INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES AND CULTURAL STUDIES
ISSN 2356-5926

Volume 1, Issue 3 (October-December)

Editor-In-Chief   **Managing Editor**
Dr. Hassen Zriba   **Najoua Chalbi**

Editorial Board

University of Delhi, India	Georgia State University, USA
*Dr. Raghvendra Kumar **LNCT Group of College Jabalpur, India**	*** Nizar Zouidi** **University of Mannouba, Tunisia**
*Dr. Salima Lejri **University of Tunis, Tunisia**	
*Dr. Chuka Fred Ononye **Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Nigeria**	

Table of contents

Articles

Editorial

Dear Colleagues,

I am so glad to present the third issue of the *International Journal of Humanities and Cultural Studies* (IJHCS). As were the two first issues, this third issue includes different research articles on various aspects and issues of humanities and cultural studies. This echoes the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary scope of the IJHCS. This new issue includes works of the research scholars from different countries such Bangladech, Belgium, France, Germany, Ghana, Libya, Nigeria, Palestine, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Taiwan, Tunisia, UAE, UK and USA.

The IJHCS has two paramount aims of 1) providing an international platform for the research scholars so that their works get noticed and appreciated and 2) making the quality research works available for the world community of knowledge seekers so that their needs are fulfilled. The IJHCS is contributing its part to disseminating and spreading the quality research works for the academic and research community around the globe.

I sincerely thank our respected contributors for selecting the IJHCS, our reviewers for reviewing the selected articles for this issue and the Administrative Board for its contribution to helping the IJHCS achieve this place.

With Best Regards,

Dr. Hassen Zriba
Editor-in-Chief
The *International Journal of Humanities and Cultural Studies* (IJHCS)

An Appraisal of the Roles of the Warriors' Guild in Addressing Pre-colonial Security Challenges in Okaland South-West Nigeria

Ogunode Sunday Abraham
Adekunle Ajasin University, Nigeria

Abstract

Security within the context of this paper can loosely be viewed as safety from any form of attack or harm. It is a term that has different dimensions and meanings in public safety, defense and military matters. It is the state or feeling of being safe and protected. Security can equally be seen as having a sense of protection against loss, attack or harm, or protection against attack from without or subversion from within. Security is one of the indispensable issues that had always taken priority position in any human society since ages. Leaders and the led alike are always concerned with how to ensure their safety in all ramifications and this has constantly spurred them to fathom measures of ensuring their continued safety. In pre-colonial Nigeria, ingenious means were employed to address security challenges by the people and their leaders. In specific terms, this article is tailored towards an appraisal of the roles of the warriors' guild in addressing pre-colonial security challenges in Okaland. The article argues that the security challenges faced by the people of Okaland in the pre-colonial times were promptly tackled through collective efforts and of course through the good leadership provided by the traditional rulers coupled with the patriotic zeal and bravery showed by the native security group. While the article acknowledges the fact that no society can exist without having to face some sort of security challenges, the author is of the view that these security challenges are surmountable.

Keywords: appraisal, roles, warriors' guild, pre-colonial, security and challenges

Introduction

Societies from all ages have always designed ingenious ways of addressing their security problems and other challenges. The pre-colonial people of Okaland in South-west of Ondo State were very inventive in dealing with their domestic security problems and other related challenges. In fact, they actually handled their security problems as a commonwealth with a high sense of collective responsibility. While the *Balogun* warriors' guild' (which membership was comprised of the hunters and the farmer guilds and the age grades) took it upon themselves to help in the pre-colonial policing of Okaland, their overall performance was not without the assured collective supports received from the people and the traditional rulers.

Anchored on the above, this paper is designed to discuss the *Balogun* warriors' guild as an effective indigenous informal security group whose members were largely responsible for the protection and stability of Okaland in the pre-colonial times. The warriors' guild is an association of men whose hunting prowess has been ratified by both their rulers and the people. Unlike the hunters' guild that is a recognised professional body without age limit, the warriors' guild has age limit as children, aged men and women cannot join. The age limit is to allow for efficiency and performance especially during troublous times.

This paper begins with a brief description of Okaland which is the territory of the town located in the north-eastern corner of Yorubaland (the single largest) in Akokoland[1] South-west of Ondo State, which existed before the colonial period in Nigeria. Etymologically, Oka is said to have derived its name from three sources: the wickedness (*ika*) of its earliest inhabitants, the maize (*oka*) which its people tauntingly threw at the enemies who besieged the town in the nineteenth century, and *Onka (*one who counts), a name which was used to refer to a Bini prince and his supporters.[2] This area is now divided into fifteen identifiable quarters with two sub-groups referred to as *Siru* and *Sifa*.

For any society with a sense of history to survive, there is always a need to bring the past to bear on the present and then provide a template for future development. It is based on this that this paper seek to present a discussion on how the pre-colonial people of Oka were able to tackle their security challenges despite the non-availability of science based security check technology and institutions.

The Warriors Guild and Pre-colonial Security Challenges in Okaland

The development of guild system is not peculiar to any civilisation; it is a universal phenomenon of great antiquity. In the traditional Yoruba society, the guild system symbolized law enforcement agency. Occupational guilds, clubs, secret or initiatory societies, and religious units, commonly known as *egbe* in Yorubaland, included the *parakoyi* (or league of traders) and *egbe ode* (hunter's guild), and maintained an important role in commerce, social control, and vocational education in Yoruba politics.[3] The hunter's guild was exclusively for men. They comprised men of proven valour and bravery. They were responsible for the provision of meat for the village chiefs. They also participated in military services like guarding villages at night and warding off invaders.[4]

Within the period covered by this paper, the prominent guilds in Okaland were the hunter's (*egbe ode*) and the association of warriors or warriors' (*egbe ologun*) guilds. These two guilds were headed by the *Balogun*. The *Balogun* title holder is the head of warriors' and

hunters' guilds in the community, while the heads of the chiefdoms were the chief commanders of their native warriors. The *Balogun* title holder was under the authority of the *Oba*, even though the *Balogun* did influence the decision of the *Oba*. For example, during the reign of the *Olusin* Ajamaye Ologunogeh (1895 – 1910),[5] Chief Koku Ologunagba[6], the *Balogun* of his time turned down the royal order of the *Olusin* Ajamaye to wage war against Oba Akoko in 1890 on the ground that Koku's mother was from Oba Akoko. The traditional functions of the *egbe ode* (hunters' guild) include: policing duty, enforcement of the customs and norms of the communities and they were also warlords who were used to ward off enemies and defend their communities' territorial pride and sovereignty.

It is instructive to state at this point that not until 1916 that, the *Balogun* title was not available in all the fifteen (15) communities of Oka, though there were some notable warriors in those communities where there were no specific *Balogun* title holders. The few communities with the *Balogun* title before 1900 were Ebinrin community (*Balogun* Ogunmola), Owake Community (*Balogun* Ajanaku Orijajogun), Okaodo Community (*Balogun* Akogiri),[7] Iwonrin Community (*Balogun* Atero); Agba Community (*Balogun* Ebonni Jala) from Jagba-Akusa clan of Agba who was later succeeded by *Balogun* Bada Baranum of Osan Agba[8] Iboje Community (*Balogun* Amogunla) the predecessor of *Balogun* Ologunboje. While the *Balogun* of Owalusin whose jurisdiction covered Owase and Idofin communities were Balogun Utufa Asagunla, (the first Balogun in *Sifa Oka* in 1833), he was succeeded by Balogun Koku Ologunagba, (1850 – 1900) Balogun Alome Elegbejeado (1900 – 1918).[9] Another notable *Balogun* was the *Balogun* of Abisi – Ikanmu and his counterpart Arogbofa of Ikanmu Oka.

According to the Late Olusin Olugunagba J.J II, it was the inter-tribal wars of the 18th and 19th centuries in Yorubaland that united Oka communities together in 1833.[10] Prior to the colonial era, Oka was at one time or the other faced with one security problem or the other. Some of the security challenges faced by the pre-colonial people of Okaland were the various wars of invasion led at different times by the Tapa (Nupe), Akoko Edo and Ujesha (Ijesa), inter-communal land disputes, the emergence of a notorious rascals, brigands, and kidnapping group known as *ipata* who actively engaged in slave raiding, fire outbreaks, the need to checkmate the various war refugees that fled to Oka to seek refuge from taking over the political power and the warding off of wild animals. In all these highlighted security challenges, the one that gave the pre-colonial people of Okaland much concern was the wars of invasion which was almost a recurring decimal. In these respect, the military prowess of the warriors' guild (the *Balogun* military group) was put to test.

Generally, the roles of the pre-colonial Oka warriors under their commandant with the *Oba* being the commander-in-chief of the communal armies, cannot be de-emphasised in the maintenance of general internal order, defense and stability of the kingdom during the pre-colonial era.

The Warriors Guild and the Defense of Oka in the Pre-colonial Era

During the prolonged Yoruba Interstate Wars (1793 – 1893), Oka Akoko remained unconquered[11] and completely insulated from the fratricidal wars in the rest of the country. Oka warriors were war mercenaries to other towns and settlements in Akoko and Ekitiland. The role its warriors played during the Ekitiparapo war otherwise known as the Kiriji war[12] remains evergreen. It was during this war that warriors from Owalusin brought the Omomo deity masquerades[13] to the *Olusin* Elure II on December 17th 1885 during the traditional

festive season of "*Ilade*" with pump and pageantry, when the traditional military prowess and dexterity of Owamuilere Ehimabo was displayed.[14] Information on the military organization of Oka in the period before the Nupe invasion is scanty, but it is clear that the community did not have a standing army. Only a militia force was raised from the hunters' guild and the age grades. Formal training was not provided but the rigor of hunting wild game prepared the men for war. The Oka hunters who formed the largest part of the warrior guild were brave hunters who helped in warding off dangerous animals from attacking their people. In fact, they were reputed for hunting down huge and ferocious animals. This hunting bravery informed the huge military successes recorded by the Oka warriors' guild in war times especially during the Nupe invasion of the late nineteenth century. The Iroho people of Okia-Oka were reputed hunters of buffalo (*efon*). Hence their oriki: *omo a mu ehin efon tore* – offspring of those who offer gifts of buffalo hide.[15]

The defense of Oka in the pre-colonial times from human enemies and wild animals was not without the application of some traditional means by the warriors. The role of the supernatural in the conduct of the Oka-Nupe war, although controversial, cannot be ignored.[16] Traditions are insistent that the defense of Oka was not just a function of topography but that of the efficacy of their charms. This was with particular reference to the administration of poison, which was lethal to man or beast that stepped on it. Two types of poison- the *apo* and *ogudu* were employed the way mines are laid in modern warfare. The *ogudu* was a particularly potent poison, which required a considerable amount of physical and psychic preparation to make. This took no less than seven days. A portion was prepared by an old man who chanted incantations, specifically the word *oro, oro, oro*!!! (poison, poison, poison!!!) for the duration of the task. Once it was prepared, sharp objects like bamboo slivers and thorns were soaked in it and later planted in the path of the invading army. Death as a result of contact with this poison was swift and panic often thrown into the line of the advancing enemies. The Oka warriors were great schemers and ingenious war strategists who would stop at nothing to defend their communities' territorial pride and sovereignty. Water sources were also poisoned by the Oka warriors. Specific mention is made of the Atawo pond in the farmland of the Ikanmu chiefdom, which was said to have taken a heavy toll on the Nupe who drank of its water.[17]

In pre-colonial Okaland, the tackling of security challenges was not left only in the hands of the warriors' guild, retired warriors, their wives and non-combatant young men were given one responsibility or the other depending on the exigencies of the time. The point to be made here is that, the pre-colonial people of Oka were responsive to the security needs of the time no wonder they overwhelmingly gave their patriotic and brave warriors the needed moral boost and direct support in addressing their collective security challenges in the pre-colonial era.

The warriors in attempt to ensure total security of their communities used everything at their disposal which hugely put them at advantage over their enemies. The caves were adequately used in the protection of the aged and the young members of the communities during wars and the rocks were also put into good use by the warriors as weapon of death. The valley was also effectively put into use in warding off invaders. While other members of the communities including their traditional heads are deep in sleep, the warriors patriotically and bravely police the area as vigilante to protect their people against rascals and kidnappers who often lurk in the cover of the dark.[18]

Lookout men (*alore*) who were positioned by the warriors to monitor enemy movements promptly blew the horn to alert the people of danger. Through this, the warriors were able to ensure the daily safety of the people. The existence of the communal quip which served to alert members of the community of any form of threat was very effective in the overall success of the warriors' guild efforts at addressing Oka pre-colonial security challenges. The communal quip called *teete* or *atete*,[19] is used to make a communal clarion call for rescue or to alert the community of eminent danger, especially when a native is privileged to have seen a foreigner whose mission is not clear or a native whose action or pre-supposed action run contrary to the corporate existence of the kingdom. By this measure, the people were equally largely involved in addressing their security problems in the pre-colonial times. Indeed, security was seen as everybody business.

Fire outbreak was also promptly attended to by the warriors with the use of traditional items and method. It was a common thing in pre-colonial Okaland to erect shrine at community centre. This shrine was known as *eka* which represented the community traditional fire extinguisher unit that housed the native eggs (*eyin adiye ibile*) used to extinguish any fire outbreak no matter its magnitude. These traditional eggs were known for their traditional potency and efficaciousness. They were equally used by the warriors to set belligerent communities or suspected enemy building ablaze. In fact, these eggs were put in good use during the Yoruba internecine war and the Ife/Modakeke war.[20] Some measures were put in place to avoid the abuse of the sacred shrine by members of the community. Each shrine had a chief priest who was also a member of the warriors' guild. This was to ensure that the protection of the traditional eggs and the shrine itself was placed in competent hands. As a strict measure, married women were forbidden from opening their heads while passing through the shrine vicinity and banana or plantain must be covered when taken through the shrine vicinity.[21] The last two measures served to avoid the contamination of the powers of the shrine and fire extinguishing traditional eggs kept in it for preservation. While the people unconditionally show their commitment to obey the rules guiding the shrine, they also helped to make the traditional eggs available for preservation.

The warriors were also patriotically committed to the security of the communities' farmlands and market places. In this regard, the warriors often divide themselves into groups with specific instructions received from their commanders on how to ensure the proper discharge of their assigned duties as the trusted eyes of all the members of the different chiefdoms in pre-colonial Okaland. As a result of the menace of the rascals and kidnappers (*ipata*), some warriors took it upon themselves to escort the women folks to the markets to buy and sell and some warriors equally serve as guards to the men and women who go to the farm to work the land and bring some produce home for consumption and possible exchange for other items as the case maybe. While some members of the communities are out to the market and some to the farm, those who are left behind are also protected by the warriors who have been assigned with the duty to do so. With this well thought out security arrangement put in place by the warriors' guild, the pre-colonial people of Okaland were able to collectively organize and develop their communities since they had nothing to fear.

Before concluding this article, it is important to consider some of the factors that contributed to the success of the warriors' guild in their effort at addressing the pre-colonial security challenges in Okaland.

Factors that Informed the Success of the Warriors' Guild

Several factors were responsible for the successes recorded in the various offensive and defensive measures put in place by the pre-colonial Oka native warriors in attempt to fix the kingdom's security challenges.

The existence of large and accommodative caves in Okaland such as the Oroke Ebinrin cave, which housed about 200 people at a time, the Oroke Owase cave[22] which lies between Okese-Owase and Agba community in Oka, about 0.6km long in size, the Ujo Ukure cave of Ikanmu, the gulf of Asin Olugbagada in-between Iwaro and Oke-Oka settlement, the Uwotufa otherwise known as Asagunla cave at Okeowa-Owalusin which Pa. Adungbe Gabriel[23] corroborated during an interview session. Inside this cave, the aged men, women and children were kept during wars until their men return from the battle. Since these caves served as safety house, the warriors were availed the concentration needed to repel invaders as they were assured of the safety of the rest members of the society.

The topographical nature of Oka settlements and the availability of traditionally made protective charms and techniques of guerilla's war system as well as the spiritual supports of their native gods/goddesses such as the *Ebita* of Ibaka, *Esinmirin* stream[24] of Owalusin and the Omomo deities masquerades, the *Agbaa* and *Ugboli* gods of Okaodo, the *Adogunmodo* of Korowa etc., besides that of the military personnel also contributed greatly to the military expeditions and achievements of Okaland.

The existence of the communal quip called *teete* or *atete* which served as an alerting security sound symbol also helped the warriors' guild in the proper discharge of the communal duties as informal security group in pre-colonial Okaland. Since the *teete* was only used to alert members of the community of any form of security threat (s), both the attention of members of the community and the warriors alike were drawn as security through this means become the business of everybody. With this collective response, the warriors were readily assured of the support of their people, thus further enhancing their commitment to the defense of the people and the community.

The warriors' guild was considered as the community police and as such, much respect was accorded them. While the warriors were committed to duty laced with integrity, financial, moral and spiritual supports were provided by the traditional rulers and the people. This served as morale booster for the members of the warriors' guild to further pledge their loyalty and readiness to defend the community regardless of the risks involved.

The availability of local weapons and strong charms also contributed to the success of the warriors' guild. This buttresses the fact that pre-colonial Oka warriors were also strong herbalists and spiritually powerful men. By this, the warriors also used their powers to protect themselves against any form of attacks.

Conclusion

The structure of *Sifa* communities in the pre-colonial Oka kingdom was like that of the military barracks (citizen-militia) where every native was a soldier, and the military importance of the uneven, rocky surface and canopy-like topography made Oka settlement unconquerable. It remains an undoubted fact that Oka Akoko was a major power in the

Ekiti/Akoko and Ijesa war prosecution even though it did not suffer any direct invasion and destruction, yet it was the refugees' camp for the other Akoko towns and migrants of the time.

Notwithstanding the warriors and their commandants contributions which called for the emergence of the *Balogun* title holders in Oka kingdom, yet *Balogun* title holders/chieftains were not given Colonial Government recognition just like that of the '*Opon*' title holder.[23] Though the *Balogun* title remains a factor to be reckoned with in the administration and the maintenance of the communal and territorial security of the confederated Okarufe town, the fact is that after 1900, when war seems to be over in Okaland, except the inter-communal disputes over the available lands and that of seniority, the role of the *Balogun* started fading away, even though many warrior families still retained 'war' appellation to their name up till date.

By and large, the warriors' guild in pre-colonial Okaland more than anything else should be applauded for the huge and patriotic roles they played in addressing the pre-colonial security challenges in Okaland. As revealed in the paper, the warriors' guild huge success was not without the assured supports of the people and their leaders. This underscores the fact that security problems can be better tackled collectively rather than leaving it all in the hands of the law enforcement agents and other security personnel. The stability and peaceful existence of any society is anchored on the readiness of the entire members of such community to pull resources together as a collective to fight a common menace. For any reasonable development to be achieved there is the urgent need to first arrest all forms of security shortcomings as a crisis ridden society repels growth and development in all ramifications.

Anchored on the above, the Nigeria government should as a matter of fact be ready to sincerely invest in measures that will help curtail the menace of insecurity which has seriously imperiled the country's development and growth for decades. The military, police force and all other agencies responsible for the security of the country should be given the needed exposure to new strategies and all necessary logistics and support should readily be made available to them for better output. Patriotism can only be assured when the leadership is right with its schemes especially those that affect the larger masses. Poverty, endemic corruption and bad welfare schemes will only help to compound the country's problem of insecurity. Only an honest leadership with the zeal to put in place an all-inclusive government and masses oriented programmes will avail.

Notes

1. The grandfather of the Okiolaja Ogun family of Ikese-Owalusin, Iwaro-Oka.
2. The chief priest of Ugboli goddess.
3. I.e. the war that ended the 100 years Yoruba interstate wars.

References

-Aponbiede F.A., (2007), 'Owamilere Ehinmabo… Testament II', (Iwaro-Oka: Niyi Press)

-Akomalafe Omobolanle .K. (1983), *The Economic Organization of Akoko 1900-1939*. (Ile-Ife: B.A. long essay, Department of History, University of Ife,)

-Igejogbo Ladele, 62yrs, a traditional orator. Interviewed at W.O 40 Osan Agba, Oka on January 31, 2011.
-Olukoju A., (1989), "The Siege of Oka", ca. 1878-84: A Study in the Resistance to Nupe Militarism in Northern Yorubaland", in *Warfare and Diplomacy in Pre-colonial Nigeria*:*Essays in Honour of Robert Smith*, ed. Toyin Falola and Robin Law, (Madison: African Studies Projects, University of Wiscousin,),

-Olukoju A.O., "Oka" (2003), in *Yoruba Towns and Cities*, ed. G.O. Oguntomisin Vol.1, (Ibadan: Bookshelf Resources Ltd,)
See www.owamilereehimabo.webs.com Accessed 21/10/2010

-Ologunagba J.J (1973), "The Brief History of The Balogun Chieftaincy in Owalusin Oka". Unpublished material.

-Oluwole Matthew, 90 years, The Shaba Olukanmu of Simerin Ikanmu Oka, No 1, Agbadotun Street Ayepe, Iwaro-Oka. September 9, 2009.

-Ogunoye S.O., aged 50years. The Olusin of Owalusin, the head of *Sifa* Oka and the second in command to the Olubaka of Okaland. Interviewed in his Palace (Olusin's Palace) Iwaro-Oka on January 20, 2011. www.owamilereehinmabo.webs.com Accessed 20/6/2011 See also the festival calendar, 2010. p.8. "Yoruba People". From Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia. Accessed 21/10/2010.
-Olukoju A., "The Siege of Oka, *ca* 1878-84: A Study in the Resistance to Nupe Militarism in Northeastern Yorubaland", in *Warfare and Diplomacy in Pre-colonial Nigeria*. *Essays in Honour of Robert Smith*. Toyin Falola and Robin Law (eds.), (Madison: African Studies Projects, University of Wisconsin, 1989), p.103.

-Olukoju A., "The Siege of Oka, *ca* 1878-84……, p.105.

-Olukoju A., "The Siege of Oka, *ca* 1878-84…………...

-Ajanaku A., The Balogun of Owake-Oka, 56years, he is a traditional title holder interviewed at No. 68 College Road, opposite Magistrate Court Iwaro-Oka Akoko on January 18, 2011

-Igejogbo Ladele, 62years, a traditional orator, interviewed at W.O. 40 Osan Agba, Oka on January 31, 2011.

-Igejogbo Ladele, 62years…

-Ajanaku A. The Balogun of Owake-Oka, 56years, interviewed at No. 68 College Road, opposite Magistrate Court Iwaro-Oka Akoko on January 18, 2011
Later nicknamed *Uwo* Ajini. Ajini was a young mad man who took over this cave last as his house before his death.

-Interviewed at his house, No. 14 Balogun Street Owalusin on December 30th 2010, He was one of the heroes still living that have entered the cave for hunting.

-Ojonla Amoko 'aged' 48years, a professional and traditional creative artist interviewed at Westend House, Iwaro-Oka on January, 10, 2011.

-The 'Opon' is the oldest male person in a community or town. He is ranked second to the Oba (king/head chief)

La place marginale du français au Ghana : un statut bien trompeur sur les média et dans les écoles

Koffi Ganyo Agbefle
University of Ghana, Legon Accra, Ghana

Abstract

The purpose of this article titled The marginalized status of French in Ghana: A real misrepresentation by the Media and Academia, is to highlight the actual status of French in current communication in Ghana, an Anglophone country. It focuses on demonstrating that the priority placed on French by the Ghanaian authorities is only apparent. We can even talk of the pseudo-status of French, with the wide gap that exists between what is said and what is done in view. Indeed, whereas the authorities in Ghana affirm that French is the second most important international language in that country, the reality seems to be different. French remains far from being the linguistic medium of social discourse in the country .Administrations, international organizations, the media, and even schools all seem to marginally prioritize French. Meanwhile, continuous official discussions are held on the importance of this language to the Anglophone Ghanaian community. Moreover, since 2006, Ghana has being a partner member of the "Francophonie"; something which presupposes that aside from English, Ghanaians can also, to an extent, transact in French, as is the case in the Francophone countries where people somehow "glean" words to express themselves in English when the need arises. Unfortunately, such a conclusion is erroneous. Ghana's "Francophonie" partner membership status is far from being rooted in her communicative needs. The teaching of French in schools and the treatment French teachers receive are enough indicators for us to conclude that, in reality, French is not a priority in the Ghanaian community and that Ghana will not need a second international language, after her official language English, which is increasingly more important than any other foreign language, even local Ghanaian languages inclusive.

Key words: Misleading status; international language; Communicative needs; National language(s)

Résumé

Le présent article vise à mettre en exergue la place réelle du français dans la communication courante au sein du pays anglophone qu'est le Ghana. Il s'agit de montrer que le statut que les autorités ghanéennes accordent au français n'est qu'apparent. On peut même parler de pseudo-statut car entre ce qui se dit et ce qui se fait l'écart est assez grand. En effet, alors que les autorités du Ghana affirment que le français est la 2ᵉ plus importante langue internationale en usage dans ce pays, dans les faits, cela ne semble pas être le cas. Le français reste loin d'être présent dans les échanges sociaux du pays. Administrations, institutions à vocations internationales, media et mêmes écoles semblent tous accorder une place marginale au français. Cependant, les discours officiels continuent d'insister sur l'importance de cette langue pour les anglophones ghanéens. D'ailleurs, le Ghana est devenu depuis 2006, membre associé de la francophonie ; ce qui suppose que ce pays a une pratique assez régulière de la langue française. On peut donc penser que le Ghanéen, en dehors de l'anglais, peut se débrouiller en français comme c'est le cas dans les pays francophones où les gens peuvent « glaner » quelques phrases en anglais pour satisfaire à une situation de communication. Malheureusement, cela n'est pas le cas. Les raisons qui ont amené le Ghana à adhérer à la francophonie et à faire croire souvent que cette langue est en usage dans le pays, semblent loin d'être sous-tendues par les besoins communicatifs du pays. Rien que l'exemple de l'enseignement de cette langue et de la gestion des professeurs de français dans plusieurs écoles, nous font dire que le français est vraiment marginalisé et que le Ghana n'aurait pas besoin d'une deuxième langue internationale à part l'anglais qui s'impose aux Ghanéens, mettant au rancart toutes les autres langues étrangères voire les langues nationales du pays.

Mots-clés : **Statut trompeur; Langue internationale ; Besoins communicatifs ; Langue(s) nationale(s).**

Introduction

Le Ghana a pour langue officielle l'anglais. C'est donc la langue de l'administration, de l'instruction et de toute autre situation formelle de communication. En dehors de cette langue internationale, ce pays a adopté le français comme seconde langue étrangère. C'est, à en croire les textes officiels, la 2e plus importante langue de communication internationale au Ghana. L'importance de cette langue pour le Ghana a été reconnue même bien avant l'indépendance ; d'où son insertion dans le système d'enseignement au Ghana depuis 1948 à Achimota Collège- Accra (Ayi-Adzimah : 2010 :112). Le préambule du syllabus « French Basic 7- 9 » met également l'accent sur l'importance de l'apprentissage du français car dit-il, c'est l'une des grandes langues de communication internationale. Le même syllabus ajoute que pour des raisons de coopération avec les pays francophones voisins et d'ailleurs, l'apprentissage effectif du français s'avère indispensable pour les Ghanéens. Par ailleurs, dans un discours devant le parlement Ghanéen, le 13 Février 2003, l'ancien Président John KUFUOR a insisté sur l'importance du français pour le Ghana et a exprimé son engagement pour le traduire dans les faits. On en déduit que les responsables politiques de ce pays reconnaissent aussi combien importante est cette langue dont ils disent prôner un usage effectif dans l'enseignement et dans d'autres secteurs publics à part l'anglais. On sait également que depuis le Sommet de Bucarest de 2006 (XIe Sommet) en Roumanie, le Ghana est devenu «membre associé (avec Chypre) de la Francophonie». Or l'accès au statut de «membre associé» est réservé à des États et des gouvernements pour lesquels le français est «d'un usage habituel et courant et qui partagent les valeurs de la Francophonie».

Au vu de tout ce qui précède, on peut être amené à croire que le français a un statut non négligeable au Ghana. Toutefois, dans les faits, ce statut de 2e langue internationale conféré au français au Ghana est assez mitigé. En effet, dans l'administration, dans les établissements scolaires et universitaires et dans toute autre situation de communication quotidienne au Ghana, ce statut du français (2^{e}langue internationale) tant proclamé semble irréel ou mitigé. C'est donc ce statut mitigé du français au Ghana que nous nous proposons de décrire en nous focalisant sur les questions suivantes:

- Quelle place réelle le français occupe-t-il dans la sphère linguistique du Ghana?

- Quels comportements linguistiques les locuteurs anglophones ghanéens adoptent-ils vis-à-vis du français?

- En quoi le statut du français est-il trompeur au Ghana?

1-   Contexte et approche méthodologique de l'étude

Le français est une langue qui présente différentes facettes au Ghana conduisant à une ambigüité de son statut de 2ᵉ langue internationale après l'anglais, langue officielle. Ces différentes facettes auxquelles nous faisons allusion proviennent du fait qu'entre ce qui se dit et ce qui se fait, l'écart est assez grand. Ainsi, notre recherche centrée sur la place réelle de cette langue, s'est effectuée à partir de différents matériaux notamment des observations conduites à un niveau macro-sociolinguistique, articulées à une étude menée à un niveau micro-sociolinguistique, à un moment où le besoin d'avoir le français comme 2ᵉ langue internationale se fait incontournable au Ghana. Nous avons contextualisé ce travail par des références à la sphère sociolinguistique c'est-à-dire à des rapports sociolinguistiques entre le français et l'anglais d'une part, le français et les langues nationales d'autres parts. A ces matériaux d'enquêtes, nous avons joint deux techniques traditionnelles de collecte de données : des entretiens et des questionnaires.

2- Bref aperçu sur les langues au Ghana

Avant de revenir à la question des langues en présence Ghana, il importerait de clarifier ce que nous entendons par langue (s) nationale/au (x) et bien évidemment par politique linguistique. En effet, ces clarifications nous paraissent nécessaires puisqu'elles permettraient sans doute de mieux comprendre le statut de telle ou telle autre langue en contexte.

Il existe deux sortes de langues nationales (LN): des *LN officielles* (c'est-à-dire promues officiellement à ce statut par l'Etat) et des *LN non officielles* qui sont les autres langues d'un pays ne bénéficiant d'aucun statut officiel. Dans notre contexte, nous appelons langues nationales toutes les langues parlées sur un territoire national sans aucune distinction provenant d'une quelconque décision politique. Il faut entendre par-là que toutes les langues parlées dans une nation sont des LN (Afeli 2003 ; Agbéflé 2012). Et c'est dans cet esprit que nous abordons la question des LN au Ghana.

Quant à la politique linguistique, nous affirmerons à la suite d'Aféli (2003) que ce concept est diversement conçu par les chercheurs. Selon Garmadi (1981 : 186),"*contrairement à la planification, la politique linguistique n'a reçu que de rares définitions.*"Calvet (1993 : 111), pour sa part, la définit comme "*un ensemble de choix conscients concernant les rapports entre langue(s) et vie sociale.*" Dans cette perspective, n'importe quel groupe humain (famille, classe d'âge, pays, etc.) peut, selon lui, avoir une politique linguistique. Pour Neustupsny (1968 : 293), il s'agit d'un effort conscient pour résoudre un problème de langue. Eastman (1983) pour sa part nous fait savoir que tout pays a forcément une politique linguistique que celle-ci soit clairement définie ou non. Il faut préciser que tous ces auteurs sont cités par Afeli (2003 : 18) qui précise que ce concept désignerait

> L'ensemble des choix nationaux en matière de langue et de culture. Cette politique linguistique se définirait en objectifs généraux à longs termes (niveaux éducatifs, formations, emplois, fonctions et statuts de langue(s), etc...) et se fonderait sur une analyse aussi précise et complète que possible de la situation de départ.

2.1 - Les langues nationales au Ghana

Le Ghana est un pays d'environ 23 millions d'habitants (selon des données de recensement de 2000). Mais le nombre exact de langues parlées dans ce pays est loin d'être définitif du fait de la diversité des langues et de leurs variantes dialectales. En effet, alors que selon Yiboe (2009 :2), on dénombre au Ghana entre 65 et 70 langues, Ayi-Adzimah (2010 :107) fait le point sur la situation linguistique en ces termes :

> *Le Ghana est un véritable pays multiethnique et multilingue : la population est une combinaison d'au moins soixante-et-quinze tribus différentes qui parlent autant de langues différentes. Tandis que Dzameshie (1988) estime qu'il y a entre 45 et 60 langues au Ghana, Boadi (1994 :5) les situe entre 36 et 50.*

Même si tous ces chercheurs ne sont pas unanimes sur le nombre exact de langues ghanéennes, tous reconnaissent cependant qu'aucune d'entre elles n'est numériquement dominante. En effet, même si la langue des Akan se trouve être la plus véhiculaire à travers tout le pays, les Akan asante ne sont pas majoritaires selon Yiboe (2009 :2). Le Ghana est donc caractérisé, comme la plupart des États africains, par une pluralité ethnique et linguistique.

2.2- Les langues étrangères au Ghana: le cas de l'anglais et du français.

Plusieurs langues étrangères se partagent ou s'insèrent aujourd'hui dans l'univers linguistique ghanéen. Mais dans ce passage nous nous intéressons au cas de l'anglais et du français. L'anglais est la langue officielle au Ghana. C'est, à l'image de bien d'autres pays, la langue du colon perpétuée par les gouvernements postcoloniaux. Cette langue est reconnue langue officielle par la constitution ghanéenne. Ce statut conféré à l'anglais lui donne une place inégalable dans la sphère linguistique ghanéenne mettant au rancart toutes les autres langues du pays notamment les langues nationales quoi qu'il existe une politique de valorisation de ces langues.

En dehors de l'anglais, langue internationale, l'État ghanéen reconnait le français comme deuxième langue internationale. Ainsi, le français occuperait également une place non négligeable. Cette position du français a été réitérée très souvent par les dirigeants du pays ; ce qui les a conduits à s'engager comme membre associé de la francophonie comme nous l'avons souligné plus haut. Cependant, certains chercheurs, Amuzu (2000 :80) et Ayi-Adzimah (2010 :111) affirment qu'il existe une rivalité subtile entre ces deux langues européennes (l'anglais et le français). Selon eux en effet, le français est fortement ébranlé par le statut de l'anglais au Ghana.

3- La réalité de l'usage du français dans les interactions langagières au Ghana

Comme nous l'avons presque déjà abondamment mentionné dans les précédents paragraphes, le statut du français tel que le définissent les autorités ghanéennes n'est pas ce que l'on peut rencontrer dans la rue, dans l'administration et dans l'enseignement. Dans ce passage, nous nous proposons de décrire la situation à deux niveaux: dans les communications courantes (le cas des media) et dans les écoles secondaires.

3.1- Le français dans les communications courantes

Il nous faut tout d'abord définir ce que nous entendons par communications courantes. Il s'agit, dans notre contexte, des échanges langagiers quotidiens dans la rue, dans les marchés, sur les média etc. Dans cette contribution, nous nous intéressons particulièrement au cas des media.

En effet, toute personne non avertie peut être surpris par le fait que dans la rue, au marché et généralement même dans l'administration, rares sont ceux qui parlent une autre langue internationale a part l'anglais; ce qui dans une large mesure n'est pas le cas dans les pays francophones en général et notamment dans les pays francophones voisins immédiats du Ghana où les gens peuvent "glaner" quelques phrases en anglais à la rencontre d'un étranger anglophone à qui on peut indiquer une rue, un marché, un hôtel ; bref à qui on peut répondre généralement aux besoins immédiats.

L'attitude linguistique des Ghanéens se caractérise plutôt par un certain "irrédentisme linguistique". L'irrédentisme linguistique étant l'amour exagéré qu'une personne a pour sa langue maternelle ou pour une langue quelconque au point de refuser tout esprit d'ouverture en vue d'apprendre d'autres langues (Napon, 2002). Par exemple, dans l'administration publique au Ghana, tout contact en français est généralement "mal accueilli" car les personnes à qui l'on s'adresse se sentent en insécurité linguistique; ce qui est une chose assez normale. Mais ce qui n'est pas normal, c'est leurs attitudes au travers desquelles on peut facilement lire une prise de position linguistique traduisant un refus presque absolu d'accepter le français comme un autre moyen possible d'échanges linguistiques.

Prenant spécifiquement le cas des institutions à caractère dit international ou celui des media, on peut être surpris par leur peu d'intérêt accordé au français qui pourtant est la deuxième langue internationale au Ghana après l'anglais. Une enquête de proximité menée dans la ville d'Accra et dans plusieurs autres grandes villes du pays révèle que la plupart des hôtels ou des agences de voyages n'offrent pas de services bilingues anglais-français. Seul l'anglais est leur langue de travail. Or ces agences ou services sont considérés comme ayant des vocations internationales et donc devraient pouvoir offrir, un tant soit peu, quelques services aussi bien en français qu'en anglais, puisqu'ils ne sont pas censés accueillir que des anglophones. Ainsi, tout locuteur monolingue français n'est pas le bienvenu dans ces agences qui finissent par perdre, de ce fait une bonne part de leurs clients qui, pour des raisons linguistiques, vont chercher à s'adresser aux rares agences à service bilingue anglais-français. Mais comme annoncé en début de ce passage, nous nous intéressons ici au cas particulier des media.

3.2- La réalité de l'usage du français sur les media au Ghana

La place du français dans les programmes de diffusion des media est très négligeable pour ne pas dire que cette langue est quasiment ignorée par les media au Ghana ; ce qui généralement n'est pas le cas dans les pays francophones voisins et ailleurs où chaque media, sinon la plus part, essaie toujours d'accorder un temps d'antenne ou quelques lignes éditoriales à l'anglais dans leur programme de diffusion. Au Ghana, les émissions radio ou télé, les pages de la presse écrite et autres canaux d'information se font dans l'ignorance presque totale de l'existence d'une communauté française ou francophone. Or, selon des statistiques de la francophonie en 2010, il existe plus de 1.333.000 locuteurs francophones dans ce pays. Au vu de ce chiffre qui représente près de 20% de la population ghanéenne, on s'attendrait à une plus large

diffusion du français sur les média pour répondre dans une certaine mesure aux besoins d'informations de la diaspora francophone qui n'est pas forcément bilingue. Il est vrai qu'il existe de plus en plus des media privée (Radios, Télévisions, Presses écrites…) qui s'intéressent au français dans leur programme à la limite de leurs moyens financiers et humains. Mais on peut quand même être surpris par les cas spécifiques des media d'Etat, qui ignorent presque entièrement le français. Or ces media représentent une référence importante pour les autres media privés et sont, sans doute, à l'image de la politique de l'Etat. C'est dire que l'importance que l'Etat ghanéen accorde au français, c'est ce qui se reflète sur ses media. Nous voudrions revenir particulièrement sur le cas du Grand quotidien national le « Daily Graphic » qui ne se soucie pas du tout du français. Toute la presse est conçue en anglais dans l'ignorance quasi-totale de la communauté francophone ou française vivant au Ghana. Nous évoquons le cas spécifique de cette presse car c'est bien la presse étatique et c'est elle qui, à notre sens, devrait donner l'exemple aux autres presses écrites. Il en est de même pour les autres média nationaux que sont le Ghana Télévision (GTV) et la Radio nationale, dont les programmes de diffusion ignorent quasiment le français. Cette attitude de ces média laissent entrevoir le très peu d'intérêts accordés à cette langue par l'Etat lui-même.

3.3- La réalité du français dans les écoles

Les textes officiels disent que le français est enseigné au Ghana aux niveaux secondaires c'est-à-dire au collège (JHS) et dans les lycées (SHS). Mais il se trouve que là encore, entre le dire et le faire l'écart est assez grand. Nous avons mené là aussi une enquête de proximité auprès de 30 écoles secondaires à Accra. L'enquête a été menée dans les deux types d'écoles secondaires publiques et privées. Les résultats de cette enquête sont contenus dans le tableau ci-après.

Types d'écoles	Nombre d'écoles enquêtées	Nombre de pro. de français disponible	Prof. effectivement utilisés pour le français
Ecoles publiques	15	18	12
Ecoles privées	10	10	10

Il ressort de ce tableau que même dans les écoles où l'enseignement du français comme langue étrangère devrait être systématique, cela ne se traduit pas effectivement dans les faits. En effet, dans les écoles publiques, sur les 18 professeurs de français disponibles, seulement 12 sont effectivement utilisés comme tel. Ceux-ci représentent 67% de l'ensemble des professeurs de français disponibles dans le secteur public. Autrement dit, 33% des professeurs ne sont pas utilisés à enseigner la matière pour laquelle ils ont été formés. Ils sont redéployés à d'autres fins c'est-à-dire que les dirigeants de ces écoles décident de les utiliser à enseigner d'autre matières (anglais, histoire…) jugées plus importantes.

Dans les écoles privées, les 100% des professeurs sont effectivement utilisés à enseigner le français. Cependant, il arrive que dans certaines écoles, les dirigeants allouent des heures d'anglais ou d'histoire à certains profs. De plus, il ressort de notre enquête que les 100% de professeurs de français dans le secteur privé ne sont pas formés pour enseigner cette langue. C'est généralement des « francophones » à la recherche d'un emploi de fortune pour juste survivre que les dirigeants recrutent et leur traitement salarial n'est guère encourageant. C'est dirigeants d'écoles privées se limitent à de tels recrutements pour éviter de payer cher les professeurs de français véritablement formés.

On relève de l'attitude des dirigeants de ces établissements aussi bien publics que privés un très peu d'égards vis-à-vis du français. Sinon comment expliquer que dans le public, non seulement le manque de prof de français n'inquiète pas ces autorités de l'éducation mais en plus ceux qui en existent sont parfois redéployés par leur chef d'établissement pour enseigner d'autres matières tel l'anglais, l'histoire etc. ou encore qu'on en vienne à réduire (parfois même de moitié) le volume horaire alloué officiellement à l'enseignement du français.

Même pour les écoles privées où tous les enseignants de français sont effectivement employés pour le français, ceux-ci ne sont généralement pas du tout formés et sont employés par les autorités de ces écoles à titre publicitaire juste pour servent d'appât et attirer les parents d'élèves à venir y inscrire leurs enfants.

Comme le souligne Ayi-Adzimah (2010 :111),

> la plupart des collèges ghanéens n'offre pas l'enseignement du français aux apprenants du fait de la pénurie d'enseignants de français. Il n'est donc pas étonnant que les apprenants perçoivent principalement l'importance du français pour des objectifs scolaires. L'essentiel pour ces derniers est de réussir leurs examens en français.

Tout ce qui précède relève des incohérences de la politique linguistique éducative du pays. Ces incohérences proviennent des attitudes d'irresponsabilités de la part des autorités chargées de l'éducation au Ghana ou peut-être du manque de conviction de ces dirigeants. C'est donc à ces incohérences que nous allons nous atteler dans le passage suivant.

4- Les incohérences de la politique linguistique du français au Ghana

La politique linguistique du français est caractérisée au Ghana par une certaine incohérence entre ce qui se dit et ce qui se fait. Alors que les textes officiels reconnaissent le français comme 2e plus importante langue internationale, on peut lire à travers les comportements des décideurs politiques que le Ghana n'aurait pas besoin d'une 2e langue internationale car l'anglais semble suffire déjà. Ainsi, la place théorique accordée au français semble se rapporter plutôt à des intérêts relationnels surtout économiques avec la France ; ce qui, avant tout, est contraire à la fonction première de la langue, qui n'est autre que le besoin communicatif. Malheureusement, on a l'impression que ceux-là même qui clament haut et fort que le français est la deuxième langue internationale au Ghana, manquent de conviction à cet effet. Sinon comment expliquer le fait qu'ils ne se montrent pas très impliqués dans la mise en œuvre de leur propre décision ? On a tout simplement l'impression qu'ils la sabotent. On peut en

déduire donc que ce qui entrave la motivation et l'apprentissage effectifs du français au Ghana, c'est bien l'attitude des décideurs de l'éducation.

Pour tout résumer, les ambigüités qui entourent la promotion du français au Ghana, s'expliquent à notre avis par une raison principale qui à son tour va engendrer deux autres raisons. La raison principale dont nous parlons est le manque de volonté politique. Celle-ci va engendrer, d'une part, une politique et une planification linguistique approximative et laxiste en faveur du français ; et d'autre part une absence criarde de ressources humaines compétentes dans le domaine de l'enseignement de cette langue. Nous convenons donc avec le Page (1971 :80 cité par Ayi-Adzimah, 2010 : 116) que

> les décisions concernant la politique linguistique d'un pays comme le Ghana sont souvent formulées pour des raisons politiques par des hommes politiques et non pas par des linguistes ; et cela ne dure que très peu d'années souvent.

En effet, si tel n'est pas le cas, comment comprendre que les textes officiels disent une chose et dans la pratique on fait autres choses ? Comment comprendre que pendant que l'Etat Ghanéen clame fort l'importance du français pour ses citoyens, on en vienne à réduire le nombre d'enseignants à former pour enseigner cette langue ou encore qu'on mette de moins en moins les moyens à la disposition des « French Teacher's training colleges » ? Il existe plusieurs autres preuves qui montrent clairement que le statut du français au Ghana n'est qu'apparent

Conclusion

Le français occupe une place assez marginale dans la sphère linguistique du Ghana. Malgré tous les beaux discours qu'on peut entendre de la part des premiers responsables de l'Etat ghanéen et surtout de ceux chargés du secteur de l'éducation, la réalité quotidienne sur le terrain nous fait dire que c'est de la pure poudre aux yeux. Le français n'est pas, dans l'usage quotidien des Ghanéens, une deuxième langue internationale. Il ne l'est que de nom. Ce qui est généralement difficile à concevoir surtout quand on sait que le Ghana est l'un des rares pays d'Afrique entourés de pays voisins tous francophones et qu'il n'y a pas un seul jour que ce pays n'est des contacts commercial, politique ou social avec ses voisins immédiats.   La présente étude s'est surtout rabattue sur la place du français dans deux types d'institutions sociales qu'on peut qualifier d'institutions clés. Il s'est agi des media et des écoles. Ainsi, les résultats de notre enquête dans ces écoles et media viennent corroborer l'idée de marginalisation du français au Ghana. On en déduit que le statut que les textes officiels attribuent au français n'est que bien trompeur. Nous pouvons donc conclure avec Yiboe (2009) que le français en tant que langue étrangère est menacé au Ghana, fortement ébranlé par le statut officiel de l'anglais que la société ghanéenne valorise de façon exagérée ; cette langue étant ressentie comme une clé magique autosuffisante. Une réflexion s'impose donc sur une politique explicite du français langue étrangère dans un pays multilingue tel que le Ghana.

Référencés

-AFELI, Kossi Antoine, 2003, *Politique et aménagement linguistique au Togo : Bilan et Perspectives,* Thèse de Doctorat d'Etat, UL, 613 p.

-AGBEFLE, Koffi Ganyo, 2012, *Le français et les langues nationales en Afrique noire francophone : la question de la langue d'enseignement à l'école primaire au Togo*, Thèse de Doctorat unique en Linguistique, Université de Lomé, Togo. 285 p

-AMUZU, Dominic S. Y, 2000, *Problèmes de bilinguisme au Ghana*, in KUPPOLE D. D. (ed), Co-existence of Languages in West Africa, Takoradi St Francis Press, P 72-87

-AYI-ADZIMAH, Daniel, 2010, *La maîtrise sémantico-syntaxique de la pronominalisation du complément d'objet indirect en contexte ghanéen*, Thèse de Doctorat en sciences du langage, Université de Strasbourg, France, 337 p

-NAPON A, 1994, *L'enseignement du français au Burkina Faso : méthodes et stratégies*, dans les Annales de l'Université de Ouagadougou, série A, vol VI, pp. 23-41

-YIBOE Kofi Tsivanyo, 2009, *Politique linguistique et enseignement bilingue au Ghana*, in Glottopol Revue de sociolinguistique n° 13 Politiques linguistiques et enseignements plurilingues francophones : entre langage, pouvoir et identité, P 127-138.

C'est le soleil qui m'a brulée de Calyxthe Beyala: un titre à la recherche d'un récit.

Ndongo Kamdem Alphonse
University of Uyo, Nigeria

Abstract

The reading of a text starts undoubtedly with its title: this meta-text offers the first thread which the reader follows in the course of reading. It goes without saying, that there always exists a correlation between a title and the text that follows it. This article goes from a hermeneutics of the epigraph that announces the text, to the analysis of the text itself, with the conclusion that the title of Beyala's text (C'est le soleil qui m'a brulee) does not just justify the text that follows: between the text and its title, there is anacolutha.

Key words: Title, correlation, epigraph, meta-text, anacolutha.

Résumé

La lecture d'un texte commence indubitablement avec son titre : cette métadonnée offre le premier fil que l'on dévidera au cours de la lecture. Cela va sans dire qu'il existe toujours une corrélation entre un titre et le texte qu'il propose. Cet article part d'une herméneutique de l'exergue a l'analyse du texte central. La conclusion que nous en tirons, c'est qu'entre C'est le soleil qui m'a brûlée (le titre) et le texte que nous propose Calyxthe Beyala par la suite, il y a anacoluthe.

Mots clés : Titre, corrélation, exergue, métadonnée, anacoluthe.

Introduction:

Le titre d'une œuvre, qu'elle soit littéraire ou non, constitue la première pertinence qui échoit au lecteur au moment où il entame une lecture. Le choix du titre d'une œuvre représente par conséquent, pour le l'auteur aussi bien que pour le lecteur, un enjeu majeur : dans cette métadonnée réside la première information sur le texte qui lui est proposé. Il existe toujours une corrélation entre le titre et l'œuvre, l'un justifiant l'autre, et inversement. Le titre du premier roman de Calyxthe Beyala est un extrait du premier poème du *Cantique des Cantiques* où une femme noire, éprise d'amour pour un Blanc, implore la bienveillance et l'indulgence des « filles de Jérusalem » afin qu'elles l'admettent dans leur sein malgré son teint noir. Ce titre préfigure donc des rapports entre le Moi (l'Africain, en l'occurrence), et l'Autre ('filles de Jérusalem', donc, la femme blanche, donc, le Blanc), avec tout ce que cela implique comme arsenal complexuel (Fanon 26). Or, le texte central ne remplit pas ce postulat contenu dans le titre, ce qui pose le problème de corrélation entre le titre et le texte dans ce premier roman de Beyala. Cet article soutient que le titre de ce roman ne l'illustre pas, pas plus que le texte central n'illustre le titre. Nous soutiendrons notre propos à partir d'une herméneutique de l'exergue (donc, du titre) et d'une analyse du texte proprement dit.

Titre et exergue :

Plus qu'un simple label, le titre d'une œuvre fournit la première impression, même pâle, sur le contenu du texte. Le titre constitue la première vitrine à travers laquelle le lecteur lorgne dans le texte. Il situe le lecteur sur le sujet traité et sur l'intrigue sur laquelle est construite l'œuvre. A cet égard, le titre est la (première) porte qui ouvre sur l'univers de la fiction où s'aventure le lecteur, et c'est à cette porte qu'il trouvera « les clés » (Tchikaya, in Lopes 15) de la lecture du texte. Liliane Collignon soutient que

> Le titre propose une définition rapide du sujet, influence notre perception de l'œuvre…la force des mots donne les premières clés de lecture…Le titre permet de mémoriser et de retenir l'attention du lecteur ou du spectateur en créant une attente : Comment l'auteur ou l'artiste a-t-il illustré ce sujet ?

Le titre d'une œuvre est son épitomé, le texte réduit en une phrase, le plus souvent un syntagme nominal, quelque fois un nom. Le titre est donc le premier élément intéressant d'un texte, parce qu'il en oriente d'emblée la lecture, qui commence avec le titre. Petit Prince (2005) soutient que « le titre est souvent la clef d'un texte. Il représente en deux ou trois mots une association avec le reste, et met le lecteur dans un état de lecture en général par curiosité. » Trouvant la poésie de TChikaya U'Tamsi 'sibylline, codée, difficile à comprendre', Henri Lopes (15) souhaite entendre l'auteur :

> -Les clés sont sur la porte.
> -Quelle porte ?
> -Le titre, pardi !

Derrida (15) est d'avis que le titre d'un texte est son nom propre, et l'élément qui garantit conventionnellement l'identité du texte. Selon lui, « Le texte est l'effet produit par le jeu du titre, par l'opération elliptique qui nous laisse dans l'impossibilité d'accéder à son sens propre, qu'il garde en réserve ».

Le titre du premier roman de Calyxthe Beyala est un extrait de l'exergue, lui-même extrait du premier poème du *Cantique des Cantiques*. Comme le titre, l'exergue constitue un péritexte à travers lequel peut s'appréhender le ton fondamental du texte. Or, ce péritexte est la première strophe d'un dialogue amoureux entre deux personnes d'horizons différents : 'la bien-aimée' au teint basané (une Noire), et 'le bien-aimé', un homme de Jérusalem (donc, un Blanc).

Il s'opère d'emblée ici une dichotomie raciale saisissante qui informe l'attitude de la bien-aimée et l'esprit même de ce poème du Cantique des Cantiques : le 'Je' parlant s'identifie comme noire et implore l'indulgence des 'filles de Jérusalem' sur son teint. Ce qui est un signe d'auto-avilissement, et un désir de légitimation du Moi par l'Autre qui traduit tout l'arsenal complexuel né du discours de l'Occident sur l'Afrique (Fanon 26). Cet exergue pose donc un double problème qui se chevauche : un problème racial et un problème de complexe d'infériorité.

Le milieu dans lequel se trouve la bien-aimée la pousse à une autodéfinition : « Je suis noire ». En réalité, elle répond à une question que personne ne lui a posée : elle se voit à travers le regard (peut-être curieux ou accusateur, peut-être méprisant ou condescendant) de l'Autre, à la manière de Ayo au milieu d'une foule blanche qui le regarde sans rien dire, et dont le regard lui inspire tout un discours d'autodéfinition qu'il se donne seul la peine de construire, dans Les *Paradis terrestres* de Femi Ojo-Ade. Autrement dit, la bien-aimée souffre du complexe d'infériorité raciale devant les filles de Jérusalem qu'elle juge supérieures à elle. L'adverbe 'pourtant' du premier vers exprime une nuance antithétique qui traduit un besoin de reconnaissance ou d'insertion dans le milieu restreint des êtres 'bien nés' que sont les filles de Jérusalem. Pour se sentir exister, elle a besoin de savoir qu'autrui l'a acceptée. « Autrui seul peut (la) valoriser » Fanon 127).

L'identité du Moi ne dépend plus de ce qu'il est, intrinsèquement, mais du discours que l'Autre tient sur lui (Todorov 7). Dans ce processus d'auto-avilissement où le 'Je' reconnait tacitement l'ascendant des 'filles de Jérusalem' sur elle, la bien-aimée du poème conjure celles-ci de ne pas prendre garde à son teint basané, « c'est le soleil qui m'a brulée », reconnaissant ainsi son cadre de référence comme étant anormal, et celui de l'autre comme étant supérieur (Todorov 8). La bien-aimée se sait épiée par les filles de Jérusalem qui ont sur elle le pouvoir d'étiquetage et de représentation, c'est-à-dire de manipulation à travers le discours. Or, nous dit encore Todorov, « le maitre du discours sera le maitre tout court » (8). Il s'instaure ainsi entre le Moi et l'Autre « une relation de pouvoir et de domination » (Said 18) ou le 'je' (le maitre de la parole) domine et l'autre est dominé (Todorov 8)

Dans cette distribution de rôles où le Blanc tient le haut du pavé, il lui revient, pour perpétrer sa position de maitre du discours, d'imposer à l'Autre « une mentalité, une généalogie (et) une atmosphère » (Said 57). Car l'Autre, ayant abdiqué toute tentative de prise en charge de soi, s'est relégué au rang de subalterne et n'est plus vu que « comme quelque chose que l'on juge…quelque chose que l'on étudie et décrit…quelque chose que l'on surveille…quelque chose que l'on illustre » (Said 55).

Que demande en fait 'la bien-aimée' aux 'filles de Jérusalem' dans cet exergue du roman de Beyala ? Elle est noire, elle en est gênée, « pourtant » elle est belle, comme pour marquer le contraste entre son teint et sa beauté. En principe, et c'est du reste ce qu'implique l'adverbe (contrastif) 'pourtant', le Noir ou la Noire sont dénués de beauté, qui est une qualité

blanche, en principe. La bien-aimée le sait et y croit, elle en souffre, c'est pourquoi elle supplie en toute logique :

> Ne prenez pas garde à mon teint basané
> C'est le soleil qui m'a brulée (v6).

Comme pour dire : « Filles de Jérusalem, je sais qu'en vertu de mon teint je suis dénuée de beauté. Je suis pourtant belle malgré mon teint noir. Je suis amoureuse folle de votre frère blanc qui me le rend bien ; souffrez-le et admettez-moi dans votre giron, etc. » Le ton de cet exergue est non seulement pathétique, mais tragique : un être humain exprime son infériorité devant d'autres êtres de race différente, cultivant ainsi un esprit spontané d'assujettissement. Les rôles sont donc distribués : « l'Occident est l'agent, (l'Africain) est un patient » (Said 129).

Le dernier élément qui nous parait d'importance capitale dans cet exergue est la variable spatiale : la bien-aimée ne s'adresse pas à des visiteurs ; elle s'adresse à des gens qui la reçoivent et qui doivent lui faire une place. Elle est donc en situation d'immigrée à Jérusalem, peut-être comme Beyala en France. Cela dit, le lecteur de *C'est le soleil qui m'a brulée* aborde le texte avec au moins trois attentes : un problème racial, un rapport conflictuel entre le Moi et l'autre, et un problème d'insertion sociale de l'immigré.

L'intrigue :

L'intrigue est l'enchainement des faits et d'actions qui forment la trame d'une pièce de théâtre ou d'un roman. Dans sa *Poétique*, Aristote considère l'intrigue (mythos) comme l'élément le plus important d'un récit ou d'un drame. L'intrigue doit avoir un début, un développement et une fin, et les événements qui la constituent doivent être liés entre eux selon une loi de causalité nécessaire ou probable (*Poétique* 23. 1459a). L'intrigue se développe en cinq étapes : l'exposition, le conflit, le climax, le relâchement et le dénouement. Ces cinq étapes s'enchaînent selon une syntaxe logique qui répond à la formule scolastique 'post hoc, ergo propter hoc', [après cela, donc, à cause de cela']. " The king died and the queen died ", nous dit E.M. Foster, "is a story" [le roi mourut et la reine mourut, est une histoire]. Par contre, « the king died and then the queen died of grief is a plot » [le roi mourut et puis la reine mourut de chagrin, est une intrigue- notre traduction]. La chaine de causalité qui lie les éléments d'une intrigue est donc marquée par la logique et la nécessité. L'intrigue répond-elle à une telle définition dans *C'est le soleil qui m'a brulée* ? On pourrait répondre à cette question en procédant à un découpage séquentiel du texte.

Séquence 1 : Rencontre entre Ateba et Jean Zepp.
Etant à la recherche d'une maison à louer, Jean Zepp, célibataire et dandy, se retrouve au hasard chez les Ateba où il trouve une maison vacante. La tante d'Ateba, Ada, l'accueille les bras ouverts. Cette première rencontre entre Ateba et Jean Zepp est immédiatement inscrite sous le signe du sexe : Jean Zepp fait la cour à Ateba sur-le-champ. Rencontre ratée qui s'achève sur une querelle sans fondement, et qui aurait pu être évitée (15-31).
Séquence 2 : Réunion familiale chez les Ateba.
Un membre de la famille veut faire circoncire son fils et organise à cet effet une fête (32-43). Rien à voir avec la séquence précédente où il est question de soupirs rejetés.
Séquence 3 : Scène de jalousie.
Ateba surprend Jean Zepp dans sa chambre en train de copuler avec une inconnue (39). Elle en éprouve du dégoût. On est déjà loin de la séquence 2.

Séquence 4 : Ateba dans la chambre de Zepp.

Malgré le dégoût qu'elle éprouve devant la scène érotique précédente, Ateba accepte de suivre Jean Zepp dans sa chambre. Il réitère ses avances qu'elle rejette avec indignation et sort de la chambre en pleurs (43-46).

Séquence 5 : Mort d'Ekassi.

« La petite chipeuse d'hommes » (47). Personnage introduit dans le récit à l'impromptu et dont la valeur narrative se révèle nulle par la suite. Ce personnage n'est pas attendu au moment où il est introduit, et son épisode s'avère être une simple greffe sans envergure (47-54).

Séquence 6 : Ateba écrit aux femmes.

En réalité, elle pense aux femmes plus qu'elle ne leur écrit, car nous n'avons même pas l'ébauche d'une lettre. Elle pense aussi aux hommes, mais aucune image précise, aucun portrait. Juste des généralités où l'homme est incriminé et la femme présupposée victime. (55-60).

Séquence 7 : Digression : un pan de vie d'Ekassi, prostituée (61-63)

Séquence 8 : Proposition d'amitié de Jean Zepp à Ateba.

Rendez-vous dans un café pour le jour suivant. Ateba se souvient qu'à 15 ans, elle a séduit et 'violé' le fils de sa voisine, un garçon de 10 ans.

Séquence 9 : Au rendez-vous avec Jean Zepp.

Ateba y arrive sans se faire prier, accepte un jus que lui offre Jean Zepp. Celui-ci lui fait de nouveau la cour. Elle y résiste. Conversation banale, promenade, séparation. La voyant rentrer tard et toute maquillée, Ada soumet sa nièce à un test de virginité. Elle est encore vierge (68-86).

Séquence 10 : A la recherche de la mère.

Ateba fouille dans les affaires de sa mère, Betty, disparue depuis dix ans, à la recherche d'un indice qui pourrait l'aider à la retrouver. Elle décide de rendre visite à Irène, son amie. Irène lui parlera de ses parties de jambes en l'air (89), mais elle fait demi-tour après avoir été rejointe par Jean Zepp (88-96).

Séquence 11 : Une nuit sans sommeil.

Ateba et Jean Zepp se retrouvent au hasard sous un lampadaire non loin de chez eux. Tous deux souffrent d'insomnie. Nouvelle proposition d'amitié. Proposition de nouveau rejetée (97-101).

Séquence 12 : Regard sur les autres.

Les autres : les hommes. Ateba prend sa résolution : « RETROUVER LA FEMME ET ANEANTIR LE CHAOS » [L'emphase est de l'auteur], mais rien n'est dit sur la démarche à suivre. Simple velléité 'féminitudiste'.

Séquence 13 : Rafle dans le quartier.

Ateba est violée par un soldat suite à une rafle dans son quartier. Elle rend visite à Irène, mais ne lui parle pas de cet incident (106-110).

Séquence 14 : Visite chez Irène.

« J'ai levé quelqu'un hier soir », lui annonce son amie (112). Puis elle lui livre les détails de ses ébats avec l'homme et conclut avec un soupçon de grossesse. Ateba se rappelle celles qu'interrompait sa mère (116). Querelle entre Ada et son amant, Yossep. Coups de poing (111-118).

Séquence 15 : Ateba, Ada, Betty.

Ateba contemple la vie tumultueuse des deux femmes et se demande si la vie ne peut se passer sans homme (119-122).

Séquence 16 : « …écrire aux femmes ».

Projet toujours en sursis, puisque nous n'en lisons même pas une ébauche. Et qu'a-t-elle à dire aux femmes ? Elle éprouve du dégoût pour les hommes, du moins le dit-elle à Jean Zepp.

Querelle sans fondement entre les deux personnages, car en dehors d'être un dragueur éphémère, Jean Zepp ne rend la vie insupportable à personne et n'est coupable d'aucun outrage (123-125). Sa seule faute dans ce roman est d'être un homme et de faire la cour à Ateba.

Séquence 17 : Rendez-vous dans un café avec Irène.

Un homme invite Ateba à danser. Refus. En anamnèse, Ateba se voit à 8 ans. Elle revit une scène de brutalité où Betty se fait rosser par son amant, qui se défoule par la suite sur elle alors qu'elle tente de venir au secours à sa mère. Irène arrive avec deux heures de retard et évoque comme excuse « un client de dernière minute ». Elle est enceinte, mais ne connait pas le père de l'enfant (126-129).

Séquence 18 : Ateba accompagne Irène chez elle.

Elle traine dans la rue et pense au moyen de faire avorter son amie. Elle se rappelle les purges que prenait sa mère autrefois, mais y renonce. Elle rentre tard, mais au lieu de se coucher, elle se change, sort sous la pluie et, comme en transe, s'offre un orgasme en plein air (130-132).

Séquence 19 : Funérailles d'Ekassi.

Ateba rencontre un homme au hasard à ces funérailles, danse avec lui et le suit chez lui, sans contrainte (137-146).

Séquence 20 : Chez son premier amant.

Ateba cède sans résistance à son premier amant, l'homme qu'il rencontre au hasard des funérailles d'Ekassi, avant de le forcer à lui faire un cunilinguisme (147-155).

Séquence 21 : A l'hôpital.

Ateba y retrouve Irène qui est venue se faire avorter. Elle éprouve pour son amie un sentiment lesbien. Irène se fait avorter (156-161).

Séquence 22 : Retour chez Irène.

Irène perd trop de sang suite à l'avortement. Elle rêve pourtant d'une vie avec un homme, une maison et des enfants, ce qu'Ateba trouve aberrant (163). Mort d'Irène. Ateba plonge dans l'hystérie et termine sa course dans un bar où elle se laisse draguer par un homme, négocie le prix de ses faveurs et suit l'homme chez lui (170). Elle couche avec lui contre cinq mille francs, puis assassine ce deuxième amant lorsqu'il tente de la retenir pour la nuit, contre son gré (173).

Le premier constat que nous pouvons faire après ce découpage séquentiel, c'est que toute dichotomie raciale est exclue du texte central. Le Moi et l'Autre, dans ce texte, appartiennent à la même race, ce qui exclut tout complexe d'infériorité (raciale), comme l'annonce l'exergue. Tous les personnages (actifs et passifs) de ce texte sont des Noirs. Autrement dit, l'une des attentes inscrites dans le titre et l'exergue (le 'Je' qui s'identifie comme noire face aux 'filles de Jérusalem', donc des Blanches, et qui implore leur indulgence sur son teint basané) est une attente frustrée. Une femme noire n'a pas besoin de dire à ses sœurs noires de ne pas prêter attention à son teint noir, car elles sont toutes noires.

Par ailleurs, la variable spatiale pose autant problème : il n'y a ni migration ni immigration, et l'intrigue évolue dans un espace trop clos pour une œuvre romanesque. Le roman est le genre par excellence où il y a éclatement de l'espace, parce qu'il y a aventure et pérégrination. Certes, l'éclatement de l'espace n'est pas une condition sine qua non du genre romanesque, mais tout au moins l'exergue annonce un individu dans un milieu étranger (une Noire à Jérusalem), ce qui n'est pas le cas dans le texte.

Sur le plan de l'intrigue proprement dit, nous constatons que seules les séquences 21 et 22 (les dernières) se suivent logiquement et nécessairement (Ateba plonge dans l'hystérie

suite à la mort de son amie). Par conséquent, toutes les autres séquences sont détachables et peuvent constituer chacune un récit autonome, en dehors des séquences 1, 3, 4, 8, 9 et 11 où Jean Zepp apparait avec la même hargne sexuelle chaque fois repoussée par Ateba. Pour le reste, Ateba contemple sa tante, Ada, empêtrée dans ses déboires avec ses nombreux amants, passés et présent. Elle souffre de l'absence de Betty, sa mère. Tout ce qui reste d'elle comme souvenir, c'est sa vie tumultueuse avec les hommes (sans détails précis) et les multiples avortements qu'elle a provoqués dans sa vie de prostituée.

Ekassi et Irène, ses amies, évoluent à la périphérie et n'influencent en rien la courbe de l'intrigue. Leur histoire intéresse Ateba par pure solidarité féminine, parce qu'elles sont femmes et parce qu'elles finissent mal. Ses deux amants, enfin, entrent dans le récit de façon inattendue, pas comme des urgences narratives. Ils arrivent de façon impromptue, circonstancielle, au gré des errances d'Ateba. Le lecteur n'aurait exprimé aucune déception ou surprise, fût-elle rentrée de ces errances sans amants, car son intention, à chaque sortie, n'était pas d'aller à la recherche des hommes. Mais il semble que ce roman est supposé proposer un scénario où la femme est victime de l'homme : il a donc fallu créer, faute de mieux, des figures mâles qui justifieraient les jérémiades d'Ateba. D'où l'introduction dans le récit des deux amants éphémères.

Enfin, à aucun moment de l'intrigue nous ne relevons le problème du complexe, qu'il soit d'infériorité ou de supériorité. Même si nous postulons que le Moi dans ce texte c'est la femme tout court, et que l'Autre, c'est l'homme (ce qui impliquerait un conflit de genres homme/femme), les mâles dans ce texte sont des personnages dont la « masculinité (est) pour ainsi dire en berne » (Manfoumbi 3). Abstraction faite d'Ada et de Betty, les femmes dans ce texte (Ekassi, Irène, Ateba) tiennent l'homme entre leurs mains comme de simples jouets, « tombé(s) dans un processus de dévirilisation » (Manfoumbi 7). On note d'ailleurs chez les personnages de Beyala une inversion de pouvoir (Manfoumbi 4), un changement de rôle et de paradigme où la femme occupe le centre et relègue l'homme à la marge. Il suffit pour s'en convaincre, de saisir la portée de la scène où Ateba oblige son premier amant à lui faire l'amour de la langue, accroupi entre ses cuisses et elle debout, ou la scène finale où elle assassine son deuxième amant avec une aisance déconcertante. « L'instrumentalisation de l'homme par la femme, soutient Simone de Beauvoir, est un exercice d'une fonction virile » (citée par Manfoumbi 6).

Ateba résiste jusqu'à la fin à Jean Zepp dont l'unique fonction dans ce texte semble être de lui faire la cour ; puis elle suit volontiers chez eux deux amants éphémères dont elle tuera le deuxième. Autrement dit, ce problème de complexe contenu dans le titre ou l'exergue est, une fois de plus, une fausse alerte.

3- Les personnages :

Qui fait quoi dans ce roman de Beyala ? L'exergue annonce une femme noire à Jérusalem, implorant l'indulgence des filles blanches. Pourquoi ? Elle est amoureuse d'un Blanc, et a peur d'être rejetée par ses 'belles-sœurs' blanches en fonction de son teint noir. Elle a donc besoin de leur reconnaissance, elle a besoin d'être acceptée, légitimée par celles (ou ceux) à qui appartient la terre où elle se trouve : Jérusalem, terre étrangère, terre des Blancs. Mais le texte central est construit autour des personnages de même race, tous des noirs africains, évoluant dans leur pays.

Au centre de ce récit que nous trouvons sans titre, il y a Ateba Léocadie, 19 ans. Elle résiste jusqu'à la fin à Jean Zepp qu'elle trouve exécrable comme tous les autres hommes (qu'elle n'a pas connus, mais que les autres femmes qu'elle connait ont connus), et tire les ficelles de deux aventures éphémères avec deux amants circonstanciels à qui elle s'offre sans contrainte, rendant ainsi aporétique son propre discours sur les hommes. Il y a ensuite Jean Zepp, simple élément postiche dans un paradigme pratiquement vide (si l'intrigue tourne autour du couple Moi/l'Autre, alors il n'y a pas vraiment conflit, pour la simple raison qu'il n'y a pas crise : Ateba se retrouve seule sur un ring où il n'y a pas d'adversaire), et dont l'incidence narrative est nulle sur le récit. Rien ne se fait, rien n'arrive par et à cause de lui. Un homme plus jeune ou plus vieux aurait tout autant joué son rôle. Elément accessoire s'il en est, il apparait dans six séquences pour répéter les mêmes velléités sexuelles avant de disparaitre derrière la scène.

Il y aussi Ada, la tante aux multiples amants. L'essentiel de sa vie tumultueuse nous est filtré en différé, comme un simple élément qu'Ateba joint au dossier qu'elle monte contre les hommes. Son seul souci est de s'assurer de la virginité d'Ateba. Peine perdue. Pour le reste, sa présence dans le récit est purement décorative. Son 'mari', Yossep, est davantage effacé. A peine l'entend-on parler une fois (quand Ada impose à Ateba un test de virginité).
Quant à Betty, personnage emblématique qui oriente la vie d'Ateba, elle est absente du récit ; il ne nous reste d'elle que les souvenirs que sa fille évoque pour nous livrer son portrait robot. Ekassi et Irène, par ailleurs, entrent dans le récit comme des boursoufflures, non parce que leurs séquences constituent des impératifs narratifs, mais parce qu'elles vivent dans l'entourage d'Ateba et qu'elles sont ses amies. Aucune d'elles n'est présentée comme une victime de l'homme. Les deux amants d'Ateba, du reste, se greffent sur le récit au hasard, car elle les rencontre au hasard. Leur intrusion dans le récit ne modifie ni la trajectoire de l'intrigue, ni sa protée, en dehors de faire d'Ateba une meurtrière qui, une fois le crime commis, se retire sans inquiétude, comme dans un Etat de non-droit.

Neuf personnages, au total. En dehors de Betty dont les déboires informent l'attitude d'Ateba devant les hommes (laquelle attitude est mise en berne à la rencontre de ses deux amants) et de Ada qui la surveille de façon morbide, les autres personnages entrent et sortent de la scène sans nécessité narrative, car leurs séquences ne modifient en rien l'intrigue : elles en constituent juste des boursoufflures. Le récit central tiendrait sur quelques pages seulement sans ces boursoufflures.

Ateba ne connait ni crise ni conflit avec les hommes, qui puisse justifier le conflit que postule 'le Moi et l'Autre' de l'exergue. Certes, les hommes dans ce texte se présentent comme des prédateurs, mais ce sont des prédateurs passifs.

Comment le titre de ce roman justifie-t-il donc le texte ? Comment est-ce que le texte répond aux attentes du titre ? Le titre suggère le Moi en position de subalterne devant l'Autre qui a le pouvoir de le définir. Ce rapport de force est absent du texte central, qui nous propose plutôt un nouveau paradigme où la femme beyalienne instrumentalise l'homme, tire les ficelles de leurs (nouvelles) relations et occupe seule le devant de la scène, avec de surcroit la mort de l'homme. Comme le soutient Ini Uko :

> …women are determined to crush every form of obstacle on their way
> from the margins where they are mere pawns for male pleasures…
> undoubtedly, African women have moved from the margins to the center
> where they can make their own decisions (90-2).

> [Les femmes sont déterminées à briser toute forme d'obstacle sur leur
> chemin de la périphérie où elles sont de simples marionnettes pour le plaisir
> de l'homme…Sans conteste, les femmes africaines ont évolué de la
> périphérie au centre où elles peuvent désormais prendre leurs propres
> décisions- Notre traduction]

Si tel est le cas dans *C'est le soleil qui m'a brulée* de Calyxthe Beyala, alors le texte ne remplit pas les attentes du titre, et il se pose un problème de corrélation entre le titre et le texte. En fait, de quelle vigne s'agirait-il dans le texte, comme le postule l'exergue ? Si l'on s'en tient à l'exergue, Ateba doit ou devrait garder sa (propre) vigne, après avoir passé son temps à garder celles de ses frères. Si la vigne est une métaphore du corps (ou du sexe ?), alors Ateba, après avoir gardé son corps contre la souillure des hommes, se laisse déflorer avec plaisir à la fin, et sans contrainte. S'il s'agit de sa 'féminitude' (il semble que le mot est de Beyala), alors il y a encore aporie : après avoir trouvé les hommes exécrables (elle le dit à Jean Zepp), Ateba tombe dans les mêmes travers que ses amies prostituées, Ekassi et Irène, qui meurent sans doutent pour avoir mal 'géré' leur corps.

Conclusion :

La femme noire du titre de ce roman annonce une immigrée à Jérusalem, peut-être comme Calyxthe Beyala en France. Le complexe dont elle souffre, et sa situation 'irrégulière' (comme une sans-papiers' ?) à Jérusalem, ou dans le monde explique son comportement vis-à-vis de l'Autre : ces idées lui « donnent une mentalité, une généalogie et une atmosphère » (Said 57). Elle se sait dépravée, puérile, différente devant l'Européenne qu'elle considère (malheureusement) comme une référence. Pour elle, l'Autre est « raisonnable, vertueux, mur, 'normal' » (Said 55). Dans tous les cas, l'Autre tient le centre et elle occupe la marge. L'on comprend qu'elle soit encline à la flatterie servile.

Ayant reconnu à l'Autre le droit de nommer et de classifier, elle accepte et entérine l'échelle des valeurs que lui impose le maitre du discours. Le ton suppliant de l'exergue ne peut traduire qu'une certitude : le 'Je' parlant entérine « a cultural discourse relegating and confining the non-European to a secondary racial, cultural, ontological status » (Said. Culture 59) [Un discours culturel reléguant et confinant le non-Européen à un statu racial, culturel et ontologique secondaire- Notre trad.]. Voilà du reste ce que nous inspire l'exergue de ce roman de Beyala.

Le texte central propose cependant autre chose qui tranche avec les attentes de l'exergue. Le Moi et l'Autre évoluent dans leur milieu naturel. L'Autre de l'exergue (le Blanc) est absent du récit central, laissant place à des êtres de même race. En considérant même que la dichotomie Noir/Blanc de l'exergue est assimilable au couple femme/homme du texte, il reste encore que les paradigmes ne sont pas les mêmes : l'exergue présente la femme noire en position minoritaire, de faiblesse ou de subalterne ; le texte central la présente en position de révoltée et de bourreau (scène finale), ce qui pose un problème de corrélation entre le titre et le texte de ce roman de Calyxthe Beyala.

Références

-Aristote. *Poétique* 23.1459a.

-Beauvoir, Simone de, citée par Achile-Fortuné Manfoumbi Mve. « Utopies féminines et dévirilisation de l'homme dans *Seul le diable le savait* de Calyxthe Beyala et *Trois femmes puissantes* de Marie Ndiaye ». *Science Sud*, 2010 (Lien). Page consultée le 25 Juin 2014.

-Beyala, Calyxthe. *C'est le soleil qui m'a brulée*. Paris : Stock, 1987.

-Collignon, Liliane. « choisir le titre d'une œuvre ». www.ipagination.com/textes-a-lire/a... 29 dec. 2012. Consulte le 14 Juin 2014.

-Derrida, Jacques. *Du droit a la philosophie*. Paris : Galilée, 1990.

-Fanon, Frantz. *Peau noire, masques blancs*. Paris: Seuil, 1954.

-Foster, E.M. *Aspects of the novel*. Gradesaver. "Biography of E.M. Forster/List of works, Study Guides and Essays". Gradesaver, 5 May 2014.

-Ini Uko, Iniobong. "Transcending the margins: New directions in women writing". *New Directions in African Literature*, No25. Ibadan: Heinemann, pp. 82-93.

-'Le Cantique des Cantiques' de Salomon.

-Lopès, Henri. « Le Congo intérieur de Tchicaya U'Tam'si ». *Cultures Sud, Tchicaya passion*. No   171, Octobre 2008, pp. 13-16.

-Manfoumbi, Mve, A. « Utopies féminines et dévirilisation de l'homme dans Seul le diable le savait de Calyxthe Beyala et Trois femmes puissantes de Marie Ndiaye ». Science Sud, 2010, pp.

-Prince, Petit. « Le titre d'un texte-Les âmes tendres ». www .les-ames-tendres.com/textes-cl. 2005.

-Ojo-Ade, Femi. *Les paradis terrestres*. Ibadan: Dokun Pub. House, 2003.
-Said, Edouard. *L'Orientalisme*. Traduction en français de Catherine Malamoud. Paris: Seuil, 1980.

---*Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Knoff, 1993.

-Todorov, Tzvetan. Préface. *L'Orientalisme*. Traduction en français de Catherine Malamoud. Paris: Seuil, 1980, pp. 7-10.

Sexual Rhetoric of the Syrian Arab Spring

Musa Al-Halool
Taif University, Saudi Arabia

Abstract

The Syrian version of the Arab Spring is arguably unique in that it has generated right from the start a concurrent sexual rhetoric not so conspicuously noted in the Tunisian, Egyptian, Libyan, or Yemeni revolutions. This idiosyncrasy has to do with a number of reasons, the most seminal of which is the multi-sectarian mosaic of Syrian society. With Syria lacking attractive oil reserves, the international community has been scandalously divided between a huffing-and-puffing anti-Assad West and a veto-toting, pro-Assad Russian-Chinese alliance. This deep division over the Assad regime allowed the Syrian crisis to be so drawn-out that the good old inter-sectarian mudslinging, disguised in sexual terms, began to resurface as a noticeable phenomenon. Because this phenomenon is not peculiar to the current conflict in Syria, this study starts by giving a historical overview of the sexualization of conflicts both among Arabs and internationally. Then the paper moves to examine samples of the mutual sexual defamation by the Syrian regime and the opposition in order to shed light on a neglected byproduct/aspect of the still raging war in and about Syria.

Key words: Arabic media discourse, Addounia TV, inter-sectarian defamation, sex Jihad, Sexual rhetoric, Syrian revolution.

"Excuse my saying so, but we [Arabs] are *castrated* peoples, so why do
you blame us if we revolt [against dictatorships]?"

Kaouthar Bachraoui

The use of sexual rhetoric to discredit opponents, tarnish their morality, trivialize their beliefs, or justify dispossessing, brutalizing, or revolting against them is a universal human *déjà vu*. Since the beginning of recorded human history, sexual rhetoric has been such an effective demagogic weapon in the employ of military, political and even religious contestants that their conflicts have themselves become sexualized. This sexualization is manifest in ancient mythology and representational art, modern literary expressions, recent graphic fabrications, and, closer home, in current Arabic media discourse on the Arab Spring, particularly in Syria.

Though the ubiquity of sex motifs in the representations of conflicts is too well-known to require documentation, a few representative examples will suffice here. In ancient Greek mythology, Kronus, the leader and the youngest of the first generation of Titans, is said to have deposed and *castrated* Uranus, his own father. A Greek vase commemorating the defeat of the Persians in the Battle of the Eurymedon (469 or 466 BC) shows a victorious Greek with an erect penis in hand pursuing a defeated Persian[1] (in the same vein twenty-five centuries later, a Photoshopped image, widely circulated on the internet, featured Osama Bin Laden sodomizing then US President George W. Bush following the September 11 terrorist attacks). In Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Claudius's usurpation of his brother's throne is coupled with the usurpation/ rape of the queen as well. After the fall of Tunisian and Egyptian dictators in early 2011, Tunisian media personality Kaouthar Bachraoui, though a conservative woman, said to her hostess in an interview on a Lebanese satellite channel, "Excuse my saying so, but we [Arabs] are *castrated* peoples, so why do you blame us if we revolt [against dictatorships]?"[2] In light of this latter summation, is it any wonder then that Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi, who presumably 'castrated' his own people for 41 years, was sodomized with a sharp instrument as soon as he was captured by some Libyan rebels on 20 October 2011?[3]

Now because military occupations have always been coupled with raping the occupied country's women (and sometimes men) or taking them as booty prizes, such encounters have naturally been represented in sexual terms (Goldstein, 2003, 332ff); hence the feminization of occupied countries and the ubiquity of the female figure as a key instigator of action and reaction. English readers are better acquainted with Sir Walter Raleigh's feminization of El Dorado which, despite the presence of the Spanish *conquistadores,* still "hath her Maydenhead" (Raleigh, 1966: 96). No wonder, then, that collaborating with the occupying forces has invariably been termed not just as an act of high treason but also as an act of 'sleeping with the enemy.' And if the natives fail to repel the occupiers, it is because they are either 'impotent' or 'emasculated.'

St. John of Damascus (675-749 AD) is said to have been the first to spread the rumor among his Byzantine co-religionists that Muslim Arabs, otherwise his compatriots, are insatiable sex maniacs. By appealing to their sense of sexual honor, this cunning ruse was doubtless meant to rouse the slumbering Byzantines in order to prevent the 'lustful' Muslim Arabs from 'raping' both the land and women of the Holy Eastern Empire. Nor should we forget that the Arab-Islamic conquest of Andalusia in 711 AD is widely believed to have been caused by an *au secours* from *La Cava Rumia* (Mozoarab for 'the Christian slut'). Daughter of

Count Julian, Governor of Ceuta, this 'Christian slut' is said to have been raped by Roderic, the last Visigoth King of Hispania, while she was studying at his court in Toledo. Enraged Count Julian appealed to Musa Ibn Nusayr, the Umayyad Governor of North Africa, for help. And the latter gladly obliged—but certainly not to avenge the defiled honor of a *cava rumia* but to wrench the whole of Hispania from Christendom. The Arab conquest of Amorium (838 AD) is also attributed to a similar *au secours* by a 'noble' Arab woman in the lands of Byzantium who, having been attacked by a Byzantine marauder, cried, as Arab legend has it, "Help, oh, Mu'tassim!" the latter being the Abbasid caliph in Baghdad. After the establishment of Israel and its sweeping victory over its Arab neighbors in 1948, the great Syrian multilingual poet-diplomat Omar Abu Risha (1910-1990) shamed the Arab regimes for failing to respond in the same chivalrous manner of Mu'tassim:

> Perchance a "Help, oh, Mu'tassim!" was loudly shouted by many a girl
> orphaned;
> Though clearly heard, their cries with the chivalry of Mu'tassim went
> unanswered.

In the same year, an Egyptian poet named Ali Mahmoud Taha (1902-1949) appeals to every able-bodied Arab male on behalf of all Palestinian sisters after the 'rape' of Palestine by the Zionists:

> Brothers, the oppressors have transgressed beyond all limits: now is the
> time for jihad, now is the time for self-sacrifice!
> Shall we leave them to divest [literally, 'rape'] Arabism of the glory and
> sovereignty of its forefathers?
> Brothers, in Jerusalem we have many a sister for whom the oppressors
> have unsheathed their knives![5]

Having said that, it must be noted that the sexualization of conflicts generally takes two forms, depending on the type of conflict: when there is an external military threat, the weak play on such sexual anxieties as rape and emasculation; but if the conflict is ideological, the contestants resort to sexual vilification of each other.

By all appearances, little has changed since the first human contestants resorted to their most instinctive weapon of defense and offense: sexual rhetoric and sex itself. Though not lone voices, two particular poems widely circulated on Arabic websites demonstrate that such a weapon has not yet lost its tactical leverage. Despite their scandalous lack of any aesthetic merit and outmoded declamatory tone, the poems are seminal examples of the current sexual warfare in and about Syria. The first is a polemical poem entitled, "Do Not Cause Syria to Fall, You Cows!" by the Palestinian poet and academic Ahmad Hassan Al-Maqdisi. In this poem, Al-Maqdisi harangues the heads of the Arab Gulf states for their support of the Syrian rebels, long before this support materialized into more than public media sympathy—and prayers, especially during Friday congregations, for Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad to fall. In the last line in the excerpt below, the atavistic poet expresses his arcane sexual fears if Syria (reduced here to the figurehead of its regime) falls:

> Do not kill Syria; for history has taught us that without Syria Arabs are
> soundly defeated.
> The Arab nation won't perish without Qatar, but without Syria's spear it
> will be broken.

> We won't live like orphans without Hamad, nor will we perish if Qatar is
>   wiped out.
> But without Syria's sword, we will be like a slave girl sodomized by Turks,
>   Romans, and Tartars.

The second example is taken from a riposte to Al-Maqdisi's poem by the Tunisian poet Muhammad Najeeb Belhaj-Hussain:

> Only cows, not Syria, shall fall; so shall the dreams of those who trade in
>   Syria.
> Filthy is the tyrant who spreads violence in it; and filthy is he who justifies
>   his tyranny.
> The Ba'ath party is nothing but a whorehouse around which hover hordes
>   of debauchery.

As this latter poem is in the form of the classical Arabic tradition of *naqa'idh* or riposting, Belhaj-Hussain, particularly in the last line, argues along the same demagogic, atavistic lines evident in Al-Maqdisi's poem. To counter Al-Maqdisi's sexual anxieties about the future of Syria without Assad, Belhaj-Hussain slaps him with a reminder to heed the no less shameful present of Syria under the Ba'ath party. Other typical effusions, both pro and con, followed suit. But such effusions need not detain us any further.[6]

Long before these poetic outbursts, a rumor of an explosive sexual charge hit the airwaves and cyberspace as soon as protests broke out in the Syrian city of Deraa in mid-March 2011. In a meeting with the fathers of the schoolboys arrested for scribbling anti-regime slogans on the walls of their school, Colonel Atef Najeeb, Chief of Political Security in Deraa, and a cousin of President Bashar Al-Assad, is reported to have told those fathers, "Forget about those brats. Go f… your wives and give birth to others. And if you can't do it, we can f… them instead." Propagators of this hard-to-verify rumor claim this was the reason demonstrators in Deraa shouted, "We'd rather be dead than humiliated!" True or not, the rumor is credible for three reasons: first, for well over half a century now Syrian security forces have always mistreated and humiliated their own citizens; second, the well-connected henchman enjoys such unbridled powers that it is hard to believe he has not insulted the fathers of those 'treasonous brats;' third, the rumor itself is consonant with the public perception of any insult or external threat as a castration threat as illustrated by both Freud's analysis of Little Hans's problem and Franz Fanon's argument in *Black Skin, White Masks*.

And sure enough, the castration anxiety was soon literally materialized in the brutal murder of Hamza Al-Khateeb, a 13-year old boy from Deraa province. After participating in an anti-regime demonstration, the boy was arrested at a checkpoint on April 29, 2011, tortured to death, and then his corpse was delivered in a body bag to his family the following month—with his penis amputated and stuck in his mouth! The profound significance of this amputation is worthy of the scholarly attention of psychoanalysts of all stripes. The absurd justification given by pro-Assad apologists (dubbed by the opposition as *minhibakjiyya*—'We-love-you-ists') is that the boy was arrested on his way to a military officers' compound to rape their women! I do not think any of these apologists has read Fanon's mention of the Algerian man who became impotent soon after learning of the rape of his wife by French soldiers during the Algerian war of independence (Fanon, 1968, 181). But those who amputated Hamza's penis, or justified it, were responding to a profound unconscious call urging them to castrate this little transgressor and broadcast the brutality as widely as possible—to be a

lesson to potential castrators who are older and more powerful than this negligible 'pecker.' Psychoanalysis aside, the amputation is of a piece with two other incidents of no less symbolic import: the gruesome ripping out by the Syrian regime of the throat of singer Ibrahim Qashoush on 3 July 2011 and the breaking of the hands of world renowned cartoonist Ali Ferzat on 25 August 2011, the one for being 'the nightingale of the Syrian revolution,'[8] the other for being its staunch cartoonist.

Sexual vilification of one's adversaries is not only a rabble-rousing tactic, but also a profoundly resonating indicator of illogic and irrationality. A case in point is the response of Joseph Abu Fadhel, a Lebanese Christian Assad apologist, to the Syrian opposition figure Muhyeddine Ladhqani on Al-Jazeera's January 31, 2012 episode of "The Opposite Direction," a weekly current events debate program modeled on CNN's now defunct "Crossfire." Whenever unable to respond to Ladhqani's detailed and sophisticated arguments, Abu Fadhel would yell at his opponent, *inti wahad ibn karfoukha* ('You are one helluva whoreson'). Abu Fadhel was apparently trying to hide his vulgar expletive by using an idiosyncratic Lebanese expression (*karfoukha* = whore) unknown to people outside the Lebanese speech community (the debate host, Dr. Faisal Al-Kasim, is also Syrian). But in the last two minutes of the program, the bulky and tall Abu Fadhel dropped his mask of verbal dissimulation, rose from his seat like a towering giant, walked over to Ladhqani, and slapped him on the face, all the while heaping sexual profanities on the absent sister and mother of his shorter and smaller opponent—in plain Arabic, this time.[9]

Another regrettable fallout of the Arab Spring in Syria is the emergence of a neo-sectarianism. This neo-sectarian discourse, of which both pro- and anti-regime factions are varyingly guilty, has been conscripted in the frantic effort to mobilize the Arab populace at large against this or that camp. The crudest form of this neo-sectarianism was attacking Assad or defending him for no other reason than being an Alawite. And with the emergence of this neo-sectarianism there also surfaced the good old politics of sexual defamation. In the absence of restrictions on the publication of comments on the Yahoo! Maktoob Arabic news service, cyberspace provided open platforms for neo-sectarians to vent out their once pent-up sectarian sentiments. While ignoring the fact that neither all Alawites endorsed Assad's policies blindly nor were all Sunnis opposed to him, such comments were rife with indiscriminate anti-Alawite slurs preposterously describing them as "children of concubinage" or "offspring of adultery" and the like. Other countless anti-Assad comments dubbed him as Bashar the Sheep, the Ostrich, the Lame Duck, or the Giraffe (the latter due to his tall neck and stature) instead of Bashar Al-Assad ('Bashar the Lion'). A favorite slogan tirelessly repeated by protesters is this, "With us, he is a lion; with Israel he is an ostrich." Such epithets were meant not only to dehumanize but also to sissify Assad—as sheep, ostriches, and ducks are symbols of putative feminine cowardice in popular Arab culture.[10] Other web comments dwelled on his so-called 'effeminate' lisp, and in Deir Ezzoar, in particular, this lisp became the theme of a favorite irreverent slogan (untranslatable into English) in some anti-Assad demonstrations.

The famous Saudi cleric Muhammad Al-Oraifi, too, jumped on the anti-Alawite bandwagon. In one of his Friday sermons, he reiterated all the anti-Assad charges of rape (including homosexual rape) and penis-amputation of detainees circulated in the Arabic media. Then, Al-Oraifi added his own personal spice, "Bashar Al-Assad himself is from a malignant sperm-drop."[11] By strict Islamic standards, the cleric committed a sin of hubris by arrogating to himself two exclusive markers of divine omniscience: knowing the unseen and knowing what is in wombs. Bordering on casuistry, this *faux pas* is not a mere dead Arabic

metaphor but an intimation of deep-seated sectarianism in the collective unconscious of the mainstream Sunni establishment.

Likewise, a Syrian opposition website published a fabricated news article claiming that First Lady Asma Al-Assad was cheating on her husband with a Lebanese businessman.[1]

A stock charge by the opposition against those who did not revolt against the Syrian regime is lack of virility and chivalry. Hence the shaming slogan repeatedly chanted by protesters, "He who does not take part [in protests] is without virile honor."[12] During the first year of protests, the rebels of Homs, the powerhouse of anti-Assad protests, nicknamed the relatively calm province of Raqqa as the province of Abu Badr, the latter being a notorious nervous Nelly in the machoist hit Syrian TV series, *Bab Al-Hara* ('The Quarter's Gate'). Likewise, during visits to Deir Ezzoar in the summer of 2011, some of my friends from Raqqa, a small town on the northern bank of the Euphrates, (now the capital of ISIS), were uniformly and provocatively asked, "We hope you have plenty of carrots in Raqqa?" The implication is that natives of Raqqa are *de facto* rabbits not real machos like the anti-Assad protesters. This slur was ironically reversed when Raqqa fell in the hands of the rebels on 4 March 2013, and its natives were immediately promoted from "rabbits" to "lions of the Euphrates."

Likewise, because Aleppo generally steered away from protests during the first year of the crisis, despite desperate pleas by the opposition to the country's second largest city to join, frustrated protesters in Kafrnobbol, a flashpoint of protests in the province of Idlib, flashed a placard with a nifty pun scribbled on it, "Even Viagra won't get Aleppo up!"[13] When it was first rumored in mid-May 2012 that General Assef Shawkat, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Syrian army, and the husband of Assad's only sister Bushra, was killed, protestors in Deir Ezzoar carried placards saying, "Don't be sad, Bushra: we are all Assef!" And when he was finally killed in July 2012, protestors across the country carried placards saying, "Bushra for all!" This clever commercial-like statement not only promises the now widowed Bushra to horny protestors, but also commodifies her by playing on the meaning of her name (good tidings).

By the same token, Addounia satellite channel, owned by Rami Makhlouf, Syria's most formidable business shark and a cousin of Bashar Al-Assad, consistently defamed Syrian rebels since the outbreak of protests on 15 March 2011. After a period of denying the protests even existed, Addounia started labeling the rebels as foreign-backed conspirators, saboteurs, and terrorist armed gangs with a blatant sectarian agenda, despite the fact that the crisis unquestionably cut across the country's sectarian fault lines. On the surface of things, Addounia did not adopt an open sectarian agenda, but its consistent reduction of a complex national crisis (and a tragedy later on) to a mere sectarian conspiracy makes the channel itself guilty of reverse sectarianism. An atavistic aspect of this reverse sectarianism is the channel's sexual defamation campaign against dissidents of all sectarian hues. In contrast to its extremely scanty coverage of the crisis (despite the too many assumed local and global conspirators), sexual defamation became a paradoxically prominent gimmick. To rob the protestors of any political legitimacy and moral credibility, the channel's standby coterie of pro-regime ninnyhammers regurgitated unverifiable rape charges against the erstwhile peaceful demonstrators. At the same time, the channel turned a blind eye and a deaf ear to the numerous charges of rape committed by pro-regime paramilitary hooligans (known as

---

[1] (http://shamlife.com/?page=show_det&select_page=31&id=32821 Retrieved April 20, 2013).

shabbeeha), which charges were independently verified and documented by Amnesty International (Amnesty International, 2012, 24).

And though Addounia initially denied reports of Syrian refugees flocking to neighboring Turkey, it soon began spreading claims that 400 Syrian women were raped by Turkish gangs and, more preposterously, that 250 of these rape victims have already given birth—all in a span too short even for frisky cats to conceive and deliver! The net result of this outrageous lie? These refugee women are now *de facto* whores—thanks either to the Turkish government which sold gullible Syrians a bill of goods in order to decoy them into its territory for the sole purpose of tainting their pristine Syrian honor, or thanks to their myopic male guardians, now virtual cuckolds, who did not see through all these wicked designs. In other words, these refugees have committed the ultimate political anathema: sleeping with the enemy! Of course, none of the channel's parliament of parrots bothered to ask himself, *What drove these refugees to the arms of the enemy*?

When in mid-August 2011 Arab Gulf states began mounting pressure on Assad to end his crackdown on peaceful demonstrators, Shareef Shehadah, a pro-Assad loyalist, said on Addonia that Sheikh Hamad, then emir of Qatar, outdid even his American masters in viciousness because he did not stop Al-Jazeera from covering (and thus inciting more) protests in Syria. To deliver his *coup de maître*, he capped his diatribe thusly, "If the Emir of Qatar does not know who his real father is, then let him ask his mother about that; because had he been the real son of his [supposed] father, he wouldn't have done this to Syrians." The message here is unmistakable: only a bastard would support the rebels who are already nothing but gullible cuckolds!

At the same time, another pro-regime apologist named Ali Al-Shu'aibi (né Ali Shawwakh Ishaq) sent a live challenge on Addounia's airwaves to the then foreign minister of Qatar to be a "man" (what an oxymoron!) and admit, "Yes, I was once an afflicted homosexual and I used to be sodomized!" This same apologist then flashed a USB drive across the screen—but he suddenly and solemnly paused with a significant headshake of disgust, a scowl of affected religiosity, and a modicum of self-righteous effusions. Theatrics over, he swore that he has a 3-minute, 20-second video clip on his USB drive (note the precision) that shows how a certain Gulf ruler used to bring a CIA agent to his palace to copulate with his wife before his own very eyes! To his credit, though, the self-styled moralist did not deign to name the cuckold-turned-head of state, nor did he show the clip itself—for that would be "some stooping," and a la Duke of Ferrara, he chooses "Never to stoop!" Aha, so it is not just rapists and bastards who support the rebels but cuckolds as well.[15] Birds of a feather conspire together.

While the Arab League summit was being held in Baghdad on 28 March 2012, to which Syria was not invited—a first in the history of the League—Addounia continued its frenzied defamation campaign, particularly against Qatar and Saudi Arabia for "conspiring against the national and territorial integrity of Syria" (a recycled cliché from the late 1970's) and "for having Syrian blood on their hands" (a patent-worthy invention). A recurrent motif in Addounia's ethos has been its tireless campaign to unmask "the neo-Qaradhawis," a coined reference to followers of Yousef Al-Qaradhawi, President of the World Congress of Muslim Scholars, and a staunch critic of the Syrian regime. To prove that Qaradhawi is not morally qualified to speak on behalf of Syrians seeking freedom and dignity, Addounia unearthed a trove of unspeakable moral filth on the Egyptian-born Qatari cleric. In the 1960's, Qaradhawi "issued a fatwa," crooned one of Addounia's young beautiful newscasters with a straight face,

"in which he sanctioned a man to copulate with his own daughter—if necessary, that is!" See who else supports the rebels? Incest advocates!

Sex Jihad!

The most outrageous of all fabrications by the regime and its apologists is sex Jihad. The fabrication was first publicized by pro-Assad Lebanese media in the summer of 2013. It claims that the Saudi cleric Muhammad Al-Oraifi has issued a fatwa urging Muslim girls to go to Syria in order to provide sexual relief to Jihadists fighting Assad forces. Al-Oraifi naturally denied having ever sanctioned such an adulterous practice. The Free Syrian Army and Jabhat Al-Nusra, Assad's strongest opponents, likewise denied such claims.

In late September 2013, one month after the Assad regime was internationally condemned for having used chemical weapons against civilians in rebel-held rural Damascus on 21 August 2013, the Syrian TV aired an interview with a Syrian teenage girl named Rawan Qaddah who "confessed" that her own father had coerced her to practice sex Jihad with several foreign fighters, and that she finally resorted to government forces in order to save her honor! The irony is that the Syrian TV aired the interview with the girl without hiding her face—thus further humiliating her.

It soon turned out that the girl was kidnapped more than 10 months earlier by regime forces in revenge for her father's role in the Free Syrian Army. By contrast, the Syrian TV aired a video of a young woman (with a hidden face) who claimed that she was kidnapped and gang-raped by terrorists. And in a few weeks, the original video tape was leaked by an insider: the alleged rape victim turned out to be a collaborator who was asking her prompters what to say on camera about her alleged attackers.[2]

In both cases, the regime's goal is obvious: humiliating the families of rebels or accusing the rebels themselves of indulging in the most unspeakable filth. It should be noted, however, that this kind of mudslinging by media commentators on both sides of the Syrian divide is neither without a historical precedent nor does it operate in a cultural vacuum. As sectarian conflict is essentially an ideological one, Islamic sects have since inception put sexual defamation against each other to good use. Such defamation, especially among the uneducated masses, continues unabated even today, alas. The Shiites, for instance, continue to recycle the long discredited charge of adultery against Aysha, the Prophet's favorite wife. That Omar Ibn Al-Khattab (585-644 AD), the second Rightly-Guided caliph, suffered from a deep rectal itch that only men's hot semen could cure, and that Sunnis see nothing wrong or shameful about homosexuality or anal sex with one's wife are still popular Shiite beliefs. Sunnis, on the other hand, counter that it is the Shiites and Alawites who engage in such shameful practices, and that they are nothing but a horde of consenting cuckolds who have no sense of protective jealousy over their womenfolk. The greatest irony of all is this: both Shiites and Sunnis are united in their belief that the Ismaelis, an offshoot of Shiism, hold an annual adult meeting where men offer verbal homage to the genitalia of a publicly displayed naked beautiful girl of their sect, after which lights are turned off and every man worthy of his name grabs the nearest woman within reach—even if she's his mother, sister, or aunt—and both take part in a communal orgy; the Shiites, the Sunnis, and the Ismaelis again believe that this annual orgy is also part of the religious culture of the Murshidis, a twentieth-century offshoot of the Alawite sect; and finally, all the four above-mentioned sects plus Christians

---

[2] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uL1bio5ZRwk

believe that the Druze tolerate premarital sex between boys and girls provided that it happen naturally, i. e., a boy and a girl are alone in a village house and the door is accidentally shut, say, by a gust of wind!

All these privately, but widely, circulated platitudes are totally unfounded. If there are any shameful sexual practices among some followers of this or that sect, they are certainly to be ascribed to individual rather than blanket sectarian reasons. Such sexual politics is basically a brazen act of twofold propaganda: an implicit act of self-propaganda that typifies the propagators as the unrivaled beacons of purity, decency, and virtue; and an explicit counter propaganda that casts rival sects as the unparalleled paragons of shameful sexual promiscuity and moral decadence. Furthermore, these repugnant and discreditable claims are part of the sometimes unpronounced, sometimes blatant cultural inter-sectarian war. These claims are also very effective demagogic ploys used to discredit—by verbal craft not rational argument—the religious beliefs of other sects by instinctively appealing to the self-righteousness of the naïve and gullible.

Likewise, Addounia's self-righteous discourse blatantly consigns the channel's owners, benefactors, and unswervingly devoted congregation of viewers to the camp of virtue, and everybody else to the camp of vice. Its goals are the same goals of historic warriors engaged in inter-sectarian mudslinging. When rebels are accused of being hired agents remotely controlled by such countries and bodies as Turkey, GCC states, and strangely even Al-Qaeda, the US, Israel, and France, such a claim requires substantiation. In the embarrassing absence of such evidence, reductive rhetoric is mobilized to silence skeptics and other dogs barking at the wrong tree. By portraying the rebels and their Turkish and GCC 'decoyers' as cuckolds, rapists, and afflicted homosexuals respectively, the channel thus hopes to manipulate the minds of its unsuspecting viewers who took this jingoistic mouthpiece on trust as their own vicarious thought machine. By demagogically appealing to its viewers' sense of exceptional uprightness in a world permeated by wicked conspiracies and moral filth, the channel hopes to blow up the presumably disgraceful past of the regime's most notorious opponents. So, is there any one in their right mind who believes that the rebels seek a bright, nay 'honorable,' future of freedom and democracy for Syrians? What person of virtue and integrity supports a rapist rebel, or listens to a cuckolded ruler, an afflicted homosexual-turned-minister, and an advocate of incestuous relationships? Is such a prospective democracy really better than the current unique system of governance whereby presidency is handed down from virtuous father to no less worthy a son?

Endnotes

1. In the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg (1981.173). Retrieved April 13, 2012 from http://www.notentirelystable.com/story%20of%20the%20eurymedon%20vase.html.

2.   Retrieved   April   28,   2011   from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xPhvtPcczq4&feature=related (Retrieved 12 April 2012).

3. A frame-by-frame analysis of a Global Post video indisputably proves this act of sodomy. Retrieved April 13, 2012 from http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/regions/middle-east/111024/gaddafi-sodomized-video-gaddafi-sodomy

4. Taha's inciting masculinist appeal was broadcast far and wide in the Arab world, thanks to Muhammad Abdel-Wahhab (1902-1991), the great Egyptian singer, and his Syrian disciple Safwan Bahlawan, who both sang these verses beautifully, yet their enchanting songs, alas, failed to wrench Palestine back from its usurpers. Singers and bards in the Arab past performed the role played today by the internet and social networks: they broadcast news, incited action, spread rumors, and even composed commercials—Miskeen Al-Darimi (d. 708 AD), a profligate-turned-hermit, is known to have written a commercial (for seductive black veils) whose verses are known to every Arab today, thanks to Sabah Fakhri whose song popularized these much adored verses.

5. Al-Maqdisi's poem and other poetic ripostes it has generated are regularly updated and available on the official website of the World Association of Arab Translators and Linguists (WATA): http://www.wata.cc/forums/showthread.php?93001 (Retrieved April 7, 2012).

6. In a rather uncanny coincidence, the English mistranslation by Bassem Mroue of the rallying point in Qashoush's bouncy, jokey song is more relevant to the theme of this paper than the Arabic original. A faithful, albeit archaic, rendition of that particular line yields, "Fie upon you, Bashar, and fie upon those who salute you…" But in Mroue's rather sporty rendition the song became, "*Screw* you, Bashar, and *screw* those who salute you" (my emphasis). See Bassem Mroue, "Ibrahim Qashoush, Syria Protest Songwriter, Gruesomely Killed." Retrieved April 12, 2012 from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/07/27/ibrahim-qashoush-syria-protests_n_911284.html

7. Retrieved April 7, 2012 from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GYf3WQsFC7s

8. Dehumanizing one's opponents has also been noted in the Syrian Arab Spring discourse. The surname of the Sudanese Lieutenant General Muhammad Al-Dabi, chief of the short-lived Arab League monitoring mission in Syria (December 2011 to February 2012), was much made of by the Syrian opposition. In Sudanese Arabic "Dabi" means "serpent," but Syrian opposition media commentators, who accused General Dabi of pro-Assad sympathy, consistently referred to him as "Dab-bi." By putting the stress on the last syllable, his name came to mean "beast," or even "behemoth" (whose appearance from the sea signals the end of the world, according to Muslim theologians). Likewise, when Dr. Faisal Al-Kasim hosted Shaikh Abdel-Majeed Al-Sa'eed, a Syrian opposition figure, and the Arabic-speaking Russian political analyst and former diplomat Vyacheslav Matuzov on "The Opposite Direction" (Al-Jazeera 7 February 2012), Shaikh Sa'eed kept referring to his Russian opponent as "*hatha al-dob lomasi ar-russi.*" (this bear-like Russian diplomat). By deliberately pausing after the first syllable of the word *diblomasi* and by changing the vowel in this syllable from *I* to *O,* Shaikh

Sa'eed coined a new insult in Arabic that meant "a bear-like diplomat." Such verbal gimmicks remind us of US President George H. W. Bush's deliberate mispronunciation of the name of Iraqi president as "Sodom Husain" in the 1990's.

9. An excerpt of his sermon, retrieved April 8, 2012, is available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z6PLXT7PGKQ

10. It must be noted that the rather flat English translation given here fails to capture the bouncy aspect of the Arabic original.

11. Retrieved April 7, 2012 from http://www.alghawoon.com/mag/art.php?id=1234

12. Amnesty International, *'I Wanted to Die': Syria's Torture Survivors Speak Out*. (London: Peter Benenson House, 2012), p. 24f.

13. For references in this and the previous paragraph, see the relevant clips, retrieved April 6, 2012, at the following link on YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uc0Ql6Qfn9k

References

-Amnesty International (2012), *'I Wanted to Die': Syria's Torture Survivors Speak Out*. London: Peter Benenson House.

-Fanon, Frantz (1968), *Les damnés de la terre.* Paris: F. Maspero.

-Goldstein, Joshua S. (2003), *War and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

-Raleigh, Sir Walter, (1595, reprinted 1966), *The Discoverie of the Large, Rich and bevvtifyl Empyre of Gviana.* Cleveland: World Publications Co.

Ghana's Role in the Nigerian War: Mediator or Collaborator?

Johnson Olaosebikan Aremu
Ekiti State University, Ado- Ekiti, Nigeria

Abstract

This article attempts an exploration of Ghana's mediatory role in a bid to broker peace between the Federal Military Government of Nigeria and its dis-affectioned Eastern Region to prevent the impending Nigerian civil war of July 1967 to January 1970. It notes Nigeria's disappointment in Ghana's neutrality after the outbreak of war as well as Nigeria's subsequent accusation of Ghana as a collaborator with the secessionist 'Republic of Biafra' throughout the war years. The article carefully interrogates the factors that propelled Ghana's neutrality and the authenticity or otherwise of Nigeria's insinuations against her action during the war. It submits that apart from the humanitarian challenge of reducing the carnage of the war, Ghana acted within the ambits of the Organisation of African Unity's Charter and Resolutions to remain neutral in what was regarded as a 'purely Nigerian internal affair'. The article concludes that since Ghana was never a party to the war, it should be exonerated from all insinuations as a collaborator with Biafra. Its mediatory role should be commended for promoting peace in the West African sub-region.

Keywords: Nigeria, Ghana, Civil War, Conflict, Biafra

Introduction

One of the major events that have generated controversy in Nigeria-Ghana relations in contemporary times was Ghana's purported lukewarm attitude to the Nigerian civil war between 1967 and 1970. Ghana's mediatory role between the Federal Military Government of Nigeria and its dis-affectioned Eastern Region to prevent the impending Nigerian civil war of notwithstanding, its neutrality after the outbreak of war (July 1967 to January 1970) provoked insinuations from the Nigerian Government as it was accused of collaborating with the secessionist 'Republic of Biafra' throughout the war years to decimate the country. It indeed played a significant role in soiling the fragile cordial relations between the two countries.

Nigeria-Ghana Relations on the Eve of the Nigeria Civil War

It is important to stress that in spite of the volatility of relations between both countries in the early years of their independence, Nigeria-Ghana relations witnessed a great improvement with the ascendancy of the military to power in both countries in early 1966. The overthrow of both Tafawa Balewa of Nigeria (15 January, 1966) and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana (24 February, 1966) may indeed be said to have marked the end of the unpleasant rivalry in Nigeria-Ghana relations, even though temporarily. This new-found cordial relation was premised largely on inter-personal relationship that existed between the two military leaders since the period of colonial rule (Aluko, 1976:9). Both Aguiyi Ironsi and J.A. Ankrah were Officers in the Royal West African Frontier Force (RWAFF) stationed at Accra until 1956. For more information, See O. Aluko, *Ghana and Nigeria; 1957 – 70: A Study in Inter-African Discord* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1976), p.9. Apart from this, the two military leaders had also been contemporaries at the Eaton Hall, England, one of the British military training institutions.

Other developments that helped in strengthening the improved bilateral relations between both countries included: the official recognition of the General Ankrah's government by Nigeria in February 1966 (Nivan, 1970: 37) and the arduous role played by Nigeria in ensuring the accreditation of the Ghanaian delegation to the defunct Organization of African Unity (O.A.U) Ministerial Council meeting held at Addis Ababa on 28 February, 1966 (Collins,1970:137). These two actions were said to have impressed the Ghanaian authorities so much that they quickly dispatched a high-powered delegation to Nigeria with a goodwill message. In a communiqué issued at the end of the visit, both countries expressed their desire to re-establish and further strengthen their traditional bond of friendship (Idang, 1973:120).

This new era of cordial relationship was nearly truncated by the 29 July, 1966 counter-coup in Nigeria which brought about the death of General Aguiyi Ironsi. Idang reports that the news of Ironsi's death in the counter-coup was received with mixed feelings by the Ghanaian authorities (ibid: 122). Eventually, however, in a diplomatic way characteristic of experienced statesmen, General Ankrah, sent a congratulatory message to the new Nigerian Head of State, Yakubu Gowon, and commended him (Gowon) for having "a peculiar grasp and understanding of the difficulties afflicting Nigeria" (Gould,1974:356). It was this spirit of mutual respect and understanding between the military leaders of both countries that prepared the ground for Ghana's intervention in the impending Nigerian civil war of 1967 to 1970. This leads us to an examination of the mediatory role played by General Ankrah in a bid to broker peace between the Nigerian Federal government and its Eastern region to prevent the outbreak of civil war in Nigeria. But before then, it is essential to state that the Ghanaian Government's intervention in Nigeria's political crisis was informed by a number of factors.

These included; an attempt to promote on in-house settlement of African disputes devoid of extra-African intervention; the zeal to maintain the territorial integrity of Nigeria; the necessity of maintenance of peace in the West African sub-region; pro-active step aimed at preventing large flows of refugee into Ghana in the event of outbreak of war in Nigeria; the need to unify the Nigerian Army and resolve the internal wranglings among its officers; and most importantly, the humanitarian factor of reducing the carnage of death in the event of outbreak of hostilities between Nigeria's Federal Government and the Eastern Region. (Abubakar, 1992)

Ghana's Mediatory Role in the Nigerian Political Crisis: Aburi and After

The events that led to the Nigerian civil war (6 July 1967- 15 January, 1970) have been well articulated in previous works that they need no rehearsals in this article. However, for records purposes, it will be succinct to mention some of the recurring ones identified in the literature namely; the 15 January, 1966 coup and its ethnic connotations. Aguiyi Ironsi's miscalculated politics of stability necessitating unitarism as against federalism; the 29 July, 1966 counter-coup and the attendant pogroms of Easterners in the North; emergence of Yakubu Gowon as military leader and, the refusal of Odumegwu Ojukwu to recognize his leadership and; the secession of the Eastern region and declaration of independence of the Republic of Biafra in July, 1967 (Ikime, 2002; Onyeoziri, 2002; Elaigwu, 2005; Nwolise, 2002 and Umoru-Onuka, 2002).

Consequent upon the massacre of about 30,000 people of Igbo extraction across the Northern part of Nigeria between May and July 1966 (Olomola & Ola, 1989:18), and the large number of easterners flocking back to the Eastern Region, Lt. Colonel Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, the military Governor of the Eastern Region demanded for more security measures for the Igbos as well as more autonomy for the Eastern Region. However, the Federal Military Government of Nigeria under Lt. Colonel Yakubu Gowon, did not grant the request. This was the beginning of heightened tension within the polity in a build-up towards the civil war. Following from the refusal of the Nigerian government to grant his request, Lt. Colonel Ojukwu in early November 1966 refused to accept Gowon's leadership and declined from attending the Supreme Military Council (SMC) meetings henceforth (Ikime, 2002:62; Elaigwu, 1986). However, upon much persuasion, Ojukwu on 23 November, 1966 indicated his willingness to attend the SMC meeting provided such meetings would hold outside the country, claiming that his personal security could no longer be guaranteed anywhere in the country except in the Eastern Region (Ojukwu,1969:14).

In an attempt to win over the apparently disgruntled Governor, Yakubu Gowon acceded to Ojukwu's demand and the search for a suitable and acceptable venue began in earnest. In December 1966, the Ghanaian Head of State, General J.A. Ankrah offered to host the mediation meeting. It was perhaps the last major attempt to broker peace between Lt. Colonel Odunmegwu Ojukwu and Lt. Colonel Yakubu Gowon (Forsyth, 2001; Madiebo, 1980). Eventually, the search for peaceful co-existence of the peoples of Nigeria as one virile, united country took the Nigerian military leaders and senior police officials to Aburi in Accra, Ghana between 4 and 5 January, 1967 (Gailey Jr., 1972:210; Uwechue, 2004; Forsyth, 2001; Ojukwu, 1969). The terms of the agreement signed at the conference popularly known as the Aburi Accord included: the Army was to be governed by the Supreme Military Council (SMC), under the Chairman of the Head of the Federal Military Government and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces; establishment of a military headquarters in which each region was to be represented. It would be headed by the Chief of Staff; Establishment of

an Area Command in each region under an Area Commander; the SMC was to deal with all matters of appointment and promotions of people in executive posts in the Armed Forces and the Police and; Military Governors were to have control over Area commands in their regions for the purpose of internal security (Elaigwu, 2005: 18-19; Oluleye, 1985:42; Obasanjo, 1971:47). Unfortunately, however, the Agreement was never implemented by Gowon's government because they were viewed as representing no more than a victory for Ojukwu. The refusal of Gowon to implement the Aburi Accord and Ojukwu's insistence that "on Aburi we stand: there will be no compromise" eventually led to the breakdown to the Accord. (Abubakar, 2002: 257).

This notwithstanding, General Ankrah was still convinced that the crisis could still be resolved amicably. His decision to persuade Gowon to implement the Aburi Agreement yielded some result when the Federal Government of Nigeria promulgated the Decree No.8 of 28 May, 1967 as the only acceptable compromise the government could afford (Achebe, 2012:86). But rather than bringing about the desired peace, it inspired new tensions in the already heated political climate of Nigeria, as Ojukwu rejected the Decree (Elaigwu, 2005:21; Kirk-Greene, 1971:35).

The Ghanaian government remained undaunted in playing its mediatory role and quickly dispatched a three-man delegation to persuade Ojukwu to modify his stand on the Aburi Accord and to consult with other military leaders so as to ensure peace in Nigeria, but without success (ibid). Subsequently, General Ankrah invited all the senior law and finance officers from all the regional governments in Nigeria to a meeting in Accra. His aim was to make the officers translate the constitutional and financial proposals of the Aburi Summit into action (Obasanjo, 1971:51). Like the previous attempts, the forum also failed to achieve its set objectives. The conflict took a new turn almost immediately after that meeting when Ojukwu enacted, "The Revenue Collection Edict" in which he demanded that all companies operating in the Eastern Region should pay their taxes into the purse of the Eastern Region instead of the Federal Government's account. The Federal Government reacted swiftly to the Edict. First it declared it illegal and ordered an economic and diplomatic blockade of the Eastern Region (ibid). Lt. Colonel Ojukwu in a counter- reaction gave the Federal Government till 31 May, 1967 to put into effect the terms of the Aburi Accord for a loose federation and assist Igbo refugees, among others. On 26 May, 1967, the Eastern Region Consultative Assembly voted to secede from Nigeria. It mandated Ojukwu to declare, at the earliest practicable date, Eastern Nigeria a free, sovereign and independent State by the name and title of 'The Republic of Biafra' (Achebe, 2012:91). Subsequently on 30 May, 1967, Ojukwu declared the secession of the Eastern Region from Nigeria, naming the new country the Republic of Biafra (Uwechue, 2004:20) Vowing to preserve the unity and territorial integrity of the Nigerian federation, General Gowon declared war against the so-called Republic of Biafra on 6 July, 1967. This signaled the commencement of the Nigerian civil war which lasted till 15 January, 1970.

Outbreak of Nigeria Civil War: Ghana's Neutrality and Nigeria's Insinuations

It is interesting to note that as soon as the war broke out in July 1967, Ghana's change of attitude became apparent. The government of Ghana remained neutral in the war, probably as a sign of respect for the O.A.U's principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of member states and respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each state and for its inalienable right to independent existence (Article III, Paragraphs 2 & 3, O.A.U Charter, 1963). It would be recalled that the O.A.U at its Kinshasa Summit of September 1967, recognized the Nigerian civil war as "an internal affair, the solution of which is primarily the responsibility of Nigerians themselves" (Elaigwu, 2005:30). Similarly at its Algiers Summit of September 1968, the O.A.U. called on all member states to refrain from any action detrimental to the peace, unity and territorial integrity of Nigeria (Cervenka, 1971:108; Elaigwu, 2005:30). As a frontline member state of OAU, Ghana had little or no choice than to conform to the organization's resolutions and principle; hence, its neutrality in the war. This made the Nigerian government to suspect Ghana's actions throughout the war (Balogun, 1973:46). Ghana's posture impeded good neighbourliness between the two countries.

It is necessary to emphasize the fact that Ghana did not, at any time during or after the Nigerian civil war, grant open diplomatic recognition to Biafra (Johns,1979:270; Onwudiwe,2002:422). However, the purported press war launched by the Ghanaian print media against Nigeria, during the war; the constant reference to "Biafra" as a sovereign country by the Ghanaian government; the emotional-laden support given to Igbo elements living in Ghana and the expulsion of Nigerian immigrant community from Ghana in 1969, with the exception of the Igbo's who were classified "special refugees", all raised fears about Ghana's unfriendly relations with Nigeria. A brief discussion of some of these issues will suffice.

The Press War

On 30 May 1967, Ojukwu, Head of State of the Secessionist Republic of Biafra, in an apparent war of propaganda, published the names of countries which he claimed had granted recognition to Biafra. Among the list of African states, Ghana's name was most conspicuous (Nivan, 1970:52). Though, Ghana never recognized Biafra openly at any point in time, the fact that it took the Ghanaian government ten days to refute the allegation was a very strong proof to political observers of Ghana's tacit support for Biafra. Incidentally, the Ghanaian press (newspapers and journals) made matters worse by their editorial comments. For instance, *The Daily Graphic* which had initially described Ojukwu's secession bid as "foolhardy" changed tone within the first month of the war. The newspaper published massive pro-Biafran propaganda (Balogun, 1973:57).

The *Daily Graphic* went ahead to commit a greater blunder when it called on the O.A.U Kinshasa summit of 1967 to revise the O.A.U Charter to accommodate secession in its Charter (Collins, 1970:160). Though this call was ignored by well-meaning African leaders and the communiqué issued at the end of the summit out-rightly condemned secession (Obasanjo, 1971: 65), the fact that the idea was ever conceived at all was in itself abominable and detestable.

Emotional Support for Igbo Elements in Ghana

The emotional support given to "Biafra" by the Ghanaian government and public came to the limelight on 29 May, 1968 when both the *Daily Graphic* and *Ghanaian Times* carried full-page advertisements in memory of about 30,000 civilians of Igbo extraction who were allegedly massacred in the 1966 civil strife in Northern Nigeria. As part of the advertisements too, the Biafra Union in Ghana also announced a memorial service for the same day at the Catholic Cathedral, Accra (Nivan, 1970:110). The Nigerian High Commissioner in Ghana in a swift reaction to the said publications called on the Ghanaian government to disallow the service. The Ghanaian government quickly responded that "she did not recognize the residence in Ghana, of any citizen of any state known as Biafra" but regretted that she could not stop the service from holding as scheduled in the interest of freedom of worship (ibid:111). This particular event clearly brought Nigeria-Ghana relations to its lowest-ebb for it depicted the level of emotional attachment of Ghanaians to Biafra and Ghana's indifference to the corporate well-being of Nigeria.

Ghana's tacit support for the secessionist could also be gleaned from its constant mention of Biafra. This, no doubt indicated that Ghana was tacitly aligning herself with the rebel's cause, a development that was totally unimaginable to the Federal Government of Nigeria. For instance, during the Niamey Peace Talks, as part of the O.A.U's efforts at restoring peace to Nigeria, General Ankrah, as leader of the six-member consultative committee sent to convey to both Gowon and Ojukwu, the O.A.U's commitment to the maintenance of the territorial integrity of Nigeria as well as its desire for peace and unity in the country, constantly referred to the secessionist enclave as the State of Biafra while Ojukwu was also referred to as "Head of State" (Obasanjo, 1971:65). These undiplomatic statements of Ankrah were strongly condemned by the Nigerian delegation to the meeting (Nivan, 1970:110). To further compound this unpleasant situation, the peace proposals made by the Committee were more or less a replica of the conditions laid down by the secessionist. Political observers interpreted the development as a confirmation of Ghana's tacit support for Biafra (ibid: 95).

Expulsion of Nigerians from Ghana in 1969

The next hostile action against Nigeria occurred in November 1969 when the Ghanaian government under the leadership of Dr. Kofi, A. Busia promulgated the Aliens Compliance Order requiring all aliens in Ghana without residence permits to leave Ghana within fourteen days, that is not later than 2 December, 1969 (Olaniyi, 2007:10; Adomako-Sarfo, 1974:76; Ahooja-Patel, 1974:175-176). Though the Order affected some migrants from other West African countries such as Togo, Burkina Faso, and Ivory-Coast, majority of the victims were Nigerian Yoruba's from the South-Western part of the country numbering about 140,000 who were forced out of Ghana at the height of the civil war (West Africa, 20 Dec., 1969:1533-1535; Boahen, 1975:196).

But if the expulsion of Nigerians at that particular period infuriated the Nigerian government, the decision of the Ghanaian government to regard the Igbo's as special refugees while other Nigerians (Yorubas and Hausas) were due for expulsion, drove a bigger wedge into Nigeria-Ghana relations. The interpretation of that Ghanaian directive that the Ghana government recognized that Igbo's were no longer Nigerians but belonged to another state being terrorized by a "bully", made nonsense of the governments earlier claims of "not

recognizing Biafra or the residence in Ghana of any citizen of such a State". This singular event, more than any other development heightened insinuations of Ghana's hypocrisy in the Nigerian civil war.

The already tensed relation between Nigeria and Ghana was also further aggravated by the comment of Dr. Kofi Busia on the question of the Nigerian civil war. He was accused of stressing the need for an "urgent unconditional ceasefire between the Nigerian and Biafran forces" (Aluko, 1976:120). That comment was condemned by Aluko as not only "unhelpful" but also "mischievous" for "deliberately ignoring the facts of the Nigerian government's case" (ibid: 129).

Though it is difficult to determine the exact reason(s) for the sudden change of attitude of the peoples and government of Ghana since the onset of the Nigerian civil war, Nigerian government officials regarded all the aforementioned actions as premeditated attempts to dissipate the Nigerian government and divert its attention away from the all-important war of unity on-going then. It was equally viewed as a Ghanaian tactic to compound Nigeria's political and economic challenges of the time. Ghana's jealousy of the large Nigerian population which she regarded as intimidating also probably contributed to her hostile posture. She may thus be accused of attempting to discomfit the Nigerian state and enhance the secession of Biafra and cause Nigeria to disintegrate and thus remove the threat of Nigeria, her only age-long rival and contender to the status of hegemonic power in the West African sub-region. These issues brought deep strain in Nigeria-Ghana relations.

Concluding Remarks

It has been established that in the event of stalemate between the Federal Government of Nigeria and Ojukwu's Eastern Region to resolve Nigeria's internal conflict, Ghana, under the leadership of General J.A. Ankrah, in the spirit of good neighbourliness, offered its territory for mediation, between the belligerent parties to the crisis in January 1967. While some African countries like Gabon, Ivory Coast, Tanzania and Guinea gave diplomatic recognition to the secessionist Republic of Biafra, Ghana maintained her neutrality, though, to the consternation of the Nigerian Government.

Though Ghana's categorization of people of Igbo descent living in its territory as special refugees' and its expulsion of Yoruba and Hausa elements in November 1969 raised great suspicion of its sympathy for the Republic of Biafra", it never at any point in time made any official pronouncement to the effect of recognizing Biafra as a sovereign state. Even then, its action may be rationalised based on the perception of the international community that the rest of Nigeria was bent on exterminating the Igbo ethnic nationality (Ikime, 2002:67). Finally, Ghana was not the architect of the Nigerian civil war. All the remote and immediate factors that prompted the war suggest that the Nigerian State was faced with internal dissention and disintegration between 1966 and 1970. Nigeria was indeed a house divided against itself at the time of Ghana's intervention. Since Ghana was never a party to the war, it should therefore be exonerated from all insinuations as a collaborator with Biafra. Its mediatory role should be commended for promoting peace and good neighbourliness in the West African sub-region.

References

-Abubakar, A.T. (1992), The Nigerian Civil War: Causes, Strategies and Lessons Learnt",
http://www.dawodu.com.atofarati1.

-Abubakar, D. (2002), "The North and the Nigerian Civil War" in Osaghae, E.E. et al (eds),
The Nigerian Civil War and Its Aftermath, in Osaghae, E.E., Onwudiwe, E. & Suberu, R.T.
(eds.) The Nigerian Civil War and Its Aftermath (Ibadan: John Archers Publishers Ltd).

-Achebe, Chinua (2012), There Was a Country: A Personal History of Biafra (London:
Penguin Books Ltd.)

-Adomako-Sarfoh, J.A.(1974), "The Effects of the Expulsion of Migrant Workers on Ghana's
Economy, with particular Reference to the Cocoa Industry", in S.Amin (ed.), *Modern
Migrations in Western Africa* (London: Oxford University Press)

-Ahooja-Patel, K.(1974), "Regulations governing the employment of non-nationals in West
Africa" in S. Amin (ed.), *Modern Migrations in Western Africa,* (London: Oxford University
Press)

-Aluko, O. (1976), *Ghana and Nigeria; 1957 – 70: A Study in Inter-African Discord* (New
        York:

-Amin, S.(ed.) (1974), *Modern Migrations in Western Africa* (London: Oxford University
Press)

-Balogun, O.(1973) *Tragic Years: Nigeria in Crisis 1966 – 1970* (Benin City: Ethiopia Press)

-Boahen,A.(1975) *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*
(London: Longman)

-Cervenka, Z. (1971), History of the Nigerian Civil War, 1967-1970, (Ibadan: Oribonoje
Press).
-Collins, R. (1970), *Nigeria in Conflict* (London: Secker and Warbury Publication)

-Ekhafor, O.E. (2004). "There was a Country". The Reminiscence of Nigeria-Biafra Civil
        War
and Elites' Perception of Nation and Nationalism in Nigeria", Historical Research Letter,
        Vol.12, 2014.

-Elaigwu, J.I. (1986), Gowon: The Biography of a Soldier-Statesman (Ibadan: West Books
Publishers)

-Elaigwu, J.I. (2005). Nigeria: Yesterday and Today, for Tomorrow (Jos: Aha Publishing
House).

-Forsyth, Frederick (2001), *The Biafra story: the making of an African Legend,(* London, Leo
Copper)

-Gailey,H.A. (Jr.)(1972), *History of Africa: From 1800 to Present*, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston Inc.)

-Idang, G. J.(1973) *Nigeria: Internal Politics and Foreign Policy, 1960-1966*, (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press)

-Ikime, O. (2002). "The Nigerian Civil War and the National Question: A Historical Analysis" in Osaghae, E.E., Onwudiwe, E. & Suberu, R.T. (eds.) The Nigerian Civil War and Its Aftermath (Ibadan: John Archers Publishers Ltd).

-Johns,D.H.(1979), "Diplomatic Exchange and Inter-State Inequality in Africa: An Empirical Analysis", in T.M. Shaw and K.A. Heard (eds), *The Politics of Africa: Dependence and Development* (England: Longman Group Ltd.)

-Kirk-K-Greene, A.H.M.(1971), *Crisis and Conflict in Nigeria, 1966-1970: A Document Source Book, Vols 1 & 11* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)
Madiebo, A.A.(1980), *The Nigerian Revolution and the Biafran War,* (Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers)

-Nivan, S.R.(1970),*The War of Nigerian Unity, 1967-70* (Ibadan: Evans Brothers Nigeria

-Nwankwo, A. & Ifejika, S. (1969), Biafra: The Making of a Nation (New York: Praeger Publishers).

-Nwolise, O.B.C. (2002). "The Effects of the Civil War on the Nigerian Military", in Osaghae, E.E., Onwudiwe, E. & Suberu, R.T. (eds.) The Nigerian Civil War and Its Aftermath (Ibadan: John Archers Publishers Ltd).

-Obasanjo, O, (1971), *My Command: An Account of the Nigerian Civil War, 1967-70* (London: Heinemann Educational Publishers)

-Ojukwu, Odumegwu (1969), *Biafra: Selected Speeches and Random Thoughts* (New York: Harpers Row)

-Olaniyi, Rasheed, (2007), "The 1969 Ghana Exodus: Memory and Reminiscences of Yoruba Migrants", SEPHIS Postdoctoral Research Grant 'Rethinking Migration and Diaspora Identity in West Africa: A Comparative Study of Yoruba in Northern Nigeria and Ghana, 1900-1970.' Project No. 2849, DCO0013857/sephis/res/142/07.

-Olomola, G.O.I.& Ola,R.O.F. (1979), "West Africa and the Search for Political Stability," in A. Fajana & A.O.Anjorin (eds.), *From Colony to Sovereign State*: An Introduction to the History of West Africa Since 1900, (Middlesex: Thomas Nelson, 1979)

-Oluleye, J.J. (1985), *Military Leadership in Nigeria, 1966 – 1979* (Ibadan: University Press Limited)

-Onyeoziri, F. (2002). "What caused the Nigerian Civil War?", in Osaghae, E.E., Onwudiwe, E. & Suberu, R.T. (eds.) The Nigerian Civil War and Its Aftermath (Ibadan: John Archers Publishers Ltd).

-Umoru-Onuka A.O. (2002), "An Evaluation of the Nigerian Civil War: The Case of Kogi Central in Osaghae, E.E. et al. (eds.), The Nigerian Civil War and Its Aftermath in Osaghae, E.E., Onwudiwe, E. & Suberu, R.T. (eds.) The Nigerian Civil War and Its Aftermath (Ibadan: John Archers Publishers Ltd).

-Uwechue, R. (2004), *Reflections on the Nigerian Civil War,* (London: Trafford Publishing) *West Africa,* 20 December, 1969

The Aesthetic Subversion of Dream in the Romanian Literature

Alina Ioana Bako
Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania

Abstract

The dream imaginary has been explained starting from the classical definitions in order to put the concept in a larger context. This imaginary is conceived by the poets who wrote between 1964 –1974, and who called themselves "The Oniric Group". It is a literary movement which appeared despite the socialist realism which had imposed itself in the Romanian literature of the epoch. This article attempts to critically broach and examines such group.

Key Words: dream, imaginary, real, image, politic.

With a start under the sign of uncertainty, "The Oniric Group" was an attempt to outline a world that gets rid of the laws imposed by the political and the social, through a recreation of similar realities. The members of the group, very important personalities, have evolved differently maintaining the influence of the dream. The year when the term "onirism" appeared is 1959, and in 1965 the members of the Group were Leonid Dimov, Dumitru Ţepeneag, Virgil Mazilescu, Vintilă Ivănceanu, Iulian Neacşu, Sânziana Pop. In 1966, Miron Radu Paraschivescu provided them an editorial space in the magazine "Branches" (in the supplement called "The story of the word" that appeared for only 9 months and wanted to gather works of old and new surrealism) and Daniel Turcea, Florin Gabrea and Emil Brumaru joined the Group. In 1968, they have attempted to create a magazine of their own,"Spyglass" but political censorship banned it at the last moment. A single article: *An artistic way. A Roundtable Discussion with Leonid Dimov, Dumitru Ţepeneag, Daniel Turcea, Laurenţiu Ulici* was published, in the "Amphitheatre" magazine no. 36 in November 1968. Later, the writers Sorin Titel and Virgil Tănase joined the Group. As the political climate was inimical, the oniric poets tried to assert themselves "drifting the inland of aesthetics"[3]. The spirit of "eminently cultural"[4] determines a stance towards the regime attitudes, that makes Laurenţiu Ulici to consider onirism as "(...) the first notable literary dissident in full expansion during the Ceauşescu Regime"[5].

Onirism literature was, to a certain extent, a political act of rebelliousness against the regime, as it is analysed by Catherine Durandin in *Romanian history*. Political persecution went up to ban even the word "oniric". Dumitru Ţepeneag testified for Europa Liberă radio station that The Oniric Group was a real challenge: "And until then we were a group, but never recognized as a group. After this statement on the radio, after the Roundtable from «Amphitheatre» and, especially, after the attacks from «Scânteia» and «Contemporanul» newspaper, we became a group and we had some political importance. For a while even the word "oniric" was banned! "[6]

The political climate in which orinism emerged took shape through the implementation of two key axes: the ideological influence and the influence of a political factor. Romanian literary landscape has undergone major transformations, based on three aspects: Stalinist period (1948-1964), the relative liberalisation stage (1964-1971) and the nationalist communism stage (1971-1989).

In the first stage the artist, the writer did not create an aesthetic work, but one that would become the ideology of power. One had to immortalize through one's writings the great achievements of human society, of the worker who was undertaken on the path of scientific and technical progress, because "the Romanian Writers' Society, through ons's new agents, embarks on the path of renewal. Without having to abdicate the artistic credo, the Romanian writer understands that s/he has to leave isolationism and become a social fighter, a lamp, a guiding principle of the nation, gaining in this manner his/her place in the new organization of the world. This mission can be carried out only within the ideas of freedom of the Great Russian Democrats who have given all the possibilities of intellectual workers to live with dignity and to manifest as leaders of the people.The intellectuals were reeducated and guided by the party and the cultural activists. Literature or so-called literature was

---

[3] Ion Simuţ, *Incursiuni în literatura actuală*, Oradea, Cogito, 1994, p.14
[4] Radu G. Ţeposu, *Istoria tragică & grotescă a întunecatului deceniu literar nouă*, Bucharest, Eminescu, 1993, p.11.
[5] Laurenţiu Ulici, *Literatura română contemporană, I,* Bucharest, Eminescu, 1995, p.37.
[6] *Dialog între Farcas Jenö şi D.Ţepeneag*, în „România literară", anul XXXI, 17-23 iunie, nr. 23-24, 1998, p.31.

characterized by the imposition of writers and literary critics, favourable to the regime and ideology promoted.

The power imitated the aesthetic liberties, which in fact were just a lot of compromises by the writers who had to get in the game of power to resist. Many writers were removed from circulation; reprinting was selective, and the meaning of it was garbled, using dogmatic criteria. The topics addressed were pro-soviets; the "new men" who builds a "new world".

This literary climate, closely related to political ideology, did not allow the emergence of the current escapists, which were not anchored in reality. Ion Simuţ, in"*The literary comunist Canon*"[7] listed the monsters of the inter-war literature, in the dogmatic vision of proletcultist: Avangarde, Modernism and Eastern Orthodoxy.

In April 1964, a changing of the policy was announced by a start of a literature without ideology. That time was propitious for the poets who were able to publish texts with unusual creative visions that finally appeared. The focus could shift, to a certain extent, to the ideological message on literarity. We keep in mind important aspects such as the access to special funds and documentary books, Western radio stations with Romanian language programmes were no longer jammed. Between 1965 and 1971, in Romania, it was not possible to publish various works, if "the drawers of the writers wouldn't have been nearly empty, as it happened in 1990."

A few groups had an important contribution, among which should be mentioned the one led by the poet Miron Radu Paraschivescu in the Journal "Luceafarul" where some of the their publication of Dream Group was made in the magazine "Steaua" edited by the same M.P. Paraschivescu (as a supplement of the magazine "Branches" of Craiova) and then, in "Equinox".

In 1967, 60 000 copies of the *Anthology of modern poetry* written by Nicolae Manolescu were drawn off, because he had introduced certain poets into the circuit: Radu Gyr and Crainic. It was the beginning of censorship practiced by Ceauşescu regime that intefereed fully in their rights; that was a new sort of dogmatism of Romanian literature. The so-called forbidden words were words such as "dark", "cold", "hungry", "old man," "old lady", "death", "cross", "priest", "fear", "orange", "banana", "coffee", "dream" and also "oniric". The Orinism was considered as "decadent, depicting the decay of bourgeois art and literature", promoted by the ruling classes of the bourgeois state, aided by the growing influence of a decadent literature felt in the West". Promoting the dream, so out of reality, the onirics were doomed. The dream was a deviation from the order. It could not be controlled and censored, so it had to be stigmatized.

In *Onirismul – between the literary history and the political history*, Laura Pavel speaks about the ethical and the political that are mixed within this concept so, "(...) a motivation and a goal mainly ethical, but which are political".[8] We cannot entirely agree with the statements presented, precisely because of the poetical ideas, especially in the poetry of Dimov. We observe the absence of a political factor. Thus onirism owes less to politics, though sometimes one can be deceived to believe otherwise. In an interview with Ion Simuţ,

---

[7] Ion Simuţ, *Canonul literar proletcultist*, în „România literară", nr.28, 18 iulie 2008.
[8] Laura Pavel, *Dumitru Ţepeneag şi canonul literaturii alternative*, Cluj, Casa Cărţii de Ştiinţă, 2007, p.56.

Dumitru Țepeneag reminds us of the political aspect, but also the idea of a Dimov politically uninterested and by the Țepeneag model that he retrieves from the work of Breton:

> "Theorizing our own literature was, therefore, an excellent idea. More questionable is the other point of my strategy and the oniric group: the political protest. Dimov did not agree. But he was opposed even to the establishment of the group. He liked to be surrounded by young people who read verses and drink at the same time, but the idea of the group did not interested him, I do not know why. (....) My model, in terms of political challenge, was the Breton's surrealist work that Dimov did not like. He argued that the socio-political situations were not the same but I liked the risk, I loved the challenge. If I look back, I don't know if I was right."[9]

Rising from surrealism, as a sequel to it in terms of processing the dream, these writers confess with the superiority that they come from "the monkey of the Surrealism". Although they write, they opt for surreal painting, because "a surrealist Painter, unlike the surrealist poet, describes his dream, he does not become the slave of hallucinations, but, using the laws of the dream, he creates a lucid work of art"[10]. The "Hard core" of the Oniric Group, who have laid the groundwork, Dimov and Țepeneag present their conceptions referring to the French surrealism. From the desire to reconcile Breton and Valéry, they build a literary concept applicable by taking on the traits of both romantic orinism and surrealist simultaneity and the structure theorised by Valéry. This oniric is the denial of the Breton concept, "le surréalisme c'est l'écriture niée", which denies the structure. There is, in this sense, a clear delimitation in which the focus moves from romantic expression, having the inspiration in the center and from surrealism that focuses on automatic writing and production – to Oniric that occurs through an objectified hazard.

We are dealing with a clear setting of writing, for which the world is a text which produces and being produced, but which is not enough. We can consider this as an extension of the bretonian psychic; also meaning essential guidelines for a creative original way. Aliasing of the dream is an attitude of self to self. Overcoming the art critic, trying to escape domineering of the tutelage of the subconscious is accomplished in two ways: by a secret word, that demands the lecturer a hermeneutics and intense effort or by the simplest word, that inhales a detail, a gesture, a look that contains the whole life.

Becoming a form of subversion aesthetics, the oniric group represents a niche in the development of Romanian literature. An outbreak has not fundamentally changed its course, but that meant a poetic heterogeneous cohesive work. The text is organized as a contrivance; it is verbalized by the refinement and the craft of the word. Considering the European avant-garde cultural imagination which was delimited by the previous literary movements, the Oniric Group was interested in breaking the patterns into reality in a world that sorts after the dismissal laws. The limits of language are forced by the contexts in which words are used or even by itself to create words. The effect obtained is a playful, nice poetry: reflexivity lost in calligraphy. The oniric poets rebuild the world, introducing in the text new spaces: streets, ships, kitchens. The verses are subject to formal rules that ensure the musicality, except those of Virgil Mazilescu, by giving up the rhymes and the balance in order to come out with disparate images. Sentimentality is hidden under the guise of clowns, particularly in the work of Leonid Dimov. Oniric literature is in opposition to the verseal, the need for space and by

---

[9] Leonid Dimov, Dumitru Țepeneag, *Onirismul estetic*. Antologie de texte teoretice, interpretări critice și prefață de Marian Victor Buciu (Theoretical texts, interpretations and critical preface by Marian Victor Buciu), Bucharest, Curtea Veche, 2007, p.75

[10] Leonid Dimov, Dumitru Țepeneag, *op. cit.,* p.67.

giving up the metaphor, as an abstraction of the meaning. From this point of view, it is one of the concret large spaces in which time is abolished. Not only is it in opposition with the verseal, but also with the metaphoric and "the epic based on the law of causality" because it tries to propose a parallel world, other than the real one.

The Oniric Group keeps multiple aspects of surrealism, including the contact with surreal paintings, opposed in their conception, to the surreal poetry. Țepeneag himself acknowledged that they were known as :"(...) some Surrealists." By analyzing some texts, we have shown some similarities with surrealism, especially the works of Virgil Mazilescu. But the others have links only with the surrealistic painting, rejecting the automatic, because beyond the images created, it preserves their most important aspect: structure. It is the structure that they want to use in their texts. In this sense, painting, as a representation, approached most of the method sought to transpose reality into text, the realm of imagination and pictorial technique, the fact of clarity without which the work of art, literary and pictorial of the dream, cannot exist.

The openings that have initiated these writers, proximity to postmodernism, were discussed by Țepeneag: "Postmodernism denies formal criteria that just helped the birth of modernism in romanticism: the new criterion. It is a forced denial, imposed by a relative depletion of forms, on the one hand, and the refusal of the general public to follow the innovators on the other"[11]. But the emphasis is on representation, they are closer to modernism through vision and real approach as a way of creation, even if they were subjects to the laws of the dream.

Leonid Dimov's work is distinguished by spontaneity, hybridity, objects of aesthetic point of view, as well as " some construction with Mosaic extracted from quarries of memory"[12], mastering both the form and content of the texts as being representative of the verse of the oniric group. Other poetic works of Emil Brumaru, Virgil Mazilescu, Daniel Turcea, and Vintilă Ivănceanu are meteoric appearances that have revolved around the theory of onirism, at bigger or smaller distances.

The oniric group was formed, innovated in different meanings, by persons who, through literary aesthetic formulas, have broken templates, producing poetry. The poets have innovated, however like ephemeral illuminations. It is symptomatic of their obsession of dreaming and sumptuous decor, all great subjects but in a playful manner.

In the editorial published in the first number of the magazine "Cahiers de l'Est" in 1975, Dumitru Țepeneag wrote about aesthetic criteria that should provide the basis for judgment issued for any work of literature, whether it comes from the literature of the East or the West. The innovative way of writing of the onirics, concretized in an expression less frequented in Romanian literature, brought a new spirit, breaking the patterns, but it was not recognized as such.

Dumitru Țepeneag delimits the sphere concept in order to determine the poles of the concept of the oniric moves (oniric literature) in the understanding of the group. Etymologically, "oneiros" means "dream" and it represents just a superficial aspect, which explains not only the name of the movement. "Oniric literature will be considered as an

---

[11] Leonid Dimov, Dumitru Țepeneag, *op. cit.,* p.317.
[12] Leonid Dimov, Dumitru Țepeneag, *op. cit.,* p.318.

attempt of synthesis between traditional fantastic of Romantic and Surrealistc type", that means, creating an "autonomous territory" between the two, which are oniric. Fantastic romantic literature would imply the existence of reason, from the point of view of the speaker, as in the prose of Poe, populated by nocturnal silhouettes, a place of shadow, and of pure fantastic. The dream does not require more than a geographical plan narrated as a way of explanation of the phenomenon or the lecturer is under the empire of an uncertain decision. The other pole is surrealism, as testified to the primary source for oniric literature. In this sense, the article of Țepeneag *In search of a definition*, refers to the oniric ideas: "I suggest two categories, according to which to be determined the scope of the notion of using fantastic literature and surreal poetry. In the perspective of literary history, oniric literature will be considered as an attempt of synthesis between traditional fantastic of Romantic and Surrealistc type".[13] We understand from the stated above that the oniric literature is created by taking elements from both Fantastic and Surrealism.

However, at the end of this article, after debating many issues related to the oniric literature, from its imagination and poetics, Țepeneag asserts: "In opposition to surrealism, onirism (aesthetic) rejects the automatic, subconscious and bondage of incoherence, cultivating ambiguity, however, consciously and rigorously calculated." The theory must be checked, but Țepeneag writes that: "Oniric literature is an ambition to achieve a double denial: the denial of the essential method of realism, and formal, but no less impressive, fantastic." At this level, there is a contradiction regarding the role played by the fantastic elements in the genesis of dream, but we observe that according to the method explained from the perspective of literary history there are some approaches of the fantastic, and by the point of view of the formal; the oniric denies the fantastic.

Dan Gulea studied the phenomenon of Romanian avant-garde and noted two trends, one negative, for the deconstruction and the second, for the building tradition. Unlike the other writers from other countries, "Romanian Avanguarde was a closed process, in this case, the crossing by a group of several literary political spectra, an avangard or another of the same group, turning on, over time, depending on the literal, political or social circumstances".[14]

Aesthetics is rehabilitated; poetic self disappears, leaving only metaphor, a deep thirst of the nomination of things. Dimov wrote in 1968: "the world of the object that involves art removes the limits between antagonistic oniric phenomena, the values include metamorphosis as art objects and the suburbs, the Court and the terraces of the great palaces of second empire, sees the social realist frescoes as stories with fairies."[15] It is about establishing the scope from which the poet extracts his material. He brings on the same plane Centre, represented by the so-called noble subjects, but also the suburbs, as the periphery of social subjects of "pimples, molds and mud" after the expression of Tudor Arghezi. However, it remains the subject of dream that is the reality, but by bringing "(...) the signs of another world".

The theoretical foundation of the "aesthetically dream literature" (as it was called by Dumitru Țepeneag) is achieved by reporting to the European literary ideas. Art functions are identified by the instruments that dissect the real, looking for a formula in which one can insert the bookmarks of another world"(Leonid Dimov), the oniric world. It is an analysis of the art object from the point of view of the delirious, one of the many possible.

---

[13] Leonid Dimov, Dumitru Țepeneag, *op. cit.,* p.78

[14] Leonid Dimov, Dumitru Țepeneag, *op. cit.,* p.80

[15] Leonid Dimov, Dumitru Țepeneag, *op. cit.,* p.103

In the discussion led by Paul Cornel Chitic in November 1968, Țepeneag talks about a dialectic spiral which would contain three types of literary "sentence (Romanticism), antithesis (Surrealism) and their synthesis of today (Oniric Literature)". From the outset, we intrigue why this group is considered to be the antithesis of surrealist and romanticism, as long as surrealism has some roots in romanticism. For example, the phrase Țepeneag quoted on a page in 10 august 1974: "On peux très légitimement discerner d'emblée dans le prolongement du surréalisme a romantisme, d'un romantisme qui avait pas donné toute sa mésure en France au XIX ème siècle, d'un «romantisme des profondeurs" or, in another text from 1990: "for example, now I remember that the «round table» of «Amphitheatre» was otherwise expressed: had onirism as thesis and surrealism as anti-thesis. Now I feel surrealism as a last avatar of romanticism".[16]

It is a question of parentage that is born as a reaction to something, but, in the end, retains some of the tradition that, in principle, has denied it. The movement contains in itself a message, like any literary movement and literary tradition, classic, romantic and surreal.

---

[16] Leonid Dimov, Dumitru Țepeneag, *op. cit.,* p.145

References

-Bachelard, Gaston, *La poetique de la reverie*, PUF, Paris, 2005.

-Balian, Roger, *Les états de la matière*, Paris, Université de tous les savoirs, 2002.

-Baltrusaitis, Jean, *Anamorphoses ou perspectives curieuses*, Paris, Gallimard, 1955.

-Barthes, Roland, *Le degré zéro de l'écriture s*uivi de *nouveaux essais critiques*, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1953.

-Barthes, Roland, *Mythologies*, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1957.

-Baudelaire, Charles, *L'Art philosophique,* în *Œuvres complètes,* II, Paris, Gallimard, 1976.

-Benveniste, Emile, *La forme et le sens dans le langage*, Actes du VIIIe Congres des Sociétés de philosophie de langue française, in *Le langage*, Génève, Edition La Baconnière, 1967.

-Bergez, Daniel, *Littérature et peinture,* Paris, Editions Armand Collin, 2004.

-Biro & R. Passeron, *Dictionnaire général du surréalisme et de ses environs*, Paris, Hachette, 1981.

-Boldan, Emil, *Prezentare succintă a istoriei literaturii române,* în „Limbă şi literatură", Volumul V, Bucharest, Societatea de Ştiinţe Istorice şi Filologice, 1961.

-Breton, André, *Le surrréalisme et la peinture*, Paris, Gallimard, 1965.

-Breton, André, *Manifestes du surréalisme*, Paris, Gallimard, 1972.

-Buzera, Ion, *Virgil Mazilescu.* Monografie*,* Braşov, Aula, 2000.

-Călinescu, Matei, *Conceptul modern de poezie (de la romantism la avangardă),* Bucharest, Eminescu, 1972.

-Cesereanu, Ruxandra, *Deliruri şi delire.* O antologie a poeziei onirice româneşti, Piteşti, Paralela 45, 2000.

-Chalebourg, Christian, Mitterand, Henri, *L'imaginaire littéraire: des archetypes à la poétique du sujet,* Paris, Armand Collin, 2005.

-Charuty**,** Giordana, *Destins anthropologiques du rêve***,** „Terrain"*,* n° 26, mars, 1996.

-Chénieux-Gendron, Jacqueline, *Il y aura une fois: une anthologie du surréalisme,* Paris, Galimard Folio, 2002.

-Christin, Anne-Marie, *L'image écrite ou la déraison graphique,* Paris, Flammarion, 1996.

-Colin, Didier, *Dictionnaire des symboles, des mythes et des légendes,* Paris, Hachette, 2000.

-Corbin, Henry, *L'imagination créatrice dans le soufisme d'Ibn'Arabî*, Paris, Flammarion, 1958.

-Creţu, Nicolae, *Ludicul Brumaru şi „măştile" lui* in „Convorbiri literare"*,* Iaşi, nr.1-2, 2001.

-Cristea, Valeriu, *Interpretări critice,* Bucharest, Cartea Românească, 1970.

-Deleuze, Gilles, *L'image mouvement,* Paris, Editions de Minuit, 1983.

-Deschamps, Jean, *Les avatars de l'imaginaire*, dans „Revue d'épistémologie critique et d'anthropologie fondamentale, Imaginaire, Raison, Rationalité", Paris, L'Harmattan, 1996.

-Dialog între Farcas Jenö şi D.Ţepeneag în „România literară", anul XXXI, 17-23 iunie, nr. 23-24/1998.

-Dimov, Leonid, Ţepeneag, Dumitru, *Onirismul estetic.* Antologie de texte teoretice, interpretări critice şi prefaţă de Marian Victor Buciu (Theoretical texts, interpretations and critical preface by Marian Victor Buciu)*,* Bucharest, Curtea Veche, 2007, p.75

-Dimov, Leonid, *Pledoarie pentru un nou poet* în „Viaţa românească"*,* nr.12, decembrie 1969.

-Durand, Gilbert, *L'imaginaire. Essai sur les sciences et la philosophie du langage,* Paris, Hatier, 1994.

-Durand, Gilbert, *Aventurile imaginii. Imaginaţia simbolică. Imaginarul.* Traducere din limba franceză de Muguraş Constantinescu şi Anişoara Bobocea, Bucureşti, Editura Univers, 1977

-Durand, Gilbert, *Introduction à la Mythodologie,* Paris, Ceres Tunis, 2003.

-Grigorescu, Dan, *Dicţionarul avangardelor*, Bucharest, Editura Enciclopedică, 2003.

-Gullentops, David, *Poétique du lisuel*, Paris, Editions Paris-Méditerranée, 2001.

-Heidegger, Martin, *Chemins qui ne mènent nulle part*, Paris, Gallimard, 1962.

-Heidegger, Martin, *Introduction à la métaphysique,* Paris, Gallimard, 1964.

-Hegel, *Esthétique*, Paris, Editions Claude Khodoss, 1987.

-Huidobro, Vicente, *Futurismo y maquinismo,* în „Manifestes", Paris, Editions de la Revue mondiale, 1925.

-Huizinga, Johan, *Homo ludens omo ludens. Încercare de determinare a elementului ludic al culturii, (note de lectură).* Bucharest,Humanitas, 2002.

-Ilie, Rodica, *Emil Brumaru (monografie),* Braşov,Aula, 2003

-Lefter, Ion Bogdan, *5 poeţi: Naum, Dimov, Ivănescu, Mugur, Foarţă*, Piteşti, Paralela 45, 2003.

-Montangero, Jacques, *Vis și* cogniție. Traducere de Marina Mureșanu Ionescu, Iași, Polirom, 2003.

-Morar, Ovidiu, *Avatarurile suprarealismului românesc*, Bucharest, 2003.

-Morin, Edgar, *La methode: la connais-sance de la connaissance*, Paris, Seuil, 1992.

-Morrissey, Robert, *Vers un topos littéraire: La préhistoire de la rêverie,* în Modern Philology, The University of Chicago Press Vol. 77, No. 3, 1980.

-Pavel, Laura, *Dumitru Țepeneag și canonul literaturii alternative*, Cluj, Casa Cărții de Știință, 2007, p.56.

-Pop, Ion, *Avangarda în literatura română,* Bucharest, Minerva, 1990.

-Sebbag, Georges, *Suprarealismul.* Bucharest, Cartea Românească, 1999. „Seine et Danube" 6, Paris, Editions Paris-Méditerranée, 2005.

-Simuț, Ion, *Incursiuni în literatura actuală*, Oradea, Cogito, 1994.

-Starobinski, Jean, *Portrait de l'artiste en saltimbanque,* Paris, Gallimard, 2004.

-Țepeneag, Dumitru, *Visul ca paradigmă* in „Literatorul", nr. 16-17, 1996.

-Țeposu, Radu G., *Istoria tragică & grotescă a întunecatului deceniu literar nouă*, Bucharest, Eminescu, 1993.

-Ulici, Laurențiu, *Literatura română contemporană. Volumul I: Promoția '70*, Bucharest, Eminescu, 1995.

-Vouilloux, Bernard, *L'Interstice figural : discours, histoire, peinture,* Grenoble, PUG, 1994.

-Wunenburger, Jean-Jacques, *L'imagination,* Paris, PUF, 1991.

Understanding Speech Acts in Victorian Society: the flouting of the relation maxim in Oscar Wilde's the *Importance of Being Earnest*

Awatef Boubakri
University of Gabes, Tunisia

Abstract

This article is based on the assumption that the analysis of literary discourse from pragmatic perspectives takes into consideration the specificity of the literary work. The literary work under focus is Oscar Wilde's The Importance of Being Earnest. The present research applies two pragmatic theories, namely speech act theory and implicature to the play and raises the question of how Wilde's purpose is pragmatically achieved. It argues that the play is characterized by the frequent violation of the Maxim of Relation. It also shows that the violation of this maxim results in four recurrent pragmatic strategies and that these strategies interrelate with four main themes of the play. Both qualitative and quantitative methods are used: The utterances marked by the violation of the relation maxim are analyzed in relation to their context and then they are classified into strategies and themes. Consequently, it is shown that whenever one of the four strategies is used, its use aims to deal with a specific theme. This research has found that, not only does the interrelationship strategy/theme contribute to Wilde's purpose behind writing The Importance of Being Earnest but it also accounts for the specificity of this play. It accounts for its unity because the unifying interrelationship is between irrelevance as the main strategy and seriousness as the main theme.

Key words: speech act, relation maxim, irrelevance, seriousness

1. Introduction

1.1. Statement of the problem

Critics of *The Importance of Being Earnest* have long been interested in the genre, the style and the philosophy of the play (Evans 1948, Raby 1988, Worth 1992, Pollard 1993, Alexander 2000). They argue that the play is a comedy of manners which relies on verbal wit and opposes the trivial to the serious as a main theme. They also maintain that Wilde's purpose is to question the social values of Victorian society and to laugh at its mores. What is missing in their studies of *The Importance of Being Earnest* is the study of this play from a pragmatic perspective.

1.2. Research objectives

The significance of studying *The Importance of Being Earnest* from a pragmatic perspective stems from the role of speech acts in the play because the way they are used also contributes to expressing Wilde's purpose behind writing this play. This article examines the marked use of speech acts manifested in the violation of the Maxim of Relation. It aims to identify the pragmatic strategies resulting from the violation of this maxim and to show how these strategies interrelate with the themes of the play. It also aims to interpret the interrelationship strategy/theme in relation to the global meaning of the play.

2. Literature review

2.1. Background

The question of how to approach literature from a pragmatic perspective has been subject of interest not only because it has become possible to study literary works in relation to the contexts in which they are written, but also because the literary discourse needs an analysis which accounts for its specificity. The specificity of literary utterances makes it difficult to neglect the fact that the text under focus is literature. "Literature does perform in a special manner" (Triki 1998: 20). Consequently, an application of a pragmatic theory to literature raises the question of what is special in literature. The specificity of the literary discourse stems from four basic characteristics: The literary text is self referential, it establishes its own fictional world, the fictional world represents an alternative to the real world and communication in the alternative world is targeted to characters as well as audience (Herman 1995: 3-13). Within the context of speech act theory and implicature, these characteristics should be taken into consideration when the illocutionary force of a speech act is identified because unlike non-literary utterances, literary utterances are more complex in terms of the writer's intention, in terms of the receiver to whom they are targeted and in terms of the context in which they are said.

A great deal of research has been focusing on speech act theory and its application to literary works, especially drama (Bollobàs 1981, Leech 1992, Toolan 2000). The application of speech act theory to literary discourse analysis clears the way for examining how speech acts are used and for what purposes. In fact, the way pragmatic tools are used results in recurrent patterns in the literary work and the purpose for which these patterns recur contributes to the global intention of the writer (Herman 1995: 228). In this respect, it is argued that plays like Albee's Who is Afraid of Virginia Woolf and Shaw's You Never Can

Tell, convey the message of their playwrights through pragmatic patterns (Bollobàs 1981, Leech 1992). The present study proposes that Oscar Wilde's The Importance of Being Earnest is also worth studying from this perspective.

2.2. Issues in speech act theory

In this section, it is important to go through the development of speech act theory, in order to understand three main aspects of a speech act, namely convention, intention and interaction (Marmaridou 2000: 186) and to understand the identification of its meaning. The identification of the meaning changes from relying on a predetermined classification of the conditions and types of speech acts (Austin1962, Searle 1969, 1979) to relating their meaning to implicature (Grice 1975) and even to other conversational principles (Leech 1983).

2.2.1. Problems with classical speech act theory

Marmaridou (2000) explains that Austin's (1962) and Searle's (1969, 1979) theories are grouped into what is called classical speech act theory. She criticizes classical speech act theory which, in each time, tries to account for the meaning of speech acts from a single angle, performative, conventional or intentional (Marmaridou 2000: 186) and she argues that it is necessary to relate speech act theory to implicature (Grice 1975) and politeness (Leech 1983).

2.2.2. Speech acts and conversational maxims

With Austin (1962) and Searle (1969, 1979), a taxonomy of speech acts is imposed on the identification of meaning; however, it has become necessary to determine the degree of indirectness of a speech act before identifying its meaning (Leech 1983, Stubbs 1983). As a result, the meaning of speech acts is identified by drawing an implicature in relation to conversational maxims (Stubbs 1983, Leech 1983). The violation of conversational maxims in the use of speech acts results in ironic speech acts (Bollobas 1981) and results in social speech acts (Triki & Sellami Baklouti 2002).

Instead of imposing a predetermined set of speech acts on the meaning of an utterance, it is necessary to determine the degree of indirectness of that utterance first. The degree of indirectness varies from a direct speech act, to a conventional speech act, to a routinized speech act and to an indirect speech act. This variation of indirectness influences the way the meaning of each type of speech acts is identified. Utterances which have Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs), are direct because these IFIDs explain how the illocutionary force is understood and they take the form of performative verbs, stress, intonation contour or punctuation (Searle 1969: 30). Stubbs (1983) suggests that speech acts whose context is highly conventional are easy to identify. For instance, "I pronounce you guilty" as said by a judge is a social act of sentencing. He adds that, apart from such a highly conventionalized context, there are acts which are "routinized" in such a way as to become easily identified; for example, in a bar, we can easily understand this utterance: "Have this one on me".

Apart from direct, conventional and routinized speech acts, it is necessary to account for indirectness and non-literalness to identify the meaning of indirect speech acts (Stubbs 1983: 154). It has become difficult to agree with Searle's account of indirectness; for this reason, it is necessary to resort to Grice's (1975) conversational maxims which help to infer the

meaning of indirect speech acts. Stubbs (1983) explains that Searle (1969: 68) makes explicit the implicit meaning of an utterance by adding an IFID; for instance, "I will come tomorrow" can be replaced by "I promise that I will come tomorrow". Stubbs disagrees with Searle when the former says that "speakers do not use extra words without reason" and that the two utterances above do not necessarily have the same illocutionary force. Stubbs adds that Grice's (1975) maxims can account for such a difference (Stubbs 1983: 156). In fact, while the first utterance can have different illocutionary forces, the second utterance violates the maxim 'be brief' because the speaker wants to convey the meaning of promise (Stubbs 1983: 158).

Although Grice's (1975) maxims are conversational rules, they are usually violated, which reveals the notion of indirectness and necessitates a long path of inference on the part of the hearer (Leech 1983: 43). Grice (1975) explains that, when the speaker does not tell the truth or he does not express just the needed information or he offers ambiguous utterances, in this case, he means more than what he says. He concludes that conversational maxims provide a basis for the listener to *infer* what is *implicated* (Grice 1975: 76).

Grice's (1975) theory of implicature argues that our talk exchanges are conversationally cooperative efforts between speakers. Grice's Cooperative Principle invites 'you' as an interactant to "make your conversational contribution such is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged" (Grice 1975: 78). Grice issues four conversational maxims and their sub-maxims, all conforming to the Cooperative Principle. They are summarized as follows:

(1)The QUATITY MAXIM: (i) Make your contribution as informative as is
                                  required.
                            (ii) Do not make your contribution more
                                  informative than is required.
(2)The QUALITY MAXIM: (i) try to make your contribution one that is true
                              (ii) Do not say what you believe to be false.
                              (iii) Do not say that for which you lack adequate
                              evidence.
(3)The RELATION MAXIM: "be relevant".
(4)The MANNER MAXIM: (i) "Be perspicuous".
                              (ii) Avoid obscurity of expression.
                              (iii) Avoid ambiguity.
                              (iv) Be brief.
                              (v) Be orderly (Grice 1975: 78-79).

Whenever a maxim is violated, the hearer must determine what the speaker intends to convey. The problem of how the illocutionary force of an utterance is determined is at the heart of speech act theory and the role of implicature is necessary here (Grundy 1995: 99).

2.3. Speech act theory and literary discourse

Different attempts have been made to analyze literary discourses from the point of view of speech act theory (Leech 1992, Coulthard 1985, Buck 1997, Herman 1995, Rozik 2000, Triki 1998). The results have been rewarding since it has become possible to approach the meanings of a number of plays, poems and novels from a new perspective; however, an important question has been raised concerning the specificity of the literary discourse and the

specificity of the literary work under focus. While some studies (Leech 1992, Pratt 1977, Coulthard 1985, Buck 1997) stress the legitimacy of applying pragmatic principles to literary discourses the way they are applied to non-literary discourses, other studies (Cook 1994, Herman 1995, Rozik 2000, Triki 1998, Harker 1999, Oltean 1999) stress the fact that the interpersonal dialogue of the characters in the literary text is different from everyday conversation.

Herman's (1995) framework is explained in detail as she focuses on the dramatic discourse which is the concern of the present study. Herman's (1995) title is self explanatory: *Dramatic Discourse is Dialogue as Interaction in Plays*. The purpose behind distinguishing dramatic discourse from conversation is to take into account the nature of the literary text. First, it is necessary to realize that conversation, or in Herman's terms "spontaneous speech exchange", is just a resource for dramatic discourse. In fact, norms, conventions and rules of speaking are manipulated by playwrights to make their speech differently. The subject matters of conversation themselves are dealt with in a different manner. In fact, dramatic discourse is not a reflection of real life but a new view of its matters. Furthermore, the new views of real life with its social norms, conduct, convention and behavior are expressed subjectively either in support or in opposition to the "dominant culture" (Herman 1995: 6-7).

Consequently, a fictional world is created in the dramatic discourse. Herman argues that this created world is usually an alternative to the real world as a result of protest against, dissatisfaction with or violation of the norms outside. She adds that this permanent reference to the real world is the key to the "intelligibility" of this fictional world. However, the dramatic text should be self-referential. In other words, it is through the speech exchange between the characters that we should know about the context in which the characters are operating (Herman 1995: 8-9). Therefore, speech exchange gives way to assumptions or to a process of inference done by the characters as well as the audience. In fact, the role of the audience in inferring the message of utterances is as prominent as the role of the characters, if not more (Herman 1995: 10).

Herman's work gives prominence to the social dimension of dramatic discourse. She advocates an application of socio-linguistic theories to language in use in drama or simply the socio-pragmatics of drama. However, this application is accompanied with a keen account of the nature of the literary text. In fact, fictionality, self-reference and audience are always present when she deals with dramatic speech from a pragmatic view. She even gives solutions to the apparent mismatch between literature and pragmatics. It is necessary to look in details at the way Herman deals with speech act theory in dramatic discourse since the present study chooses Herman's (1995) work as its framework.

As far as the illocutionary force is concerned, Herman argues that it is determined through relevant assumptions and references to the context of the utterance and the whole process is motivated by an ideological self. Drama stems from tension between a social subject and the demands of social others (Herman 1995: 201). However, Herman warns against such a simplified understanding arguing that the self is a complex phenomenon in dramatic discourse. The source of complexity is the fact that the dramatic self is usually ambiguous in such a way as to expect more than one illocutionary force inferred from a single utterance. Herman adds that it is only by making the character liable to his speech that we understand what is meant. In other words, characters act in their own fictional world which is intelligible through making relevant assumptions (Herman 1995: 200-203).

Concerning conventional acts, Herman argues that drama defamiliarizes the conventional institutional events and they are no longer taken for granted. She takes as an example Shakespeare's *Coriolanus.* She argues that Coriolanus is killed by his people because he violates the felicity conditions of acts like promise and request and he refuses to perform acts of greeting (Herman 1995: 208). In dramatic discourse, routinized speech acts are also reversed which reflects the fact that norms of speaking and norms of behavior are no longer taken for granted.

The question now is how the audience (or the reader) knows about these norms and conventions in a fictional world where everything related to real life is manipulated and conventional acts themselves are defamiliarized. In dramatic discourse, the role of the outside recipient is as prominent as that of the characters inside the text and, knowing that the former does not necessarily belong to the socio-cultural context in which the play is written, he should make assumptions on the basis of what is said by the characters (Herman 1995: 215). It is here that the role of the audience materializes. The audience should get knowledge from the text itself relying on the utterances of the characters. He proceeds with a chain of assumptions which develops each time another utterance is said by a character. Consequently, the audience succeeds in inferring the meaning of literary utterances and the global message of the literary work. As a conclusion, the process of assumption formation on the part of the audience indicates that the literary text is self-referential.

These insights from the application of pragmatic theories to the dramatic discourse taking into account its specificities is expected to be significant to the study of *The Importance of Being Earnest.*

3. **Methodology**

This section describes the framework, the instruments and the type of study.

3.1. Framework

This research is based on Herman's (1995) application of speech act theory to dramatic discourse because Herman succeeds in solving the difficulties of applying a pragmatic approach to literature. She defends the relevance of applying a linguistic pragmatic approach to drama without neglecting the specificity of dramatic discourse. Herman argues that the way speech acts are used in dramatic discourse is actional in itself (Herman 1995: 229). In other words, the intention of the speaker, the interpretation of the illocutionary force by the hearer, assumption formation on the part of the audience and the dramatization of conventional speech acts are significant in dramatic discourse.

Herman argues that the intentional self is more complex in dramatic discourse in comparison with the intentional self in non-literary discourse; consequently, his utterance can have more than one illocutionary force. This complexity does not indicate that it is impossible to infer the meaning of speech acts in literary discourse. On the contrary, this complexity reflects the specificity of the speaker's intention in literary discourse. It is due to the tension between the 'ideological self' and the 'dominant culture' that the intentional self is difficult to be understood. His desires and intentions are in conflict with or different from those of the other and those of society (Herman 1995: 201).

The way the hearer interprets the speaker's utterance is also significant. Herman argues that in modern drama, miscommunication and non-communication replace communication; consequently, the response of the hearer to the speaker's utterance is not necessarily the expected response. As a result, comic and tragic effects are created depending on the genre of the play. Herman says that "the excesses that could result from unilateral exploitation of code and inferential possibilities in the utterances can be material for comic episodes" (Herman 1995: 204). Moreover, the hearer's response to the speaker's illocutionary force becomes a discourse strategy which is actional in dramatic discourse.

Besides the hearer's response, the audience assumption formation is significant in dramatic discourse. Herman says that "the audience is actively involved from the beginning in creating the necessary information and the off-stage context of the play" (Herman 1995: 204). Besides the axis of communication character-character, dramatic discourse includes another axis which is stage-audience. The audience is another addressee in addition to the character. As a result, the role of the audience is as prominent as that of the character, especially that the playwright intends to convey a message to the audience.

In addition to the speaker's intention, the hearer's interpretation and the role of the audience, the dramatization of conventional and institutional speech acts is also significant in dramatic discourse. Herman argues that these acts are defamiliarized (Herman 1995: 208) which refers to the fictional world which is an alternative to the real world in dramatic discourse. Herman adds that infelicitous performance exceeds conventional speech acts to other norms of speaking and behavior (Herman 1995: 197).When deviation in the use of speech acts recurs in the play, it results in patterns or discourse strategies which are actional.

3.2. Research instruments

- **Searle's classification of speech acts**
  Searle (1979) classifies speech acts into:
- Assertives (using language to tell people how things are, as in concluding, asserting, hypothesizing).
- Directives (using language to try to get them to do things, as in requesting, advising, pleading).
- Commissives (using language to commit oneself to doing things, as in promising, undertaking).
- Expressives (using language to express our feeling and attitudes, as in apologizing, thanking, welcoming).
- Declarations (using language to bring about changes into the world through utterances, as in declaring wars, nominating a candidate) (Searle 1979: 30).

Searle's categorization of speech acts facilitates the inference process; for instance, it is necessary to know whether a speech act is assertive or expressive.

- Grice's Cooperative Principle

Grice (1975) issues four main maxims which are summarized as follows:
(1) The QUATITY MAXIM: (i) Make your contribution as informative as is required.
                               (ii) Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.
(2) The QUALITY MAXIM: (i) Try to make your contribution one that is true

          (ii) Do not say what you believe to be false.

          (iii) Do not say that for which you lack adequate

             evidence.

(3) The RELATION MAXIM: " be relevant".

(4) The MANNER MAXIM: (i) "Be perspicuous".

          (ii) Avoid obscurity of expression.

          (iii) Avoid ambiguity.

          (iv) Be brief.

          (v) Be orderly (Grice 1975: 78-79).

Grice's maxims constitute the way an ideal conversation should be. Any violation of these norms implicates an intention on the part of the speaker. The present study focuses on the violation of the Maxim of Relation 'Be relevant', because utterances which are irrelevant to their speech situations are frequent in the play.

- **Peer review**

The present study identifies a list of utterances in which the Maxim of Relation is violated. In order to prove that the list is exhaustive and no other utterance is marked by the flouting of the Relation Maxim, the play is presented to two teachers of English literature. In terms of availability, only one teacher is a native speaker.

3.3. Type of study

This study is qualitative and quantitative. It is qualitative because it starts with a primary analysis of the utterances where the Maxim of relation is violated. The purpose is to identify the illocutionary force of each speech act in relation to the context in which it occurs in the play. This research is also quantitative because it makes use of a statistical analysis: It assigns quantities to pragmatic strategies and themes. It also presents percentages of the occurrence of these strategies and themes looking for an interrelationship between them.

3.4. Corpus description

This section introduces the play and describes its plot, its characters and its themes. *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1854) is a comedy of three acts. It consists of 61 pages in the Oxford edition (1989). The male characters are the two gentlemen, Algernon Moncrief and Jack Worthing. The three women are Gwendolen Fairfax, Cecily and Lady Bracknell. Gwendolen, Algernon's cousin, adores the name Earnest and she is in love with Jack. Lady Bracknell, Gwendolen's mother, stands for the social conventions of Victorian society (Raby 1988: 130). Cecily is Mr. Worthing's ward. Algernon pretends to have a sick friend whose invented name is Bunbury, in order to avoid going to social events he dislikes, such as Lady Bracknell's dinner. Jack, who lives in the country, also claims to have a wicked brother called Earnest to be able to go to town. In town, Jack pretends to be Earnest. The play opens with proposal scenes. The contractual aspect of marriage in upper class society is the only aspect in which Lady Bracknell is interested. She needs to know everything of importance about Jack Worthing before accepting his engagement to her daughter. In order to meet Cecily, Algernon goes to the country pretending to be Earnest, the imaginary brother of Jack. Now confusion takes place and the first meeting between Gwendolen and Cecily is characterized by quarrel since they find out that both of them are engaged to Earnest. One of the key comic moments of the play is the discovery of Jack's identity. Just after his birth, Jack is found in a handbag in

Victoria Station. Lady Bracknell and Miss Prism, Cecily's tutor, are involved in the loss of the baby but they have just discovered that the baby is Jack because that very bag is still with him. It turns out that Jack is not Jack but Earnest Moncrief, Algernon' s old brother and Lady Bracknell's nephew. The discovery pleased everyone, especially Gwendolen, who has always wanted to marry a man named Earnest. The main theme of the play is seriousness as it is opposed to triviality (Worth 1992: 157). Wilde tackles this issue in relation to sub-themes namely culture, marriage, good manners and hospitality

3.5. Procedure

   This research proceeds with a qualitative analysis followed by a quantitative analysis and closes with a qualitative analysis that serves the unity and specificity of the play.

   The first qualitative analysis consists in listing the utterances marked by the violation of the Maxim of Relation. These utterances are analyzed for interpretation and assigned numbers from U1 to U125 to facilitate the quantitative analysis. The quantitative analysis aims to identify recurrent patterns in the play. It classifies the numbered utterances into strategies that the present study names pragmatic strategies. These pragmatic strategies result from the violation of the Maxim of Relation. The numbered utterances are also classified into themes dealt with in the play. The purpose is to look for a possible relationship between the two classifications of the same utterances according to pragmatic strategies and themes. In order to do so, all the possible relations between four strategies and four themes are calculated in terms of percentages. These percentages help to identify which relations are noticeable. The noticeable percentages refer to the patterns which represent the interrelationship strategy/theme. The final stage is to illustrate the patterns identified with extracts from the play focusing on how these patterns contribute to the central theme.

4. Findings and discussion

   There are 125 utterances in which speech acts are marked by the violation of the Maxim of Relation. The peer review has supported the validity of the list of utterances Identified. Their analysis results in the following findings.

4.1. Findings

The utterances under focus are classified into pragmatic strategies and into themes in order to see whether there is an interrelationship between them.

4.1.1. Pragmatic strategies resulting from the flouting of the Maxim of Relation

   The 125 utterances violate the Maxim of Relation in four different ways resulting in four recurrent strategies in the play. With reference to Herman (1995), when interpersonal acts result in recurrent strategies in dramatic discourse, these strategies are actional in themselves and they are called discourse strategies (Herman 1995: 225-226). Since the strategies under focus in the present study are motivated by a pragmatic feature which is the violation of the Maxim of Relation, it is possible to consider them as pragmatic strategies. The four pragmatic strategies are:

- Strategy # 1: Indifference to the illocutionary force of the speech act previously uttered by another character. The character either shifts to another

topic or utters a speech act whose illocutionary force is against the expectation of the other character and of the audience.

- strategy # 2: The stage direction which describes what the character does is irrelevant to the speech act he utters at the same moment. The contradiction is between what the characters want to do with their bodies and what they want to do with their words.

-Strategy # 3: Two words, two expressions or two meanings which are irrelevant to one another, are combined in the same utterance or in the same speech situation in such a way as to say the opposite of what is normally said or to reverse conventional and routinized speech acts.

- Strategy # 4: Crucial issues are suddenly dealt with, which is irrelevant to the initial subject dealt with in the immediate situation of the discourse.

4.1.2. The thematic classification of utterances

The play deals with the theme of seriousness about different issues in Victorian society. These issues constitute sub-themes into which the 125 utterances violating the Maxim of Relation are classified. The themes are the following:
- Theme # A: Norms of politeness, sincerity, civilities, morality, duty and responsibility known as good manners and related to gentlemen and respectable ladies in Victorian society.

- Theme # B: Hospitality and eating as an occupation manifested in the eating habits of upper class society.

- Theme # C: The institution of marriage and other related issues such as divorce, ideal husband, love, engagement, proposal, adultery, eligible man and faithfulness.

- Theme # D: Cultural features of Victorian society such as culture, education, literature, music, literary criticism, politics, religion, science, art and philosophy.
This classification of the same utterances already classified into four pragmatic strategies aims to observe whether there is an interrelationship between pragmatic strategies and themes.

4.1.3 The interrelationship between strategies and themes

Since the utterances are classified into four pragmatic strategies and four themes, it is necessary to study the following possible relations between them:

Strategy # 1 ———— Theme # A   Theme # A ———— Strategy # 1
           Theme # B   Strategy # 2
           Theme # C   Strategy # 3
           Theme# D   Strategy # 4

Strategy # 2 :———— Theme # A   Theme # B ———— Strategy # 1
           Theme # B   Strategy # 2
           Theme # C   Strategy # 3

Theme # D   Strategy # 4

Strategy # 3 —— Theme # A   Theme # C —— Strategy # 1
                  Theme # B   Strategy # 2
                  Theme # C   Strategy # 3
                  Theme # D   Strategy # 4

Strategy # 4 —— Theme # A   Theme # D —— Strategy # 1
                  Theme # B   Strategy # 2
                  Theme # C   Strategy # 3
                  Theme # D   Strategy # 4
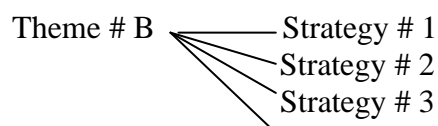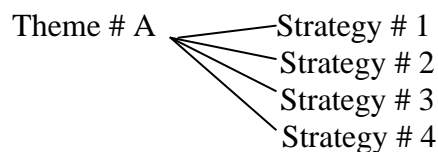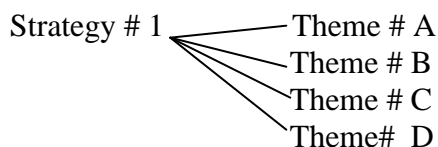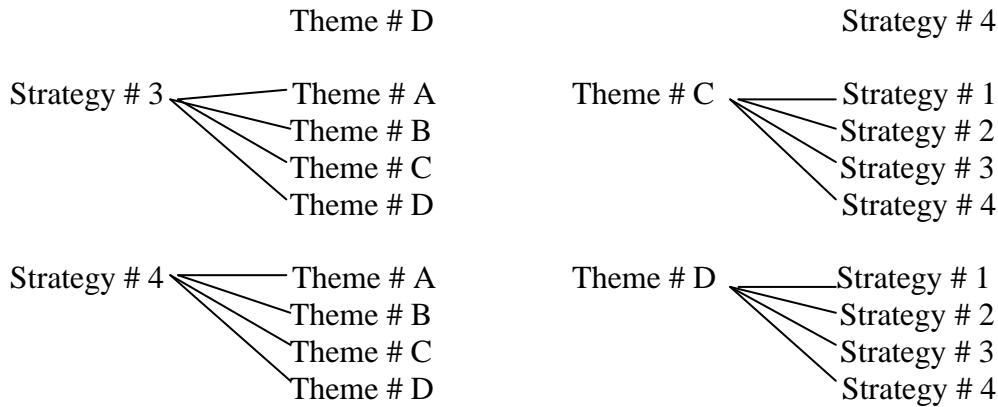
	Strategy # 1	Strategy # 2	Strategy # 3	Strategy # 4
Theme # A	40	0	7	0
Theme # B	1	8	0	0
Theme # C	0	0	41	0
Theme # D	1	0	8	19

Table 1: Total of utterances under each possible relation

Table1 presents the number of utterances under each possible relation; for instance, 40 utterances use Strategy #1 and deal with Theme # A.

In order to identify which theme is more likely to be dealt with, with each strategy and which strategy is more likely to be used with each theme, it is necessary to calculate the percentages of all the possible relations presented above.

4.1.3.1. The relationship strategy/theme

This section aims to answer the question which theme is more likely to be dealt with, with each strategy. Table 2 presents the needed percentages in order to answer this question:

	Strategy # 1	Strategy # 2	Strategy # 3	Strategy # 4
Theme # A	95.23 %	0	12.5 %	0
Theme # B	2.38 %	100 %	0	0
Theme # C	0	0	73.21 %	0
Theme # D	2.38 %	0	14.28 %	100 %
Total	42	8	56	19

Table 2: Percentages of utterances under each relation strategy/theme

In table 2, the percentages are calculated; for instance, the percentage of utterances under the possible relation Strategy # 1 / Theme # A is calculated in the following way:

$$\frac{40 \times 100}{42} = 95.23\ \%.$$

In other words, 95.23 % of the utterances which use Strategy # 1 deal with Theme # A. Table 2 shows that the relationship strategy/theme is understood in the following way:
- When Strategy # 1 is used, most of the utterances deal with Theme # A (95.23 %).
- When Strategy # 2 is used, all the utterances deal with Theme # B (100 %).
- When Strategy # 3 is used, most of the utterances deal with Theme # C (73.21 %).
- When Strategy # 4 is used, all the utterances deal with Theme # D (100 %).

4.1.3.2. The relationship theme/strategy

This section aims to answer the question of which strategy is more likely to be used with each theme. Table 3 presents the needed percentages in order to answer this question:

	Strategy # 1	Strategy # 2	Strategy # 3	Strategy # 4	Total
Theme # A	85.1 %	0	14.89 %	0	47
Theme # B	11.11 %	88.88 %	0	0	9
Theme # C	0	0	100 %	0	41
Theme # D	3.57 %	0	28.57 %	67.85 %	28

Table 3: Percentages of utterances under each relation theme/strategy

Table 3 shows that the relationship theme/strategy is understood in the following way:
- When Theme # A is dealt with, Strategy # 1 is used in most of the utterances (85.1 %).
- When Theme # B is dealt with, Strategy # 2 is used in most of the utterances (88.88 %).
- When Theme # C is dealt with, Strategy # 3 is used in all the utterances (100 %).
- When Theme # D is dealt with, Strategy # 4 is used in most of the utterances (67.85 %).

4**.1.3.3. The interrelationship strategy/theme**

On the basis of the results presented in table 2 and table 3, it is observed that there is an interrelationship between the four pragmatic strategies and the four themes. Whenever a pragmatic strategy is used, its use aims to deal with a specific theme. As a result, four patterns recur in the play, namely:

- Strategy # 1 is interrelated with Theme # A.
- Strategy # 2 is interrelated with Theme # B.
- Strategy # 3 is interrelated with Theme # C.
- Strategy # 4 is interrelated with Theme # D.

As a conclusion, there is a high predictability concerning the interrelationship between pragmatic strategies and themes in *The Importance of Being Earnest.*

4.2. Interpretation and discussion

It has been proved that four pragmatic strategies resulting from the violation of the Maxim of Relation recur in *The Importance of Being Earnest* and they interrelate with four main themes. The question now is why these pragmatic strategies are used when those themes are dealt with. Each pattern is illustrated with extracts from the play and in each extract, the irrelevant utterance is underlined.

4.2.1 Strategy # 1/ Theme # A

Whenever the theme of social norms of politeness, sincerity, responsibility and civilities is dealt with by one of the speaking characters, the hearer responds indifferently to the illocutionary force of the speaker' s speech act . As a result, the hearer responds with a speech act which either shifts the topic or contradicts the expectation of the speaker and that of the audience. The following three examples illustrate this pattern.

U3:
Algernon: …oh! …by the way, Lane, I see from your book that on Thursday night,

> **when Lord Shoreman and Mr. Worthing were   dining with me, eight**
> **bottles of champagne are entered as having been consumed.**
>
> **Lane   : <u>Yes, sir; eight bottles and a pint</u> (480).**

Lane's utterance is irrelevant to Algernon's. Algernon's indirect speech act has the intention of accusing the servants and Lane is involved. Instead of denying, apologizing or being quiet, Lane is assertive of the accusation giving more details to his master. Lane appears to be indifferent to the illocutionary force of the speech act uttered by Algernon. His response is against the expectation of both Algernon and the audience. Lane intends to escape from responsibility by challenging his master's accusation.

U27:

> **Lady Bracknell: Good afternoon, dear Algy, I hope you are behaving very well.**
>
> **Algernon   : <u>I'm feeling very well, Aunt Augusta</u> (487).**

Algernon's assertive speech act is irrelevant to Lady Bracknell's directive speech act. Lady

 Bracknell's intention is to remind Algernon that he should behave in good manners; however, Algernon is indifferent to the illocutionary force of her speech act and shifts the interest from behavior to feelings.

U107:

> **Gwendolen [After a pause]: They don't seem to notice us at all. Couldn't you**
> **   cough?**
>
> **Cecily   : <u>But I haven't got a cough</u> (525).**

Cecily's utterance is irrelevant to Gwendolen's. Gwendolen's directive speech act is a request to cough in order to attract the attention of the two gentlemen. Cecily, however, responds to the propositional content rather than to the illocutionary force of Gwendolen's speech act. Cecily's response is against the expectation of her interlocutor and against that of the audience. It shows her spontaneous character which is far from being aware of the artificial civilities of her society.

In such examples, the character is indifferent to the illocutionary force of the speech act uttered by his interlocutor. The character pretends not to understand the intention of his interlocutor and he responds with an irrelevant utterance creating a comic effect which goes with the genre of the play as a comedy of manners.

The fictional world is established the moment the characters tend to look for an alternative world which deviates from the real one. This idea is expressed by Herman (1995) when she says that "discourse strategies may serve to construct very different kinds of subjectivities and inter-personal possibilities. The use of speech can either stabilize some set of beliefs about the state of the world or radically undermine such an eventuality" (Herman 1995: 237). With reference to strategy # 1, the character undermines the set of norms specific to the real world, when he tends to shift the topic or to respond with the unexpected whenever an obligation is imposed on him. His response reflects an alternative view of how the person should behave. The character is keen to imply that he is not obliged to follow good manners, to be sincere, to be responsible for his duties and to participate in social events.

Relating these obligations to their socio-cultural context, these obligations or set of norms constitute the characteristics of a gentlemen and a respectable lady in the Victorian society; however, some characters like Algernon, Jack and Cecily in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, tend to escape from these norms. As a conclusion, Strategy # 1 is used to express the character's deviation from the norms and conventions of Victorian society. Characters who do belong to upper class society, ironically participate in criticizing it by being 'impolite', 'insincere' and 'irresponsible'.

4.2.2. Strategy # 2 / Theme # B

Whenever the characters are occupied with eating and whenever they deal with the theme of hospitality, they contradict what they say with what they do and the latter is indicated through the stage direction. The following three examples illustrate this pattern:

U2:

Algernon: And, speaking of the science of life, have you got the cucumber
Sandwiches cut for Lady Bracknell?
Lane   : Yes, sir. [Hands them on a salver.]
Algernon : [Inspects them, takes two, and sits down on the sofa.] (480).

What is described in the stage direction is irrelevant to Algernon's utterance. His utterance is a directive speech act of asking. He asks whether the sandwiches are prepared for Lady Bracknell; however, he takes two in order to eat them.

U10:

Algernon: Oh! There is no use speculating on that subject. Divorces are made in
heaven – [Jack puts out his hand to take a sandwich. Algernon
interferes at once.] Please don't touch the cucumber sandwiches. They
are ordered specially for Aunt Augusta. [Takes one and eats it.] (482).

What is described in the stage direction is irrelevant to Algernon's utterance. On the one hand, his directive speech act orders Jack not to take the sandwiches. On the other hand, Algernon takes one. There is a contradiction between what he wants to do with his words and what he wants to do with his body.

U101:

Cecily [Sweetly]: Sugar?
Gwendolen [Superciliously]: No, thank you. Sugar is not fashionable any more.
[Cecily looks angrily at her, takes up the tongs and puts four lumps of sugar in
the cup] (591).

What is described in the stage direction is irrelevant to Gwendolen's utterance. Gwendolen's utterance is an assertive speech act of declining an offer followed by an assertive speech act of comment. She intends to despise Cecily. The stage direction which describes Cecily's response is irrelevant to Gwendolen's decline of sugar, although Gwendolen is her guest. At the same moment, a contradiction appears between the intention behind the words and the action behind what is physically done.

In these examples, the characters create a mismatch between physical acts and speech acts, which is another source of comic effect. The mismatch between the stage direction and the utterance of the character in moments when sandwiches are prepared for the guest and in moments when the tea is offered by the host is a challenge to the rules of hospitality. The norms of hospitality mark the specificity of every culture but they are of great importance to the upper class society; however, they are ironically spoiled by characters that belong to that class. It is absurd to forbid one's guest from taking sandwiches while the host is eating them all the time. It is unacceptable to make negative comments on the tea offered by the host and it is completely rude to deliberately serve the host with the thing he declines.

However, Wilde provides excuses for his characters that are playful with the norms of hospitality. Cecily serves Gwendolen with sugar and cake that the latter declines because of Gwendolen's despising justification: Sugar and cake are no longer seen in respectable houses. Therefore, another irrelevance emerges in order to express the character's revolt against the ridiculous formalities the upper class society is keen to preserve as indicators of social respectability and status. Furthermore, occupation with eating and reversing the norms of hospitality occurs at moments when serious problems need to be solved. Therefore, a third irrelevance emerges when the characters resort to eating or to commenting on the norms of hospitality when an important subject is dealt with or when a serious problem is faced. In fact, they escape from the pressure of social obligations.

4.2.3. Strategy # 3/ Theme # C

Whenever the characters speak about subjects related to the institution of marriage such as marriage proposal, divorce, ideal husband, eligible husband, love, faithfulness and adultery, they tend to match contradictory terms, expressions and meanings. As a result, the characters say something different from and even opposite to what is normally said. The following three examples illustrate this pattern:

U5:
　Algernon: Good heavens! Is marriage so demoralizing as that?
　Lane   : I believe it is a very pleasant state, sir. I have had very little experience
　　　　　of it myself up to the present. I have only been married once. That was
　　　　　in consequence of a misunderstanding between myself and a young
　　　　　person (480).

The underlined utterance is irrelevant to what is just said before by the same character in the same speech turn. Lane utters an assertive speech act giving his opinion about marriage. The character matches two meanings which do not go together: His marriage was the result of a misunderstanding between him and another person which is nonsense.

U28:
　Lady Bracknell: I'm sorry if we are a little late, Algernon, but I was obliged to
　　　　　　　call on dear Lady Harbury. I hadn't been there since her
　　　　　　　poor husband's death. I never saw a woman so altered; she
　　　　　　　looks quite twenty years younger (488).

The underlined utterance is irrelevant to what is said before by the same character about Lady Harbury. Two contradictory meanings are joined together in such a way as to say the unexpected about a woman whose husband has recently died.

U22:
>   **Jack   :That is nonsense. If I marry a charming girl like Gwendolen, and she is the only girl I ever saw in my life that I would marry, I certainly won't want to know Bunbury.**
>   **Algernon :Then your wife will. <u>You don't seem to realize that in married life three is company and two is none</u> (487).**

Algernon's utterance combines contradictory words in such a way as to reverse a routinized speech act which is "two is company and three is none". The routinized speech act is reversed to reflect the reality of husbands and wives in the English house.

In the examples above, the combination of words, expressions and meanings which do not go together, "challenges our day-today, automatized realities and modes of meaning" (Herman 1995: 238). For instance, women look younger after their husbands' death, women's flirting with their husbands is scandalous, husbands usually forget about the fact that they are married and the natural place of the father is in the house. In Herman's terms, "when institutional events and conventional acts enter a play and their workings are dramatized, the-taken-for granted is defamiliarized" (Herman 1995: 208). For instance, when Jack blames Algernon for his opinion about faithfulness, affirming ironically that Divorce Courts are made specifically for people like Algernon, Algernon responds with the following utterance: "Divorces are made in heaven" (U9). The original conventional speech act is "marriages are made in heaven" as stated in the Bible. He is the same character who reverses the routinized speech act "two is company and three is none". In fact, the characters seem unaware of and playful with the laws which govern the institution of marriage.

However, the violation of the Maxim of Relation in the speech acts they use implies the intention of denouncing the state of marriage in Victorian society. Some characters like Algernon are not serious about the question and they have a cynical view of the situation of marriage. Even the representative of conventional and traditional marriage who is Lady Bracknell, is trapped into an absurd view about the subject when she says: "to speak frankly, I'm not in favour of long engagements. They give people the opportunity of finding out each other's character before marriage<u>, which is never advisable</u>" (U120). Her underlined utterance is irrelevant to what is said before by the same character because long engagements normally contribute to building a marriage on a strong basis. This strategy is used by Wilde in order to show the inability of the characters to distinguish between what is true and what is false. Moreover, since the characters are acting in a socio-cultural context, they are made to consider the question of marriage in this way as a strategy to denounce the situation of marriage in Victorian society.

4.2.4. Strategy # 4 / Theme # D

Whenever the characters deal with important issues related to culture such as literature, literary criticism, education, history, politics, art, music, philosophy, religion and modern culture, they do this suddenly and these issues are irrelevant to their initial subject which is more immediate to their speech situation. The following three examples illustrate this pattern:

U14:

   **Jack   : Of course it's   mine. [Moving to him]. You have seen me with it a
          hundred times, and you have no right whatsoever to read what is written
          inside. It is a very ungentlemanly thing to read a private cigarette case.
   Algernon: Oh! It is absurd to have a hard and fast rule about what one should read
          and what one shouldn't. More than half of modern culture depends on
          what one shouldn't read (483).**

   Jack utters an assertive speech act of blame. Algernon responds with an assertive speech
of protest. In fact, he goes beyond the protest against Jack's reproach to the protest against the
fact that half of the books which deal with modern culture are not published. The character
hints at censorship which is a crucial issue and it is dealt with suddenly and in irrelevance to
the subject of the cigarette case which is far less important and more immediate to their
speech situation.

U44:

   **Jack [After some hesitation.]: I know nothing, Lady Bracknell.
   Lady Bracknell   : I am pleased to hear it. I do not approve of anything
                      That tempers with natural ignorance. Ignorance is
                      like a delicate exotic fruit; touch it and the bloom is
                      gone. The whole theory of education is radically
                      unsound. Fortunately in England, at any rate,
                      education produces no effects whatsoever. If it did,
                      it would prove a serious danger to the upper classes,
                      and probably lead to acts of violence in Grosvenor
                      Square. What is your income? (493).**

Lady Bracknell deals with the subject of modern education suddenly which is irrelevant to the
initial subject which is testing the gentlemanly character of Jack. She wants to know the
amount of his knowledge but she goes beyond that to the criticism of the whole system of
modern education in England.

U124:

   **Lady Bracknell: [In a severe, judicial voice.] Prism! [Miss Prism bows her head
                in shame.] Come here, Prism! [Miss Prism approaches in a
                humble manner.] Prism Where is that baby? [General
                consternation. The Canon starts back in horror.
                Algernon and Jack pretend to be anxious to shield Cecily and
                Gwendolen from hearing the details of a terrible public
                scandal.]
                Twenty-eight years ago, Prism, you left Lord Bracknell's house,
                Number 104, Upper Grosvenor Street, in charge of a
                perambulator that contained a baby of a male sex. You never
                returned. A few weeks later,   through the   elaborate
                investigation of the metropolitan police, the perambulator
                was discovered at midnight, standing by itself in a remote
                written in bold   corner of Bayswater. It contained the
                manuscript of a three volume novel of more than   usually**

> **revolting   sentimentality**. **[Miss   Prism   starts   in**
> **involuntary   indignation.]   But   the   baby**
> **was not there! [Everyone looks at Miss Prism.] Prism! Where is**
> **that baby? (534).**

Lady Bracknell's utterance is irrelevant to the initial subject she deals with in the same speech turn. In a moment of anger and indignation, Lady Bracknell suddenly shifts to speaking about the theme of the novel. It is an implicit, and as if an accidental, criticism of the novels written in that period.

In these examples, the characters deviate suddenly from their subject matter to a more important issue in such a way that the axis of communication changes from character-character to stage-audience. Consequently, Strategy # 4 exemplifies an important characteristic of dramatic discourse which is the existence of two axes of communication namely, the fictional axis and the theatrical one. Rozik (2000) argues that the axis of communication changes from character-character to stage-audience when the playwright intends to convey a message to the audience which is usually belief change (Rozik 2000: 124). It is exactly what happens when strategy # 4 occurs and reoccurs in the play. What motivates the use of this strategy when these issues are dealt with?

It is typical of Wilde to deal with important cultural issues in a sudden way *In the Importance of Being Earnest*. In fact, being irrelevant to what is said before and being dealt with suddenly, these issues seem to be treated accidentally rather than deliberately, which is a pragmatic strategy for an implicit criticism. It is very clever of Wilde to undertake a double criticism through this strategy. First, he questions the validity of what is allowed to be read and the validity of modern education, of literary criticism, of history, of some literary genre like middle class novels and all the cultural features of Victorian society. Second, he criticizes the fact that people are forbidden from dealing with these issues in public or in a direct way, which explains the resort of his characters to strategy # 4. In fact, strategy # 4 is the resort of the playwright himself and not just of Algernon and Jack.

4.3. Conclusion: Irrelevance/seriousness

The four patterns described, interpreted and evaluated above constitute macro speech acts which deal with norms of behavior, hospitality, marriage and culture. Each macro speech act is marked by the violation of the Maxim of Relation which generates implicature. According to Strategy # 1/ Theme # A, it is implied that the characters want to escape from the norms of behavior because these norms are frustrating. With reference to Strategy # 2/ Theme # B, it is implied that the characters prefer to be preoccupied with the trivial act of eating, enjoying the playfulness with the norms of hospitality rather than bothering with the burden of social problems. According to Strategy # 3/ Theme # C, it is implied that the characters have a cynical view of the institution of marriage because people are no longer serious about it. According to Strategy # 4/ Theme # D, it is implied that the characters aim to question the validity of cultural features in Victorian society.

As a conclusion, irrelevance stems from the permanent inability of the characters to distinguish between the serious and the trivial or rather from the inability to be either serious or not serious. They escape from taking a final choice between the two and enjoy being playful with all the norms, conventions, rules and values of their society. U104 reflects this tendency:

U104:

> **Algernon: <u>Well, one must be serious about something, if one wants to have any amusement in life. I happen to be serious about Bunburying. What on earth you are serious about I haven't got the remotest idea. About everything, I should fancy. You have such an absolutely trivial nature</u>. (522).**

Just in one utterance, the character violates the Maxim of Relation three times: Someone should be serious for amusement; Algernon is serious about Bunburying; Jack has a trivial character because he is serious about everything.

This conclusion is significant to the literary text as a whole because it establishes its unity: There is a unifying strategy which is irrelevance and a unifying theme which is seriousness.

5. Conclusion

It has been proved that speech act theory is relevant to the study of *The Importance of Being Earnest.* The marked use of speech acts manifested in the violation of the Maxim of Relation is characterized by four pragmatic strategies. Whenever one of these strategies is used, it is more likely to deal with a specific theme which explains the interrelationship strategy/theme supported by this study.

The significance of this pragmatic study is that it relates the play to its socio-cultural context. In order to question the social values of Victorian society, the characters show lack of **seriousness** about the different social features of that society, especially when they utter **irrelevant** speech acts to their immediate discourse situation.

Besides relating the play to its socio-cultural context, this pragmatic study maintains the specificity of the dramatic discourse. The violation of the Maxim of Relation results in ironic speech acts and in comic situations which reflect the genre of the play as a comedy of manners.

As a result of this pragmatic study, the play is characterized by a high predictability concerning which strategy is used with which theme leading to think about a mechanical structure. In fact, this mechanical structure is behind Bernard Shaw's description of Wilde's play as having a banal structure (Raby 1988: 120). Within this respect, the contribution of the present study is to show that behind this mechanical structure lay implied meanings that the most complex structures may not be able to convey. In fact, *The Importance of Being Earnest* does things with its words rather than with its plot or structure.

This study chooses to focus on the violation of the Maxim of Relation; however, this does not indicate that the only pragmatic tool which contributes to the global meaning of the play is the violation of the Maxim of Relation. The play is still open for other pragmatic studies from other perspectives. Moreover, the interrelationship strategy/theme that the present study argues for should be interpreted as a marked recurrent pattern in the play rather than as a strategy which governs the whole of it. In fact, literature is always open for more than one interpretation; therefore, the same conclusion should apply to pragmatic interpretation of literature.

References

- Alexander, E. (2000). *A history of English literature.* Palgrave.

-Austin, J. L. (1962). How to do things with words. In Jaworski, A. and Coupland, N. (eds.).(1999). *The discourse reader.* Routledge: London, 63-75.

-Bollobàs, E. (1981). "Who is afraid of irony?": An analysis of uncooperative behavior in Edward Albee's *Who is Afraid of Virginia Woolf. Journal of pragmatics,* 5, 325 334.

-Buck, R. A. (1997). Towards an extended theory of farce action: Analyzing dialogue in E. M. Foster's *A Passage to India. Journal of pragmatics,* 27, 83-106.

-Coulthard, M. (1985). *An introduction to discourse analysis.* London: Longman.

-Evans, B. I. (1948). *A history of English drama.* Penguin Books.

-Grice, H. P. (1975). Logic and conversation. In Jaworski, A. and Coupland, N.
 (eds.). (1999). *The discourse reader.* Routledge: London, 76-89.

-Grundy, P. (1995). *Doing pragmatics.* Edward Arnold. London.

-Harker, W. J. (1999). Inferential processing and the comprehension of the literary
 text. *Journal of literary semantics,* 28, 79-91.

-Herman, V. (1995). *Dramatic discourse: Dialogue as interaction in plays.* Routledge: London.

-Leech, G. (1983). *Principles of pragmatics.* London: Longman.

-Leech, G. (1992). Pragmatic principles in Shaw' s *You Never Can Tell.* In
Toolan, M. (ed.). (1992). *Language, text and context: Essays in stylistics.*
Routledge: London, 259-280.

-Marmaridou, S. (2000). On speech acts. In *Pragmatic meaning and
cognition.* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamin Publishing Company.

-Oltean, S. (1999). Fictionality as a pragmatic and referential category. *Journal of literary semantics*, 28, 92-104.

-Pollard, A. (1969). Introduction. In Pollard, A. (ed.). *The penguin history of literature: The Victorians.* Sphere Books.

-Pratt, M. L. (1977). *Towards a speech act theory of literary discourse.* Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indiana.

-Raby, P. (1988). *Oscar Wilde.* Cambridge University Press.

-Rozik, E. (2000). The pragmatic nature of theatrical discourse: The performance-
 text as a macro speech act. *Journal of literary semantics*, 29, 123-134.

-Searle, J. R. (1969). *Speech act: An essay in the philosophy of language.* Cambridge: Cambridge U.P.

-Searle, J. R. (1979). *Expression and meaning.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

-Stubbs, M. (1983). *Discourse analysis: The sociolinguistic analysis of natural language.* Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

-Toolan, M. (2000). "What makes you think you exist?" : A speech move schematic and its application to Pinter's *The Birthday Party*. *Journal of pragmatics*, 32, 177-201.

-Triki, M. (1998). How does a poem perform? *Lettre de Kairouan*, 4, 15-35.

-Triki, M. & Sellami-Baklouti, A. (2002). *Foundation for a course on the pragmatics of discourse.* Imprimerie Reliure d'Art , Sfax, Tunisia.

-Wilde, O. (1895). *The Importance of Being Earnest.* Penguin Books.

-Worth, K. (1992). Oscar Wilde. *Modern dramatist series*. Macmillan.

The Infernal Automobile: Car Culture in the Fiction of J.M.G. Le Clézio

James   Boucher
University of Iowa, USA

Abstract

This paper proposes an analysis of the culture of the automobile in J.M.G Le Clézio's early fiction. Tracing the emergence of the automobile as icon and myth during the trente glorieuses of post-war France, cinematic representations of the car in Jacques Tati's Mon Oncle anchor a discussion of the unintended consequences of the ubiquity of the personal vehicle in French urban spaces. Le Clézio's texts create a complex image of the automobile as anathema to the natural environment, social cohesiveness, and individual identity. Rather than being represented as liberating, the idealized culture of the car is problematized as providing neither mobility nor freedom.

Keywords: eco-criticism, capitalism, car culture, pollution, consumerism, space.

1. Introduction: The Car and Its Consequences

The economic basis of Western society is facing more and more scrutiny as it becomes undeniable that the capitalist model of production and consumption is proving untenable given the limited natural resources available to us and the rest of the Earth's myriad species (Paterson 255). Underlying this system is one product that has emblematized and helped to perpetuate it: the car. The automobile performs "the activity most embedded in ideologies of the free market: displacement" (Ross 22). The car and its agency of displacement have radically changed the surface of the planet. Roads now crisscross every country and traverse areas that were once wild, remote, and, for most, inaccessible. The countryside has been transformed, but the cityscape has all but been defined, not by the ideals of human comfort or aesthetics, but by the car and its spatial requirements and accommodations. One of the most affected metropolitan areas in this respect is Los Angeles where two-thirds of all land space is devoted to parking and circulating automobiles (Paterson 260). Cars have also fundamentally altered man's relationship with the world around him in ways that go well beyond land use. Humanity has managed to shrink space and free time thanks to the speed of the motor vehicle. This has revolutionized commerce and communications, but has, more importantly, given man a new sense of power over his environment and the constraints of physical being, in general. Jean Baudrillard, writing in 1967, describes the liberating, spiritual aspect of speed in this way: "Mobility without effort constitutes a kind of unreal happiness, a suspension of existence, an irresponsibility. Speed's effect, by integrating space and time, is one of leveling the world to two dimensions, to an image; it loses its depth and its becoming; in some ways it brings about a sublime immobility and a contemplative state. At more than a hundred miles an hour, there's a presumption of eternity" (Ross 21).

In his novel *Terra Amata*, also published in 1967, J.M.G. Le Clézio presents an opposing trajectory of car culture when he describes the imprisonment of the traffic jam as an apocalyptic descent into hell, a point I will come back to later. In addition, for many car owners, a car is not only a means to get from one location to another, but it also speaks to who we are. It is a strong symbol of identification, and as such, it is an object that has profoundly affected social conflict and the ever-widening problem of wealth distribution and disparity in the developed and developing worlds (Paterson 257). Throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, the car has played a prominent role in "shaping and reshaping urban and non-urban spaces, ways of thinking and being, and modes of social interaction" (Inglis 197).

The overwhelmingly negative consequences of the automotive industry on the environment, however, have been well studied and documented. It is not in the scope of the current project to provide a detailed review of that statistical material. It is clear that the car, and its ever increasing use in Western and Non-Western contexts alike, has wide-ranging effects on ecosystems. From air pollution and catalyzing climate shifts to frenetic resource consumption and depletion, the car is an active agent of environmental destruction (Paterson 256). Michael Paterson, in an analysis of world politics and the environment, goes beyond the carbon footprint of the sedan on the freeway to illuminate the leviathan extent of automotive influence on a global scale. The three main aspects of this hegemony are that: "the car industry has been instrumental in creating the transnational flows associated with globalization; that the reproduction of a globalizing capitalism has involved the expansion of the car industry as that industry made crucial contributions to securing accumulation; and that the state has been highly involved in promoting the car over its competitors, both because of the state's structural role in promoting accumulation, and because of the consequences of

interstate competition, the importance of a car industry for development, and in some instances the car industry's connection to a state's war-making capacities" (257). (Interestingly, it was the production of armaments, the majority of tanks used by the French army during World War I, which established Renault as an industrial power) (Ross 15). The car industry, as archetype of the generalized capitalist industrial model, is characterized by the methodology of Fordism. Expanded as a general theoretical framework for economic development, the techniques of car production, distribution, and marketing have had an incredible impact on economic growth after the period of decolonization (Paterson 262-3). The automobile and its attendant industrial infrastructures were "the central vehicle of all twentieth-century modernization" (Ross 19).

Vogues of production style and structural organization were not the only concepts that made their way across the Atlantic after the war, however. One of the most important American exports to France at the time was an ideal of development, modernization, and expansion that was predicated, in large part, on a healthful, burgeoning automotive industry (Ross 4, 10). In post-war France, the car industry was a chief factor in launching the boom of the *Trente Glorieuses*, a period of remarkable urbanization that brought into being a society of mass consumption *à l'américaine*. André Citroën promoted Fordist structures in the Citroën factory in Paris after the Second World War, and the partially state-supported automotive company Renault espoused the same principles, making France one of the world's leading auto producers (Inglis 199-201). In purely practical terms, the economic, political, and environmental ramifications of the automobile in the modern world have been immeasurable. In the figural realm of ideas and images, however, the car has procured an equally iconic status. As Guy Debord posited in his Situationist Theses on Traffic, the car is: "the most notable material symbol of the notion of happiness that developed capitalism tends to spread throughout the society. The automobile is at the heart of this general propaganda, both as supreme good of an alienated life and as essential product of the capitalist market…" (Debord).

2. The Automobile in France

During the rapid fire economic growth of the *Trente Glorieuses* (the thirty years following the end of the Second World War), the personal automobile became ubiquitous in France. Before and immediately following the Second World War, the car was a luxury item restricted to a relatively small group of elites. From the mid-1950s, significant numbers of upper working and lower middle class consumers became car owners (Inglis 201). The government-supported move to modernize key industrial sectors across the economy following the precepts of Fordism, the most crucial of these being the automotive sector, had freed capital and increased buying power throughout French society; and, after 1949, this extra money was employed primarily to buy cars (Ross 19). However, it was the exploding class of middle managers in technocratic companies, known as *cadres*, "who were the particular avatars of the burgeoning consumer economy, in which automobiles and household goods such as refrigerators were increasingly sold as essentials of life" (Inglis 201). During the 1950s and 1960s, as a requisite for the economic explosion, the displacement afforded by a personal vehicle was essential (Ross 22).

Many of the cultural consequences of automobile ownership and the emerging technocrat lifestyle can be seen in the film *Mon Oncle* by Jacques Tati (1958). The commute of the brother-in-law of the title character, Charles Arpel, from his ultramodern, gadget-filled home to *Plastac*, the rubber hose factory where he works in middle-management, is the embodiment

of the need for mobility during the period. The cranes and high-rise apartment buildings that mark the silhouette of the new side of town are predicated upon the automobile and the movement it allows. The striking visual contrast between the garbage collector with his horse-drawn cart in the center of the old town that opens the film and the gaudy green and pink Cadillac that Charles offers as an anniversary gift to his wife in the new town figure a radical turning point in French society that has consequences, not only for spatial, but also social relationships.

Spatially, Tati reverts visually to a liminal space between the old and new town many times throughout the film. The shot frames the cranes and high-rises in the gap of a crumbling wall that marks the end of the old town and the beginning of the new. Significantly, the boundary is marked on the other side by a highway. In this way, Tati emphasizes the destructive nature of modernization that threatens to supplant traditional lifeways. The organic dirtiness of the old town, marked by the street sweeper, who seemingly moves the same rubbish pile back and forth throughout the film without ever cleaning a thing, is contrasted with the obsessive, sterile, empty cleanliness of the new town. The new town is also characterized by the omnipresence of cars. Tati bombards the viewer with many shots of traffic and cars moving in robotic, synchronized fashion.

Socially, the solidarity of the residents of the old town is illustrated by a scene of drunken singing and confraternity following a brawl caused by a humorous misunderstanding concerning the illegal dumping of some industrial waste in the local river. The scene ends with everyone being driven home on the horse-drawn cart that symbolizes an older, more fulfilling way of life. Conversely, the frigidity and maladroitness of the garden party in the new town shows an inherent lack of social integration. In this scene, the male guests speak only about work and the female guests about the appliances in the kitchen and interior decorating. At one point, a crisis, the failure of one of the decorative gizmos in the yard (an aluminum water fountain in the form of a surreal metallic fish), leaves one of the guests sitting, utterly ignored and forgotten at a table. Tati uses the awkward silences arising from the lack of sociability to accentuate the tension for comedic effect, portraying a disconnectedness that borders on disorder. One of the female guests repeatedly bursts out in loud, grating laughter at the futility and ineptness of the gathering, at once pointing out to the spectator what should be deemed ridiculous and unnatural and, at the same time, personifying the very lack of social grace and humanity that Tati is criticizing.

As burlesque as the film may be, *Mon Oncle* offers disturbingly enlightened insight into a world that was made possible by the automobile (*Mon Oncle*). Humanity's relationship with his physical environment has been drastically altered. That environment itself has been degraded and transformed to accommodate the car. The mobility that it has promised is illusory, an encumbrance to fulfillment. The car does not deliver freedom or happiness, as advertised. The social fabric of human existence has been unraveled by the car and the models of modernization and mass consumption that have directly resulted from its production, distribution, and marketing, as characterized by the advent and expansion of Fordist paradigms to broader, more wide-spread practices of industrialization in French society. These aspects of the automobile and its cultural legacy are portrayed in provocative ways in some of the early works of J.M.G. Le Clézio.

The car as a material object, commercial product, and cultural sign was a central aspect of the early fiction of J.M.G. Le Clézio. Jean-Marie-Gustave Le Clézio was born in Nice in 1940. He has been a prolific writer across many genres since the early 1960s. He garnered

the Prix Renaudot in 1963 for his first novel, *The Interrogation*, and the Grand Prix Paul-Morand in 1980 for his novel *Desert*. He attained the pinnacle of international literary recognition in 2008 when he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. I examine here the manifold portrayals of the car and car culture in two of his early works of fiction: *Terra Amata* (1967) and *The Giants* (1973). Both works were published during the *Trente Glorieuses* and dealt significantly with the automobile specifically, and, more generally, the environmental and social fallout of an emerging consumerist society.

3. Pollution, Non-Space, and The Hell of Immobility in the fiction of J.M.G Le Clézio

Pollution is one of the main environmental degradations yoked to the automobile. Le Clézio deals with this element of automobile use and its impact on the physical environment in various ways. One of the most prevalent instances of automobile-based pollution can be found in references to air pollution, which is often marked by a characteristic heat in Le Clézio's descriptions. Pervasive odors and smells emanate from cars tied up in traffic jams and radiate out into surrounding environments: "Around the motionless caravan the heat too rose upwards trembling, and an acrid smell of overheated radiators spread out a few inches above the ground" (Le Clézio, *Terra Amata* 112). These pernicious odors are invasive to the point of infiltrating the entire atmosphere and surrounding the lines of traffic in a warm, harsh fog. "Everywhere there was the same fury of faces, the same shrieking voices, smells of gas and hot oil, and desperate movement. To the left arose the huge white walls of blocks of flats. In the middle the tide of cars buzzed in its burning cloud" (Le Clézio, *Terra Amata* 113). Not only are the polluting odors disseminating across the cityscape, but they also penetrate and enter the human bodies of Le Clézio's characters.

In *The Giants*, the character Machines is ironically enamored with the Gulf gas-station where he goes to enjoy an orange soda everyday on his break from the megastore Hyperpolis. The polluted odors associated with cars take on a mock pleasantness, although they are clearly invasive and deleterious: "There was the odor, too. Machines were very fond of the odor that floated in the air here, an odor compounded of petrol, oil, grease and sludge. He inhaled these gases, and the odor of Gulf permeated his lungs and arteries, as sharp and searching as a bright beam of light" (Le Clézio, *The Giants* 212). Instead of the car being a product that serves humanity, it has become dangerous, a product that may harm and whose chemical pollutants may invade our bodies. Not only does it carry out its nefarious work of contamination virtually unnoticed; the experience of pollution has even become a guilty pleasure of the unwitting. Instead of offering protection from the outside world, it has made the environment uninhabitable.

> The young woman was driving with the car windows open, and she could smell the odor of the gases that were entering her lungs. There was even a sort of very fine dust hanging in the air: clouds of microscopic metal filings, sent swirling up by the wheels of passing cars. It really was rather frightening to cross through this whole iron landscape, inside a car, like that, when one's own body was made of tender flesh" (Le Clézio, *The Giants* 80).

The possession has turned here against the possessor. The liberty promised by the displacement typically linked to the automobile has proven to be an imprisonment, a point I return to later. The image of microscopic metal filings could be read metaphorically and literally as an allusion to the technologies of mass-scale production linked to the automobile and their unintended destructive consequences, the nearly unnoticed traces left behind that continue to damage the soft, living creatures that are exposed to them.

Air pollution isn't the only disruptive effect of the motor vehicle presented in the Le Clézio texts; noise pollution is another inescapable result of the ubiquity of cars and the changing shape of the cityscape.

> Car hooters blared ceaselessly, there were grotesque yells of laughter, and cries, and the music of the electric guitar reverberated from all the transistors: and it was a calm harmonious concert that stirred your inside and made you tremble. All this had been prepared to crush and conquer you. There was no mildness anywhere, no hiding-place of gentle shadow. Everywhere there were stars of noise and heat and light…" (Le Clézio, *Terra Amata* 117).

The non-stop bleating of car horns and the incessant, all-encompassing throb of the electric guitar music (which is playing on the car radio) commingle with the barely audible grotesque voices coming from outside the vehicle to create an auditory onslaught that produces a visceral, corporal reaction in the listener. The voluntarism of this deformation of space and the natural environment becomes evident when Le Clézio tells the reader (who is addressed directly by the second person personal pronoun 'you' and, thus, assumes a status equal with that of the main character, Chancelade, sharing his discomfort and vulnerability) that the coordinated sounds of this sonorous attack were 'prepared' by some undisclosed entity. Here, Le Clézio hints at the involvement of the French government in the industrial complex, policies of modernization, and the development and promotion of mass consumption during the period following the Second World War, likewise denouncing the industrial giants profiting from the system.

The highway, one of the quintessential spaces of car culture, is also an important source of noise pollution:

> The road kept growling and snarling. It was a very wide, very flat road that ran parallel to the sea. Countless engines streaked along it, one behind the other, pounding away on their wheels, gliding, vanishing. The sea made its own noise, too, but no one heard it. All that could be heard was the snarling of the engines arriving, leaving, disappearing. Often, three or four engines passed each other in opposite directions at the same moment, and that made a strange noise that disintegrated like a shell exploding" (Le Clézio, *The Giants* 203).

The leveling presence of the hum of the highway has annihilated the sounds of the natural world, the crashing of the ocean waves. The accumulative effect of several cars passing by simultaneously is figured by a weapon. The proximity of the beauty of the natural world is obliterated by the domineering canine vociferations of "engines" endowed with a will of their own.

The dual symbols of objects of subjugation, the dog and the machine, have turned the tables, dominating mankind and the environment. Accentuating the unforeseen ecological and societal consequences of technological productions, cars are portrayed as uncontrollable, overwhelming the natural world and mastering humanity, instead of the other way around. In the immediately subsequent passage, Le Clézio, as in his descriptions of the scattering of noxious odors and gases, describes sounds as hovering just above ground level: "Horns, brakes and tires also sent their noises skimming over the hot asphalt. These sounds were not high in the sky. They were earthbound, existing an inch or two above the road, and one became aware of them mostly through the soles of the feet" (Le Clézio, *The Giants* 203). The perception of sound "through the soles of the feet" attributes a seismic substantiality to the freeway traffic. The two previous citations present highway noise pollution as a disruptive

sonic conquest that alters the landscape by silencing nature and relegates humans to a secondary, submissive role vis-à-vis the material extensions and prerogatives of their own creation, the car.

One of the important ways in which the preponderance of automobiles has refashioned urban and non-urban spaces alike is the excessive proliferation of signage. In both novels roadside signage and the visual blitzkrieg they wage on the motorist constitutes another, equally invasive and penetrating form of pollution: semiotic pollution. The rapid fire sequence of signs is depicted in *The Giants* as one long hyphenated word that accentuates the blurring of spatial and semantic boundaries brought about by the speed of car travel through the condensed urban environment. "The tree-like poles, their flashing lights extinguished; and the antennae vibrating, wordless, in the wind; and the cafés-bars-self-service store-post office-pharmacy-supermarket-drive-in banks-casino-bookshop-Cultural Centers-hotel-station-toll-barrier-cinema-cinema-cinema, all motionless now…" (Le Clézio, *The Giants* 20). [I have changed some aspects of the translation here to more closely reflect the original French text, many of the terms in Taylor's translation were rendered in the plural when they appear in the singular in the French version. The plural forms don't accurately reproduce the effect of visualization that I believe Le Clézio was attempting to represent in this passage. In addition, this aspect of visualization is further emphasized in the original French version by the use of recognizable terms such as *P.M.U* which refers to betting on horse races and would typically be seen at a small tobacco shop or café. Some of these terms are understandably left out of Taylor's translation. Another significant element that is not translated in the English translation of the original French text is the corporate name *ANTAR*, a French petrochemical company]. Le Clézio contextualizes the scene as the driving of a vehicle by the presence of the light poles compared to trees and the antennae that are not those of insects, but those of cars. Then, any road-literate reader can easily visualize the continuous series of names (even more continuous in the original French text) announcing the various establishments of any typical street. This surfeit of words and letters going by the car window in alacritous succession leads to an unnerving disintegration of and dissociation from meaning that has its own representation on the page in the form of the contiguity expressed by the use of the hyphen. This obscuring of borders changes the nature of space as it is presented to the automobilist. Space has shrunk and melted into one conglomeration of incomprehensible language, a linguistic representation devoid of semantic significance, a nonsensical (but easily recognizable) list rather than a real space.

Le Clézio employs the same strategy of listing to shroud modes of identification and muddy barriers in *Terra Amata*, jumbling human identity with merchandise and advertising in a way that underscores the automobile's complicity in the broader project of modernization, consumerism, and commodification:

> You must have your name written up with all the other names and offer it in the enormous perpetual market. True, all these names are also the names of all the men and all the women. Their infinite identity is written there, along with many other things. They are called Bar, Beach Restaurant, Drugstore, Tobacconist, Rialto Cinema, Ricord's Wineshop, Rhônelec, Pax Cinema, Butcher's, Philips, Interflora, Barclays Bank, Forum Cinema, H. Thomas, Dental Surgeon, Casino, B.P., Mercedes, Toyota, Evinrude. Telephone. Station. Airport. George's Hair Salon. Waterman. Pepsi-Cola. Whisky. Cinzano. Kodak. Motorway. Krung Thong. Chesterfield. Perugina. Caution, icy surface! Danger, lorry exit. Silence, hospital. All the voices speak at once, with their neon letters, their hooters and sirens, their blood-red paint" (Le Clézio, *Terra Amata* 212-3).

The infinitude of human identity is linked to the endless possibilities of economic expansion and the ever-stretching road in this vertiginous example of the ocular overstimulation of driving, in which Le Clézio conveys semiotic pollution's potential to inflict harm with terms such as "caution", "danger", "hospital", and "blood". Changes in space, inevitably lead to a disintegration of identification, belonging to a specific place. "When bulldozers erase the land,… …it's in the most concrete sense, the most spatial sense, that marks of identity are erased, as well" (Augé 63).

In an illuminating scene that further obfuscates essential markers of identification and threatens violence, the girlfriend of Tranquillity is driving through the city at night when she is attacked by light and words in another terrifying exemplification of semiotic pollution. The nature of nighttime has been deformed by electric light and the lights of cars and neon advertisements. Even at night, "There were so many lights that one needed dark glasses to save the eyes from being blinded" (Le Clézio, *The Giants* 79). The light can blind; and, in this horrid passage, words are equipped with a will to "kill and smash" while "stalking their prey", the driver. In the first of a series of transformations, the words detach from their signs and become a giant cloud of moths that the young woman's vehicle cleaves through in an attempt to kill as many of the letter-moths as possible.

The choice of the moth as symbolization of advertisement is significant for many reasons. Le Clézio is signaling the ambiguity of the lighted roadside sign. The moth is generally attracted to light, but the moths in Le Clézio's imaginary are emitters of light rather than light-seekers. In an innovative use of metonymic reversal, they are not portrayed as being fascinated by the gleam; instead, they are a luminous lure themselves: "They swooped aimlessly across the road, glowing, flickering out, tracing sarabands of light. Tranquillity's friend watched them, scared but at the same time wonderstruck. They were really beautiful moths, their mottled black wings shimmering with golden stars, spangles, drops of blood" (Le Clézio, *The Giants* 81). The polyvalence of the zoomorphized road signs is stressed here. In a reversal of roles that is a common trait of Le Clézio's rhetorical style, the motorist is bewitched by them in much the same way that a moth is drawn to the sparkle of lights. Simultaneously, the young woman is frightened and wary of their latent malevolence. The figure of moth-like attraction indicates an involuntary action with fatalistic and self-destructive connotations.

Changes in space and humanity's relationship with its surroundings in the urban context is linked to a replacement of the primary position of nature and the natural environment by a second, constructed one based on industrial economic (and often automobile and mobility) related imperatives associated with the rise of consumerism. The "golden stars" on the wings of the bats are a reference to the substitution of the real stars with neon, man-made impostors. The flecks of "blood" are a reminder of the violent, aggressive character of words in this harrowing formulation. The words subsequently transform into bats and clouds of smoke, further symbols of danger and destruction. In addition, they are symbolized by "volcanoes, stars, and suns" that fill the city with a "red glow" (Le Clézio, *The Giants* 81). In a metaphorical movement that shifts gradually from the diminutive to the cosmic, a technique that is characteristic of his early writing, Le Clézio takes this maniacal barrage of words from fluttering moths to an all-encompassing presence that erases the entire natural world including human distinctiveness and identity: "There were so many letters, even more letters than there are bats inside a cave. There were so many letters that everything was blotted out: sky, earth, houses, and human faces" (Le Clézio, *The Giants* 82). The destruction outside quickly becomes penetrative, as with the other forms of pollution discussed above, the words enter the

body, this time with detrimental consequences for the psyche. The words and letters are detached from all meaning; the signified is irreparably torn from the signifier, leading to confusion and disorientation. The unrecognizable "alien letters" are no longer seen as belonging to any "earthly writing system", which is a paradoxically "frightening" and "intoxicating" discovery for the young woman (Le Clézio, *The Giants* 82). As the hysteria mounts, the entire landscape is visually represented on the page by a bewildering array of letters in a loose, haphazard organization (Le Clézio, *The Giants* 86). Unstable, its constitution transfigures and morphs its dimensions and contours with dizzying rapidity.

When the young woman finally reaches her destination (echoing themes from the previous quote from *Terra Amata* discussed above), the penetration and dissolution of personal identity has been completely effectuated:

> …[she] shut off the engine of her car. For quite a long time she looked at the unending street with all its separate letters dancing and its light-filled tubes crackling like insects. She listened to the cries, and she allowed many words to enter her, through the eyes, the ears, the mouth, the whole skin. When they were inside her body she became a fragment of the street, like all the rest" (Le Clézio, *The Giants* 88).

The internalization of the decomposition of meaning dehumanizes and denatures. The fragmentation of personal identity is realized in this scene through the baffling aggression of the glaring words of road signs, which like many other elements of the modernizing and industrializing France of the period, were a by-product of the attempted universalization of the automobile, a prosaic example of its environmental and psychological effects. The metonymic reversal is righted. It is now humanity that is "crackling" and burning up like a moth that's flown too close to the light.

To better understand how semiotic pollution effects humanity and its identification with the environment, I turn to the theories of Marc Augé. In his book, Non-Places: An Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity, Augé assigns the theoretical appellation of "non-place" to a space that cannot define itself as having any characteristics that are relational, historical, or affirmative of personal identity (110). Augé posits that the traveler is the quintessential example of a person inhabiting "non-space" (110). In the passage discussed above, the language and, therefore, the landscape are foreign and incomprehensible to the young woman driving through the city of signs. In what Augé describes as a particular form of modern solitude associated with "non-places" such as the highway, movement removes any signification from what one looks at (117). The gaze blends with its object and is transformed through a *mirroring* process into the object of an unidentifiable second subject (Augé 117). This *mirroring* process results in identification with the interpellations of advertisement that seek to define the viewer (Augé 126). The tendency to self-identify with the words and messages of the roadscape, while, simultaneously these messages have been rendered meaningless and insignificant leads to the disintegration of identity that occurs in the Le Clézio text when, after being penetrated by the malicious publicity of the highway, the young woman "became a fragment of the street, like all the rest" (Le Clézio, *The Giants* 88).

The lack of significance, of meaning anchored in the world around us, that Le Clézio associated with car travel and the car's imposition on the structures and peripherals of urban space as experienced inside of a moving automobile, is depicted in an equally disconcerting way in the 1983 film *Koyaanisqatsi* directed by Godfrey Reggio. Through a variety of time-lapse shots of moving traffic, Reggio visually challenges the value of the supposed freedom of displacement promised by cars. The time-lapse shot lends itself well to his cinematic

objectives.   The immobility of the camera and the ceaseless array of cars moving in all directions raise the question: where are all these cars going? And, by correlation, where are we going? The stable gaze of the camera focused on the bustle of traffic flow incites this kind of criticism by suppressing images of arrival and departure, in favor of constant images of dislocation.   The movement is further manipulated by speeding-up shots to a nauseatingly frenetic tempo.   In some of the most high-velocity nocturnal shots, the red glow of taillights gives the impression of flowing electric blood in some heedless, headless organism.   In this analysis, the blood is not the necessary fluid that keeps the system operational.   It is both the cause and effect of the system and its excesses of pollution and social disintegration.   Reggio comments on the social consequences of all this senseless movement and modern imbalance by cutting from shots of urban movement, such as traffic or escalators in train stations, to slow-motion close-ups of the disillusioned, unsmiling, haggard faces of the inhabitants of the megalopolis.   Using these cinematic techniques, Reggio visually attempts to elucidate the same philosophical questionings/conclusions as the fictional formulations of J.M.G. Le Clézio.   The environment surrounding us has lost purpose and meaning and humanity's implication in the perpetuation of that environment is largely based upon humanity's espousal of the car as an essential aspect of modern life.   The ironic vision of immobility that is the side effect of the cinematic technique of time-lapse in *Koyaanisqatsi* has remarkable resonances in one of the most topically germane sections of *Terra Amata* for this study, the chapter entitled: In a Region That Resembled Hell (*Koyaanisqatsi*).

Le Clézio represents a descent from agentivity to passivity in this section of *Terra Amata*. The relationship between humanity and its possessions and between humanity and its environment has been drastically altered.   The scene employs one of the most well-known (and unpleasant) tropes of car culture: the traffic jam. Le Clézio presents an evolution in the power dynamic between humanity and the car that ends with the domination of humanity by the automobile. In the first stage, humanity is in hierarchical command; there is a contestation of superiority, of possession and control: "One day Chancelade went through a region that resembled hell.   He was sitting in a blue car driven by his wife" (Le Clézio, *Terra Amata* 110).   The woman is active and the car is passive.   Le Clézio quickly passes to the second stage of the evolution in the relationship between man and machine, an anthropomorphism of the car that serves to endow it with agency and human-like qualities.   This representation has an equalizing result that puts mankind and the automobile in parallel.   Le Clézio says this about cars: "…yes, it was just as if there was a heart inside this carapace of metal and plastic, a heart and mechanical lungs, and as if the whole world were inhabited by steel robots" (*Terra Amata* 110).   The attribution of human organs is reinforced by the word "inhabited" ("peopled" in the original French text).   Despite the heart's symbolic connection to emotion, here, the cars, in a Cartesian formulation, are only endowed with mechanical likenesses to mankind.   Listening to music, smoking, and gazing out the window, the main character, Chancelade, is a passive element, while the car takes on an increasingly active role.   "The blue car drove on by itself along the road, and Chancelade looked at the sea… …He smoked another cigarette without saying anything, the prisoner of the metal machine bowling along" (Le Clézio, *Terra Amata* 110). Even though the reader is told at the beginning of the chapter that Chancelade's wife Mina is actually driving the car, the impression is that the car and the traffic are in control.   The car driving on "by itself" takes Chancelade "prisoner" and he impassibly accepts.   The theme of immobility is predominant in the text. Le Clézio insists on the car being the opposite of what humanity has been told it will be.   It does not liberate.   It does not provide freedom of movement.   It imprisons.   Chancelade's wife, Mina exclaims: " 'The traffic!   We shall never get to town before two.'   But Chancelade didn't hear.   He just continued to lie back on the cushions gazing avidly at the world rushing by" (Le Clézio, *Terra*

Amata 111). The overabundance of vehicles, the oppressive traffic is an impediment to the proposed mobility of the automobile. The automobile has "peopled" the roadways at an uncontrollable rate that has surpassed humanity's capacity to rectify the imbalance and, thus, has negated one of its principal supposed advantages. One of the other dangers of automobile travel stops traffic in the scene: an accident ahead. Air pollution (112) and semiotic pollution (113) bombard Chancelade in his car.

All of the unforeseen side effects of the car culture converge on Chancelade in the following passage:

> This was the real curse of this place, the infernal power that was taking possession of his mind and body in order to reduce him to slavery. The world had suddenly turned over to show its hidden face, and nothing was any longer comprehensible. As the words exploded the landscape gradually fell to pieces, showering the motionless car with the debris of human bodies and artefacts of civilization" (Le Clézio, *Terra Amata* 114).

The urban environment that has been shaped by the car in order to free man from the existential restraints of time and space has failed to fulfill its primary function of mobility and displacement. Inversely, the "place" is now taking "possession" of humanity and reducing it to complete subjugation. The immobility of the vehicle, its motionlessness, instigates a reaction. The culture of the car, its definition of physical space with the attendant madness imposed by the semiotic jumble it entails has a cost. The human cadavers and the ruins of civilization are its necessary victims. In showing the evolution from possession to equal to master, Le Clézio predicts the societal ramifications of the automobile and the consumption practices that it engenders.

The setting in which this shifting axis of domination plays out paints a stark picture indeed, an environment completely stripped and void that will accompany the slavish fate of humankind:

> And gradually the landscape was transformed. It didn't really change; but everything began to shine more harshly, more violently, as if the damp softness of the air had been removed. It was as if for days a terrible wind had been blowing, a furnace discharging desert sand that grain by grain weathered the world to the bone, leaving nothing to be seen but bare angles, points, edges, and spikes. The ground was dry now, burned by the light, and nothing grew up between the pebbles but thick weeds with long sharp prickles" (Le Clézio, *Terra Amata* 112).

The characteristic textual elements of air and semiotic pollution as discussed above are directly implicated here. Two of the principal forces behind the barrenness of the land are heat and light, producing a sharp, uninviting, hellish world, exemplified by infertility and the macabre symbol of "bone".

4. Conclusion

Writing ten years before the publication of *Terra Amata*, in 1957, the French luminary Roland Barthes said this about the latest Citroën sedan: "I think that cars today are almost the exact equivalent of the great Gothic cathedrals: I mean the supreme creation of an era, conceived with passion by unknown artists, and consumed in image if not in usage by a whole population which appropriates them as a purely magical object" (Inglis 202). The magic of the car, as Baudrillard said, is in sublimation. The "presumption of eternity" produced by

speed that he so elegantly spoke of also entails the "irresponsibility" of taking the image, the illusion at face value. The automobile and its multitudinous ecological, political, and societal ramifications are more transparent than they were when Barthes gazed into the chrome shimmer of the Citroën DS in 1957. Jacques Tati was already perspicaciously poking holes in the validity and certainty of the myth in 1958. J.M.G. Le Clézio, nearly a decade later, prophetically saw the end result of a society built on the Fordist model, a car culture that left little room for any other culture except its own, a desolate, nonsensical monoculture. An unprecedented, ecological crisis, a disintegration of social relations, a proliferation of "non-places", and a profound alteration in man's relationship with his environment are plainly visible yields of the automobile industry in today's international markets.

The immobility that J.M.G. Le Clézio described In a Region That Resembled Hell was represented in a different way in the film *Koyaanisqatsi* in 1983. The film ends with a poignant and powerful image of one of man's greatest efforts of mobility to date, the latest model of the Gothic cathedral, only more universal even, more magical, because tied to the aspirations of the entire species. Perhaps, those aspirations have become more central as the deterioration of our own planet's ecosystems has steadily become more glaringly apparent. In slow motion, Godfrey Reggio follows the launch of a rocket on its transcendental voyage into space. During its ascent, the rocket suddenly explodes violently bursting horrifically into flames. The immobile camera, planted on the ground, in a painfully long shot, follows its slow graceful descent as it makes its way back to Earth.

References

-Augé, Marc. *Non-Lieux: Introduction à une anthropologie de la surmodernité*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1992. Print.

-Debord,   Guy.   "Situationist   Theses   on   Traffic".1959. http://www.bopsecrets.org/SI/3.traffic.htm. Web 18 November 2011.

-Inglis, David. "Auto Couture: Thinking the Car in Post-War France". *Theory, Culture, Society 21* (2004): 197-219. Web 16 November 2011.

-Koyaanisqatsi. Dir. Godfrey Reggio. 1983. DVD. MGM Home Entertainment, 2011.

-Le Clézio, Jean-Marie-Gustave. *The Giants*. Trans. Simon Watson Taylor. New York: Atheneum, 1975. Print.

---.*Terra Amata*. Trans. Barbara Bray. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1969. Print.

-Mon Oncle. Dir. Jacques Tati. 1958. Hulu+ Streaming Video. Web 19 November 2011.

-Paterson, Matthew.   "Car Culture and Global Environmental Politics".   *Review of International Studies 26* (2000): 253-70. Web 16 November 2011.

-Ross, Kristin. *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies: Decolonization and the Reordering of French Culture*. Massachusetts Institute of Technology: October Books, 1995. Print.

The story behind an invisible community: Arab Jews in the United States

Ramzi Brahmi
University of Manouba, Tunisia

Abstract

The invisibility of the community of Arab Jews living in the United States, better known as the Mizrahi community is intriguing. Its identity combines two seemingly paradoxical elements and it is assumed that this community is encompassed by two larger ethnic groups: the Jewish American and the Arabic American ones. However, a closer look at this community shows that such assumptions are not corroborated by facts. Little is known about this diaspora, which suffers double alienation from the two larger ethnic groups. This paper attempts to delve into the identity formation of the Mizrahi community in the United States by starting with a bird's eye view on its immigration and integration patterns in an attempt to understand its distinctiveness and the obstacles that prevent the community from being visible and more influential. This paper also intends to spotlight the way such a community managed to preserve its identity for generations and the way members of the community perceive their Arabic and Jewish identities in an American context which presents both identities as incompatible.

Key words: Mizrahi, Jews, Arabs, United States, identity.

It is not so easy for many Americans to digest the combination of being Arab, Jewish and American at the same time. Being Arab and Jewish at the same time is more complicated by living in the US where media regularly stereotype part of one's identity and glorify the other. The case of Arab Jews who immigrated to the United States, better known as Mizrahim, is intriguing. Jewishness and Arabness are interwoven in their experience. Their heritage entails them to be part of the Arab American community. Yet, they cannot be considered solely Arab Americans because "to expect Mizrahim to be simply Arab would be like reducing African Americans to be simply Africans" (Shohat 17). Likewise, they cannot be considered just Jewish Americans. To get an insight into their identity, a glimpse of their immigration history and integration patterns are highly needed.

Mizrahi Jews started immigrating to the United States during the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century and Multiple factors can stand as an explanation for their immigration. The desire to avoid military conscription along with the economic downturn and disintegration of the Ottoman Empire represent the push factors, while the prospects of economic progress represent the pull factor. Like their fellow Syrian Christians and Muslims, Syrian Jews provided for living by working as peddlers and owning small shops and merchants.

One way of tracing the identity construction of Arab Jews is to shed light on their patterns of integration in the United States, patterns that are usually determined by an array of variables such as period of arrival, subgroups' diversity, social and economic status. These variables influence, to a great extent, the choice of adaptation strategy: (1) ethnic denial, (2) ethnic isolation, or (3) ethnic integration. Perceiving the culture of the host society as a threat, first generation of Jews emigrating from Arab countries tended to develop a defensive strategy which celebrated ethnic heritage and maintained a strong sense of community and ethnic solidarity. In other words, they cultivated a strong sense of social identity. The latter is defined by Henry Tajfel, the eminent social psychologist, as "the individual's knowledge that he belongs to certain social groups together with some emotional and value significance to him of this group membership" (qtd. in Hogg 2). Social identity, then, is our sense of who we are in relation to the community and society which we are part of.

What makes the social identity of the Mizrahi community in the US interesting is not just the fact that it combines both elements from the Jewish American and the Arab American identities but also it reflects the community's success in fully preserving their identity and heritage, unlike many Sephardic communities in the US. Writing in 2012, Jane Gerber asserts that "the contemporary Syrian descendants of the same early-twentieth-century migration possess the strongest, best organized, and most cohesive community among American Jews today. Their third and fourth generations thrive as Americans and as Syrian Jews nurturing a strong sense of Syrian Jewish identity, while becoming fully American" (40). This success was largely a result of the community's anti-intermarriage stance. It kept a very low intermarriage rate partly because of the decision of religious leaders who strictly forbade it and put much importance on marrying co-religionists within the community. Furthermore, the community promoted collective consciousness and a strong sense of identity through ethnic narratives, literature, art, and music. Such a heritage helped them construct and preserve their identity. Commenting on the importance of sharing an ethnic narrative and a common heritage, Alain De Benoist, in his book, *On Identity*, writes, "Collective imagination is real: common representations and images build the framework of a group. All people and nations have a number of beliefs related to their origins or their history. Whether these beliefs refer to an objective reality, an idealized reality or to a myth is irrelevant. They just need to be

reminiscent or representative of an exordium temporis, a founding moment" (24). Indeed, ethnic narratives and a sense of shared memoire maintain and strengthen ethnic identity. Being aware of that, Arab Jews were very interested in preserving art and culture and passing it on to the next generations in order to ensure the survival of the community's identity and culture.

After their arrival to the US, Arab Jews established their own communities. They joined neither Jewish American nor Arab American communities, despite being Arabs. This is mainly because living in Arab American neighborhoods might result in tensions especially after the 1948 war. Arab Jews, particularly Syrians, are very religious; many of them are Orthodox and support the Zionist movement which is despised by other Arabs.

Starting from the mid 1950s, most Syrian Jews stopped sending their children to public schools; they rather opted for yeshivas, Jewish religious schools. It should be pointed out here that the community succeeded in establishing its own institutions. It has its own synagogues, cemetery, Talmud Torah, mikvahs (ritual baths), community center and a wide range of social services. Mizrahim seems to be a closed community, not very much interested in forging bonds with other Jewish communities probably due to fear of the incremental loss of their Mizrahi identity. Another obstacle that prevented them from integrating into bigger Jewish communities is their Arabic culture which is unwelcome among Jewish communities especially among the European Orthodox. Arab Jews still hold to their Arabic heritage. Aspects of their heritage are reflected for example in music and what is more fascinating is the way such a heritage is passed from a generation to another. In fact, the preservation of Arabic musical heritage appeared to be happening through the synagogue services (Zenner 166). The Arabic heritage of Mizrahim does not only manifest in music but also in the religious services themselves which foreshadow the impact of living in societies with a majority of Muslims and Arabs. Examining such an impact, Marc Kligman points out, "One finds within Syrian liturgy parallels to the murattal and mujawwad style of Koranic recitation, as well as the improvisatory singing found in Arab vocal music and the interaction between the leader and listeners, or, in the context, the cantor and the congregation" (219). Needless to say, Language is a very crucial element of the Arab Jewish identity. Unlike other Jewish communities, they use Judeo-Arabic, which a mixture of Arabic and Hebrew. Being a source of literary, scientific and philosophical heritage, Judeo-Arabic was instrumental in keeping alive the unique Jewish identity of Mizrahim. It sets them apart not just from Ashkenazi communities but also from Eastern Sephardic communities. Their success in preserving their identities through generations can partly be explained by the socialization mechanisms.

Transmitting ethnic identity takes place through the process of socialization, in which the family and religious institutions play the biggest role. Ethnic socialization denotes introducing children to their ethnic heritage and inculcating ethnic values and customs. Patterns of socialization are very important in ethnic identity formation: the individual learns what is expected from him and what is not as a member of a certain group. In addition, their attitudes are likely to be influenced by the group's values. Defining socialization, William Bloom maintains that it is a "whole process by which an individual, born with behavioral potentialities of enormously wide range, is led to develop actual behavior which is confined within a more narrow range- the range of what is customary and acceptable for him according to the standards of his group" (14-15). As far as Arab Jews are concerned, they have always been proud of their ethnicity which influenced their children's identity formation.

Their ethno-religious identity is different in myriad ways from that of Ashkenazi Jews. It incorporates the Arabic culture and heritage which is deemed "exotic" or "inferior" and very different from American culture. Ashkenazim are more or less close to the European roots of American culture but for non-Ashkenazim the situation is different. Their cultural heritage is considered incompatible with the mainstream American culture not just by other ethnic groups but also by fellow co-religionists. The small number of Mizrahi Jews does not mean that their experience is insignificant in comparison with the Ashkenazi experience and that we can study Jewish history without referring to their experience. Although they were ascribed an identity by the larger society, they developed their specific diasporic identity and draw their own ethnic boundaries in order to keep their distinctiveness vis-a-vis other sub-groups with whom they were ascribed a collective identity by the larger society. Indeed, the creation of ethnic boundaries makes ethnic groups seem different from the rest of society and look like a block; a unique entity. Immigrants help create their self-ascribed identity through conscious acts and ad hoc efforts.. There is a margin of differences even within the boundaries of each ethnic group. Ethnic boundaries are flexible in order to encompass members with different nationalities as in the case of Arab Jews.

The cultural clash in the United States between the west and east, greatly affected the identity formation of Mizrahi communities in the United States. They had to identify with one of the two camps and the pressure was driving the great majority of them to identify with the west. There were some difficulties for Sephardim and especially Mizrahim in forming their identity because their Jewishness is questioned by the majority of Jewish Americans, Ashkenazim, and so is their Arabness. Their alienation is two folded; it goes beyond the hyphen problem to encompass seemingly paradoxical identity elements. This unwelcoming atmosphere affected their identity construction in myriad ways and made marginalization central to their experience. Ironically, marginalization and discrimination against Arab Jews in the United States helped strengthen the bonds between members of the community, bearing in mind that self-awareness of one's ethnicity heightens during times of crises especially when a certain ethnic group is the victim of marginalization and stereotyping.

In fact, the alienation of Mizrahim reached the level of exclusion not just from the representational picture of Jewish Americans but also the academic field. Aviva Ben-Ur, in her article "Sephardic Jews in America: A Diasporic history" explains this exclusion:

> This denial of Jewishness was a defining experience for eastern Sephardic immigrants (and, in some cases, for their native born children and grand children as well). Perhaps not accidently, in both U.S Jewish community and the academic study of its past, Jewishness has tacitly been assumed to be synonymous with Germanic or Eastern European descent. What began at the turn of the twentieth century as denial of shared ethnicity and religion (whereby Ashkenazim failed to recognize Sephardim as fellow Jews) continues today in text books, articles, documentaries, films, and popular awareness. More often than not, Sephardic Jews are simply absent from any sort of portrayal of the American Jewish community (2).

What is noticeable about attempting to study the Mizrahi community in the US is the lacking scholarly literature devoted to it, though there are more and more voices especially in academia calling for incorporating the experience of Jewish communities such as Mizrahim into the Jewish American experience, rather than having a marginal status. Despite its uniqueness, the Mizrahi community is invisible in comparison with other Jewish communities. Reasons for its invisibility include the small size of the community and its lack

of interest in building coalitions with other communities and ethnic groups, fearing the loss of its peculiar identity. This lack of coalitions partly explains its invisibility at the political and social levels, though it is active at the artistic level and produced highly recognizable works of art. In times of political crises in the Middle East, Mizrahim were asked to take sides and thus denouncing one part of their identity. Taking a middle position cost them criticism from both sides, Arab Americans and Jewish Americans. These complex intergroup relations account for their inability to forge bonds with other groups and also for their invisibility.

The special case of Mizrahim illustrates that the fact that in their ethnic identity formation, the religious factor was of higher importance when it came into conflict with other elements such as language, cultural heritage and nationality. That is why they preferred to distance themselves from Arab Americans and set up their own communities with closer relations to Jewish Americans. The fact that Mizrahim did not join Arab American communities does not mean they were trying to distance themselves from Arabic culture. On the contrary, they were very proud of their Arabic heritage and customs, although such a pride is actually an obstacle for them to forge bonds with Ashkenazim, the great majority of Jewish Americans. Indeed, many Mizrahi Jews identify themselves as Arabs in the first place and festivities such as weddings are very much like those of Arab Christian and Arab Muslim.

References

-Benoist, Alain. *On Identity*. Trans. Kathy Ackerman and Julia Kostova. *Eléments* 113 (2004): 1-61. Web. Kindle file.

-Ben-Ur, Aviva. *Sephardic Jews in America: A Diasporic History*. New York: New York Press, 2009. Kindle file.

-Bloom, William. *Personal Identity, National Identity, and International Relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge university press. 1990. Print.

-Gerber, Jane. "Sephardic and Syrian Immigration to America: Acculturation and Communal Preservation." *Modern Jewish History: Contemporary Sephardic Identity in the Americas: an interdisciplinary approach.* New York: Syracuse University Press, (2012):38-65. Print.

-Hogg, Michael A. and Deborah J. Terry, eds. *Social Identity Processes in Organizational Contexts*. Michigan: Sheridan books, 2001. Print.

-Kligman, Marc. "Liturgy and Music of Syrian Jews." *Encyclopedia of the Jewish Diaspora: Origins, Experiences, and Culture, Vol. 1*. Ed. Mark Avrum Ehrlich. California: ABC-Clio, (2009): 218-220. Kindle file.

-Shohat, Ella. "The Invention of Mizrahim." *Journal of Palestine studies* 29.1 (1999): 5-20. *Jstor*. Web. 17 April 2014.

-Zenner, Walter. "The Syrian Jews of Brooklyn." A *Community of Many Worlds: Arab Americans in New York.* Eds. Philip Kayal and Kathleen Benson. New York: The City Museum of New York, 2002: 156-169. Print.

Religious resistance in Kenya: The Gikuyu Independent Churches in *A Grain of Wheat* by Ngugi wa Thiong'o.

Christophe Sékène Diouf
Gaston Berger University of Saint-Louis, Senegal

Abstract

This paper explores the effects of missionaries' opposition to African cultures which led to the creation of Independent Churches. It mainly focuses on Kenyan colonial history. These facts are incorporated in Ngugi's novel: A Grain of Wheat. In this literary work, The Independent Churches reflect the difficulties that the autochthones are confronted with while deciding to conciliate two different cultures. These Churches express a religious resistance. During colonization, the guardians of the traditions who discovered the new religion, Christianity, faced the missionaries' Churches by setting up Independent Churches. This article takes into consideration many aspects related to people's realities especially in the religious domain. Thus, the contribution of this study is to lay the stress on the role that the Independent Churches played in the empowerment of African cultures. This work also underscores the cultural effects such as religious syncretism stemming from the mixture between Christian elements and African traditions.

Key words: cultures, Independent Churches, Gikuyu, liberation, religious syncretism.

Introduction

Religious conflicts constitute major problems throughout the world and particularly in the African continent. In spite of the initiatives taken by organizations like the United Nations Organization, these situations continue to raise several questions. People become more and more worried about the persisting religious conflicts in the globalized world. Many nations face such undercurrent phenomena. The religious conflicts in Nigeria and Central Africa can be good illustrations. They encourage us to re-examine the religious resistance in Kenya through *A Grain of Wheat*.

Indeed, in this analysis, it is of paramount importance to unveil the basic causes of the rupture from missionaries' Churches, the characteristics of the Independent Churches, and show their surviving elements. Taking into consideration all these facts, it is worth mentioning that the questions of differences are at the core of the religious resistance in *A Grain of Wheat*. In other words, the Independent Churches are a turning point in the history of Christianity in Kenya.

This paper proposes to highlight that the Independent Churches represented strategies of resistance for cultural liberation. On the one hand, it is useful to describe the rupture from missionaries and the appropriation of the Bible. On the other hand, the emphasis is put on the religious syncretism as a signpost of the brewing between Christianity and Gikuyu traditions. As a theoretical framework, the concepts of restoration and re-appropriation of Postcolonialism is essential. This methodology will guide our study to better understand the ways the members of the Independent Churches fight in opposition to the persisting process of subjugation. It shows that Gikuyu whose children have been barred from attending the missionaries' schools are committed to dismantle the colonial discourses.

From rupture with missionaries to the appropriation of the Bible

In Kenya, the causes of the break with the missionaries dated back in 1928. To persuade the new faithful to Christianity to give up the clidectomy, the missionaries decreed the non admission of the children who practiced that rite in their schools. As a consequence, there was a division within the Gikuyu community. One group was devoted to observe the clidectomy rite (female circumcision) while another accepted to renounce the practice. The Gikuyu Independent Churches testify the dissension with the missionaries. They are the intrinsic consequences of the prohibition of certain customs like the initiation rites of girls, particularly the circumcision. Daniel Bournaud explains the cultural resistance of Gikuyu to missionaries:

> The resistance to the State appears to be all the more powerful as it leans on the affirmation of a cultural identity. The conflict about the clidectomy that opposes Kikuyu and European shows this care of authenticity face to the stranger, the other. By refusing to give up the clidectomy of young girls, the Kikuyu society preserves it essential values and rejects the Europeanization of customs promoted by the missionaries (Bournaud, 1991: 20).

In *A Grain of Wheat*, the churchmen regarded the practices of circumcision as non-conformity with the precepts of the Gospel. According to them, the faithful people can never keep on following their ancestral customs. Hence, was the decision of the guardians of traditions to break with the missionaries' Churches and found their own Churches. From this perspective, they claimed for a Christian spirituality rooted in African beliefs. They aimed at

renewing the religious practices and adjusting cultural elements with the expression of their faith. Besides, the Independent Gikuyu Churches departed from the missionaries who came to spread Christianity in the colonized lands. They are the environment where the religious resistance becomes a weapon in the service of the downtrodden. They contest missionaries' bigotry:

> The reaction of Independent Churches is characterized by the affirmation of the necessary tribal and comminatory rooting of the believer through an effective and daily solidarity. They return to ancestors, founder reference of the community (Metogo, 1985: 87).

In *A Grain of Wheat*, an important aspect which characterizes the Gikuyu Independent Churches is the religious autonomy. In the religious resistance, the new Reverend Jackson Kingori is the leading charismatic figure. The Church of Scotland School represents the direct rupture from the missionaries Churches. The reverend teaches Christian precepts. He has recourse to sermons to better reinforce religious resistance. He preaches by insisting on the concept of God in Christianity as well as in Gikuyu. From his angle of announcing the Gospel to the new adepts of the Church of Scotland School, he calls for an appropriation of the Bible. According to him, the missionaries have betrayed Christianity to ally with colonizers. He notes that, in terms of belief, Ngai, the Gikuyu God is synonymous of the same God professed in the Bible: "Ngai, the Gikuyu God, is the same One God who sent Chris, the son, to come and lead the way from darkness into the light" (83). By making a parallel between 'Ngai, the Gikuyu God'(83) and the God taught in the Bible, Reverend Jackson tries to debunk the ideology of missionaries according to which African people believe in many gods. He points out that his people are profoundly religious. The Reverend emphasizes the necessity to re-establish the truth. In this respect, religious elements are used to stress cultural resistance. Laurenti Magesa quotes Samuel G. Kibicho in theses terms:

> Samuel G. Kibicho, for instance shows the role that the Gikuyu conception of God (Ngai) played in their struggle against colonialism in the 1950's and how it has been an important factor in their response to Christian evangelization from the beginning (Magesa, 1997: 8).

In *A Grain of Wheat*, the Kikuyu Greek Orthodox Church represents another example of the Gikuyu Independent Churches in Kenya. However, the main preoccupation of this Church resides in the restoration of the lost lands to Kenyan peasants. Moreover, the problem of the lands taken by the British colonizers is one of the causes that separate Gikuyu Christians from certain converted natives and missionaries' Churches. The Kenyan revolutionary struggle has an impact on the religious field. Gikuyu Independent Churches join the fight to improve workers' and peasants' living conditions. The fate of the downtrodden becomes part of the preoccupations of these Churches. As far as they are concerned, the leading figures of Independent Churches believe that it is a religious obligation to collude with the exploited masses. Even though that the clidectomy was the immediate consequence of the cultural resistance, the land question takes a basic place in the history of Gikuyu Independent Churches. To grasp the land property, it will be useful to quote Patrick Williams:

> The effect of the British land grabbing was to turn many Kenyan-above all the Gikuyu, Ngugi's people, who lived in the White Highlanders-into ahoi, landless tenants farmers, working for others or rending their land. Ngugi's father was one of these. To the British, this was partly an unavoidable consequence, but it was also partly deliberate policy: to the extent that Kenyan worked for a wage or became part of the money economy-rather than living off their own produce, or what they exchanged that produce for-they

became subject to greater economic control by the British (Williams, 1962: 2).

All these things considered, one can understand why the members of the Kikuyu Greek Orthodox Church tried to contribute to the struggle for the recovery of the lands from the British colonizers. To show their firm opposition to missionaries and colonizers, they participated in mass movements and protest against the heavy taxes and the theft of lands. They also incite masses to organize themselves for a better liberation. For instance, during meetings, the Reverend prays for the emancipation of Kenyan people and the end of oppression and exploitation. To this regard, the narrator declares:

> Nyamu now called upon the Rev. Morris Kingori to open the meeting, with a prayer. Before 1952, Kingori was a renowned preacher in the Kikuyu Greek Orthodox Church, one of the many independent churches that had broken with the missionary establishment (217).

The sermons remain an essential means reinforcing the struggle in the Kikuyu Greek Orthodox Church. This Independent Church plays a key role in the fight against the system of colonial exploitation on the one hand, and religious oppression, on the other hand. The Reverend Morris Kingori addresses the crowd through sermons to encourage the masses and infuse them with pride and determination in their way towards liberation from the burden of colonialism. He relies on sermons to help them rally together in order to achieve their emancipation. It this perspective, before the beginning of every meeting, fighters call upon him for prayers. In these occasions, the Reverend contextualizes Kenyan people's fate. He appropriates the biblical history of Exodus. He compares Kenyan people to the enslaved Hebrews in Egypt, Pharaoh's land. Sermons are important in the rupture from missionaries and the re-appropriation of the Bible. Trough them, the members who are attached to the Independent Churches celebrate the struggle for social justice. Thus, we point out that oppressed people can feel a certain sense of hope in their quest for liberation. The latter is symbolically a depiction of the improvement of their lives:

> Oh God of Isaac and Abraham, the journey across the desert is long. We are without water, we are without food, and our enemies followed behind us riding chariots and on horseback, to take us back to Pharaoh. For they are loth to let your people go, are angered to the heart to see your people go. But with guidance, Lord, we shall surely reach and walk on Canaan's shore (218).

Another basic aspect is that in the Independent Churches, spirituality has consoled the suffering people. It has been an important source of motivation. Through sermons, religious leaders have contributed to reinforce the determination of the victims of domination. They empower them above all when the moral and physical forces are reduced. In *A Grain of Wheat,* to better understand "the break with the missions" (218), we can quote Simon Gikandi when he states:

> Furthermore In 1928, when the Church of Scotland Mission demanded that all it members renounce clidectomy as a condition of their continuation membership in the Church, a large number of athomi balking, breaking away to form their own independent Churches. The Christian community in Central Kenya thus came to be divided between those who had agreed to sign a pledge renouncing clidectomy and the others (this group which labeled itself Gikuyu Kararing'a (pure Gikuyu). The objective of the latter group was in the words of its manifest, "to further interests of the Kikuyu and its

members and to safeguard the homogeneity of such interests relating to their
spiritual, economic, social, educational upliftment (Gikandi, 2000: 22).

In the light of this assertion, it is worth underlining the place of Independent Churches in
the resistance particularly in periods of excessive exploitation and oppression. For instance, in
America, the Separatist Churches had greatly taken part in the fight for the emancipation of
the black community that was subordinate to the system of segregation or Jim Crow laws. In
their quest for true dignity, the religious songs were considerably useful. The spirituals were
of paramount importance during segregationist laws. They strengthened and helped the
suffering people overcame hard living conditions and be confident that the sun of justice
would shine. Like the sermons in *A Grain of Wheat*, the spirituals had profoundly expressed
the feelings of the oppressed:

> Spirituality accompanied theology, and the spirituals reveal the slaves' deep
> personal and collective faith. Tied to this was a surprisingly hopeful
> optimism, which transcended the wretchedness of the slave experience
> (Newman, 2005: 1777).

In addition to the reinforcement of masses' courage, the Independent Churches react
against the stereotypes. The founding leaders of the Independent Churches feel that they are
invested with the mission to rehabilitate the customs denigrated by some missionaries and
colonizers. Their Churches sensitize the Kenyan masses and draw their attention concerning
the ancestral traditions. Leaders of the Independent Churches strive to relieve people from the
yoke of the sufferings. They invite Kenyan social strata to follow their traditional beliefs.
They disapprove any rejection of the bonds which link them with their past and land. In other
words, they are deeply attached to their customs and traditions. In respect, John Mbiti points
out:

> Independent Churches are in an attempt to 'find place to feel at home', not
> only in worship but in the whole profession and expression of Christian faith.
> Beneath the umbrella of independent churches, African Christians can freely
> shed their tears, voice their sorrows, present their spiritual and physical
> needs, respond to the world in which they live and empty selves before God
> (Mbiti, 1969: 228).

In *A Grain of Wheat*, the character of Harry Thuku is portrayed as a charismatic leader
who backs the foundation of the Independent Schools and the Independent Churches. As
mentioned in the novel, it is under his leadership that these institutions widespread throughout
the Kenyan country. He is even considered as a messiah because his messages convey hope to
the oppressed. He denounces the exploitation of his people by the British colonial power. He
guides a revolutionary movement that makes people praise his deeds in the Gikuyu
Independent Churches:

> They talked of him in their homes; they sang his praises in teashops, market
> places and on their way to Gikuyu Independent churches on Sundays. Any
> word from the mouth of Harry became news and passed from ridge to ridge,
> right across the country. People waited for something to happen. The revolt
> of the peasant was near at hand (13).

In the same order of contesting missionaries and colonizers' opposition to the expansion
of Independent Schools, nationalists such as Harry Thuku appear in *A Grain of Wheat* as one
of the pioneers who play a key role in their wide spreading. The character of Thuku is one of
the most mythic figures who challenge colonizers in Ngugi's literary works. He awakens the

masses and sides with them for cultural and political resistance. Furthermore, in the reaction to cultural alienation, it appears that the religious syncretism becomes one of the significant cultural effects of the attempts to adapt African traditions with Christianity. Religious syncretism is a phenomenon resulting from such a situation.

Religious syncretism: a factor of cultural mixture

In *A Grain of Wheat*, some characters evolve in an environment marked by a religious syncretism. In the Gikuyu Independent Churches, the religious syncretism constitutes a distinctive aspect. Characters combine traditional cultures with Christian principles. By breaking with missionaries' Churches, members incorporate some elements of their cultures and customs in the religious manifestations of Independent Churches. In their conservatism, they advocate the preservation of Gikuyu cultures. They identify these Churches with the local color. In other words, the traditional religious elements take an important place. To this point, the narrative voice explains the ways Jackson celebrates religion in his Independent Church: "Jackson would reason out, trying to show that the Christian faith had roots in the very traditions revered by the Gikuyu" (83). This quotation depicts the form of religious syncretism characterizing Gikuyu Independent Churches. They underline the mixture of the Gikuyu culture with the Christian religion. Religious syncretism includes borrowing from both systems of beliefs.

The option for the syncretism can be examined as a challenge to the European culture. Indeed, given that the evangelized people cannot totally liberate themselves from the cultural heritage of Christianity, they find solution in religious syncretism. They are compelled to adopt it. Facing the endeavors of acculturation undertaken by colonizers, the Independent Churches are regarded as necessary alternatives. Consequently, religious syncretism borrows from Gikuyu and Christianity. In this regard, Richard Laurent Omba observes: "the contact between Christianity, animism and traditional religions results from a sort of religious syncretism" (Omba, 2005: 287).

The following words from Muthoni in *The River Between* are illustrative of the aspects of religious syncretism: "I am still a Christian in the tribe. Look. I am a woman and will grow big and healthy in the tribe" (61). In her spiritual life, Muthoni decides to be reconciliated with her tribe as well as the Christian religion. She can't favor her Christianity to the detriment of her tribal custom that invites her to follow the passage from girlhood to adulthood.

However, among the major reasons of the foundation of Independent Churches, we assert that liberation from cultural assimilation is given priority. The religious resistance fights for the orientation of Christianity to the natives' cultures. It conveys resistance against the loss of the religious roots inherited from the elders of the tribe. To avoid the disappearance of customs and traditions, certain characters take shelter in religious syncretism. It emphasizes an "enculturation: indigenization of Christianity" (my translation) (Tonda, 2010: 88). This statement reflects the cultural reality of Independent Churches. The latter are rooted in the indigenous culture in order to better maintain the contacts with African traditions.

In fact, in *A grain of Wheat*, Ngugi portrays the religious syncretism that significantly affects the characters' belonging to the Independent Churches. He gives an overview of the metamorphosis of their identities. The theme of the religious syncretism varies from one character to another but, this study focuses mainly on its presence in the Independent

Churches to note that characters who try to resist cultural alienation take shelter in a religious syncretism.. They somehow combine Christianity and religious traditions. Most of them sustain the necessity to harmonize the practices. They deny any exhaustive absorption of missionaries' teachings.

Religious syncretism becomes the bridge that connects Gikuyu to Christianity in the Independent Churches. Indeed, members are shared between ancestral beliefs and the Gospel. On the subject of such a situation, Mohamadou Kane argues: "Most often the novelists, where survives the faith, emphasize a form of syncretism that conciliates the tradition and the contributions of the other religions" (my translation) (Kane, 1982: 432).

In the contact between missionaries and Gikuyu is born a religious syncretism. In *A Grain of Wheat*, the characters do not accept to turn back to their cultures and traditions while embracing the new religion. As a realty in their daily practices, syncretism functions as an undercurrent feature in the revolutionary ideology of characters. It manifests itself in the initiation: "They mixed Christmas hymns with songs and dances performed during initiation rites when boys and girls are circumcised into responsibility as men and women" (204). This celebration clearly reveals that in the novel, it is a synthesis of religious values. It is noticeable that Christian melodies are integrated in the ritual ceremony of the Gikuyu tribe. In this performance, the mixture of cultural elements from Gikuyu and biblical allusions emphasizes the syncretic nature of some characters. Moreover, religious syncretism goes hand in hand with the nationalism. It is not only reduced to Independent Churches. It participates in the praise of the Independence. It is worth mentioning that religious syncretism epitomizes the unity of masses to celebrate the accession of their nation to sovereignty.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the issue of religious resistance in *A Grain of Wheat* has been the major point discussed in this present study. Through this novel, the subject matter analyzed is the opposition of Gikuyu to missionaries' religious education that prohibits the practice of certain customs like the clidectomy (female circumcision). Thus, it has been pointed out that the Gikuyu Independent Churches side with the Independent Schools in the resistance against the acculturation. They defend the cultural values of their tribe. They are environments of the contestation against religious indoctrination. They are established in accordance with the cultural realities of Gikuyu in particular and African people in general. In the quest for liberation, they break with the missionaries' Churches, contextualize biblical tenets and give impetus to the affirmation of local identity. The Independent Churches have been founded as cornerstones of the liberating strategies. In the controversies concerning customs and traditions, they appear as responses to the cultural domination.

This paper concludes that a symbiosis between Gikuyu culture and Christianity is a significant aspect of the religious syncretism which permeates characters' lives that search for a cultural reconciliation. However, today, in a cross-cultural world, all these facts lead us to re-examine the crucial issues such as religious fundamentalism, radicalism, religious conflicts, and revolutionary religious movements to name but a few related to the different conceptions of religion. The essential question we can raise is: how can people promote mutual understanding and religious tolerance for a peaceful world? This can be achieved through a respect of cultural differences and an enhancing of Inter-culturality.

References

-Bournaud, Daniel. « L'Etat centrifuge au Kenya ». *Etats d'Afrique noire : Formations, mécanismes et crise*. Paris : Karthala, 1991.

-Gates, Henry Louis and Anthony Appiah. ed. *Africana : The Encyclopedia of the African and the African American Experience.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

-Gikandi, Simon. *Ngugi wa Thiong'o*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

-Kane, Mohamadou. *Roman Africain et Tradition*. Dakar : Nouvelles Editions   Africaines, 1982.

-Magesa, Laurenti. African Religion : *The Morals Traditions of Abundant Life*. New York: Orbis Books, 1997.

-Mbiti, John. *African Religions and Philosophy*. 2e ed. London : Heinemann, 1969.

-Metogo, Eloi Messi. *Théologie Africaine et Ethnophilosophie*. Paris : L'Harmattan, 1985.

-Ngugi wa Thiong'o. *A Grain of Wheat*. London: Heinemann, 1967.

-Omba, Richard Laurent. « La résistance religieuse dans les écrits de l'ère coloniale au Cameroun ». *Faits religieux et résistances dans les littératures de l'ère coloniale.* No3. Paris: Kailash Editions, 2005, pp.276-289.

-Richard Newmann, *Africana : The Encyclopedia of the African and the African American Experience* ed. Henry Louis Gates and Anthony Appiah 2e ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

-Tonda, Joseph. « Le Corps en double africain : Etre, Résistance à la domination politico-religieuse et fidélité lignagère ». *De la subversion en religion*. Paris : Karthala, 2010, pp.87-102.

-Williams, Patrick. "Ngugi wa Thiong'o : Texts and intertexts". *Contemporary World Writers*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1962, pp. 1-77.

Humour and culture

Adel Alharthi
University of Salford, UK

Abstract

Humour and culture are inseparable since humour is a mirror of the culture and in which it is produced. However, topics that provoke laughter are not specific to one culture. We are all human beings and we sometimes laugh at the same things, even though we may look at them from different perspectives. In other words, humour which is related to sex, marriage, politics, religion and stereotyping is common among many people from different cultures, but the way in which people compose their jokes is normally bound to their culture and their understanding of the world around them. This paper discusses the relationship between culture and humour and it sheds light on some common sources of humour in different cultures. The paper also presents a thorough discussion of the development of humour and its various types in the Arab world form Pre-Islamic era to the present. This discussion is needed since there is considerable shortage of research in the field of humour development, especially in the Arab world.

1. Introduction

In each culture people share common beliefs, behaviours, customs, and experiences. In fact, they create what Wenger (1998) calls "Communities of practice", which refers to shared linguistic styles and cultural traditions. For example, what a person refers to can be understood by the other members of the same society. This applies to humour as a social phenomenon which is associated with a certain group of people who have their own shared knowledge of the world, and their humorous and joking references which are relevant and appreciated by each member of this group. This paper will shed light on humour across cultures, in which some topics that provoke laughter are analysed. The article concludes with a detailed analysis of the development of humour in the Arab world throughout different periods of time from the pre-Islamic period to the present.

2. Humour in culture

Humour normally targets various common topics which are interesting and controversial, including marriage, religion, politics, sex and stereotyping. Friends, colleagues and opponents use different types of humour such as jokes, sarcasm, irony and teasing in everyday life interaction, whether to socialize, criticize each others behavior, or even to fight against some global issues such as racism and war crimes.

Let us take politics as a prominent source of humour which is usually tackled by people from different countries. Citizens normally mock politicians and crack jokes about new regulations and laws that may affect their lives and the world in which they live. We all come across different jokes about some world leaders and their political decisions. These jokes can be heard among a group of people sitting in a cafe or chatting using social media. According to Shehata, political jokes are perceived as a way of relieving pressure from what is called "political oppression", especially for those who cannot ridicule the political figures and decision makers in public or in media, such as in some countries in the Arab world (1992: 76).

In contrast to politically oppressed people, citizens in developed and democratic countries use humour to ridicule and mock political issues on both personal and public levels, whether through daily interaction or through comic shows. A good example of comic TV shows that target politicians is David Letterman's *Late Show*, in which he mocks and makes fun of US presidents and ministers. Also, the show targets global policies and foreign leaders, which makes it not only well known in America but also in different parts of the world.

Political humour does not only exist between citizens and leaders or the leaders of different parties in a particular country. Humour can be used as a tool of showing the superiority of one country over another, which in many cases reflects the historical relationship between the two countries. A good example of this is the way the Portuguese perceive Brazilians, as they used to subjugate Brazil for four hundred years. Martins (2012: 92) states that the Portuguese used to crack jokes about Brazilians, who have developed on both economical and political levels, in order to claim their superiority over their "former colony":

> **Example (35)**
>
> Two Brazilian people were admiring the Colosseum in Rome...
> - My God! Isn't that amazing?
> - Oh yeah! Now just imagine when it will be finished!

Another area in which different cultures vary in using humour is stereotyping. It is very common between different people from different societies that there is a sort of stereotyping, whether between a particular group of people in a particular society or even between different nationalities. For example, a primitive *Falah* in Egypt is a person and is not well-educated who is normally perceived as stupid because s/he cannot act properly when faced with normal life challenges or some technological issues that are beyond his/her knowledge. On an international level, Italians are dirty, French are arrogant, Argentineans are chatty, Chinese are nerds and Americans are uncultured. This sort of stereotyping is normally used when telling jokes about different nationalities.

Religious stereotyping is also another source of humour in many countries as a result of the fighting and bigotry that exists between different religions around the world. This stereotyping is not only concerned with the religion itself and with its rules and concepts, it also involves targeting religious scholars and their believers. It is common to find people who believe that Jews are cheap, Muslims are terrorists and Christians are hypocritical. Accordingly, people start making jokes based on the way they perceive these religious followers. The following joke illustrates this, in which the Jewish father is so stingy that he keeps reducing the amount of money his son asks for:

<u>Example (36)</u>
A Jewish boy asks his father for twenty dollars. His father replied, "ten dollars, what in the world do you need five dollars for, I'd be happy to give you a dollar, here's a quarter."

Sex is also without doubt, a common topic and a prominent source of laughter, to the degree that most jokes normally revolve around sex or at least contain some sexual references. We all agree that cultures have dissimilar perceptions of sex, in most western countries it is acceptable to discuss sex related topics whether in public or with a relative or friend, not to mention the presence of sex in movies, TV series, talk shows, advertisements and even presidential campaigns. Let us take Obama's campaign in 2012, when sex and humour were used to promote political agendas and convince people to vote for Obama. In an advertisement called 'My First Time' which is dedicated to Obama's campaign, a girl named Lena Dunham talks to camera in a way that makes you think that she is talking about sex instead of political issues. This is obvious in her funny utterances such as "You want to do it with a great guy. It should be with a guy with beautiful … somebody who really cares about and understands women". The advertisement plays on words and ideas, in which voting for the first time is compared to losing one's virginity (MacMillan 2012).

Contrary to this, sex is considered to be a prickly issue in some Islamic and Arabic countries, where it is socially and sometimes religiously prohibited to mention anything about your sex life, especially in public. At the beginning of El Feki's book, one interviewee says [12]:

In the Arab world, sex is the opposite of sport. Everyone talks about
football, but hardly anyone plays it. But sex – everyone is doing it,
but nobody wants to talk about it.

However, despite all the facts about sex and the way it has been perceived in different cultures, it still has a close connection to humour in both liberal and conservative societies. People tell sexual jokes and enjoy practising this, even if it is socially unacceptable in some parts of the world. Furthermore, with the advent of social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook and Youtube) and short films, the trend towards circulating sexual jokes and humour that contains sexual references has begun to increase.

The following section will discuss humour in the Arab world, in which a detailed discussion of some of the prominent sources of humour is presented. In addition, a brief discussion of the development of humour in the Arab world during different periods of time, including the pre-Islamic period, mediaeval Islamic era, the Fatimid period, Ayyubid dynasty, Mameluke period, Ottoman Empire, and modern Arab world.

3. Humour in the Arab world

Humour as a social phenomenon is deeply rooted in the lives of inhabitants of many nations, even though they have different backgrounds. It can be argued that we share the same concept of what humour is and how we respond to it. However, despite the recognition of this phenomenon, each society has unique techniques for cracking jokes and provoking laughter which, in many instances, distinguish them from other societies. In other words, as human beings, we may find the same topics such as sex, marriage, politics and stereotyping humorous, but we still have something exclusive and special when utilising these topics in our daily interactions; something that reflects our own lifestyle, beliefs and traditions. The Arab world is not an exception.

Arabs have their own language and unique culture, and humour is an essential aspect of their everyday lives. Apart from the daily interactions between individuals that normally involve discussing humorous topics, the existence of humour in Arabic culture, especially in literature, can be traced back to the Pre-Islamic period. In this era humour played a major role in poetry, which held an important position in Arabic civilization and usually had a tribal colour, especially when depicting a war of words between two tribes as poets used their poetry to praise their tribes and denigrate others. In other words, poets were the defenders of their tribes as they used satire to mock and exploit the demerits of the opponent's tribe. Satire is the only common form of humour in the pre-Islamic era that is extant in the literature from that time as a result of the absence of any cultural interaction with other civilizations.

During the Islamic period, and more specifically when Prophet Mohammad was preaching Islam and calling on his tribe, *Quraish,* to accept Islam, some Quraishites who were against his new message mocked and ridiculed him in an attempt to undermine his character, thus impeding the spread of his message to the rest of the tribe and to the rest of the people of Makkah. In addition, certain types of humour, such as parody and irony, were used by various opponents of Prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon him) at that time. One of the most famous examples of parody was used by a well-known non-follower of the Prophet, who claimed prophecy and composed some funny verses that he alleged were a revelation from God. The verses were rhythmically similar to Quran but they were absolute nonsense.

An important development during the golden age of Islamic civilization (from 661 until 1258), was the flowering of a rich literary tradition. Humour was a prominent element in most literary works because of stability and development, as well as the openness to foreign

cultures such as Indian, Persian and Roman civilisations. In addition to satirical and ironical poetry that prevailed in Arabic literature and which was adopted by well-known poets such as Jarir, Al-akhtal Al-farazdaq and Al-hutai'ah, new poets and prose writers like Bashshar bin Burd, Abu Nawās, Hammād 'Ajrad, Abdul Samad, al-'Atabi, al-Hamdumi, Ibn al-Rūmi, Ibnsakra, al-Jāhiz, Abu al-'Aina and Badiul-Zaman al-Hamdani led the literary revolution in this period, paving the way for the emergence of new and different forms of humour (Mubeen,2008: 18). In addition, this period witnessed the emergence of a group of poets called the al-Shu'ra al majāneen(lunatic poets), such as Abu al 'Ibar and Abu Galāla al-Makhzusmi, who used mockery and ridicule in their works.

In addition, the mediaeval Islamic era witnessed the emergence of various amusing characters, like Abu Dulama and Ash'ab, who are still recognised by many Arabs, to the degree that some of these characters have been imitated and utilised in certain Arabic films and TV series. Abu Dulama, who was well- known as a poet and satirist, used to use his poetry to flatter caliphs. As a result of his satirical verses and humorous anecdotes, many of his figures of speech are still being used in modern Arabic literature, as well as occasionally in conversations in Arabic daily life. One of Abu Dulama's more famous amusing stories is that he was in caliph Almahdi's court, which contained an elite group and was asked by the caliph to compose some verses that would satirically address one of the elite. The caliph threatened to cut his head off if he refused to do so. When Abu Dulama looked at the people, he could not pick a person to ridicule as the elite were asking Abu Dulama not to target them (they were winking). Eventually, Abu Dulama chose the safest way and preferred to satirise himself with the following three verses (Al-Hamarnah 2004: 19):

<div dir="rtl">

ألا أبلغ لديك أبا دلامة   فليس من الكِرام ولا الكرامة

إذا لبس العمامة كان قرداً   وخنزيراً إذا نزع العمامة

جمعت دمامةً وجمعت لؤماً   كذاك اللؤم تتبعه الدمامة

فإن تك قدأصبت نعيم دنيا   فلا تفرح فقد دنت القيامة

</div>

Back translation:

       Tell Abu Dulama that he has neither value nor dignity
       He resembles a monkey when putting on his Imamah

And looks like a pig when he takes it off

       You combine between ugliness and meanness
       As meanness is always followed by ugliness
     And do not be happy that you have been living blissfully
       As your life has come to an end

Another famous historical personality in the history of humour in mediaeval Islamic literature (the Umayyad period) is Ash'ab (the greedy). Ash'ab had the required skills to make money as he could both sing and dance and succeeded in entertaining people on many occasions until reached the top of the entertainment profession. The stories of Ash'ab's extreme stinginess and stupidity have long been shared by Arabs and some of them have been adopted in many Arabic TV series. Ash'ab had the ability to outwit people and to convince them in order to get what he needed from them. In one of his stories, he managed to persuade a girl that a gold coin gave birth to a silver one and then vanished in childbirth. Another story that reflects his imbecility is when he told some children that used to bother him that there was someone in the town giving people presents. When the children ran towards the man, he followed them thinking that there might be someone giving away presents.

The late mediaeval period witnessed new forms of humour that were utilised to criticise social follies and vices and to teach people moral values. Accordingly, various satirical plays and novels became popular, such as those written by Al-Jāhiz, including *Kitab al bukhalā*(Book of Misers), *Kitab al nawadir* (Book of Jokes), *kitabnawadar al Hasan*(Book of Hasan's jokes), *kitab al mulahiwaalturaf*(Book of funny stories and comic anecdotes), and*kitab al muzāhwa al jidd*(Book of humour and seriousness) (Mubeen 2008: 19). It is also worth mentioning the work of Ibn al-Muqaffa, who was Persian and who lived in Basra during the Umayyad Caliphate and who was murdered on the orders of the Abbasid caliph Abu Ja'far al- Mansur after being accused of importing Zoroastrian thoughts into Islam. Ibn al-Muqaffa's work combines humour and seriousness, and in some cases he criticised Arabs who ridiculed Persian culture. In addition, he was a pioneer of literary prose, which he introduced to Arabic literature after he had translated *KalīlahwaDimnah* into Arabic (Jum'ah 2008: 66).

In the Fatimid period, political humour prevailed as Egyptian poets used humour to criticise the Fatimid Caliphs, especially the religious and historical relationships between these caliphs and Prophet Mohammad's daughter *Fatimah*. Another reason why people used humour to ridicule the caliphs and their secretaries was that they were offered key positions. One of the leading poets in this period was *IbnQādūs al-Dimyāti* and his famous verses criticising hypocrisy (Mubeen 2008: 24-25). The utilisation of humour in political conflicts continued throughout this period until the Ayyubid dynasty, which saw the emergence of educational humour that was adopted to motivate people to make changes in their societies. However, mockery and ridicule returned to their positions as predominant forms of humour, thanks to Al-Bahā' Zuhair. Another key figure in this period who was recruited to a key position during the Ayyubid dynasty was al As'ad bin Mamātī, who edited a book entitled *al fashūsh fi hukmiQraqūsh* in which he satirically targeted *Qraqūsh*,a Turkish leader (Baha' al-Deen al-Asdi) (Radhi 2007: 162).

Humour in the Mameluke period witnessed the introduction of public theatre, which played a major role in the flourishing of public entertainment and which took humour to a new level. As a result of the establishment of the theatre (khayāl al-Zill), some poets composed notable works that addressed social and political life. For example, Ibn Daniel was a humourist and a poet who dedicated his work to enhancing the role of comedy theatre and who composed three dramas, namely "*TaifulKhayal*(spectrum of image), *AjeebwaGareeb*(strange and wondrous) and *Mutayyam*(infatuated)" (Mubeen 2008: 26).

During the Ottoman Empire, political humour prevailed as a result of the political suppression at that time. In fact, there was a form of censorship, as well as restrictions on poets and writers, which prevented them from producing literary work that reflected the political life of many people in all areas that were under Ottoman rule. However, some notable efforts were made by various writers who travelled abroad and had the chance to observe the role of the theatre in western countries. An example is Maroun Al-Naqash, who was a pioneer of Arabic theatre and who went to Italy to study the work of some western playwrights. In 1848, he translated Molière's five-act comedy *The Miser,* which was performed in house in Lebanon by some of his relatives. After the success and popularity of Al-Naqash's theatre, the Ottoman authorities gave permission for the establishment of a public theatre (Zabash 2012: 174-175). This major step in the history of Arabic theatre paved the way for the flourishing of theatre in many Arabic countries such as Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Algeria and Tunisia [13].

Theatre became more popular in Egypt, which encouraged some Syrian and Lebanese writers and actors to emigrate to Egypt. This included *Salem Al-Naqash* and *AdeebIshaq,* who came with their theatrical group and performed some translated humorous works. At the beginning of the 20th century, different theatrical groups were established by various writers and actors, including *George Abiadh*, *YousufWahbi*, *Aziz Eid* and *Nagib al-Rihani,* who was a great comedian both on stage and in films, and who is considered to be the father of comedy in Egypt (SirajAldeen 2006: 26). *Al-Rihani's* theatrical group performed many plays, including "TaaleeliYa Bata", "KeshKeshBey Fee Paris", "Homar We Halawa" "Ayam El Ezz", "HokmKarakosh", "HizzYaWizz" and "BalashAwantah". Similarly, Aziz Eid was also a famous comedian and presented many comic plays, such as "*Lilat al-Dokhlah*", "*Umm Arab' WaArba'een*" and "*DokholeAlhamam Mosh ZaiiKhroujeh*" (Abdulhameed*et. al* 2004: 70-71).

Humour is also a prominent element in most Arabic films and TV series. For example, in Egypt, Al-*Rihani* presented a number of great films like "Sahib al-Sa'adahKushckePayh", "HawadethKushckePayh", "YagootAfendi" and "Abu Halmoos". In addition, *Ismail Yaseen*, who was also a famous comedian, presented a series of films including "Khalaf El Habayb", "Ali Baba We El ArbeenHaramy", "Al-SitatAfareet", "Ismail Yaseen Fee El Gueish" and "Ismail Yaseen Fee El Segn". In Syria, there were three famous comedians, *DuraidLahham*, *YasseenBakoush* and *NihadQali*. These three actors presented a well-known TV series called "Sah El Nawm", which was filmed in 1971 as a film with the same name. In Lebanon, Hassan Ala' al-Dean (also known as Shosho) was a comedian and was also one of the founders of the Lebanese national theatre. He participated in many comedy films, such as "Shosho We El Million", Ya Salam Ya Hub", "Salam Ba'ed El Mout" and "ZamanYa Hub". He also presented various comic shows and TV series, including "HalacaatFocahiyah" , "YaMaudeer" and "Sharee' al-Ezz".

In addition to the great amount of humorous works presented on stage and in films, other forms of humour were utilised in different media, like newspapers and magazines, particularly in Egypt, which has been considered to be the fulcrum of the Arab world and the cultural centre from 1933 onwards. As a result of the political stability and prosperity in Egypt, more than 170 comic newspapers and magazines were established between 1876 and 1952, including "Abu Nazarah", "Abu Zumarah", "Alhawi", "AltankeetWaAltabkeet", "Ala'freet", "Abu Nawas", "Almajnoon", "AlgholeZagzouqWaZarifah", "Anta Wa Ana", "Ha' Ha' Ha'", "Joha" and "Idhak". Numerous newspapers and magazines paved the way for a completely new form of humour, caricature. Some newspapers, such as "Ha' Ha' Ha", attempted to produce caricatures while others, such as *AllataifAlmasriah,* copied caricatures from western newspapers and presented these to the readers (Abdulhameed *et.al* 2004: 70). In 1919, during the Egyptian revolution, caricatures were used frequently in all forms of literary work, particularly in political newspapers, in which caricature was used as a weapon in the conflicts between different political parties at that time. In some cases, caricatures were used to criticise the government and its policies.

3.1 Humour in the modern period

Humour in the Modern Arab world (from 1945 to the present) has changed dramatically as a result of the enormous changes that have taken place at the economic, social, educational, and industrial levels. Accordingly, the number of theatres has increased rapidly, many acting schools have been established and a huge number of AV productions have been

created. Egypt and Syria have been the leading countries in both cinema and TV production; in fact, Egyptian and Syrian TV comic series and films are broadcasted on different Arabic TV networks and Cinemas. In Egypt, different generations of comedians have entertained Arabic audiences for the last fifty years, such as *Adel Imam*, *Sa'eedSaleh*, *Sameer Ghanim*, *younusShalabi*, *SuadNasir*, *Hassan Hussni*, *Al-Muntasirbellah*, *Sana' Younus*, *Ahmad Adam*, *Ahmad Bedeer*, *Halafakher*, *WaheedSaif*, *Mohammed Najm*, *Mohammed Sobhi*, *Mohammed Humaidi*, and *Mohammed Sa'ad*. These actors and others have participated in different comedy productions which normally ridicule social follies and governmental policies that affect ordinary people.

In Syria, the focus of all TV productions has been on TV series reflecting the traditional life of the common people, and these often contain humour. The most well-known comedian who has dedicated his entire career to criticising various social and political pitfalls in the Arab world is *Yasser Al-Azamah*. He produced a TV series entitled "Maraia", which is one of the most famous productions to address the many political and social issues facing society. He does this in a highly satirical way. The series was first produced in 1982 and is still produced every year. Another popular Syrian TV series is "Jameel We Hana", in which *AymanZaidan* and *Norman As'ad* play a typical married couple. The topics covered and situations presented are often filled with humour.

In North African countries, such as Morocco, Tunisia and Libya, and some Gulf countries, such as Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, the production of comedies is very limited in comparison. There are different reasons for this. One is the religious and social restrictions affecting female participation in films as in a country like Saudi Arabia. Another possible reason is the lack of acting schools and a film industry. A third reason is the linguistic barriers which sometimes make it difficult for other Arabic speaking audiences to comprehend TV shows and films. For example, Moroccan or Saudi films and TV shows are normally produced in Moroccan and Saudi dialects of Arabic respectively, making it hard for the other Arabic speaking audiences to understand and appreciate the jokes in these materials.

However, despite all the factors that constitute a serious impediment to the flowering of the film and TV industries in some Arabic countries, several attempts at producing comic shows are worth mentioning. In Kuwait for example, many theatres have been established in which comedies are performed. A well-know comedian in the gulf region and the Arab world who has acted many plays and TV shows is *AbdulhussainAbdulredha*. He performed "Bye London", one of the most popular comedies in the Arab world, in which he sarcastically criticises politics in the Arab World and the unacceptable and shameful behaviour of some individuals when travelling abroad. Abdulredha also participated in what is considered to be the most popular comedy series, "Darb Al Zalag" (The Slippery Path).

Comedy productions have more recently begun to appear in other Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, Tunisia, Iraq, Jordan, and Yemen. In Saudi Arabia for example, "Tash Ma Tash" (No Big Deal) is a popular television comedy series that has been running for eighteen seasons during the holy month of Ramadan. The show, which heavily relies on two comedians, *Nasir Al-Gasabi* and *Abdullah Al-Sadhan*, has no specific story, but rather each episode has a different plot and characters. In Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria, as stated previously, comedy shows are unpopular in the Arab world because of the difficulty involved in comprehending the language used in these materials. However, despite this unpopularity, some series have been produced at a local level. For

example, in Morocco, many TV shows have been broadcasted in the last few years, such as "al-A'uni" and "A'elahMuhtaramahJeddan", which both revolve around two Moroccan families living a normal life with humourous stories involving each member of these families.

The use of humour has changed recently in the Arab world and has been taken to a new and different level thanks to the advent of new technologies and the emergence of social media (Youtube, Twitter, Facebook and What's up). Accordingly, new comic shows have been adopted in which different types of humour are utilised for social and political purposes and, in some instances, these shows intend to amuse the audience for the purpose of entertaining them. In fact, what makes these comic and satirical shows more appealing is the absence of any censorship that may stifle the quality of these productions and impose restrictions on the prickly and even critical topics that are normally addressed.

These new channels of communication between users have changed the whole concept of AV productions, as they are normally made by individuals for their interests and at their own risk, especially those dealing with contentious political issues. For example, some Youtube users who dedicate their Youtube channels to mocking presidents or politicians have been arrested and, in some cases, questioned and told not to criticise the government. This sort of harsh attitude on the part of government officials towards Youtube users and their comic shows is a result of their popularity among local audiences, as these short videos address their social, political and economical concerns in a funny and satirical way.

The use of internet-based media such as Youtube has played a crucial role in the lives of many Arabs to the degree that many Arab leaders have been overthrown as a result of the political will of young people such as the activists WaelGhonim and Abdulrahman Mansour, who created a page on Facebook called "We are all KhaledSaeed", which played a major role in supporting the protestors. The page satirically used facts about the oppressed people in Egypt and incidents that justify the need for the removal of Mubarak's regime and the ill-treatment of the police.

What is interesting about social media during the Arab spring is that users frequently used humour to mock, ridicule and criticise the existing presidents and their corrupt governments. In fact, many jokes have circulated involving the overthrown Arab leaders such as the Tunisian president *Ben Ali*, the Yemeni leader *Ali Abdullah Saleh* and the controversial Libyan leader *Muammar Gaddafi*. The following three jokes, taken from (Hazou 2011) illustrate this.

(37) As soon as *Ben Ali* enters a store looking for footwear, a salesperson comes
forward and hands him a pair of shoes with the perfect fit.
Ben Ali: How did you figure my shoe size?
Salesperson: Because you stomped us for 23 years.

(38) *Anwar Sadat* asks Mubarak: Was it murder or a coup?
Mubarak: No, Facebook.

(39) *Saleh* meets with his cabinet to discuss Yemen's economic woes.
Minister: I have the perfect solution.
Saleh: What?
Minister: We declare war on America. After we lose, the Americans will spend billions
to rebuild our country – much as they did in Germany and Japan after World War II.

Saleh: But what if we beat the Americans?

In addition to humorous jokes that are full of satire and exaggeration, caricatures are very popular and have been used more frequently on social media as they can be easier to comprehend for ordinary Arabs. These caricatures may mock and ridicule one leader or, in many cases, portray several dethroned leaders in a sarcastic manner. For example, in Figure 4, the three leaders Bin Ali, Mubarak and Gaddafi are in the cartoon, where Gaddafi is praying that what happened to Bin Ali and Mubarak will not happen to him as they have lost their chairs, which symbolize their rules.

Fig.4 A cartoon with caricatures of Bin Ali, Mubarak, and Gaddafi

The amount of freedom that has been given to people during the Arab spring does not only affect the production of comedy shows in Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Yemen and Syria, but has also inspired those who live in countries where less freedom is given. By way of illustration, let us take Saudi Arabia as an example of how comic shows, especially on Youtube, have created a revolution in the development of the forms of humour used in the last fifteen years. These productions rely heavily on humour to address the concerns of Saudi citizens at social, political, and economical levels. As a result of this relative freedom of speech, a considerable number of Youtube channels have been established, such as 'Masameer' (Nails) produced by *Malik Niger*, 'AlaAttaier' (on the fly) presented by *Omar Hussain,* 'La Yakthar' (shut up) produced by enthusiastic young Saudis like *Ali Alkhalthamy* and *FahadAlbutairy* and 'Sahi' (vigilant) presented by *HadiAlshaibany*.

In summary, humour has played an essential role in Arabic culture. This role was in one direction during the pre-Islamic period, in which satirical lines of poetry prevailed and were used to mock opponents' tribes. The utilization of humour then started to develop throughout the mediaeval Islamic era, resulting in a wide range of humorous plays that were considered to be a new literary form during that period of time. Furthermore, the Mameluke period and the Ottoman Empire witnessed the emergence of public theatres, which had a great impact on the production of comedy plays. After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, there was a sort of openness to western cultures which resulted in a rapid development of forms of humour such as caricature, comedy films and sitcoms, especially in Egypt, Lebanon and Syria. In addition, with advent the of new technologies and the emergence of social media, the use of humour has been taken to another level in which individual young people produce their own comic shows tackling many issues relating to social and political topics. These shows are usually presented for the purpose of criticising existing social and political follies in an attempt to drive change.

4. Conclusion

This paper gave a detailed analysis of the relationship between humour and culture and how people from different cultures have different ways of perceiving what is humorous and what is not. In other words, what is funny in a particular culture can be boring or humourless in another. The paper concludes with a thorough discussion of the types of humour in Arabic culture in different periods of time and how the utilisation of humour at social and political levels has changed rapidly in the last few years, resulting in an excessive production of comic shows using social media.

References

-Abdulhameed, S., Abdullah, M. S., Ashmawi, S. (2004). *AlfukahawaA'liyatAlnaqdeAlejtima'ee*. Cairo: University of Cairo.

-Al-Hamarnah S. M. S. (2004). *Al-Turfah fee aladabalfelisteny, derasahtahliliyah*, (Unpublished MA thesis), Islamic University, Gaza

-Hazou, M. (2011, 27 February). Roasting Gaddafi, Mubarak, Ben Ali and Saleh with a smile. [Weblog]. Retrieved from http://michcafe.blogspot.co.uk/2011/02/roasting-gaddafi-mubarak-ben-ali-and.html

-Jum'ah, H. A. (2008). Ibn al-Muqaffa' watuhmat al-zandaqah. *Thaqafatonalilderasatwa al-buhooth*, 5(18), pp. 65-82.

-MacMillan, G. (2012). How Obama's campaign uses sex and humour (Republicans stick to the apocalypse). Retrieved 12 August, 2013, from http://gordonsrepublic.brandrepublic.com/2012/10/29/how-obamas-campaign-uses-sex-and-humour-republicans-stick-to-the-apocalypse/

-Martins, P. (2012).Ethnic humour: what do Portuguese people laugh at?.*Folklore: Electronic Journal of Folklore*, 50, pp. 87-98.

-Mubeen, H. (2008). Humour and comedy in Arabic literature (From the birth of Islam to Ottoman period), *Al-Hikmat*, 28, pp. 13-30.

-Radhi, R. A. (2007). alfashūsh fi hukmiQraqūsh- aldawafe' waalagradh. *Journal of College of Education/Wasit*, 2(19), pp. 162-172.

-Elfeki, S. (2013)*Sex and the Citadel: intimate life in a changing Arab world.* London: Chatto&Windus.

-Shehata, S. S. (1992). The politics of laughter: Nasser, Sadat, and Mubarek in Egyptian political jokes. *Folklore*, 103(1), pp. 75-91.

-SirajAldeen, M. (2006). Funnalmasrahiyahwasea'tuh fi aladabalarabi. *DrasatAljama'hAlislamiyahAla'lamiyahShitagong*, 3, pp. 23-34.

-Wenger, E. (1998).*Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

-Zabash, S. (2012).Alrawaadh al-a'waa'lewamas'alatta'sceilalmasrahala'rabi. *Al'athar*, 13, pp. 173-191.

Possible Criteria for Evaluating Students' Translation Errors

Ramadan Ahmed Elmgrab
University of Benghazi, Libya

Abstract

Although different criteria have been proposed in applied translation literature in order to eliminate the subjectivity of the evaluator, these attempts remain tentative and, consequently, evaluation is still an area of controversy. A sound evaluation should go beyond intuition to achieve objectivity and accuracy. In translation practice, however, the operation inevitably involves the making of personal judgments and cannot be a pure mechanical process. Most translation instructors would, however, opt for a quality assessment as translation involves a transfer of meaning which can be affected by the quality of the error rather than its quantity. Yet, a high distribution of an error can always alarm instructors and arouse their suspicion, especially when it is widespread among various students. The criteria for evaluating translation students' errors will contribute to the construction of systematic assessment processes. Instructors are required to seek a basis for informed judgment built upon both theoretical consideration and experimental criteria. In this respect, this paper attempts to discuss the main criteria of translation quality assessment to see how far they serve this purpose.

Keywords: criteria, translation, corpus, evaluation, students, errors.

1 Preliminary

Translation is as old as language itself. The first traces of translation dated from 3000 BC in the old kingdom of Egypt in which the discovery of the Rosetta stone is considered to be the turning point in the history of translation. Later on, in the ninth century, the West contacted Islam through Arabs in Muslim Spain where a continuous contact between Arabic and Indo-European languages was born. Although translation today is a very common practice little has been written about it. The importance of translation emerges from its vital role in transmitting meaning and culture, as language is probably the most important vehicle serving this purpose. The appropriateness of a translation can play a salient role in the enhancement as well as breakdown of international communication.

To this end, different translation models and approaches have sought to eradicate such translational misunderstandings, yet each of them has engendered more controversies than solving existing ones. Mistranslation and translational problems are a persistent obstacle to the translator and therefore for the instructor of translation. Instructors, in their turn, are frequently confronted not only with texts that are problematic owing to linguistic and/or socio-cultural boundaries between the source language (SL) and the target language (TL) but also with the problem of teaching according to the needs of the different trainees concerned. The translation instructor's task is most often twofold: (i) to explain the linguistic difficulties embedded in the source texts, and (ii) to explicate the translation strategies required to render the source text (ST) into the target text (TT). For instance, if a SL text involves a cultural problem it would require first explanation of the cultural meaning of the lexical item concerned and then the finding of an equivalent meaning in the TL.

Error analysis offers in this case the appropriate tool to check upon the students' needs and relate them to translation theory. Translation instructors often rely on teaching models which anticipate the students' difficulties usually on the basis of a comparative analysis of both languages in question and in most cases; they depart from two languages to claim universality. That is, a translation theory or model, often assumed to apply to all sets of languages, is usually based on findings from a particular group of students or predictions of the theorist from his knowledge of a particular set of languages. Such translation models, although providing insightful methodological and pedagogical means for the instructor, are not always suitable for all groups of students and all types of language. This divorce between translation theory and the context of the teaching situation can be bridged through the discussion of the students' performance.

Error evaluation provides the instructor with the necessary feedback regarding the particularity of the group or individual students and the suitability of the instructor's methodology, information which translation theory alone fails to supply. In short, error evaluation provides the instructor with valuable information about trainees' areas of failure and the efficiency or inefficiency of teaching methods and practices. Errors should, therefore, be considered as an inevitable part of any learning or training situation which requires creativity or the ability to analyze and regularize (Tylor 1980).

However, assessing acceptability of texts is an important task especially in the process of educating translator trainees. In this respect Buraser (2013:128) explains that

> we do not confuse acceptability of texts with the quality of translation, since the latter focuses on the aspects of accuracy and faithfulness between the ST and the TT, while the former emphasizes the link between the textual features displayed in similar texts of the same genre and the ones displayed in the translation text, which is no longer viewed by the target audience as translation, but simply as text.

This means that when evaluating the quality of translation, the evaluators are usually translation experts who identify the TT errors against the quality of the ST, whereas, assessing acceptability of texts is a different process which requires the involvement of the target audience, who need not be translation studies experts.

2. Possible Criteria for Evaluation

The domain of errors is a complex issue that requires a solid theoretical background before any attempt is made to induce or generalize conclusions about students (Elmgrab 2013:58). Although scholars have different views concerning the translation teaching process, they (Kussmaul 1995, Williams, 2004, Bogucki 2010) in general maintain almost similar methodological criteria. They suggest that a sound account of students' errors should be organized in terms of certain procedural steps, namely identification of errors (discovering the deficiency), description of errors (looking at the symptoms), explanation of errors (diagnosing the reasons for the error), and evaluation of errors (assessing the gravity of the error and accordingly recommending the appropriate therapy). Thus, an effective evaluation, which is the main goal of this paper, cannot proceed without the *apriori* stages of identification, description and explanation.

2. 1. Identification of Errors

Translation instructors most often face some difficulties in identifying translation errors. The non-binary nature of translation errors makes the process of recognition a point of controversy among instructors. In this regard, Newmark (1988:6) points out that "satisfactory translation is always possible ... there is no such thing as a perfect, ideal or 'correct' translation". Translation quality assessment should then be performed in such terms rather than the right/wrong dichotomy. Satisfactory/acceptable translation is used here to indicate that the translated text cannot be judged as simply wrong or right as it is the case in monolingual statements such as: *the earth is flat*. A translation cannot be either rejected completely or taken for granted as right or wrong. For example, the Arabic expression:

(1) ^{C}amaliyya ?istishha:diyya   (Martyr operation)
is often rendered into English as:
(1a) suicide attack

The reverse translation of the English text 1a will produce in Arabic a different meaning from the original text. This is likely to be because of a clash of cultures which is enacted in the two linguistic texts. In the Western culture such acts are often associated with violence, terrorism, and even fanaticism, whatever their reason or purpose. In the Arab-Islamic culture, however, such acts are a sign of self-sacrifice and courage especially when they are committed against a so-called enemy or occupier. However, despite the ideological shift in translation 1a, it cannot be judged as simply true because it deviates from the ST meaning or simply false because it has been managed in a manner that serves the TL reader's thought and therefore the communicative purpose of translation (Hatim 1990).To this effect, translation instructors may differ as to which translation can be considered acceptable/accurate or unacceptable/inaccurate and consequently as to what is to be regarded as erroneous. For instance, an error sanctioned by an instructor as serious may be overlooked by another provided that the meaning is still effected. Sentence 2 reads:

(2) The decree was signed by the president
(2a) wuqqi^{C}a al-marsu:m min qibal al-ra?i:s   (literal translation)
(2b) waqqa^{C}a l-ra?i:s al-marsu:m.   (The president signed the decree)

Passivized forms like sentence 2 are acceptable in English, while the acceptability of the corresponding Arabic form in 2a varies according to the instructor and the context in which it occurs. This is because Arabic passives are typically agentless (Saad 1982). Translation 2a, however, is acceptable in media discourse which is more open to Western styles and structures. Disparity between instructors also arises when the error is due to cultural mismatch. For example, judgement of translation 3a as accurate or erroneous may depend on whether the translator intends to introduce the TL reader to the SL religious culture or simply has failed to observe the cultural demands of the TL:

(3) Jesus, Son of God
(3a) ^{c}i:sa ?ibn Allah.   (literal translation)

Nonetheless, not all translation failures can be clearly identified as either belonging to the category of *mistake* or *error*. For instance, it would be hard to tell whether the inappropriateness of 3a is due to the producer's (translator) lack of the necessary linguistic knowledge and therefore should be identified as a mistake; or whether it simply reflects a lack of the necessary translational skills to differentiate between a literal and dynamic (pragmatic) methods of translation according to situation and context, and should therefore be classified as an error. Only our feedback from the producer's linguistic knowledge may solve the confusion.

Having said this, a feedback from the students being assessed is still an essential component of a well-informed judgment of their errors. The instructor can have recourse to this type of feedback in the process of error detection in two different ways. In the case of an informal assessment process, the instructor may, if necessary, ask the students what they want to convey by the erroneous translation in question. This can pave the way to discovering whether the error can be traced either back to a misunderstanding of the ST or a lack of competence in the TL. In the former case, the instructor would be carrying out an authoritative interpretation of the student's erroneous translation (Corder 1981). The second type is often performed when no direct contact can be made with the student whose errors are studied. The instructor should, therefore, infer the student's intention whenever possible from his knowledge of the idiosyncratic style and the strategies used. This process is referred to as a plausible interpretation (ibid.).

In translation practice, however, some instructors tend to opt for a plausible interpretation of their students' translations given the negative pedagogical implications the authoritative interpretation may induce. Students often feel demotivated and may even develop lack of self-confidence if they are repeatedly pressed to explain their errors for which they may feel embarrassed. Thus, I believe it is advisable that instructors should be lenient at this level of error evaluation, particularly at early training stages, in order to allow students to get to grips with practical translation skills and strategies.

2.2. Description of Errors

The description of errors is generally looked upon as the process of comparing between the student's translation and tat of the instructor's reconstructed one. This process becomes a mere contrastive analysis in that they both have the methodology of a bilingual comparison. This evaluative procedure of contrasting the student's construction to an ideal reconstruction compared by the instructor is often performed, as Bassnet-Susan (1991) notes, from one of two standpoints: from the view of the closeness of the translation to the SL text or from treatment of the TL text as a work in its own language. Both views are, however, limited in scope. If the instructor describes the student's error merely on the basis of his reconstruction designed according to Bassnet-Susan's first view, i.e. the principle of equivalence of the TT to the ST, the instructor then overlooks the non-binary nature of translation which means that there are several possible translations of one ST. Therefore, while an

instructor may describe a student's erroneous translation as serious on the basis that it is too distant from his own translation, the student's same translation can be closer to one of other possible reconstructions, and consequently less serious. The instructor is then required to have an open view of other translations and interpretations offered by the students themselves. The latter view observes the student's erroneous translation merely within the framework of the TL.

This approach also faces the same controversy among instructors. For example, a grammatical error may, according to one instructor, display incompetence and therefore is heavily penalized. The same error may be sanctioned more tolerantly by another instructor on the basis that, though grammatically incorrect, it makes sense within the context and does not distort the meaning intended in the ST. Consider the translations of sentences:4, 5 and 6:

> (4) al-ijra?a:n al-awwala:n
> (4a) The two first procedures
> (4b) The first two procedures
> (5) The lesson is not easy
> (5a) al-dars laysa sahl   (literal)
> (5b)laysa al-dars sahl   (not the lesson easy)
> (6) Hope Hospital adopts a non-smoking policy
> (6a) tattabi^C mustashfa: hub siya:sat ^{C}adam al-tadkhi:n   (Hope Hospital *feminine)*
> (6b) yattabi^C mustashfa hub siyasat ^{C}adam al-tadkhi:n   ((Hope Hospital *masculine*)

Erroneous translations such as 4a, 5a and 6a above may not be considered by some instructors as serious in so far as they do not affect the communicative meaning of the ST. Yet, other instructors may consider these errors as a reflection of the student's incompetence and seek, therefore, remedial teaching because, as Kussmaul (1995: 144) argues, "the more basic these errors are, the more heavily they are usually penalized". In addition, the view of assessing translation only within the TL framework borrows heavily from a purely monolingual position which ignores the role of the ST in the modeling of the translation before being rendered into the TL and culture. Thus, any description of translation errors should take into account the ST as well as the TL and culture.

However, an instructor's task is not restricted to the description of errors. He should also discover the cause of the error in order to provide a solution. For instance, the instructor's description of the erroneous translation of 7a below by providing the appropriate translation in 7b is not adequate in determining or constructing a reteaching plan to enable students to avoid errors of the same type that are generally made by Arab students:

> (7) dawr al-?i^{C}la:m fi:al-mujtama^C
> (7a) The role of **the** media in **the** society
> (7b) The role of media in society.
> (8) Super predators arrive
> (8a) lususfawqa al-^{C}ada wasalu: (literal)
> (8b) wusul lususfawqa l^{C}a:da   (Arrival of super predator)

In this case, the instructor needs to explain the errors in 7a as resulting from an inaccurate transfer from Arabic due to the divergence in use between the two languages of the definite article system. In 8a, the student transferred the English sentence structure (SVO) into Arabic which requires a different syntagmatic distribution (VSO). Though a possible structure without a verb can be rendered as 8b notice, however, that one of the characteristics of Arabic is the relative fluidity of its word order as it permits as many ways of ordering the constituents of the sentence as possible (Abdul-Raof 1998). The transfer in 8a is from the foreign language (SL) into the mother tongue (TL) in contrast to the common assumption that transfer errors occur the other way round, i.e. from TL to SL.

Trainees need to be introduced to such linguistic differences; it is the instructor's responsibility to explain such differences and make them part of translation strategies. Since translation errors vary a great deal, seeking different remedies according to the type of error would be realistic in translation practice. Thus, a classification of errors, though often overlapping, is essential. It should be noted, however, that such a compartmentalization does not necessarily imply a clear-cut line between translation errors as an error can be classified in more than one category.

In this respect, two major types of translation error can be distinguished: errors made at micro-textual level and those at macro-textual level the two of which (micro- and macro-levels) constitute the standards of textuality of text. Micro-errors refer to those deficiencies in the organization of the textual elements in the text, i.e. the way the surface components of text (phonology, morphology and syntax) relate together. Errors at this level are mainly threefold: syntactical, semantic, and stylistic. The idea is an amalgamation of Widdowson's (1979) categorization of equivalence and Kussmaul's (1995) typology of errors.

At the micro-level, the syntactic type is usually more important in foreign language teaching but appears also in translations (Kussmaul 1995). It includes errors such as the wrong use of conjugation, prepositions, agreement and word order. Semantic errors often refer to the wrong selection of a word's meaning particularly in judging between polysemes and synonyms such as the French *savoir*/*connaitre* or the English *see*/*watch*, or the Arabic *insarafa* (went away)/*gha:dara* (departed) or *akala* (ate) *tana:wala* (had a meal or tackled a certain subject). The stylistic type represents the student's inability to differentiate between intrinsic stylistic features peculiar to each language or different situations within the same language. Indeed, different styles are often used with different genres. For instance, repetition is a prominent stylistic feature that characterizes Arabic texts and often shows up in English texts translated by native Arab speakers. In English, however, repetition is often considered redundant and is usually required to be avoided in translation from Arabic (Williams 1984).

Macro-errors, however, refer to failures to render the extra-linguistic meaning of the surface components and the communicative functions they perform. Within this contextual aspect of text, two types of error could be identified: one relating to situational adequacy and the other to general cultural adequacy. Situational errors involve failure to preserve any of the three Hallidayan discourse parameters of *field*, *tenor* and *mode* of the ST in the TT. Field is an abstract term which refers to what the text is about. Linguistic choices in translation are often determined in terms of the field of discourse. For instance, in a military context, sentence 9 would be more suitable than sentence 10:
(9) Execute one's orders
(10) Do one's orders.

Misrepresentation of tenor, on the other hand, is often a result of a failure to transfer the ST's interpersonal relationships. For example, sentence 11 would be undesirable in a formal context whereas sentence 12 would be more appropriate:

(11) Cops came to his home
(12) The police came to his home.

The mode of discourse, however, is concerned with the role language plays in the interactive process (Halliday and Hasan 1989). For example, *re* is appropriate in a business letter but is rarely, if ever, used in spoken English (Baker 1992). Likewise, *basmala* an acronym of the Arabic phrase meaning *In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, and the Most Merciful* is ideally used in written Arabic but is unlikely to be acceptable in spoken Arabic varieties. These language choice restrictions

such as *re* and *basmala* are in both cases likely to be imposed, as Baker (ibid.) explains, by the fact that speakers of each language have certain expectations about what kind of language is appropriate to particular situations.

Cultural errors, on the other hand, refer to the failure to represent the embedded cultural meaning of the ST into the TT. Difficulty in translating the cultural embedding often increases when "the ST is tied in a specific way to the source language community and culture" (House 1977:189), that is, the field of the ST is not shared by or common to the target culture. Cultural problems usually arise at this level for the student who, in such a situation, is often undecided about whether to opt for a cultural adaptation as a way of compensation or keep the exotic character of the ST as a way of enhancing cross-cultural rapprochement. Kussmaul (1995: 134) argues that trainees "should be left in such cases to decide for themselves, though they should be advised to take into consideration the readership".

After the identification and description of the error as affecting the micro and/or macro-level of meaning, a necessary step forward is needed because identification and description alone cannot provide any viable solution for translation problems. It is also essential to look for the reason of errors that is to provide an explanatory account of the students' errors.

2.3. Explanation of Errors

It is held that errors are attributable to transfer from the SL, which occurs when the student cannot help mixing up two systems, at the same time, ending up with a new one of his own belonging to neither of them. Translation instructors can make use of the interlanguage approach, but not at an advanced stage as Kussmaul (1995) noted. That is to say, beginners in a translation course are more prone to transfer errors and are consequently often advised, like foreign language learners, to distance themselves, as far as possible, from the SL. As far as Arab trainees are concerned, I believe that they have to be encouraged at the first stage of their programme to gain confidence and competence in the TL (English) and culture. At a more advanced stage, however, it becomes clear that translation is not the same as foreign language teaching. While the main concern of foreign language teaching is the TL, translation involves, in addition to the TL, SL which is the primary source of information the translator departs from and should keep in with whenever possible. Neubert and Shreve (1995:415) depict translation error as

> what rightly appear to be linguistically equivalent may very frequently qualify as "translationally" nonequivalent, and this is so because the complex demands on adequacy in translation involve subject factors and transfer conventions that typically run counter to considerations about "surface" linguistic equivalent.

This is why trainee translators are often faced with the problem of how to represent the meaning of the SL into the TL without affecting the structure of either of them. Thus, translation errors relate to translation skills though they may be transfer errors similar to that of language teaching. Yet, explanation of errors is often speculative because the process of translation took place in the translator's mind which we do not have access to it. These speculations may either concur with the reality about the translation process or contradict it; Kussmaul (1995:6) points out in this regard that

> our expectations and guesses may coincide with reality, i.e. with what happens in the translation process, but there are also the well-known cases when we find mistakes in our students' translation which are explained to us by our students in a completely different manner from the way we should have explained them.

This emphasizes that absolutes in translation are untenable and any principle can be questioned. From what preceded, I tried to highlight some necessary prior steps to the evaluation of translation errors. They are the identification, description and an explanation. However, these steps mainly performed on "an intuitive basis establishing an experimental taxonomy of potential translational difficulties and of the general linguistic, extra-linguistic and socio-cultural impact a particular text makes on the student" (Wilss 1992:395).

3. The Assessment of Instructors' Evaluation and Consistency

The assessment of translator's performance is a widespread activity that has attracted the attention of several researchers and publications. There is an abundant amount of literature on how to teach translation and assess trainees' performance (Lonsdale 1996, Malmkjar 1998 and Hatim 2012). However, little use has been made of the feedback from students' performance and especially from instructors' translation quality assessments. In other words, although tests and criteria have been set for instructors to conduct their assessment, the scrutiny of their evaluation tools, the interaction of instructors with these tools, and the pedagogical implications of such interaction for the theory and teaching of translation are all areas that have been under-researched.

At the beginning, I attempted to predict different possible criteria instructors might be using during their evaluation, viz. identification, description and description. The evaluation will be divided into two main sections: the first is concerned with instructors' interaction with the aforementioned criteria of assessment and the second with their inter-consistency. Before proceeding in the analysis of students' errors, it is worth giving a brief description of the nature of the data. That is how translation errors can enhance our understanding of practical translation practice. Several ideas are put forward on how such a task can be best realized or performed. These ideas will serve as a methodological matrix for the analysis and evaluation of actual translation errors derived from a real corpus which consists of two main databases.

5.1. Database One: Translation-Tests

The first database consists of three passages given as translation tests to twenty Arab trainee-translators at Benghazi University, Libya. Testees who made under familiar test conditions were asked to produce the Arabic translations of three English test-translations represent the main Hallidayan text types: argumentation is used to evaluate objects, events or concepts with the aim of influencing future behavior, i.e. to persuade readers to accept a claim, whether that acceptance is based on logical or emotional appeals or both. Exposition is used to analyze concepts with the aim of informing or narrating and instruction is used to direct the receiver towards a certain course of action. It is worth mentioning that text type is vital for communication aims as Hatim and Mason (1990:140) postulate that "a conceptual framework which enables us to classify texts in terms of communicative intentions serving an overall rhetorical purposes". Fawcett (1997:104) also emphasizes that text type help us choose the appropriate translation method (solution) when he made it clear that "it makes no sense to judge a translated text in the traditional manner of picking out a few items to comment on, we should begin by determining the text type since the text co-determines the appropriate translation method.

Taking more than one sample from each trainee by testing them in terms of different text-types has two main implications for the present work. First, it increases representativeness of the student's performance which varies even in similar tasks, let alone in producing different text-types. Second, it ensures the validity and reliability of the assessment of students' translations because the more samples we have from the output of each testee the more reliable the assessment is likely to be

(Hughes 1989). Thus, the separation between text types is expected to provide a balanced assessment of errors because, as Hatim (1997) observes, the demands of each translation task vary according to the type of text being translated, certain types often being more demanding than others.

As to the analysis of the students' translations, it starts with the identification of discrepancies in each text. These discrepancies are, afterwards, described by locating their linguistic realizations. That is, the actual part of the text which bears the discrepancy is defined in terms of the descriptive parameters (syntactic, semantic, and stylistic). Because the analysis of the macro-structure of a text can be verified in translation only through the choice and arrangement of its actual linguistic signs (given that they are the usual feedback that trainees are provided with), syntactic, semantic and stylistic errors will also be examined in terms of their effect on the macro-textual level of translations. The descriptive analysis is carried out separately on each text-type. Once the errors are classified as syntactic, semantic or stylistic, and it is determined whether they also affect the macro-textual level of the translation, we shall try to trace them back to their source. That is, errors will be explained as to whether they are stimulated by the trainee's lack of competence in the TL or transfer from the SL, etc. At this stage a comparative analysis is crucial. For example, comparison between the SL system and TL system is essential to trace interference. Comparison between errors of different text-types can also determine the difficulties inherent in the rhetorical or discoursal nature of the text-type being translated.

3.2 Database Two: the Questionnaire

After the analysis of students' errors in the corpus, assessment of instructors' perception of their gravity is also essential to complete our evaluation task of these errors. This was realized through the administration of a questionnaire to ten evaluators (translation instructors). The questionnaire consists of fifteen translation errors described and explained during the analysis of students' performance. That is to say, there was a selection of all possible categories of errors that can generate different criteria of assessment but the choice between errors of the same type was random. For each erroneous construction, its corresponding ST was provided with details of which text and line it is extracted from. For instance, Sample 6 text Three, lines 1-3 reads:

> He seized what lay around him …
> wa istafa:d min kul ma ḥawlah

The contextualization of the extract is also made easier by mentioning the number of the text and lines as all three texts and their lines are numerated and attached to the questionnaire. Instructors were required to assess these constructions (four error-samples for each criterion) on the basis of two scales. In the first scale, they had to determine the type of error(s) as syntactic, semantic and/or stylistic. In the second scale, they were asked to evaluate the erroneous constructions in terms of their gravity using a score system from 0 to 5. Score 5 stands for most serious errors and 0 for non-errors.

After the collection of the questionnaire, instructors' scores were compared to examine to what extent they made use of the evaluation criteria (identification, description and explanation) and how consistent and reliable their assessment was. The analysis investigated the instructors' interaction with inter-consistency. Consistency can be defined in the context of this work as giving consistent information about the value of a learning variable being measured while inter-consistency is related to the production of similar judgments by different instructors when evaluating the same sample, i.e. the more similar the scores are, the higher is the inter-consistency achieved and vice versa.

3.3 Analysis of Students' Corpus

On the whole, the analysis of the translation of argumentation shows a number of weaknesses that can drastically affect the quality of the translation or the credibility of the translator. Students made a variety of linguistic errors which can alter the micro- and/or macro-level of the translation. These tend, however, to be errors made by individual students and are not much different from those made when translating exposition and instruction. Some errors, however, are more frequent in argumentation than in the other text-types. Others are a mere result of cross-linguistic variation between the argumentation formats of the two languages.

As far as translation of argumentation between Arabic and English is concerned, it is essential to acquaint the trainee with the argumentative format in each language and the ways variation could be dealt with. To convey the argumentation convincingly to the TL audience, the translator must do so within the constraints imposed by the discourse situation of the text. The realization of these constraints, defined as field tenor and mode, can be cross-linguistically variant. In this case, the translator is compelled to work with the constraint framework of the TL but must find at the same time compensating techniques to preserve the pragmatic goal of the ST.

The investigation of the problems related to the translation of exposition and instruction text types shows that in most cases students lacked the frame and schema of the type and genre of the text they were translating as they made all types of errors. Testees seem to pay little attention to the textual aspects of text, such as cohesion, coherence and the organization of information (thematic, forms, argumentation).

Compared with their translation of argumentation, testees performed better in exposition and instruction as their errors became less frequent and less serious especially with regard to the core meaning of text. Most of their errors affected partially either the meaning of some words/expressions or the naturalness with which the whole text was presented. The students' main incompetence in this regard was the way they processed the text. They seemed to opt for a minimal processing of words and sentences and did not give way for a multiplication process within the whole context in order to allow its expressive and communicative aspect to become manifest. It is obvious that students lacked the necessary pragma-textual framework, when dealing with two culturally and linguistically incongruent languages like Arabic and English.

In sum, the texts were hardly negotiated by the trainees and there was an obvious inclination towards the SL forms and rhetorical functions. In other words, trainees were not aware of the impact of the TL audience's modes of thought and response on the quality of the translation. Therefore, their rendering seemed to strip out the text from its aesthetic functions and ornamental values; the transfer of content, regardless of the appropriateness of its presentation in the TL, was their only concern.

3.4 Questionnaire Results

Table One (appendix I) is a numerical representation of instructors' assessment of the fifteen samples administered as a questionnaire. I rearranged the order of samples in the table according to the criteria which they mostly violate and were intended to test. In other words, one sample may involve the violation of more than one criterion but in most cases it is set to test one of the criteria regardless of the instructors. The Table shows a serious disparity among instructors' scores. However, a detailed analysis of these samples takes into account the different types of error each one involves; their recognition by instructors also indicates that the level of inter-consistency amongst instructors is relatively satisfactory. Most of them severely penalized errors which affect the core meaning of the

ST either by altering it, deleting part of it or making it unintelligible. The alarming observation which can be inferred from the instructors' evaluation is that their analysis and assessment of the trainees' translations are often performed at the surface level. In other words, instructors, in the process of their assessment, check upon the main content of the ST without paying equal attention to pragmatic and stylistic aspects of translation such as ideological shifts, intertextual meanings, naturalness and collocative patterning of words.

4. Conclusion

Finally, evaluation is an important element of translation teaching for it is a feedback from which instructors check upon their students' achievements and needs. To be so, it must probe into all meaning aspects that are crucial to a successful translation. In the case of our evaluators, apart from the semantic content, almost all other aspects were overlooked. Instructors' feedback from their evaluation in this context is not of much help as it does not cover all students' needs. It can even be misleading if instructors design their own syllabus, remedial teaching or completion of the course on the basis of the findings from this kind of evaluation.

From the discussion of instructors' evaluation, it can be claimed that there is a considerable imbalance in their assessment in terms of the different criteria and tools available for this purpose. Such an imbalance can have undesirable effects on the teaching/learning process. The inconsistency in instructors' evaluation is likely to cause confusion for the trainees and mask the clarity of the course objectives.

It should be noted that errors are just part of the students' development process in training. Any sound account of this process should involve the other part of the students' performance which does not involve error-making. In other words, the instructor's analysis should not be limited solely to those areas that are problematic to the students but can be extended to those mastered skills in order to draw a complete picture of the training process.

References

-Abdul-Raof, H. (1998). *Subject, Theme and Agent in Modern Standard Arabic*. London: Curzon.

-Baker, M. (1992). *In Other Words: A Course Book in Translation*. London: Routledge.

-Bassnet-Susan, M. (1991). *Translation Studies*. London: Routledge.

-Bogucki, L. (2010). *Teaching Translation and Interpreting: Challenges and Practices*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

-Burazer L. (2013). Examining the Differences in Assessing Quality of Translations and Acceptability of Texts. ELOPE / Volume X / Autumn pp 127-137. Ljubljana: Birografika Bori.

-Chau, S. (1983). How to Translate this is a Red Rose? The grammatical, Cultural, and Interpretive Aspects of translation. In Wilss, W. and Thome, G. (eds.), *Translation Theory and its Implementation in the Teaching of Translating and Interpreting.* pp. 124-134, Stuttgart-Tübingen: Gunter Narr.

-Corder, S. P. (1973). .*Introducing Applied Linguistics*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

-Corder, S. (1981).*Error Analysis and Interlanguage*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

-Elmgrab, R. A. (2013). *Evaluation* of Translation Errors: Procedures and Criteria. .*International Proceedings of Economics Development & Research*. Vol. 62, p58-65.

-Fawcett P. (1997). *Translation and Language*. Manchester: St. Jerome.

-Halliday, M. A. K. and Hasan, R (1989) *Language, Context, and Text: Aspects of Language in a Social-Semiotic Perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

-Hatim, B. And Masom, I (1990). Discourse and the Translator. London: Longman.

-Hatim, B. (2012). *Teaching and Researching Translation*. London: Alwats Learning Pearson.

-Hatim, B. (1997). *The Translator as Communicator*. London: Routledge.

-House, J. (1977). *A Model for Translation Quality Assessment*. Tübingen: Gunter Narr.

-Hughes, A. (1989). *Testing for Language Teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

-Kussmaul, P. (1995). *Training the Translator*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

-Lonsdale, A. B. (1996). *Teaching Translation from Spanish to English*. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press.

-Malmkjar, K. (ed.) (1998). *Translation and Language Teaching: Language Teaching and Translation*. Manchester: St Jerome.

-Neubert A., Shreve G. and Gommlich K. (1995). (eds.): *Basic Issues in Translation Studies*. Kent, OH, Institute for Applied Linguistics.

-Newmark, P. 1988.*Approaches to Translation.* London: Prentice Hall International.
Pym, A. (1992). *Translation* Error Analysis and the Interface with Language Teaching. In Dollerup, C. And Loddegaard, A. (eds.), *Teaching Translation and Interpreting, Talent and Experience*. pp. 279-88.Amsterdam: Benjamins.

-Pym, A. 1993.*Epistemological Problems in Translation and its Teaching.* Teruel: Edicions Caminade.

-Saad, G. 1982.*Transitivity, Causation and Passivisation*. London: Kegan Paul International.

-Tylor, B. 1980 Adult Language Learning strategies and their Pedagogical implications: for Teachers and Teacher Trainees. In Croft, K. (ed.) *Readings on English as a Second Language.* pp. 144-52, Cambridge Mass:Winthrop.

-Widdowson, H. (1979). The Deep Structure of Discourse and the Use of Translation. In Brumfit, J. and Johnson, K (eds.). *The Communicative Approach to Language Teaching*, pp. 60-71, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

-Williams, M. (2004).*Translation Quality Assessment: An Argumentation-Centered Approach (Perspectives on Translation)*. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press.

-Williams, M. (1984). A Problem of Cohesion. In Swales, J. and Mustafa, H. (eds.), *English for Specific Purposes in the Arab World*. pp. 118-128, Birmingham: University of Aston Press.

-Wilss, W. 1992.*The Future* of *Translator Training. Meta* 37:3, pp 391-396.

Appendix I

Inter-consistency (disparity among instructors)											
Identification				Description				Explanation			
Samples	**S1**	**S2**	**S3**	**S4**	**S5**	**S6**	**S7**	**S8**	**S9**	**S10**	**S11**	**S12**
Evaluator I	2	1	4	2	0	3	2	2	1	3	4	3
Evaluator II	2	2	5	4	1	4	3	3	2	2	5	5
Evaluator III	1	2	4	3	0	1	1	5	1	3	5	4
Evaluator IV	0	0	5	5	1	2	0	1	2	5	0	3
Evaluator V	0	0	3	3	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	4
Evaluator VI	0	0	3	3	0	0	1	0	0	1	4	1
Evaluator VII	1	1	5	3	3	2	3	3	1	3	0	3
Evaluator VIII	2	0	3	2	1	3	2	1	1	1	0	3
Evaluator IX	3	3	4	3	1	1	1	3	3	4	3	4
Evaluator X	1	0	3	4	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	4

(Table 1: numerical representation of Instructors' assessment)

(Table 2: Transliteration System for Arabic Sounds)

Consonants			
Arabic Alphabet	Symbols	Examples	Meaning
ء	?	?amal	hope
ب	B	ba:b	door
ت	T	ti:n	fig
ث	Th	tha^{c}lab	fox
ج	J	jamal	camel
ح	H̲	h̲ub	love
خ	Kh	khubz	bread
د	D	walad	boy
ذ	Dh	dhahab	gold
ر	R	ra?s	head
ز	Z	zi:t	oil
س	S	sin	tooth
ش	Sh	shams	sun
ص	S̲	s̲ayf	summer
ض	D̲	d̲ayf	guest
ط	T̲	t̲i:n	mud
ظ	TH	THuhr	noon
ع	c	^{c}abd	slave
غ	Gh	gharb	west
ف	F	fa:r	mouse
ق	Q	qalam	pencil
ك	K	kutub	books
ل	L	naml	ants
م	M	masjid	mosque
ن	N	na:r	fire

ه		H	haram	pyramid
و		W	ward	rose
ي		Y	yawm	day

Vowels and Diphthongs

فتحه	-	A	kataba	he wrote
ضمة	و	U	kutub	books
كسرة	-	I	sin	tooth
مد طويل	ا/ي	a:	ka:tib	writer
ضمة طويلة	و	u:	fu:l	beans
كسرة طويلة	ي	i:	fi:l	elephant
Diphthongs		Aw	mawt	death
أصوات علـه مركبة		Aj	bayt	house

Comprehending a Culturally Unfamiliar Text: The Role of Pre-reading Activities

Syed Md Golam Faruk
King Khalid University, Saudi Arabia

Syeda Shabnam Mahmud
BRAC University, Bangladesh

Abstract

The paper investigates whether the cultural unfamiliarity is a hindrance to reading comprehension or not and, if this is a barrier, whether pre-reading activities can be of any help to overcome it. The study was conducted with 19 foundation English course students at a private university in Bangladesh collecting data from their two consecutive reading comprehension classes. Two texts—one is about "ragging" of which each of the students had direct practical experience, and the other is about Halloween of which some of them had some vague ideas through movies and internet—were used as teaching materials following the same kind of pre, while, and post reading activities. The reading comprehension tests confirmed what had been widely acknowledged as the negative effect of cultural unfamiliarity on reading comprehension and showed that the pre-reading activities were useful to turn the negative effect into positive ones. However, the pre-reading activities were not equally useful for all the students; the positive impact of the activities was obvious only in the motivated students' performance.

Keywords: Reading comprehension, Pre-reading activity, Cultural familiarity, Cultural unfamiliarity

Introduction

Language, many scholars argue (Allwright and Bailey 1991; Byram 1989), is integrated with culture which presupposes the necessity of the learners' acquaintance with the target culture for learning the target language in the true sense of the term. However, at the same time, unfamiliar culture is found to be a barrier in dealing with micro-level text-driven features such as lexical access, letter identification, and pattern recognition etc. (Ilieva 2000; Ndura 2004). Boriboon (2004) examines such a situation in Thailand and finds that the unfamiliar cultural elements create reading comprehension difficulties. Nevertheless, in order to gain intercultural competence, which is one of the objectives of ESL learners all over the world, the students have to be acquainted with foreign cultural elements (Garcı´a, 2005; Majdzadeh, 2002; Victor, 1999; Cortazzi and Jin, 1999). Theoretically, one of the few ways to resolve this dilemma is to use the pre-reading activities. It is widely acknowledged that activation of readers' existing schema or by providing them with *background* or *subject matter knowledge* (Alptekin, 2006; Steffensen, Joag-Dev, & Anderson, 1979) can enhance reading comprehension. However, the extent of effects of the reading activities meant for activating readers' schema on reading comprehension is not properly explored yet. The study aims to explore the effects of pre-reading activities on the comprehension of a culturally unfamiliar text. It addresses the following two research questions:

1. Does the familiarity or unfamiliarity of a text affect the readers' comprehension?
2. Do the pre-reading activities help comprehend a culturally unfamiliar text?

The paper tries to find out to answer the question by collecting data from 19 students studying in a foundation course of a private university in Bangladesh. First of all, keeping all other variables under control the scores obtained for the culturally familiar and unfamiliar texts were compared in order to measure the impact of cultural unfamiliarity on reading comprehension. Secondly, the scores of the students who actively participated in the pre-reading activities were sorted out to find that only the motivated students could overcome the barriers of cultural unfamiliarity by being active in the pre-reading discussion.

Literature Review

Reading, as the applied linguists all over the world are unequivocally agreed upon, is not just taking in the information from the reading materials; it is an interaction between a text and the reader (Grabe & Stoller, 2002; Anderson, 1999). The proposition of the reader's active participation in the reading process presupposes that the reader has already something in his mind regarding the text he reads**.** Logically speaking, the more information she/he has regarding a reading text, the more interactive she/he can be in the reading process and consequently the more interaction is supposed to ensure the better comprehension.

However, as understanding the smaller units of language is as important as larger conceptual units, a reader has to deal both with micro-level text-driven features like pattern recognition, letter identification, lexical access etc. and macro-level reader-driven features like activating prior knowledge or monitoring comprehension. In order to complete the processes satisfactorily, a reader needs to use her/his limited working memory space efficiently. In other words, if she/he does not have the necessary prior linguistic and conceptual background knowledge, she/he has to overload her/his small working memory and thus becomes unable to comprehend the reading material satisfactorily. Therefore adequate relevant linguistic and conceptual knowledge contribute to the automatic processes

(McLaughlin, 1987) keeping the attentional space free for unfamiliar and new elements in the text.

The importance of background knowledge in the reading process is also discussed within schema theory (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983; Bartlett, 1932) which deals with "preexisting knowledge structures stored in the mind" (Nassaji, 2002, p. 444). The theory explores the ways in which the readers combine their knowledge with the text (Alptekin, 2006; Ketchum, 2006; Ajideh, 2003; Grabe & Stoller, 2002; Alderson, 2000; Anderson, 1999; Murtagh, 1989; McKay, 1987; Carrell, 1983; Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983; Johnson, 1981, 1982). There are many kinds of schemata: formal schema, content schema, cultural schema etc. The formal schema (Singhal, 1998) is in fact textual schema—knowledge of conventions of language and textual organization. Relevant studies suggest that if a reader has knowledge of these conventions, she/he is supposed to understand a text better than one who has not this knowledge. In Carrell's (1987, p. 464) words "texts with familiar rhetorical organization should be easier to read and comprehend than texts with unfamiliar rhetorical organization". Content schema, which is described as content knowledge (Carrell, 1983), can be termed as *background knowledge* or *subject matter knowledge*. The knowledge which is not directly related to a particular text is *background knowledge* and the knowledge which is directly related to the text is *subject matter knowledge* (Alderson, 2000).

Method

The study was conducted at a private university in Bangladesh where the medium of instruction is English. The data were collected from two English classes held consecutively on the 28th (the class for familiar text) and 29th (the class for unfamiliar text) October 2014.

Participants

19 young urban adults (aged 18-21) who participated in the study are the students of Department of Architecture (2), Bachelor in Business & Administration (12), Computer Science & Engineering (2), Economics (1), Biotechnology (1), and Pharmacy (1). All of them studied English as a second language for 12 years in their pre-university schools (Primary, Secondary, and Higher Secondary) but their medium of instruction for other subjects was Bangla. All of them can be considered to be very good students in terms of their respective disciplines as they were enrolled in the university through a very competitive admission test.

Nevertheless, in terms of their performance in English course that they were studying in the period between September-November 2014, the students showed different kinds of motivation and diverse levels of proficiency. The teacher who had been teaching them for the last 3 (September-November 2014) months observed that there are 3 types of students (see Table 1). It is to be noted here that the teacher had been teaching the same English course to the same level of students in this particular institution for the last 5 years having an MA in Applied Linguistics.

Type	N	Characteristics
Type - A	4	Not motivated to participate in pre-reading activities but very good in speaking and writing, creative and mature.
Type - B	10	Motivated to participate in pre-reading activities and good in speaking and writing but poor in terms of ideas.
Type - C	5	Not motivated to participate in pre-reading activities and weak in speaking and writing, and, furthermore, poor in terms of ideas.

Table 1: *Participants' Type*

Materials

As mentioned above, two reading texts—one culturally familiar and the other culturally unfamiliar—were used in two consecutive classes. The content of the first text titled "Ragging in Educational Institute: A Human Right Perspective" was very much familiar to the students. All of them had the painful experience of being insulted, tormented and maltreated by the senior students. The text (429 words) consists of five paragraphs of almost equal length. The second text titled "Halloween in America" (419 words) describing culture specific Halloween parties is largely unfamiliar to the students and has the same size and the same number of paragraphs. In fact, both the texts were tailored in terms of language and size by the class teacher to the students' level and class time. However, in spite of taking all the measures, the texts could not be made exactly equal in terms of their readability—the Flesch Reading Ease of "Ragging in Educational Institute: A Human Right Perspective" (43.2) was slightly higher than that of "Halloween in America" (40.6).

Pre-reading activities

The teacher conducted the same kind of pre-reading activities (see Table below) with the same students in both the classes. The allocated time for one class was 80 minutes out of which 35 minutes were spent for the pre-reading activities.

Phase	Classroom activities
Phase 1	Reading strategies are discussed (5").
Phase 2	After a general discussion on Ragging and Halloween the specific texts are discussed (10").
Phase 3	Students' working in small groups is followed by intra and inter group discussions (20").
Phase 4	Pattern of the answer to opinion based question is discussed (10").
Phase 5	Reading comprehension test (20").
Phase 6	The students' answers are peer reviewed (8").
Phase 7	Submission of the students' write-ups (5").
Phase 8	Wrapping up of the class (2").

Table 2: *Classroom activities*

Note. "=minutes

Test

In both the classes, the students took opinion-based tests after having a pre-reading session of 35 minutes. The students got 25 minutes for writing their scripts and eight minutes to get their scripts peer reviewed by other students. They had to write at least 150 words for five marks. Out of five marks, two were awarded for content (ideas) and three were given for language. Regarding content, the papers were marked on proper addressing to the prompt; clear, meaningful, and relevant ides followed by adequate examples, evidence, and reference. Regarding language, the papers were marked on organization, grammar, spelling, variation in sentence structure, and vocabulary.

Data analysis

Marking the papers**:** Two independent raters marked the papers in terms of their content (two marks) and linguistic features (three marks). The two sets of marks for the same text—"Ragging in Educational Institute: A Human Right Perspective"— were analyzed through Pearson Correlation Coefficient Test and a high correlation coefficient was found between them, $r = .92$, $p < .001$.

Statistical analysis: SPSS was used to analyze the participants' posttest scores and a post-hoc LSD (least significant difference) test was employed to find out the difference between the posttest scores for the familiar and unfamiliar texts. Cohen's d was used to calculate the effect size.

Results

The descriptive statistics are presented in Tables 3 and 4. As can be seen, on average, the students did better in familiar than in unfamiliar text. However, if the focus is narrowed to the Type B students only, we see that unlike Type A and Type C students they scored higher in the test for unfamiliar text than in that for familiar one.

Students	Text Type	N	M	SD
Type A	Familiar	4	4.325	0.43684
	Unfamiliar	4	4.0625	0.37942
Type B	Familiar	10	3.32	0.51218
	Unfamiliar	10	3.485	0.63511
Type C	Familiar	5	3.68	0.40094
	Unfamiliar	5	2.62	0.43243
All	Familiar	19	3.62632	0.60009
	Unfamiliar	19	3.37895	0.73301

Table 3: *Mean scores in terms of student and types*

Students	Conditions	Mean Difference	*p*	Cohen's *d*
Type A	Familiar vs. Unfamiliar texts	0.263	*0.507*	*0.642*
Type B	Familiar vs. Unfamiliar texts	-0.165	*0.630*	*-0.286*
Type C	Familiar vs. Unfamiliar texts	1.060*	*0.030*	*2.542*
All	Familiar vs. Unfamiliar texts	0.247	*0.300*	*0.369*

Table 4: *Results of the post-hoc LSD test on text difference in terms of types of students*
Note. * *p* < .05

From the Tables above, it is clear that Type A and Type C students did better in the test for familiar text than that for the unfamiliar one though with regard to Type A students the difference between the scores of familiar (M=4.32) and unfamiliar (4.06) texts is not significant (*d*=0.64). However, in the case of Type C students, the difference between the scores of familiar (M=3.68) and unfamiliar (M=2.62) texts indicates a large effect size (*d*=2.54). The results substantiate the findings of the studies discussed above. Nevertheless, the scores of the Type B students is quite surprising; they did slightly better in unfamiliar text (M=3.48) than in the familiar (M=3.32) one, though the difference is not statistically significant (*d*= − 0.28). The class as a whole did better in familiar text (M=3.62) than in unfamiliar one (M=3.37) though the difference is not statistically significant (*d*=0.36).

Discussion

Theoretically and logically, the scores for the familiar text should be higher than those for the unfamiliar one, as all other variables like students, teacher, time, question pattern, linguistic difficulty, text readability, text length, and reading activities are controlled. However, the teacher could not control the variable of pre-reading activities. She tried to do follow the same steps allocating the same amount of time but the students did not respond in the same way. The reason is, as she assumes and as the students admitted later on, too much familiarity of the text "Ragging in Educational Institute: A Human Right Perspectives" dissuaded them to participate in the discussion. Perhaps the idea that they knew everything about ragging persuaded them against activating the related schema. Therefore, pre-reading activities became virtually meaningless in the class for familiar text. By the same token, the students (at least one of the Type A and six of the Type B students), goaded on by their curiosity to know a slightly known and seemingly "weird" exotic religious ritual, actively participated in the pre-reading activities with a lot of interest which ultimately facilitated their comprehension of the unfamiliar text.

Therefore, in answer to the question no. 1—"Does the familiarity or unfamiliarity of a text affect the readers' comprehension?"—we can say that the familiarity with the content of a text enhances reading comprehension and the results shown in the Tables above confirm what has been widely acknowledged as the positive effect of schematic knowledge on reading comprehension (e.g., Alderson, 2000; Alptekin, 2006; Ketchum, 2006; Oller, 1995; Steffensen et al., 1979). In answer to the question no. 2— Do the pre-reading activities help comprehend a culturally unfamiliar text?—we can say that the pre-reading activities can help

only those who are motivated. As we have seen, only 7 out of 19 students were motivated and they reaped tangible benefits from the pre-reading activities.

Conclusion

Two conclusions, with regard to two research questions, with some caveats described below, can be drawn from this study. Firstly, cultural familiarity enhances reading comprehension and secondly, pre-reading activities can adequately compensate for the lack of relevant cultural schema if the students are motivated to participate in classroom.

The study is not without limitation. The statistical findings would be more generalizable if the study were conducted with more participants. Moreover, if the statistical data analysis were done on the scores for language and content separately, it would provide deeper insight into the impact of pre-reading activities on the students.

Nevertheless, despite these limitations, the results of this study have important pedagogical implications. The teachers, especially the teachers, who teach global course books in Kachru's (1982) Outer and Expanding circles and who have to deal with culturally unfamiliar texts, can take it for granted that they have to pay extra attention to the reading elements unfamiliar to the students through pre-reading activities. Moreover, they have to keep in their mind that the short pre-reading activities that are usually administered in the English classrooms can ultimately help only the motivated students who are ready to pay intensive attention to the activities and eager to participate actively in them. The other unmotivated learners including very good learners like Type A students (see Table 2) need to be paid extra attention in order to overcome the hurdles of an unfamiliar text.

References

-Ajideh, P. (2003). Schema theory-based pre-reading tasks: A neglected essential in the ESL reading class. *The Reading Matrix*, *3* (1), 1–14.

-Alderson, J. C. (2000). *Assessing reading.* Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

-Allwright, D. and K. M. Bailey. (1991). *Focus on the language classroom: An introduction to classroom research for language teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

-Alptekin, C. (2006). Cultural familiarity in inferential and literal comprehension in L2 reading. *System*, *34*, 494–508.

-Anderson, N. J. (1999). *Exploring second language reading.* Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.

-Bartlett, F. (1932). *Remembering: A study in experimental and social psychology.* Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.

-Boriboon, P. (2004). 'We would Rather Talk about Plaa Raa than Hamburgers': Voices from low proficiency EFL learners in rural Thailand. Paper presented at the Postgraduate Conference, Edinburgh, UK. Available at http://www.ling.ed.ac.uk~pgc/ archive/2004/proceedings/ boriboon2004.doc. Accessed 5 August 2014.

-Byram, M. 1989. *Cultural studies in foreign language education*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

-Carrell, P. L. (1983). Some issues in studying the role of schemata, or background knowledge, in second language comprehension. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, *1*, 81–92.

-Carrell, P. L. (1987). Content and formal schemata in ESL reading. *TESOL Quarterly*, *21*, 461–481.

-Carrell, P. L., & Eisterhold, J. C. (1983). Schema theory and ESL reading. *TESOL Quarterly*, *17*, 553–573.

-Cortazzi M., & Jin L. 1999. Cultural mirrors: Materials and methods in the EFL classroom. *Culture in second language teaching and Learning*. E. Hinkel (ed.), 196-219, Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

-Garcı´a, M. (2005). International and intercultural issues in English teaching textbooks: The case of Spain. *Intercultural Education, 16*(1), 57–68.

-Grabe, W., & Stoller, L. F. (2002). *Teaching and researching reading.* Harlow, England: Pearson Education.

-Ilieva, R. (2000). Exploring culture in texts designed for use in adult ESL classrooms. *TESL Canada Journal, 17*(2): 50–63.

-Johnson, P. (1981). Effects on reading comprehension of language complexity and cultural background of a text. *TESOL Quarterly*, *15*, 169–181.

-Johnson, P. (1982). Effects on reading comprehension of building background knowledge. *TESOL Quarterly*, *16*, 503–516.

-Kachru, B. B. (ed.). (1982). *The other tongue: English across cultures*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

-Ketchum, E. M. (2006). The cultural baggage of second language reading: An approach to understanding. *Foreign Language Annals*, *39*, 22–42.

-Majdzadeh, M. (2002). Disconnection between language and culture: A case study of Iranian English textbooks. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 474 691. Available at http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED474691. Accessed 5 August 2014.

-McKay, S. (1987). Cultural knowledge and the teaching of reading. *English Teaching Forum*, *25*(2), 18–20, 28.

-McLaughlin, B. (1987). *Theories of second language learning*. London: Edward Arnold.

-Murtagh, L. (1989). Reading in a second or foreign language: Models, processes, and pedagogy. *Language, Culture, and Curriculum*, *2*, 91–105.

-Nassaji, H. (2002). Schema theory and knowledge-based processes in second language reading comprehension: A need for alternative perspectives. *Language Learning*, *52*, 439–481.

-Ndura, E. (2004). ESL and cultural bias: An analysis of elementary through high school textbooks in the western United States of America. *Language, Culture and Curriculum, 17*(2): 143–153.

-Oller, J. W. (1995). Adding abstract to formal and content schema: Results of recent work in Peircean semiotics. *Applied Linguistics*, *16*, 273–306.

-Shen, Z. (2004). Effects of previewing and providing background knowledge on EFL reading comprehension of American documentary narratives. *TESL Reporter*, *37* (2), 50–63.

-Singhal, M. (1998). A comparison of L1 and L2 reading: Cultural differences and schema. *The Internet TESL Journal*, *4* (10). Retrieved from http://iteslj.org/Articles/Singhal-ReadingL1L2.html.

-Steffensen, M. S., Joag-Dev, C., & Anderson, R. (1979). A cross-cultural perspective on reading comprehension. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *15*, 10–29.

-Victor, M. (1999). Learning English in Gabon: The question of cultural content. *Language, Culture and Curriculum, 12*(1), 23–30.

"I stood Among them, but Not of Them": Con Melody's Journey of Excess and Ethnic Ambivalence in Eugene O'Neill's *A Touch of the Poet*

Olfa Gandouz
University of Sousse, Tunisia

Abstract

The present paper is an attempt to investigate the notion of excess in Eugene O'Neill's A Touch of the poet by analyzing Con Melody's ethnic experience and his movement between two contradictory spheres of self-hatred and self- endearment. Excess has negative effects as it removes the protagonist from reality by making him stuck in the illusion of being an aristocratic New Englander. The inability of cleansing the Irish ethnic roots fosters a sense of self-glorification which is the positive outcome of excess. Some gothic elements highlight the protagonist's desire of cutting off any links associating him with the Yankees. In this respect, he changes his political orientations and relapses into using his native dialect (the brogue), after considering it as the epitome of backwardness and ignorance. The return of the previously repressed Irish self helps Melody conceive of a new vision about identity by defining it as something to be accepted and not reformulated. This article is divided into three parts. Before focusing on Melody's journey of excess, a historical contextualization is needed. The first part deals with a historical study by locating the notion of excess within the dire experience of some Irish-American immigrants who escaped the traumatic Irish famine of 1845 and were lured by the rosy American dream of acquiring wealth. The second part highlights the negative outcome of excess in A Touch of the Poet by focusing on the myth of ethnic integration which has made Melody resurrect the ghosts of the past, weave outer and inner masks and drop his native tongue in order to be recognized as a New Englander. Finally, the analysis sheds light on the role of excess in creating a compromise between Melody and his Irish peasant roots. Stylistic, dramatic, theatrical and thematic elements are used to map out O'Neill's reliance on excess to dramatize Melody's experience of ethnic ambivalence.

Keywords: Excess, Ireland, Identity Crisis, Irish-American dream of Ethnic Integration, Self-Denigration, Self Glorification.

1. Irish Immigration to "the Land of Opportunities.":

According to *The Oxford Dictionary of Word Histories*, the word excess has Latin origins and it refers to "Latin excessus, from exceed, go out, and surpass" ("Excess"). In the context of surpassing and going out of the national boundaries, large waves of Irish citizens opted for immigration to the United States because of the Irish famine's excessively negative impacts. Indeed, economic fiasco and social evils accelerated Irish immigration to the States. During the nineteenth century, Irish immigrants opted for America because it was the epitome of wealth. Because of American exceptionalism Irish immigrants believed that they would move from "rags to riches"[17] . The letters of the first waves of immigrants were loaded with optimism and fascination by the American luxury which was different from the financial crisis created by the Irish famine. We can refer to the letter of an Irish farmer who encouraged his friends to visit the land of opportunities by stating: "I'm exceedingly well pleased at coming to this land of plenty. On arrival I purchased 120 acre of land at 5 dollars an acre. I would advise all my friends to leave Ireland the country most dear to me; as long as they remain in it they will remain in misery" (qtd. in Sheehan 15).   The farmer's accent of delight which is emphasized though the use of the adverb "exceedingly" shows that new horizons opened up for Irish peasants who moved from wretchedness to prosperity. In his homeland, the Irish peasant used to belong to the have- nots but in America he bought a land. The utopian letters made some Irish immigrants believe in the truthfulness of the American dream of ethnic integration.

Irish immigrants' high expectations were replaced by hopelessness due to the overexploitation and enslavement inflicted upon them. The painful discrimination of some Irish immigrants appears through preventing them from having access to public service. In this prospect, an Irish immigrant declares : " I know that Irish people were almost like blacks for a while…. They were even forced to ride in the back of the bus for a while" (qtd. in Waters 162). This exclusion reveals that the Irish arrival in America was a horrible moment as it made the immigrants aware of the illusory aura that surrounded the American promises. Irish immigrants were also excluded from the job market under the slogan of "No Irish Need Apply" which prevented them from getting jobs. "No Irish Need Apply "was a song written by John Poole, a business manager in New York. Poole's song contains a complaint of an Irish immigrant who was burdened with the hostile situation: "I saw a place advertised. It is the thing for me says I;   but the dirty spalpeen[18] ended with: No Irish Need Apply. Whoo! Says I ; but that's an insult-though to get place I'll try" (qtd. in Greene 13). The immigrant is deceived by the maltreatment of the Irish and defines the slogan of "NINA" as an insult. The deception emerges through the state of anger which is introduced by describing himself as a "dirty spalpeen". Poole's "dirty spalpeen" is used in an ironic way to translate the immigrant's misfortune and demonstrate the chasm between the fake American promises and the gloomy reality of alienation.

The deep hostility against the Irish was aroused because of some distinctive Irish features. For example, Catholicism made the Irish stigmatized in a completely different Protestant and Urban American society. In the nineteenth century, the western hemisphere was dominated by Anglo-Saxon Protestantism. Despite the fact that America encapsulated the key concepts of freedom, Catholicism was undermined. Hostility and phobia can be observed

---

[17] « Rags to riches »: an expression used by the nineteenth century American author Horatio Alger. He rose from misery to wealth in the land of opportunities because of hard work .

[18] Spalpeen: " A scamp; an Irish term for a good-for-nothing fellow" ("Spalpeen"). *Webster's Quotations, Facts and Phrases*. Ed. Philip Parker. California: Icon Group International, 2008.

through the rumors which appeared in 1850 claiming that Irish Catholics were conspiring against protestants and claims " were made plausible by the argument that Catholics were agents of Satan"(Lyons 47). Because of this hatred Irish Catholics could not assimilate to the American cultural network. The aspects of the immigrant's marginalization during their arrival in America can also be studied through the position of some Irish servants who were stigmatized by their American masters because of their Catholicism. In the context of fathoming the major hardships that Irish servants faced, the literary critic, Robert Ernst affirms: " potential employers disliked and even feared their religion, shuddered at Irish impulsiveness and turbulence and were disgusted and morally shocked at the Irish propensity for strong drink" (66). The disrespect of ethnic belonging made the Irish arrival in America a nightmarish experience.

Irish American citizens did also face linguistic hindrances because of their local dialect (called brogue). This rural Irish accent was associated with the poor, ignorant and rural Irish immigrants who were compelled to abandon their native dialect for the sake of assimilation. The politician Daniel O'Connell was among the proponents of the mother tongue's decline and adopting English as a modern alternative: "The Irish language is connected with many recollections that twine round the hearts of Irishmen, yet the superior utility of the English tongue, as the medium of all modern communication, is so great that I can witness without a sigh the great disuse of the Irish" (O'Connell 15). We infer through the paradoxical oscillation between respecting the native language and calling for its abandonment that O'Connell is trying to be diplomatic by playing on the sentimental chords of the Irish people to make them use a more dominant language. In this context, we can refer to Reginald Byron who studies the American threats to Irish ethnic identity by showing that " those who came to America as Gaelic speakers, but bilingual, shifted to English quite rapidly, normally more or less upon their arrival, and brought up their children as monoglot English speakers" (124). The embrace of English by the offspring of Irish immigrants led to the oblivion of the native language.

Eugene O'Neill's grandparents were among the Irish immigrants who faced various problems during their arrival in the United States. Eugene's father, James could not "forget the tragedy of how his father, a famine emigrant, refused to adjust to life in America and abandoned his wife and eight children to return to Ireland" (Diner 60). We deduce that immigration did not solve the problem of poverty because O'Neill's family continued to be overwhelmed by hunger and endured financial hardships. This state of extreme misery made the father return to the native soil as he could not adapt to the American urban way of life. The father's inability to settle in America shows his regret about leaving Ireland.

2. Erasing Irish Roots:

After studying the Irish American immigrants' excessive belief in the dream of ethnic integration, we will move to *A touch of the Poet*'s hero who represents a significant example of some Irish immigrants. In the play, excess is recognized from the very beginning through the utopia of crossing ethnic boundaries and the attempts to transcend ethnic limits. In his utopian quest, Melody invents a world of fantasies to accomplish his dream of being an aristocrat. Melody acquires the manners of a gentleman and is interested in "overplaying a role which has become more real than his real self" (Act 1, 151). The wish of joining the high sphere of Yankee gentry is induced by his father who decided to enroll him in a college of wealthy people "to prove himself equal of any gentleman's son" (Act 1, 140). The protagonist's excessive wish of being integrated within the mainstream American aristocratic

society makes him abide by the rules of American gentry. That's why he displays a refined behavior to be recognized as an American citizen and not an Irish immigrant with peasant roots. His refined behavior is manifested through his gallantry towards the female American characters. For instance, he accepts an American woman's insult by arguing "as gentlemen, I should grant it as a pretty woman's privilege to be always right even when she is wrong" (Act 2, 84).

Melody's excessive belief in the illusion of being an American aristocrat reaches its paroxysm when he refers to America as his own country. He boasts "This country-my country now will drive the English from the face of the earth" (Act 1, 160). The use of the possessive adjective "my" is an indication of his identification with America. In his journey of excess and immersion in the utopia of being a Yankee gentleman, Melody encourages the relationship between his daughter and the American gentleman Simon. He feels exited and privileged after his conversation with the Yankee character: "I have enjoyed my talks with him. It has been a privilege to be able to converse with a cultured gentleman" (Act 1, 164). The father fancily believes that his daughter's American lover will help him climb the social ladder. On the other hand, he has an antagonistic relationship with the other Irish characters with whom he refuses even to have dinner at the same table: " I may tolerate their presence of charity, but I'll not sink to dining at the same table" (Act 1, 158). The refusal of sharing the same table with the Irish characters is a sign of the denial of Irish origins.

Melody uses different tools to weave the mask of aristocracy. He resorts to the mirror which allows him to see the images that he wants to see and gives him the impression of being an aristocrat. In front of the mirror, he recites some of Lord Byron's verses about self-esteem. Arrogance is the common point between Melody and Byron; that's why the constant reference to Lord Byron is a relief for Melody. The mirror's reflections echo an arrogant Byronic hero who escapes the reality of being a despised Irish immigrant. Then, the mirror is a tool of blurring the boundaries between the past and the present. O'Neill uses expressionism as a technique to introduce the character of Melody who survives with unearthing his memories and living with the ghosts of the glorious past when he used to have a high rank in the army. He celebrates the Anniversary of Talavera[19] because he wants to be identified by his position as a Major. The Talavera anniversary is a fetish for the protagonist for it helps him stress his bravery and highlight his scintillating position among the new American wealthy elite. Another instance of the intrusion of the past in the present is revealed when he strives to inculcate in Sara the principle of aristocratic pride; when she is not sure whether old Harford would consider her the suitable bride of his son, Melody reacts violently by screaming: "I would remind him that you, my daughter was born in a castle!" (Act 3, 210). The birth in a castle remains the main symbol of aristocracy.

The use of some theatrical elements like the depiction of Melody's costume is evocative of his desire to be distinguished as a man of real nobility. The uniform provides Melody with spiritual comfort because it represents him as a brave knight who transcends his modest origins. When Deborah humiliates him, his wife tries to change his mood of disappointment by encouraging him to put the uniform: "he will feel proud again in his uniform" (Act 2, 185). The positive functions of the uniform encourage Melody to take care of it: "the costume has been preserved with great care. Each button is shining and the cloth is spotless. Being in it, Melody has notably restored his self-arrogance" (Act 2, 194). Although it is merely a relic of

---

[19] The Battle of Talavera : a battle fought during the Peninsular war. The Anglo-Spanish allied army won the battle against the French in 1809.

the past, the uniform is still shining because it determines Melody's present and defines him as a prestigious man.

Having a mare is a sign of belonging to the new gentry and holding a respected position within the American upper social fabric. Instead of paying Neilan who threatened not to provide Melody's family with groceries, Melody prefers to pay Dickinson's feed bill for the mare. Sara is dissatisfied with her father's deep care of the mare at the expanse of the family's basic needs and " attacks his inhuman preference for an animal over the human needs of the family" (Gutpa 137). The preference of this animal is shown when the protagonist declares: " I've the mare! And by God, I'll keep her if I have to starve myself so she may eat" (Act 1, 165). Melody's efforts to take care of the mare and to give it a high favor even over himself is a pertinent example of his excessive wish to be an aristocrat. That's why, Melody reacts vehemently and teases his daughter when she complains about his special interest of the mare: "Why are you so jealous of the mare, I wonder? Is it because she has slender ankles and dainty feet" (Act 3, 206). Melody's praise of the mare is thus an indication of his endeavor to define himself as a man of honor and denigrate his Irish roots.

In addition to the mare, Melody resorts to language to cut off any nostalgic yoke reminding him of Ireland. He opts for American English as a prestigious mode of expression and orders his daughter to get rid of the brogue by sending her to school to talk like a gentleman's daughter. Sending Sara to school in order to cure her reflects Melody's desire to tame his daughter and force her to wear the social mask of aristocracy by using the upper class's dialect. Furthermore, the denial of Irish origins can be traced through the relationship between Sara and Melody, especially through the latter's anger wherever his daughter uses the Irish dialect. His fury appears when he rebukes Sara by screaming loudly: "You're a great tease Sara, I shouldn't let you score so easily. Your mother warned me you only did it to provoke me" (Act 1, 163). Sara uses brogue only to tease her father and react against his constant insult of Nora when she relapses into her original dialect.

After adopting the dialect of the American dominant group, Melody becomes politically engaged with this group and promises to cast his vote with the Yankees for Quincy Adams against Andrew Jackson and the Democrats. Melody will vote for Adams to avoid the stigma of being an Irish immigrant and be classified as a Yankee gentleman. When he encounters the Democrats' political slogans in the paper, he accuses Jackson of being " a contemptible, drunken scoundrel!" (Act 1, 158). We infer through Melody's disdain of Jackson that he is different from the other Irish characters who praise Jackson and appreciate his political maxim of disseminating the roots of equality and respecting ethnic minorities. Unlike the majority of Irish characters in the play who prefer Jackson because of his sympathy with the poor immigrants, Con considers this candidate as "the idol of the riffraff" (Act 1, 157). Melody's difference triggers the anger of his Irish neighbors who rage at him because he identifies with the Yankees. In this context, " Father Flynn, stopped [Melody's wife] on the road and told [her she] would better warn him not to sneer at the Irish and call thim scum, or he 'll get in trouble" (Act1, 150). Father Flynn's threat is the outcome of Melody's derision of Irish-American characters because of their high appreciation of Jackson's philanthropic agenda. Melody diverges from his Irish community by expressing his political devotion for Adams since both share the same degree of deep hatred towards Irish immigrants. So, excess is noticed through his radical trial of purging the Irish roots and weaving the mask of aristocracy. The inner masks are manifested through the experience in front of the mirror and the outer masks are created through his physical appearance, uniform, language and political orientations.

3. A Parody of the American Dream:

Excess has negative effects as it has made him believe in the fiction of equality and tolerance. Through Melody's experience of excess O'Neil aims at parodying the American dream of ethnic integration. In the play, parody appears when Sara depicts her father's wishes of assimilation as "a fairytale where only dreams are real" (Act 1, 166). Melody fails because he could refine his manners but could not change his physical profile or get rid of his Irish vitality. Excess is another factor behind his failure as it led to his removal from the harsh reality of the marginalization of the ethnic other. Marginalization reaches its peak when the American father decides to impede his son's marriage to the Irish girl; he is ready to pay the sum of three thousand dollars provided that the Irish family leaves Boston. Melody is shocked when he discovers the bitter reality of ethnic marginalization; he reacts violently by considering Harford's settlement as an insult and decides to " take a whip and drag [Harford] out of his house and lash him down the street for all his neighbors to see" (Act 3, 220). Melody's antagonism to the Harfords because of their deep humiliation shows that his fervent desire of integration starts to vanish.

The abortive dream of creating an aristocratic ego proves that equality is an inexorable demand in an American community dominated by the biased prejudices against Irish characters. In this way, O'Neill subverts John Locke's ideal belief in equality and debunks his claim that " all creatures of the same species and rank, are born to all the same advantages of nature and the use of the same faculties" (Locke 3). This utopian vision is contradicted with the atmosphere of marginalization that prevails in the play and is echoed through the inability of creatures who belong to the same species to share equal opportunities. Thus, " in contrast to Lockean liberalism, O'Neill recognized the emotional force of desire but regarded it as leading not to life liberty and property, but to illusion, despair and on insatiable quest for the impossible" (Diggins 38). The link between desire, illusion and despair mirrors Melody's journey of excess; his strong desire of being a gentleman pushed him to wear the mask of aristocracy and led to his hopelessness because of marginalization.

4. The Glorification of the Irish Self:

The failure of the dream of ethnic integration and the inability of negating the Irish roots lead to the compromise with the Iris self. Self- glorification is the positive outcome of excess. Melody reaches a higher degree of maturity when he decides to cut off any link reminding him of the aristocratic class. The presence of some gothic elements like the atmosphere of terror suggested by the act of killing the mare in the underground shows his rebirth as an Irish citizen. The act of killing the mare stands for the symbolic death of Con's aristocratic ego. He kills the mare because it reminds him of the American female character's aristocratic features. Melody's challenge of Deborah and her high class is revealing about his hatred towards this aristocratic class and his rebirth as a common man. He declares: "I'm fresh as a man new born" (Act 4, 253). Melody's rebirth presents the positive aspect of excess. Excessive deception allows him to have steady steps in the ground of reality and have a more realistic vision in the mirror by clearly observing his original identity. The mirror has a dramatic function because it has allowed him to admire his fake glory as a gentleman and prevented him from recognizing his true identity.

In the final act, Melody looks away from the mirror and when he sees the crowd, he sings:" I'm alive in the crowd; they can deem me one of such! I'll be among thim and of them too" (Act 4, 254). Melody's mirror is similar to the mirror of Shakespeare's historical

protagonist, Richard II. In fact, "Melody's mirror is made of the same glass as the mirror of Shakespeare's Richard that O'Neill and Shakespeare use the mirrors in similar ways" (Berlin 14). The common point between Melody and Richard's mirrors is hiding the real identity and resulting in a critical moment of identity loss. Richard's glass is dramatic because it introduces the protagonist's downfall when he is no longer the king of England; he personifies the mirror when he blames her: "O' flattering glass! Like to my followers in prosperity, thou doest beguile me" (4.1.276.95). Richard speculates over his true identity when he is compelled to give the crown to Henry Bolingbroke and accuses the mirror of hiding his authentic position by making him believe in the lie of being a glorious king. Like Richard, Melody accuses the mirror of making him believe in the lie of being an aristocrat. That's why, in the final scene "[Con's] eyes are fastened on the mirror [and] he leers into it" (Act 4, 254). This unpleasant glare translates Melody's blame of the mirror and accusing it of being responsible for his identity crisis.

Excessive deception helps Melody solve his identity crisis and declare his fresh start that is realized through the use of his native Irish brogue. He celebrates his Irishness when he uses brogue fluently as his primary mode of expression. His insult of some Irish characters because of their Irish brogue that is a sign of backwardness is replaced by a harmonious relationship with them. He shifts from hating his wife to highlighting his passionate love towards her. Nora is glad about Melody's shifting position because his respect of ethnic roots makes him respect her Irish side. Nora's response can be analyzed through the comparison between her reaction and Sara's reaction towards Melody's decision to be an Irish peasant again. When Sara persuades her father not to be "the leering peasant again" (Act 4, 255), Nora advises her daughter to let Melody choose whatever suits him: "Lave your father be. It's best" (Act 4, 255). This advice suggests Nora's satisfaction with her husband's rebirth. She is overwhelmed with joy when Melody informs her that he will join the Irish American community: "Ah well! That's good. They won't all be hatin' him now" (Act 4, 257). Nora appreciates Melody's glorification of the Irish self when she enjoys the harmonious relationship with her newly born Irish husband. This harmony is revealing about Melody's accomplished mission of finding an earth mother. Indeed, as Manheim puts it, "O'Neill frequently has his central character search for an earth mother, a total provider, a bringer of comfort, a figure in all respects physical and emotional, more respectful than himself" (158). Nora is Melody's provider of warmth because she reminds him of his native roots, reacts positively to his nostalgia towards the mother land and appreciates his compromise with the Irish self.

Melody makes a compromise with his Irish self when he defines himself as a simple man and decides to vote with the Irish for Andrew Jackson. Jackson's care for paupers encouraged the protagonist to vote for him as he used to respect Irish immigrants. In fact, Jackson was among "the Democrats [who] welcomed the Irish and seemed to accept their ethnicity without questioning their capability of integrating into American society" (Gleeson 95). Melody's preference of Jackson proves that he has a new perception about democracy by defining it as the mob rule. At the end of the play, Melody dies and his death is a sign of his physical destruction; he is physically destroyed but morally victorious because by accepting the reality of being an Irish citizen he has finally grasped that identity is a compromise between different warring elements.

5. Conclusion:

To conclude, in his journey of excess Melody falls from idealism to the reality of accepting his origins. This fall is meant to question the dominant linguistic and socio political myths and reach the conclusion that within the American context there is not one monolithic culture but different cultures that coexist. The protagonist's excess helps us acquire a new definition about ethnicity. In fact, Melody's ethnic ambivalence or his shifting position from self -hatred to self- glorification makes us define ethnicity as something that has to be accepted because it is part of one's anthropological existence. In this respect, Melody shifts from complaining "I stood among them, but not of them" (Act 2,178) to singing "I'll be among thim and of them too" (Act 4, 254). He ultimately understands that difference is a source of richness.

References
Primary Sources:

-O'Neill, Eugene. *A Touch of the Poet*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984.

-Shakespeare, William. *Richard II.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1998.

Secondary Sources:

-Berlin, Normand. *O'Neill's Shakespeare.* Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1993.

-Byron, Reginglad. *Irish America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

-Diggins, John Patrick. *Eugene O'Neill's America: Desire under Democracy.* London: The University of Chicago, 2007.

-Diner, Hasia. *Hungering for America: Italian, Irish and Foodways in the Age of Migration.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001.

-Ernst, Robert. *Immigrant Life in New York City 1825-1863*. New York: Syracuse University Press, 1994.

-"Excess". *The Oxford Dictionary of Word Histories*. Ed. Glyniss Chantrell. New York: Berkley Books, 2003.

-Gleeson, David. *The Irish in the South, 1815-1877.* Chapel Hill: The University of North California Press, 2001.

-Greene, Victor. *A Singing Ambivalence: American Immigrants between Old World and New, 1830-1930*. Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2004.

-Gutpa, Monika. *The Plays of Eugene O'Neill: A Critical Study*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 2001.

-Locke, John. *Of Civil Government: The Second Treatise*. Rockville: Wildside Press, 1992.

-Lyons, Matthew. *Right-Wing Populism in America: Too Close for Comfort and Chip Berlet.* New York: Guildford Press, 2000.

-Manheim, Michael. *Eugene O'Neill's New Language of Kinship*. New York: Syracuse University Press, 1982.

-O'Connell, Daniel. *Early Life and Journal 1975 to 1802.* Ed. Arthur Houston. London: Isaac Pitman, 1906.

-Sheehan, Sean. *The Diaspora*. London: Evans Brothers Ltd., 2008.

-Waters, Mary. *Ethnic Options: Choosing Identities in America*. London: University of California Press, 1990.

The Empowerment of Teaching Modern English and American Literary Texts to EFL Emirati University Students: New Pedagogical Approach

Seddik M. Gohar
UAE University, UAE

Abstract

The present paper examines the difficulties encountered by Emirati students in comprehending English and American literary texts due to semantic and trans-cultural ambiguities deployed in the target texts. The paper identifies several types of culturally loaded vocabulary embedded in American slang and popular culture proliferated on a wide scale in contemporary American fictional and dramatic texts. Due to lack of cross-cultural and collocational knowledge on the part of EFL students, culturally determined vocabulary such as military slang in American war novels represents a major obstacle in analyzing and understanding the texts. Since most of the American slang and idiomatic expressions in literary texts are language and culture specific elements with no equivalence in TL, Emirati EFL students fail to understand them. Through inappropriate inter-lingual transfers, they reach perplexing conclusions formulating misconceptions about English language.

Key words: Inter-lingual transfers, Collocational knowledge, Fictional and dramatic texts, Military slang, Idiomatic expressions, Trans-cultural ambiguities.

Introduction

While lexical problems are integral to L_2 acquisition and learning, language studies prioritize phonological and syntactical areas of research giving less attention to lexical paradigms. Nevertheless, lexical errors are disruptive and handicapping on the part of EFL/ESL learners simply became it is in the choice of words that effective communication is hindered on a large scale. Further, lexical research focuses on the paradigmatic relations of lexical items (the relations among a set of lexical items- within the same class - which can be replaced by one another in specific grammatical / lexical contexts) and gives less attention to the syntagmatic aspects of lexis (the ability of items to co-occur, known as collocation). This study - which targets the L_2 performance of EFL Emirati students at the English Literature Department of UAE University - argues that students' lack of sufficient knowledge of the collocational patterns of lexical items leads to collocational errors which undermine the development of their language skills. Consequently, they encounter obstacles in dealing with texts integral to Western literary canons.

In a related context, it is relevant to argue that effective L_2 acquisition signifies an awareness of SL culture due to the dual connection between language and society. Acquiring L_2 language cultural aspects   has a tremendous impact upon the function of language patterns and brings about cultural competence integral to communicative competence. Apparently, cultural competence implies an understanding of SL values, beliefs as well as the cross-cultural distinctions between L_1 and L_2 in addition to an awareness of extra linguistic knowledge about the major spheres of people's life in SL countries. The knowledge obtained about a foreign culture through T.V. programs, movies, newspapers, magazines, books and electronic media is not sufficient for EFL/ESL learners to comprehend literary texts produced by native language writers. Proper understanding of L_2 literary discourse requires a high level of proficiency and cultural competence adequate to an understanding of the content and the aesthetic value of a fictional text (Zavyalova 2001: 570).

In order to understand L_2 fictional texts, for example , the EFL/ESL learners penetrate into the heart of the target culture because literature / fiction conveys feelings, emotions, views and attitudes typical of a foreign culture. The comprehension of a foreign fictional text depends on the EFL learner's language competence because language carries the cultural code. Further, an understanding of the fictional text depends on the learner's background and cultural knowledge which should be relevant to that of the author. Since every culture consists of national and international components, the semantics of a language simultaneously reflects universal and culturally-oriented elements.

Moreover, socio-cultural components are embedded in the semantic structure of a language. When used in fictional contexts, culturally-loaded vocabulary elements convey additional allocations which transcend their original lexical meaning. Explicitly, these linguistically-culturally loaded vocabulary items represent a major obstacle for EFL learners unaware of L_2 collocational knowledge and cultural components. The extensive proliferation of these lexical elements in contemporary English and American literature obscures the literary texts when approached by EFL learners ignorant of L_2 cultural correlations and linguistic entanglements.

These culturally-loaded vocabulary structures can be roughly divided into two major categories: word combinations which carry a universal/international code and lexical items possessing local/national cultural significations. An appropriate awareness of both categories

of vocabulary is essential to an understanding of fictional texts. However, the second category represents an obstacle for EFL learners because it is endowed with culturally oriented vocabulary structures rooted in local environments. It is difficult for EFL learners to grasp these vocabulary items without relevant knowledge and background experience about the target culture. On this basis, it is obvious that the cultural gap separating EFL learners from the target language- they seek to learn- represents one of the basic obstacles which undermine their comprehension of an L_2 literary text.

In other words, culturally-oriented information is rendered by means of culturally-colored vocabulary called (*realia*) – the denotative part of the meaning associated with information from background knowledge. Such denotative *realia* reflects the peculiarities of the social, political and cultural customs and traditions of the socio-lingual entity under consideration. Nevertheless, these culturally-loaded vocabulary structures - due to their universal nature- are comprehended by EFL learners because they have no cultural connotations: e.g. "We were sitting at one of those tables, the kind they used to have in the drugstore when you were a boy and took your high school sweetie to get «that chocolate banana split" (Warren's All *the King's Men* 1979). The preceding statement reflects the emotional condition of the narrator who recalls some memories from his adolescent years. Apparently, the direct/lexical meaning of the underlined word combinations is: "chocolate ice-cream with small pieces of banana filled with syrup". On the semantic level the EFL learner can easily understand the meaning of the underlined vocabulary structures above by consulting the dictionary. However, there are other vocabulary structures with cultural connotations inconceivable by the EFL learners who lack knowledge about the target culture. In *All the King's Men*, a novel by the American writer, Robert Penn Warren one of the characters says: "I Like my Vanilla". The meaning of the underlined word - combination, on the semantic level, suggests "ice-cream". Nevertheless, an interpretation of the phase within the cultural context of the novel affirms that it is not about ice-cream but it underlined the speaker's relation to other races. Thus the phrase "I like my Vanilla» means "I do not like African-Americans" or people with black skin (cited in Zavyalova 2001: 570).

Obviously, fiction includes culturally-loaded vocabulary structures - like the items cited above- reflecting the author's culture or subjective vision because fiction is one of the main sources of culturally-related vocabulary central to the process of cross cultural communication. These vocabulary items, due to their cultural peculiarities, are not comprehended by EFL learners who are often unaware of the target culture. Moreover, authors, in their portrayal of fictional characters, incorporate culturally-determined vocabulary to reveal the outward appearance as well as the inner life of particular characters. The following extract from Warren's All the King's Men illustrates this phenomenon: "Alex Mitchell who has two brown eyes which do not belong above that classic torso which keep fidgeting around like a brace of Mexican Jumping beans".[1] Here, the comparison lies in the fact that the seeds of the Mexican trees and bushes, in which the Carpocarsa Saltitano butterfly puts its grubs, start jumping when the growing grip moves. This *Realia*, unfamiliar to the EFL learners, helps the author to create a bright image of the character and through the description of Alex's eyes; the author expresses his emotional state. The underlined *Realia* reveals a sharp contrast between Alex's strong body and his "fidgeting eyes". The contradiction in appearance of the character of Alex displays his nervousness and uncertainty, two qualities inconceivable by the EFL learners due to lack of cultural background knowledge. Explicitly, one of the basic roles of culturally-oriented vocabulary is to create character images often reflect the authorial vision. Through character delineation, first person narration and character's speech, the author attempts to fulfill particular aesthetic purposes

integral to the aesthetic function of the literary text. An EFL learner-unaware of the cultural connotations of TL vocabulary-often reach conclusions different from those intended by the author.

In this context, it is relevant to argue that word combinations with the same denotations may evoke different associations in the minds of different learners from different cultures. In addition to the fact that word combinations with the same denotations may evoke different associations in the minds of learners from different cultures, the culturally oriented vocabulary under consideration includes lexical structures with cultural connotations representing an obstacle to EFL learners who often misinterpret them. Implanted in literary and fictional texts and complicated by their cultural peculiarities, these vocabulary items constitute an obstacle which hinders the EFL learners from grasping the TL text in an appropriate manner. Evoking connotations which are different from their dictionary meaning, these vocabulary structures prevent the EFL learners from interpreting the authorial message leading to misconception and misunderstanding of the target text.

As an integral part of the compositional structure of fictional literature, the culturally-determined vocabulary plays a significant role within the aesthetic structure of literary texts. Therefore the EFL learner understands of the culturally loaded vocabulary items is crucial to a successful penetration into the core of the literary texts and the authorial visions as well. English Department Emirati students- like other EFL learners- experience many difficulties in dealing with culturally-loaded vocabulary encountered in their literature courses. After several years of teaching English and American literature to Emirati students, I was able to identify different categories of culturally-determined vocabulary constituting obstacles in the comprehension of Western literary texts. These categories include widely used lexical structures consisting of new meanings attributed either to existing words or lexical items made up of new words lying outside standard polite usage.

The First category

This category includes culturally determined words combinations related to the issue of race and discrimination. For example the following extract is cited from one of William Faulkner's novels: "the idea is if we don't look out, "the white race" will be utterly submerged. It's all scientific stuff, it's been proved" (cited in Zavyalova 2001: 571). Apparently, the underlined phrase reveals the attitude of the persona toward the problem of racial segregation stating his view about the superiority of the white race. The concept of racism in America is not often familiar to EFL learners coming from another culture. The American author F. Scott Fitzgerald, in The Great Gatsby, a classical novel, discusses the idea of the American dream underlining the necessity of placing restrictions on immigration to USA during the 1920's: "well, these books are all scientific, insisted Tom; this fellow has worked out the whole thing. It's up to us, who are "the dominant race», to watch out or "the other races" will have control of things."[2] Explicitly, the speaker Tom Buchanan, a major character in the novel and a rich white man, does not consider USA as a large colony of settlers or a melting pot and does not want the country to accept more immigrants.

In the African-American drama Dutchman, Le Roi Jones, the writer of the play, deploys culturally-oriented vocabulary structures integral to the racial situation in USA in the 1960's. EFL Emirati students found difficulties in understanding such a text due to lack of knowledge about the cultural connotations of the vocabulary items used in the play as in the following extracts:

1. Lula, addressing Clay: "What've you got that jacket and tie on in all this heat for? And why've you wearing a jacket and tie like that? **Did your people ever burn witches** or start revolutions over the price of tea? Boy, those narrow shoulder clothes come from a tradition you ought to feel opposed by. A three button suit. What right do you have to be wearing a three-button suit and striped tie? **Your grandfather was a slave**, **he didn't go to the Harvard**". The preceding lines are uttered by Lula, a white lady who symbolizes the mainstream American culture. These sarcastic lines are addressed to Clay, a middle class African – American who attempts to be integrated into the white American society, thus, he imitates white Americans in terms of dress and behavior ignoring his racial roots. To an EFL student from the UAE, the entire extract is only about a woman who criticizes a man because she does not like his clothes. Unable to perceive the racist agenda embedded in culturally loaded vocabulary items dispersed in the extract, due to lack of cultural knowledge of the target text, the EFL learners reach conclusions outside the context of the text.

2. Lula: "I bet you never once thought you were black nigger".
   Clay: "well, in college **I thought I was Baudelaire**. But I've slowed down since". Within the cultural context of the play, the writer castigates Clay, an epitome of the African-American middle class, who believes that he is superior to the rest of the African-American community "**a black Baudelaire**". The reference to the famous French poet is misinterpreted by EFL Emirati students who jump to mistaken conclusions. Their unawareness of American culture and lack of knowledge about the racial situation in USA in the 1960's, lead to textual misinterpretations.

3. Lula: "And with my **apple-eating hand** I push open the door and lead you, my tender big-eyed prey into my God, what can I call it… into my hovel".
   Clay: "then what happens?"
   Lula: "After the dancing and games, after the long drinks and long walks, the real fun begins. And **you'll call my rooms black as a grave**. **You'll say**, "**this place is like Juliet's tomb'.**

   The above cited extracts include two important vocabulary structures loaded with cultural connotations that EFL Emirati students failed to understand. First, the reference to **the apple** as a biblical and Western traditional symbol of temptation indicates that Lula or white America tempts Clay by offering him false promises of integration. Further, Lula within the complicated symbolic structure of the play represents Eve who convinced Adam/Clay to eat from the forbidden tree; consequently, he will be driven out of paradise/America. The second reference is to **"Juliet's tomb"** which is associated with death. The allusion to Shakespeare's **Romeo and Juliet** paves the way for the murder of Clay at the hands of Lula by the end of the play. However, both references, due to their cultural peculiarities are not conceived by EFL Emirati students who come from a different culture.

4. Lula: "Do all these people frighten you?"
   Clay: Why should they frighten me?
   Lula: Because you're **an escaped rigger**. Because **you crawled through the wire** and made tracks to my side.
   Clay: **Wire**?
   Lula: Don't they have **wire around plantations**?

Clay: You must be **Jewish.** All you can think about is **wire**.”

Through references to **"plantations**” Lula aims to remind Clay of the slavery era when blacks were forced to live in plantations surrounded by wires. She attempts to argue that she is superior to him and consequently he has to keep the status quo. On the other hand, the writer's allusions to wires and the analogy between Southern American plantations and the Nazi concentration camps in Europe are integral to the artistic vision of Le Roi Jones. The African American writer points out that his people will inevitably be massacred like European Jews, the victim of the Nazi holocaust in case they attempt to be integrated into the mainstream white American society. The preceding dialogue includes vocabulary items loaded with cultural connotations unfamiliar to EFL Emirati learners who are not aware of the catastrophic ramifications of the holocaust or the history of American slavery or the socio-political situation in the USA in the sixties.

5. Lula: And that's how **the blues** was born. The little niggers sitting on a limp, but none of them ever looked like him. Yes, come on Clay. Let's do the nasty. **Rub bellies**. Let's rub bellies on the train. **Do the gritty grind like your old rag- head mammy**. Shake it, shake it! **Let's do the choo-choo train shuffle, the navel stretcher**.

These humiliating comments, uttered by Lula, could be considered as an attempt to underestimate African-American history and popular traditions viewing "the blues" as a kind of belly rubbing. The sarcastic allusions to the blues – music / singing associated with black history of pain and suffering in USA - is considered as humiliating remarks by Clay. Consequently, he becomes furious at Lula threatening to punish her in a brutal way and bring havoc to the New York subway car where the incidents of the play take place. The ambiguous cultural references to the "blues" traditions are beyond the reach of EFL learners. Due to their unawareness of the socio-historical collocations of the term "blues" in African-American culture, Emirati students consider Clay's reaction to Lula's abusive comments – which are justified- as morally unacceptable reaching mistaken conclusions about the meaning of the text.

6. Lula: "Clay, **you liver lipped white man**. You would be Christian. You aren't no nigger, you're just a dirty white man. That's all you know….. that **cream-oil** on your knotty head, jackets buttoning to your chin so full of white man's words. Christ God." Furthermore, Lula accuses Clay of being a criminal: "Clay, **you are a murderer** and you know that". She also castigates Clay calling him "**Uncle Tom big lip**".

Explicitly, Lula criticizes Clay's outward appearance, his clothes, his hair style and his language because he imitates white people in an attempt to be assimilated into the mainstream American society. Reflecting the writer's agenda, Lula claims that Clay kills his black self «-you are a murderer"- and black identity by abandoning the cause of his people and their struggle for freedom and equality. In this context , EFL Emirati students with little knowledge about black traditions and the distinguished position of the blues in African-American culture as well as the racial entanglements during the 1960's in USA are confused by the preceding lines. Moreover , Emirati students fail to understand the racial connotations of the recurring references to "Uncle Tom"- (In American culture the Uncle Tom character signifies the submissive black slave) - a symbol of the middle class Negro who is dominated by the slave -master complex. The Emirati students also fail to understand the cultural significance of the allusions to the blues singers **"Bessie Smith**" and the famous black musician "Bird"- **Charlie Parker**- as well as the allusions and

references to names of famous streets in New York like "**East Sixty-Seventh Street**" and "**Seventh Avenue**".

The Second Category

This category includes culturally-loaded vocabulary associated with American military language and integral to American war novels. Obviously, the American army, particularly the navy, has a long history of terms and phrases which constitute its own corpus of military language. With a sense of irony , soldiers and sailors have developed vocabulary structures that seem to be official in form, nevertheless, their actual meaning is truly slang (Soboleva 1997 : 259) . Soldiers, in Vietnam War novels, for example, routinely use long phrases, titles, abbreviations and nick names with connotations outside the reach of EFL Emirati students. Furthermore, American war novels, in general are characterized by the use of ambiguous and abstract military language loaded with connotations unfamiliar to EFL learners.   In "politics and the English language", George Orwell discusses the use of political/military language in Vietnam War novels. He refers to a language which consists of "euphemism, question-begging and sheer cloudy vagueness". According to Orwell, the use of the lexical item, "**pacification**", for example in a Vietnam war text means that "**defenseless villages are bombarded from the air, the inhabitants driven out into the countryside, the cattle machine-gunned, the huts set on fire with incendiary bullets**". Orwell points out that vocabulary structures such as **"transfer of population**" or "**rectification of frontiers**" have the following collocations: **"Millions of peasants are robbed of their farms and sent trudging along roads with no more than they can carry**". Finally, Orwell illustrates that the use of the statement "**elimination of unreliable elements**" in the context of Vietnam war novels signifies that "**people are imprisoned for years without trial or shot in the back the neck or sent to die of scurvy in Arctic labor camps**" (Orwell 1972 : 153).

In a related context, Erich Fromm argues that "all governments try, in the case of war, to awaken among their own people the feeling that the enemy is not human" (Fromm 1973 : 145). This destruction of the humanity of the enemy reaches a peak with enemies of another race. One does not call them by their names but they are usually called by a humiliating term. The texts of Vietnam War novels incorporate vocabulary items identifying the Vietnamese enemies as "**slope heads**", "**dinks", "slants", "slopes**" and "**zips**". These vocabulary items or what Thomas Merton calls "the linguistic garbage" (Merton 1969: 99) complicated the texts of American war literature. The culturally loaded vocabulary used by Vietnam War writers' aims to obscure the horror of war substituting the real language of trauma with a pattern of camouflaged lexical items. These items not only reduce the war to a pattern of symbols, signs and metaphors but also prevent EFL students from coming to terms with the Vietnam War fiction as a literature of trauma. The attempt of the authors to camouflage the brutality of war by incorporating ambiguous vocabulary structures dehumanizes the language of the fictional texts. For example, the enemy (Viet Cong) areas were "**pacified**" not "**destroyed**" and the term "**genocide**" was replaced by the phrase "**free fire Zones**". After the "bombing pauses" strategy which was ironically part of president Johnson's peace initiative, Vietnamese citizens were sent to refugee camps in order to "**sanitize**" the area. Consequently, American troops went out to "**sweep and clean**" the Vietnamese dirt…etc. Confronting this kind of discourse as well as other   selected culturally / linguistically loaded vocabulary items and military slang in fictional texts about war EFL Emirati students found enormous challenge in their attempt to analyze literary texts. Students also encounter other vocabulary items with ambiguous cultural significations in American war novel texts as follows:

1. Bird: Literary, the winged animal. In military language, it means an aircraft, plane or helicopter.
2. Brass: Literary, the yellow metal made up of copper and zinc, which is used to manufacture buttons and medals worn by high ranking officers. In reference to these brass parts of the uniforms, enlisted men/women refer to «officers" as "brass".
3. Dove: Literary, a kind of pigeon. In the biblical book of Genesis, the dove is a symbol of peace. In military language, it refers to a person who not only looks for peace but also is against the establishment of the military.
4. Fubar: The literary meaning of the word is obscene while the acronym itself is socially acceptable. In military and youth slang, it means "mess".
5. Hawk: Literary, a bird of prey. The term means someone with warlike attitudes.
6. Huey: This word is originated during the Vietnam War and it means a helicopter. Its use is perpetuated by movies and novels about that war.
7. To rock out: Literary, it means to sway or vibrate violently or cause to shake. In military language, it means to fail in an operation or task.
8. Snafu: The literary meaning is obscene but the acronym is accepted socially. In military language , it means "a mess" particularly "a bureaucratic mess"
9. Zero: Literary, it means a number. In military contexts, it refers to army officers. The term originated from the letter "0" which is an abbreviation for "officer".

The Third Category

It includes a variety of vocabulary structures and lexical components which gradually becomes part of youth speech, criminal terminology and street colloquialism. It is significant to argue in this respect that the process of word formations and shifts of meaning -that takes place in standard American English- happens more rapidly in slang systems. With the passage of time, this category of slang idioms and popular vocabulary turns into a productive system influencing the development of contemporary American language in general. Further, the study of culturally-loaded vocabulary usage reveals that slang lexical items and expressions penetrate from one social sphere into another - including the literary canon - to be settled into standard American language. Constituting a dynamic aspect of American English such culturally-loaded slang structures come from different groups at all levels of population, therefore, they recur in fictional texts and literary works. EFL students unfamiliar with the cultural connotations of lexical slang items, proliferated in contemporary American literature, encounter difficulties in understanding these texts. Literary works in which youth slang interacts with street language and criminal expressions are almost inconceivable to a considerable number of EFL students who graduated from public secondary schools where English and American fictional texts are not part of the English language curriculum. The following list - incomprehensible to EFL Emirati students- includes examples of criminal terminology and street argot, disseminated in modern American literary texts:

1. Bad: Literary, it means "not good". The slang meaning is the opposite: good or great. To distinguish between the literal and the slang meaning of the word, the latter is pronounced with a longer "A".
2. Blood: Literary, it means the fluid produced in the heart to be circulated throughout the body. The term means a friend or a relative.
3. Hot: It means aggressive and violent. For example, a "hot" situation means a situation involving police and guns.
4. To chill out: As a slang term it means "to calm down and become passive".

5. Dis: This slang prefix means "to treat someone badly or with disrespect".
6. Dope: Literary, it means narcotics. In slang language, the term means all kinds of fun.
7. To go down: Literary, it means to descend. As a slang term it occurs in reference to an illegal activity. Example: the drug deal goes down at midnight.
8. Heat: Literary, it means high temperature. In slang language, «heat» means "guns". "To pack heat" means to carry guns.
9. Jack: A euphemism for "shit" but not as profane as the word "shit". "Jack" is never used as a lone explicative. Example: "to be worth jack" means to be worthless.
10. Joint: Literary, it means «a low class establishment". As a slang lexical item, it has two meanings: prison or / and a cigarette made of marijuana.
11. Junkie: It has no literary meaning. As slang it means a person dedicated to drugs. It extends to suggest people dedicated to anything but the term refers to narcotics.
12. The Man: Literary, it means a person. But as a slang term, it means the following: an important person, the white status quo, the aristocracy, the institution, and white people collectively (by blacks).
13. Pig: Literary, it is a barnyard animal. As a slang term, it is used as a derogatory name for "a police officer".
14. Pusher: Someone who advocates the use of narcotics.
15. Rock: Literary, it means a stone. As a slang term it means crack, a highly addictive form of cocaine.
16. Rumble: Literary, it means «to shake". Its slang meaning is "to fight".

Moreover, the following list includes examples of youth slang deployed in contemporary American fictional literature and considered as obstacles confronting EFL Emirati student:

1. Babe: Literary, it means an infant. As a slang term, it means any woman especially an attractive one.
2. Bail: Literary it means to parachute out of a plane. As a slang term it means to get out abruptly from an undesirable situation.
3. The bird: The slang meaning of the term is an obscene gesture given by extending and showing the middle finger of the right or the left hand.
4. Bogus: Literary it means a sham. As a slang term it is used as an expletive to express dislike.
5. Chick: Literary it means a young bird. As a slang term it means an attractive female.
6. Chillum: It comes from chill and it means relaxing.
7. Cool: It means good, nothing to worry about, no problem.
8. Cut: It means a strong and muscular person.
9. Dog: It means an extremely unattractive person or someone of poor character.
10. Dude: Literary it means a dandy. As a slang term it is a form of address similar to a friend.
11. Geek: A socially inacceptable person. The stereotypical geek wears glasses and operates computers.
12. Jillion: It means a virtually unaccountable number but it lacks numeric value.
13. Put down: To belittle someone.
14. Put off: To reject someone.
15. To Rock: To have fun, to be funny , to dance
16. Shades: It means a pair of sunglasses or dark glasses.
17. Stoned: Literary it means to be killed by stoning. It means to be high under the influence of alcohol or narcotics.
18. Strung out: To be paranoid or extremely sick due to an over use of narcotics.

19. Stud: Literary a male animal kept for breeding. As a slang term it means a man who has a way with women, a Don Juan.
20. To Suck: It means bad. It is often used with the word shit. Example: this soccer match sucks shit. It is very regular when used with the word "slut".
21. Wicked: Literary it means mischievous or malicious. Its slang meaning is good or excellent.

Conclusion

On the basis of the preceding argument, it is noteworthy to point out that linguistically loaded vocabulary and socio-cultural components, embedded in the semantic structure of a language, are part and parcel of English and American literary texts. When used in fictional contexts, these vocabulary elements convey additional allocations which transcend their original lexical meaning. Obviously, these linguistically-culturally loaded vocabulary items including slang structures represent a major obstacle for EFL learners unaware of L_2 collocational knowledge. In other words, the extensive proliferation of these lexical elements in contemporary English and American literature obscures the literary texts when approached by EFL learners ignorant of L_2 cultural correlations and linguistic entanglements. Enhancing the awareness of EFL students about the semantic and cultural connotations of L_2 vocabulary provides a better comprehension of literary texts.   An understanding of SL slang patterns and culturally-loaded vocabulary structures inevitably enables Emirati students and other   EFL learners to acquire the extra-linguistic aspects of the fictional texts and thereby leads to a proper comprehension of textual and aesthetic elements integral to authorial visions. This process may include the following procedures: An exploration of problematic vocabulary items on the semantic level from a denotative perspective, an investigation of the functions of these lexical structures and word combinations in terms of their contextual connotations and an analysis of the socio-political context in which the literary/fictional text was composed in order to comprehend the authorial intentions behind the connotations involved.

Endnotes

[1] All citations come from Warren , *All the King's Men*. New York ; Harvest Books , 1996.
[2] All citations come from Fitzgerald , *The Great Gatsby* . New York : Penguin Books , 2007.

References

-Fitzgerald, F. Scott . *The Great Gatsby*. New York : Penguin Books , 2007

-Fromm Erich. *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*. New York: Fawcett, 1973.

-Jones Le Roi . *Dutchman*. New York: William Morrow, 1964.

-Merton Thomas. «War and the Crisis of Language «in A Critique of War, ed.

-Robert Ginsberg. *Chicago*: Henry Regenery Company, 1969.

-Orwell, George. " Politics and the English Language". Inside the Whale and Other Essays. New York: Simon, 1972.

-Soboleva , Svetlana. "American Slang". Proceedings of " Experiencing American Culture in the Classroom". Far-Eastern University, Vladivostok, Russia.(1997). PP. 259-264.

-Zavyalova, Victoria. "The Role of Socio-Linguistically Loaded Vocabulary in Understanding Fictional texts". Proceedings of FELTA Third International Congress. Far-Eastern University, Vladivostok, Russia. (2001). PP. 568-573.

-Warren Penn Robert. *All the King's Men*. New York: Harvest Books, 1996.

Class Consciousness in D H Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*

Abdelfattah Ghazel
Al Majmaah University, Saudi Arabia

Abstract

The paper studies the notion of class in D H Lawrence's last novel Lady Chatterley's Lover. It argues that Lawrence offers his vision of social and cultural reform in the aftermath of the Great War. The paper sheds a rehabilitative look at the novel and establishes a theoretical framework where the issues of sex and class are reconciled. Lawrence transgresses class boundaries through the Connie/Mellors liaison. The narrative is organized in two stages. The first stage of the narrative exposes the emptiness of the pre-war social values, with the purpose of destroying the reader's sense of class. In this stage, Lawrence attacks the old class system and draws a bleak image of the upper class, as represented in the Character of Sir Clifford Chatterley. Once the destructive stage is over, the writer introduces his new class markers, and thus initiates the reader into a fresh class consciousness.

Key words: class consciousness, transgression, sensuality, constructive, upper class, social reform.

Lady Chatterley's Lover, henceforth *LCL,* was met by fierce opposition from the media and the public when it was first published. Lawrence is said to have begun the novel in 1926, while he was sojourning at the Villa Mirenda not far from Florence. The first unexpurgated edition of the novel appeared in July 1928 from Florence aided by Giuseppe Orioli, who ran a bookshop of international fame in that city. There was high demand for the novel-from the beginning- due to the fact that Lawrence was an established writer by then. Because of its 'offensive content', the novel had to be secretly distributed in Britain and America, but it was not long before the customs authorities in both countries started confiscating copies on account of its obscenity. The novel provoked public anger as it undermined the readers' tolerance in their notions on how to conduct themselves in their most intimate moments. The book was labelled "obscene" and "transgressive" and suffered severe censorship.

.

The novel was harshly criticised for undermining the reader's sense of order, class system and morality. Up to the 1960s, critical responses to the novel set to expose the destructive nature of novel with no recognition of its literary merit. In accordance with The Obscene Publications Act of 1959, a jury was assembled at the Old Bailey in October 1960 for the notorious trial of the Penguin Books for its publication of the novel. The trial is now commonly known as *Trial of Lady Chatterley's Lover.* The twelve-day trial ended with the acquittal of the Penguin Books. Following the trial, criticism of the novel started to consider its literary merit. The initial rejection of the novel was largely fuelled by the Victorian concern over morality and the role of literature in promoting it. Most of the critical response to *LCL* prior to the trial focused on its apparent obscenity and its use of swear words. While there have been many attempts at studying the explicit sex scenes and swear words in the novel, their role as new class markers has been overlooked. Lawrence was keen to question the stultifying Victorian conventions of class and gender and their danger to the self development. This paper seeks to demonstrate that the novel-in response to the cultural disillusionment that followed the Great war- advances an agenda of social reform based on a re-evaluation of the class system in England.

Lawrence exposes the futility of the pre-war class consciousness and replaces it with a more vivid consciousness based on his own class markers. We argue in this paper that the transgression of class boundaries is socially and literally productive. Lawrence employs a binary narrative process to introduce his vision of social reform. The first stage of this process attacks the pre-war class system in England, with emphasis on the subsequent social malaise; while the second stage hails a new class consciousness that acknowledges the need to transgress the long-held taboos about sex and the body. The methodology we use to establish the constructive function of the novel imitates the narrative constitution.   This is to say that the reader should not take the sex scenes and other disturbing passages in isolation. They are better grasped when considered as part of a constructive scheme that seeks to help in the construction of the British society in the wake of WWI. The transgression of class boundaries in the novel was one of the things that caused it to be castigated. In the pre-war period, the different classes of society were kept apart and this was considered as a normal characteristic in the order of things. Power, money and education maintained the supremacy of one social class over the other, which accounts for Clifford's efforts to re-establish the status quo ante bellum.

The novel raises a few questions as to its meaning, the narrative modes and its conception of the post war English society. D. H. Lawrence was mainly criticised for encouraging pornography and blurring the boundaries between social classes through the Mellors/Chatterley bond. Much of the debate around the novel centres on the liaison between

the Aristocratic lady and the gamekeeper. Our modest proposal aims at establishing a wider scope for the interpretation of the novel and to see it as part of a socio-cultural dynamism that is meant to reconstruct a sense of national integrity within a collapsed world. The setting of the novel is reminiscent of Peter Sloterdijk's argument about the disillusionment with the city in the 1920s formulated in his book *Critique of Cynical Reason*. The impact of industrialization and what he calls the 'death industry is the creation of a cultural and intellectual abyss and a state of utter chaos' (25). This chaotic world gainsays any utopian vision of the city as the place for self- assertion. Materialism, industrialization and modernism have all strengthened the alienation of the ego from the world. The ego is unhoused, and it has to strive to create its own idiosyncratic mode of life. In the absence of a strong social and cultural agenda, the individual relation to any form of conventions loosens. The protagonists in *LCL* are thrust in a state of distortion and have to experiment with a new and unrestricted sexual freedom to reconstruct their shattered identity.

LCL follows a two-stage process of construction. This binary, dialectical construction of the story is mirrored in the duality of the narrative voices. Each phase of the construction process is assigned a suitable narrative voice. The first phase of the story consists in deconstructing and destroying the existing class system. It questions and undermines the foundations of the British class system, with an emphasis on the emptiness of its values. The second phase starts when the reader's sense of class and order is shaken, to propose a new class consciousness. This phase converts the reader to a new social experience based on sensuality. Lawrence transgresses the class boundaries in a way that liberates all the social classes from the prerogatives of class and gender. His destruction of the pre-war class system is done by eliminating the conventional class dividers, namely power and money. In the second part of the story, Lawrence coins new class dividers to propose his vision of social and cultural reform. In his attempt to bring about social reform, Lawrence reshuffles the existing social classes and creates new class demarcations.

The narrative voice in the novel seems to abide by the two-stage process. The first phase consists in exposing to the reader the emptiness of the pre-war values of social order, class system and class boundaries. This expository phase kills the reader's sense of class codes and leads them away from these notions. The second phase of transgressing the social boundaries initiates the reader into a fresh class consciousness that bears within it the seeds of cultural reform. The stepping out of the conventional class values is announced by a shift in the narrative voice. The ability of a narrative to transform readers is hit upon by the narrator in Chapter 9 when he says:

> And here lies the vast importance of the novel, properly handled. It can inform and lead into new places the flow of our sympathetic consciousness and it lead our sympathy away in recoil from things gone dead. Therefore, the novel, properly handled can reveal the most secret places of life: for it is in the *passional* secret places of life, above all, that the tide of sensitive awareness needs to ebb and flow, cleansing and freshening (109)

Class demarcations in *LCL* are expressed via the juxtaposition of two opposing social classes: the upper class of which Clifford is a fervent representative and the lower working class in the character of Mellors. In the novel, the subtlety in class boundaries lies less in the dividers than in the equivocation that Lawrence attributes to the upper class. Money, education and industry are clear class dividers in the novel. However, instead of giving privilege to the upper class members in the novel, they hamper the individual growth. Materialistic class dividers are only introduced to be ridiculed. The exposition of these class

demarcations in a rather bleak way serves the authorial project of social reform. The cross class affair between Connie and her lover materializes the possibility of repositioning oneself in the cosmos and to aspire to a more authentic mode of existence.

The effacement of class boundaries is inevitable for the survival of the individual in the post-war era. Lawrence's transgression of class boundaries is not done for the sake of transgressing them. What is at stake in the novel is a reaction to the soulless society of the late 1920s. Lawrence is in fact cynical towards the effects of modernity on society and how it has brought about a type of cultural lethargy.   It is important to note here, that the transgression of class boundaries in the novel takes place at two different levels. The first level is the level of Sir Clifford Chatterley whose resentment of the social institutions is articulated in clear terms.   The second level of transgression is represented in the Mellors/Connie affair. In both cases, Lawrence is keen to show that the transgression of such class boundaries is indeed productive especially in so far as self-realisation is concerned. Looking into Lawrence's cynical stance endows the novel with the mission of settling the odds of post-war Britain, and –oddly enough- anchors it in the Victorian tradition of writing. The Mellors/Connie liaison, however obscene and transgressive it might otherwise be considered, does in fact maintain the Victorian notions of family and marriage. Lady Chatterley is only looking for a more satisfying marriage than her current one. However, the type of marriage she strives for is conventional at heart. This can be easily justified by the leading role Mellors enjoys in the various encounters they have together. Lawrence is cynical towards the limits that the class system puts on the individual, but he does seem conservative in the way he proposes for the emancipation of Connie for both her sterile marriage and her class.

The reader's sense of an ordered society is challenged from the beginning of the novel. The narrator introduces us to a destabilized society that sways under the calamities of the Great War. He insists on the vulnerability and the destitution of the British society. The sweeping effect of WWI and the need to survive are expressed in the very beginning of the novel. The novel starts with a description of the situation of the social scene, which advocates Lawrence's project of social reform. The war has revealed the emptiness of all the social institutions and moral conventions. Society has created in its citizens a 'false sense of purpose' (Sloterdijk, 5) and has long worked to keep them under its control through the adherence to a set of conventions that promise meaningfulness. These conventions turned out, after the war, to be void of meaning. Society, by consequence, is no more than a group of individuals with no collective sense of belonging or mutual understanding; hence the necessity to go beyond these conventions and to experiment with new forms of 'unrestrained' arts that might get as far as hitting the truth.

The novel opens with the following paragraph:

> Ours is essentially a tragic age, so we refuse to take it tragically.   The cataclysm has happened, we are among the ruins, we start to build up new little habitats, to have new little hopes. It is rather hard work: there is now no smooth road into the future: but we go round, or scramble over the obstacles. We've got to live, no matter how many skies have fallen (1)

The opening paragraph sets the socio-cultural context of the novel.   It captures a theme which was common for most modernist writers; the impact of WWI on Europe. It argues that the Great War destroyed the socio-political foundations of western civilisation and undermined the meaningfulness of life. It has thrown humanity- so to speak- in a state of

chaos and absolute nothingness. The tragedy of the war is over, and we've got to live anyway. The dilemma of survival herein mentioned raises the existential concern of the novel. The ensuing chapters have more to them than publicizing Lady Chatterley's private life. The writer takes a defensive stance from the outset when he recommends that the reader find the socio-cultural and even intellectual context of the novel. The post war individual is culturally and socially unhoused and he has to find his way through the subsequent distortion. He is cast in a state of meaninglessness which, paradoxically enough, has enlightened him about everything he had previously held valuable.

The void and chaos left by the Great War was heavily felt in European countries. In his article *"The Double Image"* Allan Bullock articulates the impact of the Great War on Europe in a contradiction between the apparent cultural security of the turn of the century period and the simultaneous ferments in thought and art. He starts his article as follows:

> The Great war which tore Europe apart between 1914 and 1918 was so shattering in its impact, so far reaching in its consequences, that it is profoundly difficult to recapture what preceded it- difficult to avoid exaggerating the sense of conflict in the pre-war years, difficult not to see them building up into a general crisis of European society in which a crash, a resolution by force was inevitable and felt to be inevitable. Yet, whatever the intimations, whatever the elements of disturbance and the feelings of change, the elements of stability and tranquillity are quite apparent as the elements of schism. (16)

The cultural and social settings that this paragraph sets legitimize, as it were, any type of transgression contained in the novel. The situation is such that any attempt at finding one's place in the world becomes possible regardless of the means therein used. The Great War dashed all the values that the English society used to maintain. The individual is lost and appalled by the atrocities of the war and gets ensnared in a state of disillusionment. They have to find "new habitats" designed to answer their most intimate and individual needs of freedom. The post war scene, with all its chaos and distortion, condemns the individual to a state of inauthenticity, but at the same time it opens up an infinite set of opportunities to live one's potentialities. The word 'tragedy' the narrator uses in the opening paragraph is all-including. The calamities of WWI touched the social, cultural and the intellectual sides of Western Civilisation. The opening of the novel points to the intellectual barrenness of post war England. This intellectual barrenness is manifest in the character of Sir Clifford Chatterley. He stands for aristocratic intelligentsia and his condition speaks for impotence at the individual and the communal levels alike. Sir Clifford came home from war "more or less in bits." (1) He is declared impotent and has to face the sad truth that he will not produce an heir to Wragby Hall. Clifford Chatterley's situation should be read in allegorical terms, where his impotence to reproduce himself becomes a note of criticism of the social scenes. Lawrence seems to be conveying the message that, without a strict agenda of social order and personal relation, England will not be able to 'perpetuate' itself. This is a defensive tactic on the part of Lawrence, whereby the narrator seeks to win the reader's sympathy with the unfolding story of adultery and cross-caste union.

Once the calamities of WWI and their effects on the British society are exposed to the reader, the narrator moves on with his destruction of the reader's class consciousness. His next target is Clifford Chatterley. He is a central character in the novel insofar as he represents the upper class. The conflict between Clifford and his wife falls into the context of the antagonism between the working and the ruling classes of post-war England. This and

other instances from Lawrence's letters allow us to suggest that he might have been influenced by the Marxist view of history as a continuous struggle between the social classes. The Marxist theory –centred on the Hegelian master-slave idea and the concept of class struggle- is illuminating for our reading of Clifford. Lawrence's aversion to capitalist economy can be traced in many of his letters. For instance, on February 15 1929, he wrote to P. R. Stephenson expressing his hate of capitalism:

> The bourgeois, the machine civilization, and the worker' (as such) all want to destroy real humanness. If Bolshevism is going to classify me as a worker or a non-worker, I am against it. I hate our civilization, our ideals, our money, our machines, our intellectuals, our upper classes. But I hate them because I've tried them and given them a long chance- and they are rotten. If a man has not 'risen in the world' he'll be forced to admit there is something 'above him'. (Letters, vol.7, 179)

Lawrence makes no secret of his opposition to those systems that-according to him- 'destroy real humanness'. The capitalist bourgeois system encourages the exploitation of the working classes and aims at maintaining the status quo to the disadvantage of the subordinated sections of society. He writes to P. R. Stephenson that "many ladies nowadays, very many, have love affairs with their chauffeurs- the chauffeur is the favourite fucker' but 'the chauffeur stays where he is – and is a machine à plaisir- and the lady stays where she is- and nothing is altered in the least.' Therefore, 'If Mellors had never found out the upper classes, by being one of them, Connie would just have had him and put him down again – 'elle m'a planté là." (Letters, vol.7, 179)

Lawrence's affinities with the Marxist reading of history does not imply –in any way- that he is a Marxist socialist who seeks to overthrow the bourgeois society through revolution. This is reflected in a letter he wrote to Gordon Campbell in March 1925:

> It is not a political revolution I want, but a shifting of the racial system of values from the old morality and personal salvation through a Mediator to the larger morality and salvation through the knowledge that one's neighbour is oneself. This means instant social revolution, from indignation with what is.
> (Letters, vol.2, 301)

The character of Clifford serves Lawrence's project of exposing the odds of the upper class, and his characterization is a perplexing one. His demeanour and attitude of bourgeois things are quite consistent in the novel. However, there are instances when his take on class and money becomes equivocal. The narrator of the novel displays some sympathy towards Clifford in the beginning of the story, when he introduces him as someone suffering from 'the bruise of the false inhuman war.' (9) This sympathy fades away soon as Lawrence uses his physical impotence as a symbol for his class. The narrator's aversion to Clifford stems not only from his inability to sleep with his wife, but also from something inside him. The narrator reasonably asks 'And yet was not he in part to blame? This lack of warmth, this lack of the simple, warm physical contact, was he not to blame for that?' (47)

Lawrence can't resist heaping humiliation on the character of Clifford. When he turns to writing he allows him to write nothing substantial. Clifford is incapable of satisfying his young wife, and he becomes more of a burden to her. Another significant humiliation is heaped on him in his infantilization at the hands of Mrs. Bolton. More importantly, the novel yields absolutely no hint of Clifford's war record. The serious damage he suffers from during

the war does imply that he was really in action, but Lawrence keeps silent on this and thus denies him the dignity of bravery. This is mainly because Clifford- as designed by Lawrence –stands for the decadence of the upper class.

Sir Clifford's state points to the bankruptcy of the upper class ideals and their inability to fulfil the individual sense of the self. His love for fame and success has alienated him from the sensual part of life. This alienation is heightened by his physical impotence. As he clings to the material side of life for survival and domination, Sir Clifford grows alienated from his wife, and the emotional gap between them increases day after day.   He incarnates the social ills that the novel abhors. He exhibits a good deal of hatred towards the middle and lower classes, and he does not seem to accommodate to their level of existence.   That Clifford stands for the upper class is explicitly mentioned in the opening chapter:

> Clifford was more upper class than Connie.   Connie was well-to-do intelligentsia, but he was aristocracy. Not the big sort, but still *it*. His father was a baronet, and his mother had been a viscount's daughter. But Clifford, while he was better bred than Connie, and more 'society' was in his own way more provincial and more timid. He was at his ease in the narrow "great world," that is, landed aristocracy society, but he was shy and nervous of that entire big world which consists of the vast hordes of the middle and lower classes and foreigners. If the truth must be told, he was just a little bit frightened of middle and lower class humanity, and of foreigners not of his own class.   He was, in some paralyzing way, conscious of his own defencelessness, though he had all the defence of privilege.   Which is curious, but a phenomenon of our day. (pp 6-7)

Connie and Sir Clifford are portrayed in a way that makes their union gradually impossible and to legitimize Connie's elopement with the gamekeeper later in the novel. Clifford's inability to mix with people of lower social orders, along with his lack of sensuality illustrates the cultural and intellectual bankruptcy of the upper class. He is arrogant and his demeanour testifies to the upper class drive to rule the others, despite the emptiness of their ideals. This arrogance is casually resented by Mrs. Bolton. The portrayal of Sir Clifford bears the rudiments of Lawrence's cynicism.   At the opening of the novel, the narrator undermines the reader's sense of class. This is done through the distortion of the Upper class ideals and the destruction of the alleged supremacy of this kind of life. The overall purpose of this destructive process is to reveal the hypocrisy and the emptiness inherent in the stratification of society. The upper class, with all its money and prestige, fails to fulfil the individual sense of being. Clifford's impotence works deeper than the physical level. It implies his failure as a nobleman.

We have argued earlier in this paper that Clifford's take on class becomes sometimes equivocal. This is evident from the beginning of the novel when the narrator alludes to the hidden rebel inside Clifford:

> Nevertheless, he too was a rebel: rebelling even against his class. Or perhaps rebel is too strong a word; far too strong. He was only caught in the general, popular recoil of the young against convention and against any sort of real authority. Fathers were ridiculous: his own obstinate one supremely so. And governments were ridiculous: our own wait-and-see sort especially so. And armies were ridiculous and old duffers of generals altogether, the red-faced Kitchener supremely. Even the war was ridiculous, though it did kill rather a lot of people. (7)

This passage is illustrative of the disappointment that characterized post-war society. Such a disappointment manifests itself as an all-engulfing movement that touched on all aspects of life, be it social or political. This is reminiscent of Sloterdijk's 'cultural discontent' and his 'diffuse cynicism.' (5) It is evident from this passage that Sir Clifford Chatterley is immersed in the material side of life, and is bound by class conventions. The 'popular recoil' that the narrator evokes helps to contextualize his discontent with all kinds of order and conventions. Clifford is resentful of the emptiness and bankruptcy of the upper class, but is unable to articulate his rejection. His physical handicap mirrors his moral confinement to a preset system of values. This system of values does not meet his most intimate needs. Clifford exemplifies the victimization of the individual by more powerful ideologies, as well as his inability to resist them .

The opening chapter offers considerable insight into the disparity between Sir Clifford and Constance. Such a comparison does establish him as a fervent believer in the bourgeois values and -at the same time- it tries to gain the reader's sympathy with Connie. We learn that "she was much more mistress of herself in that outer world of chaos than he was master of himself." (7) Clifford's lack of accommodation and his shyness confine him to the emptiness of the aristocracy. Both Clifford and Connie struggle for a more authentic and idiosyncratic form of existence. Their approaches to self assertion are different. Clifford embraces a life of literature and art in an attempt at achieving social recognition. He starts writing books, and invites young intellectuals at Wragby Hall. In the beginning, this intellectual life seems to be fulfilling for Connie as she joins their discussions of literature and ideas. It was her father's warning to her against being a 'demi vierge' (15) that has awakened her to the futility of the intellectual life of Wragby. Connie's disappointment with her sterile and soulless marriages becomes more and more felt, as the imperative of a more fulfilling and more sensual form of life grows inside her. She realizes that she has filled her life with empty words, with virtually no personal attachments. It is upon this realisation that she sets to look for more satisfying forms of being.

Her journey will take her first to a short-lived affair with Michaelis, a young British playwright. We learn later that Connie's attachment to him was out of sympathy, as she is touched with the bad treatment he receives from the aristocracy. It was his aloofness that has attracted Connie to Michaelis. This short affair with the British playwright is seminal as it initiates Connie into the world of sensuality. The second stop in her quest for authenticity is her more satisfying involvement with Oliver Mellors, her husband's game keeper. It is during the many sexual intercourses that she has with Mellors that Connie comes to terms with her sense of the self. Clifford, on the other hand, remains entrapped in his intellectual life. His love for money and fame is typical of the aristocracy. Through his character, Lawrence channels his critique of the figure of the aristocratic who claims his right to dominate the lower classes even if he is inadequate.

It has already been argued that Clifford's sense of class and his physical impotence point to the narrator's resentful look at the upper class. The intellectual life at Wragby Hall is barren. Connie's quest for a more idiosyncratic level of existence is heightened by Sir Clifford's mistreatment of his mine workers. He treats them, more or less like objects. We read in chapter 2 that:

> She could not help feeling how little connection he really had with people.
> The miners were, in a sense, his own men; but he saw them as objects rather
> than men, parts of the pit rather than parts of life, crude raw phenomena
> rather than human beings along with him. He was in some way afraid of

them; he could not bear to have them look at him now he was lame. And
their queer, crude life seemed as unnatural as that of hedgehogs. (13)

Such a sensual experience is not made available to Sir Clifford, whose love of power
and domination prevents him from transgressing the social norms. This is despite the fact that
Clifford himself resents the emptiness of the upper class. Textual evidence of his malaise
with everything that surrounds him has been given earlier in this paper, when the narrator
labels him as 'rebel.' The authorial voice admits in the same above-quoted passage from the
novel that he is too weak to be a rebel. He is, the narrator informs us, 'only caught in the
general, popular recoil of the young against conventions and against any sort of real authority'
(7) Sir Clifford is physically and emotionally confined to the restrictions of his class. He lacks
the courage and the readiness to break these conventions. As it has been argued earlier, Sir
Clifford is part of a collective consciousness where the value of the individual is measured by
his ability to maintain his integrity in his socio-political environment. He is a mass figure
who remains benign and impotent to face the forces that cripple him.

The rigidity of the pre-war social order is articulated in the way Clifford relates to those
who work for him. He is sensitive of class and struggles to maintain his control and
supremacy over the miners, Mellors and even Mrs. Bolton-on whom he depends heavily. This
materializes Lawrence's hate of industrialization and its dehumanization of the workers.
Clifford represents the master as he owns the means of production, and the miners are his
possession. We learn in the novel that "The miners were, in a sense, his own men: but he saw
them as objects rather than men, parts of the pits rather than parts of life, and crude raw
phenomena rather than human beings along with him" (15-16)

According to Clifford's understanding of class, the upper and the working class are
incompatible and uncongenial. He believes that each class should stick to its respective
function. Clifford explicitly expresses his belief in what he takes to be a natural division of
roles between classes when he says "when it comes to expressive or executive functioning, I
believe there is a gulf and an obscure one, between the ruling and the serving classes. The
two functions are opposed. And the function determines the individual." (183) Isn't this
conviction that 'the function determines the individual' reminiscent of Marx's view of
society? He clarifies this link in the *Communist Manifesto* of 1848 as follows:

> The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of
> social, political and intellectual life. It is not the consciousness of men that
> determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their
> consciousness. (Qtd in Koh 191)

Being a member of the serving/working class brings the person down to the level of a
machine or an animal. This machine falls in the hands of the master who uses it to maximize
his profit. Clifford is explicit in his treatment of the miners as animals when he confides to
Connie that 'the miners are not men, but animals you don't understand and never could.
Nero's slaves were extremely little different from our colliers or the Ford motor car workers'
(182).

Industry in the novel is seen in the coal mines of Sir Clifford. The negativity with which
this industry is presented in the novel serves the authorial attempt at driving the reader away
from the sad reality of post-war Britain in order to usher them in a new class and self-
consciousness. Sir Clifford is the epitome of post-war England with its inhuman treatment of
the individual and its determinism to uphold a special bond between the industrialists and

their workers. Workers become just instruments in the machine of the productive system. They yield both their bodies and souls to the whims of the capitalists. Sir Clifford articulates the need for these capitalists to own the industry in religious terms as he argues in chapter 13, when Connie asked him if he really has to own the industry:

> I don't. But to the extent I do own it, yes, most decidedly. The ownership of property has now become a religious question: as it has been since Jesus and St. Francis. The point is not take all thou hast and give to the poor, but use all thou hast to encourage the industry and give work to the poor. It's the only way to feed all the mouths and clothe all the bodies. Giving away all we have to the poor spells starvation for the poor just as much as for us.   And universal starvation is no high aim. Even general poverty is no lovely thing. Poverty is ugly. (198)

Although the passage appears a bit too late in the novel, it does help to sustain the ugliness of industrialisation and its effects on the characters of the novel, including Clifford himself. In fact, Lawrence's conception of industrialism in the novel is both complex and equivocal. Such remarks and others on the notion of class in relation to both money and power are instances of the unwholesome civilized consciousness that inhibits the soul and restrains its potentialities. Clifford's insistence on the necessity of social differences and the benevolent nature of the industrialization process implies that the workers have to be subjugated and trained within the productive apparatus of industrialization. Connie, in response to her husband's insistence to strengthen the organization of industry and to turn workers into instruments of the industrial machine, points to the brutality of industrialization in robbing people of their *natural life*. She replies:

> Everything is to be sold and paid for now; and all the things you mention now, Wragby and Shipley sells them to the people, at a good profit. Everything is sold. You don't give one heartbeat of real sympathy. And besides, who has taken away from the people their natural life and manhood, and given them this industrial horror? Who has done that? (199)

Industrialization robs the workers of their natural lives and turns them into machines. The effects of industry on the serving class are heavily resented by Connie and her lover who- speaking for the working class- attacks the industrial system.   He notes:

> It's a shame, what's been done to people these last hundred years: men turned into nothing but labour-insects, and all their manhood taken away, and all their real life. [...] I would wipe the machines off the face of earth again, and end the industrial epoch absolutely, like a black mistake. (220)

A significant piece of evidence of the antagonism between the social classes is to be found in the relationship between Mellors and Clifford. Their relationship is characterized by hostility all through the novel. This hostility reaches its peak in the incident of the chair. One day, Clifford decides to go for a walk in the wood with Connie when suddenly the engine breaks down and has to call Mellors for help. The incident of the chair best exemplifies the class conflict when Mellors physically and figuratively is under the master to repair his chair. This is an interpretation that can be supported by the narrator's comment that the incident brings together 'the ruling class and the serving class' (189). The tension between the two men will become apparent again as the narrator informs us that "the two males were as hostile as fire and water and that they mutually exterminated one another' (192)

Connie spares no occasion to remind Clifford of his abuse of power that derives from his class consciousness. In one instance she reminds him that 'you have only got more than your share of the money, and make people work for you for two pounds a week, or threaten them with starvation [...] you only bully with your money, like any Jew or any Schieber' (193-94). She warns him that he makes more money from the work of the miners than what they receive. The capitalist system, in the light of Marx's view of history, widens the gap between the ruling and the serving classes of society. Ball notes that the poorer the proletarian is, the richer the capitalist will be (135). He maintains that 'the struggle of one class against the other, resulting from the master-slave relationship between people, lies at the core of the Marxist view of history, and the only solution, according to Marx is to overthrow the ruling bourgeoisie.' (136)

The aloofness that characterizes class relations in the novel is best seen in Clifford as the narrator informs us that "he was at his ease in the narrow 'great world'-that is, landed aristocracy society- but he was shy and nervous of all that other world which consists of the vast hordes of lower and middle class humanity, and of foreigners not of his own class' (10) Clifford's shyness and aloofness of the working class hides a deep sense of hate of these people. He expresses his love for his class and his hate of the serving class many a time in the novel- either in his discussions with Connie or Mrs. Bolton- but it is when he learns about Connie's pregnancy from his gamekeeper that he articulates his utmost contempt for the lower classes. He falls into a rage as he takes their affair as a humiliation for a man of his class. Such a rage is driven equally by his sexual impotence and his belief in the discrepancy between the social classes of the two lovers. Clifford comments- upon learning about the pregnancy- 'that scum! That bumptious lout! That miserable cad! 'And then addresses Connie to wonder if there is 'any end to the beastly lowness of women' (296). Clifford's rage is mostly targeted to the working class as he finds it difficult to understand why "such beings were ever allowed to be born" (296). The narrator tells us then that-in regard to Mellors- Clifford "couldn't even accept the fact of the existence of Mellors, in any connection with his own life because of his sheer, unspeakable, impotent hate" (296) Clifford justifies his position as master of the pits by arguing that the industrial system is more crucial for the working class than the aristocracy. The latter has the right not only to control the workers, but also to make a profit at the expense of the masses. This is because the workers have equally benefited from the bourgeois productive system. Clifford's class consciousness makes him see only the economic and social achievements of the English upper class. He makes no mention of the wretchedness of the workers, the exploitation of children within the industrial system and the poor remuneration of the workers He elicits the many benefits that the working class members obtain from the pits when he says:

> Who has given the colliers all they have that is worth having: all their political liberty, and their education, such as it is, their sanitation, their health conditions, their books, their music, their everything? […] It is all the Wragbys and Shipleys in England who have given their part, and must go on giving." (181)

Clifford's class consciousness represents the basis for his relation with those who work for him, including Mrs. Bolton. The master-slave theory is implied in the way he deals with Mrs. Bolton, his caretaker. Mrs. Bolton gives Clifford the possibility of exercising his upper class power. He teaches her games such as chess and bezique as if to remind himself that he is still a member of the upper class. He likes to teach her because this gives him a sense of power. The bond that links Clifford to his caretaker is characterized by mutual dependence on one another. The narrator informs us that 'Mrs. Bolton for her part was thrilled because

she was coming bit by bit into possession of all that the gentry knew, all that made them upper class: apart from money. […] She was making him want to have her there with him and this was a subtle deep flattery to him, her genuine thrill.' (100) Mrs. Bolton, through her connection to Clifford, is looking for recognition. She longs to be recognized as a person, and this is possible only when Clifford-her superior- recognizes her efforts. Sir Clifford's dependence on her fills her in with sense of joy. He needs her both as a caretaker and in order to relish his position as her master.

> Only when he was alone with Mrs. Bolton did he really feel a lord and master, and his voice ran on with her almost as easily and garrulously as her own could run. And he let her shave him or sponge all his body as if he were a child, really as if he were a child. (109)

Clifford's attachment to Mrs. Bolton in a mother-son type of relationship is important in two ways. First, it is a sample of the mother-son relationship that Clifford seems to hold to so that he feels secure in the world. Second, the proponents of a Freudian reading of the novel would use this mother-son bond to conclude that Clifford's relation to his mother is an unresolved one. Accordingly, the ultimate separation of Connie and her husband is not fuelled solely by his sexual impotence but also by "Clifford's unresolved dependency on his mother". (Gerald 377) Mrs. Bolton's presence in the life of Clifford is a necessary one as it gives him the possibility to live out his full potential as master.

The need to subjugate the body and souls of the workers can be better understood if read in the light of Foucault's theory of the subjugation of the body by social forces, forwarded in his work *Discipline and Punish.* Foucault demonstrates how disciplinary techniques and institutions establish a firm socio-individual control over the individual's body. Foucault argues that the human body is both the subject and the target of social forces and power. The control that these forces can exercise over the body goes further than mere subjugation and manipulation. They claim an unprecedented right to shape, train and improve the human body according to their own interests. In the process, the body is explored, broken and re-organized to meet the need of these alien forces.

The image of the body as machine is manifest in the *LCL*. In the passages quoted earlier in this part, and in many other occasions in chapter 13, Sir Clifford articulates his theory of the inevitability of the industry to maintain not only the industrialists, but also the miners themselves. The novel illustrates the polymorphous results of Chatterley's industry on the miners. The image is reminiscent of Foucault's theory of the subjugation of the body by social forces.(*Discipline and Punish 16*) Sir Clifford takes advantage of the miners' situation to make their bodies and spirits docile to his productive machine. His endeavour aims at maximizing his profit but also maximizing his efficiency in the exploitation of the natural and human world.   Clifford's insistence to perfect the organization of the industry and to dominate the workers can be seen as a way of compensating for his physical injury.

Clifford's sense of class differences is unshakable. He exposes a fierce determination to maintain and defend the pre-war class divisions as a vital element of the order of things. He retorts to Connie's defence of the working class with his claim that the disparity between social classes is a matter of unalterable fate where the masses (the miners in the case of the novel) are doomed to be controlled and subjugated. He says: "that is fate. Why is the star Jupiter bigger than the star Neptune? You can't start altering the make-up of things." (198) The coal mining industry of Sir Clifford crystallizes the pre-war class system with one ruling

class and one ruled. Clifford's relation to his miners could be read in allegorical terms, where the miners stand for the masses and the industrial system represents Clifford's unshakable sense of the superiority of his class. The effect of industrialization on people is crippling at the physical and the psychic levels alike. It represses them and disfigures their natural instincts. Lawrence's cynical stance in regard to class system can be seen in his account of the effects of industrialization on the masses that render them instrumental and operational on the physical level, while at the psychic level they are denied the right to live humanly. The novel contains textual evidence of Clifford's wish to impose discipline, as it were, on nature so as "to capture the bitch-goddess by brute means of industrial production." (107) This statement reveals a material interest in nature, where it has to be subdued for the use of man. One should be efficient in the power exercised on nature to extract from it what human beings need.

Here, again, Foucault's theory of *disciplinary power* seems useful to understand Clifford's treatment of his miners and his insistence on the superiority of the ruling class. The aim of disciplinary power is to make the body useful and docile. Foucault argues that this new type of power has been developed by the bourgeois society of the 18th century as the successor to the preceding form of sovereign judicial power. Jae Kyung Koh develops Clifford's use of disciplinary power in a seminal article entitled *D.H Lawrence's Vision of Cultural Regeneration in Lady Chatterley's Lover* when he writes:

> For Chatterley, his coal-mining enterprise requires a collaborative strategy, harnessing the most powerful technologies available and, as far as possible eliminating human friction from the process through turning the workforce into an entirely obedient group of people capable of conforming to mechanical rhythms and pace. Such a process is made possible by gaining control over the bodies of the miners with the aim of reducing them to mere functions and instruments of the mechanical process. The working lives of these individual are becoming increasingly instrumental while their creative, human forces atrophy. (207)

Chapter 13 is supportive of this socio-industrial reading of the novel that positions it against the General Strike of 1926. We read in the novel: "Oh, good!" said Connie. 'If only there aren't more strikes!' 'What would be the use of their striking again? Merely ruin the industry, what's left of it: and surely the owls are beginning to see it." (197) Lawrence considered the General Strike as the starting point for a revolution that questions the social foundations of the British society. The novel chronicles what Lawrence had seen in the mining midlands in 1926 during what he called his "everlasting and unspeakable strike." The strike brought forth an unprecedented 'class-hatred' that was considered as bearing the roots for social reform. The General Strike had a twofold scope. For, one the one hand it created an all engulfing despair and anger at the disparity between the social classes, and on the other hand, it provided the remedy for what it created. It is from this prism, that the novel could be said to offer an optimistic outlook.

The portrayal of Sir Clifford as the epitome of class system allows the narrator to kill the reader's sense of class. The destructive part of the novel leaves no room for suspicion as to the emptiness and the brutality of the pre-war values of the British society. Lawrence challenges the institutions of power that depend upon traditional ideas of class and money for their legitimacy and acceptance. The narrator's project of offering a new class consciousness opposes power in a constructive way whereby the repressed gains a voice in society. The

negativity with which the Sir Clifford is presented reveals the narrator's aversion to the discourse of power.

The social reform that Lawrence advances in the novel creeps into the reader's consciousness as the novel unfolds. The cross-caste affair of Mellors and Connie bears the seeds of a more fulfilling society that acknowledges the value of the individual. The Connie-Mellors liaison is the alternative to what Lawrence rejects. Once the old class markers are debunked the narrator exposes new ones that answer the needs of the individual. Clifford's connection to money and power is levelled against Mellors' sensuality and his emancipation from the pre-war prerogatives. The transgression of class boundaries in the novel is maintained via a passage from a restrained sense of being to an authentic mode of existence through sensuality. It could be assumed that Lawrence places education (not necessarily schooled education) and sensuality at the centre of his new class consciousness.

LCL offers an idiosyncratic approach to history based on cycles. For Lawrence, there is always a dominating and a repressed class of society. The formation of a new social class takes place when the repressed section of society revolts against the dominating one, overthrows it and takes over. The cyclical view of history finds expression in *LCL*. The rising of the repressed announces the coming of a new era of human history. The Connie-Mellors affair marks the rising of the repressed against the ruling class. Connie awakens to a new way of self-knowledge that is got through a sensual experience. It is the Connie-Mellors liaison that makes the breaking of the class boundaries worthwhile. It is not the breaking of these boundaries that matters for Lawrence, but the fact that this transgression is literally and culturally productive.

In *LCL* society moves from one stage to another when the upper class is infiltrated and later displaced by a lower class, and when the social foundations that uphold the old relations are shaken. This takes place when the repressed natural instincts of both the upper and the lower classes are liberated. We attempt to back our analysis with some post-industrial class theories. Carolyn Howe, in her book *Political Ideology and Class Formation: a Study of the Middle Class* announces the decline of the Marxist theory of the economic foundations of class fractions:

> A number of post-industrial theories gainsay the Marxist theory that the working class will one day become the vanguard in capitalist societies. This working class has given way to a new stratum of wage-earners whose money comes from their performance of mental (rather than manual) tasks. They embody the anti-capitalist awareness of the centrality of knowledge as a means of production. Knowledge controllers enjoy the pivotal positions once assigned to manual workers. (30)

The first class marker that Lawrence offers is education. The term is not used to refer to formal education and schooling. It is a construct that builds on the individual's upbringing and psychological makeup. Lawrence acknowledges the cyclical movement of history and the role of knowledge to gain power and to claim legitimacy in society. The knowledge Lawrence poses is but a form of a new class consciousness where the movement from one class to another is done through the unleashing of sensuality. He, therefore, creates a new class distinct from both Connie's upper class and Mellors' working class: it is a stratum that partakes of two or more class locations that are contradictory. It derives its essence from the old philosophical question of *know thyself.* Self- knowledge or consciousness, as advocated in the novel, rests on education. This can be seen in relation to the two opposite characters of

Clifford and Mellors where the education of the first literally cripples him and prevents his coming to terms with his age. This is all the more so when contrasted to Mellors whose very psychological makeup ensures his emancipation from class boundaries.

The significance of the coming of Mellors resides in his being in sharp contrast to the industrial system, and to Clifford in particular. He provides Connie with a well-needed break from the soulless world of Wragby and the coal-mining village of Tevershall. He is a working class figure and yet manages to break loose from the boundaries of his own class. It could be argued here, that it is thanks to his education and his personal qualities- rather than in spite of them- that he becomes fully independent. The role of education in relation to both Mellors and Clifford should not be overlooked. It is a determining factor in the overall demeanour of each of them. Clifford's education hampers his growth and affects his relationship to his miners. When he first suggests to Connie to have a child from another man, Clifford openly bids her to mingle with men from the upper class as he explains to her: "Why, Connie, I should trust your natural instinct of decency and selection. You just wouldn't let the wrong sort of fellow touch you." (46) It is noteworthy, however, that he contradicts himself in this regard as he argues-on the same subject-when Connie asks him whether he cares for the child's father or not:

> Does it matter very much? Do these things really affect us very deeply?
> ...You had that lover in Germany... what is it now? Nothing almost. It seems
> to me that it isn't these little acts and little connections we make in our lives
> that matter so very much. They pass away, and where are they? Where....
> Where are the snows of yesterday? .... It's what endures through one's life
> that matters; my own life matters to me in its long continuance and
> development. [...] If we brought it up in Wragby, it would belong to us and to
> the place. I don't believe very intensely in fatherhood. If we had the child to
> rear, it would be our won and it would carry on. (45)

Unlike Clifford, Mellors' education has favoured and fostered his upward mobility and shaped his vision of a more humane society with new kinds of human relationships. Koh accounts for the natural nobility of Mellors and considers him to be "a natural aristocrat, a gentleman in everything except birth, and his education and background allow him to condemn both the destructive industrial capitalism and the world of the disciplined modern masses. He views industrial bourgeois society as insane." (195) The lugubrious atmosphere of the Tevershall and Wragby push Mellors to embrace a new type of human interaction based mainly on the sharing of bodily pleasure through the many sexual encounters he has with Connie. Mellors, as the antithesis of Clifford, speaks for Lawrence's rejection of the mechanical aspect of pre-war society. The subjugation of the human body under the industrial machines has estranged man and has denied him the spontaneous sensual instincts in life. The Mellors-Connie liaison suggests Lawrence's vision of new kinds of relationships that will transcend class fractions and which, definitely set the path for a regenerated society.

Constance Chatterley and her lover exhibit a great deal of cynicism in regard to traditional ideas of the whole experience of man including, Man, truth, justice, reason and freedom. This is reminiscent of Foucault's notion of 'eventalization' that he explains as "the making visible of a singularity in places where there is temptation to invoke a historical constant, an immediate anthropological trait, or an obviousness which imposes itself uniformly on all" (*A Preface to transgression* 6) The cross-caste affair exemplifies Foucault's working of eventalization in both its ethical and political modes, in questioning the institutions of power that depend upon these traditional ideas for their survival. Constance

Chatterley, caught in a sterile and unfulfilling marriage, strives to forge a more humane way of living. Such a mode of life will acknowledge the inevitability of sensuality if we were to lead a free from of existence. Sensuality seems to be the only alternative to emancipate people from the manacles of both industry and cultural nothingness.   Insofar as industrialization is concerned, the novel is all the more condemning. Although it hails a society with virtually no class-boundaries, *LCL* throws a look of nostalgia to the pre-industrial period. Mellors and Constance Chatterley create their own world far away from the rules of upper class society. It seems that by distancing themselves from their societies, they manage to better understand its decadence. This point can be illustrated by the following quotation from Thomas Reed Whissen when he writes:

> Looking about them at what must have seemed a hopeless situation--a social worker's nightmare--the sensitive artists of the times rebelled in the only way they knew how, the only way left--inwardly. They saw no possibility whatsoever of reforming society, and so they set about distancing themselves from it. They fancied themselves "aesthetes," choosing "art for art's sake" as their credo. Since nothing artistic seemed to have any effect whatsoever on a society determined to glorify bad taste, these aesthetes could only conclude that "all art is useless" and take whatever satisfaction they could in producing works that existed only for their own sake. In fact, they soon came to elevate literary criticism to the position of the highest art form, maintaining that if art is a notch above reality, criticism is a notch above art. (xix)

We can argue axiomatically, from what has just been said, that *LCL* helps to settle the debate over the blurring of class boundaries. Lawrence's vision of social reform is one that shakes the class system. The introduction of Mellors in the life of Connie is symbolic as it announces the possibility of a social regeneration which will transform the oppressing industrial society into a more humane one. Lawrence expresses his discontent with the working of modern industrialization on the individuals. What Clifford sees as the unalterable order of things is in fact an artificial disorder which deforms the natural and imposes on its disciplinary power and regulation. The Connie-Mellors affair is a note of hope of social and cultural renewal. The new order will establish a community where the individual enjoys his whole freedom.

The new social order the novel seeks to establish is the antithesis of the modern age that the opening of the novel labels 'tragic.' The tragedy mentioned in the opening paragraph is nothing but- to use Koh's words- "the regimentation and mechanization, epitomized by Chatterley's Colliers." (200.) However, this tragedy is also a diagnosis of the life of the characters in the novel, especially Connie's personal tragedy, which includes her barren life with her crippled husband and the intellectual life he tries to create for both of them. The ruins mentioned in the same opening paragraph are both physically and socially. Physically, they stand for the material damages of WWI, and socially they reflect the destruction of the values and social order which are part of the war legacy.

I have argued in the beginning of this paper that *LCL* is constructive. However, this constructive nature of the novel is not in its transgression of class boundaries, but in the type of union Connie and her lover seek. Put differently, *LCL* aims to maintain the Victorian notion of family and marriage. This is particularly evident when we take into our account the following assumption: Lawrence does not break the class boundaries for the sake of being transgressive; he is keener to show that the same ideal of family can be achieved differently. His cynicism targets the dull and empty life of the upper class and offers an alternative mode of life whereby the same notion of marriage can still be got. The alternative he pushes

forward gives supremacy to the body and sensuality over money and birth. Lawrence is cynical towards the upper class and he ridicules its greatness. He destroys its notion of morality and decency with a tale of explicit profanity. Yet, his cynicism is by no means an advertisement for free sex and immorality. Lawrence defends his novel in his famous essay "A Propos of *Lady Chatterley's Lover,*" by clarifying that 'he was no advocate of sex or profanity for their own sake.' (*LCL*, xii) That Lawrence advocates the same orderly society can be easily demonstrated through the questioning of the purpose of the novel in general. The protagonists are after a conventional marriage, and a conventional sexuality with male dominance. Connie transgresses her class but she remains entrapped in her gender. The same argument about conventionality and male chauvinism can be seen in Mellors' relation to his wife. Mellors is trying to escape a non-gratifying marriage. Within his first marriage, Mellors suffered tremendous abuse from his aggressive wife. The study of sexuality and gender offers new insight into the novel, but it is beyond the scope of this paper.

Both characters seek to find a true sense of the self and to be able to find a way to reconcile the bodily and the spiritual needs. The novel can be subscribed within the tradition of the modernist novel as it shares the same concern over the repercussions of technology the stratification of society at the individual level. The transgression of social classes becomes a necessary step in the journey to self discovery. This point is discussed by Vivas when he notes:

> Rather than mere sexual radicalism, this novel's chief concern--although it is also concerned, to a far greater extent than most modernist fiction, with the pitfalls of technology and the barriers of class--is with what Lawrence understands to be the inability of the modern self to unite the mind and the body. D.H. Lawrence believed that without a realization of sex and the body, the mind wanders aimlessly in the wasteland of modern industrial technology

The transgression of class boundaries in the novel has no anarchist intention. It only calls for a new sphere for self-realization, the essence of which is uncensored sensuality. The freedom of the individual from all types of bonds, namely the social ones, is a requisite for the building up of a new ego. This is one of the ways in which cynicism offers an alternative to what it rejects. The social bankruptcy that the novel depicts is exemplified in the Wragby life and more particularly in the emasculation of Sir Clifford. The coal-mining society in which Constance finds herself is soulless. The alternative that Lawrence provides in the novel is based solely on sensuality. The true obstacle in front of self-realization is the negation of the body and its desires.

To conclude, one might say that the novel is transformative. The reader is led by the narrator to realize the ugliness of the pre-war social system and to embrace a new class consciousness. This is achieved through a binary phase, where the first phase consists of the exposition of a dying social system. This exposition starts with a bleak image of the English society in the wake of WWI and moves on to give an example of such an empty society through the character of Sir. Clifford. The latter epitomizes the pre-war rigidity of the social system. He exhibits a great deal of fervour in matters of industry and class, and succeeds to maintain his position as the master of the pits. The second phase consists in the vicarious love affair between Connie Chatterley and Mellors. This affair is presented as the alternative to what the narrator rejects and pushes the reader to discard. Therefore, the transgression of class boundaries in the novel is not done for the sake of transgressing them. Lawrence is keen to show that this transgression can be culturally and socially productive.

References

Books
1. Bullock, Allan. "The Double Image." *Modernism: A Guide to European Literature 1890-1930.* Ed. Malcolm Bradbury, London: Penguin Books, 1991. Print.
2. Foucault, Michel. *A preface to transgression in language, counter memory. Practice. Selected essays & interviews, ed*. Trans. Bouchand and Sherry Simon. Ithaca: Cornell University press, 1977. Print.
3. *---Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison*. Trans. by Alan Sheridan. NY: Vintages books, 1978. Print.
4. Howe, Carolyn. *Political Ideology and Class Formation: A Study of the Middle Class.* Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1992. Print.
5. Lawrence, David Herbert. *Lady Chatterley's Lover.* New York: Bantman Dell, 2007. Print.
6. *---Late Essays and Articles.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. Print.
7. ---. *The Selected Letters of D. H. Lawrence*. Ed. James T Boulton. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997. Print.
8. Sloterdijk, Peter. *Critique of cynical reason*. Trans. Michael Eldred. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987. Print.
9. Vivas, Eliseo. *D.H Lawrence: The Failure and Triumph of Art.* Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1960. Print.
10. Whissen, Thomas Reed. *Classic cult fiction: a companion to popular cult literature.* New York: Greenwood Press, 1992. Print.

Articles
1. Gerald, Doherty. "The Art of Appropriation: The Rhetoric of Sexuality in D. H. Lawrence." *Style* 8.2 (1996): 1-36. JSTOR Digital Library. Web. 26 June 2007.
2. Koh, Jae Kyung. "D.H Lawrence's World Vision of Cultural Regeneration." *Midwest Quarterly.* 43.2 (2002): 189-207. EBESCOhost: Academic Search Premier. Web. 6 August 2010.

The Problem of the Questions "Who am I " and "What am I " in Arendt's *Human Condition* and Patočka's *Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History*

Alžbeta Hájková
Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium

Abstract

This article explores Arendt's and Patočka's accounts of the questions "who am I" and "what am I." For Arendt, we need to abandon the given meaning of life and pursue excellence through means of action and speech in order to find our "who am I." When it comes to "what am I," Arendt is convinced that this is a question one should not ask, since it can lead to dangerous attempts to master the human nature. I argue that not all attempts to understand human nature are dangerous, as some of them aim not at mastering the human nature from within, but creating the political framework that would fit human nature the best. Furthermore, while the totalitarian regimes, through their violent attempts to master the "what am I," i.e. the human nature, obscured the way to our "who" both Arendt and Patočka suggest that in the modern age, we have abandoned this question – who am I – voluntarily. While Arendt does not offer an explicit way out of the state in which there is no true space for action and speech, Patočka thinks that the way out of such nihilisim lies in readoption of the Socratic way of life, which can come about only if one faces the senselessness in its strongest form - the senselessness of war.

Key words: Arendt, Patočka, human nature, "who am I," action, nihilism

If people today were to ask themselves the question "who am I," they would often reply with the statement "I am who I am" – the expression of a groundless self-love and unjustified pride, obtained from motivational literature. For Hannah Arendt and Jan Patočka, such an answer is simply grounds for another confirmation of their premise that men of the 'modern world' (to use Arendt's term) gave up on asking themselves who they really are, and consequently lost the chance to find the authentic meaning to their lives. It is not the first time in history that man turned "who am I" into "what am I." Still, it appears that only in the modern world people voluntarily undertook their transformation into objects. In this paper I will seek to illustrate that despite the fact attempts to answer the question "what am I" are, as Arendt suggests, dangerous, the biggest threat lies in one's voluntary resignation from the question "who am I," which is, unlike the former, answerable. However, in order to uncover the means to answer this question – "who am I" – we must first acknowledge the importance of its connotations and not dismiss it with the trivial "I am who I am."

At the very beginning of her work *The Human Condition*, Arendt builds on st. Augustine, and paraphrases his important distinction between the aforementioned questions that man can ask himself – "what am I" and "who am I." Throughout the book, she describes the conditions under which we ask ourselves "whom am I." Even though a simple answer to this question might be to say "a man," man is always a conditioned being, and "everything [he] come[s] in contact with turns immediately into a condition of [his] existence."[20] Man is therefore a man always within certain conditions which form his life and pertain to the question of who he is. Reality is shaped by men, and that same reality shapes men. The world is a conditioning force that changes and develops throughout the course of its history, at least the man-made aspects of it. And even if we might be close to it (and in Arendt's view we in fact desire this), men have not yet found the way to completely alter the very condition into which they are born, a condition which is of the earth itself.[21] In no way does Arendt believe that the conditions of human existence can answer the question "who am I" fully. They can never explain it in the scientific sense of the word, because we are never conditioned absolutely.[22]

However, there seems to be one condition of human life which captures our "who am I" the most fully: The sphere of human action. It is through action and speech that one leaves the realm of necessity (which is conditioned by manual labor directed at one's life-preservation), and steps out of the quiet life to face his equals– "equals" in the sense that they too left the isolation of the private realm in order to ask the question "who am I," facing one another.[23] It was with this question, according to Patočka, that history began, for it signified the ultimate rejection of the meaning of life as simply given. For both Patočka and Arendt, this took place at the formation of the Greek *polis*. In *polis*, the individuals confronted one another through means of action and speech under the condition of plurality. Through this action and speech, man truly revealed who he was, distinguished himself from the others, and achieved the excellence that made his own "who am I" extend beyond his own individual existence, and turned it into something immortal. *Polis* embodied the conditions under which one asked himself "who am I," for it bore the

---

20 Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 9.

21 Ibid., 9 – 10.

22 Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 11.

23 Ibid., 32 – 33.

consequence of losing the seemingly firm ground on which he previously stood. Through this risky questioning, man nourished his soul, and as a result, touched upon a new meaning of life lying in the constant search for the truth.[24]

The unpredictability of human action prevents us from foretelling the answer to the question "who am I" with a scientific precision. Nonetheless, according to Arendt, the answer to this question is much closer to our reach than the other question a man might ask himself – "what am I"– which suggests an inquiry into human nature. Arendt tells us that "the sum total of human activities and capabilities which corresponds to the human condition does not constitute anything like human nature." Not only does she not try to make claims about 'human nature' as such, she is also convinced that this is a question one should not ask, for it requires "jumping over our own shadows," i.e. putting ourselves into a position of superhumans. For if there is such a thing as human nature at all, surely it is only our creator who knows of this essence.[25] Arendt concludes the question "what am I" unanswerable, since it requires "speaking about 'who' as though it were a 'what'" – once we pose this question, we inevitably put ourselves into the position of someone who looks at other human beings from above.[26] The danger of making claims about human nature lies precisely in the fact that one takes on the role of a creator. The fact that we will never know whether there is a human nature, or what is it composed of, means that any attempts to be creative here, any effort to impress the claims about human nature onto the human condition, can do more harm than good.

While Arendt deems the "what am I" question as unphilosophical, many of her predecessors thought otherwise. A look at some of the most famous accounts of human nature seems to reveal that any claims on the knowledge of human nature become truly dangerous not when someone merely tries to grasp its essence and then seeks to create a political system – an environment external to this nature – that should presumably fit this nature the best. The real danger arises when someone thinks he knows what human nature is and for this reason, attempts to *change* it, to strip people of this nature, to be creative in a sense that one masters not only that which surrounds the man, but he wants to change that which in his view *is* the man, because only the way which is external to man– i.e. the society in which he lives– improves.

In the Hobbesian state of nature, men are of such a nature that they find themselves continually in a perpetual state of war of every man versus every man. However, what we witness in *Leviathan* is not an attempt to change the dark side of human nature within the commonwealth – the goal is to *tame* it. The aim is to create a political society where those who fight *for glory* will be rewarded by the sovereign so that their pride is satiated and they are kept in control, and where those who fight *out of fear* are given the feeling of security, and the competitiveness of those whose quarrels arose *from contest* is regulated by the law.[27]

---

24 Jan Patočka, *Kacířské Eseje o Filosofii Dějin* (Prague: Oikoymenh, 2007), 37 – 38.
25 Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 9 – 10.
26 Ibid., 10.
27 Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (London: Routledge, 1894). 63 – 67, 146.

In Locke's view, opposed to the Hobbesian state of nature, people are perfectly capable to cooperate and to live side-by-side peacefully in the state of nature, for they are naturally bound to take care, not only of their preservation, but also to bear in mind the well being of others. It is the "inconvenience" of the state of nature, i.e. the absence of a superior judge in the cases of transgression of the natural law, which results in the creation of the commonwealth. Again, we see that for Locke the inclination for a peaceful life is rooted in human nature, and this belief is reflected on the shape he gives to his commonwealth, where the sphere of civil society and morality remains separate from the magistrate.[28] Thus Locke and Hobbes might be wrong in their claims about human nature, and as a result, the political systems they have created might not suit people the way they imagined. Nevertheless, neither Hobbes nor Locke aspired to change that which was, according to them, *in* the human nature. They sought the answer to the question "what am I" in order to create a political system in which the "who am I" could best flourish.

Unlike Hobbes and Locke, Rousseau is aware of the danger that the attempts to explore human nature bring, and to some extent he shares Arendt's concern expressed over the question "what am I." In his preface to *Discourse on the Origin and the Foundation of Inequality Among Men*, Rousseau makes it clear that it is beyond the capacities of even the greatest minds to fully "disentangle what is original from what is artificial in the real nature of man and to understand well a condition which no longer exists, which perhaps did not exist, which probably never will exist."[29] Not only is Rousseau, exactly like Arendt, aware that there might not be any original nature, he also implies that the only proper way to try to identify it is through rational inquiry and meditation, for even the "most powerful sovereigns" and "the greatest philosophers" are not capable to perform "the experiments in the bosom of society" which would shed light on human nature.[30] When it comes down to a search for human nature, Rousseau implies that there are not *any* experiments that can be considered proper albeit the ones taking place in our mind, an opinion not only of Rousseau, but of Hobbes and Locke as well. For to set up an exploration of human nature in the midst of society means to, in Arendt's words, treat the "who" as a "what." It requires violation of one of the two basic principles of humanity that Rousseau formulated, as it leads to human suffering, the suffering which comes into play as soon as someone claims not only to *know* human nature, but also aims at *mastering* and *changing* it from the inside.

Totalitarian regimes of the 20th century embodied such an aspiration. Totalitarianism became truly creative, for it is not satisfied with the description of the "what am I" alone, but has the greater desire to master human to the extent that there is no longer any place for the "who am I" question. Under totalitarian rule, there is no longer space left for the unpredictability of human action, unlike in Hobbes or Locke. For them, the political society did not aspire to *erase* the imperfections of the human nature. Rather, it merely set conditions so that human flaws might be restrained, and justly punished. The situation is different with totalitarianism – it works through a constant and continual movement, which aims at replacing our supposedly flawed nature with the

---

28 John Locke, *The Second Treatise*, ed. *by* P. Laslett. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012) §4 – 7, §17 – 20.

29 Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin and the Foundation of Inequality Among Men*, trans. Ian Johnston (The University of Adelaide, e-book), preface, http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/r/rousseau/jean_jacques/inequality/ .

30 Ibid., preface.

new, perfect one, contorting to the ideals of the particular ideology.[31] The final stage of totalitarianism is where human imperfections need no punishment, because no imperfections exist in the first place.

"Who am I" is, according to Arendt, a question to which an answer differs from one individual to another. By trying to make human nature perfectly mastered, uniform, and predictable, totalitarianism obstructs any path to the way wherein one might find his "who am I." In *The Origins of Totalitarianism,* Arendt gives an account of what happens to the "who," to the individual under the totalitarian rule. Yet in the context of this paper the more crucial question is the origin of the desire to eliminate the spontaneity and unpredictability of action. This is a matter on which Arendt sheds light in *The Human Condition*. She is convinced that just as the *polis* was a place for action and speech, Plato's *Republic* was supposed to create a political society where neither of these two get any role. Plato was first to realize the "destructive force" of a "deeper principle" penetrating the Greek society – the principle of a new, unpredictable *beginning* that each action represents.[32] It is for this reason that Plato tried to extend the rules of the household onto the public realm. In *oikos,* the action becomes a fabrication or a mere labor and is therefore governable and controllable, and speech is used only instrumentally and turns into "idle talk."[33] Human affairs become mastered and the master-slave relationship typical for the private sphere is applied to the entire society. "The element of beginning disappears" and "with it the most elementary and authentic understanding of human freedom."[34] Plato, according to Hegel, saw no other way to deal with the "free infinite personality" hiding behind the Socratic question "who am I," than to try to repress it, for it was precisely the infinity and the unpredictability of human potential that he deemed dangerous.[35] In a similar fashion, totalitarianism interpreted "action in terms of making," and attempted to eliminate it through propaganda and force.[36]

Following both Arendt's *Human Condition* and Patočka's *Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History*, it appears that the true misfortune of our modern age is that there is not any external violent force that would prevent us from returning to the pursuit of the question "who am I." Yet, we gave up pursuing it. Thanks to this voluntary resignation from the quest for the non-evident truth to our life, we live in conditions that are even worse than those produced by totalitarianism. Under totalitarian rule, the public realm of a true plurality did not exist; in mass culture, people, who abandoned the movement of action, became *homos faber* who quietly work on their well being and the accumulation of wealth. Such isolation brought the political to cessation. Behavior is substituted for action, because behavior implies a recurring pattern, an end – an end that the spontaneous action can never foretell.[37] Moreover, bureaucracy is substituted for behavior, which gives us the seeming "mastery over circumstances" of formerly spontaneous

---

31 Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: The World Publishing Company, 1958), 463.

32 G. W. F. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, trans. H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 20.

33 Hannah Arendt, *The Human* Condition, 208.

34 Ibid, 225.

35 G. W. F. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, 20.

36 Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 196.

37 Ibid, 233.

human interactions.[38] "[The] modern age's conviction that man can know only what he makes" inevitably reduces man to a "what."[39] However, unlike in totalitarianism, this "what" is no longer confronted as imperfect, and there is no striving for excellence whatsoever. "Individual life again became mortal," and men succumbed to nihilism.[40]

For Patočka, the features of human life in the modern world that Arendt describes are the external signs of a deeply rooted nihilism; by "imposing an order on the portion of the world within our reach," we only confirm Nietzsche's premise that the general meaning is absent.[41] The care of one's soul which created history (and which simultaneously marked the birth of Europe) is gone, and we live in what appears to be a pseudo-prehistorical period. Man, trapped in the cyclical movement of production and deprived of any meaning, returns to the prehistorical ways of pleasure. In hope of escaping the burden of dailiness, he succumbs to the demonic and the orgiastic. However, the freedom that the demonic offers is only ostensible; it is not moving forward, towards the discovery of a new meaning. The demonic is shifting from reality and back, only to make the burden of it even heavier upon returning.[42] The life reduced to labor, with the occasional escapes to the easy sensual pleasures of the demonic, takes people back to the animalistic existence, it turns them into "herd men," who do nothing but blink upon hearing the question "who am I."[43] Indeed, the state of post-totalitarian Europe is even worse than during the times of oppression and war. Nowadays, there is no force which would, through attempts to master human nature, destroy the path to discovery of our "who." In the mass culture, resignation from the search for a meaning of life and abandonment of the aspiration to excellence are voluntary. People are not only incapable to restore the path to these things – they are also unwilling to do so.

In light of this, when we return to our initial distinction between the questions "who am I" and "what am I" established by st. Augustine and paraphrased by Arendt, we can see that attempts to answer the latter are as dangerous as giving up on the former. However, following Arendt' words, we must not forget that unlike the question of human nature, we are not left without the means to answer "who" we are. For Arendt, this means action and speech, which constitute the political. For Patočka, this means a movement of truth represented by the philosopher who rejects the naive and absolute meaning of life, and through this rejection arrives at a meaning which lies in *seeking* the very meaning. Both of these principles merge in the figure of Socrates, who pursued the latter by employing the former. However, unlike in the Greek *polis*, in mass society, contemplation is distrusted and action reduced to mere production.[44] The question, therefore, is not a matter of *what* the means are, but how they can be reapplied in a society which garners hostility towards them.

---

38 Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, trans. M. Clark and A. J. Swensen (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1998), 37.
39 Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 228.
40 Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 320; Jan Patočka, *Kacířské Eseje o Filosofii Dějin*, 66.
41 Jan Patočka, *Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History*, trans. E. Kohák (Chicago: Open Court Publishing Company, 1996), 72.
42 Jan Patočka, *Kacířské Eseje o Filosofii Dějin*, 66 – 67, 87 – 89.
43 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra,* trans. A. del Caro (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 10.
44 Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 290.

When we look at Patočka's account of nihilism, we see that man cannot suffer the trap of dailiness without *any* illusory meaning (which is in this case the demonic) that brings him relief . Furthermore, Arendt tells us that modern man *identifies* production with action. This means that behind his cyclical movement of work, there might be a subtle yet present desire for "permanence and immortality," but he no longer realizes that "the beautiful and eternal cannot be made."[45] Even though *The Human Condition* ends with the "victory of the *animal laborans*," Arendt somewhat hesitantly acknowledges that the capacity to act is still within us.[46] Similarly, Patočka is convinced that philosophy, i.e. the means to answer the "who am I" question, can exist "regardless of the structure of society," which means that it can reemerge even in the modern age of nihilism.[47] But how can such a rediscovery of philosophy be brought about? In Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitariansm*, that which even totalitarian ideology could not control– and which consequently carried the hope for change– was "each new birth." Every new delivery is a start of "the world anew," each individual birth embodies precisely that infinite potential which is feared by totalitarianism.[48] However, in the modern world, the new birth alone does not seem to suffice to overcome the ever-present nihilism. What we need is a *rebirth.* Patočka suggests that such a rebirth occurs when someone faces the senselessness in its strongest form, the sort of senselessness that does not offer *any* temporary remedies. The senselessness that man experiences in war embodies such a rebirth-inspiring experience, because the immediate contact with war uncovers not only how the war itself lacks any meaning whatsoever, but also how the life one led before the war lacked it. War changes the man. The experience of sheer senselessness allows him to adopt to the way of life in which one is "prepared to give up the hope of a directly given meaning and to accept meaning as a way."[49]

This is the way of life of the Socratic *daimon*, of the question "who am I" – the question that stood not only at the beginning of history, but also at the nascence of philosophy and politics, which emerged interdependently. Perhaps there is hope that this interdependence is preserved, and with the reestablishment of the Socratic question, the true public realm of Arendt's action and speech will rise from the oblivion as well.

We have seen where the question "who am I" stood at the beginning of history, and where it stands in the present. Although attempts to master human nature (i.e., the "what am I") clearly obstructed the way to answer thie question "who am I", what made us indifferent towards the question completely is the repression coming from within us. While Arendt describes the consequences of this with a striking precision, she does not aspire to give us a solution. Patočka, on the other hand, sees a way out of this miserable state. Still, in his view, the true escape from the misery of senselessness comes through the rebirth experienced under the misery which is ever greater – war. Most of those who survived the great wars of the 20th century, and hence could have the experience Patočka described, are either gone, or on the edge of their lives. Nihilism

---

45 Ibid., 303, 322.

46 Ibid., 320.

47 Jan Patočka, *Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History*, 103.

48 Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 465 – 466.

49 Jan Patočka, *Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History*, 77.

remains. Thus, the final question for everyone who deems Patočka's way out of nihilism to be true ought to ask – in spite of the fear it might inspire or that radical shaking which we need in order to rediscover the Socratic question and restart history – is yet to come.

References

-Arendt, Hannah. *The Human Condition.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998.

-Arendt, Hannah. *The Origins of Totalitarianism.* New York: The World Publishing Company, 1958.

-Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich. *Elements of the Philosophy of Right.* Translated by H. B. Nisbet. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

-Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan.* London: Routledge, 1894.

-Locke, John. *The Second Treatise. Edited by* Peter Laslett. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

-Nietzsche, Friedrich. *On the Genealogy of Morality.* Translated by M. Clark and A. J. Swensen. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1998.

-Nietzsche, Friedrich.*Thus Spoke Zarathustra.* Translated by A. del Caro. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

-Patočka, Jan. *Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History.* Translated by Erazim Kohák. Chicago: Open Court Publishing Company, 1996.

-Patočka, Jan. *Kacířské Eseje o Filosofii Dějin.* Prague: Oikoymenh, 2007.

-Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *Discourse on the Origin and the Foundation of Inequality Among Men.* Translated by Ian Johnston. The University of Adelaide. http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/r/rousseau/jean_jacques/inequality/

The Nineteenth-Century American and British Female Public Performer: A Cultural Study

Nodhar Hammami
University of Kairouan, Tunisia

Abstract

The article studies the division of gender roles in nineteenth-century British and American societies. It deals first with man's possession of public spaces and imprisoning of woman in the private sphere, then focuses on woman's resistance to this policy while invading man's public zone in search for freedom and independence. The emphasis is put on woman's religious, political and theatrical performance in the nineteenth century as features of self-expression and a translation of her desire to conquer the public world and unbind herself from the domestic sphere in which she has been confined.

Key words: nineteenth century – private – public – performance – identity - freedom

Until the first half of the nineteenth-century, American and British women had been confined into the private sphere and deprived from their natural right to move freely in the universe. Society drew frontiers for each sex and strove to preserve the ruling position for man. Empowered by his biology, man claimed that the public sphere is his realm and that woman's place should not exceed the domestic fences. However, the second half of the nineteenth century recorded woman's revolutionary step outside the familial world and revealed woman's conspiracy against her self-assigned ruler. By invading the public world, woman started her quest for identity in order to regain her natural freedom and recapture her human dignity.

Starting from Lévi-Strauss's account of the origin of the myth of difference between sexes which transforms a state of 'nature' into a state of 'culture', and going through Kate Millett's distinction between sex, which is determined biologically, and gender, as a social concept, which refers to culturally acquired sexual identity, we can trace back the patriarchal ideology which was supported by biological determinism and which regarded female social dependency and spatial confinement as 'natural'. According to Millett, the system's successful pattern of oppression was due to passing itself off as nature. Woman's biology dictates her inferiority within the male empire and places her as an inferior male. These assumptions are clearly advocated by Aristotle's belief that 'the female is female by virtue of a certain lack of qualities' and reinforced by the definition of woman by St. Thomas Aquinas, the thirteenth-century Christian theologian, as an 'imperfect man' (Selden 134).

Woman was reduced to a physical container created for the unique purpose of bearing children. Middle-class Victorians received the wisdom of considering woman as '"dependent, passive, the Angel in the House," separated from public life and confined to home, marriage and morality' (Pugh 1). Barbara Welter extracts four 'cardinal virtues' in the True Woman and classifies them as piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity. Man was considered as the worker, artist and writer par excellence whereas woman used to be the ruler of the domestic and maternal world. The Victorian sexual myth, built around the French Napoleonic Code of 1804, promoted woman's appropriateness for the domestic sphere and advocated her alienation from the public world as if life had been breathed in her to make her subordinate to her male superior. In *The Subjection of Women*, John Stuart Mill considers that 'All the moralities tell them that it is the duty of women . . . that it is their nature, to live for others, to make complete abnegation of themselves, and to have no life but in their affections' (27). Woman's idealization as a superior moral virtue in the domestic sphere metamorphosed her into a grotesque creature in the masculine public world; her virtuous superiority imposed her public inferiority.

Patriarchy exerted a double physical control over woman's body where females were not only sexually exploited, but also 'exploited because the role of the housewife is one that all married women are expected to assume' (Neal Ferguson 352). It was a conspiracy which aimed at marginalizing the feminine and creating what Betty Friedan describes as 'the feminine mystique'[1] that welded the two exploitative modes together. In *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*, Margaret Fuller reserves much space to speak about woman's entrapment in the confines of marriage in a continuous pattern of exploitation when the father 'sells his daughter for a horse, and beats her if she runs away from her new home' because of the belief that 'she must

marry, if it be only to find a protector, and a home of her own' (43). Seen as 'slavery, sex and sexuality' (Dickenson xxix), marriage seems to provide the female subject with a sense of collective gendered identity in societal conditions which advanced man's manipulation of women. Rajeswari Sunder Rajan, in an extreme position, equates marriage as a patriarchal institution with rape, saying that 'Rape as an act of sexual violence may be viewed either as the paradigm of all heterosexual relations or as the manifestation of aggressiveness, the index of social lawlessness' (77). She defines marriage as a 'prolonged sexual domination by the male' and compares it to rape which is 'a momentary violent aberration . . . entailing the man's responsibility for the woman' (67). Rajan politicizes marriage to make it a means used by man to colonize woman's body and mind. The nineteenth-century religious and political activist, Ellice Hopkins, defends a healthy marital relationship and stresses the absolute proximity of the physical and the spiritual within marriage. Hopkins condemns sexual non-reciprocity within marriage for its perpetuation of male physical abuse of women and violation of the sacramental status of the marital bond. In a study of Hopkins's writings, Sue Morgan shows one of the strongest feminist currents in her work bearing 'her portrayal of a sexual system where men are constantly depicted as the sexual aggressors and perpetrators of the moral destitution of women' (213). Under the absence of emotional and spiritual communication in matrimonial ties, the man becomes a rapist and the woman a victim, using the same colonial strategies followed by the world's most powerful political regimes.

Like gender, which is seen by feminists as a cultural concept pasted over male and female biological identity, marriage as a relationship between husband and wife is considered as a patriarchal institution which clearly maintains sexual discrimination and metaphorically stands for man's imperialistic spirit. Caught into these social institutional cages, women were viewed as desired objects of pleasure rather than desiring subjects. The objectification of women translated man's desire to have a self-effaced and sexless wife. Woman had to conform to the nineteenth-century ideal of the domestic paragon and be a mere non-responsive and inactive sexual partner. Thus her moral perfection resulted in her asexuality. Elizabeth Allen draws on the idea that 'womanliness came to mean sexlessness and in the 1840s and later fiction relied on this conviction whenever it presented an ideal woman' (31). Nineteenth-century woman should follow the type of the Virgin Mary, 'the sexless maternal figure' (Rajan 69), in order to enter the realm of perfection under the rule of a patriarchal Father who kept incessantly molding a whole ideology of allegorical colonization.

In order to escape sexual and domestic oppression, women preferred singlehood over heterosexual engagements and sought economic independence outside their usual sphere. Both reactions were often interrelated because of the nineteenth-century rapid economic growth where industrial capitalism weakened the patriarchal power of fathers and increased the life choices for women. Inspired by man's very imperialistic strategies, woman made a progressive move to the outside world. In *The Bonds of Womanhood,* Nancy F. Cott shows how girls escaped the confines of patriarchal farm communities for independent life in cities in which they shared boarding house rooms with other girls and thus established intimate female friendships, not to say at times lesbian commitments. The search for economic independence opened the opportunities for women to forsake the male hegemony to a realm of their own. Cott declares that 'Social and economic change included alteration of family structure, functions, and values, which affected

women's roles in manifold ways' and describes the 1830s as 'a turning point in women's economic participation, public activation and social visibility' (5-6).

Homo-sociality, devoted same-sex friendships and similar rejection of heterosexual marriage, are potentially subversive choices for women. Nineteenth-century single devotional life reflected the fashionable cult of religiosity which was used by women as a vehicle for self-empowerment. Christina Rosetti[2]'s *Maude* echoes the reinstitution of religious sisterhoods in the Church of England in the nineteenth century. As a work of prose and verse which is concerned with the spiritual life of High Church women, it presents the feminist theology which seeks to reclaim a feminine voice in relationship to the Divine. The bachelorhood of sisters reinforces the idea of 'undercutting the authority of a father, brother or husband in favour of the authority of a feminine equal, a "sister"' (Roden 64). The choice of enclosure through a religious vocation shows that woman's genital inaccessibility to men was political; it was an escape from heterosexual relations and consequently a defiance of man's strategic rule of woman. The nineteenth-century sisterhoods 'reversed traditional emphases of monasticism. The goal was not *contemplatio*, but action, activity, and involvement in and with the world' (Roden 65). George Moore's character Evelyn Innes, in his novel *Evelyn Innes* (1898), goes to a convent in an effort to renounce her lover and abandon her vocal successful career. Religion and nunnery became a refuge and a means to fight man's interference in woman's life; it was one way to get liberated.

The search for freedom was the main factor which stimulated woman's behavior in America and Europe. The conditions of the American woman was not unlike those of the European or English woman, especially that transatlantic voyages and immigration from Europe to the 'Dollar land' by the end of the American Civil War in 1865 made women live the same situation in the two worlds. Seeking liberation, political participation and economic independence, American as well as English women deserted the domestic fences of their mothers and invaded man's public sphere in search of their true identity which had long been commanded by the policy of patriarchal societies. Politically speaking, 'women, largely absent from all institutional sites of the public – from polling places, city councils, public offices, the newspaper rooms, and political clubs were an extreme case of the social exclusions of early American republicanism' (Ryan 265-66). As a reaction to the negative relationship between women and the ruling political circles, feminist figures insisted on attaining public visibility and political contribution. After succeeding in launching a series of reform movements in the nineteenth century including political reform and the suffrage movements[3], social reform (like the 1857 Matrimonial Causes Act),[4] health reform (like the 1886 Contagious Act),[5] moral reform (including the victimization of prostitutes, joining Christian benevolent associations, leading anti-slavery movements…), economic reform (like the first industrial strikes led by women in the United States that occurred in 1835), active feminists proved woman's political and social maturation. Woman's development conditioned the overthrow of the patriarchal parameters of True Womanhood. By 1835, there was only a limited number of paid occupations open to women in housework, handicrafts and industry, and school-teaching (Cott 6). Woman's growing literacy by the 1830s opened the way for them to be journalists and fiction writers (Cott 7).

Women's non-domestic pursuits were not limited to primary school teaching and magazines publications, but extended to public confrontations like religious preaching or political

addresses or stage acting. On the religious level, and particularly during the Second Great Awakening (1790- 1840), more than one hundred women crisscrossed the country as itinerant preachers who belonged to the evangelical religious group, holding meetings in barns, schools, or fields; they were the first group of women to speak publicly in America (Brekus 20). After the crisis of faith caused by the rise of empiricism, positivism and Darwinism, religious movements in England like Tractarianism[6] called for the reinstatement of lost Christian traditions of faith. Female preachers participated in the attempts of theological reconstruction, aware that 'preaching was fundamental to its devotional practice because it was through preaching that the individual soul was reached and converted' (Gilmour 73). The evangelical contribution to nineteenth-century culture was not only intellectual but also moral through the organization of public campaigns against slavery or child labor. Evangelicalism's nursery of Victorian values was a point of intersection between religion and politics, the two areas in which women actively participated and concretized their reformist spirit through oral performances. In the political domain where women were asking for equal rights, including vote, many rhetoricians got up public podiums to sensitize and mobilize women. Among them, we may list Maria W. Stewart (1803-1879), Kate Chopin (1850-1904), Sarah Grimke (1792-1873), Margaret Fuller (1810-1850), Sojourner Truth (1797-1883), Frances Harper (1825-1911), Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906), Sarah Winnemucca, Anna Julia Cooper (1858-1964), Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1902), Fannie Barrier Williams (1855-1944), Ida B. Wells (1862-1931) and Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860-1935) ("List of Female Rhetoricians" 1).

Nineteenth-century women took part in a great variety of reform movements to improve education, to initiate prison reform, to ban alcoholic drinks, and, during the pre-Civil War period, to free the slaves when it was not considered respectable for women to speak before mixed audiences of men and women. The abolitionist sisters Sarah and Angelina Grimke of South Carolina who boldly spoke out against slavery at public meetings, received at least approval from some male abolitionists including William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, and Frederick Douglass who supported the right of women to speak and participate equally with men in antislavery activities ("Woman's History in America" 3). Some women like Stanton, Lucy Stone, Lucretia Mott, Harriet Tubman, and Sojourner Truth drew similarities between the position of women and that of the slaves where both categories were considered as passive, devoted, and obedient ("Woman's History in America" 4). Women's political addresses like those of the American Mary Elizabeth Lease, a leading Populist spokeswoman in the 1880s and 1890s in Kansas who cried out for labor reforms and birth control the way Margaret Robins would do when she would lead the National Women's Trade Union League in the early 1900s, were at a time unconventional, unusual and transgressive ("Woman's History in America" 4). Participation in the Abolition movement taught and activated women to initiate a feminist movement to ask for their rights in society: in *Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights in the United States,* Eleanor Flexner and Ellen Fitzpatrick declare that:

> It was in the abolition movement that women first learned to organize, to hold public meetings, to conduct petition campaigns. As abolitionists they first won the right to speak in public and began to evolve a philosophy of their place in society and of their basic rights. For a quarter of a century the two movements, to free the slave and to liberate women, nourished and strengthened one another. (80)

Fuller shows respect for the woman who challenged sterile conditions of domesticity and True Womanhood for the sake of her emancipation: 'As to her home, she is not likely to leave it more than she now does for balls, theatres, meetings for promoting missions . . . in hope of an animation for her existence' (19). In the political field, Fuller cites many examples of feminist activists like the rigorous Angelina Grimke and Abby Kelly, those abolitionists who, though they received some approval, encountered hostility from some of their male peers:

> Women who speak in public, if they have a moral power, such as has been felt from Angelina Grimke and Abby Kelly; that is, if they speak for conscience's sake to serve a cause which they hold sacred, invariably subdue the prejudices of their hearers, and excite an interest proportionate to the aversion with which it had been the purpose to regard them. (72)

Fuller quotes a snatch of Kelly's polemic in the Town-House to show her moral power and linguistic skill, a skill which is a reminder of Verena Tarrant's while delivering feminist speeches in political meetings:

> [T]he scene was not unheroic – to see that woman, true to humanity and her own nature, a centre of rude eyes and tongues, even gentlemen feeling licensed to make part of a species of mob around a female out of her sphere. . . She acted like a gentle hero, with her mild decision and womanly calmness. (72)

Woman's voice reached the public not only through oral addresses and sermons but also through written material. Female novelists conveyed their feminist and reformist messages through setting, characterization and style. Their call for independence and struggle for freedom were mediated by their public texts which could fulfill the mission of public addresses because of their required publicity. In *Private Woman, Public Stage: Literary Domesticity in Nineteenth-Century America*, Mary Kelly examines the American history of women and analyzes the conflict between woman's compulsory domesticity or 'privacy' and her needed 'publicity' as a novelist where she strove to reconcile public recognition with private domesticity. If Kelly presents the conditions of the woman novelist as a public figure in the nineteenth century, Tracy Davis surveys the milieu of the Victorian woman and studies woman's public professions as actresses in her book *Actresses as Working Women: Their Social Identity in Victorian Culture*.

Written productions and direct oral addresses were woman's mediums to imperialize man's public zones. Invading the theatrical space by woman was symbolic enough to show that the stage is not exclusively a male area but rather open to the two sexes to display their artistic faculties. Tracy Davis provides data about women's rising involvement in theatrical activities, sustained by figures dating back to nineteenth-century statistics and manuscript censuses. She explains the historical conditions that hastened woman's access to the public sphere by focusing on the demographic female surplus that left women without marriage and urged their search for livelihoods in trade. Demographic data mixed with the change of the dramatic repertoire permitted the stage to absorb female recruits in growing numbers. Since the way was paved by religious preachers and political orators, women did not find it odd to make public confrontation with stage audiences. Performance, including non-dramatic activities, was a new employment field for women; Davis states:

> [T]he broadest spectrum of performing specialties that comes under the rubric of 'actor' as the term was colloquially understood in the nineteenth century: including, in other words, specialties that range from tragedienne to danseuse, marionette manipulator to serio Vocalist, Negro comedian to patentee, and equestrian artiste to heavy villain. (40)

The stage ceased to be forbidden to women and controlled uniquely by males; it became a dwelling place for men and women whose genius required publicity. In her article 'The Voice of Freedom: Images of the Prima Donna', Susan Rutherford reads the figure of the nineteenth-century 'prima donna' as an embodiment of woman's longing for release from patriarchal manacles. She describes her voice as a voice of freedom, symbol of liberation and a positive expression of female independence, individuality and artistry. Helen Day's essay entitled 'Female Daredevils' stresses the dexterity in the nineteenth-century female public performances as daredevils, parachutists and balloonists.

Woman's appearance on the stage and her public meeting with a male audience signaled her reactionary departure from male monarchy in which she used to be excluded from any intellectual, artistic or public activity. Her former invisibility was replaced by an increasing involvement in the world of art. In 1841, there were about three actors to each actress, two to one in 1851 and by 1891 actresses were in the majority (Gardner 8). Formerly, men's enactment of women's roles was a theatrical habit which had been perpetuated till the seventeenth century (Van Den Abeele 7). Women were forbidden from public appearance and seen as incompetent for theatrical performance, a fact which contributed to the subjugation of women. 'Classical plays and theatrical conventions,' maintains Sue-Ellen Case, 'can now be regarded as allies in the project of suppressing real women and replacing them with masks of patriarchal production' (7). By the nineteenth century, the theatrical tradition of playing woman by male actors in drag was not only quitted but sometimes reversed where the audience was surprised by considerable number of 'female Hamlets' on the stage, for instance. In 1851, Charlotte Cushman played Hamlet, and in 1861 in England Alice Marriott also did. These actresses, who dressed in male costumes and who fought heroically, succeeded in adopting masculinity and performed their roles adequately. Jill Edmonds in 'Princess Hamlet' declares that 'No female role in Shakespeare could provide such opportunity for physical action' (70).

Acting male roles while using male attire emphasized a masculinized sexuality which could be headed under what Kristen Pullen called 'dress reform' that involved 'the spectre of the masculine woman' who adopted male clothes to threaten the power of the phallus (120). Replacing man on the stage announced woman's desire for a male-free world, a world of her own where she would be the ruler. Cross-dressed or transvestite females challenged the hierarchical and stylized male world whose 'obsessive use of sex-connected costumes' is 'a pattern based upon gender distinctions' (Gilbert, 161). The rebellious spirit of the nineteenth-century liberal woman initiated the radicalism that has affected modern feminist thought, in one way to declare that 'no one, male or female, can or should be confined to a uni-form, a single form or self' while seeking to 'outline the enduring, gender-connected myths behind history' (Gilbert, "Costumes" 162). Nineteenth-century actresses' transvestism contributed to the creation of an age free of gender-based principles through the metaphorical use of male costumes in public.

Actresses exhibited their performing power with liberty and their physical mobility was granted. In her article about the French performer Yvette Guilbert, Geraldine Harris describes her as an example of the liberal woman who freely moved between France and London to perform her chansons. Although written in Parisian slang which was not comprehensible for English audience, her songs received a great success in London due to her attractive presence and adept performance on the stage. Harris records Maurice Donnay's words which describe the fin-de-siècle liberal atmosphere: 'And in 1890 there were in ideas and morals, an ease and freedom which we found very new. We breathed the air of liberty' (121). Similarly Sarah Blackstone in 'Women Writing Melodrama' cites an example of an active and mobile actress/singer of the period, Genevieve Ward, who performed the sensational melodrama *Forget Me Not* (which she first presented in 1879) more than two thousand times during her career, making the heroine Stephanie her signature role (26-7). Throughout George C.D. Odell's *Annals of the New York Stage*, Ward was praised as 'impressive,' 'an admirable actress,' 'excellent as always in the role' (qtd. in Blackstone 27).

Actresses reached fame, success and made wealth from their valiant appearance on public stages which 'could provide a higher wage than any other legitimate occupation freely accessible to a woman' (Tracy Davis 53). Actresses' financial situation was far better than lower paid non-dramatic specialties like ballet dancers, aerial faeries, panto choristers, extravaganza supernumeraries and burlesque performers (Tracy Davis 48). Certain historical figures in the acting domain won an intercontinental popularity due to their performances on London, French and other theaters, though they came from different nationalities; among them we may list: Marie Bancroft, Julia Bartet, Kate Josephine Bateman (Mrs Crowe), Sarah Bernhardt, Madeline Brohan, Mrs Partick Campbell, Céline Celeste, Marie Céline Chaumont, Mary Jane Chippendale, Annie Clarke (Boston), Kate Claxton, Sophie Croizette (Russia), Marie de La Porte, Aimée Desclée, Doche (Paris), Dudlay, Duse, Nellie Farren (Liverpool), Marie Favart, Lydia Foote, Anna Judic, Clara Morris, Plessy, Ristori, Elizabeth Robins, Rousby, Lydia Thompson, Annie Webster and Mrs John Wood. Those female stars took advantage of their gifts to invade the public world and overcome a history of female silence. Their use of the stage was rather political since it served to 'challenge and subvert the prevailing male hegemony' (Gardner 1).

Stage women were not limited to performing activities but expanded their wings to management where they appeared side-to-side with male managers to 'constitute a significant challenge to the traditional notions of woman's place' (Gardner 10). From the earliest part of the century, the women of London theater like Eliza Vestis and Fanny Kemble were 'equal to their male contemporaries in popularity and the management of their business affairs' (Gardner 10). Tracy Davis listed many women managers of the period like Mrs Wild (who owned a travelling theater in Yorkshire and Lancashire, 1820-51), Mrs Nye Chart (at the Theatre Royal Brighton, 1876-92), Ellen Poole (at the Alexandra Theater Liverpool, 1883-88), Lillie Langtry who was a lessee at the St James's (1890), preferring to make her fortune in America, and others like Kate Santley or Emma Conus (51-2). There were cases of widow managers like Sarah Lane who succeeded her husband at the Britannia and ran the theater from 1871 to 1899 or Sarah Baker, in London provinces, one of the most successful managers at the beginning of the nineteenth century who proved to be socially self-reliant and financially independent and self-sustaining. Whether managers or stage performers, independent women took power and legalization from a

number of reform acts such as the 1882 Married Woman's Property Act which allowed women to own and administer their own property and the 1889 Women's Trade Union League. The Free Theater movement had originated on the continent between 1880s and 1890s; it began in England with Ibsen's plays which attracted many women actresses like Janet Achurch and Charles Charrington's. *A Doll's House* (1889) and *Hedda Gabler* (1891) were enacted as private performances by women (Gardner 11).

Foundations of schools of acting by women marked the evolutionary spirit of the era as promoted by the Fabian Society where they progressively changed from simple trainees to managers and dramatists, then to expert trainers and masters of art. Sarah Thorne not only ran the Margate Theatre Royal between 1867 and 1899, but also pioneered in the establishment of a respected school of acting to attract the 'ladies and gentlemen' wishing to enter the theatrical profession (Gardner 10-11). The students of Sarah Thorne appeared as successful managers and actresses such as Marion Lea, Gertrude Kingston at the beginning of the twentieth century together with Olga Nethersole, Lillah McCarthy who were actresses known to have been involved in the Little Theater Movement and ran it before the First World War. The feminist work in the domain of acting and stagecraft was embodied in the foundation of The Actresses Franchise League in 1908 'with its policy of performances in support of the campaign for votes of women' (Gardner 12). The Fabian tendency of female performers took its shape in the foundation of Fabian Women's Group in 1908, formed within the Ibsenite milieu. Woman's involvement in art, writing and acting, was equally recorded in both England and America because 'women pioneered their way west on an equal footing with the men and out of sheer necessity discarded any pretence of "femininity"' (Ferris 42).

Women's invasion of the stage was a means to exteriorize their latent skills, exhibit their artistic power and concretize their potentialities in a process of subversion of all previous pre-assumptions on woman's inaptitude in the domain of art. Feminist theater is based on the urge to politicize sexuality where woman's performance 'deconstructs sexual difference and thus undermines patriarchal power' (Keyssar 1). The stage becomes a location where the female voice can be heard; it offers 'a "place from which to speak" in which men can be at home in public' (Kruger 68). Fuller admits woman's creative power as a public preacher or performer when she says:

> As to the possibility of her filling with grace and dignity, any such position, we should think those who had seen the great actresses, and heard the Quaker preachers of modern times, would not doubt that woman can express publicly the fullness of thought and creation, without losing any of the peculiar beauty of her sex. (19)

By displaying creative powers on the theatrical imperializing space, women of genius proved that they were no longer passive, emotional and domestic angels but rather sensible, clever and active competitors to men; they made an assault on a public spot of power from which symbolic imperialism might efficiently function in favor of woman's new social and political position.

However, despite women's endeavor for a better social and professional position, sexual inequity persisted in society which received actresses and public performers with contempt and humiliation, within the frame of male's policy of exclusion. Fuller transmits the Victorian

masculine reaction towards woman's transcendence of domestic confines, saying that 'the world repels them more rudely, and they are of weaker bodily frame' (67). In spite of woman's acknowledged artistic skills, her public presence was not accepted by Victorians who still based their ideology on woman's 'natural' inferiority. Fuller also records the drawbacks of actresses' engagement in marital ties: 'Woe to such a woman who finds herself linked to such a man in bonds too close. It is the cruelest of errors. He will detest her with all the bitterness of wounded self-love. He will take the whole prejudice of manhood upon himself. . . . Such women are the great actresses, the songsters' (67).

Society functioned as a handicap in the face of the great female talents and placed itself 'against the flowering genius, artistic "dispersion", the cultivation of intellectual or artistic pursuits' (Perosa 40) in order to preserve its code of behavior and to eschew the roots that may threaten the masculine prerogative. Victorians 'were deeply suspicious of women whose livelihood depended on skills of deception and dissembling, and the circumstances of actresses work belied any pretences to sexual naiveté, middle-class immobility, or feeble brain power' (Tracy Davis 53). The resistance to the contemporary stream of female public exhibitionists took place between 1820 and 1860 when a range of printed material promoted and prescribed the cult of True Womanhood, as man's new strategy of re-possessing his space. Religious figures were attempting to re-instill feminine ideals through public lectures and sermons to stop the stream of 'publicity' among women.

In literature, the challenge to modernity was embodied in the production of many theological writings, as surveyed by Robin Gilmour. He studies the works of Matthew Arnold[7] who published four volumes of religious books in the 1870s including *Literature and Dogma* (1873). In the book, Arnold calls for an undogmatic reading of the literary language of the Bible so as to redeem the Crisis of Faith caused by the failure of supernatural dogmatic Christianity in an age of reason, skepticism and experientialism. He intends to make the Christian ethic stronger than dogmatic theology. Arnold's writings were followed by agnosticism in its promotion of ethics and morality, even without religion. Ethical Societies grew up, mostly in London, 'to provide communities of the like-minded where rationalists and philosophical Idealists could meet to hear lay sermons and debate moral and religious issues' (Gilmour 106). These reformist trends, which challenged modernity in general and woman's reactionary imperialist policy in particular, including her ascent to the stage, shape a continuum with Rousseau's philosophical negative view towards theater as a public distracting space and female acting as an embodiment of corrupted morality[8]. Women, on the other hand, neglected that type of moral reform, declined the recall to social conventions and refused to step back into the dark ages of patriarchy while sticking to their new liberal spirit and insisting on the necessity of their public presence.

Although the majority of women working for the theater shared a renunciation of social, religious and cultural summons to feminine 'virtue', a group of women writers of early American comedies feared the strong anti-theatrical attitudes that were based on religious and cultural opposition to women's public activities. They assured 'a highly didactic tone and focus[ed] closely on issues of national identity' in order to avoid 'counter antitheatricalism, or perhaps merely to address unsophisticated audiences,' as Amelia Kritzer maintains (3). Those female writers displayed an ironic internalization of old values which kept rooted inside female thought.

Written by the American playwright Anna Cora Ogden in 1845, *Fashion* is a play that reflects 'a more conservative vision of American womanhood through its confinement of women within domestic scenes and its idealization of feminine passivity' (Kritzer 18). As modern and liberal women, actresses were themselves used by both male and female playwrights to critique what they called the 'New Woman'[9] within the context of male's plan of attacking woman's new imperialist policy. Gardner speaks about the irony produced when 'this unconventional world [female theatrical activity] was the purveyor of some of the most conventional –not to say reactionary –attitudes towards women in the period' (8). Some playwrights reproduced the antagonistic iconography of the prevailing ideology while using women against themselves. We can apply at this level Barbara Freedman's description of the modern theater as falling into the 'process of saving itself by denying itself' (82).

Actresses often performed roles that clashed with their own search for liberation like the roles we find in Pinero's *The Amazons*, Henry Arthur Jones's *The Case of Rebellious Susan* and Sydney Grundy's *The New Woman*. Case condemns the culture that wittingly used the women of theater against themselves:

> As a result of the suppression of real women, the culture invented its own representation of the gender, and it was this fictional 'Woman' who appeared on the stage, in the myths and in the plastic arts, representing the patriarchal values attached to the gender while suppressing the experiences, stories, feelings and fantasies of actual women. (7)

These types of women collaborate with patriarchy to reinforce their own suppression. The example of Grundy's play *The New Woman*[10] embodies the idea of exploiting female actresses to attack female liberation, though written by a woman. The comedy presented its audience with two versions of the New Woman: the caricature who is a grotesque, and a serious woman, Mrs Sylvester. The play, along with its poster which showed a young woman in black sitting in front of a large latchkey with a smoldering cigarette in the margins, expressed hostility to the whole notion of the New Woman (Gardner 2-3). The irony springs from the dichotomy between the goals of the play and the real identity of the actresses who are the object of critique. Gardner echoes the social view of the New Woman by Victorians:

> [She] was seen typically as young, middle class and single on principle. She eschewed the fripperies of fashion in favour of more masculine dress and severe coiffure. . . and was certainly a devotee of Ibsen and given to reading 'advanced' books. She was financially independent of father or husband. . . She affects emancipating habits, like smoking, riding a bicycle, using bold language and taking the omnibus or train unescorted. (4-5)

Notwithstanding the political motives of female public participation, the identity of performers or actresses had neatly fit into the category of the public woman or prostitute. Society provided two female types: the idealized domestic true woman and the vilified prostitute or false woman. The whore was the anti-thesis of the wife and was usually described as a temptress, a dark woman fraught with evil. Performers' defiance of passive middle-class femininity and realization of economic self-sufficiency through public visibility 'led to persistent and empirically unfounded prejudices and very real sexual dangers in their work places' (Tracy Davis xiv). Social respectability was denied because of their public exposure and eroticized female

form. According to Maria-Elena Buszek, what stirred more the equation of performers with prostitutes was the appearance of photographic imagery which promoted sexualized theatrical identities outside the contained space of theater where female performers shifted from the stage to mass media and popular culture. In 1853, the Photographic Society was formed in London under the Queen's reign to become 'the most characteristic of Victorian media: it brought together science and art in a novel way, was realistic, inescapably contemporary, incipiently democratic, and promised victory over the Time. Spirit which haunted the age' (Gilmour 218). In Europe, a visual display of the female performer whether a dancer or actress was associated with the same display and commercial exchange of the prostitute as having a profession. The burlesque tradition and photographic pin-ups originated in the mid-nineteenth century to make female performers explore pointedly sexual roles on and off-stage and the early carte de visite pin-ups of bawdy burlesque actresses were a strategic feminist use.

The establishment of the pin-up genre defined the manipulation of its viewers/consumers by its '"awarish" or sexually self-aware, representational subjects' (Buszek 2). Self-aware female sexuality was not only imaged but liable for live display. Through feminized spectacles, sexuality seems to be of a 'performative nature,' for actresses consciously created fantasy characters for their viewers (Pullen 134). Their deliberate bodily display and their physical possession of the theatrical space can be read as subversions of old oppressive cultural mores and substitutions for patriarchy's repression of woman's sexual desire. In *The History of Sexuality,* Michel Foucault questions the 'repressive hypothesis,' which asserts that since the nineteenth century, Western societies have sought to repress human sexuality, showing that what we think of as repression of sexuality actually constituted the essence of our identities and produced a profusion of discourse on the subject. He argues that the regulating discourse of the last two centuries produces rather than represses sexuality. He considers prostitution and psychiatry as outlets of confession to release the repressed sexual feelings. Thus it is possible to say that woman's premeditated physical exposure argued for her active sexuality, exteriorized her sexual potentialities and made her a manipulator of man's desire. Buszek echoes M.G. Lord's definition of pornographic imagery as 'an unruly force that promises to unsettle social conventions and [serves as] a radical political act.' Performers were self-consciously erotic, taking pleasure in their own beauty while reconstructing their sexual identities through the discovery of their sexuality. Women's celebration of their female corporeality destroyed the tradition of the asexual Angel in the House and challenged the contemporary didacticism of evangelicalism and Tractarianism which were teaching the Victorians 'to hate their own flesh.' (Gilmour 86).

Nonetheless, the confusion between the stereotype of the actress and the courtesan was held in an agitated societal atmosphere, not seeing the reactionary side but imbued with feelings of disdain for these female performers. Like prostitution, theatrical activity was seen as a profession granting a primary source income in return for the physical selling of the self. The association of the theater with prostitution was even more firmly established in the United States where the nation's puritanical origins influenced the perception of performance and its entailing immorality and associated theater with sexual display. The American theater was criticized for offering the space for crimes of exhibitionism and prostitution. Both occupations often overlapped to give birth to the theatrical tradition of the actress- courtesan. Lora Pearl, a famous London courtesan of nineteenth-century demi-monde embarked on a theatrical carrier. The

opposite also happened when performers turned into courtesans like the alteration of Lola Montez, the eastern American dancer and performer (1851), into a recognized courtesan. This moral transformation was a historical result of the rise of prostitution in the nineteenth century where 84 out of 168 had become prostitutes (Brian 4).

As a result of the spreading out of prostitution which was confused with female acting, a trend of female reformers strove to put an end to such a 'dishonorable' profession. In 1894, a group of middle-class Christian women intended to seek out and expel prostitutes from London music halls 'for their promotion of morally dubious entertainment' (Morgan 209). Evangelical campaigns were arranged for Social Purity Movement whose defining feature was 'its attempt to infuse society with a level of sexual respectability through the mass dissemination of perspective moral literature' (Morgan 211). Yet female purists themselves were repelled by puritanical severity because they articulated rigorous debates on sexual matters. The movement differed from the traditional Christian view of the sinful lifestyle. Some pious women like Ellice Hopkins called for public discussions on sexuality and accused the Anglican church of the contribution to the trouble of the century for keeping silent on the subject (Morgan 210). Although Hopkins endeavored to stop prostitution, she defended prostitutes as victims of male sexual abuse within society.

The Victorian society judged liberated female performers from two paradoxical points of view. From a negative social, religious and cultural view, they were equated with prostitutes, but from the affirmative political and feminist perspective, public performers signified transgression, independence and self-realization. Tracy Davis writes of this subversive identity of the nineteenth-century actresses and clarifies the view of society towards them:

> Actresses were symbols of women's self-sufficiency and independence, but as such they were doubly threatening: like the middle classes generally, they advocated and embodied hard work, education, culture, and family ties, yet unlike prostitutes they were regarded as 'proper' vessels of physical and sexual beauty and legitimately moved in society as attractive and desirable beings. (69)

Though appreciated and desired, female performers remained the emblem of immorality and illegal sexuality. There were fans of actresses who admired their physical magnetism and feminine presence on the stage but perhaps without consideration of their political intentions and estimation of their struggle for emancipation, with the exception of some cultural forms, especially literature, which sometimes show recognition of the female endeavor to overcome patriarchal conventions. In drama, writers like Shaw and Barker 'created idealised, independent, self-determining women –Vivie Warren in *Mrs Warren's Profession* and Marion Yates in *The Madras House'* (Gardner 9).

The Victorian classification of women into two types, the pious and respectful lady and the immoral and public whore is applicable on actresses themselves where a clear distinction between virtuous performers and actresses-courtesans was perceivable. Some actresses like Jenny Lind and the Italian Adelaide Ristori tended to construct a favorable image of woman's talents. Their on and off-screen star images denied the sexualized identity produced in actresses/ courtesans scandalous photographs. Buszek declares that '[t]heir identities asserted the potential

of the true woman to exist in the sphere of the theater as in the home.' The charming portraiture of Lind and Ristori's style of performance as a venerable antique character epitomized true womanhood yet outside the domestic sphere (Buszek 10).

The fashionable New Woman of the time who offered a subversive public identity sustained by her hunger for independence and self-reliance was threatened to undergo a process of self- destruction or an entry into a new cycle of passivity, and passivity in the theater was not unlike the one lived under patriarchy. As a latent complicit with patriarchy, capitalism was a new manipulator of women. It, at the same time, drew women from their private dwellings and used them as objects for materialistic ends where '[o]n stage and backstage theatres became analogous to the industrialized factory' as in textile and heavy manufacturing trades (Tracy Davis 48). Thinking they were liberated and saved from the patriarchal constraints, women were unconsciously incarcerated by capitalist shackles. The pin-ups of the bawdy burlesque actresses were associated with mass reproduction, distribution and consumption. Attracted more the bourgeois audiences, these pin-ups promoted a boom of leg show productions in the United States. 'The free trade in spoken drama (dating from the theatre of Regulation Act of 1843),' affirms Tracy Davis, 'took control of the theatrical industry from the hands of a few and made licenses available to unlimited numbers of small and large scale entrepreneurial managers' (6). In 1860, Laura Keene, a female dramatist and theater manager, sought to draw larger audiences to her 'women's plays' to legitimate theatrical spaces in the United States away from the working-class burlesque halls and concert saloons of New York City in the aim of industrializing live entertainment (Buszek 5). Other playwrights characterized their plays with social and moral transgressiveness like Lord Byron's plays *Mazeppa* and *The Black Crook* which showed undressed performers at Niblo's Garden. Lydia Thompson's play *British Blondes* (performed in New York in 1868) with its dyed-haired and disrespectfully-dressed prostitutes indicated that 'the appeal of [the play] lay in their legs and light golden hair' (Pullen 119) Such nineteenth-century burlesque plays echoed woman's hysteria on and off stage while 'overlapping tensions about theatre, fashion, feminism and female sexuality' (Pullen 133).

While some plays were inscribed within the laws of the capitalist system, others attacked it in the hope of creating a Fabian socialist system. The engagement of feminism with socialism aimed at liberating women from the hands of capitalism. Women's freedom was thought to be a direct result of economic liberation within a transformed economic and social system (Jill Davis 18). Many female actresses as well as feminist and anti-capitalist dramatists were aware of the exploitative nature of capitalism and its conspiracy with patriarchy against women. Shaw's play, *Mrs Warren's Profession* (1894) argues that the origin of prostitution is economic by making the prostitute Mrs Warren choose prostitution over other forms of sex slavery. Prostitution is presented by Shaw as an economic and social phenomenon caught by the unclean hands of capitalism. On the tongue of his characters, Shaw condemns the system when, for example, Praed says to Vivie: 'What a monstrous, wicked, rascally system! I knew it! I felt at once that it meant destroying all that makes womanhood beautiful.' (217). Despite that cultural attack on capitalism which aimed at resisting the features of inequality in society including woman's oppression, liberated women who thought themselves freed from the male world when they conquered man's public sphere were caught in another form of slavery. Public performers were usually *seen* by a male audience who repossessed and enslaved them by their gaze. Relying on the Fanonian

identification of the **gaze** as a force of fixation, we can assume that performers are consumed by the other where they do not represent the desiring eye but rather the blinded or the desired eye to fall once again in the pits of patriarchal subjugation. Barbara Freedman explores the functioning of the spectatorial gaze, saying: 'Since the male is traditionally envisioned as the bearer of the gaze the woman represented as the fetishised object of the gaze […] the classic cinematic gaze spils us into male (voyeur) and female (exhibitionist)' (84).

Yet, the duality of voyeurism and exhibitionism may not function if we consider that the gaze does not fixate the real woman on the stage but rather the character that she represents in the play. The performer sometimes wears a mask to render her role, it is a mask which announces that 'the "I" is always already another; its characters assure us of their displacement' (Barbara Freedman 102). The actress's performance deconstructs and displaces her identity while constructing and placing another subjectivity which will be the object of the gaze. The real performer can thus escape being manipulated and become herself the manipulator. Freedman calls for the actor's gaze as a substitute for the spectatorial gaze: 'We seek in theater, that moment when our looking is no longer a looking (as in film), but a being seen, a return of the look by the mirror image which denies the process' (99). Unlike cinema, the theater provides the actress with the possibility of returning a look that can control spectatorship. The actress's constitutive gaze is a reformulation of subjectivity and can never be applied without awareness that she is seen. Though formally liberated, woman should possess the Lady of Shalott's mirror, not for self-reflection but to watch herself being looked at. Escaping manipulation was a complex and slippery process where woman had to be endowed with an extraordinary intelligence and filled with a complete awareness of the system's tricks of entrapment so as to overcome them. In *Feminist Movement*, Ethel Snawden argues that 'women's achievement of equality is dependent upon the overthrow of capitalism' (qtd. in Neal Ferguson 347).

Distinctions between the real identities of actresses and their performed roles in plays were dissolved by the audience who thought itself in possession of the stage actresses and who went to theater to 'sit silently in the protective darkness and fulfill [their] role as sanctioned voyeurs' (Barbara Freedman 79). Capitalism interfered once again with the quality of the audience who was allowed to watch plays. Elitism of public reception made actresses preys to the capitalist system anew. The theater's collapse into private spectatorship (male, bourgeois, middle, educated class) made female actresses display their individual talents for the exemplary audience. What was criticized is that the political dimension of woman's public participations was not always seized by the spectator, who was more attracted to the entertaining side of theater. Therefore, the new woman's policy can be said to be double-edged; it could re-install the patriarchal principles as it could create an effective counter movement against man's colonization of the public sphere. Woman's new invading policy was surrounded by dangers which could make her lose the war and re-assert man's sovereignty.

Endnotes

[1] 'The feminine mystique' refers to woman's domestic world which made her confined to her own body and beauty, and the physical care and serving of husband, children and home.

[2] Christina Rossetti (1830-1894) is an English poet who wrote romantic, devotional and children's poems. She also wrote prose including short fiction and devotional works. She was deeply interested in the Anglo-Catholic movement that developed in the Church of England.

[3] Since 1848, women had discussed suffrage: in the U.S. Woman's suffrage movement was launched by Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stantan at the Seneca Falls Convention in New York.

[4] The 1857 Matrimonial Causes Act allowed divorce through the law courts, instead of the slow and expensive business of a Private Act of Parliament. The wife had to prove her husband had committed adultery, incest, bigamy, cruelty or desertion.

[5] The 1886 Contagious Act legalized the forcible medical examination of prostitutes.

[6] Tractarianism or Oxford movement (1833 – 1845) is a movement which developed within the Church of England to emphasize the church's Catholic inheritance and to defend it as a divine institution against the threats of liberal theology, rationalism, and government interference. ('Oxford Movement', *Britannica Concise Encyclopedia*).

[7] Mattew Arnold (1822-1888) is an English poet and cultural critic. He instructs the readers on contemporary social issues and presents critiques to the spirit of his age. He rejects the superstitious elements in religion while retaining a fascination for church rituals. His works are more concerned with virtues and values than with theistic matters.

[8] See Jean-Jacques Rousseau's essay entitled "Letter to D'Alembert on the Theatre" (1758) which was written to object to the establishment of a theater in Geneva and related the issue to the broader social context. In the letter, he warns of the potential of the theater to corrupt the morality in society while focusing on the belief in the natural order and harmony of traditional sex roles. He claims that the theater is a threat to an ideal and natural style of living and argues that its amusing aspect distracts people from hard work. He describes actresses as scandalous and indecent. In general, he believes that the presence of women in public spaces corrupts the youth and causes their effeminacy and lack of patriotism.

[9] The concept, echoing the name of Sydney Grundy's play in 1894, was coined to describe the modern liberal woman and to refer to the subversion of the female norm in nineteenth-century theatrical activity. Yet the term is not limited to the 1890s. It first appeared in France in 1832 as a title of a feminist newspaper (*La Femme Nouvelle*).

[10] Grundy's play *The New Woman* opened at the Comedy Theater on 1 September 1894.

References

-Allen, Elizabeth. *A Woman's Place in the Novels of Henry James*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984.

-Brekus, Catherine. "Female Preaching in Early Nineteenth-Century America." *The Center for Christian Ethics at Baylor University*. 2009. Web. Jan. 2014. <http://www.baylor.edu/content/services/document.php/98759.pdf>.

-Blackstone, Sarah J. "Women Writing Melodrama." *The Cambridge Companion to American Women Playwrights.* Ed. Brenda Murphy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999. 19- 30.

-Brian, Lee. *American Fiction: 1865-1940*. London: Longman, 1987.

-Buszek, Maria-Elena. "Representing 'Awarishness': Burlesque Feminist   Transgression, and the 19th-Century Pin-up." *TDR: The Drama Review*. Vol.43. Number 4, T 164, winter 1999. Web. 26 July 2008. <http://muse.jhu.edu/login?uri=/journals/the_drama_reveiw/v043/43.4buszek.html>.

-Case, Sue-Ellen. *Feminism and Theatre*. New York: Routledge, 1988.

-Cott, Nancy F. *The Bonds of Womanhood*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985.

-Davis, Jill. "The New Woman and the New Life." *The New Woman and Her Sisters: Feminism and Theatre: 1850- 1914*. Ed. Viv Gardner and Susan   Rutherford. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992. 17- 36.

-Davis, Tracy, C. *Actresses as Working Women: Their Social Identity in Victorian Culture*. London: Routledge, 1991.

-Dickenson, Donna. Introduction. *Woman in the Nineteenth Century and Other Writings*.   By Margaret Fuller. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.

-Ferguson, Neal A. "Women in Twentieth-Century England." *The Women of England: From Anglo-Saxon Times to the Present*. Ed. Barbara Kanner. London: Mansell Publishing, 1980.

-Ferris, Lesley. "The Golden Girl." *The New Woman and Her Sisters: Feminism and   Theatre: 1850- 1914*. Eds. Viv Gardner and Susan Rutherford. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf , 1992. 37- 55.

-Flexner, Eleanor, and Ellen Fitzpatrick. *Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement in the United States*. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard, 1996.

-Freedman, Barbara. "Frame-up: Feminism, Psychoanalysis, Theatre." *Feminist Theatre and Theory*. Ed. Helene Keyssar. Houndmills: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1996. 78- 108.

-Fuller, Margaret. *Woman in the Nineteenth Century and Other Writings*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.

-Gardner, Viv. Introduction. *The New Woman and Her Sisters: Feminism and Theatre: 1850- 1914*. Eds. Viv Gardner and Susan Rutherford. New York: Harvester wheatsheaf, 1992.

-Gilbert, Sandra M.. "Costumes of the Mind: Transvestism as Metaphor in Modern Literature." *T.S. Eliot*. Ed. Harriet Davidson. London: Addison Wesley Longman Ltd., 1999.

-Gilmour, Robin. *The Victorian Period: The Intellectual and Cultural Context of English Literature, 1830- 1890*. London: Longman Group UK Ltd., 1993.

-Harris, Geraldine. "Yvette Guilbert: La Femme Moderne on the British Stage." *The New Woman and Her Sisters: Feminism and Theatre: 1850- 1914*. Eds.Viv Gardner and Susan Rutherford. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992. 115- 33.

-Kelley, Mary. *Private Woman, Public Stage: Literary Domesticity in Nineteenth-Century America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1984.

-Keyssar, Helene. Introduction. *Feminist Theatre and Theory*. Ed. Helene Keyssar. Houndmills: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1996.

-Kritzer, Amelia Howe. "Comedies by Early American Women." *The Cambridge Companion to American Women Playwrights*. Ed. Brenda Murphy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999. 3- 12.

-"List of Female Rhetoricians." *Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikipedia Foundation Inc, 22 Apr. 2010. Web. 8 May 2010.<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_female_ rhetoricians>.

-Mill, John Stuart. *The Subjection of Women*. Longmans, Edwards &Co., 1869.

-Morgan, Sue. "The Power of Womanhood – Religion and Sexual Politics in the Writings of Ellice Hopkins." *Women of Faith in Victorian Culture: Reassessing the Angel in the House*. Eds. Anne Hogan and Andrew Bradstock. Houndmills: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1998. 209- 24.

-Perosa, Sergio. *Henry James and the Experimental Novel*. New York: New York University Press, 1983.

-Pullen, Kristen. *Actresses and Whores: On Stage and in Society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

-Rajan, Rajeswari Sunder. Real and Imagined Women: Gender, Culture and Postcolonialism. London: Routledge, 1993.

-Roden, Frederick S. "Sisterhood is Powerful: Christina Rosetti's *Maude*." *Women of Faith in Victorian Culture: Reassessing the Angel in the House*.   Eds. Anne Hogan and Andrew Bradstock. Houndmills: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1998.63- 77.

-Ryan, Mary P. "Gender and Public Access: Women's Politics in Nineteenth-Century America." *Habermas and the Public Sphere*. Ed. Craig Calhoun. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1999.

-Shaw, Bernard. *Plays Unpleasant: Widowers' Houses, The Philanderer, Mrs Warren's Profession*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1946.

-Selden, Roman. *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory*. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1985.

-Van den Abeele, Charlotte. *Le Théatre*. Brussels : Artoria, 1995.

-*"Women's History in America." *Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia* Women's International Center. *Compton's New Media, Inc.,* 1994-95. Web. 22 May 2010. <http://www.wic.org/misc/history.htm>.

Captivity among the Maroons of Jamaica in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries: A Comparative Analysis

Amy M. Johnson
Elon University, USA

Abstract

This article examines the practices of captivity among the Maroons of Jamaica during the early colonial period. In this paper, I argue that the practice of holding people in bondage in Maroon communities, which was strongly influenced by the West African customs of their ancestors, had much in common with the southern Native American nations in the United States before the mid-1800s. Through a comparative analysis, I draw conclusions about the nature of captivity among the Jamaican Maroons almost a century before the first slave was documented in the Maroon census records. I conclude that captives in Maroon villages experienced a range of rights and obligations and even those held in chattel-like servitude had mechanisms for social inclusion.

Key words: Jamaica, Maroon, bondage, captivity, Akan, Native American

Introduction

The term 'Maroons' first appears in 1626 in reference to the enslaved blacks who fled from their Spanish captors in Jamaica and created strongholds in the dense forests of island. These runaways established autonomous communities from which they withstood Spanish, and later English, attempts to re-enslave them.[1] On May 10, 1655, the English finally conquered the island of Jamaica from Spanish after a protracted and costly war though they never succeed in subduing the Spanish Maroons. By 1660, the English had accepted the autonomy of Juan Lubola and his band of Spanish Maroons and begun to settle the island.[2]

English militiamen and small farmers initially populated the newly acquired island of Jamaica. However as its potential for sugar production became evident, large-scale sugar plantations developed and an increasing numbers of enslaved Africans were brought to the island to work the sugar industry. The enslaved Africans and their descendants took every opportunity to secure their freedom. By the late seventeenth century, there emerged distinctly English Maroon communities in Jamaica.[3] The Leeward Maroon group arose in the western side of Jamaica following major insurrections in 1673, 1690 and1696.[4] Meanwhile, enslaved men and women revolted in Guanaboa in 1685 and settled in St. George parish with the Spanish Maroons to form the Windward Maroons.[5]

The population of Maroon villages grew steadily over the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and "amounted to some thousands" by the early 1700s.[6] Despite numerous attempts to quash the Maroon villages and re-enslave the inhabitants, the English were unsuccessful at overcoming the military expertise in guerilla warfare of the rebel fighters. Not only did the Maroons repeatedly repel the English militia and elude the Mosquito Indians and dogs brought in to track them, they continued to attack plantations and settlements.[7] In 1739, Governor Trelawny of Jamaica and the leaders of the Windward and Leeward Maroons signed peace treaties in which the colonial government acknowledged the freedom and autonomy that the Maroons had already claimed for themselves in exchange for a cessation of hostilities and an agreement from the Maroons to help quell future slave rebellions and return runaways to their masters.

Captivity among the Maroons

Unequal degrees of freedom existed in the autonomous Maroons communities soon after they were formed. Colonial planters complained bitterly that the Maroons stole slaves from their plantations.[8] While some may have willingly fled the plantation to join the Maroons in the forest, Maroons captured others were for their domestic, agricultural, and military labor.[9] It is difficult to assess the prevalence of bondage even after the census takers begin recording people under the category of slave in 1773.

Even less is known about the experiences of those the Maroons held in bondage. Historically, Maroons were not a literate people, and even as education and literacy expanded into these remote communities, they have continued a rich tradition of transmitting knowledge through oral narratives. However, accessing stories related to controversial topics such as bondage is challenging. First, secrecy and distrust of outsiders is deeply ingrained in Maroon culture

primarily as a result of their initial development in a hostile environment. This circumspection has continued among modern-day Maroons who have had their history and culture misunderstood and misrepresented, particularly by academics. Consequently, knowledge sharing with non-Jamaicans and even non-Maroons has become stymied. Second, present-day Maroons are highly conscious of their depiction in modern society, which affects not only with whom they share information, but also what they share. [10]

Consequently, in order to draw any conclusion about the nature of bondage among the Maroons during the early colonial period, scholars must use a comparative analysis. In this paper, I argue that the practices governing the rights, privileges, and disabilities of captives among the Maroons of Jamaica, which were themselves influenced by the customs of their West African ancestors, were similar to the southern Native Americans nations in United States prior to the Civil War. I conclude that bondsmen experienced a range of rights and obligations and even those held in chattel-like captivity had mechanisms for social inclusion.

Comparative Practices

During the early colonial period of Jamaica's history, the majority of those enslaved on the island were African-born. Consequently, there is little surprise that many of the original inhabitants of the Maroon communities had been captured in Africa. Although the Maroon population was ethnically diverse, West African, especially Coromantee or Akan, culture was influential in the ethnic identity that emerged in Jamaican Maroon villages. Extensive research on Maroon culture and heritage has already noted the strong cultural ties between the Maroons of Jamaica and Akan-speakers of West Africa. Scholars have noted the connections in the religious practices of Obeah, their musical instruments, particularly the abeng, and in the language.[11] Thus, an examination of captivity among the Akan-speaking people of the Gold Coast of West Africa, the region of modern-day Ghana, provides a valuable starting point from which to explore the cultural assumptions and practices concerning bondage that informed both Maroon captors and their captives.

In their seminal work, Historian Suzanne Miers and Cultural Anthropologist Igor Kopytoff argue that Western concepts of slaves as chattel and free people as autonomous individual are not applicable to systems of bondage in West Africa. They contended that freedom was understood as unencumbered relationships and full inclusion in the society. Slaves, on the other end of the spectrum were those whose dependence significantly impeded their ability to demand the rights, privileges, and protection of inclusion. There was a great deal of fluidity and, at times, ambiguity between these dependent relationships.[12] In this theoretical framework, slavery is one form of dependency in a continuum of inter-dependent relationships used to incorporate outsiders into kinship networks. Wives, clients, pawns, and slaves were distinguished in their dependency largely by their ability (or inability) to call on their support networks for protection and the intended length of the dependent relationship.

Recently acquired captives were the most likely to suffer in chattel-like working and living conditions.[13] Few ever became free, but they did marry, sometimes into the master's lineage; have families; and take advantage of opportunities to improve their social and material lives

through the system of patronage.[14] Prominent men and women displayed and enhanced their wealth and power through a large assemblage of dependents, which indicated their economic and military strength. Patrons engaged in reciprocal obligations, a means of demonstrating their benevolence, to attract and retain dependents.[15] Consequently, enslaved peoples often worked alongside free and quasi-free dependents at tasks determined by their age, gender, talent, the status of the master and the purpose for which they were acquired.[16] Enslaved women, for example, were employed at the same domestic duties as free women. A captive woman's level of deprivation, workload, and even her status were determined by a number of factors including her relationship with her master, whether she was born into bondage or captured, and the master's standing in the community.

The southern nations of Native Americans—Chickasaws, Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws, and Seminoles—also had an ancient history of bondage, including the practice of slaveholding. Likewise, many of the customs related to captivity was similar to those of West Africans, namely a continuum of unfreedom and dependency affecting everyone from kinsmen to slaves; a sense of reciprocity between patrons and bondmen; and social mobility for enslaved peoples. Historians such as Daniel Littlefield Jr., Theda Perdue, Claudio Saunt, Tiya Miles, and more recently Barbara Kraumather and Christina Snyder have shown that captivity, of which enslavement was a form, among the Native Americans was always a dynamic institution. People held captive in Native American villages had a wide range of experiences. Captured enemies and adult males were often victims of ritual torture and sacrifice. Meanwhile others held in bondage experienced a range of levels of inclusion from servile laborer to full adopted kin.[17] In societies such as these that are predicated on inter-dependent relationships, mechanisms for inclusion were central to practices of holding outsiders in bondage.

The strategies employed by Maroon captors to control and exploit labor and those utilized by bondmen to extort rights and privileges were shaped by African-derived cultural assumptions. However, Maroons were also responding to, adapting, and negotiating a specific context that would have made the wholesale importation of African "slavery" not only illogical, but impossible. And thus any attempt to frame bondage among the Maroons simply as a continuation of West African practices falls short of a true appreciation for the dynamic and adaptive nature of Maroon life. Captivity in these autonomous communities rested on the intersection of African originating ideology and specific Jamaican contexts.[18]

Like Native Americans, the Jamaican Maroons were both culturally and racially distinct from the hostile colonial society surrounding them and found it necessary to incorporate outsiders, even slaves, into their villages in ways that the hegemonic white society did not. Moreover, constructs of identity in both societies emerged within the context of racial chattel slavery.

Scholars of Native American history have studied the ways in which the specific contexts of early colonial society transformed indigenous forms of bondage and their scholarship has been influential in the conceptual framework of this research. In reference to New World societies, historian Ira Berlin stated that "the lines between free and slave, black and white were porous prior to the arrival of sugar."[19] Sugar, he suggested, was the spark that transformed the region

into a slave society. Perdue, Snyder, and Kraumather point to the American Revolution, the Great Migration, and the Civil War as pivotal moments in the shaping of Native American identity and catalysts for changes in captivity among Native Americans. Although Native Americans communities never became full-fledged slave societies they did adapt their practices around bondage to respond to new dangers and take advantage of new economic opportunities.[20] In particular scholars of Native American history note the emergence of transgenerational enslavement of Africans and their descendants.[21]

However, due to military, agricultural and regional differences, the systemization of inherited servitude had already been well established by the 17th century in the West Indies. In February of 1731, Governor Hunter wrote to the Duke of Newcastle in England of testimony extracted from a captured Maroon woman "who [had] been some years with the rebels." This woman recounted that Maroon raiders had cut the throat of a "negro woman they had carried off from a plantation" and then cut their own throats when pursued by a white militia party.[22] What might have been in store for the slain woman had she arrived in the Maroon town? The cultural context of dependency in conjunction with the chronic shortage of women in Maroon communities led to the rapid incorporation of women into these male dominated societies. Women were invaluable to the long-term success of the village as wives, mothers, and laborers.[23] Whether the women fled to the Maroons on their own, willingly traveled with Maroon raiders, or were captured and forced to the town had the most bearing on their social status within the community. In particular, how formerly enslaved women came to the Maroons indicated her bravery and strength. Women who displayed these characteristics made ideal mates and mothers to the next generation of Maroon warriors. [24]

A woman's basic duties, however, had less to do with their captive or free status than their gender. In many pre-industrial indigenous societies in West Africa and the Americas, women performed the agrarian and domestic duties.[25] In his examination, Sarra, a Maroon captive apprehended by the colonial militia, told officials that in the windward part of the island, "there is a great deal of open land about it, in which is plenty of coco, sugar canes, plantains, melons, yams, corn, hog and poultry."[26] Maroon towns relied heavily on hunting and subsistence farming for their survival and women were an integral part of the work force. However, the Maroons did not own the land on which they planted and it was always possible that militia incursions would force them to abandon the fields. Consequently, large-scale farming that would have made the most effective use of enslaved laborers was not feasible prior to the signing of the Maroon Treaties.

The method of their arrival in the village determined the experiences of males in the Maroon towns. Maroons treated the men who fought against them as war captives and as such put them to death or held them in chattel-like forms of bondage.[27]The men who fled to them or were captured from the plantations had a different set of opportunities shaped by notions of reciprocal privileges and obligations. Again, Sarra's testimony is enlightening. He recalled that "they give all encouragement for all sorts of negroes to join them and oblige the men to be true to them by an oath which is held very sacred among the negroes, and those who refuse to take the oath, whether they go to them of their own accord or are made prisoners, are instantly put to death." [28]

As potential warriors these men were crucial to the expansion and protection of the village. Equally important, new arrivals from the plantation often brought ammunition and weapons necessary to fight colonial forces, and could also direct raids back to the plantations from which they recently escaped. It was in the interest of the Maroons to allow men who proved to be loyal and adept to join the community as free men or, at the least, give them opportunities to enhance their material and social status. The men who escaped from Colonel Nedham's plantation were allowed into the village though not entrusted with authority or knowledge until they proved their loyalty to Maroons. These men later assumed leadership roles among the Windward Maroons.[29] What is more, the Maroons, as Edward Long noted "were endeavoring, by every means in their power, to bring other slaves in different parts of the island to their cause."[30] Any attempt to hold men as slaves with little chance of earning the right to be free certainly would have hampered efforts to recruit from the plantations. Thus when an enslaved man belonging to Colonel Nedham demanded of the Maroons that they "send home his master's negros," they rebuked his command.[31]

The men and women who failed to meet Maroon standards, on the other hand, were either killed or held in perpetual bondage.[32] The framework of reciprocity and opportunities for social mobility did not preclude the violence, dehumanization, and trauma often associated with captivity. An intriguing observation of the Leeward Maroons supports this assertion and describes what bondage may have been like for marginalized men in these villages. The anonymous source noted, "The chief Employment of these Captains was to Exercise their respective men in the Use of the Lance, and small arms…To Conduct the bold and active in Robbing the Planta. Of Slaves, Arms, Ammunition etc. Hunting wild hogs, and to direct the rest with the Women in Planting Provisions- and Managing Domestic affairs."[33] According to this source, "the rest," who were presumably men, were required to do women's work. Besides being emasculated, these men, and likely some women too, suffered from physical abuse and deprivation. The same source reported that Maroons treated some captives with such severity that "some of them afterwards used to Escape from their Tyranny and come to beg the Mercy of their Former Masters."[34]

Not only did the cultural background of the Maroon slaveholders and their bondmen imply that both parties negotiated bondage through this framework of reciprocity, but the local context did not facilitate the development of a slave society. Unincorporated people, those with "no sense of loyalty forged out of common experience" certainly represented a threat to Maroon communities. Historian Mavis Campbell uncovered evidence of two women-- Venus and Assiba—who exemplify the dangers. The two women purportedly led the militia to the Maroon towns and told them when best to strike. The colonial government compensated these women and others who deserted the Maroons.[35] Moreover, incursions by the colonial militia ensured some degree of incorporation for many outsiders regardless of whether they were voluntary bondsmen or captives. For example, both Maroon groups were well-known for their military expertise and the documents point to Cudjoe as an autocratic leader.[36] In this context, people in the village had opportunities to prove their worth through battle and possibly attain greater rights and privileges in the process. Finally, Maroons lacked guaranteed access to land and trade markets on the island rendering a slave-produced surplus unnecessary.

There is no evidence that Maroons ascribed to Western notions of autonomy as a definition of "free" in their society. Moreover, individual rights were incredibly difficult to support in Maroon villages constantly under threat of attack. Nevertheless, newcomers most certainly earned the right to be free and to participate fully in the society while those held in bondage did not. Kenneth Bilby, an Anthropologist well-established among the Jamaican Maroons, eloquently noted, "the Maroons' beginnings are sometimes traced back to the African continent. But for [most], the critical, defining moment in their history occurs when one or more of their captive ancestors decide[d] not to work, vowing to fight instead."[37] Given the methods by which the early Maroons gained their freedom and the difficulties they faced to maintain it, freedom was a privilege, not an obligation.

Conclusion

Scholarship on captivity among the Maroons of Jamaica has been slow to forthcoming. First, there is a paucity of information related to the practice of holding people in bondage in these communities during the early colonial period. Neither the Maroons themselves, nor their bondmen, left any written records about captivity in these villages. The oral narratives that may have survived about this topic are largely inaccessible to outsiders, ie. non-Maroons. Second, scholars are seemingly reluctant to challenge the image of the Maroons as the great black freedom fighters of the colonial world. The Rastafarian movement has certainly perpetuated this image as a challenge to the counter narrative that the Maroons turned their backs on those enslaved on the plantations when they signed the Treaties of 1739.

This paper places captivity among the Maroons within the larger context of bondage in indigenous, kin-based societies. By examining bondage in the Akan-speaking communities of pre-colonial West Africa and in the southern nations of Native Americans, I have argued that captivity among the Maroons existed long before the census takers recorded the first Maroon slave and bondage encompassed a wide range of experiences and included mechanisms for incorporation. All dependents, of which bondmen were a category, had certain rights, privileges, and obligations determined by the nature of their dependency.

In addition to providing a comparative framework for understanding captivity among the Maroons in the early colonial period I have shown that acknowledging the practice of holding people in various states of bondage in Maroon villages need not challenge the notion of Maroons as freedom fighters nor confirm their supposedly traitorous nature. Captivity and unfreedom was widely practiced throughout the colonial world. Africans, Native American, and Europeans all had long histories of holding people in various stages of servitude and bondage. An acceptance that the same was true of the Jamaica Maroons merely confirms their historical location in the early colonial Atlantic world.

Endnotes

[1]Mavis Campbell, *Maroons of Jamaica 1655-1796: A History of Resistance, Collaboration and Betrayal* (Trenton: Africa World Press, Inc., 1990).

[2] Robert Charles Dallas, *The history of the maroons, from their origins to their establishment of their chief tribe in Sierra Leone*: *including an expedition to Cuba, for the purpose of procuring Spanish chasseurs; and the state of the Island of Jamaica for the last ten years: with a succinct history of the island previous to that period.* vol. 1 (London: T.N. Longman and O. Rees, 1805; Reprint, London: Cass Libraries, 1968), 22-26.

[3]*Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series* [hereafter CSPCSCS], W. Noel Sainsbury, J.W. Fortescue, et.all (Reprint, Vaduz: Kraus Reprint Ltd., 1964), #299i "Council of Trade and Plantations to the King July 12," July 15, 1731. For general histories of the Jamaican Maroons see Dallas, *The History of the Maroons*; Campbell, *The Maroons of Jamaica.* For political development see Barbara Kopytoff, "The Early Political Development of Jamaican Maroon Societies," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, vol. 35, no. 2 (April 1978): 287-307.

[4]Long Papers, Add.MS 12431, Anon. "History of the Revolted Negroes in Jamaica," 69-70.

[5] David Buisseret, *Jamaica in 1687: The Taylor Manuscript at the National Library of Jamaica* (Kingston: University of the West Indies Press: 2008), 274-275.

[6]Long Papers, Add.MS 12431, Anon. "History of the Revolted Negroes in Jamaica," 69-70. The number of inhabitants of each village varied.

[7]See Orlando Patterson, "Slavery and Slave Revolts: A Sociohistorical Analysis of the First Maroon War, 1665-1740" in *Maroon Societies: Rebel Slave Communities in the Americas*, ed, Richard Price (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996) for a discussion of the events leading up to the signing of the Maroon Treaties of 1739.

[8]CSPCS, #486 "Governor Hunter to the Council of Trade and Plantations," November 13, 1731; CSPCS, #331 "Governor Trelawnly to the Duke of Newcastle," July 7, 1737. Theft from the planation is acknowledged in oral narratives of present-day Maroons, see Kenneth M. Bilby, *True-Born Maroons* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2005), #19, 104.

[9]Anon. "History of the Revolted Negroes in Jamaica," 69; CSPCS, #627i "Address of the Governor and Council of Jamaica to the King Nov. 21, 1730," December 24, 1730; CSPCS, #486, 1731; CSPCS, #55, 1734; CSPCS, #75i , 1734. In 1730 several women and children were carried off from two settlements in Port Antonio, CSPCS, #111 "Governor Hunter to the Council of Trade and Plantations," March 11, 1730 and CSPCS, #519, 1730. Also see, Kopytoff, "The Early Political Development of Jamaican Maroon Societies."

[10] Bilby, *True-Born Maroons,* 1-54 for a nuanced discussion of the struggles over ownership and control of Maroon culture and heritage.

[11]African traditions in Maroon communities have been studied extensively. Monica Schuler, "Akan Slave Rebellions in the British Caribbean," Savacou, vol 1, no 1, June 1970: 8-28; David Dalby, "Ashanti Survivals in the Language and Traditions of the Windward Maroons of Jamaica," African Language Studies, XII (1971): 31-51; Campbell, *The Maroons of Jamaica*; Kenneth Bilby, ed., *Drums of Defiance: Maroon Music from the Earliest Free Black Communities in Jamaica* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Folkways, 1992); John Thornton, "The Coromantees: An African Cultural Group in Colonial North America and the Caribbean," *Journal of Caribbean History* 32, nos. 1-2 (1998): 161-78; Kenneth Bilby, *True-Born Maroons*; Kofi E. Agorsah, ed. *Maroon Heritage: Archeological, Ethnographic, and Historical Perspectives*. Kingston, Jamaica: Canoe Press, 1994; E. Kofi Agorsah, "Spiritual Vibrations of Historic Kormantse and the Search for African Diaspora Identity and Freedom" in Akinwumi Ogundiran and Paula Saunders, eds. *Materialities of Ritual in the Black Atlantic* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014): 87-107. For more on captivity, see Audra Diptee, *From Africa to Jamaica: The Making of an Atlantic Slave Society 1775-1807* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2010) and Amy Johnson, "Slavery on the Gold Coast and African Resistance to Slavery in Jamaica during the Early Colonial Period," *LIMINA: A Journal of Cultural and Historical Studies* 18 (June 2012).

[12]Suzanne Miers and Igor Kopytoff, "African 'Slavery' as an Institution of Marginality" in *Slavery in Africa: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives,* eds. Suzanne Miers and Igor Kopytoff (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1977) 3-81; Victor Uchendu, *The Igbo of Southeast Nigeria* (New York: Rinehart and Winston, 1965); Akosua Perbi *A History of Indigenous Slavery in Ghana from the 15th to the 19th Century* (Ghana: Sub-Saharan Publisher, 2004).

[13] Historian Akosua Perbi identified many of the restrictions placed on enslaved men and women on the Gold Coast, *A History of Indigenous Slavery on the Gold Coast*, 130-132.

[14]Perbi, *A History of Indigenous Slavery in Ghana*, 112-114; Orland Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), 53-55; Miers and Kopytoff, "African 'Slavery,'" 20, 25-26. General studies of pre-colonial slavery in Africa include Walter Rodney, "African Slavery and other Forms of Social Oppression on the Upper Guinea Coast in the Context of the Atlantic Slave Trade," *Journal of African History* 7, no.3 (1966): 431-443; Frederick Cooper, "The Problem of Slavery in African Studies," *Journal of African History* 20, no.1 (1979): 119; Ray Kea, *Settlements, Trade, and Polities in the Seventeenth Century Gold Coast* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982); Paul Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Claire Robertson and Martin Klein, eds.,*Women and Slavery in Africa* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983); Patrick Manning, *Slavery and African Life: Occidental, Oriental, and African Slave Trades* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990)*;* Claude Meillassoux, *The Anthropology of Slavery: The Womb of Iron and Gold* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

[15]Willem Bosman remarked that for people on the Gold Coast, "their Riches consist in the Multitude of Slaves," *A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea, Divided into the Gold, the Slave, and the Ivory Coasts* (London, 1721), 204.

[16]John K. Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1680* (New York and London: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 85-88. Wealthy men and women invested in slaves as a reproducing form of private property similar to European investments in land. E. Frances White "Women in West and West-Central Africa," in *Women in Sub Saharan Africa: Restoring Women to History,* eds. Iris Berger and E. Frances White (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 65; Miers and Kopytoff, "African 'Slavery,'" 29.

[17]Daniel F. Littlefield Jr., *Africans and Seminoles: From Removal to Emancipation* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1977) and *Africans and Creeks: From the Colonial Period to the Civil War* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1979); Theda Perdue, *Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society, 1540-1866* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1979)*;* Claudio Saunt, *A New Order of Things: Property, Power, and the Transformation of the Creek Indians, 1733-1816* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Tiya Miles, *Ties that Bind: The Story of an Afro-Cherokee Family in Slavery and Freedom* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2005); Christina Snyder, *Slavery in Indian Country: The Changing Face of Captivity in Early America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010); Barbara Kraumather, *Black Slaves, Indian Masters: Slavery Emancipation, and Citizenship in the Native American South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013).

[18]Genovese describes Maroons as "attempting to resurrect an archaic social order often perceived as traditionally African but invariably a distinct Afro-American creation," Eugene Genovese, *From Rebellion to Revolution: Afro-American Slave Revolts in the Making of the Modern World* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1979), 3. Jamaican anthropologist Michael Smith makes a similar argument in *The Plural Society in the British West Indies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965): 24-37.

[19]Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1998), 27.

[20]Perdue discusses the effect of economic changes on the evolution of plantation slavery among the Cherokee, *Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society*, 50-69.

[21]Kathryn E. Holland Braund, "The Creek Indians, Blacks, and Slavery," *Journal of Southern History* 57 (November 1991): 601-36 for an earlier discussion of Native American racism against blacks.

[22] CSPCS, #50 "Governor Hunter to the Duke of Newcastle" February 11, 1731.

[23]Women were well protected in Maroon communities. See CSPCS, #25iii "Extract of Col. Campbell's letter of the examination of some rebellious negros lately taken," January 23, 1731; Bilby, *True-Born Maroon*, 157-159.

[24]Barbara Bush noted that women played important roles in resistance in Maroon villages and throughout Caribbean society in *Slave Women in Caribbean Society, 1650-1838* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990). The scholarship on female rites of passage, such as female circumcision, further suggests that bravery and fortitude where important attributes for future wives. Bettina Shell-Duncan, Walter Obiero and Leunit Muruli write "The bravery and self control displayed by enduring the pain of the operation is seen as central to the transformation from childhood to womanhood. By withstanding the pain of being cut, a woman demonstrates her maturity and readiness to endure the pain of childbirth and hardships of married life," in Chapter 6: "Women Without Choices: The Debate over Medicalization of Female Genital Cutting and Its Impact on a Northern Kenyan Community," 117. Fuambai Ahmadu remarked that the ability to face an ordeal demonstrates "daring, bravery, fearlessness, and audacity—qualities that will enable young women to stand their ground as adults in the households and within the greater community," in Chapter 14: "Rites and Wrongs: An Insider/Outsider Reflects on Power and Excision," 300. Both chapters are in Bettina Shell-Duncan and Ylva Hernlund, eds., *Female "Circumcision" in Africa: Culture, Controversy, and Change* (Boulder and United Kingdom: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000). Also see Adama and Naomi Doumbia, *The Way of the Elders: West African Spirituality and Tradition* (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn Publications, 2004), 131-138. CSPCS, #358vii "Further examination of [the negro] Sarra alias Ned taken by order of H.E. 1st Oct., 1733," Oct 13, 1733.

[25]Robertson and Klein, *Women and Slavery in Africa*; Miers and Kopytoff, "'African' Slavery;" Perdue, *Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society*, 52-53; Krauthamer, *Black Slaves, Indian Masters*, 25-27.

[26]CSPCS, #358vii "Further examination of [the negro] Sarra alias Ned taken by order of H.E. 1st Oct., 1733," Oct 13, 1733.

[27]Ebenezer Lambe, a member of the militia group sent out against the Maroons at Port Antonio in January 1733 noted that "the rebels" fired on and killed both whites and blacks in the party. Perhaps some of the "negroe shott" and baggage men who fled during campaigns against the Maroons did so not to join the rebels rather to escape the retribution they would face if captured by them. CSPCS, 75ii "Journal of proceedings of the Parties commanded by Edward Creswell and Ebenezer Lambe, kept by Ebenezer Lambe Jan. 27, 1733," March 27, 1733; Campbell, *Maroons of Jamaica*, 67.

[28]CSPCS, #358vii "Further examination of [the negro] Sarra alias Ned taken by order of H.E. 1st Oct., 1733," Oct 13, 1733.

[29]CSPCS, #486 "Governor Hunter to the Council of Trade and Plantations," Nov 13, 1731; CSPCS, #244i "Mr Ashworth to Governor Hunter June 1733," July 7, 1733; CSPCS, #320 "Governor Hunter to the Council of Trade and Plantations," Aug 25, 1733. Those who fled to the Maroons with "such arms as they could get," may have been particularly welcomed as access to weapons and ammunition was limited, CSPCS, #19 "Governor Hunter to the Duke of Newcastle," January 16, 1732. More than 30 bondmen left the estate of John Morant to join the Maroons carrying their field tools, CSPCS, #388 "Governor Hunter to the Council of Trade and

Plantations," September 20, 1732. Maroons used these tools to attack the breastworks, CSPCS, #174 "Council of Trade and Plantations to the Duke of Newcastle," May 22, 1734. Edward Long similarly suggested that those hoping to be accepted by the Maroons performed deeds "recommending themselves to their new friends" *The History of Jamaica, or, General Survey of the Ancient and Modern State of that Island: with reflections on its situation, settlements, inhabitants, climate, products, commerce, laws and government,* vol. 3 (London: T. Lowndes, 1774), 446.

[30]Long, *History of Jamaica*, vol. 3, 446. Those who fled to the Leeward Maroons had to go through an initiation period, James Knight, "The Naturall, Morall and Political History of Jamaica," B.L. Add. MS 12419, 96.

[31]CSPCS, 311ii "Examination of Nicholas Plysham before the Governor and Council of Jamaica, 18th June 1730," July 4' 1730.

[32] Interestingly, the census records categorize the men using military terms. Men are listed as "able men" or "fit to carry arms" and are grouped separately from the elderly and boys. Also see Campbell, *Maroons of Jamaica*, 46-50.

[33][Anon.] to Knight, N.D., Add. MS 12431, 76 also cited in Kopytoff, "The Early Political Development of Jamaican Maroon Societies," 297.

[34]Anon. "History of the Revolted Negroes in Jamaica," 60**.**
[35]Campbell, *Maroons of Jamaica*, 108. CSPCS, #484ii "Information by 'an Ebo named Cupid' escaped the rebels," Feb. 27, 1735.

[36]Knight, "History of Jamaica," Add. MS 12419, 95-97.

[37]Bilby, *True-Born Maroon*, 98.

References

Archival Research: British Library

-Additional Manuscripts [Add MSS] 12431: Tracts Relating to Jamaica. Edward Long, "Account of the Maroons," 1241.

-Anon., "History of the Revolted Negroes of Jamaica," ff.69-74.

-James Knight, "The Naturall, Morall and Political History of Jamaica," B.L. Add. MS 12419.

Published Primary Sources

-Bosman, Willem. *A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea, Divided into the Gold, the Slave, and the Ivory Coasts*. London, 1721.

-*Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series*. W. Noel Sainsbury, J.W. Fortescue, et. all, eds. Reprint, Vaduz:Kraus Reprint Ltd., 1964.

-Dallas, Robert Charles. *The history of the maroons, from their origins to their establishment of their chief tribe in Sierra Leone: including an expedition to Cuba, for the purpose of procuring Spanish chasseurs; and the state of the Island of Jamaica for the last ten years: with a succinct history of the island previous to that period.* 2 vols. London: T.N. Longman and O. Rees, 1805; Reprint, London: Cass Libraries, 1968.

-Long, Edward. *The History of Jamaica, or, General Survey of the Ancient and Modern State of that Island: with reflections on its situation, settlements, inhabitants, climate, products, commerce, laws and government.* 3 vols. London: T. Lowndes, 1774; Reprint, Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2003.

Secondary Sources

-Agorsah, Kofi E., ed. *Maroon Heritage: Archeological, Ethnographic, and Historical Perspectives*. Kingston, Jamaica: Canoe Press, 1994.

-Berlin, Ira. *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America*. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1998.

-Berger, Iris and E. Frances White, eds. *Women in Sub Saharan Africa: Restoring Women to History*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999.

-Bilby, Kenneth M., ed. *Drums of Defiance: Maroon Music from the Earliest Free Black Communities in Jamaica*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Folkways, 1992.

-Bilby, Kenneth M. *True-Born Maroons*. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2005.

-Braund, Kathryn E. Holland. "The Creek Indians, Blacks, and Slavery." *Journal of Southern History* 57   (November 1991): 601-36.

-Bush, Barbara. *Slave Women in Caribbean Society, 1650-1838.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990.

-Buisseret, David. Jamaica in 1687: The Taylor Manuscript at the National Library of Jamaica. Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2008.

-Campbell, Mavis C. *The Maroons of Jamaica 1655-1796: A History of Resistance, Collaboration, and Betrayal*. Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press, 1990.

-Frederick Cooper, "The Problem of Slavery in African Studies," *Journal of African History* 20, no.1(1979).

-Diptee, Audra. *From Africa to Jamaica: The Making of an Atlantic Slave Society 1775-1807*. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2010.

-Doumbia, Adama and Naomi Doumbia. *The Way of the Elders: West African Spirituality and Tradition*. St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn Publications, 2004.

-David Dalby, "Ashanti Survivals in the Language and Traditions of the Windward Maroons of Jamaica," African Language Studies, XII (1971): 31-51.

-Genovese, Eugene. *From Rebellion to Revolution: Afro-American Slave Revolts in the Making of the Modern World.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1979.

-Johnson, Amy. "Slavery on the Gold Coast and African Resistance to Slavery in Jamaica during the Early Colonial Period." *LIMINA: A Journal of Cultural and Historical Studies* 18 (June 2012).

-Kea, Ray. *Settlements, Trade, and Polities in the Seventeenth Century Gold Coast.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982.

-Kopytoff, Barbara K. "Early Political Development of Jamaican Maroon Societies." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 35 (Apr., 1978): 287-307.

-Kraumather, Barbara. *Black Slaves, Indian Masters: Slavery Emancipation, and Citizenship in the Native American South*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013.

-Littlefield, Daniel F. Jr. *Africans and Seminoles: From Removal to Emancipation*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1977.

-----*Africans and Creeks: From the Colonial Period to the Civil War.* Westport, CT: Praeger, 1979.

-Lovejoy, Paul. *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

-Manning, Patrick. *Slavery and African Life: Occidental, Oriental, and African Slave Trades*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

-Meillassoux, Claude. *The Anthropology of Slavery: The Womb of Iron and Gold*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991.

-Miers, Suzanne and Igor Kopytoff. "African 'Slavery' as an Institution of Marginality." In *Slavery in Africa: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives* edited by Suzanne Miers and Igor Kopytoff, 3-81. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1977.

-Miles, Tiya. *Ties that Bind: The Story of an Afro-Cherokee Family in Slavery and Freedom.* Berkley: University of California Press, 2005.

-Patterson, Orlando. *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982.

-Perbi, Akosua. *A History of Indigenous Slavery in Ghana from the 15th to the 19th Century.* Ghana: Sub-Saharan Publisher, 2004.

-Perdue, Theda. *Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society, 1540-1866.* Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1979.

-Price, Richard, ed. *Maroon Societies: Rebel Slave Communities in the Americas*. 2d. ed. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1979.

-Robertson, Claire and Martin Klein, eds. *Women and Slavery in Africa*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983.

-Rodney, Walter. "African Slavery and other Forms of Social Oppression on the Upper Guinea Coast in the Context of the Atlantic Slave Trade." *Journal of African History* 7, no.3 (1966): 431-443.

-Shell-Duncan, Bettina and Ylva Hernlund, eds. *Female "Circumcision" in Africa: Culture, Controversy, and Change*, Boulder and United Kingdom: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000.

-Saunt, Claudio. *A New Order of Things: Property, Power, and the Transformation of the Creek Indians, 1733-1816*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

-Schuler, Monica. "Akan Slave Rebellions in the British Caribbean." *Savacou*, vol 1, no 1, June 1970: 8-28.

-Smith, Michael. *The Plural Society in the British West Indies*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965.

-Snyder, Christina. "Conquered Enemies, Adopted Kin, and Owned People: The Creek Indians and Their Captives." *The Journal of Southern History* 73, no. 2 (May 2007): 255-288.

----- *Slavery in Indian Country: The Changing Face of Captivity in Early America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010.

-Thornton, John K. "The Coromantees: An African Cultural Group in Colonial North America and the Caribbean," *Journal of Caribbean History* 32, nos. 1-2 (1998): 161-78

-----*Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1680*. New York and London: Cambridge University Press, 1992

-Victor Uchendu, *The Igbo of Southeast Nigeria* (New York: Rinehart and Winston, 1965).

Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*: A reading

Imed Lassoued
University of Manouba, Tunisia

Abstract

Man has always been seen as a reasonable creature whose actions are the manifestations of reason. As a matter of fact, the dominance of reason has resulted in the establishment of rules and norms that enhanced the superiority of man in general and the Western man in particular during the eighteenth century. Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels, however, presents us with another picture. This essay will succinctly bring to the forefront this picture and show how Swift excelled in using some rhetorical devices like satire, irony, burlesque, and grotesque to castigate mankind.

Key words: **Horacian Satire, Juvenelian Satire, mankind, society, British literature**.

Writers are generally sensitive to the pressing issues of their societies. Armed with the power of the word, they all aim at reforming their societies or even whole nations. Due to its reformative power, satire is a suitable means by which a satirist attempts to cure his society. Among eighteenth-century English writers of Satire, Jonathan Swift is an outstanding example. Any Satirist is under pressure to both unveil and hide at the same time since those in power may be tempted to eliminate him. The burning of John Marston's satires, a century ago, comes into mind. Eighteenth-century England provided Swift with suitable deformities to spell out his satire throughout his masterpiece *Gulliver's Travels*. It enabled him to display his genius.

A number of changes took place during the last three decades of the seventeenth century and the first half of the eighteenth century which is better known as the Augustan Age because it is the period which stimulated Jonathan Swift to write *Gulliver's Travel*s and other works. The pace of scientific discoveries continued to to accelerate. The success of science particularly associated with the heroic name of Newton inspired thinkers in other fields to employ the inductive experimented methods in a search of a natural law. John Lock's Essays Concerning Human Understanding follows the Baconian and Newtonian empirical way blazed the trail for the main stream of British philosophy in the eighteenth century. Besides Lock, we may mention David Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature*. Similarly important is George Cheyne's Philosophical Principles of Religion in 1715. The list may go on to include names like Halley, Shaftesbury, etc….

The works of these authors contributed to setting the basis for the growth of a new kind of society. In some respects the influence of science on religion was to force Super-Naturalism back from nature to imagination. The aim was to liberate human intelligence from the biblical system of time and space in which earlier men had placed unquestioning faith. As the eighteenth century advanced it became easier to think about nature, society, and human nature in terms of a process instead of a fixed state. During the last decades of the seventeenth century and the first half of the eighteenth century it seems logical that the political and cultural sphere of this period should be covered if we are to fully understand Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels. The before- mentioned domains once studied thoroughly would provide us with ample evidences and clarifications on the forces that drove Swift to write his masterpiece. At this stage we think it is logic to mention briefly the major characteristics of the period under study. The people went through many years of strife and longed for peace. The early years of the eighteenth century were marked by fierce religious disputes which left the church too torpid to cope with the problem created by the activities of the early Evangelists. The aristocratic class made up by the landlords and a growing infusion of moneyed men was the class which controlled the parliament. The division between Whig and Tory corresponded mainly to the church and those who were inclined towards the mercantile, according to Stephen Leslie. We believe that these conditions provided a fertile ground for the satirist to unleash his satire. Satire can only flourish amid such conditions. Gulliver's Travels is undoubtedly satirical throughout.

Satire pertains not only to literature, but to every day utterances. It is conceived as an instrument of reform in the battle against human vice. However, it has not received serious

attention from English criticism. As James Sutherland puts it: ''for one book on satire there are probably half a dozen on comedy and perhaps as much on tragedy.'' There is a common agreement that satire can be described as the literary art of diminishing a subject by making it ridiculous. The satirist must appear amiable to his audience, hostile only to his enemies. The satirist is too sensible that he cannot turn a blind eye in front of this uncongenial reality. All satirists are endowed with the power to forecast the imminent coming of a new dark age. It has to be pouted out that the Greeks were the first to satire. And it was the Romans who added its derivatives to their native "satura". As such Horace and Juvenale emerge as pillars of Roman satire.   Both   of   them   are   poets,   and both of them embody divergent views on satire.   Ronald Paulson sums it up when he says:

> The distinction between Horacian and Juvenelian satire is largely one of focus on
> fool or knave. Horace focuses on the fathers who are hated while Juvenal focuses on
> the sons who kill their fathers. The fictions they employ are therefore basically
> different and since most subsequent satire derives from one or the other, they should
> be clearly distinguished (p21).

Unlike Alexander Pope whose literary heritage sustains a Horacian stance, Jonathan Swift's satire is Juvenalian in spirit. The grotesqueness of the picture of society and the exaggeration of some human conducts is conveyed in Gulliver's Travels. According to William K. Wimsatt, Swift's literary method consists mainly in anatomizing humanity through burlesque, irony, the grotesque, and parody. It would be interesting if we define these terms and relate them to Gulliver's Travels. However, we are going to leap to the work under study and give the reader an overview of this work. What is it about?

The wickedness of eighteenth century England legitimized Swift's choice to attack his society vituperatively. Like many satirists Swift chooses Gulliver as satiric personae. *Gulliver's Travels* is not only a political satire, it belongs also to the Utopian genre. The eighteenth century is known, apart from being the age of reason, as the Golden Age of Utopian fantasy. Whenever the whole fabric of society is collapsing the door is open to dreamers to come up with new alternatives. Thus Swift's Houyhngnms, who represent benevolence and perfection, emerge from his imagination. Their physical appearance as horses is evidence that he intends them to be beyond earthly representation. The Yahoos are directly paralleled with the loathsome man. Thus, we are in front of two societies a real and an ideal. If we sum up the four Books that make up Gulliver's Travels we are can succinctly say that Book I, II, and III expose to us men as corrupt, unreasonable, and futile, however, Book IV scrutinizes on the essence of the human race and unveils the common fate of humankind. Swift's   satire embraces the conventional institutions man evolves within. Politics is one of these institutions. The corruption of those in charge makes up the bulk of his satire in Book I. In Book II, we are given an apocalyptic picture of the court. In Book III, Gulliver's visit to the island of Balinbarbi and more precisely to the Academy of Lagado puts him in front of a fertile ground to display his genius a parodist. Several scholars pointed out that the Academy of Lagado is largely intended as a parody of the Royal Society established in 1662. Swift's satire on the relentless qualification of modern science is part of a large suspicion of the project of reason. It so appears that throughout Book I, II, and III Swift charted human absurdities and failings in several societies before reaching conviction about

Volume 1, Issue 3, December, 2014

humankind in Book IV. Natural and uncivilized man is the central theme of Book IV. While good qualities are given to the non human form of the horse, bad qualities are given to the nearly human form of the Yahoo.

Unquestionably, *Gulliver's Travels* is a fascinating book. It appeals to a wide range of readers. I have to admit that this humble essay has only given some hints to the ordinary reader who may venture to read it in full with a critical eye. I hope, as a casual explorer, only whet your appetite to read more on Jonathan Swift and *Gulliver's Travels* in particular.

References

Primary source(s)

-Swift, Jonathan. *Gulliver's Travels*. England: Penguin Popular Classics, 1994.

Secondary sources

-Dixon, Peter § Chalker, John, eds. *Jonathan Swift: Gulliver's Travels.* Introduced by Michael Foot, Penguin Books, 1967.

-Highet, Gilbert. *The Anatomy of Satire*. New Jersy: Princeton University Press, 1972.

-Kernan, Alvin. *The Plot of Satire*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965.

-Ingram, Allen. *Intricate Laughter in the Satire of Swift, and Pope*. New York: Saint Martin Press, 1986.

-Paulson, Ronald. *The Fictions of Satire*. Baltimore, Maryland: The John Hopkins Press, 1967.

-Plumb, John Harold. *England in the Eighteenth Century*. Penguin Books, 1973.

-Sutherland, James. *English Satire*.Cambridge at the University Press, 1967.

-Wimsatt, William, ed. Alexander Pope: *Selected Poetry and Prose*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961.

Arab Spring and the Contribution of Arab Women: Expectations and Concerns.

Isam M Shihada
Al Aqsa University, Gaza Strip, Palestine

Abstract

The Arab Spring seems to represent a new era of emancipation for women in the Arab world. Yet, it remains to be seen whether women will be afforded the opportunity to play substantial roles in the futures of their respective countries, or whether they will be marginalized, secluded and silenced. In this paper, I try to examine and chronicle roles played by Arab women during Arab Spring, the concerns and challenges they face and what strategies women should adopt to ensure their rights, in post- revolutionary periods. The researcher also argues how the new model of young women leaders like Ms. Karman and Asmaa Mahfouz deconstructs the prevalent narratives concerning the representation of Arab women which centers upon notions of women's sexuality, reductionist interpretations of religion and Orientalist representation of women to justify women's subordination. Finally, this paper concludes with the fundamental questions which need to be answered and the strategies which should be adopted regarding whether and how Arab women will indeed benefit from the ongoing change in the Middle East.

Keywords: The Middle East, Arab Spring, Arab women, Role, Empowerment, Challenges.

Introduction

In December 2010, the world turned its attention to Tunisia after a young street vendor, Mohamed Bouazizi[1] set himself on fire to protest the government's unjust treatment of the Tunisian people. His self-immolation sparked what is now called the "Arab Spring"[2] which led to the fall of dictators in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen while others may fall in Syria, Bahrain and Sudan. In the Arab world, thousands of women have taken to streets protesting for change and freedom after enduring centuries of oppression where, in several contexts, they have been deprived of social, economic and educational equality, freedom of speech and the right to participate in elections. Women's engagement in the Arab Spring negates the myths that Arabs cannot establish civil and democratic societies without resorting to violence and that they are incompatible with democracy[3].

The Arab Spring seems to represent a new era of emancipation for women in the Arab world. Yet, it remains to be seen whether women will be afforded the opportunity to play substantial roles in the futures of their respective countries, or whether they will be marginalized, secluded and silenced. In other words, fundamental questions need to be answered regarding whether women will indeed benefit from the ongoing change in the Middle East. Hence, in this paper, I try to examine and chronicle roles played by Arab women during Arab Spring, the concerns and challenges they face and what strategies women should adopt to ensure their rights, in post- revolutionary periods.

Arab Spring: Causes

In the Arab world, dictators, from Hosni Mubarak[4] in Egypt to Ali Abdullah Saleh in Yemen, have accumulated enormous wealth earned by plundering foreign aid budgets, lavish military weapons contracts and corruption. Power is also being centralized where they use secret police to terrorize, kill and counter any dissent to keep the people cowed and under complete control.[5] For example, in Egypt, we find that feelings of humiliation, lack of democracy and endemic destitution (or literally an absence of bread[6]), have driven them to rise up and revolt against the oppressive Egyptian regime which has deprived people of their freedom, dignity, and basic daily needs and violated their rights**.** Within this context, Ashraf Ezzat argues that Egyptians don"t even have to get arrested to feel degraded; all they have to do is to queue up in a long line that could drag out for hours just to buy a loaf of bread or sign the endless papers to apply for an ID card or a driving license or wait their turn to get examined in a hospital which has no beds or medication for them.[7] Moreover, the Egyptian regime has "a million and half well-trained soldiers whose sole mission is to keep the Egyptian people down."[8] For instance, during the Egyptian revolution, the military has killed protesters, persecuted and imprisoned thousands of them including women. We see that most of protesters, in Egypt, are young women, men and university students who find themselves with neither hope nor future since they are unable to find work and marry. Put differently, they are driven by "an untamable anger and a profound sense of injustice to change the regime."[9]

In the Arab world, uprisings have really taken regimes by surprise since they have not paid attention to the sweeping technological transformation. Social websites like Facebook and Twitter[10] have been beneficial for political and social groups who can interact freely and even revolt when organizing and assembling on the streets would put people‟s lives at risk like facing detention and physical threats. In this regard, Alaa Al Aswany argues that in Egypt, demonstrations have been organized through Face book "as a reliable source of information; when the state tried to block it, the people proved cleverer, and bloggers passed on ways to bypass the controls."[11]

Furthermore, social media creates history by giving the world a new means of communication. In the past, while journalists had to be physically present on the ground to interview people about their experiences, Twitter and Facebook, today, have made numerous eyewitness accounts possible which have revealed "how fragile a totalitarian regime can be in the face of a widely used simple communication technology."[12] Besides social websites, channels like Aljazeera[13] have played prominent roles in covering the sufferings of the ordinary Arab man and woman and shedding light on the oppressive means used by the dictatorships to keep their people down.

Women and Arab Spring

During the Arab Spring, we have witnessed women protest alongside men where they "were harassed, tortured, shot by snipers, and teargased"[14]. We also find that female social media organizers and journalists tweeted, filmed and reported the revolutions. I argue that women have just been instrumental in bringing down dictators like Zin Abidin Ben Ali[15] in Tunisia and Hosni Mubarak[16] in Egypt. Their active participation in the revolutionary Arab Spring not only shatters the traditional stereotypes about Arab women, viewed as oppressed, passive and voiceless[17], but also sheds light on their determination to chart and reshape their own destinies. Similarly, Soumaya Ghannouchi[18] argues that the type of the woman that has emerged out of Tunisia and Egypt in the Arab Spring deconstructs "the perception of the Arab women as powerless enslaved, invisible and voiceless."[19] Furthermore, none of the uprisings in the Arab countries can be possible without the participation of women. They were among the first to protest at the Avenue Habib Bourguiba[20] in Tunis, Tahrir Square[21] in Egypt and Pearl Roundabout[22] in Bahrain.

Tunisian women have indeed set an inspiring example to all women in the Middle East by toppling Ben Ali and taking part in building a new civil and democratic Tunisia. For example, in Tunisia, Saida Sadouni[23] has led the historic Kasbah demonstration that succeeded in forcing Mohamed Ghannouchi‟s[24] interim government out of office. During the Kasbah demonstration, Sadouni told protesters "I have resisted French occupation. I have resisted the dictatorships of Bourguiba and Ben Ali. I will not rest until our revolution meets its goals."[25] In another case, one may say that the blogger Lina Ben Mhenni[26] is probably the first Tunisian woman to inform the

world about the Tunisian uprising in December, 2010, and continues blogging despite being threatened, censored and terrorized.

One of the memorable scenes of the Arab Spring is that of female demonstrators donning headscarves or jeans, protesting, camping and sleeping in tents in front of government offices. Within this context, Magda Adly[27] states that during the Egyptian revolution we have seen women of all castes and ethnicities, wearing veils and jeans, come to rallies in thousands and leading what is happening on the ground. Concerning the participation of veiled women in the Arab Spring, one may argue that this is yet another stereotype, one which falsely links the veil[28] with submissiveness that is being dismantled. For example, we find many Arab women activists choose to wear the veil, yet they are "no less confident, vocal or charismatic than their unveiled sisters."[29]

If we take the example of the Egyptian revolution, we find that women assemble, organize, protest, guard tents and patrol streets for security at Tahrir square. It is the leader of the Egyptian revolution Asmaa Mahfouz[30] ' a representative of her young generation, who has been inspirational in turning a one-day demonstration into a raging revolution. For instance, she has uploaded a short video on Facebook in which she challenges whoever says that women should not go to protests because they will get beaten.

In Yemen, demonstrations against the rule of President Ali Saleh have been led by a young charismatic woman, Tawakul Karman[31.] Karman has been campaigning since 2007 demanding political reform in Yemen. When she was arrested in January, 2011, the Yemeni authorities were forced to release her following a wave of angry protests in Sana. Speaking about her experience in jail, Karman says,

> After a week of protests in the Yemeni revolution media outlets reported my detention and demonstrations erupted in most provinces of the country; they were organized by students, civil society activists and politicians. The pressure on the government was intense and I was released after 36 hours in a women's prison, where I was kept in chains.[32]

In a powerful statement of international support for the Arab Spring and the important roles played by women proclaimed by the peace Prize citation, "We cannot achieve democracy and lasting peace in the world unless women obtain the same opportunities as men to influence developments at all levels of society."[33] Tawakul Karman has recently been awarded the Noble Peace Prize for her efforts to advance democracy and human rights, and equality for women in her country. We find that Karman has been honored for her nonviolent struggle for women's rights in Yemen which represents the right moment for women to achieve basic and equal rights. As a liberal Islamist, Karman seems to represent the idea that Islam is not against peace and women Islamists can also fight for human rights, freedom and democracy[34] and will play a vital role in modernizing Arab societies. To be awarded the Noble Peace Prize can also be seen not only as a message of support and endorsement for the Arab Spring which has empowered the

disadvantaged women and down trodden people, but also as a victory for Arab women in their struggle to end oppression and dictatorship.

What has inspired Arab women and thrust them into the heart of protest is their yearning for change and political freedom. They have played crucial roles raising hopes that their meaningful contributions would translate into social, civil, democratic and political rights. Not only women participate in the protest movements raging in Arab countries, but also they assume leadership roles there. Arab women prove themselves through continuous action on the ground at Kasbah, Tahrir Square and Pearl Roundabout.

I argue that the new model of young women leaders like Ms. Karman, Mona Eltahawy, Saida Sadouni, Lina Ben Mhenni and Asmaa Mahfouz deconstructs the prevalent two narratives concerning the representation of Arab women. The first narrative centers upon notions of women's sexuality, family honor and reductionist interpretations of religion and conventions to justify women's subordination.[35] The second is the Orientalist narrative which views Arab and Muslim women as oppressed and miserable objects of pity in desperate need of Western intellectual, political and military intervention to save them from darkness and lead them to enlightenment.[36]

Hence, we find that Arab women's participation in the Arab Spring deconstructs both narratives, where we find Arab women refusing to be degraded, isolated and silenced. Instead, we see women who are determined to liberate themselves as they liberate their societies from dictatorship. Put differently, they take care of their own future, a future which they seek for themselves and is thus an authentic one, defined only by their own needs, choices and priorities.

Arab Spring: Women's Concerns and Challenges

Historically speaking, women have been the most consistent and staunch advocates of democratic and civil society values across the Arab world. If we take the example of Tunisia, which has the most progressive personal status code in the region, we find that the Tunisian government abolished polygamy and enacted women's equality in marriage, divorce and child custody after independence in 1956.[37] Yet, women have tangible reasons to worry about their future since national revolutions betrayed them in the past. If we take the case of the Algerian revolution against French colonialism, we find that women participated, fought and were killed beside men in war.[38] Yet, by the time the Algerian independence was won, women were sent back home by their revolutionary male fighters.

Though the Arab Spring certainly presents positive changes, there are many challenges women face. There is indeed more to be done when it comes to supporting women's rights throughout the Arab world and there are also reasons for intensifying efforts to ensure that women's rights are not compromised during political transitions. In the Arab world, the rise of Islamists[39] to rule and sexual assaults against women demonstrators have made women not only feel afraid about their safety but also concerned about their hard-earned rights obtained under

previous toppled dictatorships.[40] The challenges women face, in fact, pose crucial questions about what will the status of women be in post-revolutionary societies like Egypt, Tunisia, Libya and Yemen? And what roles can women play to protect their rights? In other words, will the women who supported and participated in the 2011 revolutions "be pushed aside by military, Islamist, or other leaders, or will they be allowed to take part in governing in the judiciary, and in making autonomous decisions about their own lives?"[41]

The disturbing reports of virginity tests and the sexual assaults on women protesters in Cairo's Tahrir Square have intensified women's fears. For example, at Tahrir Square, Mona Eltahawy[42] has been held for hours while blindfolded, sexually groped and one of her arms broken. Recounting her painful trauma, Eltahawy writes:

> Besides beating me so monstrously, my left arm and right hand were broken; the dogs of (central security forces) subjected me to the worst sexual assault ever. Five or six surrounded me, groped and prodded my breasts, grabbed my genital area and i lost count how many hands tried to get into my trousers.[43]

In another case, we find that the scene of dragging the unconscious young woman in the blue jeans,[44] with her upper-half stripped, through the streets of Egypt testifies to the brutality of the military in Egypt using the weapon of shame to subjugate women. Yet**,** sexuality can no longer be used against women due to rising levels of feminist consciousness in Egypt in particular and in the Arab world in general. For instance, when the military in Egypt has subjected young women to degrading virginity tests[45], women sued them[46] and used social media like "Facebook and Twitter to expose their brutal actions, an endeavor which demonstrates women's persistence to continue their struggle for freedom.[47] In her article, "the unknown woman shows the struggle is not over," Ahdaf Soueif points out that one of the disgusting patriarchal techniques used against women is groping them sexually in a way to insinuate that "females who took part in street protests wanted to be groped,[48] which consequently led women to develop counter techniques like wearing multiple layers of light clothing without buttons to avoid sexual harassment while protesting.

To add more, it is deplorable and outrageous to see that women, in Egypt, have been left out of the political dialogue since Hosni Mubarak's fall. For example, the committee assigned to rewrite the constitution in Egypt does not even have one single female legal expert. In this regard, Nawal El Saadawi argues to counter any attempt to exclude women from being part of ongoing changes in the new Egypt, it is very important for women to unite as a strong political power.[49]

In the Arab world, women still continue to face public and private discrimination on a daily basis. If we take Saudi Arabia as an example, we find that Saudi women still suffer from gender segregation, unequal educational and economic opportunities and the prohibition from driving.[50] Though King Abdulla's announcement that women will be granted the right to participate in the 2015 local elections, this reform can be seen as only one positive step out of

many necessary steps that the Saudi government must make to ensure equal rights for Saudi women. Yet, the vast majority of Saudi women are still waiting for their Arab spring. Within this context, Christoph Wilcke argues that "women are even forcing change in calcified Saudi Arabia, where the so-called guardianship system requires them to obtain permission from a male relative to travel, work, study, or take part in public life."[51]

On the other hand, in Tunisia, the Islamists under Rashid Ghannouchi[52] try to appease the fears of women by making it clear that there is no contradiction between Islam and women's rights and they would not seek to reverse women's equal rights. They are also neither interested in polygamy nor in forcing women to wear the veil. They also intend to take progressive, modern and moderate Turkey as an example to follow. However, Shirin Ebadi,[53] drawing on the bitter experience of women and the Iranian Revolution[54] in 1979, warns that women should demand their rights now during the popular uprisings sweeping the Arab world to "avoid being short-changed by post-revolutionary governments,"[55] since if women cannot gain equality now, then this cannot be a real revolution and won't lead to democracy.

In order to avoid past errors committed by feminist and political groups during the period of nationalism in 1950s and the Iranian revolution, where they put off their demands for equality until after the overthrow of regimes, the women's rights movement should move fast to secure constitutional rights. Hence, women must sustain an uprising before it is too late and redouble efforts to ensure that their rights are not sacrificed during political governmental transitions. They should also persevere in forming political parties with clear programs, run in elections and demand their quota according to international law.

Women, in fact, must adopt a new political discourse based on emphasizing women's leadership. Ideally, male revolutionaries should not stand by or shy away but support and recognize the right of women to dignity, equal rights and freedom of expression since it will not be possible to develop Arab societies without women. It is, undoubtedly, foreseen and expected that there will be real challenges to this process of women's emancipation, as recent attacks on female demonstrators indicate. But the dynamic process of revolutionary change is irreversible and those who have started the Arab Spring will continue in rebuilding their new societies. Finally, there is no doubt that this is the right moment of transformation in the Arab world for women and men, but any revolution that fails to achieve equality for women will be incomplete.

Notes and references

[1] Mohamed Bouazizi was a Tunisian street vendor who set himself on fire on 17 December 2010, in protest of the confiscation of his wares and the harassment and humiliation that he reported was inflicted on him by a municipal official and her aides. His act became a catalyst for the Tunisian Revolution and the wider Arab Spring, inciting demonstrations and riots throughout Tunisia in protest of social and political issues in the country. The public's anger and violence intensified following Bouazizi's death, leading then-President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali to step down on 14 January 2011, after 23 years in power. The success of the Tunisian protests inspired protests in several other Arab countries, in addition to several non-Arab countries. The protests included several men who emulated Bouazizi's act of self-immolation, in an attempt to bring an end to their own autocratic governments.

[2] For more information on the Arab Spring, see Robin B. Wright, *Rock the Casbah: Rage and Rebellion Across the Islamic World* (Cape Town: Deckle Edge, 2011); Bruce Feiler, *Generation Freedom: The Middle East Uprisings and the Remaking of the Modern World* (London: William Morrow Paperbacks,2011);John R. Bradley, *After the Arab Spring: How Islamists Hijacked the Middle East Revolts* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Lin Noueihed and Alex Warren, *The Battle for the Arab Spring: Revolution, Counter-Revolution and the Making of a New Era* (CT: Yale University Press, 2012); Sohrab Ahmari, Nasser Weddady, Lech Walesa and Gloria Steinem, *Arab Spring Speaks out for Freedom and Justice from North Africa to Iran* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012);Hamid Dabashi, *The Arab Spring: Delayed Defiance and the End of Post colonialism* (London: Zed Books, 2012); Marwan Bishara ,*The Invisible Arab: The Promise and Peril of the Arab Revolutions* (New York: Nation Books,2012); Marc Lynch. *The Arab Uprising: The Unfinished Revolutions of the New Middle East*. (Jackson, TN: Public Affairs, 2012); Jean-Pierre Filiu, *The Arab Revolution: Ten Lessons from the Democratic Uprising* (USA: Oxford University Press,2011); James L. Gelvin, *The Arab Uprisings: What Everyone Needs to Know* (USA: Oxford University Press, 2012); James Petras, *The Arab Revolt and the Imperialist Counterattack* (Atlanta: Clarity Press, 2011);Kenneth M. Pollack, *The Arab Awakening: America and the Transformation of the Middle East* (Washington,D.C.,:Saban Center at the Brookings Institution Books,2011); Minky Worden and Christiane Amanpour, *The Unfinished Revolution: Voices from the Global Fight for Women's Rights* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2012).

3   For more information on this topic, see Nicola Christine Pratt, *Democracy and Authoritarianism in the Arab World* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2006); Ibrahim Elbadawi and Samir Makdisi (eds.), *Democracy in the Arab World: Explaining the Deficit* (New York: Routledge, 2010); Gerd Nonneman (ed.*), Democracy, Reform and Authoritarianism in the Arab World* (New York: Routledge,2010); Francesco Cavatorta and Vincent Durac, *Civil Society and Democratization in the Arab World: The Dynamics of Activism* (New York: Routledge, 2010).

[4] For more details on the rule of dictators in the Middle East, see,e.g, Roger Owen, *The Rise and Fall of Arab Presidents for Life* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012); Galal Amin, *Egypt in the Era of Hosni Mubarak, 1981-2011* (American University in Cairo Press, 2011).

[5] For more discussions on the brutality of Arab regimes, see, James Petras, *The Arab Revolt and the Imperialist Counterattack* (n.c: Clarity Press, 2011).

[6] For more information on the Egyptian revolution and the democracy of bread, see, e.g, Vijay Prashad, *Arab Spring, Libyan Winter* (n.c: AK Press, 2012); Wael Ghonim, *Revolution 2.0: The Power of the People Is Greater Than the People in Power: A Memoir* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt,2012); Ashraf Khalil, *Liberation Square: Inside the Egyptian Revolution and the Rebirth of a Nation* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2012); Alaa Al Aswany, *On the State of Egypt: What Made the Revolution Inevitable* (London:Vintage, 2011); Alaa al Aswany and Jonathan Wright, *Arab Spring Dreams: The Next Generation the State of Egypt: A Novelist's Provocative Reflections* (The American University in Cairo Press, 2011)

[7] Ashraf Ezzat,"Mona Eltahawy Recounts the Real Story of Egypt Revolution," "*Word Press*." November 26, 2011. Accessed July 11, 2014. http://ashraf62.wordpress.com/2011/11/26/mona-eltahawy-recounts-the-history-of-Egypt-revolution/

[8] Alaa Al Aswany, "United by an injustice and anger that won"t be tamed," In *The Arab Spring: Rebellion, Revolution and a new world order*, edited by Toby Manhire (London: Guardian Books, 2012), 4919.

[9] Ibid, 4919.

10, *Egypt Unshackled- Using social media to @#:) the System* (New York: Cambria Books,2011)

11 Al Aswany, "United by an injustice and anger that won"t be tamed," 4948.

[12] Denis G. Campbell, *Egypt Unshackled- Using social media to @#:) the System* (New York: Cambria Books, 2011), 5.

[13] For more information on the role of Aljazeera, see Josh Rushing and Sean Elder, *Mission Al-Jazeera: Build a Bridge, Seek the Truth, Change the World* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Khalil Rinnawi, *Instant Nationalism: McArabism, al-Jazeera, and Transnational Media in the Arab World* (New York: University Press of America, 2006).

[14] Minky Worden and Christiane Amanpour, *The Unfinished Revolution: Voices from the Global Fight for Women's Rights* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2012), 2.

[15] On 14 January 2011, following a month of protests against his rule, Zin Din Ben Ali was forced to flee to Saudi Arabia along with his wife Leïla Ben Ali and their three children. The interim Tunisian government asked for Interpol to issue an international arrest warrant, charging him with money laundering and drug trafficking. He and his wife were sentenced in absentia to

35 years in prison on 20 June 2011. In June 2012, Ben Ali was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment in absentia for inciting violence and murder.

16 For more information on the rule of Hosni Mubarak, see Gala Amin, *Egypt in the Era of Hosni Mubarak, 1981-2011* (American University in Cairo Press, 2011); Roger Owen, *The Rise and Fall of Arab Presidents for Life* (Harvard University Press:Cambridge,2012)

17 For more details, see Mona Mikhail, *The images of Arab Women: Fact and Fiction* (Washington, D. C: Three Continents Press, 1979); Reina Lewis, *Rethinking Orientalism: Women, Travel, and the Ottoman Harem* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press,2003); Reina Lewis and Sara Mills, (eds.) *Feminist Postcolonial theory* (New York: Routledge,2003); Faegheh Shirazi,(ed) *Muslim Women in War and Crisis: Representation and Reality* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011).

18 Soumaya Ghannouchi grew up in London where she worked as a journalist writing for the Guardian.

19 Soumaya Ghannouchi , "Female protesters are shattering stereotypes," In *The Arab Spring: Rebellion, Revolution and a new world order*, edited by Toby Manhire. (London: Guardian Books, 2012), 6493.

20 Avenue Habib Bourguiba is the central thoroughfare of Tunis, and the historical political and economic heart of Tunisia. It bears the name of the first President of the Republic of Tunisia and the national leader of the Tunisian independence movement. During the protests of 2011, many demonstrations calling for the downfall of President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali and that of the national unity government were held on the avenue.

21 For more details on the significance of Tahrir Square, see Hoda Rashad, *Rising from Tahrir* (Seattle: CreateSpace, 2012).

22 Pearl Roundabout was a roundabout located near the financial district of Manama, Bahrain. The roundabout was named after the pearl monument that previously stood on the site and was destroyed on March 18, 2011, by government forces as part of a crackdown on protesters during the ongoing Bahraini uprising.

.
23 For more discussions, see, Jessica Sarhan,"The Women behind the revolutions and computer screens." *Your MiddleEast* 18, October, 2011. Accessed July 9, 2012. http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/columns/article/the-women-behind-the-revolutions-and-computer-screens_2258; Soumaya Ghannoushi, "Rebellion: Smashing stereotypes of Arab women." *Aljazeera*. April 25, 2011.Accessed July 9, 2014. http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2011/04/201142412303319807.html.

[24] Mohamed Ghannouchi resigned as prime minister of the post-revolution government amid further clashes between police and protestors. The interim president, Fouad Mebazaa, named the former government minister Beji Caid-Essebsi as Ghannouchi's replacement.

[25] Soumya Ghanoushi , "Female protesters are shattering stereotypes," 6493.

[26] Lina Ben Mhenni is a Tunisian Internet activist, blogger and university linguistics teacher. In 2011, Mhenni was reported to have been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for her contributions and activism during the Tunisian Revolution.

[27]Magda Adly is the director of the El Nadim Center for the Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence to Inter Press Service.

[28] For the debates on the veil, see, e.g, Fatima Mernissi. *The Veil and The Male Elite* (New York: Basic books, 1992); Ali Mohammad Syed, *The Position of Women in Islam: A Progressive View* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004); Nawal El Saadawi, *The Nawal El Saadawi Reader* (London & New York: Zed Books, 1997); Leila Ahmed, *Women, Gender and Islam* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992); Anwar Hekmat, *Women and the Koran: The Status of Women in Islam*. (Amherst: Prometheus, 1997); Elizabeth Fernea, *In Search of Islamic Feminism: One Woman's Global Journey* (New York: Doubleday, 1998).

[29] Soumaya Ghannouchi, "Female protesters are shattering stereotypes," 6493.

[30]Asmaa Mahfouz is an Egyptian activist and one of the founders of the April 6 Youth Movement. She has been credited by journalist Mona Eltahawy and others with helping to spark mass uprising through her video blog posted one week before the start of the 2011 Egyptian revolution. She is a prominent member of Egypt's Coalition of the Youth of the Revolution and one of the leaders of the Egyptian revolution.

[31] Tawakkul Karman is the head of Women Journalists Without Chains.

[32] Tawakkul Karman, "A Better Country Awaits Us," In *The Arab Spring: Rebellion, Revolution and a new world order*, edited by Toby Manhire (London: Guardian Books,2012), 5803.

[33]Worden and Amanpour, "*The Unfinished Revolution*", 2.

[34] For more information on human rights in Quran, see, e.g., Muhammad Sharif Chaudhry, *Human Rights in Islam* (Lahore: Pakistan Islamic Education Congress, 1993); Riffat Hassan, "On Human Rights and the Qur"anic Perspective," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 19:3 (1982): 51;

Shaheen Sardar Ali, *Gender and Human Rights in Islam and International Law: Equal Before Allah, Unequal Before Man?* (The Hague/Boston: Kluwer Law International, 2000).

35 For more information on the reductionist interpretations of religion and conventions, see Miriam Cooke, *Women Claim Islam* (New York: Routledge, 2001); Amina Wadud, *Quran and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); Margot Badran, *Feminists, Islam and the Nation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995); Margot Badran, *Feminism in Islam: Secular and Religious Convergences* (Oxford: One world, 2009).

36 For more details on the Western stereotypes concerning women in the Arab world, see Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Vintage,1979); Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations:*
. Remaking of World Order (New York: Touchstone Press, 1996); Soumaya Ghannouchi, "Rebellion: Smashing stereotypes of Arab women," *Aljazeera*. April 25, 2011. http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2011/04/201142412303319807.html; Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Vintage, 1994).

37 For more discussions on the status of women in Tunisia, see Mounira Charrad, *States and Women's Rights: The Making of Postcolonial Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco* (University of California Press, 2001); Minky Worden, *The Unfinished Revolution: Voices from the Global Fight for Women's Rights* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2012).

38 For more information on the relationship of women and nationalism, see Valentine Moghadam (ed), *Gender and National Identity: Women and Politics in Muslim Societies* (London: Zed Books Ltd , 1994); Jayawadena Kumari, *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World* (London: Zed Books, 1986); Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse* (London: Zed Press, 1986); Andrew Parker, Mary Russo, Doris Sommer and Patricia Yaeger (eds.), *Nationalisms and Sexualities* (New York: Rout ledge, 1992); Homi Bhaba (ed), *Nation and Narration* (London: Routledge, 1990); Anderson Benedict, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

39 For more discussions on the rise of Islamists to rule in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya, see, John R. Bradley, *After the Arab Spring: How Islamists Hijacked the Middle East Revolts* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Wadah Khanfar, "Islamist parties: We should welcome the rise of political Islam," In *The Arab Spring: Rebellion, Revolution and a new world order, edited by Toby Manhire* (London: Guardian Books, 2012).

40 For more details on the history of Arab women''s struggles for their rights, see Nawal El Saadawi, *The Hidden Face of Eve: Women in the Arab world*. Trans. Sherif Hetata (London: Zed Books, 1980); Suhair Majaj, Paula W. Sunderman, and Thérèse Saliba, (eds). *Intersections: Gender, Nation, and Community in Arab Women's Novels* (Syracuse University Press, 2002); Dayla Cohen-Mor, (ed). *Arab Women Writers: An Anthology of Short Stories* (Albany: State

University of New York Press, 2005); Anastasia Valassopoulos, *Contemporary Arab Women Writers: Cultural Expression in Context* (London: Routledge, 2007).

[41] Minky Worden, "*The Unfinished Revolution",* 4.

[42]Mona Eltahawy is an Egyptian-American journalist.

[43] Ashraf Ezzat, "Mona Eltahawy Recounts the Real Story of Egypt Revolution," *Word Press.* November 26, 2011. Accessed July 11, 2014. http://ashraf62.wordpress.com/2011/11/26/mona-eltahawy-recounts-the-history-of-egypt-revolution/1

[44] For more discussions on sexual harassment against women by the Egyptian military, see, Ahdaf Soueif , "The unknown woman shows the struggle is not over," In *The Arab Spring: Rebellion, Revolution and a new world order*, edited by Toby Manhire (London: Guardian Books, 2012).

[45] Virginity tests are perceived by many women as rape. They are undressed by jeering soldiers, who use their mobile phones to film examinations of women's genitalia. For more discussion on virginity tests, see Habiba Mohsen, "What Made Her Go There? Samira Ibrahim and Egypt"s Virginity Test Trial," *Aljazeera*." March 16, 2012. Accessed July 11, 2012. http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/03/2012316133129201850.html

[46] For more information on suing the Military by women victims, see ,e.g, Robert Mackey, "One One year later, Egyptian women subjected to „virginity tests" await justice,"TheLede," March 9,2012. Accessed June 10, 2012. http://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/03/09/one-year-later-egyptian-women-subjected-to-   virginity-tests-await-justice/ngroundnews.org/article.php?id=29727&lan=en&sp=0; Deena Adel, "Against all odds: „Virginity test" Victim Awaits Her Verdict, "*Global Post*. November 21, 2011. Accessed July 11, 2014.http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/regions/middle- east/egypt/111121/against-all-odds-„virginity-test"-victim-awaits-her-v

[47] Ahdaf Soueif , "The unknown woman shows the struggle is not over," In *The Arab Spring: Rebellion, Revolution and a new world order*, edited by Toby Manhire (London: Guardian Books,2012), 5081.

[48]Ibid, 5040.

[49] For more information on Nawal el Saadawi"s views, see, Anna Louie Sussman, "An Interview With Nawal El Saadawi," "*The Nation*", March21, 2011. Accessed, July21, 2014. http://www.thenation.com/article/159362/interview-nawal-el-saadawi#

[50] For more information on the rights of women in Saudia Arabia see Sören Jehoiakim Ethan,(ed) Women's Rights in Saudi Arabia (Berlin: Volv Press, 2012); Sami alrabba, *Veiled Atrocities: True Stories of Oppression in Saudi Arabia* (New York: Prometheus Books,2010); Rajaa Alsanea, *Girls of Riyadh* (Penguin Press HC, 2007).

[51] Christph wilcke ," Saudi Women's Struggle," In Minky Worden and Christiane Amanpour , *The Unfinished Revolution: Voices from the Global Fight for Women's Rights* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2012), 93.

[52] Rashid al-Ghannushi is a Tunisian Islamist politician who co-founded the Ennahda Movement, currently the largest party in Tunisia. He has been called the party's "intellectual leader".

[53] Shirin Ebadi is an Iranian Nobel peace laureate. She was Iran˝s first woman judge but lost that job following the Islamic revolution because the country's new leaders said women were too emotional to be judges. She became a human rights lawyer but, after suffering harassment, she left the country in 2009.

[54] For more information on women and the Iranian revolution, see Soraya Paknazar Sullivan(ed.), *Stories by Iranian Women Since the Revolution* (Austin, University of Texas Press,1991); Robin Wright, *The Last Great Revolution: Turmoil and Transformation in Iran*(London:Vintage,2001); Shirin Ebadi and Azadeh Moaveni, *Iran Awakening: A Memoir of Revolution and Hope* (New York: Random House,2006); Haleh Esfandiar, *Reconstructed Lives: Women and Iran's Islamic Revolution* (Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press,1997); Azar Nafisi, *Reading Lolita in Tehran: A Memoir in Books* (New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2008).

[55] Shirin Ebadi, "Islamic Law and Revolution against women," In Minky Worden and Christiane Amanpour, *The Unfinished Revolution: Voices from the Global Fight for Women's Rights* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2012), 53.

Getting Away With Murder: The Film Noir World of Woody Allen

Bryan Mead
Northern Illinois University, USA

Abstract

Although normally utilizing parody and humor when dealing with film noir, Woody Allen has made two films that deal more directly with the style and themes of classical noir cinema: Crimes and Misdemeanors (1989) and Match Point (2005). Both films differ from classical film noir, however, in the protagonist's ability to enter into the criminal underworld and return unscathed by the experience. Whereas classical noir protagonists are isolated and unable to enter (or re-enter) everyday society, the protagonists in Allen's films are able to do so, moving the focus of these films from an existentialist "fate" of the classical noir to an individualized morality based on choice and reason. This essay examines the noir elements of both Crimes and Misdemeanors and Match Point in an effort to expand current academic understanding of Woody Allen's film oeuvre.

Keywords: Woody Allen, film noir, existentialism, film, film studies, noir, Match Point, Crimes and Misdemeanors

Much of the scholarship devoted to the cinematic canon of Woody Allen includes discussion of two oppositional cinematic categories: comedy and drama. These categories are broken down into more specific genre groupings depending on the film(s) being discussed, with the most common terms utilized being slapstick, romantic comedy, comedy-drama, tragedy, and parody. There is, however, a label that fits certain Allen films that has received very little attention, typically only being mentioned in passing when mentioned at all. This label (or genre, depending on who is being asked) is *film noir*. To be sure, Allen has been connected to film noir by certain scholars (most notably Mary P. Nichols), but only in relation to his parody of noir-type films. Allen's most direct parodies of film noir include *Shadows and Fog* (1991) and *The Curse of the Jade Scorpion* (2001), the latter of which has been described as "film noir meets romantic comedy," where the "result is something lighter than the former [yet]…more serious than the latter" (Nichols 256). Nichols' description underscores the fact that Allen's parodies of noir, while potentially being films worth studying, fail to contain the same thematic concerns as more standard noir films.

However, in addition to his noir parodies, Woody Allen has made two films that deal more directly with the style and themes of classical noir cinema, yet which have not been examined in this way. These two films are *Crimes and Misdemeanors* (1989) and *Match Point* (2005). In categorizing both *Crimes* and *Match Point* as noir films it will first be important to properly describe noir cinema to notice how Allen's films actually have similarities with and departures from the classical model. It will also be necessary to discuss the significance of existentialism in noir cinema to see how both *Crimes and Misdemeanors* and *Match Point* share with yet also depart from the standard noir handling of existentialist ideals. What finally becomes apparent in categorizing Allen's two films as noir cinema is the discrepancy between Allen's protagonists and those of the classical period. Allen's protagonists ultimately have an ability to enter into the criminal underworld and return unscathed by the experience whereas classical noir protagonists are isolated and unable to enter (or re-enter) everyday society. This alteration ultimately shifts the thematic focus from the existentialist "fate" of the classical noir to an individualized morality in Allen's cinema based on choice and reason.

Classifying films as "noir" has been an area of debate since the mid-1950s. Many generic descriptions of noir cinema note "an urban setting in which psychotic members of criminal gangs freely roamed the dark streets," in films that stylistically include "shadowy scenes, involving the extensive use of dimly-lit interiors and nighttime exteriors, [which] establish a forbidding, menacing, and sinister atmosphere" (Laham 51). Characters in this environment are often "alienated from each other and often turn to crime in order to achieve their aims" because they are either "psychopathic, lack a conscience, [or] are willing to engage in crime if it serves their self-interests" (Laham 51). More detailed explanations of noir as a movement add that noir "situates itself within the very criminal milieu" that other films merely examine from a distance, follow characters (both main and secondary) that are morally ambiguous (and who usually traverse in the mid-way point "between lawful society and the underworld"), and contain a pervasive theme of violence and crime that "abandoned the adventure film convention of the fair fight," and replaced it with "settling scores, beatings, and cold-blooded murders" (Borde and Chaumeton 20-22). Along with these traits is a recurring "femme fatale" character who is

"frustrated and deviant, half predator, half prey, detached yet ensnared, [who] falls victim to her own traps" (Borde and Chaumeton 22).

Many of the narrative concerns associated with classical noir cinema are prominently featured in both *Crimes and Misdemeanors* and *Match Point*. Both Judah (Martin Landau) of *Crimes* and Chris (Jonathan Rhys Meyers) of *Match Point* are emotionally isolated characters who enter into morally questionable behavior (extra-marital sex), have their middle-class lifestyle threatened by a "femme fatale," and decide to engage in criminal activity (murder) in order to serve their self-interest. It is this engagement with criminal activity that causes both characters to become directly involved with a criminal underworld that they were not initially connected with. Both films, then, offer examples of Durgnat's "Middle Class Murder" category of noir in which the "theme of respectable middle-class figure beguiled into, or secretly plotting, murder" is prevalent (Durgnat 46).

Of course, narrative elements of noir must also be coupled with a visual style consistent with noir mise-en-scene. The degree to which all noir films adhere to a similar visual style is cause for much debate, but it is important to mention that many within the noir canon contain visuals that offer a "constant opposition of areas of light and dark," greater use of a longer "depth of field," and compositional imbalance that is "designed to unsettle, jar, and disorient the viewer in correlation with the disorientation felt by the noir heroes" (Place and Peterson 66-68). *Crimes and Misdemeanors* and *Match Point* also employ these elements, although more subtly than many of the oft-cited noir examples such as *Double Indemnity* (Wilder, 1944) or *Detour* (Ulmer, 1945).

Crimes and Misdemeanors' noir-ish visual style is evident early in the film. The first post-credits image of the film is of the exterior of a banquet at night. Darkness surrounds the structure, which can only be seen because of the interior lights escaping through the windows. The lights are slightly reflected off of a nearby lake, but the majority of the screen is complete darkness. A sound bridge of applause connects the exterior shot to an interior shot of a large crowd inside the hall. This first interior shot initially appears normal, yet the wide-angle lens used distorts the spacing within the room so that both the floor and the ceiling are visible. Thus, even though the camera is positioned above the heads of the crowd and seems to be shooting at a direct angle, the ceiling still fills the top portion of the screen. The function of this image becomes apparent once the narrative moves forward a bit and the viewer finds out that this banquet is in honor of Judah Rosenthal who has, earlier in the day, almost been revealed as an adulterer. Judah's internal angst and entrapment is visually represented by compositionally including the ceiling in the opening shots of the film. His claustrophobic feelings are being visually depicted, enhancing his perception that he cannot escape his situation.

A cut moves from the wide-angled shot of the banquet hall to a tracking close-up of Judah listening to both the master of ceremonies speak his praises and his family lovingly joke about his apparent nervousness. The camera pans, tilts, and dollies back and forth during this sequence, shifting its framing from a close-up of Judah to slightly wider shots that include Judah's family, mirroring Judah's mental focus which is shifting from the letter he found earlier in the day to his family's comments. These shots, much like the majority of classic noir moving camera shots,

seem to have been "carefully considered and…tied very directly to the emotions" of the character (Place and Peterson 69).

Judah's honorary banquet is then interrupted by a flashback to earlier in the day. Again, the camera utilizes noir visual style in creating an unsettling atmosphere. The interior of the room seems only to be illumined by light entering through the windows, giving the film a dull color and, since the characters are mostly lit from behind, casting shadows over the side of their bodies nearest to the camera. Objects within the frame also "take on an assumed importance simply because they act to determine a stable composition" (Place and Peterson 68). Miriam Rosenthal (Claire Bloom) is initially framed on the right side of the screen as she puts away her coat with the left side of the screen occupied by a large stone wall. As the camera pans from Miriam to Judah (after she walks down the hallway), the stone wall (which is revealed to be a fireplace) moves from the left of the screen to the right, becoming a very literal physical barrier between the couple. Judah also moves from the left of the screen to the right, with the left screen being filled with a couch and large bookshelves. Judah's off-center positioning is disconcerting, especially when he finds the letter from Dolores (Anjelica Huston), and the seemingly unimportant objects to the left of the screen begin to gain significance as Judah reads the letter. The couch and bookshelves are visual reminders of what he would be losing if his infidelity was ever found out. The film again transitions from wide-angle shot to a moving close-up, tilting up from a close-up of the letter to a close-up of Judah's face, remaining in close proximity to Judah as he peers around the room, moves to the fireplace, and burns the letter. Just as in the banquet hall, the camera's movements represent Judah's anxiousness and fear of being caught.

Another sound bridge is used to transition back to the banquet where Judah is now giving his speech. The high ideals and morally pure philanthropist described in the opening scenes is now shrouded in deception and immorality. A stationary medium shot of Judah captures his speech on "community, generosity, and mutual caring," which, to the film's audience, now sounds incredibly deceptive and phony. Judah is also positioned between two window frames, another visual representation of his emotional confinement. The sequence finally ends similarly to how it began, with a wide-angle shot of a large crowd that captures both the floor and the ceiling. This time the action is taking place on a dance floor and Judah is positioned much more prominently in the frame, but the functionality of the framing remains consistent.

Wealthy living and enjoyable entertainment is contrasted sharply with a tracking shot of Dolores walking down the streets of New York. Pleasant sounds of the banquet band are replaced by people yelling and traffic noise. As Dolores enters her apartment it becomes quite apparent that her living space differs greatly from Judah's large home and that this relationship pulls Judah from an upper middle-class living into a much harsher life-style. Within the confines of Dolores' apartment the camera is unable to frame the actors in full shots and the walls of the apartment are consistently in frame. Barriers are also presented in front of the characters as they move in and out of view, which again throws compositions out of balance. For instance, in Dolores' bedroom she and Judah are centrally framed as they argue until Dolores turns her back and moves behind the wall. The conversation continues, but Judah is the only character in the shot with nothing to replace Dolores except for her bedroom curtains. Then, Judah actually moves into Dolores' spot, positioning both of the characters to the left of the frame (with no one

facing the right). Instead of the camera following the action, it remains stationary, capturing the unsettled emotions of the characters rather than the physical actions. The ability for characters to move in and out of frame creates a more sinister and foreboding environment, one that is more suitable for people trying to hide. Also, just as in Judah's home, the characters are mainly back-lit, casting dark shadows over the side closest to the camera. It is clear from this sequence that Judah is traversing in a more dangerous environment than he belongs and that his "normal" life is being affected by his immoral choices.

Match Point's visual style is much more dichotomous, contrasting a very well-lit and "ordinary" world with a more dark and sinister one. As the narrative progresses the ratio of well illumined scenes to scenes of high lighting contrast diminishes, with the latter type of lighting style becoming more prominent as the protagonist becomes more involved with his criminal instincts. *Match Point* also uses close-ups to indicate a shift into a more morally questionable and noir-type environment. The first glimpse of the noir-ish visual style appears when Chris Wilton first encounters the femme fatale Nola Rice (Scarlett Johansson). The scene is lit in much the same manner as the backlighting in *Crimes* with the main source of lighting coming from an exterior windows, casting half of the characters in shadow. This visual style is supported with sexually charged dialogue and forceful contact. Nola's first words to Chris betray her motives as she asks him, "so, who is my next victim?" After Chris showcases his aptitude for table-tennis, he then moves around the table and puts his arm around Nola, supposedly explaining to her proper ball-striking technique. With this action, the film cuts to a close-up of Nola's face, followed by a reverse shot of Chris' face. These are the first close-ups used in the film (save for a close-up of Chris reading *Crime and Punishment* in his apartment) and reveal an immediate physical connection between Nola and Chris. These close-ups are short-lived as Nola's fiancé (and Chris' friend) Tom (Matthew Goode) enters the room, causing the camera to return to its use of full and medium shots.

Close-ups are not used again until the next time Nola and Chris meet. This time, both Chris and Nola are with their respective spouse-to-be, and the sequence begins with a series of medium shot-reverse-shots from over the shoulders of Chris and Nola. As the conversation shifts focus to Nola's career, the camera abruptly cuts to a close-up of Chris staring at Nola. The conversation continues with the same shot-reverse-shot method, only now using close-ups of the two main characters (with occasional close-ups of the other two). It is during this series of close-ups that the conversation moves into a discussion of fatalism, chance, and luck, all of which are major themes in noir cinema (and will be discussed in more detail later in this essay).

Chris' emotional distancing from his fiancée Chloe (Emily Mortimer) and his sexual desire for Nola lead him down a path similar to Judah's, culminating in entrapment. The visual motif of confinement that was used so prominently in the opening moments of *Crimes and Misdemeanors* is replicated when Chris takes a job at Chloe's father's office. A wide-angle panning shot captures both the floor and the ceiling of the high-rise office, and the pervasive presence of windows and metal pillars overwhelm the frame. Parallel lines are everywhere, making it seem as though the roof is descending on Chris and he is being imprisoned. Chris' emotional imprisonment is also supported in the next scene at his apartment, which has bars on both his front door and the windows.

Match Point's noir visual style is fully in effect during the scene in which Chris and Nola succumb to their sexual urges. As Chris stands inside a dimly lit room (again only lit from an exterior window), he notices Nola walking outside in the rain. After the camera pans to the right, away from Chris to capture more of Nola, Chris re-enters the frame, creating an over-the-shoulder shot that showcases his eye-line focused on his sexual interest. Chris is foregrounded, in shadow, as Nola moves deeper into the distance that is blurred by rain and visually blocked by trees. The film cuts to a hallway almost completely filled with shadow as Chris moves from utter darkness toward the gloomy light of the exterior door. His descent into infidelity is nearly complete, and the visual style reflects this descent.

In addition to the classically noir-ish narratives and visuals of these two Woody Allen films is a prominent thematic focus on existentialist philosophy. The connection between film noir and existentialism is most directly made in Robert Porfirio's article, "No Way Out: Existential Motifs in Film Noir." It is Porfirio's contention that existentialism "places its emphasis on man's contingency in a world where there are no transcendental values or moral absolutes, a world devoid of any meaning but the one man himself creates" (Porfirio 81). Existentialist philosophy, then, has both a so-called "positive side" that focuses on terms such as "'freedom,' 'authenticity,' 'responsibility' and 'the leap into faith,'" and a "negative side" which "emphasizes life's meaninglessness and man's alienation" (Porfirio 81). It is this "negative" and darker side that Porfirio rightly connects with the existential thread present in classical film noir. Classical noir protagonists such as Walter Neff (*Double Indemnity*), Christopher Cross (*Scarlet Street*), Al Roberts (*Detour*), and Myra Hudson (*Sudden Fear*) act "from desperation rather than rational choice, reacting to an inchoate, contingent world dominated by blind chance that is always threatening, carrying an undercurrent of violence that can strike at any moment" (Spicer 48). It is quite arguable, then, that classical film noir "is imbued with a strong fatalism that emphasizes not freedom but constraint and entrapment" (Spicer 49). Fate is, thus, more powerful than human choice or human will. The tactical planning of a crime cannot overcome the fatalism of a situation because fate is stronger.

What makes the classical noir films so interesting in light of this seeming obsession with existentialism is that fate always seems to pass moral judgment on characters. Walter Neff and Phyllis Dietrichson of *Double Indemnity* are killed because of their nearly perfect murder plot (whereas the morally righteous Barton Keyes lives). In *Sudden Fear*, Lester Blaine and Irene Neves are killed for their perfect murder plot while Myra Hudson, who was supposed to be killed and even plotted a perfect murder of her own (but did not go through with it) lives. *Detour*'s Al Roberts, who blamed fate for everything wrong with his life, is picked up by a police car at the end of *Detour* since he stole the identity of a dead man and ended up killing another woman (whether it was accidental or not). Even a noir character who seemingly gets away with murder, such as Christopher Cross in *Scarlet Street*, is so tortured and goaded into his moral downfall that fate seems just to have him merely go insane rather than to jail him for his crime.

It is this fatalist existentialism in classical noir that actually marks the first major departure from the noir-world of Allen's films. To be sure, Allen's protagonists are very aware of existentialist philosophy, but they (and the films which they inhabit) are much more concerned

with the individual's ability to create his own morality than with the fatalistic whims of an uncaring universe. In Allen's noir universe the criminals can actually commit murder without being fatalistically captured or killed for their actions. The only obstacle to living contented and complete lives (fully re-integrated into the society that they nearly abandoned for sexual satisfaction) is individualized morality that can be controlled by the criminal.

Judah's ability to overcome his fear of moral reckoning is one reason that *Crimes and Misdemeanors* has been described as being "haunted by the existential uncertainties that hover over Allen's work" (Hirsch 211). In fact, the final conversation of the film that takes place between Cliff Stern (Woody Allen) and Judah actually represents Allen's departure from the classical noir resolution. Cliff desires "the moral void where God's judgment once existed to be filled by the perpetrator's own ethical decision, humanity taking upon itself the task of imbuing the universe with its own self-projected moral imperatives even at the terrible personal cost of self-condemnation" (Bailey 135). This is the type of existentialism that would lead Walter Neff to confess his transgressions into his audio recorder, or would lead Myra Hudson to refrain from killing her adversaries, even though she may die because of it. Cliff's thinking is what causes Christopher Cross to confess his guilt, even if it is not believed by the court, and what propels Al Roberts to confess his actions to the audience through voice-over. Judah's "idea for a movie" about "a villain who benefits from his evil and accommodates himself to his own duplicity, deception, and dishonesty makes Cliff uneasy," yet it is exactly what Judah is able to accomplish (Girgus 145). As Judah tells Cliff, "if you want a happy ending, you should go see a Hollywood movie."

Match Point ends on a very similar note to *Crimes*, and Chris Wilton's ability to get away with the murder of Nola Rice, her unborn child, and an unsuspecting neighbor "clearly suggests that luck supersedes morality" (Bailey and Girgus 567). The ending of the film actually provides proof of Chris' thesis on fate and chance in relation to hard work that he offers earlier in the film. *Match Point*'s final close-up of Chris suggests the protagonist's ability to mentally and emotionally persevere through any individual doubt that may betray him. He is able to "lay aside any ethical code or deep understanding of life" and "cope with fear" so that he can "notice that, although there are many things which are beyond our control, this is not always negative" (Barbera 13).

Thus, Woody Allen's *Crimes and Misdemeanors* and *Match Point* align themselves with classical film noir in many ways. Both films employ narratives dealing with sexual lust, murder, and hidden middle-class deceit that could have easily been lifted from noir's classical period. Allen's films also utilize a very distinctively noir-ish visual style that relies on lighting contrasts, unsettling and imbalanced framing compositions, and a deliberate use of close-ups and moving cameras. There is, however, ultimately a major thematic difference between Allen's films and those of the more classical noir period. The difference centers on the results of existentialism. Whereas classical noir protagonists are isolated and unable to enter (or re-enter) everyday society because of their actions (often resulting in their fatalistic demise), the protagonists in Allen's films are able to fully recover their livelihood and escape moral judgment. The lack of human control over situations is muted and, even though luck and chance play a part in Allen's noir world, these elements are not necessarily detrimental to the protagonists. Instead, an individual's

ability to create his own morality allows Allen's characters to emerge from the noir underworld unscathed. Classical noir fatalism is, thus, replaced by individualized morality, allowing Allen's characters to get away with murder: both physically and emotionally.

References

-Bailey, Peter J., and Sam B. Girgus. *A Companion to Woody Allen*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013. Print.

-Bailey, Peter J. *The Reluctant Film Art of Woody Allen*. Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky, 2001. Print.

-Barbera, Pau Gilabert. "Woody Allen and the Spirit of Greek Tragedy: From Crimes and Misdemeanors (1989) to Match Point (2005)." *Barcelona English Language and Literature Studies* 17 (2008): 1-18. Print.

-Borde, Raymond, and Etienne Chaumeton. "Towards a Definition of Film Noir." *Film Noir Reader*. Ed. Alain Silver and James Ursini. 8th ed. New York, NY: Limelight Ed., 2006. 17-26. Print.

-Durgnat, Raymond. "Paint it Black: The Family Tree of the Film Noir." *Film Noir Reader.* Ed. Alain Silver and James Ursini. New York: Limelight, 2006. 37-51. Print.

-Girgus, Sam B. *The Films of Woody Allen*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002. Print.

-Hirsch, Foster. "The Comedian's Progress: The Eighties." *Love, Sex, Death & the Meaning of Life: The Films of Woody Allen*. 3rd ed. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo, 2001. 195-230. Print.

-Laham, Nicholas. "Film Comedy Highlights the Dark Side of American Life." *Currents of Comedy on the American Screen: How Film and Television Deliver Different Laughs for Changing times*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland &, 2009. 50-76. Print.

-Nichols, Mary P. "Woody Allen's Film Noir Light: Crime, Love, and Self-Knowledge in The Curse of the Jade Scorpion." *Woody Allen and Philosophy: You Mean My Whole Fallacy Is Wrong?* Ed. Mark T. Conard and Aeon J. Skoble. Chicago: Open Court, 2004. 243-58. Print.

-Place, Janey and Lowell Peterson. "Some Visual Motifs of Film Noir." *Film Noir Reader.* Ed. Alain Silver and James Ursini. New York: Limelight, 2006. 65-75. Print.

-Porfirio, Robert G. "No Way Out: Existential Motifs in the Film Noir." *Film Noir Reader.* Ed. Alain Silver and James Ursini. New York: Limelight, 2006. 77-93. Print.

-Spicer, Andrew. "Problems of Memory and Identity in Neo-Noir's Existentialist Anti-Hero." *The Philosophy of Neo-noir*. Ed. Mark T. Conard. Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky, 2007. 47-63. Print.

Relations d'interdépendance complexe et développement du français au Nigeria

Samson Fabian Nzuanke
Université de Calabar, Nigeria

Abstract

This article attempts to explain the role played by international relations in developing the French language and giving it a foothold in Nigeria. In fact, the entire process is founded on a two-century long tripod: the arrival of French traders in the Niger Delta area in the 18th century; the introduction of French in secondary schools by missionaries in the 19th century and transnational relations in the 20th century. All this falls in line with the modernist paradigm or transnationalism as propounded by Robert Keohane and Joseph S. Nye (2001) who hold that relations of interdependence involve a complex mix of multiple channels and absence of hierarchy among issues in the relations between States as well as in the relations between non-State actors. These multiple channels and the absence of hierarchy among issues create opportunities for functional co-operation whose objective is to find identical solutions to identical problems for an eventual win-win situation between States on the one hand, and between the different functional units, on the other. This is seen in the effective presence of a multiplicity of national and international stakeholders on the Nigerian linguistic landscape and their active participation in developing structures and improving the quality of French language training programmes which not only explain the current rush towards the various language centres, but also explain the continuous increase in the number of learners of French as a foreign language in Nigeria.

Key words: complex interdependence, trans-nationalism, functionalism, training

Résumé

La présente communication est une tentative d'explication du rôle des relations internationales dans le développement et l'implantation de la langue française au Nigeria. En fait, cette action repose sur un triplet qui s'étale sur deux siècles, à savoir: l'arrivée des commerçants français dans la zone du Delta du Niger au 18e siècle; l'introduction par les missionnaires de l'enseignement du français dans les établissements secondaires au 19e siècle et les relations transnationales du 20e siècle. Tout ceci entre en droite ligne dans le paradigme moderniste ou le transnationalisme que prônent Robert Keohane et Joseph S. Nye (2001) qui supposent que les relations d'interdépendance impliquent une complexité des multiples réseaux de contacts et de sujets dans les relations entre les Etats et entre les institutions et organismes non-étatiques. Ces différents réseaux de contacts et les multiples sujets à l'ordre du jour ouvrent la voie à des possibilités de coopération fonctionnelle dont l'objectif est de trouver des solutions identiques aux problèmes identiques en vue des éventuels gains mutuels entre les Etats d'une part, et entre les différentes unités fonctionnelles d'autre part. Ceci est évident dans la présence effective des multiples acteurs nationaux et internationaux sur le paysage linguistique nigérian et leur participation active au développement des structures et à l'amélioration de la qualité de l'offre de formation en français qui expliquent non seulement la ruée actuelle vers ces différents centres de formation mais aussi l'évolution croissante en termes d'effectifs des apprenants de français langue étrangère au Nigeria.

Mots-clés : interdépendance complexe, transnationalisme, fonctionnalisme, formation

1. **Introduction**

La capacité du Nigeria à redéfinir la direction de sa politique du développement linguistique vis-à-vis des communautés et groupes ethnolinguistiques internes d'une part et de certains autres pays étrangers en l'occurrence la Grande-Bretagne, la France et les pays francophones d'Afrique, d'autre part, traduit quelque part la quête d'une autonomie certaine dans la gestion de sa vie sociopolitique en général. Cette situation traduit également l'évolution et la souplesse dans les relations internationales post-guerre froide, caractérisées par l'interdépendance complexe qui implique:

i. des multiples réseaux de contacts dont les réseaux interétatiques, les réseaux trans-gouvernementaux et les réseaux transnationaux;

ii. des multiples sujets à l'ordre du jour au niveau international dont militaires, culturels, économiques, sociopolitiques, etc; et

iii. le non usage de force (puissance militaire) dans la résolution des conflits entre les Etats (Keohane et Nye, 2001).

Cette manière de penser les relations internationales et celles d'interdépendance semble avoir donné au Nigeria la possibilité d'assumer ses responsabilités «d'un grand d'Afrique» ayant la capacité de négocier lui-même ses relations avec les autres pays et ainsi de pouvoir s'affirmer sur le plan sociopolitique international.

En effet, l'histoire du français au Nigeria et l'histoire de l'enseignement du français dans le pays se situent dans le cadre de l'interdépendance complexe puisqu'elles sont tributaires de la pénétration des missionnaires et envahisseurs coloniaux dans le pays vers la fin du 19e siècle. Avec la délimitation des territoires africains sous contrôle britannique, soit avant la Conférence de Berlin de 1884-1885 qui officialise la colonisation, l'enseignement du français dans la zone qui devient le Nigeria en 1914 était limité à certains établissements scolaires privilégiés qui se trouvaient à Lagos et n'avait pour but que d'enseigner la culture et la civilisation françaises. C'est ce qui était à la mode dans la quasi-totalité des territoires sous contrôle britannique de l'époque.

Mais la situation va changer après les indépendances de la plupart desdits pays africains à partir de 1960. Lors de la conférence des Etats africains sur l'éducation tenue à Addis-Abéba et ensuite à Yaoundé en 1961, les dirigeants africains ont pris un engagement ferme d'encourager le bilinguisme, c'est-à-dire promouvoir l'enseignement de l'anglais et du français à travers le continent africain (Motazé, 1994). A partir de cette période, les programmes d'enseignement du français dans les pays anglophones seront révisés afin de permettre aux apprenants de pouvoir s'exprimer en français.

C'est probablement grâce à cette politique que beaucoup de Nigérians s'intéressent à la langue française. D'où la promotion du français par son enseignement dans presque tout le système scolaire du pays. Un élément complémentaire de cette dernière hypothèse qui aurait favorisé la présence et la pratique du français au Nigeria, c'est la situation géographique du pays. La contiguïté du Bénin, du Cameroun, du Niger et du Tchad (tous des pays plus ou moins essentiellement francophones) au Nigeria offre vraisemblablement la possibilité à ce dernier de promouvoir le bilinguisme anglais-français qui pourrait se manifester, à priori, chez ceux qui ont

appris le français dans les écoles et institutions nigérianes et aussi chez ceux qui ont appris le français en séjournant dans des pays francophones (Motazé, 1994).

Partant de ces hypothèses, Motazé distingue trois catégories de locuteurs du français au Nigeria, à savoir :
   i. Des Nigérians ayant séjourné dans les pays francophones et la France y compris:
   a). Ceux qui ont d'abord appris le français dans les écoles nigérianes et en sont sortis pour continuer leurs études dans les pays francophones; et
   b). Ceux (illettrés ou non) qui sont partis du Nigeria pour une raison ou une autre pour les pays francophones et y ont appris le français sur le tas ;
   ii. Des personnes qui, n'ayant pas appris le français à l'école, l'ont appris en famille au Nigeria, surtout en travaillant chez les Francophones; et
   iii. Des Français et ressortissants (diplomates et autres) des pays francophones vivant au Nigeria (Motazé, 1994 : 5-6).
   Mais, quel est le rapport entre ces relations sociopolitiques d'interdépendance et le développement et l'implantation du français au Nigeria ?

2. **Revue de la littérature**

Iféoma Onyemelukwe (2004) retrace l'histoire des relations franco-nigérianes comme élément moteur de la promotion du français au Nigeria et situe la date du premier contact entre les Nigérians et les commerçants français au milieu du 19ᵉ siècle, contrairement à la date de la fin du 19ᵉ siècle dont Motazé (1994) fait mention. D'après Iféoma Onyemelukwe (2004), après les premiers contacts commerciaux entre les Nigérians et les commerçants français qui achetaient des esclaves au milieu du 19ᵉ siècle, la présence française au Nigeria devient croissante avec l'arrivée et l'implantation des sociétés françaises telles que la Compagnie Française d'Afrique Occidentale (CFAO) en 1902 et la Société Commerciale Ouest africaine (SCOA) en 1926.

Ce n'était qu'à partir de 1960 que la langue française a commencé à prendre vraiment corps dans le pays avec son introduction officielle dans les programmes scolaires et universitaires. Cette officialisation du français au Nigeria a reçu le soutien de l'Organisation de l'unité africaine-OUA (devenue l'Union africaine (UA) le 11 juillet 2000 après la signature de l'Acte constitutif de l'Union à Lomé au Togo), qui prône le bilinguisme anglais-français en Afrique à partir de 1963. En effet, c'était suite aux recommandations des experts africains réunis à Yaoundé au Cameroun du 15 au 21 novembre 1961, dans le cadre de la conférence internationale sur l'enseignement d'une deuxième langue européenne en Afrique, conjointement organisée par la Commission de Coopération Technique pour l'Afrique (CCTA) et le Conseil Scientifique africain (CSA). La conférence de Yaoundé était la suite de celle qui a eu lieu à Addis-Abéba, en Ethiopie, quelques mois plus tôt.

Onyemelukwe (2004) note par ailleurs que bien avant la décision de l'OUA en 1963, soit entre 1945 et 1960, le français faisait déjà partie des programmes scolaires dans certains pays africains d'expression anglaise en l'occurrence le Kenya, la Sierra Léone, la Rhodésie (actuellement Zambie et Zimbabwé) ainsi que le Ghana où le français a été introduit à l'école de

Mfantsipim à Cape Coast en 1875. L'auteur se base sur ces faits pour dire que le français est arrivé au Nigeria un peu tardivement.

Afolabi (2006) n'est pas d'accord avec Iféoma Onyemelukwe. Il cite l'article de M. Omolewa intitulé «The Teaching of French and German in Nigerian Schools - 1859-1959» paru en 1971 dans *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines*, Volume XVIII, N°3, de l'Ecole des hautes études en Sciences Sociales de Paris, pour démontrer que le français, tout comme l'allemand, était déjà aux programmes des premiers établissements d'enseignement secondaire créés au Nigeria au 19e siècle. En effet, le tout premier collège au Nigeria (CMS Grammar School, Lagos) créé le 6 juin 1859 par Thomas Babington Macaulay avait le français (et l'allemand) au programme. Cela va de même pour Wesley High School and Training Institution (devenue Methodist Boys High School) de Lagos qui ouvre ses portes en avril 1878 (Afolabi, 2006) et pour Methodist Girls High School de Lagos , crééé en 1879.

Aussi, contrairement à l'avis d'Iféoma Onyemelukwe(2004) relatif à l'année de l'introduction officielle du français aux programmes des établissements d'enseignement secondaire, Ségun Afolabi est formel. Alors qu'Onyemelukwe situe la date en 1960, Afolabi (2006) insiste que c'était en 1956 que le français a été formellement introduit de manière simultanée à King's College, Lagos, et à Government College, Ibadan.

Afolabi (2006) s'accorde néanmoins avec Onyemelukwe (2004) pour dire que l'apprentissage de la langue française au Nigeria est né de la nécessité de briser la barrière linguistique qui existait entre les commerçants français et leurs homologues nigérians au 18e siècle. Il cite Simon Okoli qui, dans un article intitulé « L'apprentissage et l'enseignement du français au Nigeria: de la renaissance à l'époque contemporaine » paru en 1999 dans *Le français au Nigeria: une cartographie dynamique,* explique que les Français avaient établi un comptoir à Ughoton dans l'empire du Bénin en 1788, et suite à leur contact avec les autochtones, ceux-ci avaient appris quelques mots français qui subsistent encore dans la langue édo. C'est ainsi qu'on a le mot « ékuyé » de «cuiller et cuillère», « itaba » du mot «tabac» et « boku » du mot «beaucoup» pour signifier les mêmes choses.

Tout en citant Omolewa (1971), Afolabi (2006) précise que bien qu'à cette époque-là le français ne soit reconnu comme matière de base aux programmes scolaires du Nigeria, il intéressait quand même certains Nigérians à l'instar des séminaristes qui l'apprenaient comme matière facultative dans les séminaires. Il ressort du travail d'Omolewa, cité par Afolafi, qu'entre 1910 et 1914, les Nigérians se sont inscrits aux épreuves du français d'*Oxford University Delegacy Examination* et de *Cambridge Syndicate Junior Examination* et que malgré des échecs enregistrés par les candidats nigérians à ces examens, plusieurs autres jeunes Nigérians continuaient à étudier la langue française, comme le témoignent les affluences aux cours du soir organisés à Lagos jusqu'en 1950. Il y avait également le cas de la famille Lawson, médecin togolais, qui s'est installé à Lagos en 1925 et a entrepris à enseigner le français aux Nigérians (Afolabi, 2006).

En ce qui concerne la présente communication, le vrai débat semble plutôt se situer au niveau des rapports ou relations entre le Nigeria et certaines nations d'expression française d'une

part, et entre les institutions et organismes nationaux et certains institutions et organismes étrangers d'autre part, qui auraient contribué au développement et à l'implantation du français au Nigeria.

3. **Cadre théorique**

La présente étude est fondée sur la théorie du fonctionnalisme prôné par David Mitrany (1966) qui suppose une certaine automatisation du processus où l'intérêt national ou personnel qui régit les choix politiques, la mobilisation sociopolitique et la possibilité de mésentente entre certains Etats, communautés ou groupes ne sont pas pris en compte.

L'existence des sujets à caractère technique dans un contexte national, multinational ou international devrait déboucher sur une action de collaboration entre les pays, communautés et groupes ayant les mêmes objectifs fonctionnels, soit en matière de commerce, de tourisme, d'enseignement, etc (Oloo, 2-4) aux fins de trouver des solutions identiques pour des problèmes identiques. Ainsi, la réussite dans une unité fonctionnelle encouragerait la coopération dans d'autres unités fonctionnelles.

Mais, y'a-t-il automatisation et adéquation dans les concessions faites entre les Etats, communautés ou groupes ? Si dans ses relations avec la France, le Nigeria avait besoin d'expertise française dans la mise en œuvre de sa politique de langue française, est-ce que ce besoin du Nigeria répondrait à cette préoccupation d'automatisation et d'adéquation étant donné que les deux pays ne se trouvent pas dans une même unité fonctionnelle? Dans un cas pareil, la France pourra, pour sa part, peut-être demander autre chose auprès du Nigeria, en l'occurrence beaucoup plus d'espace d'hégémonie linguistique, d'influence et de prestige sur le plan local.

Ce scénario évoque déjà un comportement relationnel qui met la France en situation de prééminence par rapport au Nigeria (Jackson & Sorensen, 197).

Contrairement à ce scénario d'inégalité que suscitent les relations franco-nigérianes, les cas Nigeria-Bénin, Nigeria-Cameroun, Nigeria-Niger, Nigeria-Tchad, etc pourraient répondre à la préoccupation d'automatisation et d'adéquation, car les besoins du Nigeria en matière d'experts de langue française dans de tels contextes fonctionnels d'interdépendance complexe, pourraient trouver des besoins réciproques en termes d'échange d'enseignants et d'autres experts dans des domaines connexes.

4. **Développement et implantation du français au Nigeria**

Bien que son introduction aux programmes scolaires soit officielle, le français n'a jamais été une matière obligatoire au même titre que l'anglais dans le système éducatif nigérian. Et cela pour cause de rivalité de prééminence entre l'anglais et le français en Afrique.

Pour Rodney (1972), avant la balkanisation du continent africain, les dirigeants français se sont donné pour devoir de créer des écoles dans certains coins du continent alors occupés par la France. L'objectif était d'instaurer et de promouvoir la langue et la culture françaises en vue d'établir des zones d'influence favorables à la France et ainsi limiter les avances de la Grande-

Bretagne et tout autre pays européen conquistador. Et l'Alliance française créée le 21 juillet 1883 servait ainsi la cause de la France en Haute Guinée vers la fin du 19e siècle (13).

Dans l'esprit de la Grande-Bretagne, la logique était la même, c'est-à-dire garder l'influence française très loin de la zone d'influence britannique. A partir de ce constat, Motazé (1994) estime qu'il y avait incohérence dans la logique de développer la langue française dans un pays anglophone comme le Nigeria jusqu'au point d'apprendre à la parler alors que l'intérêt colonial des envahisseurs britanniques était de séparer les indigènes colonisés de leurs voisins francophones.

Même après la conférence de Yaoundé (du 15 au 21 novembre 1961) sur l'enseignement d'une deuxième langue européenne en Afrique, le français n'a eu pour concurrent au Nigeria que le latin qui était aux programmes de beaucoup d'établissements d'enseignement secondaire jusqu'aux années 1980.

A l'introduction officielle du français aux programmes des établissements d'enseignement secondaire au Nigeria, l'enseignement de la matière est passé du simple renseignement des élèves sur la culture et la civilisation françaises par la méthode « grammaire et traduction » (Motazé, 1994 ; Afolabi, 2006) à la deuxième langue officielle du pays, en passant par diverses tentatives de professionnalisation de la langue dans le pays.

Motazé (1994) souligne donc que cette situation a encouragé le développement du français au Nigeria, car depuis lors, plusieurs colloques sur l'enseignement réunissant les professeurs du Ghana, de la Sierra Léone et du Nigeria, ont été organisés en vue d'introduire la pratique de l'oral au programme du West African Examinations Council (WAEC), instance chargée de l'organisation des examens officiels en Afrique occidentale anglophone. La recommandation du colloque du WAEC en 1966 relative à l'oral en français a été par la suite adoptée par les établissements.

A partir des statistiques flatteuses sur les inscriptions aux examens officiels dont le West African School Certificate (WASC) organisé par le WAEC et le London General Certificate of Education (GCE) organisé par l'Université de Londres, des concours d'entrée à l'université et autres institutions tertiaires organisés par le Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) ainsi que les inscriptions prises dans certaines institutions telles que les universités, les écoles normales, les Alliances françaises et les centres de langue française sur une période de plus de quarante ans, soit de 1962 à 2002, Onyemelukwe a réussi à démontrer que le français s'enracinait déjà au Nigeria avec une légère baisse dans les taux d'inscription aux différents examens et institutions entre 1990 et 1996 (Onyemelukwe, 2004).

Paradoxalement, c'est au cours de la même période que le Village français de Badagry est mis sur pied (création en 1991 et ouverture de ses portes en janvier 1992) pour la formation des élèves et étudiants ainsi que pour le recyclage des enseignants du français tant au niveau secondaire qu'au niveau tertiaire. La mise sur pied du Village français de Badagry était l'œuvre du régime du général Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida qui voulait donner un nouvel élan aux activités de la Communauté économique des Etats de l'Afrique de l'ouest (CEDEAO). En effet,

lors du sommet des chefs d'Etats de la CEDEAO tenu à Abuja le 07 juillet 1987, le Général Babangida avait déclaré:

> … Je vous prie, mes chers frères, de franchir une autre étape dans notre   quête   d'entente dans notre sous-région. Cette étape consiste à établir dans nos systèmes éducatifs des écoles entièrement bilingues auxquelles les pays membres de la CEDEAO enverront leurs élèves ; je vous prie donc de faire en sorte que les effectifs de ces écoles soient recrutés dans les pays membres de la CEDEAO….Voilà l'enjeu de la CEDEAO pour l'an 2000… (Afolabi, 128).

La période de déclin du français au Nigeria est synonyme de la période de crise politique au Nigeria au cours de laquelle le pays était pratiquement isolé par la communauté internationale. Mais, grâce à l'arrivée au pouvoir en France de Jacques Chirac qui a succédé au socialiste François Mittérand en 1995, la France, dont l'économie avait besoin d'une bouffée d'oxygène, s'est ouverte beaucoup plus au monde et en particulier au Nigeria. Onyemelukwe (2004) relate qu'il y a eu des accords de coopération signés entre l'Ambassade de France et certains Etats fédérés du Nigeria en 1995 sur la promotion et l'enseignement du français.

Ce début de relance de coopération entre le Nigeria et la France a été renforcé par deux déclarations présidentielles, les 14 et 31 décembre 1996, qui donnent un nouvel élan à la coopération culturelle et linguistique franco-nigériane. Il s'agit des discours de politique du Chef de l'Etat d'alors, feu le général Sani Abacha, qu'Ifeoma Onyemelukwe (2004) prend le soin d'en proposer un extrait ainsi qu'il suit :

> We have seen that we are virtually surrounded by French-speaking countries. And these French-Speaking countries are our kith and kin. But, because of the difference inherited in the language of our colonial masters, there has been a vacuum in communication with our neighbours. It is in our interest to learn French (20-21).

Ce discours de politique étrangère (et linguistique) semble avoir remis le français au goût du jour au Nigeria et permis la mise en place d'un comité spécial composé d'éminents universitaires, spécialiste de français en l'occurrence Y.M. Maingwa, Président et les professeurs Samuel Adé Ojo et Tundé Ajiboyé comme membres. Le comité était chargé, entre autres, d'élaborer la nouvelle politique nigériane de bilinguisme dont la disposition phare est reprise *verbum e verbo* par la politique nationale d'éducation (1998) : « Ainsi la langue française est la deuxième langue officielle du Nigeria. Le français devient d'ailleurs une matière obligatoire dans le système scolaire nigérian ».

Cette résurgence du français a occasionné non seulement la relance des activités des associations d'enseignants à l'instar de l'University French Teachers'Association of Nigeria/ Association nigériane des enseignants universitaires de français (UFTAN-ANEUF) pour les universités, de l'Association inter-collège des enseignants de français (INTERCAFT) pour ce qui est des écoles normales supérieures, et au niveau secondaire, de la National Association of French Teachers (NAFT), mais aussi des activités économiques entre le Nigeria et la France.

Selon Nzuanke (2012), la France occupe la deuxième place, derrière les Etats-Unis, des investisseurs étrangers au Nigeria avec plus de 130 sociétés commerciales et industrielles, et plus

de cent mille employés nigérians. En effet, les investissements français au Nigeria se situent à près de 40% de tous les investissements étrangers au pays.

Dans le cadre de ces relations d'interdépendance entre le Nigeria et certains pays d'expression française, et entre leurs institutions et organismes respectifs, l'on constate la prééminence de certaines structures gouvernementales et non-gouvernementales qui participent au développement et à l'implantation du français au Nigeria. Il s'agit entre autres des :

a) Structures gouvernementales étrangères telles que les Alliances françaises et les Centres internationaux de langues.

Au Nigeria, il y a neuf Alliances françaises et deux centres culturels français qui dépendent du ministère français des Affaires étrangères, à savoir :

i.   Enugu, sise au No 40 Neni Street, Ogui New Layout;
ii.   Ilorin, sise au No 6 Abdulrasaq Road, GRA;
iii.   Jos, sise en face de Standard Bulding;
iv.   Kaduna, sise au 10C Umaru Gwandu Road, Off Rabah Road;
v.   Kano, sise au No 22 Magajin Rumfa Road, Nassarawa;
vi.   Lagos, sise à la Maison de France, Kingsway, Yaba;
vii.   Maiduguri, sise au No 3, Yérima Road, Old GRA ;
viii.   Owerri, sise à Shell Camp en face d'Alvan Ikoku College of Education;
ix.   Port-Harcourt, sise au No 13 Azikiwe Road, SCOA Building, Old GRA;
x.   Le centre culturel français sis au No 9A Udi Street, Off Aso Drive, Maitama à Abuja; et
xi.   le centre français d'Ibadan sis au No 7 Lebanon Street. (Ce centre français d'Ibadan est souvent pris à tort ou à raison pour une Alliance française).

Par ailleurs, il y a aussi un programme de formation des professeurs organisé en partenariat avec l'Agence Internationale de la Francophonie (AIF), Organisation intergouvernementale de la francophonie (OIF) et diverses structures de formation professionnelle. Ces formations permettent d'augmenter le nombre de professeurs de français, mais aussi de rendre leur pédagogie plus moderne et plus attractive (Nzuanke, 193-194)**.**

Une nouvelle phase de la coopération française a en effet été lancée en 2005 par la mobilisation des ressources des pays francophones voisins dans le cadre du Réseau des centres de français langue étrangère d'Afrique (RECFLEA). Ce programme, mené en partenariat avec l'Organisation internationale de la francophonie (OIF), vise à structurer et à renforcer les actions de coopération entre les centres concernés (formation conjointe des formateurs, harmonisation des certifications et des cursus, production conjointe de ressources pédagogiques) et soutenir la mobilité des enseignants et des stagiaires. L'objectif est de développer des pôles de compétences spécialisés et complémentaires permettant de construire des parcours de formation régionale répondant à la demande de français en Afrique de l'Ouest.

Cette professionnalisation de l'offre de formation décloisonne et met en cohérence l'offre de français et les actions de soutien à l'éducation en français, valorisant ainsi auprès de publics universitaires le rôle du français comme langue de communication, de développement et de solidarité, au service de l'intégration régionale. Ce réseau réunit le Village du Bénin (Centre

international de recherche et d'étude de langues CIREL/VB) à Lomé, le Centre béninois des langues étrangères (CEBELAE) à Cotonou, le Village français du Nigeria (VFN) à Badagry et les centres régionaux pour l'enseignement du français (CREF) du Ghana.

b) structures gouvernementales locales telles que les établissements d'enseignement universitaires et secondaires ainsi que les centres de langue française.

En fait, le Nigeria bénéficie de l'appui de la coopération française dans sa politique d'enseignement du français. Cet appui passe par une coopération étroite avec le ministère fédéral de l'Education et s'est concrétisé avec la mise en place d'un réseau de plus de 179 établissements secondaires et vingt-quatre institutions supérieures pilotes (universités et écoles normales supérieures) tandis que trois établissements spécialisés (les centres de formation des professeurs de français de Jos, Enugu et Ibadan, ainsi que le «French Language Center» sis à Off Oba Akinjobi Street, Ikeja - Lagos) assurent la formation continue des enseignants de français. L'ambassadeur de France au Nigeria a par ailleurs inauguré en janvier 2007 les nouveaux bâtiments de l'école de musique de Peter King, à Badagry, dans l'Etat de Lagos.

En guise d'appui à l'effort de la coopération française, le gouvernement fédéral a créé le Village français du Nigeria (VFN) en 1991. Au cœur du dispositif de francisation du paysage linguistique nigérian, ce Village, situé à Badagry, un village proche de la frontière béninoise, fait figure de petit havre de paix francophone ; il a accueilli ses premiers stagiaires le 06 janvier 1992. Dès lors, il accueille chaque année, en immersion linguistique, les étudiants de toutes les universités et Ecoles Normales du pays, pour leur permettre de s'initier ou de se perfectionner en français.

Dans le même ordre d'idée, certaines structures étatiques et non étatiques telles que des universités et écoles normales supérieures signent des accords de partenariat avec certaines universités étrangères en vue du programme d'immersion linguistique. C'est le cas de l'Université de Calabar qui a signé en 2006/2007 des Conventions de coopération avec l'Université de Yaoundé 1 (Université publique), d'une part, et l'Université de Yaoundé-Sud, Ndi Samba (Université privée) au Cameroun, d'autre part.

Selon les termes desdites Conventions qui rentrent en droite ligne avec la théorie du fonctionnalisme où l'on trouve des groupes ayant les mêmes objectifs fonctionnels en matière d'enseignement, il doit y avoir un programme d'échange d'étudiants et d'enseignants entre l'Université de Calabar et les deux universités camerounaises. Ceci permettrait le brassage culturel même sur le territoire nigérian où avec la présence des Camerounais francophones, ceux des Nigérians qui rentreraient en contact avec ces Camerounais, auraient la possibilité d'apprendre le français sur le tas.

En plus des structures universitaires, il y a huit centres de langue française à travers le pays, à savoir ceux d'Akure (Etat d'Ondo), de Bauchi (Etat de Bauchi), de Benin City (Etat d'Edo), de Calabar (Etat de Cross River), d'Ibadan (Etat d'Oyo), d'Ilorin (Etat de Kwara), d'Uyo (Etat d'Akwa Ibom) et de Yola (Etat de Gongola). Ces centres sont généralement sous la tutelle de leurs gouvernements respectifs et servent à la fois de complément et de relais pour les Alliances françaises dans leurs Etats respectifs (Nzuanke, 194)**.**

En dehors de ces structures étatiques, il y a aussi des centres privés de langue qui proposent des offres de formation en français. Notons également la présence des bibliothèques, librairies et autres qui viennent en soutien à ces programmes de formation en langue française. Ces bibliothèques, comme celles des universités d'Etat, détiennent des volumes d'ouvrages en langue française. Pour ce qui est des librairies, c'est beaucoup plus des librairies privées qui ont souvent des stocks de documents en langue française.

Même si la prise de conscience en matière de français s'enracine déjà au pays, l'on note avec beaucoup de regret que l'accès à ces Alliances françaises et centres de langue française se limite à la capitale fédérale d'Abuja et aux Chefs-lieux de certains Etats fédérés. Cela veut dire que ceux des Nigérians moyens qui n'ont pas la possibilité de se trouver dans la capitale fédérale (Abuja) ou celle d'un Etat de la fédération, n'auront peut-être jamais la chance de s'initier de manière convenable à la langue française.

Toutefois, la conséquence de cette prise de conscience est que depuis 1995-1996, l'on enregistre une évolution en termes de structures d'enseignement du français et d'effectifs au Nigeria (Voir Figures et Tableaux ci-après).

FIGURE 1: Evolution de l'effectif des apprenants de français dans les universités nigérianes de 1992 à 2013
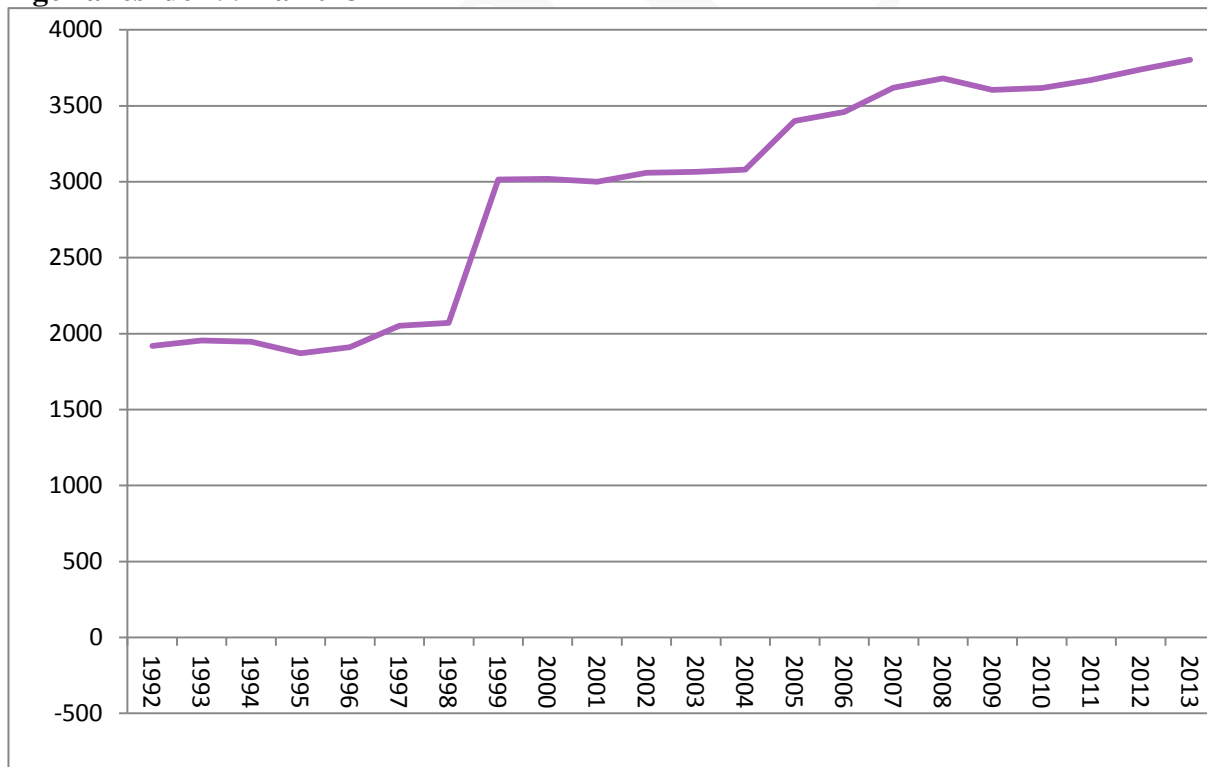
Source : Inyang, 69

TABLEAU 1
Evolution de l'effectif des apprenants de français dans les universités nigérianes de 1992 à 2013

Année	Nombre d'universités	Effectifs
1992	36	1920
1993	36	1956
1994	36	1947
1995	36	1870
1996	36	1911
1997	36	2051
1998	36	2070
1999	41	3015
2000	45	3020
2001	46	3001
2002	52	3060
2003	53	3065
2004	58	3080
2005	76	3401
2006	81	3460
2007	92	3620
2008	95	3680
2009	104	3605
2010	104	3618
2011	104	3670
2012	104	3740
2013	104	3802

Source: Inyang, 68

FIGURE 2: Evolution de l'effectif des apprenants de français dans les écoles normales supérieures au Nigeria de 1992 à 2013
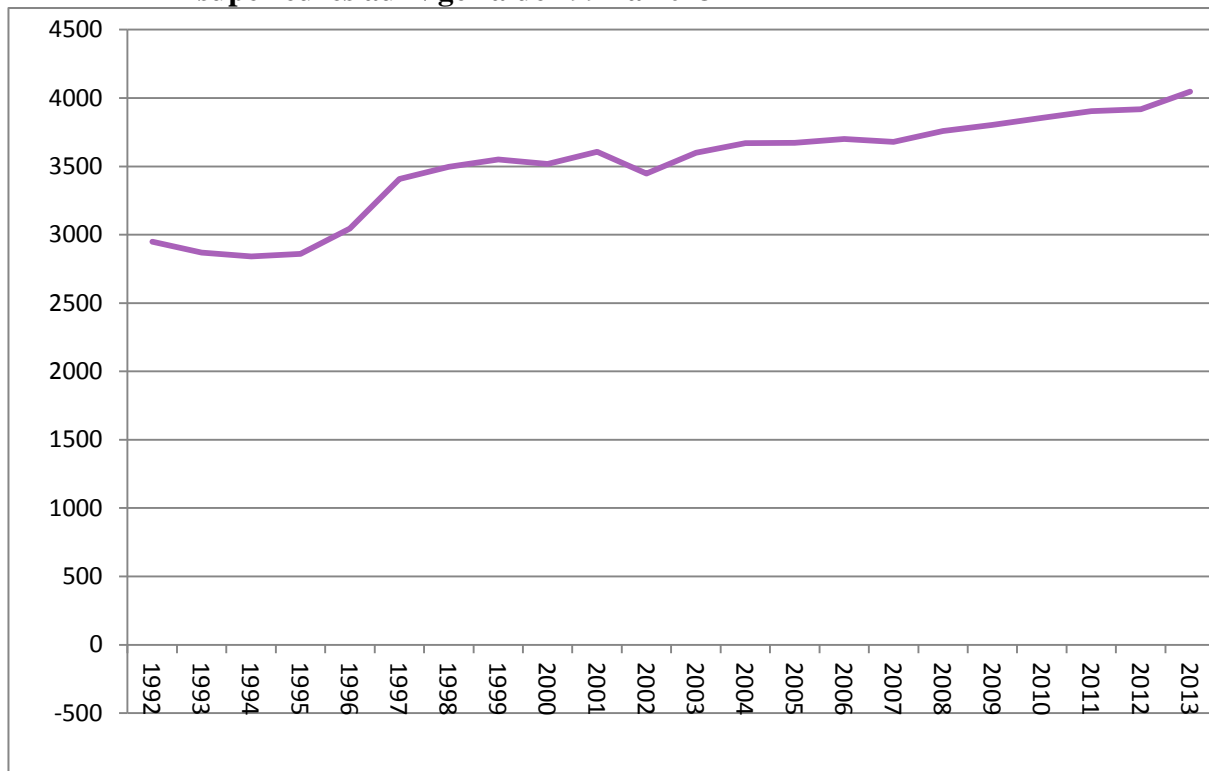
Source: Inyang, 71

TABLEAU 2
Evolution de l'effectif des apprenants de français dans les écoles normales supérieures nigérianes de 1992 à 2013

Année	Nombre d'écoles normales	Effectifs
1992	54	2950
1993	54	2870
1994	54	2842
1995	54	2860
1996	54	3044
1997	54	3407
1998	54	3496
1999	54	3550
2000	54	3518
2001	54	3606
2002	54	3447
2003	54	3599
2004	60	3670
2005	60	3673
2006	60	3700
2007	60	3680
2008	60	3760
2009	66	3804
2010	66	3856
2011	66	3904
2012	66	3918
2013	66	4048

Source: Inyang, 70

Volume 1, Issue 3, December, 2014

**FIGURE 3: Evolution en nombre d'apprenants du français au Centre de
langue française de Calabar de 1992 à 2013**
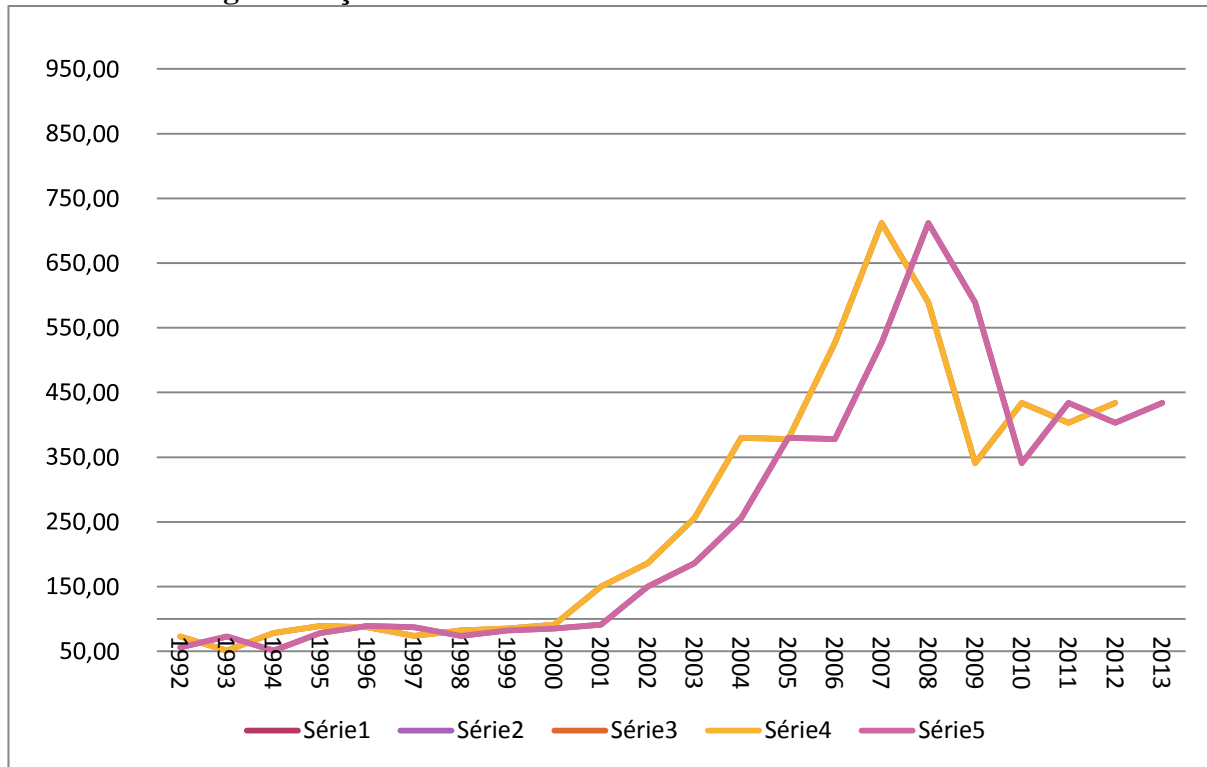
Source: Inyang, 113

TABLEAU 3

Nombre d'apprenants du français par an au Centre de langue française de Calabar

Années	Nombre d'apprenants du français
1991-1992	56
1993-1994	73
1994-1995	51
1995-1996	78
1996-1997	89
1997-1998	87
1998-1999	74
1999-1999	82
1999-2000	85
2000-2001	91
2001-2002	150
2002-2003	186
2003-2004	256
2004-2005	380
2005-2006	378
2006-2007	527

2007-2008	712
2008-2009	589
2009-2010	341
2010-2011	434
2011-2012	403
2012-2013	434

Source :Inyang, 112

5. **Conclusion**

Cet état de lieu du rôle des relations internationales dans le développement et l'implantation du français au Nigeria nous montre que l'adoption du français comme deuxième langue officielle du pays ne laisse personne indifférent. Certes, pour l'heure, l'accès aux Alliances françaises et centres de langue française se limite à la capitale fédérale d'Abuja et aux Chefs-lieux de certains Etats fédérés, mais, toutes les analyses relatives à l'existence de la langue française au Nigeria font état des avantages à tirer essentiellement par le Nigeria et les Nigérians.

Pour le pays, il s'agit principalement d'un meilleur positionnement géopolitique dans la sous-région par rapport à ses relations d'interdépendance avec d'autres pays et organismes internationaux; et pour les Nigérians, il s'agit beaucoup plus d'une plus grande ouverture économique et culturelle en termes d'investissement et également en termes de possibilités d'emploi, d'interaction et éventuellement d'acculturation. Cela veut dire que le pays gagnerait plus en s'associant à certains autres pays afin d'ouvrir d'autres centres de langue française à l'intérieur du pays et ainsi donner la possibilité à une grande partie de la population de s'initier de manière convenable à la langue française.

Références

-Afolabi, Samuel. « Le français au Nigeria: Hier, aujourd'hui et demain ». *Calabar Studies in Languages, 13* (1), (2006), 123-136.

-Inyang, Gloria W. *La politique de la transnationalisation et la diffusion du français au Nigeria* de 1992 à 2013. Thèse de doctorat non-éditée. Calabar : Université de Calabar. 2014.

-Federal Republic of Nigeria. *National policy on education.* Lagos: National Educational Research Council. 1998.

-Jackson, Robert & Sorensen, Georg. *Introduction to international relations: Theories and approaches*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2003.

-Keohane, Robert O. & Nye, Joseph S. *Power and interdependence: World politics in transition.* New York: Addison-Wesley. 2001.

-Mitrany, David. *A working peace system.* Chicago: Quadrangle Books. 1966.

-Motaze, Dorothy. « Le français au Nigeria: Esquisse d'hypothèse pour la diffusion du français dans une société plurilingue ». *La Revue Nigériane d'études Françaises* : *Village du Benin, 1* (2), (1994), 1-9.

-Nzuanke, Samson. F. *L'économie politique de la diplomatie culturelle de la France au Nigeria*. Thèse de Doctorat/PhD non éditée. Calabar: Ecole doctorale, Université de Calabar. 2012.

-Oloo, Adams. *The quest for a United States of Africa :Top-Down or Bottom-Up Approach.*The Bulletin of Friday of the Commission. Addis-Ababa : African Union Commission. Vol 1,No1. October, 2007.

-Onyemelukwe, Ifeoma. *The French language and literary creativity in Nigeria*. Zaria: Labelle Educational Publishers. 2004.

-Rodney, Walter. *How Europe underdeveloped Africa.* Abuja: Panaf. 1972.

The Effect of Fuel Subsidy on Nigerian Civil Servants: Christian Ethical Point of View

Ayodele Omojuwa
University of Lagos, Nigeria

Abstract

"The Petroleum Products Pricing Regulatory Agency wishes to inform all stakeholders of the commencement of the formal removal of the subsidy on Premium Motor Spirit, Petroleum products marketers are to note that no one will be paid a subsidy on PMS discharges after 1st January 2012," said the statement signed by PPPRA executive director Reginald Stanley. The tempo of activities within the polity became overtly charged immediately after the announcement of the removal of fuel subsidy on January 1, 2012 by the Petroleum Products Pricing and Regulatory Agency (PPPRA). This indeed, came as a shock to most Nigerians as they were not prepared for the sudden change. Labour and transport unions, human rights groups, market women, taxi drivers and lawyers' associations have been bitterly opposed to having the subsidy removed. That led to the announcement of a nationwide strike by the organized Labour, comprising the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) and the Trade Union Congress (TUC) starting from January 9. That strike successfully grounded economic activities around the country for one whole week, with Nigeria losing approximated N320 billion per day. From some state capitals came reports that governors, who earlier decided at the National Economic Council (NEC) to advise the Federal Government to remove fuel subsidy had started siding with the people and encouraging protests." The Nigerian Governors Forum (NGF) had also earlier in 2011 announced it was incapable of paying the N18, 000 minimum wage if the government retained fuel subsidy. The strike lasted for a week, after which, it was called off. As a result of the problems enumerated above, this paper identified the effect of fuel subsidy removal on the welfare of civil servants in Lagos state. It also described and measured the effect the subsidy removal on their level of poverty and the extent at which their standard of living has been affected. All these, altogether highlighted and assessed the welfare improvement or decline of public servants. The productivity level of civil servants after the subsidy removal also, was considered alongside their motivation or commitment to work.

Key words: Subsidy, Stakeholder, Fuel, Marketers, Petroleum, Strike, Labour-Congress.

Introduction

Nigeria is an oil exporting, developing country. With a population of 165 million, it is the most populous country in Africa. Available evidence in extant literature shows that Nigeria is the largest in Africa and the sixth largest oil producing country in the world. N igeria is the world's 14th largest producer of crude oil with 10th largest proven reserve. It possesses the world's 8th largest proven natural gas reserves. The country has 4 refineries with an install production capacity of 485,000 barrels of fuel per day.

The Refineries

Old Port Harcourt Refinery: installed processing capacity of 60,000 barrels per day, built by Shell was taken over by the Nigerian government in 1977. It is Nigeria's first refinery.
- Kaduna Refinery: commissioned in 1988 with processing capacity of 150,000 per day.
- Warri Refinery: Has installed processing capacity of 125,000 barrels per day of crude. It was built in 1978 with initial capacity for 100,000 bbl per day.
- New Port Harcourt Refinery: processing capacity of 150,000 barrels per day. It was initially designed as an export refinery. It is the most modern of Nigeria's refineries and was commissioned in 1991.
- Total refineries capacity 60,000+150,000 + 125,000 + 150,000 = 485,000 bbl/day. Source: NNPC, 2009.

The total production is adequate to meet its domestic needs with a surplus for export. Yet, the country is a large net importer of gasoline and other petroleum products. It is rather ironic to posit that oil wealth which serves as the source of fortune for many countries is the main source of Nigeria's misfortune. At least Nigeria was economically steady and progressive before the so-called oil boom. Furthermore, the proceeds from the resources are not utilized for the benefit of the citizenry.

Subsidies are payments made by the government for which it receives no goods or services in return (Karl Case, 1999). Many governments across the globe perceive the provision of subsidies as a social obligation to the economically disadvantaged citizen, particularly the poor (people who live under $2 a day) and vulnerable groups. In this way, virtually every country introducing subsidies takes the pro-poor point of view into consideration, sometimes arguing for some form of protection for citizens of the various countries. The effect of the subsidy removal is widespread, the problems associated with the fuel subsidy removal and civil servants welfare as observed are highlighted below. The following areas are considered:

i) Increase in the cost of living: The cost of living has indeed sprung up. Nigeria already has one of the highest poverty rates globally. Prices of many things have changed. Its effect is multi-faceted, as it affects food, clothing, shelter etc. This can be viewed under some headings

  a) Consumer goods: The prices of goods and services have increased owing to the subsidy removal. There exist, a decrease in the value of money (purchasing power). Funds available can now purchase or command less goods, when compared to what it

used to get before. e.g. sachet water has experienced hundred percent increase from N5 to N10.

b) Transport cost: Increase in transport fare is also a resultant effect of fuel subsidy removal. There is a sharp increment in the cost of transportation. This also adversely, affects their cost of living and invariably civil servants welfare.

c) Cost of Accommodation: The amount usually charged for renting an apartment has increased. Also, there has been a top up on the price of building materials and this has resulted to as further increase in the cost of accommodation.

ii) High rate of corruption: The removal of fuel subsidy and devaluation of the naira has rendered the salaries received by public servants inadequate. They would not be able to fend for themselves as they want to. The tendency is that corruption would set in and be on the increase. This is expected as their basic salaries are not enough to cater for all their needs.

iii) Reduction in savings rate and investment: Salaries received by public servants are not enough to even meet their expenditure. Prices of goods and services changed without a corresponding change in their pay. Thus, the extra fund needed to be set aside for savings and investment is reduced to the barest minimum.

iv) Motivation: This means that workers inner drive may reduce as they are not well catered for. They might see no need to go the extra mile in the performance of their duties so as to attain excellence.

- GOVERNMENT (POLICY MAKERS)

To the government, this study will reveal the effect of subsidy removal on the welfare of public servants and thus would aid subsequent economic decisions of the policy makers.

Innovative strategies that would facilitate a better well being and help channel the course of nation leaders in the right direction as it is expected to poise them into enacting citizen friendly laws.

- CIVIL SERVANTS

It serves as a platform to help civil servants express themselves by carefully giving attention to their views. Important strategies proposed by them to leverage their sufferings arising from the removal of fuel subsidy would be noted. Also, ways by which they can contribute better to the furtherance of the economy for growth, development and productivity sake would be addressed and how the government can play its own role.

The table below provides a clearer picture of the different pump prices by the different administrations from 1978 to Jan. 2012.

Table I: Various Petrol Adjustments in Nigeria Since 1978

S/N	Date	Administration	Price	Percentage change
1	1978	Obasanjo	15k	
2	1990	Babangida	60k	300%
3	1992	Babangida	70k	17%
4	1992	Babangida	3.25k	364%
5	1993	Babangida	N5.00	54%

6	1994	Shonekan	N11.00	120%
7	1994-1998	Abacha	N11.00-	
8	1998-1999	Abacha	N20.00	82%
9	2000	Obasanjo	N20.00-	
10	2000	Obasanjo	N22.00	10%
11	2001	Obasanjo	N26.00	18%
12	2003	Obasanjo	N40.00	54%
13	2004	Obasanjo	N45.00	13%
14	2007	Obasanjo	N70.00	56%
15	2007	Yar'Adua	N65.00	7%
16	2010-2012	Jonathan	N65.00-	
17	2012	Till date Jonathan	N141.00	117%

Source: Adagba O., Ugwu S.C and Eme O.I, (2012)

According to Eme (2011) the Nigerian down steam oil sector is characterized by under-funding, shortage of Petroleum products nationwide, product adulteration, vandalisation of products distribution and shortage of facilities and poor and non-maintenance of facilities, especially the Turn-Around maintenance (TAM) of the nation's four refineries. The oil pipelines and deports also suffered many years of neglect and their vandalisation negatively impacted on the operational efficiency of the oil industry gave rise to the call for deregulation of the petroleum industry. The fallout of the above scenario was incessant fuel shortage fuel price like and rise in the prices o essential commodities.

Deregulation and Anti-Subsidy Removal Strikes in Nigeria

The analysis below shows the reactions of citizens to the increase in the price of fuel since 1986-2012.

1986 – The Ibrahim Babangida government increase in fuel price led to tension and mass protests across the country.

1994 – The Abacha junta increased the price of fuel to N15, from N3.25 but after massive street protests, it reduced it to N11 on October 4, 1994.

Clashes with the military regime twice led to the dissolution of the NLC's national organs, the first in 1988 under the military regime of Gen. Ibrahim Babangida (rtd) and the second in 1994, under the regime of late Gen. Sani Abacha.

1998 – Abdulsalami Abubakar increased fuel price from N11 to N25 but after days of sustained protests, it was reduced to N20 on January 6, 1999.

1998 – After a series of flow stations were shut down, having been taken over by a group of Ijaw youth, Nigeria's total oil output fell by about one third.

1999 – The Nigeria Police opened fire and used tear gas to disperse protesters trying to gain entry into the National Assembly complex in Abuja. The demonstration was called by the NLC to protest against plans to end fuel subsidies.

2000 – The Obasanjo regime tried to affect an increment in fuel price to N30 but protests and mass rejection forced it to reduce the increment to N25 on June 8, 2000 and further down to N22 on June 13, 2000. The price hike raised a lot of dust. For eight days; the economy was at a standstill.

2003 – During the April 2003 election, Nigeria was engulfed by four nationwide stoppages over fuel subsidies. It witnessed a legal battle over the extent of the right to strike.

Volume 1, Issue 3, December, 2014

2004 – Fuel hike affected international and domestic flights in Nigeria as many airlines were hit by a shortage of aviation fuel, with planes unable to leave the commercial capital, Lagos.

2012-strike action was also recorded. The announcement of the removal of fuel subsidy on January 1, 2012 caught Nigerians caught off guard. The nationwide strike came on board on January 9. By all intent and purposes, Nigerians were right to protest the fuel price increase, or what has been termed this time around fuel subsidy removal. While government estimated that it would make N1.3 trillion from the removal of subsidy, Many Nigerians had set themselves up for festivities at the end of 2011. Many had travelled to their home states during the long Christmas holidays. They were not expecting themselves back at their bases until the first week of January 2012. Thus, it was not surprising that the removal bred anger. Transport fares skyrocketed, prices of goods and services also pumped up, not just as a result of the fuel price increase, but also because of the usual character of transporters during festive seasons. States of the South South except Edo stayed out of the fuel strike, there were vociferous cries in Abuja, Lagos, Ibadan, Kogi, Kaduna, Minna and Kano also. It emerged that many of the states in the South East and even North East had stayed off the strike. It became obvious that politics was playing a big role in determining the face of the protest.

History of Fuel Subsidy Strike Actions in Nigeria between 2000 and 2012

Date	Cause of strike	Duration	Resolution
June 1, 2000	Prices of petrol increased to N30/litre from N11/litre	Eight days	Price reduced to N20 per Arabian litre
June 16, 2002	Price increase from N20/litre to N26/litre	Two days	Price retained at N26 per litre
June 30 – July 8, 2003	Price increase from N26/litre to N40/litre Price increase from N34/litre to N50/litre	Eight days	Price reduced to N34/litre
October 11, 2004	Price increase from N42/litre to N52/litre	Three days	Government appointed the 19-member Sen. Ibrahim Mantu committee on palliatives.

September 2005	Price increase from N52/litre to N65/litre	No Strike	Protest by NLC and civil society groups led to a cut in price
June 20, 2007	Price increase from N65/litre to N70/litre	Four days	Price reduced to N65/litre
January 1, 2012	Price increase from N65/litre to N141/litre	Eight days	Price reduced to N97/litre

FUEL SUBSIDY REMOVAL AND CIVIL SERVANTS

The Civil service is one of the agents of development in any nation. The transformation of any society or system depends on the effectiveness and efficiency of its civil service, particularly, the developing societies. Civil Service- Adamolekun (2002), states that the civil service is commonly used as the synonym of the machinery of the government, this is so in Britain and most common wealth countries of Sub-Saharan Africa. In the British conception, the civil service is used to refer to the body of permanent officials appointed to assist the decision makers.

Today, the civil service has come to be regarded as modern institution bequeathed to mankind in the process of revolutionizing an efficient way of organizing any large human organization. It is in this respect that the civil service is defined as a bureaucracy (Ipinlaiye, 2001).

OPEC and non OPEC countries and their fuel prices per litre and minimum wage.

S/N	COUNTRIES	FUEL PRICE PER LITRE N OPEC	MINIMUM WAGE
1	VENEZUELA	3.61	95,639
2	KUWAIT	34.54	161,461
3	SAUDI-ARABIA	25.12	99,237
4	IRAN	102.05	86,585
5	QATAR	34.54	101,250
6	UAE	70.18	103,112
7	ALGERIA	63.55	55,937
8	LIBYA	26.69	23,813
9	IRAQ	59.66	25,813

10	NIGERIA	141.00	18,000

NON OPEC

S/N	Countries	Fuel per litre	Minimum wage
1	USA	157.00	197,296
2	Uk	334,41	295,644
3	Oman	48,67	91,583

Source: The Nation, 2012. Monday January 6, pp.40.

The implication of the subsidy removal on the welfare of civil servants is of utmost importance. Since they form part of the economy and do contribute their quota towards the overall development of the economy, thus, a country desirous of growth should put them into consideration. Wellbeing usually refers to the degree to which an individual is well. In this sense it is synonymous with `quality of life'. Sometimes, however, the word is also used to indicate the quality of supra-individual phenomena, such as the family, a sector of industry or society as a whole.

MERITS OF FUEL SUBSIDY REMOVAL

To the protagonist fuel subsidy removal was a step in the right direction and in the interest of Nigerians. According to Egbosiuba (2012), He points out the following: The positive outcomes of fuel subsidy removal are:
  i.   It gives incentive to private companies to build oil refineries in Nigeria.
  ii. Reduces or eliminates fuel smuggling across Nigerian borders.
  iii. Reduce fuel usage.
  iv. The price of fuel also reduces a little bit due to competition.

 SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES

The antagonists of the fuel subsidy removal present a contrary view. They have concluded that their leaders are truly detached from the reality of economic hardship endured by Nigerians.There would certainly be a downward shift in the quality of life for the borderline income groups as they are forced further down into the most desperate or challenged group of workers as choices have to be made in the redistribution of the household and business budgets – trades off have to be made between the essentials – fuel consumption/transport costs vis-a-vis health care costs, feeding allowance, education allowance, saving investment opportunities until some adjustments have been made to the wage levels. This has not taken into cognizance the plight of the unemployed and possible levels of unemployment such a shock might trigger in the short to medium term.
THE CONSEQUENCES ARE HIGHLIGHTED BELOW:
   (i)   Increase in Fuel Price
   (ii) Increase in Transport fare

(ii)   Increase in Price of Good and Services

(iv)   Psychological Effects on homes.

3.4 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The major instrument to be used for data collection is the questionnaire. The questionnaires will be printed and administered to the eight hundred (800) workers of the Local Government. The second part of the questionnaire consists of research questions raised in the study to find solutions to the research problem. Specifically, the questionnaires used a four point opinion/attitude scale, stated in the following ways:

SA   -   Strongly Agree
A   -   Agree
SD   -   Strongly Disagree
D   -   Disagree

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents'

Classification Variable	Frequency	Percent
GENDER		
Male	44	55.0
Female	36	45.0
AGE		
21 – 30yrs	28	35.0
31 – 40yrs	29	36.3
41 – 50yrs	16	20.0
51yrs and above	7	8.8
MARITAL STATUS		
Single	21	26.3
Married	52	65.0
Divorced	5	6.3
Separated	2	2.5
QUALIFICATION	18	22.5
WASC/SSCE/GCE	14	17.5
OND	37	46.3
HND/B.Sc.	11	13.8
MSc/MBA		
MANAGEMENT POSITION	29	36.3
Junior Staff	45	56.3
Senior Staff	6	7.5
Executive		

The table above shows the distribution of the respondents' according to some demography parameters. It would be observed from the table above that 55% of the respondents'

were male whereas 45% were female. More so, 36.3% of the respondents' opined between 31 to 40 years as their age whereas 35% opined between 21 to 30 years. Likewise, 20% of the respondents' opined between 41 to 50 years as their age and 8.8% opined at least 51years as their age. Also, 65% of the respondents' opined they were married whereas 26.3% opined single as their marital status. Moreover, 6.3% and 2.5% opined divorced and separated respectively as their marital status. Furthermore, more than 40% of the respondents' opined HND/B.Sc. as their educational qualification whereas 22.5% opined WASC/SSCE/GCE. Likewise, 17.5% of the respondents' opined OND and 13.8% opined MSc/MBA as their educational qualification. Additionally, 56.3% of the respondents' were senior staff whereas 36.3% were junior staff and 7.5% were executive.

4.2 Analysis of other Data

Fuel Subsidy Removal is a good idea

■ Percent	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
Percent	16,3	20	33,8	30
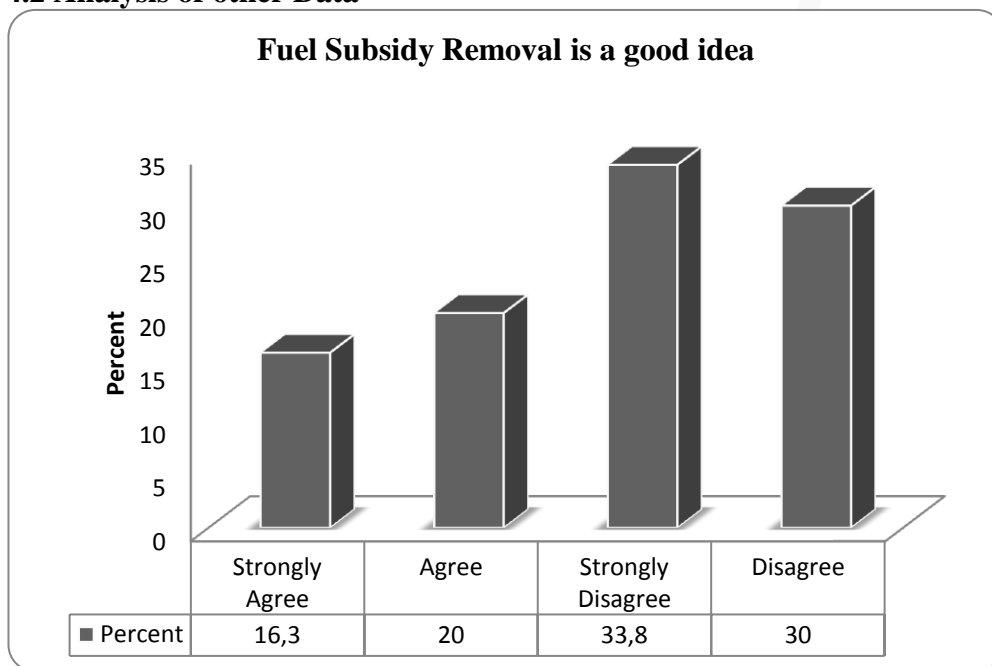
Fig1: Respondents' perception to fuel subsidy removal

It would be observed from the chart above that more than 60% of the respondents' which represent more than 6 respondents' out of every ten randomly selected opined that fuel subsidy is not a good idea whereas 36.3% opined otherwise.

Volume 1, Issue 3, December, 2014

I work as a civil servant because I have no choice

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
■ Percent	27,5	35	21,3	16,3
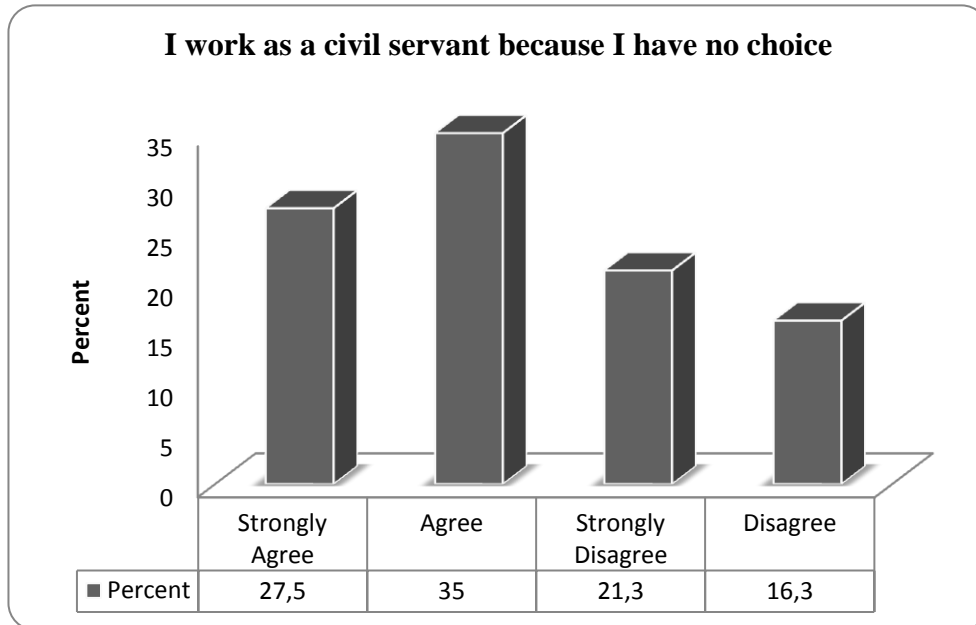
Fig2: Respondents' opinion for choice of job

It would be observed from the chart above that 62.5% of the respondents'' opined that they work as a civil servant because they have no choice whereas 37.6% opined otherwise.

My Salary is no longer capable of meeting my needs

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
■ Percent	52,5	31,3	11,3	5
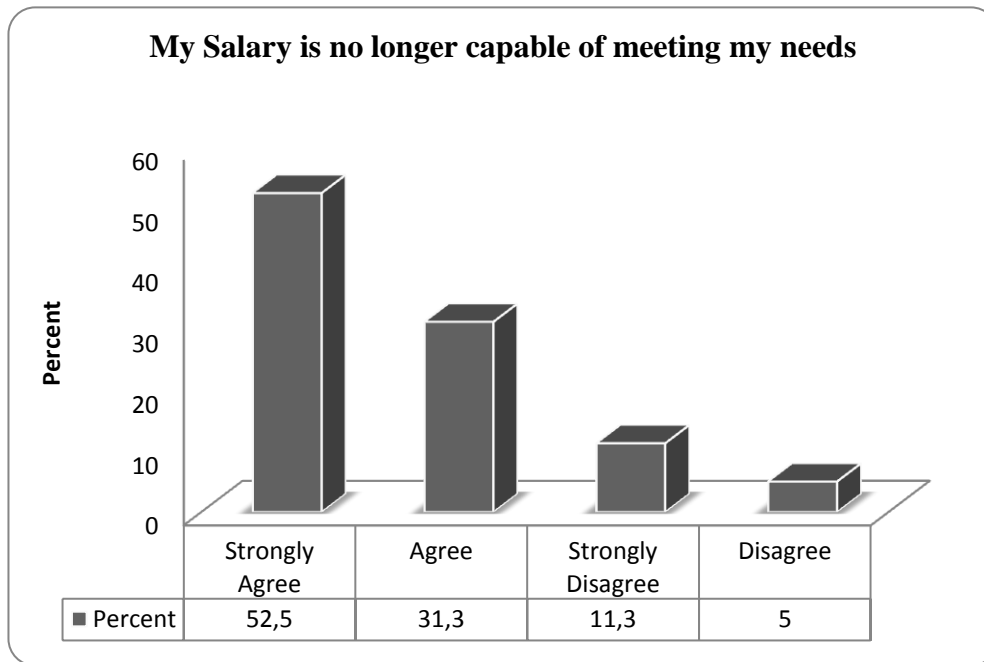
Fig 3: Respondents' Satisfaction based on Remuneration

It would be observed from the chart above that more than 80% of the respondents' which represent more than 8 respondents' out of every 10 random selected opined that their salary is no longer capable of meeting their needs whereas 16.3% opined otherwise.

4.3 Presentation of Data According to Research Questions

Research Question 1: Is there any significant relationship between the removal of fuel subsidy and the level of poverty of civil servant?

Table 2: Effects of fuel subsidy removal on respondents' standard of living

STATEMENTS	SA	A	SD	D
My purchasing power has reduced in relation to the prices of commodities.	28.8	38.8	17.5	15.0
My savings and investments have not reduced.	10.0	15.0	38.8	36.3
The cost of accommodation has not escalated as a result of fuel subsidy removal.	21.3	17.5	25.0	36.3
The cost of transportation has not increased.	2.5	13.8	28.8	55.0

It would be observed from the table above that more than 60% of the respondents' opined that their purchasing power has reduced in relation to the prices of commodities whereas 32.5% opined otherwise. Likewise, 75% of the respondents' opined that their savings and investment have reduced whereas 25% opined otherwise. More so, more than 50% of the respondents' opined that the cost of accommodation has escalated as a result of fuel subsidy removal whereas 38.8% opined otherwise. Also, more than 80% of the respondents' opined that the cost of transportation has increased since the removal of fuel subsidy whereas 16.3% opined otherwise.

Thus, it could be concluded that there is a relationship between the removal of fuel subsidy and the level of poverty of civil servant.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between the quality of lives of civil servants and the subsidy removal?

Table 3: Challenges Identified by Civil Servants after Fuel Subsidy Removal

STATEMENTS	SA	A	SD	D
Fuel subsidy removal has increased my indebtedness.	32.5	46.3	18.8	2.5
The proportion of my salary devoted to the purchase of consumable goods has decreased.	45.0	27.5	22.5	5.0
Health care cost, electricity charges, water bills have all experienced a top up on their prices.	57.5	37.5	3.8	1.3
The salary I receive is meager when compared to my needs.	52.5	31.3	5.0	11.3

It would be observed from the table above that about 80% of the respondents' opined that fuel subsidy has increased their indebtedness whereas 21.3% opined otherwise. Moreover, 72.5% of the respondents' opined that the proportion of their salary devoted to the purchase of consumable goods has decreased whereas 27.5% opined otherwise. Also, more than 90% of the respondents' opined that health care cost and other utility bills have all experienced a top up on their prices whereas 5.1% opined otherwise. Additionally, more than 80% of the respondents' opined that they salary they received is meager when compared to their needs whereas 16.3% opined otherwise.

Thus, it could be concluded that there is a relationship between the quality of lives of civil servants and the subsidy removal.

Research Question 3: Find out if the productivity of workers has declined as a result removal of the fuel subsidy removal.

Table 4: Influence of Fuel Subsidy Removal on Civil Servants' Productivity at Work.

STATEMENTS	SA	A	SD	D
I am no longer motivated to work.	32.5	32.5	25.0	10.0
Fuel subsidy removal has increased job satisfaction.	16.3	12.5	36.3	35.0
My job has become more stressful and tiring.	42.5	35.0	21.3	1.3
Subsidy removal on fuel has made me increased my expenditure.	46.3	30.0	12.5	11.3

It would be observed from the table above that more than 60% of the respondents' opined that they are no longer motivated to work whereas 35% opined otherwise. Likewise, 71.3% of the respondents' opined that fuel subsidy removal has decreased their job satisfaction whereas 28.8% opined otherwise. Furthermore, 77.5% of the respondents' opined that their job has become more

stressful and tiring whereas 22.6% opined otherwise. Additionally, 76.3% of the respondents' opined that subsidy removal on fuel has increased their expenditure whereas 23.8% opined otherwise.

Thus, it could be concluded that the productivity of workers has declined as a result removal of the fuel subsidy removal.

Presentation of Data According to Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There will be no statistically significant relationship between the removal of fuel subsidy and the level of poverty of civil servants.

CROSS TABULATION

			My purchasing power has reduced in relation to the prices of commodities				
			Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Total
Sex	Male	Count	11	18	11	4	44
	Female	Count	12	13	3	8	36
Total		Count	23	31	14	12	80

CHI-SQUARE COMPUTATION

Observed Frequency (OF)	Expected Frequency (EF)	(OF - EF)	$(OF - EF)^2$	$(OF - EF)^2/EF$
11	12.7	-1.7	2.89	0.23
18	17.1	0.9	0.81	0.05
11	7.7	3.3	10.89	1.41
4	6.6	-2.6	6.76	1.02
12	10.4	1.6	2.56	0.25
13	14	-1	1.00	0.07
3	6.3	-3.3	10.89	1.73
8	5.4	2.6	6.76	1.25
				6.01

The computed chi-square statistic is given below:

$$\sum \frac{(OF - OE)^2}{OE} = 6.01$$

Computing the critical value,

The degree of freedom is given as (r-1)*(c-1) "where r = number of rows and c = number of columns". Thus from the cross tabulation table above, the degree of freedom is (4-1)*(2-1) = 3*1 = 3. Thus, the degree of freedom is 3.

Using 5% (0.05) as the significance level, the tabulated chi-square (critical value) is 9.488.

Since the computed chi-square statistic lags the critical value i.e. 6.01<9.488, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

Thus, this implies that there is no significant relationship between the removal of fuel subsidy and the level of poverty of civil servants.

Hypothesis 2: There is no statistically significant relationship between the standard of living of civil servants and the of fuel subsidy removal.

CROSS TABULATION

			The salary I receive is meager when compared to my needs				
			Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Total
Sex	Male	Count	25	10	1	8	44
	Female	Count	17	15	3	1	36
Total		Count	42	25	4	9	80

CHI-SQUARE COMPUTATION

Observed Frequency (OF)	Expected Frequency (EF)	(OF - EF)	$(OF - EF)^2$	$(OF - EF)^2$/EF
25	23.1	1.9	3.61	0.16
10	13.8	-3.8	14.44	1.05
1	2.2	-1.2	1.44	0.65
8	5	3	9.00	1.80
17	18.9	-1.9	3.61	0.19
15	11.3	3.7	13.69	1.21
3	1.8	1.2	1.44	0.80
1	4.1	-3.1	9.61	2.34
				8.20

The computed chi-square statistic is given below:

$$\sum \frac{(OF - OE)^2}{OE} = 8.20$$

Computing the critical value,

The degree of freedom is given as (r-1)*(c-1) "where r = number of rows and c = number of columns". Thus from the cross tabulation table above, the degree of freedom is (4-1)*(2-1) = 3*1 = 3. Thus, the degree of freedom is 3.

Using 5% (0.05) as the significance level, the tabulated chi-square (critical value) is 9.488.

Since the computed chi-square statistic lags the critical value i.e. 8.20<9.488, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

Thus, this implies that there is no significant relationship between the standard of living of civil servants and the of fuel subsidy removal.

Hypothesis 3: There is no statistically significant relationship between the productivity of workers and the removal of fuel subsidy.

CROSS TABULATION

Volume 1, Issue 3, December, 2014

			I am no longer motivated to work				
			Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Total
Sex	Male	Count	17	13	7	7	44
	Female	Count	9	13	13	1	36
Total		Count	26	26	20	8	80

CHI-SQUARE COMPUTATION

Observed Frequency (OF)	Expected Frequency (EF)	(OF - EF)	(OF - EF)^2	(OF - EF)^2/EF
17	14.3	2.7	7.29	0.51
13	14.3	-1.3	1.69	0.12
7	11	-4	16.00	1.45
7	4.4	2.6	6.76	1.54
9	11.7	-2.7	7.29	0.62
13	11.7	1.3	1.69	0.14
13	9	4	16.00	1.78
1	3.6	-2.6	6.76	1.88
				8.04

The computed chi-square statistic is given below:

$$\sum \frac{(OF - OE)^2}{OE} = 8.04$$

Computing the critical value,
The degree of freedom is given as (r-1)*(c-1) "where r = number of rows and c = number of columns". Thus from the cross tabulation table above, the degree of freedom is (4-1)*(2-1) = 3*1 = 3. Thus, the degree of freedom is 3.
Using 5% (0.05) as the significance level, the tabulated chi-square (critical value) is 9.488.
Since the computed chi-square statistic lags the critical value i.e. 8.04 <9.488, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.
Thus, this implies that there is no significant relationship the productivity of workers and the removal of fuel subsidy.

Conclusion

This study has provided information in terms of the effect of fuel subsidy removal on the welfare of civil servants together with their attitude and productivity level at work. The respondents' opined that fuel subsidy removal is not a good idea. Moreover, they also opined that they work as civil servants because they have no alternative with more than 80% stating that their salary is no longer capable of meeting their needs. More so, there is a relationship between the removal of fuel subsidy and the level of poverty of civil servant as their savings together with

purchasing power reduced as a result of fuel subsidy removal such that this further affect the quality of life of the civil servants. As a result, the productivity of workers has declined as more than 60% of the respondents' opined that they are no longer motivated to work. In a nutshell, it could be said that fuel subsidy removal has negative impact on the welfare of the civil servants together with their productivity level.

RECOMMENDATION

The following are the recommendations as a result of the findings made:

- ❖ The remuneration of civil servants should be properly reviewed using the present economic situation in the country as the basis.
- ❖ The outlined promises made by the Federal Government for implementing the fuel subsidy removal should be fulfilled to maintain relevance before the citizens.
- ❖ Civil servants should be motivated to work to promote the furtherance of the mission statement of the civil service of the federation so as to save it from extinction.
- ❖ Government must put in place an effective regulatory framework to protect the citizens from exploitation by petroleum marketers. Therefore, the Petroleum Product Pricing Regulatory Agency
  (PPPRA) must be urgently reorganized. Subsidy as a social security is the rights of Nigerian particularly the under privileged. The ordinary Nigerian must be protected and money aimed at ameliorating the
  lives of the poor must be protected.

- ❖ The governance structure should be more cost effective and corruption must be more effectively tackled. Government must sustain the momentum of dialogue and enlightenment to stabilize the polity and ensure accountability and transparency in the use of the savings from the policy decision for the benefit of the people. There is a seeming agreement among Nigerians that the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) is corrupt and needs a complete reorganization and persons found to be guilty be appropriately punished.
- ❖ Decision making must be participatory. Government must sufficiently involve the citizenry in the process of decision and policy making particularly on issues and policies that affect their lives. This could be through town hall meetings with all segments of society and making the necessary contacts with members of the grassroots and civil society organizations. To do this, government could employ the services of NGOs and National Orientation agencies across the country.

References

-Adeyemo, T. (2012) ''Tackling the subsidy mess@, Tell, No. 1, Jan. pp 8-9

-Agboola, T. (2012) "OPS: Subsidy Removal will kill small industries" The Nation Jan, 10, pp 13-14

-Bankole, F. (2001) @Nigeria and Perennial Fuel Scarcity@ The Tribune, Tuesday March 21, pp 14.

-Ering, S. O. (2010) An Introduction to History of Social Thought and Social Order. Serenity Publishers, Lagos. Pp 23-28

-Iba, L (2009) "Fuel Crisis: Will deregulation roll away our problems? , Daily Sun, October 5 pp 3 & 39.

-International Energy Agency (IEA) 2009, World Energy Outlook, Paris.

-Onanuga, A. (20120 "Fuel protest rock cities", The Nation, July, pp 3.

-Sarpu, R. K. (2008) Public Policy: Formulation, Implementation and Evaluation (2nd ed) Sterling Publisher, New Delhi pp 62

Poe and the Myth of Origin

Sandy Pecastaing
Université Bordeaux Montaigne, France

Abstract

Published in 1848 – one year before Poe's death – Eureka is one of the last direct legacies of the English and French Enlightenments. This work is placed under the patronage of Newton, Laplace and Humboldt to whom Poe dedicates his essay "with [his] very profound respect". The program of the American writer is ambitious. "I design to speak of the Physical, Meta-physical and Mathematical – of the Material and Spiritual Universe: – of its Essence, its Origin, its Creation, its Present Condition and its Destiny." Of the eighteenth century, Poe has kept the spirit and pleasure of intellectual conquest, the taste for exploration of all the fields of knowledge and imaginative writings. But he knows that he belongs to another world, a world where Science – he says – has driven Diane away from the forests and the poet from the public space. Eureka is above all a "romance", a prose poem. It is also a discourse in scientific language. Poe translates the myth of Origin into astronomical formulas. "[The] myths decay and symbols become secularized – Mircea Eliade writes –, but […] they never disappear, even in the most positivist of civilizations, that of the nineteenth century. Symbols and myths come from such depths: they are part and parcel of the human being" (Mircea Eliade, Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism, tr. Philip Mairet). In composing Eureka, Poe extends the exercise of rewriting beyond the limits of science. He speaks of the eternal return of Poetry, and highlights the origin of myths of Origin. "In the Beginning Was the Fable" (Paul Valéry, "Au Sujet d'Eurêka").

Key Words: Poe, Cosmology, Universe, Origin, Poetry

> Quant à [l']origine [de l'Univers], – AU COMMENCEMENT
> ÉTAIT LA FABLE. Elle y sera toujours.
> **Paul Valéry, "Au sujet d'*Eurêka*".**

> As for [the] origin [of the Universe], – IN THE BEGINNING WAS
> THE FABLE. There it will always be.[50]
> **Paul Valéry, "About *Eurek*a".**

"Many people mocked the words of Poe: "I have no desire to live since I have done "*Eureka*." I could accomplish nothing more" (letter to Maria Clemm, July 7, 1849, *Letters*, t. II, p. 452). Where some see only pretentiousness, this could also be an expression of nothing more than the feeling of a writer and a philosopher assured of having finally grasped and formulated the basic principles of a creed hitherto imperfectly designed",[51] Claude Richard observes. Published in 1848, "*Eureka* is the product of long psychological and scientific preparation. From *Al Aaraaf*, then in successive steps, the basic principles of Poe's philosophy decant slowly – in *The Conversation of Eiros and Charmion*, *The Colloquy of Monos and Una*, *Mesmeric Revelation*, *The Power of Words* – throughout studies and new initiations, carefully checked".[52] *Eureka* is an ambitious work. It is a cosmogony, and "cosmogony is a literary genre of a remarkable persistence and surprising diversity, one of the most antic genres that are",[53] Paul Valéry writes. "It seems that the world is barely older than the art of making the world"[54]:

> […] le genre cosmogonique touche aux religions, avec lesquelles il se confond par endroits, et à la science, dont il se distingue nécessairement par l'absence de vérifications. Il comprend des livres sacrés, des poèmes admirables, des récits excessivement bizarres, chargés de beautés et de ridicules, des recherches physico-mathématiques […].[55]

> The cosmogonic genre touches on religions with which it merges in places, and on science, from which it is necessarily different by the absence of checks. It includes

---

[50] Author's translation.

[51] Author's translation. Cf. Claude Richard's note, Edgar Allan Poe, *Contes Essais Poèmes*, edition directed by Claude Richard, Paris, Robert Laffont, "Bouquins", 1995, p. 1484-1485: "Bien des gens se sont moqués de la phrase de Poe : "Je n'ai pas désir de vivre, puisque j'ai fait *Eureka*. Je ne pourrais accomplir rien de plus" (lettre à Maria Clemm, au 7 juillet 1849, Letters, t. II, p. 452). Là où certains ne voient que prétention, ne s'exprime pourtant rien d'autre que le sentiment d'un écrivain et d'un philosophe assuré d'avoir enfin saisi et formulé les principes fondamentaux d'un credo jusqu'alors imparfaitement conçus". From now, we will use the abbreviation *CEP*, followed by the page number.

[52] Author's translation. Cf. Claude Richard's note, *CEP*, p. 1485: "*Eureka* est le fruit d'une longue préparation psychologique et scientifique. Dès *Al Aaraaf*, puis par étapes successives, les principes fondamentaux de la philosophie de Poe se décantent lentement – dans *Conversation d'Eiros avec Charmion, Colloque entre Monos et Una, Révélation magnétique, Puissance de la parole* – au fil d'études et d'initiations nouvelles, soigneusement vérifiées. "

[53] Author's translation. Cf. Paul Valéry, "Au sujet d'Eurêka", in *Edgar Allan Poe*, Paris, L'Herne / Fayard, "L'Herne", N° 26, edition directed by Claude Richard, 1998, p. 367 : "La cosmogonie est un genre littéraire d'une remarquable persistance et d'une étonnante variété, l'un des genres les plus antiques qui soient."

[54] Author's translation. Cf. Paul Valéry, "Au sujet d'Eurêka", *op. cit*., p. 367 : "On dirait que le monde est à peine plus âgé que l'art de faire le monde. "

[55] Paul Valéry, "Au sujet d'Eurêka", *op. cit*., p. 367.

sacred books, admirable poems, excessively weird stories, loaded with beauty and the ridiculous, physico-mathematical research [...].[56]

In other words, the cosmogonic genre transgresses the limits of the genre. It defines all the stories of genesis of the universe – including works of science. Science is also a narration.

Eureka is a complex, composite work. As the author affirms in the dedication to the reader, this is a poem. It is also a rationalist discourse, with many philosophical and scientific sources[57] – a narrative in the form of an essay on the genesis of the Universe, an imaginative creation which has some traces of the survival of cosmogonist myths. At the same time it draws on the legacies of the English and French Enlightenment in elaborating a new cosmology from Laplace's nebula theory and the Newtonian law of gravitation. But the foundations of Poe's cosmology are aesthetic, Eveline Pinto notes. "Poe invents the themes of his world according to his experience as a writer".[58] *Eureka*, then, is a work of fiction. Eveline Pinto concludes:

> Pas plus que les auteurs des premières tentatives de cosmologie intégrale, Poe n'innove. Dans sa *particule primordiale*, ne s'anticipe ni "l'atome primitif" de Lemaître, ni "l'Ylem" de Gamow ; lorsque Poe inaugure sa singulière histoire de l'Univers par la supposition de l'Unité, il ne faudrait pas, par une sorte de projection rétroactive, le tenir pour le précurseur de modernes théories. Ces thèmes ne sont peut-être dans la science que la trace des survivances, des archaïsmes et des images qui continuent à investir la pensée rationaliste.[59]

---

[56] Author's translation.

[57] Cf. Claude Richard's note, *CEP*, p. 148: "Poe fut d'abord porté par la tradition néo-platonicienne et la Naturphilosophie de Schlegel. Puis il s'est familiarisé avec – outre la théorie des nébuleuses de Laplace, Newton et Kepler – le célèbre *Cosmos* de Alexander von Humboldt à qui *Eureka* est dédié, les *Vestiges de la création* de Chambers, le *Cours de philosophie positive* d'Auguste Comte, l'un des traités de Bridgewater, *Astronomy and General Physics Considered with Reference to Natural Theology*. Il n'est pas impossible non plus qu'il ait eu connaissance de l'*Histoire naturelle universelle et théorie du ciel…* (1775) de Kant, du moins à travers l'exposé qu'en fait Humboldt dans *Cosmos* et du très célèbre *Philosophiae naturalis theoria redacta ad unicam legem virum in natura existentium* (1758) de Boscovich qui devient "la plus populaire des spéculations concernant l'ultime constitution de la matière" et qui se trouvait enseignée dans maintes écoles américaines. Il a puisé sa théorie des correspondances (de la lumière, de l'électricité, de la chaleur, du magnétisme) dans les travaux d'Oersted et de Faraday, de J. Priestley, de Pictet, de Seebeck, de Peletier, probablement connus à travers des rapports divers, tandis qu'à propos de la nature répulsive de ces forces, il s'inspire des travaux de Cavendish et de B. Franklin." Author's translation: "Poe was first led by the neo-Platonic tradition and Schlegel's Naturphilosophie. Then he got to know – in addition to Laplace's nebula theory, Newton and Kepler – the famous *Cosmos* by Alexander von Humboldt to whom *Eureka* is dedicated, Chamber's *Vestiges of Creation*, *The Course in Positive Philosophy* by Auguste Comte, one of Bridgewater's treaties, *Astronomy and General Physics Considered with Reference to Natural Theology*. It is not impossible that he was aware of *The Universal Natural History and Theory of the Heavens...* (1775) by Kant, at least through the account of which Humboldt gave in *Cosmos*, and of the very famous *Philosophiae naturalis theoria redacta ad unicam legem virum in natura existentium* (1758) by Boscovich which becomes "the most popular speculation about the ultimate constitution of matter" and which was taught in many American schools. He derived his theory of correspondences (of light, electricity, heat, magnetism) from the works of Oersted and Faraday, J. Priestley, Pictet, Seebeck, Peletier, probably known through various reports, while the works of Cavendish and B. Franklin inspired him about the repulsive nature of these forces".

[58] Author's translation. Cf. Eveline Pinto, *Edgar Poe et l'art d'inventer*, Paris, Klincksieck, "Collection d'esthétique (Paris)", 1983, p. 326 : "Poe invente les *thèmes* de son univers en fonction de son expérience d'écrivain."

[59] Eveline Pinto, *Edgar Poe et l'art d'inventer*, *op. cit.*, p. 298-299.

> No more than the authors of the first attempts at complete cosmology, Poe does not innovate. In its primary particle, he does not anticipate Lemaitre's "primeval atom" nor the "Ylem" of Gamow; when Poe inaugurates his unique history of the Universe by the assumption of Unity, he should not be regarded as the precursor of modern theories by a sort of retrospective projection. In science these themes are only perhaps the trace of survivals, of archaisms and images which continue to invest the rationalist thought.[60]

Implicitly, Eveline Pinto reduces the paradigmatic opposition between science and myth. By highlighting the convergence of myths and scientific theories with the same conception of the origin of the universe, she opens up the possibility of a competing, poetic hypothesis: the hypothesis of the American writer, according to which the phantom of the original Unity haunts the minds of men across cultures and centuries – because men have long known – they have always known the secrets of the universe – because we are literally dust of stars, we are all depositories of the memory of the world. "We walk about, amid the destinies of our world-existence, encompassed by dim but ever present *Memories* of a Destiny more vast – very far distant in the by-gone time, and infinitely awful."[61] Memories that are bound up with the Platonic reminiscence, and echo the confidence of Egaeus: "it is mere idleness to say that I had not lived before – that the soul has no previous existence. […] There is, however, a remembrance of aërial forms – of spiritual and meaning eyes – of sounds, musical yet sad; a remembrance which will not be excluded; a memory like a shadow – vague, variable, indefinite, unsteady".[62] Let us follow the hypothesis of Poe: the survival of cosmogonic myths over centuries, the perforated memory of our past lives are reducible to the phenomenon of a confused reminiscence: the subject remembers without remembering, he is in the image of an anonymous multitude – of conglomerate identities, distinct and similar at the same time – of humanity, – and humanity represents the incarnation of God, "a God, […] [who] became all things at once, through dint of his volition, while all things were thus constituted a portion of God."[63]

Why do ancient and archaic myths survive? "[M]yths decay and symbols become secularized – Mircea Eliade writes –, but […] they never disappear, even in the most positivist of civilizations, that of the nineteenth century. Symbols and myths come from such depths: they are part and parcel of the human being".[64] What is a myth? According to Claude Lévi-Strauss:

> Myth is the part of language where the formula *traduttore, tradittore* reaches its lowest truth-value. From that point of view it should be put in the whole gamut of linguistic expressions at the end opposite to that of poetry, in spite of all the claims which have been made to prove the contrary. Poetry is a kind of speech which cannot be translated except at the cost of serious distortions; whereas the mythical value of the myth remains preserved, even through the worst translation. Whatever our ignorance of the language and the culture of the people where it originated, a myth is

---

[60] Author's translation.

[61] *Eureka*, *The Works of the Late Edgar Allan Poe*, volume 2, New York, Redfield, 1857, p. 212.

[62] "Berenice", *The Complete Tales and Pœms of Edgar Allan Poe*, London, Penguin Books, "Penguin Literary", 1982, p. 642.

[63] *Eureka*, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

[64] Mircea Eliade, *Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism*, translated by Philip Mairet, Princeton University Press, 1961, p. 25. Cf. Mircea Eliade, *Images et symboles Essais sur le symbolisme magico-religieux*, [Paris], Gallimard, "Tel", 2004, p. 36: "[L]es mythes se dégradent et les symboles se sécularisent, mais ils ne disparaissent jamais, fût-ce dans la plus positiviste des civilisations, celle du XIXe siècle. Les symboles et les mythes viennent de trop loin : ils font partie de l'être humain."

still felt as a myth by any reader throughout the world. Its substance does not lie in its style, its original music, or its syntax, but in the story which it tells.[65]

So the myth is all at once infinitely translatable and untranslatable. Infinitely translatable because it resists the many transformations produced in translation, it is transposable from one language to another language, without losing the value of myth. Implicitly, Claude Lévi-Strauss de-literarises tales of myth, of which we can therefore affirm the *untranslatable* character. We do not translate a myth. We tell a myth. It is a mode of discourse adapted to all discourses: poetic, literary, scientific, political, etc. The myth is a story – a "sacred history," Mircea Eliade says:

> […] il relate un événement qui a eu lieu dans le temps primordial, le temps fabuleux des "commencements". Autrement dit, le mythe raconte comment, grâce aux exploits des Êtres Surnaturels, une réalité est venue à l'existence, que ce soit la réalité totale, le Cosmos, ou seulement un fragment : une île, une espèce végétale, un comportement humain, une institution. C'est donc toujours le récit d'une "création": on rapporte comment quelque chose a été produit, a commencé à *être*.[66]

> Myth narrates a sacred history; it relates an event that took place in primordial Time, the fabled time of the "beginnings." In other words, myth tells how, through the deeds of Supernatural Beings, a reality came into existence, be it the whole of reality, the Cosmos, or only a fragment of reality—an island, a species of plant, a particular kind of human behavior, an institution. Myth, then, is always an account of a "creation"; it relates how something was produced, began to *be*.[67]

Science assumes the function of myth when it teaches men "the secret of the origin of things"[68]: the expansion of the Universe "from an extremely dense and hot state",[69] the evolution of forms of life since the apparition of life on Earth. It tells us how something has created something – not how something has been created *from nothing*. Only the myth does this, as Paul Valéry suggests.

> Quant à l'idée de commencement, – j'entends d'un commencement absolu, – elle est nécessairement un mythe. Tout commencement est coïncidence ; il nous faudrait concevoir ici je ne sais quel contact entre le tout et le rien. En essayant d'y penser on trouve que tout commencement est conséquence, – tout commencement *achève* quelque chose.[70]

> As for the idea of a beginning – I mean an absolute beginning – it is necessarily a myth. Every beginning is coincidence, we should develop here I do not know what contact between everything and nothing. In trying to think about it, we find that every beginning is a consequence – every beginning *ends* something.[71]

---

[65] Claude Lévi-Strauss, "The Structural Study of Myth", *The Journal of American Folklore*, Vol. 68, N° 270, Myth: A Symposium (Oct. - Dec. 1955), p. 430.

[66] Mircea Eliade, *Aspects du mythe*, [Paris], Gallimard, "Folio essais", 2005, p. 16-17.

[67] Mircea Eliade, *Myth and Reality*, translated from French by Willard R. Trask, Long Grove, Illinois, Waveland Press, Inc., 1998, p. 5-6.

[68] *Ibid*., p. 14. Cf. Mircea Eliade, *Aspects du mythe*, *op. cit*., p. 26.

[69] Author's translation. Cf. Wladimir Vostrikov, *Conceptions cosmologiques*, Paris, Mon Petit éditeur, 2012, p. 81 : "à partir d'un état extrêmement dense et chaud".

[70] Paul Valéry, "Au sujet d'Eurêka", *op. cit*., p. 368.

[71] Author's translation.

Any attempt to tell the tale of the genesis of the universe, of life, leads to the production of a myth. Even science is therefore the source of modern fables, like old mythologies. We could cite as an example the Schrödinger's cat experiment. Science questions and then explains: how? Myth asks: why? They do not answer the same questions; but science and myth are both discourses of *truth*. Science produces transitional truths through the development of theories of which none is definitive. A "myth is a "true story",[72] as Mircea Eliade underlines. Similarly, *Eureka* is a "Book of Truths": "*What I here propound is true*: – therefore it cannot die: – or if by any means it be now trodden down so that it die, it will "rise again to the Life Everlasting".[73]

Poe's program is ambitious: "I design to speak of the *Physical, Metaphysical and Mathematical – of the Material and Spiritual Universe: – of its Essence, its Origin, its Creation, its Present Condition and its Destiny*".[74] He then follows with the general proposition: "*In the Original Unity of the First Thing lies the Secondary Cause of All Things, with the Germ of their Inevitable Annihilation*".[75] The starting point of Poe's cosmological investigation is a hypothesis: God is Spirit. He "created [us], or made [us] out of Nothing, by dint of his Volition".[76] The cosmic vision of the American writer is thus theological.

What else does Poe say?

> I now assert – that an intuition altogether irresistible, although inexpressible, forces me to the conclusion that what God originally created – that that matter which, by dint of his Volition, he first made from his Spirit, or from Nihility, *could* have been nothing but Matter in its utmost conceivable state of – what? – of Simplicity[.][77]

"*Oneness*, then, is all that I predicate of the originally created Matter"[78]. "The willing into being the primordial particle, has completed the act, or more properly the conception of Creation."[79] This is indeed a *conception* and not – Poe says explicitly – "an 'act' in the ordinary meaning of the term."[80] The "Irradiation from Unity" however is an act; this is "the primary *act*" of God.[81] "The thought of God is to be understood as originating the Diffusion – as proceeding with it – as regulating it – and, finally, as being withdrawn from it upon its completion."[82] The principles of attraction and repulsion are "the two *immediate* results of the discontinuance of the Divine Volition"[83]; and the law of gravitation, "force impelling matter to seek matter",[84] translates "the tendency of the diffused atoms to return into their original unity".[85]

---

[72] Mircea Eliade, *Myth and Reality*, *op. cit.*, p. 1. Cf. Mircea Eliade, *Aspects du mythe*, *Op. Cit.*, p. 11: "histoire vraie".

[73] *Eureka*, *The Works of the Late Edgar Allan Poe*, volume 2, New York, Redfield, 1857, p. 117.

[74] *Ibid*.

[75] *Ibid*., p. 118.

[76] *Ibid*., p. 132.

[77] *Ibid*., p. 133.

[78] *Ibid*.

[79] *Ibid*., p. 133-134.

[80] *Ibid*., p. 156.

[81] *Ibid*.

[82] *Ibid*., p. 156-157.

[83] *Ibid*., p. 157.

[84] *Ibid*., p. 139.

[85] *Ibid*.

The cosmology of Poe is also poetic: "the Universe […] is but the most sublime of poems."[86] The creation of the Cosmos is a divine act *of aesthetic*, a work of art, in accordance with ancient and archaic myths of origin of the world. According to Mircea Eliade:

> La cosmogonie est le modèle exemplaire de toute espèce de "faire" : non seulement parce que le Cosmos est l'archétype idéal à la fois de toute situation créatrice et de toute création – mais aussi parce que le Cosmos est une œuvre divine ; […] le Cosmos […] est l'œuvre exemplaire des Dieux, c'est leur chef-d'œuvre.[87]

> The cosmogony is the exemplary model for every kind of "doing"; not only because the Cosmos is at once the ideal archetype of every creative situation and of every creation but also because the Cosmos is a divine work; […] the Cosmos is the exemplary work of the Gods, it is their masterpiece.[88]

Poe does not elaborate further.

> In divine constructions the object is either design or object as we choose to regard it – and we may take at any time a cause for an effect, or the converse – so that we can never absolutely decide which is which.[89]

> The pleasure which we derive from any display of human ingenuity is in the ratio of *the approach* to this species of reciprocity. In the construction of *plot*, for example, in fictitious literature, we should aim at so arranging the incidents that we shall not be able to determine, of any one of them, whether it depends from any one other or upholds it. In this sense, of course, *perfection* of *plot* is really, or practically, unattainable – but only because it is a finite intelligence that constructs. The plots of God are perfect. The Universe is a plot of God.[90]

Poe's originality lies in the composition of poetry from an exercise of rewriting cosmogonic myths into a discourse which is both literary and scientific. Generic confusion of this work is great. "Nevertheless – Poe tells us – it is as a Poem only that I wish this work to be judged after I am dead."[91] This is a strange invitation to the reader. Why simultaneously offer a "Book of Truths" and the freedom to refuse to hear the truth? The cosmogony of Poe is a personal myth of which the transmission implies that it is immediately degraded to a poem, reduced to the state of a fable. Why? Here is a hypothesis of an answer: because Truth is something *to discover*, it is not an object that can be gifted.

Poe offers us a "Book of Truths", he says. So the object of transmission is not the Truth, it is the Book. The Book in and of itself is a work of *language*, a *language act*. In other words, the gift is a speech, a poetic discourse of which the Beauty – still according to Poe – confirms the truthful character. So Beauty and Truth are complementary. About Laplace's nebula theory, Poe writes: "we shall find it *beautifully true*. It is by far too beautiful, indeed, *not* to possess Truth as

---

[86] *Ibid*., p. 204-205.
[87] Mircea Eliade, *Aspects du mythe*, *op. cit*., p. 48-49.
[88] Mircea Eliade, *Myth and Reality*, *op. cit*., p. 32-33.
[89] *Eureka*, *op. cit*., p. 197.
[90] *Ibid*.
[91] *Ibid*., p. 117.

its essentiality".[92] Thus, beauty is a criterion of truth. It is also "the sole legitimate province of the poem".[93] New conclusion: Poetry and Truth are not strangers to each other; they are both linked in a same connection with Beauty. In a few words, the dedication to the reader changes into possibility the impossibility "to reconcile the obstinate oils and waters of Poetry and Truth" of which Poe makes the statement in "The Poetic Principle"[94]:

> The demands of Truth are severe. She has no sympathy with the myrtles. All *that* which is so indispensable in Song, is precisely all *that* which *she* has nothing whatever to do. It is but making her a flaunting paradox, to wreathe her in germs and flowers. In enforcing a truth, we need severity rather than efflorescence of language. We must be simple, precise, terse. We must be cool, calm, unimpassioned. In a word, we must be in that mood which, as nearly as possible, is the exact converse of the poetical. He must be blind indeed who does not perceive the radical and chasmal differences between the truthful and the poetical modes of inculcation.[95]

Now let us ask why, and in what way, *Eureka* is a poem.

Indeed, this work does not meet all the criteria of Poetry expressed in several of the author's texts, for example, "The Poetic Principle" and "Philosophy of Composition". Therein, Poe determines that the length of a poem should be adapted to the period of a reading session equal to or less than thirty minutes: "a poem is such, only inasmuch as it intensely excites, by elevating, the soul; and all intense excitements are, through a psychal necessity, brief."[96] So, logically, "a long poem does not exist", "the phrase, 'a long poem' is simply a flat contradiction in terms."[97] "After the lapse of half an hour", the excitement "flags – fails – a revulsion ensues – and then the poem is, in effect, and in fact, no longer such."[98] Why then attribute to *Eureka*, which is about one hundred pages long, the status of a poem? Two responses are possible: the first consists in claiming that Poe's essay does not belong to the category of prose poems by reducing the dedication to the reader to an ironic discourse of which the general intention is satiric and is directed at men, who "feel", rather than "think", who "put faith in dreams as in the only realities", and also to those for whom Truth is to be found among the objects of a poem; the second response accepts the reading order and therefore formulates the following hypothesis: *the work is indeed what Poe says it is: a prose poem*, it is an exception to the aesthetic rules outlined in Poe's prior publications, and acts as an additional poetic manifest, it complements the previous theoretical and critical productions of the author on the rules of composition and the nature of the poem. In fact, the work answers the question: *what is Poetry?* when Poe writes: " the Universe […], in the supremeness of its symmetry, is but the most sublime of poems. Now symmetry and consistency are convertible terms: – thus Poetry and Truth are one."[99] In "The Poetic Principle", Poe "define[s] […] the Poetry of words as *The Rythmical Creation of Beauty*."[100] So there is a

---

[92] *Ibid*., p. 167.
[93] "Philosophy of Composition", *Poems & Essays*, London & Melbourne, Everyman's Library, "Everyman Classics", 1987, p. 167.
[94] "The Poetic Principle", *Poems & Essays*, op. cit., p. 96.
[95] *Ibid*.
[96] "Philosophy of Composition", *op. cit*., p. 166.
[97] "The Poetic Principle", *op. cit*., p. 91.
[98] *Ibid*.
[99] *Eureka*, *op. cit*., p. 204-205.
[100] "The Poetic Principle", *Op. Cit*., p. 99.

poetry which is not a Poetry of words, a poetry, also sensitive, moving, which characterizes Poe's essay, if it is truly a poem, and which we can suppose to be a Poetry *of thought*. The Poetry of thought is a language act to which we can apply Henri Meschonnic's definition of poem:

> […] J'appelle poème la transformation d'une forme de vie par une forme de langage et la transformation d'une forme de langage par une forme de vie, toutes deux inséparablement, ou je dirais encore une invention de vie dans et par une invention de langage, ou encore un maximum d'intensité du langage. Vie au sens d'une vie humaine.[101]

> I call poem the transformation of a form of life by a form of language and the transformation of a form of language by a form of life, both inseparably, or even the invention of life with and through the invention of language, or the maximum intensity of language. Life in the sense of human life.[102]

> […] cette définition du poème déborde de la définition traditionnelle, qui est essentiellement une définition formelle : les poèmes à forme fixe. Elle englobe tout ce qu'on peut appeler arts du langage. En ce sens un roman n'est un roman que s'il a du poème en lui. À chaque phrase. Et ce n'est qu'un exemple parce que tout ce qu'on appelle les genres littéraires y est inclus. Et tout autant ce qui est de l'art de la pensée, qui fait un poème de la pensée.[103]

> […] this definition of the poems exceeds the traditional definition, which is essentially a formal definition: fixed-form poems. It encompasses everything that can be called arts of language. In this sense a novel can only be a novel if it has poem in it. In each sentence. And this is just one example, because everything we call literary genres is included. As is the art of thought, which makes a poem of thought.[104]

The poetry of thought – of which Poe's cosmogonic work is an example – is a poetry of ideas. Poe links the ideas to ideas, weaves a text of which the value of myth lies in the program of the author: Poe describes a beginning – the formation of the universe – from nothing. He evolves beyond the limits of science, drawing from the source of poetry, writing under the government of the imagination, intuition – which is the result of convictions obtained after the long and unconscious walk of thought.

In telling us the genesis of the Universe and the return of atoms towards the original Unity, Poe invents a modern myth of life of the Cosmos – he also becomes a prophet of the end of the world:

> When, on fulfilment of its purposes, then, Matter shall have returned into its original condition of One – a condition which presupposes the expulsion of the separative Ether, whose province and whose capacity are limited to keeping the atoms apart until that great day when, this Ether being no longer needed, the overwhelming pressure of the finally collective Attraction shall at length just sufficiently predominate and expel it: – when, I say, Matter, finally, expelling the Ether, shall have returned into absolute Unity, – it will then (to speak paradoxically for the moment) be Matter without Attraction and without Repulsion – in other words, Matter without Matter – in other words, again, Matter no more. In sinking into Unity, it will sink at once into that Nothingness which, to all

---

[101] Henri Meschonnic, *Éthique et politique du traduire*, Lagrasse, Éditions Verdier, 2007, p. 26-27.

[102] Henri Meschonnic, *Ethics and Politics of Translating*, translated and edited by Pier-Pascale Boulanger, John Benjamins Publishing, 2011, p. 50.

[103] Henri Meschonnic, *Éthique et politique du traduire*, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

[104] Henri Meschonnic, *Ethics and Politics of Translating*, *op. cit.*, p

> Finite Perception, Unity must be – into that Material Nihility from which alone we can conceive it to have been evoked – to have been created, by the Volition of God.
>
> I repeat then – Let us endeavor to comprehend that the final globe of globes will instantaneously disappear, and that God will remain all in all.
>
> But are we here to pause? Not so. On the Universal agglomeration and dissolution, we can readily conceive that a new and perhaps totally different series of conditions may ensue – another creation and irradiation, returning into itself – another action and rëaction of the Divine Will. Guiding our imaginations by that omniprevalent law of laws, the law of periodicity, are we not, indeed, more than justified in entertaining a belief – let us say, rather, in indulging a hope – that the processes we have here ventured to contemplate will be renewed forever, and forever, and forever; a novel Universe swelling into existence, and then subsiding into nothingness, at every throb of the Heart Divine?[105]

In creating a new myth of the eternal return of life, Poe speaks of the eternal return of Poetry. Poetry is everywhere – Poe teaches us in "The Poetic Principle":

> We shall reach, however, more immediately a distinct conception of what the true Poetry is, by mere reference to a few of the simple elements which induce in the Poet himself the true poetical effect He recognizes the ambrosia which nourishes his soul, in the bright orbs that shine in Heaven – in the volutes of the flower – in the clustering of low shrubberies – in the waving of the grain-fields – in the slanting of tall, Eastern trees – in the blue distance of mountains – in the grouping of clouds – in the twinkling of half-hidden brooks – in the gleaming of silver rivers – in the repose of sequestered lakes – in the star-mirroring depths of lonely wells. He perceives it in the songs of birds – in the harp of Æolus – in the sighing of the night-wind – in the repining voice of the forest – in the surf that complains to the shore – in the fresh breath of the woods – in the scent of the violet – in the voluptuous perfume of the hyacinth – in the suggestive odor that comes to him, at eventide, from far-distant, undiscovered islands, over dim oceans, illimitable and unexplored. He owns it in all noble thoughts – in all unworldly motives – in all holy impulses – in all chivalrous, generous, and self-sacrificing deeds. He feels it in the beauty of woman – in the grace of her step – in the luster of her eye – in the melody of her voice – in her soft laughter – in her sigh – in the harmony of the rustling of her robes. He deeply feels it in her winning endearments – in her burning enthusiasms – in her gentle charities – in her meek and devotional endurances – but above all – ah, far above all – he kneels to it – he worships it in the faith, in the purity, in the strength, in the altogether divine majesty – of her *love*.[106]

Poetry is everywhere: always where something or someone tears us away from our melancholy. Poe's work makes us think of the movement of life: the anxiety, the unrest of thought, long, essential. It talks about death, it depicts the deceased and ghosts, but it is always on the side of life, that passes, fragile. That is why Poe's cosmological essay is great – why it is a work of poetry. It invites us to live in the enjoyment of life.

---

[105] *Eureka*, *op. cit.*, p. 211.
[106] "The Poetic Principle", *op. cit.*, p. 111-112.

References

-ELIADE M., *Aspects du mythe*, [Paris], Gallimard, "Folio essais", 2005.

-ELIADE M., *Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism*, translated by Philip Mairet, Princeton University Press, 1961.

-ELIADE M., *Images et symboles Essais sur le symbolisme magico-religieux*, [Paris], Gallimard, "Tel", 2004.

-ELIADE M., *Myth and Reality*, translated from French by Willard R. Trask, Long Grove, Illinois, Waveland Press, Inc., 1998.

-LÉVI-STRAUSS C., "The Structural Study of Myth", *The Journal of American Folklore*, Vol. 68, N° 270, Myth: A Symposium (Oct. - Dec. 1955).

-MESCHONNIC H., *Ethics and Politics of Translating*, translated and edited by Pier-Pascale Boulanger, John Benjamins Publishing, 2011.

-MESCHONNIC H., *Éthique et politique du traduire*, Lagrasse, Éditions Verdier, 2007.

-PINTO E., *Edgar Poe et l'art d'inventer*, Paris, Klincksieck, "Collection d'esthétique (Paris)", 1983.

-POE E. A., *Contes Essais Poèmes*, edition directed by Claude Richard, Paris, Robert Laffont, "Bouquins", 1995.

-POE E. A., *Poems & Essays*, London & Melbourne, Everyman's Library, "Everyman Classics", 1987.

-POE E. A., *The Complete Tales and Pœms of Edgar Allan Poe*, London, Penguin Books, "Penguin Literary", 1982.

-POE E. A., *The Works of the Late Edgar Allan Poe*, volume 2, New York, Redfield, 1857.

-VALÉRY P., "Au sujet d'Eurêka", in *Edgar Allan Poe*, Paris, L'Herne / Fayard, "L'Herne", N° 26, edition directed by Claude Richard, 1998.

-VOSTRIKOV W., *Conceptions cosmologiques*, Paris, Mon Petit éditeur, 2012.

The sound of silence? Sex education and censorship in Britain

Fabienne S Portier-Le Cocq
Université Paris 13 - Sorbonne Paris Cité, France

Abstract

In the 20th century European countries recognised the need of young people to receive sex education within the limitations of what was perceived morally acceptable. Sweden was a pioneer in introducing sex education in its curriculum. On the other hand, Great Britain lags behind. A fragile balance has emerged between private and public spheres, the parents 'rights to educate their children themselves and the governmental task to preserve and control citizens 'health, between the forces of the past and the visions of future. Sex education is a powerful indicator of social and cultural change. Yet, in Great Britain the mere allusion to the term sparks numerous debates on the amount of information to provide children and young people with or to censor to protect their 'innocence'. For some, sex education acts as a brake on morality and, for others it is essential to prevent, for instance, public health issues such as the rather high rates of teenage pregnancies, and increasing rates in STIs and STDs among young people. The issue of censorship is not trivial in this sensitive and contentious context. This article explores the history of sex education in Great-Britain from the late 19th to the early 21st century and the politics of censorship towards sex education.

Keywords: Great Britain, sex education, censorship, controversy, 20th and 21st centuries

Introduction

Since the 19th century it seems that sex education in Great Britain has been closely associated with key-words such as silence, ignorance, contamination, fear, and loss of innocence. Sexual ignorance and the culture of silence around sexuality were corroborated by oral historians (Humphries, 1988, 108). In the Victorian era, The Contagious Disease Acts of the 1860s entailed the creation of the Social Purity Movement whose main target was the working-class supposedly needing moral re-education. The social purity movement questioned the complete sexual ignorance of young women (Nelson, 1997). And for social purists, ''to speak out was vital and knowledge through education was power'' (Mort, 1987, 114). Then, the social hygiene movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries was involved in disseminating sex education. In the 1940s, during the Second World War, due to the spread of venereal diseases, sex education was in the limelight. In the 1980s with the advent of HIV and AIDS, sex education was again on the agenda. Next, in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, the increases in teenage pregnancy rates triggered more discourses on sex education from politicians and public opinion.

This recurrent and seasonal theme has always been a controversial topic sparking heated debates and discussed in the contexts of controlling women, decreasing unwanted pregnancies, or sexual health, notably in the context of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and AIDS, and is now depicted as a mess (Heritage, 2010) in contemporary Great Britain. Sex education seems an intractable issue, as there are mixed feelings for politicians and the general public as regards more sex education or less of it.

In this article, sex education encapsulates ''the topic delivered in schools and regulated by the state or taking place within the private sphere of the family or received via peers and through the media'' (Sauerteig and Davidson, 2009). It ''belongs to the private, public, medical and educational spheres and over decades governments have not interfered in sexual matters to keep their voters'' (Hall, 2000). This article will explore the history and development of sex education from the Victorian era to 2013. The first section of the article relates the main steps of the history of sex education from the Victorian era to this day and questions silence surrounding the topic and the myth of ignorance. The second section focuses on censorship and politics as regards sex education. Censorship pertained to sex education is both moral and political and defined as "the removal, suppression, or restricted circulation of literary, artistic or educational materials . . . on the grounds that these are morally or otherwise objectionable in the light of standards applied by the censor" (Reichman, 1988). Censorship is aimed at material that is believed to be unspeakable, too private to be public (Klein, 1999).

From social hygiene to 21st century sex education: a history of silence and the myth of ignorance

Since Victorian times the history of sex education has hinged on two key-words, silence and ignorance (Soldati, 2011). Historians wrote about the silence on sex and birth control in the 19th and early 20th centuries (Cook, 2004) and the discussion about the need for sex education dates back to the Victorian era (Hall, 2009, 19). There has been a strong tradition of discretion – which might better be described as nervous evasiveness - about sex in Britain (Hall, op. cit., 2).

It was not until the mid 1850s that young people's information on birth control started being disseminated. Sex education materials focused on boys' and girls' awareness of the relationship between sex, health and fitness (Schofield and Vaughan-Jackson, 1912), and when sex education took place at school it was in the context of hygiene.

In 1880, Miss Agnes Cotton, the founder of the first Moral Welfare Home for Children talked in plain language to her pupils: ''Every little bit of our bodies is given to us by God our Father, and to be used for the work he made it for – and nothing else''. She talked about ''eyes, ears, etc., and by degrees and in small parties or one by one, speaking of the more secret things'' (Cotton, 1880). In the mid 1880, the British Medical Journal was favourable to pupils learning basic sexual facts about anatomy and physiology.

In the early 20th century, social hygiene was the phrase used to mean current sex education. The issue pertaining to school sex education has always been to find the right balance between the amount of knowledge supplied to children and the preservation of innocence, particularly for girls. According to purist and eugenist Dr Schofield, ''the language of sex education needed to be systematically 'eugenized', shifting the signification away from the 'sexual' to the 'racial''''. Teachers were never to use the term 'sexual'; the word 'racial' was free of objection and resentment from parents (Mort, op. cit., 186). This strategy speaks volume and testifies of embarrassment and the intricacies of sex education pioneers. In the same vein, the first ever document to mention 'sex education' in its title was published in 1943 (Hampshire, 2005).[1]

In 1913, girls from Dronfield elementary school in Derbyshire received sex education by Miss Outram, both a eugenist and feminist teacher and headmistress who informed them of pregnancy and childbirth. Frank Mort reckons that ''the case illustrates the ever present debate about openness on sex education and social control or the fear of the loss of innocence'' (Mort, ibidem, 156-157).

In 1914, the London County Council adopted a resolution banning sex education from their schools (Stanley, 1995, 86). And, when Marie Stopes received her vast correspondence in the wake of the publication of *Married Love* in 1918, she construed that there was an obvious and blatant need for sex education.

In 1920, educational films were shown, conferences were organised at which sex education in schools and homes were discussed; still, stories of ignorance prevailed in the historian records especially for adolescents, but all walks of life of British society were concerned until the first half of the 20th century. Particularly for working-class young people gangster films were considered detrimental to boys while sex images threatened girls' innocence (Smith, 2005, 55). The recurring question is was it a matter of protecting children or controlling them? In the 1920s, the Workers Birth Control Group (WBCG) campaigned exclusively within the Labour Party to widen access to contraceptive knowledge (Brooke, 2011, 5).

In the interwar years, although there were some improvements, formal sex education was still limited. Still, the 1925 Report of the Departmental Committee on Sexual Offences Against Young Persons recommended 'sex education and the provision of facilities for healthy indoor and

outdoor recreation as preventive measures (to child sexual abuse). Feminist proposals for prevention also included sex education, … '. In 1927, the Board of Education advised sex education at the discretion of schools but few followed the recommendation (Weeks, 1981, 211). In 1929, Janet Chance[2] opened a sex education centre in Kensington, London, for working-class women, but her initiative was unimportant compared to countries such as Germany, Austria, Scandinavia and Switzerland (Weeks, ibidem, 212). The marriage guidance movement took sex instruction as one of the pillars of training young Britons for companionate mariage (Lewis, 1990).

In the early 20th century, popular cultural discourses included sex and there were a great many books on sex and one must not assume that there was complete silence over sex or that it was a taboo subject. The problem lay on information disseminated being contradictory and ambiguous, thus partial and distrusted. What is more, women self-censored the information they gathered, *prefering to play an ignorant role* because of the social implications it would entail, and tarnished reputation (Fisher, 2006).

Commentators observed that until the 1940s the British government had remained silent on the issue whereas researchers speak of ''traditional silence'' (Hampshire and Lewis, 2004; Crowther, 2009) although there is evidence that school sex education had been a controversial issue since the Victorian times. Should one infer that silence is synonymous with censorship?

During the Second World War, because of the evacuation of population and movement of military men, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) proliferated. In 1942, school sex education focused on the prevention of STDs (Hampshire, 2005). Gradually sex education in Great Britain was taught by using figures of speech, and evasive explanations on the reproduction of animals and flowers and taught in biology classes, hence the idiomatic expressions 'the birds and the bees', 'the facts of life', 'the stork brings them under the gooseberry bush' used in regard to sex education for children.

In 1943, the Board of Education stated that sex education was of the 'prior responsibility' of parents. Although recognising that many did not take the responsibility, the Board did not set up sex education classes (Hampshire, op. cit.) but issued a pamphlet on *Sex Education In Schools and Youth Organisations* (Weeks, ibidem, 255). In Eustace Chesser's seminal sex survey of 1956 more women received sex education from medical and teaching staff and other adults (Chesser, 1956, 421). He stressed the growth of sexual knowledge and education, and the emancipation of women.

When again STDs were rife in the 1950s and 1960s, sex education really became a political issue as a remedy to sexual health issues. Silence was alluded to again in another document of the mid 1960s, ''*In some quarters there is still a conspiracy of silence* '' (Ministry of Health, 1965, 82-83) while ignorance, which implied respectability, innocence and moral purity (Porter and Hall, 1995, 27) constituted an identity for women. But gin and pieces of bark were reported considered abortifacients for instance (Drabble, 1958, 8-14; Sillitoe, 1958, 85).

Following the societal changes of the 1960s and 1970s, school sex education had to adapt with more topics discussed and with more explicit biology textbooks. Still, despite more books on sex education being released, Mrs Mary Whitehouse[3] launched a legal action to ban *The Little Red School Book,* (Hansen and Jenson, 1971) first published in Great Britain in 1971 and providing advice about teachers, school work, drugs and sex. It was deemed obscene and published in the country in a censored form that same year.

In the 1970s, the increase in the number of teenage mothers fuelled research on young people's experience in terms of sex education and their knowledge of birth control (Farrell, 1978). The 1970s are a turning point between what society perceived as 'normal' and 'deviant' sexuality. Yet, it emerged that young people were receiving too little rather than too much sex education whether at home or at school and this was still an embarrassing topic to talk about in the private or public sphere. The advent of HIV virus and AIDS in the mid 1980s and its rapid spreading internationally put a brief halt to the situation and health issues were discussed and sex education at school became a recurrent theme of the political agenda. The 1985 Gillick case[4], homosexual movements gaining power polarised attention on sex education on all fronts. Many Acts and amendments have ensued and sex education has become an omnipresent or seasonal though contentious topic. It is broached particularly when teenage conception or sexually transmitted disease rates among young people are increasing worryingly, because the content of sex education programmes are deemed partly responsible for the high rates of teenage conception in Britain. The fears generated by the content of sex education, particularly when related to the teaching about homosexuality, still prevail to this day.

The previous Conservative governments (1979-1997) had assumed loss of innocence and corruption if young people were to receive sex education, thus reinforcing a culture of secrecy (Vincent, 1998). Hence, they implemented guidance to schools on how to address the issue while supporting abstinence.In 1994, a guide to sex education geared at teenagers was withdrawn because its ''terminology and style made it 'smutty and not suitable''' (Hall, ibidem, 194).

The 1997-2010 Labour governments were more involved than their Conservative predecessors in putting sex education on the agenda, especially as Tony Blair pledged to halve the teenage conception rates by 2010 through better access to contraception and advice, and better sex education. So far, the present Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition has remained rather silent as regards its policy on home and school sex education, especially as Michael Gove has made it clear that he is not interested in sex relationship and education (SRE) because he does not want to tell schools what to teach (Brooks, 2013).

Sex education, censorship and politics

In Great Britain, there is no law against giving sex education, but there is ''resistance from the authorities'' (Schofield, 1973, 56) and it is a highly politicised issue. ''A whole range of forces, bearing on teachers and the education system has marginalised sex education'' (Hall, 2009, 21). The National Union of Teachers in the early 1970s feared that sex education *would be censored according to political rather than educational needs* (Hampshire, ibidem). As Linda

Chion-Kenney points out, "virtually any decision made by school board members concerning what is taught, used, and learned in school can be viewed as the act of a censor" (1989).

Since 1980, sex education lessons have continued to cause controversy. In the 1980s, there were debates between the left and the right with the Conservatives arguing that sex education was corrupting children. In 1980, an amendment to an Education Bill suggested that head teachers would inform parents of any provision of sex education and that they would be able to inspect teaching materials and withdraw their children from sex education lessons. The amendment was dropped and controversy ensued. Then, in 1981, the funding of the Family Planning Association and Brook Centres were threatened if some of their materials were not withdrawn. In 1982, the Ministry of Education wanted more materials removed (Durham, 1991).

Sex education was referred to explicitly by statute in England and Wales for the first time in the 1986 Education Act. Ann Blair and Daniel Monk (2009, 40) reckoned that the interference of the government made the 1986 Act redundant, as it stipulated that only schools were responsible for sex education. Still, the 1986 Education Act stated that school governors and head masters now had the authority to decide how sex education would be taught. Before the 1986 Education Act, head teachers were free to decide how sex education was to be taught and were influenced by Local Education Authorities (LEAs). In 1986, LEAs, boards of governors and teaching staff were to make sure sex education was taught within the framework of morality and traditional family values (Durham, op. cit., 105-106) and the 1986 Education Act posited that schools would take on the responsibility of sex education thus putting aside LEAs and giving parents more power within school governor boards.

The introduction of the National Curriculum with the 1988 Education Reform Act resulted in science becoming a compulsory subject in its own right, creating a dichotomy. From then on, both the 'biological aspects of human reproduction' were taught and ''*the non biological aspects' of sex education were further marginalised''* (Blair and Monk, op. cit., 39).
The Children Act 1989, enforced in 1991 (DoH), specified the duties of local authorities towards young people they were responsible for in terms of advice and support, touching on relationship and health issues. The fear that talking about sex would be an incentive to have sex is the main reason put forward together with the fear it would encourage homosexuality. This appeared explicitly in section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988: ''A local authority shall not promote the teaching in any maintained school of the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship''.[5] The introduction of Clause 28 banned local authorities from publishing or teaching anything which may promote homosexuality or its acceptability. Hence, *Jenny Lives with Eric and Martin* was censored as the children's book dealt with gays (Bösche, 1983). And ''explicit 'safe sex' information for gays and sex education pamphlets for teenagers have been victims of the government censor'' (Socialist Review, 1994). Section 28 enactment caused more problems. Homosexuality was a concern pertained to AIDS and HIV virus which became topics taught in science at school in 1991 causing more debates which led to the 1993 Education Act. Sex education became a compulsory subject for all secondary school pupils in 1993 though without being included in the national curriculum. The Secretary of State for Education, Kenneth Baker, was to ensure that pupils would not receive education on HIV/AIDS and STIs. The 1993 Act emphasised self-censorship from schools who did not want to act against parents as schools

were accountable to them, and they did not want their school to get a bad reputation (Blair and Monk, op. cit., 43).

Michael Portillo, in a sententious speech delivered at the Centre for Policy Studies declared that ''If parents believe it is the duty of schools to teach their children right and wrong, they may abandon their own responsibilities'' (Charlot, 2000, 849). According to Valerie Riches (2004), the government's approach to teenagers' sexual health is not based on research, but on the ideology which sees in the state the parent of every child. Sex education has never been aimed at preventing unwanted teenage pregnancies nor STIs, but increasing the role of the state while changing the family structure.

In 1992, in the White paper *The Health of the Nation,* sex education and contraceptive advice were aimed at young people to decrease teenage conception rates. Yet, the solutions proposed by the government to solve the issue were contradictory. In May 1994, Baroness Cumberlege[6] recommended the provision of condoms for 12 year-olds to decrease the under-20 conception rates, which corresponded to the objective of *The Health of The Nation*. John Patten[7] argued stricter sex education in school to protect innocent children from knowledge and no explicit information on sex were to be provided. It was not until 1993 that teachers in maintained schools in England and Wales were, by law, required to provide sex education programmes, though the vast majority had their own sex education programme in place by the 1970s and 1980s.

Currently, under the 1996 Education Act, parents have the right to withdraw their children from sex education. The 1996 Education Act has created anomalies as regard sex education and contraceptive advice at school and has put obstacles to the dissemination of information. On the one hand, parents can ask for their children not to attend sex education classes. On the other hand, the law amended the national curriculum in science, as all references to HIV, AIDs and STIs were erased. This Act assumed the right to parents to withdraw their children from lessons on the non biological aspects of sexual health and human relationships, even if children were over sixteen, the age of consent. The teaching of sex education was supposed to encourage young people to have sex. But, young people who receive consistent school sex education are more likely to use contraceptive methods (Camper, 2006), and attendance at sex education classes has a positive outcome on reducing teenage pregnancy and STD rates (DfH&E, 2000, Corlyon and Stock, 2009, 13-14).

Improving sex education teaching used to be one of the priorities of the former Labour governments (1997-2010): their election entailed changes such as the repeal of section 28 in 2003[8] and school guidance to prevent ''homophobic bullying and encourage a more liberal and inclusive approach to sexuality'' (DfEE, 2000). The 2000 Learning and Skills Act reinforced the teaching of traditional family values and the protection of children from any inappropriate teaching and materials. In July 2000, new directives to clarify the content and approach of what schools should provide pupils to inform them and avoid them taking risks came into application. Directives for Primary Care Trusts and health authorities were given in connection with the types of services young people need and the people they trust to improve contraception services. In areas where sex education was taught in a vast majority of schools and included Personal, Social

and Health Education (PSHE), rates of teenage conceptions had fallen. Schools had to provide parents methods to speak about sex and interpersonal relationships (DfEE, op. cit., 9-10). The key role for secondary schools is to delay the onset of sexual activities and to reduce the outcome of unwanted teenage pregnancies (DfEE, ibidem, 16). Since July 2000, Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) has been in the framework of Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE).[9] PSHE includes nutrition and physical activity, drugs, alcohol and tobacco education, sex and relationships education, emotional health and wellbeing, safety, careers education, work-related learning, and personal finance.

In its 2003 second report, the Independent Advisory Group on Teenage Pregnancy recommended sex education lessons from the age of five, the age of compulsory education in the UK. And, one of the Social Exclusion Unit's core recommendations was to extend sex education in primary schools. In 2008, rise in teen abortions prompted the ministers to ask schools to improve sex education for five year-olds being taught about relationships and older pupils about contraception and sex. But David Blunkett, Education secretary, backtracked for fear children would lose their innocence and in 2010 the project was dropped.

In the late 2009, Children's Secretary Ed Balls announced that parents would no longer be able to remove teenagers over the age of fifteen from sex education classes in a plan to make Personal, Social and Health and Economic Education (PSHE) compulsory in all maintained schools. Thus, every underage secondary school pupil would receive sex education for a year, but the plan was abandoned in 2010 as Conservatives did not support his reforms since they think "children are children until they are 16, and after that they are adults" (BBC News, 2010). But even if sex education attendance was to become compulsory, students from academies and free schools would not have to follow the national curriculum (Brooks, op. cit.)

On 21 March 2011, Conservative MP Andrea Leadsom asked in the House of Commons: ''Is my right hon. Friend aware of the great concern of some parents about the inappropriate material being shown to their five-year-old and seven-year-old children under the guise of Sex and Relationship Education? Will he take steps to start a licensing regime to ensure that the material being shown is age-appropriate?'' (Parliament, 2011). She launched a campaign to support mothers with a view to review the sex education materials shown and used to primary school children exposed to too graphic description of sex in her constituency and suggested that the British Board of Film Classification take on classification of SRE materials.

On 4 May 2011, a bill was introduced by a Conservative MP to provide additional sex education for 13 to 16 year-old girls. It aims at providing information and advice on abstinence (Parliament, 2011). The government's decision to make sex and relationship education compulsory in all primary and secondary schools from 2011 sparked controversy. The Schools Minister Nick Gibb held that the coalition would not implement plans put forward under Labour to make sex education compulsory for children as young as five. From September 2011, sex education was to be be taught as part of new lessons in Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE), but in fact the Coalition ditched the controversial plans and sex education remains optional in primary schools. Currently parents have the right to withdraw their children from sex education until they are 19, but the Opposition Shadow Minister under Labour, Ed Balls

declared that the age of consent being 16, the voting age 18, it does not make sense for parents to control their children until 19. As recently as August 2012, David Paton concluded that school sex education has made little impact on teenage pregnancy rates (Paton, 2012, 22-24).

Conclusion

Scandinavian countries and West Germany seem to have been at the forefront of introducing sex education in school curricula (Sauerteig and Davidson, ibidem, 6), and openness on the issue of sexuality pays off. In Sweden, sex education has been compulsory since 1956 and for pupils it implies information on contraception and visits to family planning centres to lower rates of abortions. In Denmark, sex education has been compulsory from primary schools since 1970 and parental attempts to withdraw their child from these lessons have been rejected. Sex education in Holland is widespread although the subject is not compulsory in the curriculum but the government asks for the subject to be a priority. Dutch schools enjoy a lot of autonomy in terms of curriculum, but the government made the promotion of health compulsory within secondary schools where the subject is divided into two categories: biology and *verzorging*, that is to say hygiene and care, and half of the primary schools teach sexual and contraceptive issues (Valk, 2000). Schools work together with family planning clinics since the latter train teaching staff and advise them on school projects. Dutch teachers assume parents talked about sexuality with their children prior to teachers doing so at school (Van Loon, 2003, 57).[10] This is a far cry from Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and British parents' behaviour with respect to the communication with their children on sexual matters (Sunday Telegraph, 2012). In these countries, contrary to Great Britain, parents and carers of school children are not entitled to withdraw children from sex education classes (SEU, 1999, 124).

The success of sex education policies in the Netherlands and Scandinavia has curbed teenage conception rates and government-funded media campaigns have proven an educative tool to educate the general public notably to protect all from STIs and to make people aware of and loosen tongues on sexual abuse of children and young people.[11]These countries consider that their success pertaining to low rates of teenage conceptions, HIV and STIs is linked to openness on sex education (Selman and Glendinning, 1996). In Great Britain, silence, censorship, allegedly based on fear, the fear of losing votes, of talking about sex, the fear of children losing their innocence, the fear of early sexual intercourse, of promiscuity, of homosexuality, of contamination contribute to the current rates of teenage parents, STDs, and to young people being infected with HIV or AIDS. Is it not time to break the silence which has been going on for the past centuries, when the sex life of British teenagers hits the headlines almost daily, and sex education in schools is still considered shockingly inadequate and a black hole? (Brooks, op. cit.)

Notes

[1] The word appeared in Board of Education, *Sex Education in Schools and Youth Organisations*, Pamphlet n°119, London, 1943, Para10.

[2] Janet Whyte Chance (1885-1953) was a British birth control and abortion advocate.

[3] Mary Whitehouse, born Constance Mary Hutcheson, (1910-2001) was a British moral crusader against the permissive society.

[4] Mrs Victoria Gillick campaigned so that general practiioners would not be entitled to prescribe the pill to underage girls whithout the consent of their parents. Since then, general practitioners are tied by the Fraser and Scarman directives following the House of Lords decision in October 1985.

[5] The clause was repealed in 2003.

[6] Julia Frances, Baroness Cumberlege, Conservative peer.

[7] John Haggitt Charles Patten, MP for the Conservative party. Ministry of Education from 1992 to 1994.

[8] Section 122 of the Local Government Act 2003.

[9] Sex Education Act 1996, amended by the *Learning and Skills Act 2000*, s148.

[10] […] *we have seen that teachers believe that Dutch parents talk to their children about sex before they receive sex education in schools'*.

[11]'*There Are Secrets You Should Talk About'*, 1992 media campaign on sex education and prevention in the Netherlands.

References

-BBC News. Balls drops key education reforms, http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/uk_news/education/8607677.stm (4 July 2010, accessed 17 July 2011).

-Blair A and Monk D. Sex education and the law in England and Wales: the importance of legal narratives' In: Sauerteig L and Davidson R (eds) *Shaping sexual knowledge: a cultural history of sex education in twentieth century Europe*. New York: Routledge, 2009.

-Bösche S. *Jenny lives with Eric and Martin*. London: Gay Men's Press, 1983.

-Brooke S. *Sexual politics: sexuality, family planning, and the British left from the 1880s to the present day*. Oxford: OUP, 2011.

-Brooks L. Sex education in crisis. *The Guardian*, 4 February 2013.

-Camper P. Let's talk about sex: balancing children's rights and parental responsibility'. *Legal Studies* March 2006; 26: 2: 88-108.

-Chesser E. *The sexual, marital and family relationship of the English woman*. London: Hutchinson, 1956.

-Chion-Kenney L. *Censorship: managing the controversy*. Alexandria, VA: National School Boards Association, 1989.

-Cook H. *The long sexual revolution: English women, sex and contraception, 1800-1975*. Oxford: OUP, 2004.

-Corlyon J and Stock L. *Research review on teenage pregnancy*. The Tavistock Institute, http://www.tavinstitute.org/projects/report-research-review-on-teenage-pregnancy/ (201, accessed 31 July 2013).

-Cotton A. (Miss) to Miss L/M. Hubbard, 16 July 1880 or 1881. Autograph Letters 12B. Fawcett Library, London Guildhall University.

-Crowther B. The partial picture: framing the discourse of sex in British educative films of the early 1930s. In: Sauerteig L and Davidson R (eds) *Shaping sexual knowledge: a cultural history of sex education in twentieth century Europe*. New York: Routledge, 2009, pp. 176-196.

-Department for Education. *Learning and Skills Act 2000*, s 148, Ch. 21, http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/21/contents (accessed 23 July 2011).

-Department of Health. *The Children Act 1989: guidance and regulations*. London: HMSO, 1991.

-Department of Health. *The health of the nation: a strategy for health in England*. London: HMSO, 1992.

-Department for Health and Education. *Sex and relationship education guidance 2000*, art. 1.7, 8.

-Drabble M. *The Millstone*. London: Penguin Books, 1965.

-Durham M. *Sex and politics: the family and morality in the Thatcher years*, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan Education Ltd, 1991, pp. 99-104.

-Education (N°2) Act 1986, ch 61.

-Education Act *1993*. Part VI, Miscellaneous, section 24. Sex education. http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts

-Education Act 1996, s 405.

-Farrell C. *My mother said… the way young people learned about sex and birth control*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978.

-Fisher K. *Birth control, sex and marriage in Britain, 1918-1960*. Oxford: OUP, 2006, pp. 36-75.

-Hall L. *Sex, gender and social change in Britain since 1880*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan, 2000.

-Hall L. In ignorance and in knowledge, reflections on the history of sex education. In: Sauerteig Lutz DH and Davidson R (eds) *Shaping sexual knowledge: a cultural history of sex education in twentieth century Europe*. New York: Routledge, 2009.

-Hampshire J. The politics of school sex education in England and Wales from the 1940s to the 1960s'. *Social History of Medicine* 2005; 18:1: 87-105.

-Hampshire J and Lewis J. 'The ravages of permisiveness': sex education and the permissive society. *Twentieth Century British History* 2004; 15:3, 290-312.

-Hansen S and Jenson J. *The little red school book*. London, 1971.

-Heritage S. Sex education is a mess, so can a TV series help teenagers ? *The Guardian*, 7 July 2010.

-Humphries S. *A Secret world of sex: forbidden fruit, the British experience, 1900-1950*. London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1988.

-Klein M. Censorship and the fear of sexuality, http://www.sexed.org/archive/article10.html (March 1999, accessed 7 July 2011).

-Lewis J. Public institution and private relationship: marriage and marriage guidance, 1920-1968. *Twentieth Century History 1* 1990, pp. 233-63.

-Ministry of Health. *On the state of the public health: the annual report of the chief medical officer of the ministry of health for the year 1965*. London, 1965.

-Mort F. *Dangerous sexualitities: medico-moral politics in England since 1830*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987.

-Nelson C. Under the guidance of a wise mother, British sex education at the *fin de siècle*. In: Nelson C and Summer Holmes A (eds) *Maternal Instincts: Vision of Motherhood and Sexuality, 1875-1925*. London: Macmillan Press, 1997, pp. 98-121.

-Parliament. Sex education (required content) bill 2010-12, http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/sexeducationrequiredcontent.html (accessed 21 July 2012).

-Paton D. Underage conceptions and abortions in England and Wales 1969-2009: the role of public policy, *Education and Health* 2012; 30: 2: 22-24.

-Porter R and Hall L. *The facts of life, the creation of sexual knowledge in Britain 1650-1990*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995.

-Portillo M. The Blue Horizon, Centre for Policy Studies, 7 October 1993. In: Charlot C *Les familles monoparentales en Angleterre de 1969 à 1997 : la naissance d'un enjeu politique*. PhD Thesis, Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle-Paris 3, janvier 2000.

-Reichman H. Censorship and selection, issues and answers for schools. Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators & Chicago: American Library Association, 1988.

-Report of the Departmental Committee on Sexual Offences Against Young Persons (1925), 65.
-Riches V. Family education trust. Sex education or indoctrination: how ideology has triumphed over facts? Twickenham: *Family & Youth Concern*, 2004.

-Sauerteig Lutz DH & Davidson R (eds). *Shaping sexual knowledge: a cultural history of sex education in twentieth century Europe*. New York: Routledge, 2009.

-Schofield AT and Vaughan-Jackson P. *What a boy should know*. London: Cassell, 1912.

-Schofield M. *The sexual behaviour of young adults*. London: Allen Lane, 1973.

Volume 1, Issue 3, December, 2014

-Selman P and Glendinning C. Teenage pregnancy: do social policies make a difference?. In: Brannen J and O'Brien M (eds) *Children in families: research and Policy*. London: Falmer Press, 1996, pp. 202-218.

-Sillitoe A. *Saturday night and Sunday morning*. London: Paladin, 1958.

-Smith SJ. *Children, Cinema and Censorship: From Dracula to The Dead End Kids*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2005.

-Social Exclusion Unit, Teenage pregnancy, Cm 4342, June 1999.

-*Socialist Review*, Not in front of the children, issue 176, http://pubs.socialistreviewindex.org.uk/sr176/censorship.htm (June 1994, accessed 21 October 2009).

-Soldati E. Sexuality and the spheres of ignorance, www.ejhs.org (21 April 2011, accessed June 2011).

-Stanley Li. *Sex surveyed 1949-1994, from mass observation's 'Little Kinsey' to the national survey and the Hite reports*. London: Taylor & Francis, 1995.

-Stella magazine. Let's talk about (teen) sex. *The Sunday Telegraph*, 22 July 2012.

-Stopes M. *Married Love*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
Teenage Pregnancy Unit. http://www.teenagepregnancyunit.org.uk (accessed 3 August 2011).

-Valk G. Le Modèle Hollandais. *Courrier de l'UNESCO*, http://www.unesco.org, accessed (juillet/août 2000, accessed 18 July 2011).

-Van Loon J. *Deconstructing the Dutch utopia: sex education and teenage pregnancy in the Netherlands*. Twickenham: Family Education Trust, 2003.

-Vincent D. *The culture of secrecy, Britain 1832-1998*. Oxford: OUP, 1998, pp. 158-166.

-Weeks J. *Sex, politics and society: the regulation of sexuality since 1800*. London: Longman.

Thinking Borderlessness: Alternative Forms of Embodiment and Reconfiguration of Spatial Realities in Emma Donoghue's *Room*

Jayana Jain Punamiya,
Marie Curie ITN ESR CoHaB
Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster, Germany

Abstract

Borders and boundaries are not limited to the domain of geography. The discourse and metaphor of borders extend beyond geopolitical to sociological, biological, affective, linguistic, racial, gender concerns and so on. They regulate power as they enforce a spatial code yet are always unsettled. Thus, any instance of border-crossing contests power and leads to the tentative creation of alternative forms of resistance. In this article, I argue that Emma Donoghue's Room (2010) depicts a variety of cross-border assemblages that contain the flow of corporeal, bio-political, and affective borders within traumatic and larger social spaces. This, in turn, leads to the tentative creation of alternative affective communities and resistance to dominant power structures.

Key words: Borders, Spatiality, Affect, Trauma, Power, Resistance

Where there are walls, you must think borderlessness.
(Spivak2013)

Non-living things do not have relations with their environment. They are completely separated from that environment in such a way that they are confined, or bounded, but do not have boundaries. They only fill a certain space, but they do not occupy or inhabit that space. Only living things really have boundaries, within which they have a certain degree of independence. The boundary is an interface and regulatory device for the entity's interdependencies with the environment. Only through this boundary as property, as realised relation between the inner and outer system, this border, which is not just an edge at which the organism stops, but is a constitutive part of the physical body, the thing becomes an organic living thing.
(Plessner, 1980)

Borders occupy a contested space where material and immaterial bodies gather across time. When a body goes astray, a spatial shift occurs. As a result, borders are unsettled. This moment of boundary-crossing, however, does not only involve geopolitical territories but also affective landscapes. In this sense, Emma Donoghue's *Room* (2010), I argue, illustrates border as a "matrix of trans-temporality" (Zarranz 2013). It depicts a variety of cross-border assemblages that contain the flow of corporeal, bio-political, and affective borders in novel ways, hence leading to the tentative creation of alternative affective communities.

This article will explore two key themes with respect to Donoghue's *Room*. The first theme is how borders shape bodily, domestic and larger social spaces. Secondly, how power relationships are expressed through spatiality and how those power relationships are inverted and contested.

The Little 11' x 11' Room*:* An Everywhere

Are stories true? They're magic, they're not about real people walking around today. So they're fake? No, no. Stories are a different kind of true (*Room*23)

The narrator, 5 year-old Jack, has been born and raised in "Room", a paradoxical prison located outside geopolitical and bio-political boundaries. While being confined to a soundproofed cell, Jack is remarkably free from institutional control although under the total subjection of his mother's kidnapper Old Nick. Explaining her situation to Jack, Ma says, "We're like people in a book, and [Old Nick] won't let anybody else read it." (90) While for Ma such an existence is horrifying, for Jack it simply is – this contrast creates the major fissures and complexities in the novel. In this article, I interrogate not only how the female body is terrorized through sexual violence and imprisonment, but also how the body of the child occupies a liminal space that challenges traditional concepts of home and belonging.

Later in the novel, when Jack escapes and comes out into the realities of an unnamed North American society at the turn of the 21st century, all the disciplinary mechanisms like the media and the hospital saturate the child's body by marking it as a source of abjection. However, by portraying Jack as embodying a set of ethical foundations necessary for the challenging and re-articulation of traditional binary oppositions that sustain hegemonic and hetero-normative

structures, I argue that Donoghue proposes novel forms of embodiment that would allow for social and political transformation.

Jack and Ma: Embodying an Alternative Affective Community

Somewhere between good and bad - bits of both stuck together (*Room* 79)

What is it like for Ma and Jack to use a Room full of traumatic memories? What sort of affect is generated out of an appropriated traumatic space? In this section I explore the melancholic experiences in relation to such spaces, their users' subjectivities onto the spaces and energy discharged out of these spaces themselves.

Bruno Latour has written against the privileged ascription of agency to human beings arguing that, as "actants" of sorts, "non-human entities" too may be interpreted as effecting "agency". "If persons and objects are assembled in a certain manner, I would argue that this is not because they always, already, or anyway would do so. Rather, 'assemblages' of subjects and objects must be read as specific in their politics and history" (Latour 1993).

An environment of ruins discharges an affect of melancholy. At the same time, those who inhabit this space of ruins feel melancholic: "they put the ruins into discourse, symbolize them, interpret them, politicize them, understand them, project their subjective conflicts onto them, remember them, try to forget them, historicize them, and so on" (ibid).
Moreover, in her discussion on affective economies, Sara Ahmed claims that feelings do not reside in subjects or objects, but are produced as effects of circulation. "Affects, then, are not property; they are not owned or possessed by subjects. Rather, they circulate between bodies constantly generating new encounters through spatial processes of approximation, disorientation, and reorientation"(Ahmed 2004).

Jack's mother has been abused for the seven years she has been locked in Room after being kidnapped when she was 19 years old. Enduring systematic sexual violence and imprisonment, the woman's abjected body appears to function exclusively as the material target of Old Nick's sadistic pleasures. Jack's mother, however, also actively uses her own body as a way of distracting her captor from infringing any violence on Jack. Thus, she successfully challenges a simplistic interpretation of her role as one of strict submission, and instead suggests a potential for unruliness and dissent within the space of traumatic ruins.

Moreover, by systematically sleeping in a "closet space" (Brown 2000) that is the wardrobe where invisibility represents comfort and safety, Jack has managed to escape the perverted look of Ma's oppressor Old Nick. "To be in a closet physically is to stand apart from, but still inside the room where the closet is located" (ibid). He can observe without being seen, thereby privileging his optics over Old Nick's. Jack reflects on his captor's ignorance and limits Old Nick's power as he manages to remain unnoticed in his "Room". Thus, the closet space called "Wardrobe" enables Jack not only to develop his imagination but also to keep his body unmarked by patriarchal violence.

Ma's Abjection, Jack's Abjected Body: Queering the Social order

In Mary Douglas's famous work *Purity and Danger* (1966), she argues that it is against filth that society is formed, or by defining and excluding that which is "dirty". Defilement, for Douglas, is a practice which marks the boundaries of a social system. Building strongly upon Douglas's arguments, we have the psychoanalytic work of Julia Kristeva, who studies "the abject" not only as that which contradicts the social order, but also as the negative counterpart to the ego. For Kristeva, abjection is an othering process through which the individual attempts to maintain and protect one's psychical integrity.

Kristeva defines as abject that which is essentially "other" to the self. The abject is "a boundary which protects and challenges psychical integrity at one and the same time" (1989). Thus, from Kristeva's psychoanalytic perspective, abjection is done to the part of ourselves that we exclude: the mother. We must abject the maternal, the object which has created us, in order to construct an identity. The mother is left behind- abjected, Kristeva says-and with her all the elements of the self that threaten or violate codes of behaviour and discursive expression. Abjection occurs on the micro level of the speaking being, through his/her subjective dynamics, as well as on the macro level of society, through "language as a common and universal law" (ibid). In this section I reflect on the domestication of the abject, its recycling, normalization and incorporation into the social order.

Many scenes involving Ma show that she is connected to bodily fluids, often in ways which we might find repulsive, filthy or shocking. We see a lot of things coming out of her body like blood, vomit and breast milk. There is a stain on the floor and in the bed from her births. Her tooth falls out. Her body is constantly giving up parts of itself. These bodily fluids that are deeply connected to motherhood show that Jack gradually begins to correspond to states of bodily feeling, for instance, Ma's soft whisper and the warmth of being at her breasts and filling his belly. Jack's world is therefore still a world that is largely dependent on Ma and her body as Kristeva would call it "for its maintenance and definition". It is interesting to note that until Jack leaves Room, he mentions that his blood has never come out of his body. Finally, as soon as he is free and in the world for the first time, he is scraped on the road and bitten by a dog, causing him to bleed. This is important as it means that he has never bled until his escape.

> Don't move don't move don't move JackerJack stay stiff stiffstiff. I'm squished in Rug, I can't breathe right, but dead don't breathe anyway. […] The beep beep again, then the click that means Door is open. The ogre's got me, fee fie foe fum. Hot on my legs, oh no, Penis let some pee out. And also a bit of poo squirted out my bum, Ma never said this would happen. Stinky. Sorry, Rug. A grunt near my ear, Old Nick's got me tight… I count my teeth but I keep losing count […]. Are you there, Tooth? I can't feel you but you must be in my sock, at the side. You're a bit of Ma, a little bit of Ma's dead spit riding along with me. I can't feel my arms. The air's different. Still the dustiness of Rug but when I lift my nose a tiny bit I get this air that's … Outside (137-138).

This instance could be referred to as a rupture of the mirror stage of Lacan's theory. "What's that? The child thinks […]. And that means I am not continuous with my mother's body, but separate from it" (Kristeva 1989). Jack is now becoming aware of the world as a representational place of persons and objects. However, Jack's experience of coming out into the

Outside involves multiple levels of abjection, in Kristevan fashion, having to deal with corporeal fluids, fear, fantasies of dismemberment, and violence. It is in fact the soothing atavistic comfort of chewing one of his mother's teeth that gives him the courage to come out into a different material space. This also means that although Jack is now moving to the Outside and becoming aware of the world he still feels continuous with his mother's body and not separate from it. Jack says:

> It's weird to have something that's mine-not-Ma's. Everything else is both of ours. I guess my body is mine and the ideas that happen in my head. But my cells are made out of her cells so I'm kind of Ma. (*Room* 142)

As mentioned before, abjection occurs on the macro level of society, through "language as a common and universal law". However, interestingly, it is not speech that characterizes Jack's arrival into this unknown place but corporeality through a deep awareness of his own material body. For Jack then, "coming out is not only an ontological moment where existence and becoming flourish, but also a moment of acute awareness and knowledge of his material body" (Zarranza 2013). Engaging with the insights of theorists such as Judith Butler, it could be argued then that Jack's coming out of the Room favours a corporeal "doing" over "saying" (Bodies 1993). In Donoghue's novel, the act of leaving Room entails coming out into a different space of power/knowledge, in this case, the society of an unnamed North American city at the turn of the 21st century.

Thinking Borderlessness

I remember manners, that's when people are scared to make other persons mad.
Maybe I'm a human, but I'm a me-and-Ma as well. (*Room* 228)

While being confined to Room with his mother, under the total subjection of their kidnapper, Jack managed to remain free from institutional control. However, in an interesting reversal, it is when Jack and his mother enter the realities of this society that all the disciplinary mechanisms like the media, the hospital, and the police attempt to mark Jack's body as messy and imperfect. Jack, nonetheless, strategically devises ways to escape society's multiple closet spaces by developing new forms of embodiment or "corporeal citizenship" (Zarranz2013). This is to say an embodiment based on the rules of his material body instead of national or institutional affiliation.

According to Foucault (1995), in disciplinary society, social command is regulated and constructed by a network what Louis Althusser calls ideological and repressive apparatuses that prescribe norms, customs and habits with the ultimate goal of suppressing any deviant behaviour. Jack systematically experiences the technologies of power over his own body: he is measured, given needles, and dressed in new clothes, constantly feeling observed and under surveillance. His body is saturated by multiple mechanisms of disciplinary control ranging from a variety of doctors and specialists, to the devastating impact of the media that systematically depicts him in terms of deviance and abjection.

He is even called "Bonsai Boy", among many other infantilizing and derogatory terms. Jack is described as suffering some form of retardation and potentially subject to all sorts of deficiencies: "As well as immune issues, [Dr. Clay tells Jack's mother,] there are likely to be challenges in the areas of, let's see, social adjustment, obviously, sensory modulation—filtering and sorting all the stimuli barraging him—plus difficulties with spatial perception…"(*Room* 182).All these disciplinary mechanisms, far from making Jack feel protected, contribute to his uneasiness with the structures of control that surround him in the new world he inhabits. As Jack himself explains, "In Room I was safe and Outside is the scary" (219).

Jack's grandparents' house represents yet another disciplinary space that attempts to train Jack into becoming a normative subject. In a significant episode in the novel, Jack wants to have a bath with his grandma but she refuses to expose her body to him and insists on wearing a swimsuit to his amusement. When she explains she rather not be naked in front of him, he cleverly asks if it makes her scared. Baffled, Jack questions the lack of coherence on the application of rules around the body and physical intimacy:

> Humans and bees should just wave, no touching. No patting a dog unless it's human says OK, no running across roads, no touching private parts except mine in private. Then there's special cases, like police are allowed to shoot guns but only at bad guys (274).

When living in Room, Jack and his mother were sometimes dressed and sometimes naked, as he explains, so he does not understand the strange knowledge that adults seem to possess in this new world, where the borders between the private and the public spheres seem arbitrarily constructed. In yet another episode in the novel, Jack's grandma takes him to the library for the day. Spontaneously, he gives a hug to a little boy, and accidentally knocks him down. She apologises for her grandson, explaining how he's still learning about boundaries. After this incident, Jack is reminded of a series of rules around emotional attachment and embodiment:

> Remember, […] we don't hug strangers. Even nice ones…we save our hugs for people we love." In a simple statement that yet reveals Jack's dissenting set of rules about the technologies of affection and gender, he defiantly replies: "I love that boy Walker." His grandma, however, simply dismisses him by saying: "Jack, you never saw him before in your life (288).

Jack's narrative voice, alternative forms of affect and embodiment involve sympathy towards readers and strangers opening up spaces for the interrogation of socially constructed borders around bodies. Jack has developed an unusual sense of language from spending his first five years living in one Room. He omits words like "the" and "a" before nouns, essentially turning the nouns into proper nouns. By turning a noun into a proper noun Jack imbues inanimate objects with personality reflecting what in general humans end up doing in isolation.

> Also everywhere I'm looking at kids, adults mostly don't seem to like them, not even the parents do. They call the kids gorgeous and so cute, they make the kids do the thing all over again so they can take a photo, but they don't want to actually play with them, they'd rather drink coffee talking to other adults. Sometimes there's a small kid crying and the Ma of it doesn't even hear (271).

It also seems symbolic of the attachments most of us in the 21st century mainstream globalized culture have to material items. Donoghue here, maybe, is trying to make a statement about consumerism and materialism that has engulfed our lives today. Jack says:

> "In the world I notice persons are nearly always stressed and have no time. In Room me and Ma had time for everything. I guess the time gets spread very thin like butter over all the world, the roads and houses and playgrounds and stores, so there's only a little smear of time on each place, then everyone has to hurry on to the next bit" (268).

Conclusion

Literature occupies a distinctive position at the nexus of past and future realities. Analysis of any literary work, I believe, can shed light on the events which actually took place, are taking place and on the scope of possibility for alternative outcomes. Emma Donoghue's *Room*, I believe, asserts a cross-border ethic that is not only understood as a transgressive force of resistance but also, at times, unavoidably complicit with certain global processes of the 21st century. It could be accused of privileging mobility in elitist ways; but by showing ambivalences through Jack and Ma, Donoghue's creative endeavours could be said to propose a careful analysis of our own involvement in the reification of borders in this uneven global scenario. With this view, this article strives to avoid the impression of a world without borders sustained by cosmopolitan elitism and global capitalism. It rather intends at "thinking borderlessness where there are all walls".

References

Primary Source

-Donogue, Emma. *Room*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2010.

Secondary Sources

-Ahmed, Sara. *Embodying Strangers.Body Matters: Feminism, Textuality, Corporeality*.Eds. Avril

-Horner and Angela Keane. Manchester and New York: Manchester UP, 2000. 85-96.
-----------------. *Happy Objects*.The Affect Theory Reader. Eds. Melissa Gregg and Gregory, J.

-Seigworth, Durham and London: Duke UP, 2010. 29-51.
-----------------. *Queer Phenomenology*. Durham and London: Duke UP, 2006.
-----------------. *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2004.
------------------. *The Promise of Happiness*. Durham and London: Duke, UP. 2010.

-Alaimo, Stacy. *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 2010. 263.

-Anderson, Ben. *Modulating the Excess of Affect: Morale in a State of 'Total War*.The Affect Theory Reader.Eds. Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth. Durham and London: Duke UP, 2010. 161-185.

-Appadurai, Arjun. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis, MN: U of Minnesota P, 1996. 27-47.

-Barthes, Roland. *A Lover's Discourse: Fragments*. London: Vintage, 2002.

-Baudrillard, Jean. *The Agony of Power*.Trans. Ames Hodges.Semiotext(e) Intervention Series. Cambridge, MA, and London: The MIT P, 2010.

-Benjamin, Walter. *Charles Baudelaire:A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism*. London: Verso, 1983.

-Brah, Avtar. *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities*. London: Routledge, 1996.

-Brown, Michael P. *Closet Space: Geographies of Metaphor from the Body to the Globe*. London and New York: Routledge, 2000.

-Butler, Judith. *Bodies that Matter.On the Discursive Limits of Sex.* London and New York: Routledge. 1993.

------------------. *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. London and New York: Verso, 2004.

------------------. andGayatri C. Spivak. *Who Sings the Nation-State? Language, Politics, Belonging*. Chicago, IL: Chicago UP, 2007.

-Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix Guattari.*A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Trans. Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1987.

-Donoghue, Emma. *Hood*. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1995.

---------------------. *Kissing the Witch: Old Tales in New Skins*. New York: HarperCollins, 1997.

----------------------. *The Woman Who Gave Birth to Rabbits.* New York: Harcourt, 2002.

-Douglas, Mary. *Purity and Danger.*Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1966.

-Gandhi, Leela. *Affective Communities: Anticolonial Thought and the Politics of Friendship*. Delhi: Permanent Black, 2006.

-Kristeva, Julia. *Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia.* Trans. Leon S. Roudiez. New York: Columbia UP, 1989.

------------------. *Strangers to Ourselves*.Trans. Leon S. Roudiez. New York: Columbia UP, 1991.

------------------.*Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*. New York: Columbia, 1982.

-Latour Bruno. *We Have Never Been Modern*.Harvard University Press.Massachusetts, 1993

-Massumi, Brian. *Parables of the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation*. Duke UP, 2002.

-Plessner, Helmuth. *Anthropologie der Sinne (Gesammelte Schrifte*). Suhrkamp: Aufl Ed, 1980.

-Puar, Jasbir K. *Homonationalism and Biopolitics. Out of Place: Interrogating Silences in Queerness/Raciality*. Eds. AdiKuntsman and Esperanza Miyake. York, UK: Raw Nerve Books, 2008. 13-70.

------------------. *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times.* Durham and London: Duke UP, 2007.

-Spivak, G. C. "A Borderless World." University of Arizona. January, 2012. Keynote Lecture.Web.

-----------------. Edward Said Memorial Conference. Centre for the Humanities, Utrecht University. April 16, 2013. Keynote Lecture.Web.

-Zarranz, Libe Garcia. *Queer TransCanadian Women's Writing in the 21st Century: Assembling a New Cross-Border Ethic*. University of Alberta, Humanities Centre L3, Edmonton, Fall 2013.

-------------------------. *Intertextuality, Parody and Jouissance in Emma Donoghue's Dissenting Fairy*

-*Tales.*Voicing Dissent: New Voices in Irish Criticism.Eds. Noreen Doody and Sandrine Brisset. Dublin: Irish Academic P, 2012. 190-201.

-----------------------. *Toxic Bodies that Matter: Trans-Corporeal Materialities in Dionne Brand's Ossuaries*. Canada and Beyond: A Journal of Canadian Literary and Cultural Studies 2.1-2 (Dec. 2012).

-Žižek, Slavoj. *Biopolitics: Between Abu Ghraib and Terri Schiavo*.Artforum International. (December 2005): 270-271.

Irony in Postmodernist Agenda: Poetics and Politics in Vladimir Nabokov's <u>Lolita</u>

Mourad Romdhani
University of El Manar, Tunisia

Abstract

Linda Hutcheon describes the postmodernist text as a manuscript that "signals its dependence by its use of the canon, but reveals its rebellion through its ironic abuse of it" (130). Irony is a key word in postmodernist philosophy and a key narrative strategy in the postmodernist text. As a poetics, established through different narrative techniques including intertextuality, parody, and pastiche and it highlights a fragmented text that deliberately questions totalising systems and lacks historical or narrative continuity. Highlighting parody, pastiche and intertextuality the postmodernist literary text reveals an ironic attitude toward unifying theories and totalitarian and stabilizing concepts. Coherence, unity or continuity become challenged notions within the postmodernist convention.

In <u>Discourse, Figure and The Postmodern Condition</u>, Jean François Lyotard hints to another aspect of the ironic postmodernist practice, namely 'the language game'. From a postmodernist perspective, language as a communication as well as reference system falls within the excluded category of universal, totalitarian, and authoritarian grand narrative. The structuralist point of view concerning the linguistic system is called into question within the postmodernist frame of thought. A whole agenda, which can be referred to as postmodernist politics, is indeed responsible for such ironic narrative practises. The apocalyptic vision of endism characterising the postmodern era has actually paved the ground for these ironic narrative practises and this sense of playfulness in the literary text. Such an apocalyptic vision of endism is reproduced by postmodern theorists like Ihab Hassan, Jean François Lyotard, Jean Baudrillard and Hans Bertens who state that through such a cynical discourse, "the postmodernists have accepted chaos and live in fact in a certain intimacy with it" (Natoli 45).

Key Words: Irony, postmodernism, poetics, politics

As a member of the 'ladies and gentlemen of the jury', a reader finds him/herself unable to reach a satisfying conclusion about Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita* as far as its literary convention is concerned. The text of *Lolita* resists any idiosyncratic classification or any attempt to tame it within a particular literary genre for it may readily be read as an epistle, a poem, a romance, a fairy tale, an adventure novel, a detective story or a diary. Humbert Humbert tells a story yet his story is stylistically and thematically unconventional.

First published in 1955, Nabokov's *Lolita* may chronologically be classified as both a modernist and postmodernist text. To decide whether it is modernist or postmodernist is itself a tricky subject that adds to the novel's sense of intricacy and resistance to interpretation. The concern of this paper is to decipher the postmodernist element in *Lolita*, starting from an idiosyncratic postmodernist writing feature, namely stylistic irony. A useful starting point would be a relative definition of postmodernism and a brief examination of irony within the postmodernist framework.

It is a common adage that irony is a figure of speech in which the intended meaning is the opposite of that expressed by the words used (Sim 286). In the form of sarcasm and ridicule, irony can articulate a sense of hostility. Irony is also connected with a requirement to deal with reality playfully or non-seriously or at least not to take facts at face value (286). From this angle, irony may readily be approached as the most relevant element within the postmodernist framework. In *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity*, Richard Rorty suggests that irony or 'liberal ironism' is the proper attitude to adopt towards life and that the postmodern writer should turn into a 'liberal ironist' who playfully refers to irony as a way to avoid the modernist gloomy temper and nostalgia toward the past.

The ironic and unserious tone of the postmodernist narrative is a well established feature that distinguishes the postmodernist narrative practice from the modernist one. Instead of viewing the loss of the past, manifested through claims about the death of the 'centre' or the death of the 'Author', as tragic in the modernist proposition, the postmodernist views this as a justification of ironic attitudes, playfulness and an opportunity for the narrative text to turn to itself so as to explore its potentialities "without an irritable searching after final truths or unified meanings" (Hawthorn 163).

Although no definition would sufficiently contain the term postmodernism, theoreticians and critics who tried to provide an approximation to this trend agreed upon one common feature, namely irony. Linda Hutcheon, for instance, in A Poetics of Postmodernism, sees postmodernism as "a cultural process or activity […], an open ever-changing theoretical structure transgressing any fixed definition" (3). Agreeing with the majority of theorists, Linda Hutcheon describes postmodernism as intertextual, ironic, contradictory, provisional, heterogeneous, transgressive of generic divisions, ex-centric and marginal. Hutcheon describes the postmodernist text as a manuscript that "signals its dependence by its use of the canon, but reveals its rebellion through its ironic abuse of it" (130).

Irony is a key word in postmodernist thought and a key narrative strategy in the postmodernist text. It can be established through different narrative techniques including

intertextuality, parody, and fragmentation. Such narrative techniques are deliberately employed to question totalizing systems of conventional narrative continuity.

Essentially, postmodernism is constructed on irony as it is "fundamentally contradictory, resolutely historical, and inescapably political" (92). Hutcheon states that the ironic aspect of postmodernism is what clearly distinguishes it from modernism: "What is newer [in postmodernism] is the constant attendant irony" (93). The postmodern engagement with history is "always a critical reworking, never a nostalgic 'return' [and] here lies the governing role of irony in postmodernism" (93).

The postmodern literary text is constructed upon a postmodernist endist vision. In fact, Frederic Jameson's statement about death of the literary 'grand narrative' in the sense of an individual, autonomous, and homogeneous text; the Derridean critical approaching of the linguistic sign by which the literary text is constructed, and Rolland Barthes' assertion of the 'death of the Author' or the controlling force in a narrative lead to the 'death of the novel' and its apocalypse as a classical convention of literature (Hutcheon 2).

Nevertheless, instead of lamenting the dead narrative, the postmodernist text turns to itself for the purpose of critical and conscious investigation. Linda Hutcheon, in *Narcissistic Narrative*, states that "cries of lamentation over the death of the novel genre [have been] abandoned" (2) to be substituted by a "self-reflective, self-informing, self-reflexive, auto-referential, auto-representational" (1) fiction. This new fiction displays an "inter- and intra- textuality, and narrative mirroring" (2), a deep interest in the creative functioning of language and an obsession with experimenting with generic narrative forms.

Thus, following Hutcheon's observation, the postmodernist text has little to do with nostalgia and much to do with irony. The postmodernist narrative abandons the lamentation of the dead literary conventions to engage in a narcissistic process of ironic playing with its own destruction as well as construction. The key word in this process is irony or as Linda Hutcheon puts it – in A Poetics of Postmodernism - "the ironic reworking of forms and contents of the past" (98).

Nabokov's *Lolita* can readily be classified as a postmodernist text in so far as it approaches irony in a postmodernist fashion. In fact, Nabokov's text displays an ironic stand point about the notion of the 'grand narrative' which no longer pertains to the postmodernist narrative practice. Instead, the pastiche genre is ironically introduced to parody multiple literary styles and to reflect a postmodernist view that meaning lies in the mimicry of the literary conventions and writing means being eclectic, non-traditional and against signification. It is what Hutcheon describes in *The Politics of Postmodernism* as "both using and ironically abusing general conventions and specific forms of representation" (8).

In *Lolita*, the eclectic approach is abundantly employed since the text is a thread of different literary conventions and styles. Humbert Humbert's –the narrator– approach to genres is eclectic. "He dabbles in them without surrendering his story to the narrative logic and trajectory

implied by their conventions" (James 45). Poet and pervert, Humbert recurs to poetry as in the example: "It is a poem I know already by heart:

> Angel, Grace
> Austin, Floyd
> Beale, Jack
> Beale, Mary
> Buck, Daniel
> Byron, Marguerite [. . .]" (Nabokov 51).

The poetic style is abundantly used throughout Humbert's narrative. His description of "the stars that sparkled and the cars that parkled" (59) add to the text eclectic construction as a poem and prose. Humbert explicitly confirms his postmodernist eclecticism while building his text. He comments on good examples of the ironic

> "eclecticism governing the selection of books in prison libraries. They have *The Bible*, of course, and Dickens (an ancient set N.Y., G.W. Dillingham, Publisher, MDCCCLXXXVII); and the *Children's Encyclopedia* (with some nice photographs of sunshine-haired Girl Scouts in short) and *A Murder is Announced* by Agatha Christie [. . .] (31).

Moe than stylistically ironic, eclecticism or the presence of different titles within Humbert's narrative has an ironic thematic purpose. Indeed, *The Bible* is reminiscent of Adam's and Eve's fall and so it is in Humbert and Lolita's case. Dicken's and the *Children Encyclopedia* are so telling of children's, as well as 12 -year-old Lolita's innocence while Agatha Christie's *A Murder is Announced* is ironically anticipating the coming events as Humbert's will commit a murder toward the end of the narrative.

Within the limits of a single page, Humbert Humbert can wander into different forms ranging from the mythic 'nymphets' to the romance: "Oh Lolita! You are my girl, as Vee was Poe's and Bea Dante's" (107); and from the poetic description of his beloved Lolita as "Lolita light of my life, fire in my loins. My sin, my soul" (9) to the grotesque portrayal of Mr Potts as "pink and bald with white hairs growing out of his ears and other holes" (118). Humbert overtly and ironically reflects upon the construction of his tale and compares himself to spider, stressing the threading process he is deliberately experiencing:

> I am like one of those inflated pale spiders you see in old gardens. Sitting in the middle of a luminous web and giving little jerks on that strand. My web is spread all over the house as I listen from my chair where I sit like a wily wizard (Nabokov 49).

Humbert's position in the center around which all the conventional styles revolve testifies to Nabokov's ironic 'use and abuse' of old literary conventions and styles. Irony 'de-doxifies', to use Hutcheon's idiom; it calls into question all doxa, all accepted beliefs and ideologies or all grand narratives. This ironic stance is constructed upon a postmodernist attitude that values the willingness to question all ideological positions and all claims to ultimate truth. This ironic stance is readily noticed as far as the linguistic background of <u>Lolita</u> is concerned. In fact, the text

becomes a field in which multiple languages coexist. The English language, French structures like "*chocolat glacé*" (Nabokov 13) or "*Histoire Abrégée de la poesie Anglaise*" (16) or "la Petite Dormeuse ou l'Amant Ridicule (129), German expressions of the kind "*sicher ist sicher*" (123), Russian names as in the instance of '*Mr Taxovich*' or "Mr Maximovich [whose] name suddenly *taxies* back to me" (30) and the Italian lexis present through expressions like "*primo* [. . .] and *secundo*" (51), add to the text's ironic play with the linguistic sign as way of resisting the grand narrative of language as a unique, homogeneous and supreme medium of uttering feelings and meanings. The plurality of linguistic signs within the same text equally testifies to the text's eclectic construction as a postmodernist work in which Nabokov "ironically celebrates the multiplicity of language games and offers ceaseless experimentation in all these games as the highest good" (Mc Gowan 2).

The postmodernist eclectic approach may be rendered to an apocalyptic vision of immanence. The postmodernist writer believes that "in a world in which stylistic innovation is no longer possible, all that is left is to imitate dead styles, to speak through the masks and with the voices of the styles in the imaginary museum" (Wayne 7). Lolita is a text of different styles and different voices. It is a text of intertextuality as the diary: "Sunday. Changeful, bad-tempered, cheerful, awkward [. . .] Monday. Rainy morning '*ces matins gris si doux*' [. . .] (49-50), the poem, the prose, the fairytale, the road story, the detective story and the romance can be read in Humbert Humbert's narrative.

Intertextuality in *Lolita* demonstrates such an apocalyptic vision and while Humbert's road trip introduces the reader to a country on the verge of postmodernity, Nabokov's text exposes the reader to different literary styles which are recycled in contexts of irony and experimentation. The main purpose behind Intertextuality and experimentation with generic forms is, as Linda Hutcheon puts it in *The Politics of Postmodernism*, to de-naturalize some of the dominant features of our way of life; to point out that those entities that we unthinkingly experience as 'natural' are in fact 'cultural'; made by us, not given to us (1-2). Accordingly, irony is not meant for the sake of wittiness in the postmodernist text. It is rather meant to highlight a postmodernist idiosyncrasy, namely playfulness as a serious reaction to chaos and endism.

Intertextuality within the postmodernist literary work would leave the reader with a fragmented non-linear narrative. Fragmentation or discontinuity is, indeed, a postmodernist attribute. In an article entitled "The Postmodern *Weltanschaung* and its Relation to Modernism", Hans Bretens argues that "postmodernists believe in a literature that denies unity" (36). It is rather a literature that establishes a realm in which Man is free to cope spontaneously with experience. Consequently, the logic of chronological order based on causality is ironically undermined in the postmodernist text. Fragmentation is stressed as aesthetic practice in so far as one major theme of postmodernist literature is achieving aesthetic perfection through the deliberate ironic blending of genres and styles. Nabokov writes in this respect:

> I'm neither a reader nor a writer for didactic fiction. [. . .] For me, a work of fiction exists only in so far as it affords me what I shall bluntly call aesthetic bliss, that is a sense of being somehow, somewhere, connected with other states of being [. . .] where art is the norm (Nabokov 314-15).

Through fragmentation, the illusion of reality is denied and the literary conventions of the God-like narrator, the plot and the setting are revisited in an ironic tone.

The narrator of *Lolita* is unconventional in so far as he is the story teller, the action partaker and the protagonist of the story. He ironically reveals himself as unreliable from the very start of the narrative: "as I look back on those days, I see them divided tidily into ample light and narrow shade" (34). He is indeed unreliable as he does not provide his readers with reality. He rather exposes them to fragments of reality demonstrating the postmodernist ironic emphasis on fragmentation as a playful practice and 'bliss'.

Reading for the plot, the reader would reach no clear idea since the convention of plot is ironically reviewed in a postmodernist fashion in *Lolita*. It is actually hard to assert whether the opening pages of Humbert's narrative are the beginning or the end of the story. Humbert's overt declaration for instance, "a few words about Mrs Humbert while the going is good (a bad accident is to happen quite soon)" (105), or his explicit comment on Jean Farlow who "was already nursing the cancer that was to kill her at thirty three" (104) turn the narrative into fragmented events which could ironically end before even beginning. Through the fragmented and discontinuous narrative, in which beginning and end are synonymous, Nabokov works to disappoint the reader's common expectations concerning the plotted narrative and reveals his predilection to postmodernist narrative practice that ironically shuns linearity and coherence and suggests fragmentation and discontinuity as a substitute.

Within the paradigm of fragmentation, the notions of space and time in *Lolita* take a new dimension and construct the text as postmodernist. Through the ironic abundance of spaces, Humbert's narrative could readily be inscribed within the postmodernist stance that defies confinement and closure and highlights openness and plurality instead. Indeed, Humbert's and Lolita's road journey and their restless movement from one 'motel' to another, create a multitude of spaces and landscapes in the text highlighting the pop culture and conforming to a postmodernist slogan introduced by Leslie Friedler 'cross the border, close the gap' which exemplifies the postmodernist ironic attempt to pull art back from a vintage point to the spontaneous flow of daily life (Mc Gowan 2).

Time is also unconventionally employed in *Lolita*. The past present and the future are ironically blended in the text. Humbert overtly signals his ironic attitude toward time, stating: "my calendar is getting confused" (Nabokov109) and preparing the reader to a new conception of time that trespasses the chronological logic and establishes new parameters that defy the confining limits of order, coherence and linearity.

Although the character of Lolita, for instance, progresses in the narrative – she starts as a 12-year-old girl and ends as pregnant woman – she is kept an unchanging 'nymphet' image in Humbert's memory. Musing over Lolita during the present act of narration, Humbert always recuperates her portrait as a child 'nymphet', freezing time at a particular point in the past. Moreover, the narrative starts with Humbert in a state of arrest, which is the effect of a previous cause. This testifies to the credibility of the statement that the chronological order is ironically

undermined for the overt construction of future events precedes the past and between the two tenses is the present act of narrating which ironically plays with tenses through past reminiscence and coming incidents.

Intertextuality, experimentation and fragmentation in *Lolita* are basically meant to reflect upon 'old' literary forms and to parody their styles. The postmodernist text is then self-reflexive in as much as it is a text reflecting about another literary text. It is also self-reflexive in so far as it is a "criticism which includes in its own discourse an implicit reflection upon itself" (Hutcheon 13), and here lies the narcissism of the postmodernist literary convention which uses irony to overtly break with the grand narratives of coherence, linearity and singularity and signal the beginning of metanarratives of fragmentation, indeterminacy and plurality.

The writing process within the postmodernist framework becomes self-conscious since it ironically turns to itself to examine its construction process. It is also self-conscious as it turns to the reader and shares with him/her the act of writing. In *Lolita*, Humbert, the narrator, establishes multiple open conversations with the reader to justify or explain some points during the writing process: "now I wish to introduce the following idea" (Nabokov 17). In another instance he addresses the reader, saying: "I want my learned readers to participate in the scene I am about to replay" (17). The repetition of the overt call "Ladies and gentlemen of the jury," also reveals the highly conscious act of writing and the attempt to make the reader an active element in meaning construction.

Unlike the classical script where the narrator can be omniscient and God-like as he's the truth holder, this convention is ironically subverted in the postmodernist text and the narrator or even the author seek refuge in the reader who acquires a crucial role in constructing meaning. In *Lolita*, Humbert, on behalf of Nabokov, blatantly puts it: "I have written more than a hundred pages and not t anywhere" (116). This dependence on the reader to create meaning in the text is projected through the clearly expressed urges to the reader: "Please reader: no matter your exasperation with the tenderhearted morbidly sensitive, infinitely circumspect hero of my book, do not skip these essential pages! Imagine me! I shall not exist if you do not imagine me" (137). Seen from a Barthesian perspective, Nabokov's dependence on the reader to give meaning to the text may be read as a signaling of the 'death of the author' and, subsequently, the birth of the reader as the meaning originator in the postmodernist narrative.

Nevertheless, Humbert's dependence on the reader does not actually imply his death. It is rather a matter of survival for writing and being understood by the reader is the only condition of existence for Humbert. Rolland Barthes' argument about the death of the author may be irrelevant as far as the postmodernist text is concerned. Indeed, in the postmodernist literary convention, the author ironically steps into and openly exerts his/her influence on the text. In *Lolita*, Nabokov clearly exhibits his ironic stand point about the 'death of the author' and his assertion of the highly self-reflexive, self-conscious act of writing: "I have camouflaged what I could so as not to hurt people" (226). In another instance, he reveals his direct stepping into the narrative through bracketed statements: "[. . .] (I don't mind if these verbs are all wrong)" (179). Such bracketed phrases and sentences carry an ironic as well as a humorous tone as in: "after all, there is no harm in smiling. For instance, (I almost wrote 'frinstance')" (129).

In sum, irony is a key word within the postmodernist narrative practice. It highlights multiplicity over singularity and reconsiders notions like the grand narrative and introduces metanarratives of intertextuality and experimentation instead. Irony within the postmodernist agenda is equally employed to experiment with conventional literary styles, reflects upon them and come out with a new aesthetic vision. *Lolita's* openness to diverse literary styles and fragmented structure turn it into a field of meaning that is hard to decipher and here lies the quintessence of *Lolita* as a postmodernist text which never submits to any definite interpretation.

References

Primary Sources:

- Nabokov, Vladimir. <u>Lolita</u>. London: Penguin Classics, 2000.

Secondary Sources:

- Bretens, Hans. "The Postmodern Weltanschauung and its relation to modernism: An introductory survey". <u>A Postmodern Reader</u>. Eds. Navali J. and Linda Hutcheon. New York: New York U. P., 1993.

- Hutcheon, Linda. <u>A poetics of Postmodernism</u>. London: Routledge, 1993.

- ---. <u>The Politics of Postmodernism</u>.London: Routledge, 1989.

- Mc Gowan, John. <u>Postmodernism and its Critics</u>. New York:Cornell U.P. 1991.

- Sim, Stuart. The Routledge Companion to Postmodernism. New York. Routledge, 2001.

- Tweedie, James. "Lolita's Loose Ends". <u>Nabokov and the Boundless Novel</u>. Hofstra University, 2000. [150-170]

Requests as Impositions: negative face among Saudi learners of English

Ikram Rouissi
University of Carthage, Tunisia

Abstract

The notion of communicative competence goes beyond the acquisition of linguistic competence to include pragmatic competence. Pragmatic competence is concerned with the use of language according to context and culture. A lack in the development of pragmatic competence may lead to communication breakdowns or cultural misunderstandings (Kasper and Blum-Kulka, 1993). Acquiring an appropriate level of pragmatic competence can be quite challenging because of the lack of clear prescriptive rules and the transfer of L1 socio-cultural norms (Chick, 1996; Cohen, 2007; Nakajima, 1997). Being primarily concerned with how non-native speakers acquire second language pragmatic knowledge (Kapser, 199), Interlanguage pragmatics has received a staple focus in second language acquisition research. Against this background, the present paper, drawing upon Brown and Levinson's (1987) model of speech acts, investigates the realization of requests among Saudi EFL learners and the effect of degree of imposition enshrined therein in different eleven situations. Brown and Levinson maintain that Requests constitute an imposition on the hearer's negative face because they represent an impingement on his freedom of action. They stress the role of three variables: distance, power, and ranking of imposition in speech act realization. The strategies posited in this framework for realizing formal requests (i.e., negative politeness strategies) represent the analytical categories adopted in this study. The study reveals that Saudi learners show a lot of care in not causing direct hits at their interlocutor's negative face. It also reveals a number of pragma-linguistic failures and suggests that they might be better explained in terms of the learners'/speakers' concern about their own negative face. The study is intended to draw teachers' attention to the necessity of developing programs or courses which raise the learners' awareness about the performance of requests in a cross-culturally sound way.

Keywords: Interlanguage pragmatics, Politeness, Negative Face, Requests, Variables, Distance, Power, Imposition, Speech Acts.

Introduction

For many years, the emphasis in second language teaching and learning theories has been primarily on the grammatical aspects of learners' language. Meir (1997: 21) states: "As communicative competence has achieved ascendancy in the goals of foreign and second language pedagogy, attention to functional aspects of language identified as speech acts has also increased." Thus second language acquisition research (SLAR) has become more and more concerned with investigating the pragmatic aspect of L2 learners' language. This new emphasis in SLAR is embodied in the development of interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) studies. Kasper and Dahl (1991: 215) define ILP as the investigation of non native speakers' comprehension and production of speech acts, and the acquisition of L2-related speech act knowledge." ILP studies concerned with the investigation of learners' speech act realization have drawn on principles established by pragmatic theories as speech act theory and the role of politeness in language use (e.g. Leech, 1983 and Brown and Levinson, 1987).

The present paper falls under ILP research; it is concerned with investigating the effect of degree imposition on Saudi learners' realization of requests in eleven different situations. The paper draws heavily on Brown and Levinson's (1987)[107] politeness model.

I.   Brown and Levinson's framework

B&L (1987) take the participant in discourse as a Model Person (MP) who is an adult member of a society and is endowed with two properties: rationality and face.
Rationality is "the ability to weigh up different means to an end, and choose one that most satisfies the desired goal." (B&L, 1987: 65). Speakers rely on rationality to choose from a set of possible linguistic means one that will satisfactorily achieve the desired goal.
Face is the "Public self image that each member claims for himself." (B&L, 1987: 61) It has two aspects: negative face and positive face. Negative face represents "the basic claims for territories, personal preserves, rights to non distraction i.e. to freedom of action and freedom from imposition" while positive face represents "the positive and consistent self-image or 'personality' claimed by interactants." (B&L, 1987: 61). Positive face[108] underlies the interactants' desire to be appreciated.

B&L maintain that requests are inherently threatening to the hearer's negative face, because they represent an impingement on his freedom of action. The diversity of linguistic forms that requests can take is normally motivated by the speaker's desire to protect the hearer's negative face. Requests also depend on three sociological variables: distance, power, and ranking of imposition.

---

[107] - Henceforth B&L
[108] - I do not account for positive face because it does not fall within the scope of this paper.

1. Distance

The variable sociological distance seems to be assessed in terms of "the frequency of interaction and the kind of material and non material goods including face exchanged between S and H." (B&L, 1987: 77). Social distance between family members or close friends is perceived as low because of the high frequency of interaction that takes place between them. However, social distance is perceived as high if the interlocutors are strangers or new acquaintances. High social distance increases the weight of the imposition whereas low social distance reduces it.

2- Power

The power variable is assessed by the degree by which S can impose his own desires and goals on H. S's superior position reduces the seriousness of the imposition and all S to use direct request forms, whereas S's subordinate position increases the seriousness of the imposition and calls for the use of indirect and polite requests.

3- Ranking of imposition

As far as requests are concerned, Ranking of imposition[109] (R), is assessed in terms of the extent to which the requested act interferes with H's negative face, i.e. with his time and freedom of action. B&L (1987: 77) identify two different ways of ranking impositions on H's negative face: "a ranking of impositions in proportion to the expenditure of (a) services (including the provision of time) and (b) of goods (including non material goods like information and other face payments)."

The above variables are used to this paper to investigate request strategies from a politeness perspective.

I.1. Strategies for realizing requests

Negative politeness strategies are central to this paper because they account for the notion of imposition on H's negative face and its effects on planning and realizing formal requests. As B&L put it,

> "Negative politeness is oriented mainly toward partially satisfying (redressing) H's negative face, his basic want to maintain claims of territory and self-determination. Negative politeness thus, is essentially avoidance-based, and realizations of negative politeness strategies consist in assurances that the speaker recognizes and respects the addressee's negative face and will not (or will not minimally) interfere with the addressee's freedom of action. Hence negative politeness is characterized by self-effacement, formality and restraint with attention to very restricted aspects of H's self-image, centering on his want to be unimpeded." (1987: 70).

To realize negative politeness, S may opt for one of the following higher order strategies.

---

[109] - R refers to "Ranking of imposition"

I.1. Higher order strategies

1- Be direct
Here S's desire to be direct and straightforward clashes with his desire to pay attention to H's negative face wants. The tension can be solved by conventionally indirect speech acts.
1a. Be conventionally direct
S does not pay attention to H's negative wants. An appropriate example would be the orders a highly ranked officer gives to a soldier.
1b. Be conventionally indirect
The use of conventional speech acts softens the threat to negative face. Conventional indirectness is linguistically realized as follows, e.g. "I would like you to do x", "Can you do x?"

2. Don't presume/assume
To redress H's negative face, S avoids assuming that H is willing or is ready to do the requested act.
2a. Question
All the interrogative forms used to encode conventional indirect requests (see 1b, above) perform the function of indicating that S assumes that H is not disposed or willing to the act requested of him.
2b. Hedge
This includes speech acts that contain tags, hedges like "perhaps", "sort of" "roughly", adverbial clauses "if clauses", or other expressions like "to tell you the truth….", "This may not be the right moment, but…"
3. Don't coerce H
Here S gives H options not to respond positively to his act. He does not coerce H by minimizing the threat inherent in the request.
3a. Be pessimistic
Pessimism can be encoded in "indirect requests with assertions of felicity conditions which have a negated possibility Operator." (B&L, 1987: 173), e.g. You couldn't possibly lend me the money. Pessimism can also be encoded in the following subjunctive auxiliaries: could (you), would (you), or might (you). The use of the subjunctive allows S to indicate that "it is not assumed that the hypothetical world is close to this one (the real world), and this partially satisfies the injunction be pessimistic." (B&L, 1987: 173).
3b. Minimize the imposition
Minimizing the threat or the imposition can be realized through euphemisms, i.e. the substitution of one word for another to be indirect, e.g. (borrow instead of take). It can also be encoded in such actives as 'little', 'tiny', or 'just'.
3c. Give deference
This strategy can be realized in address terms such as 'Sir', 'Madam', which encode social distance (D) or high status (P). B&L stress that address terms "soften FTAS by indicating the absence of risk to the addressee."[110] (1987: 182).

---

[110] - FTAS stands for face threatening acts.

4. Communicate S's wants not to impinge of H

This strategy for redressing H's negative face consists in conveying awareness of H's negative face wants by indicating that S does not want to bother H. It can have the following realizations.

4a. Apologize

This can have the form of admitting the impingement, indicating reluctance, giving overwhelming reasons, and begging forgiveness.

4b. Dissociate S, H from the particular infringement

This can be realized by the avoidance of the pronouns "I" and "you".

5. Redress other wants of H's derivative from negative face

This strategy consists in compensating for the threat intrinsic in the face-threatening act (FTA) by paying attention to H's desire to be respected or considered superior.

5a. Go on record as incurring debt

S may express explicitly his indebtedness to H; e.g. "I'd be eternally grateful to you…"

II.   Limitations of B&L's model

B&L (1987) acknowledge certain limitations of their model. Abdesslem (2001: 121) states that the model is not geared towards studying discourse as an on-going process and that people's "assessment of their proper face-value differ and their mood may affect their face evaluation." Meier (1997: 22-23) has identified four problems in B&L's model. First, it is not certain that formal features have an equivalent value across languages. Second, face wants can differ across cultures as well as the way to address these wants. Third, it is difficult to establish an objective measure to directness or to maintain that is universally least polite. Fourth, the model does not offer much guidance for researchers interested in cross-cultural studies.

The present study does not overlook the criticism leveled at B&L's model. It uses the model as a tool to discuss Saudi students' production of requests. It tries to see how requests affect what B&L call negative face. The variables of Distance, Power and Imposition are implemented to reveal their effect on the production of requests.

III.   Data Analysis and results

III.1 Background

The data consists of a discourse completion test. This instrument imposes a tight control on the informants' responses. It consists of a written questionnaire with several items. Each item represents a brief dialogue with an empty slot. The informants are asked to fill in a response, which they think is appropriate to the given context. The unit of analysis in the discourse completion test is the utterance or speech act/acts.

Ten (10) out of eleven (11) situations were taken, with little adjustment, from (Blum-Kulka, 1982). The number of participants is 20 level four (second year) male university students, majoring in English language and translation. The total number is 35, but 20 volunteered to take the test. The test was administered in the second week of May, 2003. The choice of this level is

quite interesting because starting from level five students will be taking courses in linguistics and translation. There is a tacit assumption that students do not need any language courses such as speaking, listening, reading, writing, or grammar. Throughout their four terms, students were taught by non-native speakers of English and their exposure to the language is almost entirely limited to the classroom context.

The discourse completion test contains eleven situations. The situations are divided into three categories; each category highlights one of the three sociological variables, namely distance (D), power (P) and ranking of imposition (I). Within each category, each situation has a degree of imposition that differs from the others.

II.2. Data analysis and results

Data analysis and results are presented in three sections that are basically those of the discourse completion test. Each section describes the main strategies the participants adopted in realizing requests and the linguistic forms they used to encode them.

III.2.1. Distance
High social distance increases the weight of imposition whereas low social distance reduces it.

Situation 1- At the restaurant
Dan: What would you like to eat?
Ruth: I don't know. Is there a menu?
Dan   (to the waiter): …………………………………………………………..

In this situation the social distance is high because the addressee is a stranger and the addressor (the informant) is a customer who asks a waiter to bring the menu. The request is simple, predicated and expected. It hardly interferes with the addressee's freedom of action: the imposition inherent in the request is minimal.

The participants opted for two major strategies to encode their requests: direct requests and conventionally indirect requests.
Four (4) out of twenty (20) students opted for direct mitigated strategies (e.g. Give us the menu, please). The choice of a direct strategy may indicate that the learners do not consider asking for a menu a serious imposition on the addressee's negative face. Because of the effect of high social distance, students' requests were mitigated by negative politeness markers, e.g. "please" "excuse me".

Sixteen (16) participants opted for conventional indirect strategies. This involved the use of questions (2a, above), hedges i.e. interrogative form (2.b), and be pessimistic (3b, above) through the auxiliaries "could" and "would". To minimize the imposition further, two participants avoided using the hearer-oriented perspective which contains or implies the pronoun "you", (e.g. could we have the menu, please?). These indirect ways of making requests indicate that speakers are conscious of possibly offending their hearers. The use of "Would you…?" may not be very appropriate and may have rude connotations for native speakers (Ben Ayed, 1996). Two (2)

informants used the auxiliary "do" and the copula "be" in "Do you have the menu?" and "Is there a menu?" Such requests are indirect, but their conventionality may not be always straightforward. The context of situation makes such acts requests and not questions.

Situation 2: In the car
Diane: We're going to miss the train. Let's ask someone how to get to the station.
Robert: I hate asking people in the street. Go on, you ask.
Diane: O.K. I will. ……………………………………………………………

The informant has to ask a stranger the direction. This represents a simple request for information, which hardly interferes with the addressee's freedom of action, for the imposition inherent in the request is minimal. The social distance is high because the addressee is a stranger. Eleven (11) out of the twenty (20) participants did not understand what was required from them and failed to produce requests. They might have understood "will" to indicate the future, but not the immediate future, i.e. now. Two (2) of the nine (9) requests were direct and made unmitigated explicit demands. Seven requests were conventionally indirect and had gambits. The gambits were apologise (beg forgiveness), give deference, and sentence initial 'please'. It is worth mentioning a this point that although the gender of the addressee was not specified, informants used only a masculine form of address, (e.g. Excuse me sir, can you tell me how to get to the station?).

 Situation 3: In a shop
Customer: How much is that dress?
Shop assistant: $50.
Customer: That's expensive. ……………………………………………
Shop assistant: Sorry Sir, all the prices are fixed.

In this situation, the social distance is high and the imposition is relatively more serious than the other two situations because the request involves asking a shop assistant for a discount. All participants opted for indirect strategies. This may indicate their awareness of the relatively serious imposition inherent in the requested act.

To minimize the imposition eleven (11) informants were conventionally indirect and their responses came in the interrogative form and encoded the strategy question, hedge, and contained the subjunctive auxiliaries 'could' and 'would' which fall within the strategy: Be pessimistic. Eight (8) of the eleven participants used hearer-oriented perspective, i.e. the second person pronoun 'you' that refers explicitly to the addressee as the performer of the requested act, (e.g. 'can you make a discount?'). Three (3) of the eleven participants used speaker-oriented forms, i.e. the first person pronoun 'I', that functioned as requests for permission (e.g. can I get it with $ 40?'). Nine (9) of the twenty participants opted for the use of non-conventional indirect forms. Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984: 201) refer to these strategies as "the open-ended group that realizes the request by either partial reference to object or by reliance on contextual clues." This consists of utterances as "this is an expensive one", 'I have bought a similar one with $ 30". These requests can also function as adjuncts, which strengthen head acts, "Could you make a discount? This is an expensive dress."

Situation 4: At the student union

Dan: Ron, I found a great apartment. I have to pay the landlady $50 deposit by tomorrow.
Ron: And you haven't got it?
Don: No, I'll get my scholarship only next week.
……………………………………………………………
Ron: I'm awfully sorry. I am waiting for my dad to send me some money.

Although the distance is low in this situation, the imposition is high. The imposition on the addressee's negative face is very serious because it represents an infringement on H's material goods; money is not a 'free' good. However, the low distance between the participants can reduce the weight of imposition because asking one's close friend for money is usually perceived as a having less imposition than asking a stranger for money. There were types of major strategies: be conventionally indirect, be non-conventionally indirect, and minimize the threat.

Thirteen (13) participants out of twenty (20) were conventionally indirect. They used interrogative forms such as 'can you' and 'will you' and encoded the strategy question hedge. They also used the subjunctive auxiliaries 'could' and 'would', which involve the strategy of 'be pessimistic'. In addition, learners used declarative request forms that express the speaker's desire /need to borrow money, e.g. "I am thinking you could lend me the money".

Six (6) out of twenty (20) informants were conventionally indirect, (e.g. "I'm out of money right now"; "I don't have any money". These utterances imply the act of requesting.

To soften the threat to negative face and minimize the imposition, twelve (12) learners used the euphemism for the verb 'give', i.e. 'lend' and 'borrow', and seven (7) used the quantity modifiers 'some' and 'little amount'.

Situation 5: In a student apartment

John: Look at the mess in this kitchen, Larry.
Some friends are coming for dinner tonight and I'll have to start cooking soon.
……………………………………………………………………..
Larry: Ok, not to worry. I'll have a go at it right away.

In this situation, the interactants are familiar equals. They are roommates and one of them asks the other to clear up the mess in the kitchen. The distance is low and the imposition inherent in the request is minimal.

Three (3) informants out twenty (20) failed to realize the requests and the rest opted for: be conventionally indirect, be non-conventionally indirect and be direct.

Eleven (11) participants out of seventeen (17) were conventionally indirect. There was the use of ability questions 'can you do x' and the subjunctive auxiliaries 'could' and 'would' which convey the strategy 'be pessimistic about H's response' that reduces negative face damage. There was the adoption of hearer-oriented perspective (e.g. 'would you clean it, please.'), speaker-oriented perspective (e.g. 'what can I do?'), and speaker and hearer perspective (e.g. 'can we clean it before we arrive?'). Eight (8) students used the first perspective, two (2) used the second perspective, and one (1) used the third perspective.

Five (5) out of the seventeen (17) informants were non-conventionally indirect and used two types of strategies; strong hints (e.g. 'I need your help before they arrive') and mild hints (e.g. 'what am I going to do?').

One (1) participant out of the seventeen (17) was explicit and direct ('clean up this mess').

Situation 6: In the living room

Peter: Mum, where's the hair brush?
Mother: In the bathroom. Peter, your hair is down to your knees.
  …………………………………………………………………
Peter: I don't want a haircut.

In this situation, we have a mother tells her son to have his hair cut. Because of the close relationship between the two interactants and because of the minimal imposition, most participants opted for the use of direct and conventionally indirect requests. In fact, twelve (12) participants out of twenty (20) used obligation statements, (e.g. 'you should cut your hair'). Five (5) other participants used 'why not' questions ('why don't you cut your hair?'). One informant used 'can you cut your hair', which is rather inappropriate in English, but its literal equivalent in Arabic would be very appropriate.

III.2.2. Power

Power relationship between interactants affects heir language.
Situation 7 at a teachers' meeting
Teacher: And when is the next meeting?
Principal: Next Wednesday. We will have to notify those who aren't here.
   Richard, ……………………………………………………………
Richard: O.K. I'll do it.

In this situation, a school principal, who has a higher status than the other participants, requests information about the hearer's willingness and readiness to inform the rest of the teachers about the next meeting date. Fifteen (15) out of twenty (20) participants failed to produce an appropriate request. Some did not seem to realize that the Principal addressed Richard in the third line of the dialogue. Three (3) participants opted for the use of the imperative form or mitigated requests ('please notify the rest') and two (2) were conventionally indirect ('could you notify the others'). The responses are quite appropriate.

Situation 8: In the professor's office
Student: I'm writing a paper in sociolinguistics. I need Hudson's book.
   ……………………………………………………………………
Professor: But please remember to bring it back as soon as you finish.

A student has to ask a teacher to lend him his book. The imposition inherent in this situation is relatively high because the request impinges on the addressee's negative face. To minimize the

imposition involved in this act, eighteen (18) participants out of twenty (20) opted for the use of indirect strategies: give deference, euphemism, and sentence-final 'please'. Two (2) participants were direct and used declarative statements ('I want to take this book'), which seem rather inappropriate here.

In order not to sound coercive, the eighteen (18) students assumed that H is not likely to do the action. They used the question, hedge strategy ('can you lend me the book?') and be pessimistic strategy through ('could' and 'would'). Eleven (11) out of the eighteen informants opted for the use of hearer-oriented perspective which includes reference to the requestee and the action to be performed, (e.g. 'could you lend me the book, please'). Nine (9) students used used speaker-oriented perspective (can I borrow your book?'). Speaker-oriented forms are slightly less direct and more tactful than hearer-oriented forms. They encode the strategy impersonalise H because they distance the addressee from the request by avoiding reference to him as the performer of the action.

Eighteen (18) out of the twenty informants opted for the use of verbs that avoid permanence. They opted for the use of the verb 'lend' and 'borrow', which indicate temporariness. The tow other informants used 'take' which implies a permanence that is inappropriate in contexts where the speaker intends to borrow something. Seven (7) students confused 'borrow' with 'lend', ('would you borrow me your book, please').

Four (4) students used the address terms 'sir', 'professor', which encode high social distance and high status. Seven (7) opted for the use of 'please' which is used as a mitigated expression in order to soften the speaker's impingement on the hearer's claim to freedom of action and freedom from imposition.

Situation 9: In the street

Police officer: Excuse me, is that your car there?
Man: Oh, oh yes.
Police officer: ……………………………………………………
Man: So sorry. I'll move it at once.

A policeman asks a driver to move his car. This situation is believed to be governed by specific culture-bound social norms (Blum-Kulka, 1984: 45). The distribution of learners' responses shows that learners are divided between making explicit, direct demand and making implicit, indirect requests or hints.

Seven (7) out of twenty (20) respondents opted for the use of imperatives and obligation statements (e.g. 'you have to move your car.'). Eight (8) were conventionally indirect (e.g. 'could you', 'would you', 'can you', 'will you'). The rest of the learners, five (5), opted for the use of strong hints (e.g. 'you are stopping the traffic' or 'this is not a car park').

III.2.3. Ranking of impositions

The ranking of imposition (R) relates the situational and cultural assessment of the degree of imposition inherent in a particular act. In requests R is assessed in terms of the extent to which the requested act interferes with the speaker's negative face, i.e. his time and freedom of action.

Situation 10: At the office
Stephen: Dan, I don't know what to do.
Dan: Do what?
Stephen: I have to write a short report for our new boss, but my computer is out of order.
        …………………………………………………………..
Dan: Yes, sure.

In this situation, S and H are 'similar' in social terms, the relative power of S and H is small and the imposition is not great. The imposition is small because there is a request of a 'free good'. Thus, this request is predictable and reasonable since both Stephen and Dan are employees in the same company and they can share the company's goods to get things done.

Eighteen (18) out of twenty (20) participants opted for the use of conventional indirect requests ('can I use your computer?') or ('would you *borrow me your computer?'). Sixteen (16) out of the eighteen (18) used the speaker-oriented perspective and two (2) used the hearer-oriented perspective.
One (1) learner out of the twenty (20) participants opted for the use of a declarative unmitigated request ('I want to your computer') and another one (1) used a 'why don't' question, which may be closer to a suggestion.

Situation 11: At the office
Stephen: Dan, I have to get my car repaired. I need $5oo to pay the mechanic.
Dan: Don't tell me you' re short of cash again?
Stephen: …………………………………………………………………………….
Dan: Ok. But, please make sure you pay me back as soon you get your salary.

In this situation, power and distance are similar to the previous situation. The imposition (R) is great and learners may choose many strategies to minimize the imposition (apologize, indicate reluctance, give overwhelming reasons, beg forgiveness, use expressions like 'just', little', or 'tiny').

Ten (10) learners out of twenty (20) failed to realize requests and answered either with 'I am afraid yes' or 'unfortunately, yes.' Their failure is due to both linguistic and sociolinguistic competence limitation. Six (6) learners opted for the use of conventional indirect requests ('could you help...?' or 'can you lend…?' and used gambits that express apology ('I am afraid'). Four informants (4) out of twenty (20) opted for the use of non-conventional indirect requests, which consist of hints 'I'm sorry, but I need help' or 'I am *at trouble'. Minimizing the imposition in this situation is mainly achieved through the use of indirect forms, the use of expressions like 'I'm afraid', 'I'm sorry + the use of substitutes (euphemisms) for the verb 'give'.

IV- Discussion

Scrutiny of the learners' responses reveals that students are widely concerned with politeness and seem to care for the hearer's negative face. In situation six (6), however, the informants who took the role of the mother who asks her son to have his haircut chose to be direct. This is quite in order, and it may be a universal phenomenon, parents pay little attention to their children's negative face.

The tendency to be indirect may be due to two major factors:
The first factor consists of the transfer of social norms from the learners' first language and culture. Blum-Kulka (1982: 31) suggests that indirectness is a social phenomenon and the "ethos" of one society influences the application of the principles of indirectness. In their native language Saudi learners tend to use mitigated expressions and indirect strategies to minimize the imposition and soften the threat inherent in requests. Although the Arabic expressions are not transferred, the indirectness is observed, and in most cases, in appropriate and grammatical English.

The second factor that may explain learners' tendency for indirectness involves the effect of the target language norms. Learners have learnt, through education, socio-cultural knowledge, and knowledge of the world, that indirectness and mitigated expressions are frequently used by native speakers of English, especially when realizing requests.

Indirect strategies either conventional (e.g. questions, hedges) or non-conventional (e.g. hints, association clues) are the strategies frequently adopted to minimize the imposition and to recognize the hearer's negative face wants. To minimize the degree of imposition and to redress H's negative face, Saudi learners tend to use speaker–oriented forms, (e.g. can I use your computer?) and speaker-oriented forms (e.g. can we/I clean it?). Both of these forms include the strategy impersonalise H. Learners distance the addressee from the request by avoiding reference to him as the performer of the requested act. Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984: 203) stress that "Given the fact that in requests it is the hearer who is under threat, any avoidance in naming the addressee as the principal performer of the act serves to soften the impact of the imposition." The effect of the high degree of imposition involved in situations 4 and 11, (in both situations the imposition is high because it involves asking the addressee for money), was reflected in the use of indirect strategies, the use of gambits that express apology (e.g. I'm sorry), the use of under-staters (e.g. little, some only), and the use of euphemism to convey temporariness and avoid permanence.

Some learners seemed to be unaware of the grammatical constraints on the verb to borrow and formulated requests such as "would you *borrow me your book?" instead of "would you lend me your book". Swan (1980) remarks that confusing 'lend' and 'borrow' is a typical error among second language learners of English. The confusion among Saudi learners and Arab learners in general may be explained in terms of first language interference where the semantic difference between lend and borrow is not marked lexically in two different verbs, but morphologically: /asallaf/ (I lend) and /atsalaf/ (I borrow).

To admit the impingement on the addressee (see situation 11), learners used "I am sorry," "I am afraid", and ellipted, as it were, the head act, or accompanied those gambits with the head act of requesting. When used on their own, gambits cannot stand for requests in English, but in Arabic they can and they reveal a great care in not dealing a strong blow to H's negative face. They are more of the going off-record type. When preceding or following the head act of requesting, gambits may not sound very appropriate in English. According to Edmondson and House (1981), the formula 'sorry' is used to apologize for harm caused to H and it is used as a common response whereby the speaker seeks to make amends for his offence. In both Modern Standard Arabic and Saudi Arabic, 'sorry' /a:sif/ may introduce an apology or a request.

Despite the fact that students were widely concerned with politeness and seem to care for the hearer's negative face, they did not produce linguistically elaborate strategies that reflect high imposition due to high D, P, or I. The following strategies are either missing or have an extremely low frequency: a- indicate reluctance and embarrassment to make requests (e.g. I'm terribly sorry to ask you); b- admit the impingement (e.g. I'd like to ask you a big favour); c- give overwhelming reasons (e.g. I can think of nobody who could help me); d- go on record as incurring debt (e.g. I'd be eternally grateful to you if you); e- the use of hedges like 'you know', 'perhaps'.

It is often assumed that lack of elaborate strategies is due to poor linguistic means. I think it is perhaps more related to the fact that learners see themselves as performers (as in the theatre) and not real users of the language. I believe that the strategies that are missing or that have a low frequency reveal the learners' reluctance to admit vulnerability or to express emotions that harm their own negative face. In other words, Saudi learners are concerned about their interlocutor's negative face, but are much more concerned about their own negative face in role-play situations, let alone real situations.

The violations of social appropriateness norms while realizing requests in the target language (e.g. "Will you lend me the money?" "Are you going to give me the money"; "Isn't there a discount?" "Can you cut your hair?") are due to lack of linguistic means, but they may be also due to a concern about S's negative face. In Hebrew, a Semitic language like Arabic, Blum-Kulka (1982: 34) suggested that a standard way of making indirect requests is by questioning whether there is a possibility in the future for the act to be performed. I think in Arabic and particularly in Saudi Arabic this questioning strategy dissimulates a negative face-vulnerability on the part of the speaker. It is reflected in English.

Conclusion

This article attempted to investigate the effect of the degree of imposition on Saudi learners' realization of requests in English in eleven situations. It also attempted to investigate whether learners are sensitive to their addressee's negative face wants. The study relied on Brown and Levinson's (1987) model, while being aware of the criticism leveled against it. It revealed that Saudi learners show a lot of care in not causing direct hits at their interlocutor's negative face. It has revealed a number of pragmalinguistic failures and suggested that they might be better

explained in terms of the learners'/speakers' concern about their own negative face. Those who advocate the communicative approach and who claim that in order to overcome pragmalinguistic failures, learners should be exposed to authentic conversations which provide real examples of language use where distance, power and ranking of imposition are highlighted, seem to have a recipe that does not take into consideration how face is valued in the source language and culture[111].

---

[111] - These findings remain tentative.

References

-Abdesslem, H. (2001), Politeness strategies in the discourse of drama: a case study, *Journal of Literary Semantics* 30: 111-138.

-Ben Ayed, H. (1996). Realizing formal Requests by Tunisian First-year university learners. Unpublished MA dissertation. Institut Superieur des Langues de Tunism Tunisia.

-Blum-Kulka, S. (1982). Learning to say what you mean in a second language: study of the speech act performance of learners of Hebrew as a second language, *Applied Linguistics* 3 (1): 29-59.

-Blum-Kulka, S., & Olshtain, E. (1984). Requests and Apologies: A Cross-Cultural Study of Speech Act Realization Patterns(CCSARP). *Applied linguistics*, *5*(3), 196-213.

-Brown, G. and Yule, G. (1983). *Discourse Analysis*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

-Brown, P. and Levinson, S. (1987). *Politeness: some universals in language use*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

-Chick, J. K. (1996). Safe-talk: Collusion in apartheid education. *Society and the language classroom*, 21-39. Edmondson, W. and House, J. (1981). *Let's talk about it*, U&S Pedagogick.

-Cohen, A.D. (2007). The Teaching of Pragmatics in the EFL classroom. *ILI Language Teaching Journal,* vol.3, no.2, 1-28.

-Kasper, G. (1992). Pragmatic transfer. *Second language research*, *8*(3), 203-231.

-Kasper, G and Blum-Kulka, S. (1993). Interlanguage Pragmatics: an Introduction. In

-Kasper, G. and S. Blum-Kulka (Eds.), Interlanguage Pragmatics. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

-Kasper, G. and Dahl, M. (1991). Research methods in interlanguage pragmatics, *Studies in second language acquisition* 12: 215-247.

-Leech, G. (1983). *Principles of pragmatics*, London: Longman.

-Meir, A. J. (1997). Teaching the universals of politeness, *ELT Journal* 5 (1): 21-27.

-Nakajima, Y. (1997). Politeness strategies in the workplace: which experiences help Japanese businessmen acquire American English native-like strategies? Working papers in Educational Linguitics, Vol, 13, no, 49-69.

-Nunan, D. (1993). *Introducing discourse analysis*, London: Penguin.

-Swan, M. (1980). *Practical English usage*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

-Thomas, J. (1983). Cross-cultural pragmatic failure, *Applied linguistics* 4 (2): 91-112.

Neo-Negritude Tempers in Okot p.Bitek's "Song of Lawino"

Aladeyomi, S. A
Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Nigeria

Ade Adejumo
Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Nigeria

Abstract

This paper examines the dilemma of the educated African elite who is torn between the realities of two conflicting cultural realities. Using the fictional character, Lawino, Okot P;Bitek provides a meeting point between the two conflicting cultures of the West and African negritude philosophy through the platform of Neo-negritude's ideology forge a better humanity.

Key words: fictional character, Lawino, neo-negritude, humanity.

The literary clime is dotted by varied ideological signposts in its attempts to grapple with diverse human situations which have continued to serve as its inspiring fount. In African literature, one of such ideological signposts is the negritude movement championed by African poets like Leopold Sedar Senghor, *Birogo* Diop, David Diop, and Bernard Dadie among others.

At the inception, it was Aime Cesaire, a West Indies black poet and senghor that led movement in the early 1930s as a kind of follow up to the Harlem renaissance in America. Harlem renaissance was fired by the spirit of cultural nationalism among the black artists who employed their skills to rebel "against the traditional perception of self-pity and inferiority complex" (Raji-Oyelade 1997:166) which the white *recial* onslaught had foisted on them. This racial assault was best expressed in the French policy of Assimilation in their colonies. This policy which sought to make Frenchman of their colonial subjects to a large extent, succeed in alienating educated Africans who became '' deeply Frenchified" (Nwoga, 1986:216) in black skin.

At the heart of this movement seemed to be the nagging question: can the cultural essence (history) of a people be re-scripted on the basis of a mere racially inspired document as enunciated by the "supremacist" philosophy of Assimilation? The Blackman's answer and reaction to this poser was expressed in the palpable rage that marked the tone of most of the negritude poems. This as Nwoga (1958:217) observed "led to a poetry of protest that expressed a rejection and a new glorification of African and blackness". Though, at this time, "the return-to-Africa" sentiment was a pan-continent feeling, the historical facts enunciated above explain why the Negritude movement was most prominent among the Franco-phone African writers. It is a kind of racial pride to counter the erstwhile assumed superiority of the whites. Therefore, Negritude can be described as an intellectual revolt against the enforced French assimilation policy and the promotion of the philosophy of blackness Principally, Negritude, as Senanu and Vincent (1076:23), observe, *aims among other things, to reassert and revive, through literature, the cultural values identity and authenticity of Africans and to extol the ancestral glories and the beauty of Africa partly through a renunciation of what is western and partly through a re-ordering of imagery* "(emphasis ours).

It was this attempt at a wholesale condemnation of the western values that accounted for the tendency for the negritude poets to over-romanticize the black culture. The hyperbolic terms in which Africa and everything African is described a consequence of this attempt at over glorification.

For example, Senghor sees the black woman as symbol of life and beauty in "Black woman"

Naked woman, black woman

Clothed with your colour which is life.

With your form which is beauty..!

In terms of imagery, African imageries come to replace foreign imageries in the works of negritude writers. This attempts at domesticating poeitic imageries is no doubt, a worthy

contribution of the negritude poets. In response to the negritudeists attempt at over glorification and uncritical projection of African value over the western values, many critic have reacted to the negritude philosophy. Some of these critics include according to Okunoye (1997:138), Jean Pual Sartre. Ezekiel Mphalele. Lewis Nkosi: Janheinz Jahn and Wole Soyinka. Wole Soyinka's major stricture against Negritude movement is summed up in the view that:

> Its poets perpetuate the European myths about African simplicity and hyper sexuality borrow their Manichean methodology from the Europeans are too self conscious**.** (Adekoya1997:149)

Above all, Soyinka feels that the "Tiger does not proclaim its Tigeritude" He does not see any reason for the pervasive nostalgia for the African past which runs through the poetic out-put of the Negritude writers. *In consequence of these strictures emerged a new sensibility still espousing the theme of African cultural worth but within the frame work of a global culture. This new sensibility is styled neo-negritude movement.* This successor to the old negritude movement emphasizes an objective assessment of the black culture and where it stands in relation to the pan-human culture.

The spate of criticisms to which the Negritude movement was subjected engendered a corresponding *liberalization of the negritude philosophy.* This ushered in a careful examination of the African values vis-à-vis the western culture. Thus, the combative –protestation noticed in the tone of the early negritudeist became mellowed down. albeit. The use of African imageries were still retained. Neo-negritude posturing in Okot p'Bitek's Song of Lawino.

The fire of cultural fervor among the negritude poets caught up with other African poets outside the Franco-phone block. Thus, the movement, which used to be solely identified with the French-speaking African writers won discipleship among Anglo-phone African writers. This is one of the central features of the neo-negritude period in the development of African poetry. Okot P'Bitek falls into this new set of neo-negritude writers.

Okot formally launched his neo-negritude mission with his long poem, *Song of Lawino* where the old themes of Negritude are emphasized. In the poem. Okot p'Bitek employs the tongue of Lawino to present and define the Acoli (by extension traditional African) values. The poem can be seen as a painstaking attempts at defining and projecting the African values within the dynamics of a global culture. As (cook,1984:43)puts it, the song is *"a constructive assertion of the rights and dignity of an on-going traditional society which should be considered on a par with its sophisticated modern counter parts"* (Our emphasis).

The point in emphasis here is that the traditional African culture is not a static unresponsive one totally impervious to changes and improvements in the face of changing socio-political realities of the dynamics world. Rather, it is a culture which is amenable to positive changes dictated by the dynamics of the pan-human universal culture. In essence, the song is not "a lament" but a "celebration" of an African (Acoli) culture. it is not a denigration of other people's culture but a call for mutual respect of all cultures. Lawiwo, the protagonist, confesses:

> I do not understand
>
> The ways of foreigners

But I do not despise their customs

Why should you despise yours?

(Song of Lawino p.41)

This liberal disposition to and appreciation of the white man's ways of life is further demonstrated in Lawino's comments about the clock:

I do not know

How to tell the time

Became I cannot read

The figures

To me the clock

Is a great source of pride

It is beautiful to see

And when the visitors come

They are highly impressed

(Song of Lawino.p.63)

The strongest point of OkotP'Bitek's neo-gegritude poetry is the ability of his poetic personal, Lawino, to confess her limited knowledge of the white man's culture and consciously makes herself a humorous subject in essence, she does not preach a wholesale rejection of the white-man's way rather, she advocates a symbiotic relationship between her Acoli and the western culture:

It is true

White man's medicines are strong

But Acoli medicines

Are also strong

(The song. P. 101)

No doubt, the song is a satiric piece, but it is a satire directed not at the white man's culture rather at the educated blacks represented by Ocol, who so unashamedly parrot the western bourgeois value and modes of life.

Lawino's anger stems from Ocol's attitudes, who after acquiring western education abandons his rural world for the urban artificiality which the western values have come to represent. His mistress, Clementine, the symbol of Ocol's new world distorts her figure, straightens her hair, reddens her lips, pads her breast-all in a feverish pursuit of the western ideal of beauty and accomplishment. Lawino denounces Ocol, ridicules the artificiality of his civilized ways, and proudly asserts the primacy and vibrancy of the peasant value which she captures in the imagery of the Pumpkin she queries: " *who has ever uprooted the Pumpkin?"* (P.34). Ina stout defense of the Acoli culture against the blind rampage of the western value: she declares:

> The Pumpkin in the old homestead
>
> Must not be uprooted

(p. 41

Through his poetic persona, Lawino, Okot p. Bitek comments on every aspect of life in the traditional setting, already being affected by western cultural intrusion. These aspects of life include dances, dresses, food, religion, education, medicine and politics. To each of these we now turn our attention to examine how they are treated within the neo-negritude construct already discussed.

On its facial value a less careful reader will see Lawino's comments about the white-man's dance represented by the "ball-room dance" as a condemnation. However, her confession that:,

> I am ignorant of the dance of foreigners
> And how they dress
> I do not know
> I only know the dance of our people

(Song of Lawino. P.42)

negates this view. Since dances are aspect of a people's culture. It is only reasonable for a person steeped in that culture to be at home with it. It is no crime not to know about the dance tradition of an alien culture. What is ridiculous is to seek to ape that tradition with which one is not at home. The manner of the ballroom dance insults her moral upbringing. She is therefore filled with revulsion with the manner in which people dance it. For example, the Africans dance outside in broad-day-light, while the class Ocol associates with dances in the darkness and at night dead drunk!. The Africans encourages dancers to hold to one another who may not be one's wife "tightly" she declares:

> I cannot dance the ballroom dance
> Being held so tightly
> I feel ashamed
> Being held so tightly in public
> I cannot do it
> It looks shameful to me!   (p.44)

In western dance, there is no respect for the elders and relatives as:

> Girls hold their fathers
> Boys hold their sister close
> They dance even with their mothers

(p.45)

The situation where these people dance is dirty and indecent. This sharply contrasts with the vibrant and lively African dance done not in the dark but openly.

One must note that Lawino does not reject the validity of the western culture what appalls her is the self hatred that makes Ocol totally reject and even consciously repudiate his root and the African peasant world. He and his likes even go further to uncritically accept the half-baked mannerisms of the European bourgeois.

Lawino could not understand how Ocol could have been so quickly torn from his roots as she retrospect's:

> But only recently
> We would sit close together/touching each other!
> Only recently I would play
> On my bow-harp
> Singing praises to my beloved:
> I used to admire him speaking
> In English

(p.36)

What is being described here is the entire alienating effect of western education. People are educated in order to help their communities and raise their cultural resources and not to form a screen between such communities and objective realities as shown in Ocol's attitudes and conducts.

It is in this regard that the song is viewed as a new mood informed by the desire to subject Africans to self-questioning and self-examination, to find out where the shoe pinches and not an unquestioning acceptance of other people's culture.

On the political plank, Lawino observes that the two warning political parties (Democratic Party and the Congress Party) controlled by the so-called African elites fundamentally represent the bourgeois class interests. She finds herself unable to wholly identify with either of them mainly because the don't represent her real interest and ideals.

> The parties only pay lip-service to unity but in reality:
> > The new parties have split
> > The homestead
> > As the battle axe splits the skull

(p. 104)

The division and suspicion which these elites have foisted on their people is demonstrated by the fierce enmity between Ocol and his brother.

Towards the end of the song, Lawino advises her husband to come back to his people so that he might be blessed and become a man again.

In Conclusion, Lawino personalizes the African values with its vibrant and healthy ethnics defined by the realities of African traditional existence while Clementine symbolizes the artificiality of the westernized African elites with all its attendant hollow pretensions. Ocol, the typical educated African denigrates his African past in an unrealistic attempt at announcing to the world that he is a "civilized" individual. This explains his open rejection of Lawino and opting for Clematina. Lawino, therefore is left with no option but to develop a passionate dislike for Ocol and his mistress, Clementine. Her ultimate goal is not to abuse these antagonists of hers just for the sake of abuse but to beat them back to their senses. In effect the song is not a criticism of the western values, but a call for self examination on those Africans who might have been caught

in the "*Ocol Afro-phobic complex*". This is the kernel of Okot p'Bitek's neo-negritude attitude examined in this paper.

Volume 1, Issue 3, December, 2014

References

-Adekoya, Olusegun (1997) " Soyinka's Poetics" in A.O. Dasylva and O.B.Jegede (eds) Poetry in English (Ibadan\:Sam Bookman)

-Cook, David (1989) "Song of Lawino: A celetration" in Ajadi, G.A. (ed) Ilorin Journal   of Language and Literature vol. 1 No. 2. (Ilorin)

-Department of modern European Languages, University Ilorin)

-Nwoga, Donatus e.d. (1986) *Western African Verse* (U.K: Longman Group Limited)

-Okunoye, Niyi (1997) "Negintinde poetry" in Dasy/va. A.O. and Jegede O.B.
(eds) *Poetry and English*(Ibadan: Sam Bookman)

-Rayi-Oyelade. Remi (1997) "African Amencan Poetry" in Desy/va A.O. and Jegede O.B. op. cit.

-Senanu .K.E. and Vincent. Theo (eds) (1976) Selection of African poetry (Ibadan: Longman Group)

Sustaining the Mutual Co-existence between Muslims and Christians through Interreligious Dialogue in Yoruba South Western Nigeria

Kamal-deen Olawale Sulaiman
Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria

Abstract

There will be no peace within the nation without peace and tolerance among the religions. This paper intends to investigate how to sustain the mutual co-existence between Muslims and Christians through inter-religious dialogue in Yorubaland of the South Western Nigeria. It also looks at the important of dialogue and cooperation, the various forms of dialogue and the scriptural teachings on dialogue between Muslims and Christians. The method of approach is purely from written sources which comprise documents, monographs, manuscripts, books, journals as well as magazines. The paper revealed that, there have not been religious clashes in Yorubaland. The paper recommended that, Government should create more job opportunities especially for the youths in educational institutions, ministries and other government parastatals so that jobless youths would not be employed as agents of religious clashes. Poverty alleviation programs should be followed strictly and payment of worker's salaries not compromised. The Nigerian inter-religious dialogue council should be established in all the elementary schools, secondary schools, tertiary institutions and Local Governments throughout the Country. Also, electronic media should be employed to educate people on the need to ensure peaceful co-existence among Christians and Muslims. In the same vein public worship should be done, bearing in mind that others also deserved their peace within the neighourhood. It is concluded that the effect of the peaceful co-existence of the adherents of the different religions in Yorubaland could be scored highly.

Key Words: tolerance, dialogue, cooperation, co-existence, inter-religions, peace

Introduction

Down the ages, people have professed the faiths of one of the world religions. However, in spite of the fact that all religions lead their adherents to the honour of the creator of all beings, it is sad today to see violence and conflicts in the world, attacks on the beautiful works of the creator by the human creatures. Today it is clear that, while no one disputes the fact that all religions preach peace, Nigeria, Africa, the Middle East, Europe, USA, the Balkans and Latin America societies have experienced violence and conflict with reverberating effects on human and material resources up to the 21[St] century more than peace. In all these societies, there is tremendous support for all the major religions. So if these societies have continued to experience violence and even genocide as the case of Rwanda, the former Yugoslavia and currently Darfur have revealed, then pertinent question such as these demand undivided attention by scholars: Is religion a source of conflict?[1] As a point of mobilization, has religion been used by fanatics and political bigots to promote conflict? Can religion be used violently to achieve political and social goals? Can one question the validity and legitimacy of the authorities of various religions including their strategies for propagating their central messages?

However, in the face of the different negative news about organized armed violence associated with the adherents of the world religions in the different parts of the world and Nigeria in particular, the story is different in Yorubaland. In Yorubaland, which is made up of a homogenous community of Yoruba people inhabiting the south-western part of Nigeria, Muslims and Christians have co-existed peacefully for many years more than in any part of Nigeria. As one appreciates the mutual co-existence between Muslims and Christians in Yorubaland, it is good to examine some ways by which the mutual coexistence could be sustained. Hence, the aim of this work is to propose that interreligious dialogue as an effective way by which the mutual co-existence between Muslims and Christians in Yorubaland could be sustained.

What is Dialogue

Dialogue, sometimes spelled dialog in American English[2] is a literary and theatrical form consisting of a written or spoken conversational exchange between two or more people[3]. Also, dialogue is a special kind of discourse that enables people with different perspectives and worldviews to work together, to dispel mistrust and create a climate of good faith, break through negative stereotypes, shift the focus from transactions to relationships and create peaceful community. It also makes participants more sympathetic to one another even when they disagree, prepare the ground for negotiation or decision making on emotion-laden issues and increase the number of people committed to decisions on challenging issues. To explain dialogue we contrast it with debate, a more common form of discourse. Both are essential in decision-making, but they have different purposes. Debate is about winning; dialogue is about learning[4].

Therefore, dialogue as an act is a two-way communication between two or more people, which requires speaking and listening. It is an act of exchange of ideas whereby the participants contribute on equal terms to the discussion. It is expected that the subject matter to be discussed will not be foreign to the discussants and the discussants are expected to approach the subject matter from their different points of view. Dialogue gives the participants the opportunity to

express their positions in an atmosphere of sincerity, objectivity, freedom and mutual respect. It is expected that none of the discussants will impose his/her views on others; rather, the discussion should lead to a point where they would agree on a consensus conclusion[5].

Listening to others when they speak is an important virtue to be cultivated among the participants in dialogue. This is because many people today are not very patient to listen to others when they are speaking. Many are mainly interested in seeing others listen to them but without listening to others. The desire to listen to others is a pointer to the fact that the discussants appreciate others and have the conviction that others have important ideas to offer. Thus an individual who wants to be listened to and does not want to listen to the others cannot be good in dialogue. Dialogue also involves asking questions for clarifications and for better understanding of others. Others are also expected to offer sincere answers to the questions asked[6].

Dialogue is also a reciprocal communication, mutual friendship and respect, as well as joint effort for the sake of shared goals, all in the service of a common search for truth and in the context of religious pluralism, as a complex of human activities, all founded upon respect and esteem for people of different religions. Dialogue does not originate from tactical concerns or self-interest, but it is an activity with its own guiding principles, requirements and dignity. Dialogue does not grow out of the opportunism of the tactics of the moment, but arises from reasons which experience and reflection, and even the difficulties themselves, have deepened. Dialogue is a path worthy of the human person. It is a means by which people discover one another and discover the hopes and peaceful aspirations that too often lie hidden in their hearts. It is a central and essential element of ethical thinking among people, and an indispensable tool for the recognition of the truth. The path of dialogue makes it possible to achieve the peace so longed for, which is the foundation of fruitful coexistence among people it excludes all kinds of violence, and helps to build a more human future with the cooperation of all, thus avoiding a radical impoverishment of society[7].

Down the ages, different disciplines have employed dialogue as a way of explaining the contents of their disciplines to all who are outside the disciplines. For example, the ancient Greeks employed dialogue as a tool for the teaching of philosophy. Socrates the great Greek philosopher through dialogue (dialectics) was able to pass on the philosophical heritage to the youths. Plato also presented his great works in forms of dialogues. Dialogue is also employed in the drama to present difficult and abstract ideas in a way that will be intelligible to the minds.

Dialogue as an act could be employed in different ways,
1. At a purely human level, it means reciprocal communication, leading to a common goal or, at a deeper level, to interpersonal communion.
2. Dialogue can be taken as an attitude of respect and friendship, which should permeate all those activities constituting the evangelizing mission. This can appropriately be called "the spirit of dialogue".
3.   In the context of religious plurality, dialogue means all positive and constructive inter-religious relations with individuals and communities of other faiths which are directed at mutual

understanding and enrichment in obedience to truth and respect for freedom. It includes both witness and the exploration of respective religious convictions. It is in this third sense that the term dialogue [denotes] for one of the integral elements of the evangelizing mission, [inter-religious dialogue].[8]

Inter-religious Dialogue

Inter-religious dialogue is a challenging process by which adherents of differing religious traditions encounter each other in order to break down the walls of division that stand at the center of most wars[9]. The objective of inter-religious dialogue is peace. Inter-religious dialogue can also be defined as a forum purposefully created to generate contacts, discussion and interaction between two (or more) different religious groups with a view to bringing about an atmosphere of peaceful co-existence. Inter-religious dialogue should not aim at obliterating the identity of participating religious group. Rather, its objective should be to discuss and reason together through aspects of problems that poses a threat to the peaceful co-existence between religious groups[9].

Inter-religious dialogue is thus a gathering of adherents of the different religions in an open and free forum. The forum provides very conducive environment whereby the adherents could listen to one another, to understand the religions of others and to seek out consensus agreement of difficult issues in their co-existence. It presupposes that the person coming to dialogue has a better understanding of his faith and ready to learn about the faith of the others in dialogue. It involves the establishment of strong relationship and building of trust and confidence among the participants. This requires a growing respect for the others in dialogue and a better readiness to understand the religious tradition of others in dialogue. It requires acknowledgements of others as creatures of God and readiness to establish a better relationship with God through others[10].

Inter-religious dialogue should not be understood as the study of the different religions of the world as in the discipline called Comparative Religion. In the same vein, debates between the adherents of the different religions even in a most friendly atmosphere is not inter-religious dialogue since the partners are out to argue to justify their different positions and to prove that one religion is better than others. Inter-religious dialogue is contained to all activities between the different religions of the world: Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, African Traditional Religion etc. The aim of the activities is not to work towards the unity of all religions in a form of syncretism or super-religion. It is not also an avenue to engage in the conversion of the adherents of other religions to one's own religion[11]. It is good now to examine the various forms of dialogue.

Why Dialogue and Cooperation between Muslims and Christians is Important

There are two quotations that highlight the urgency and need for Muslims and Christians to cooperate. The first is taken from an address made by Pope Benedict XVI to Ambassadors from Muslim countries in 2006 in which he said:

> Inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue between Christians and Muslims cannot be reduced to an optional extra. It is, in fact, a vital necessity, on which in large measure our future depends[12].

The second quotation is from a letter signed by 137 Muslim Scholars and Leaders from across the Muslim world and sent to Christian leaders in 2007. It says:

> Muslims and Christians together make up over half the world's population. Without peace and justice between these two religious communities, there can be no meaningful peace in the world. The future of the world depends on peace between Muslims and Christians[13].

These statements highlight the urgent need for Muslims and Christians to address the polarization that is growing between them. This has been fuelled by wars, persecution, injustices and by individuals and groups stirring up religious divisions to achieve political or material gain. Dialogue between Muslims and Christians is needed now more than ever before to address the issues causing this growing division. The fact that Muslims and Christians make up over 50% of the world's population makes dialogue and cooperation imperative[14].

Various Forms of Dialogue

There are different forms or ways by which inter-religious dialogue could be understood or practiced among the adherents of the world religions. They are dialogue of life, action, theological exchange and religious experience. The different forms of dialogue could be understood as presented below.

Dialogue of Life

In the dialogue of life," people strive to live in an open and neighbourly spirit, sharing their joys and sorrows, their human problems and preoccupations."[8] The practice of the dialogue of life could be understood in the sense that in Yorubaland today, Christians and Muslims live together in the same house without any frictions. In many cases, they share the same toilet, bathroom, kitchen and go to the same farmlands without problems. Sometimes they participate in each other's feasts and festivals through sharing of meals and drinks even though they rarely attend the places of worship different from their own during these festivals. They are fans of the same football clubs and social organizations. The adherents of the two religions go to the same markets to `shop'. Christians purchase goods produced by the Muslims without discrimination. In the same vein, the Muslims feed on the products on sale in the markets by Christians. Muslims also do not see the need not to buy goods from Christians even when some Christians who belong to the white garments Churches like Cherubim and Seraphim or

Celestial Church of Christ come to the markets to sell their garments. Muslims and Christians are happily married in Yorubaland and in some of these marriages the parties retain their religions before marriage in their marital life.

Dialogue of Action

In the dialogue of action Christians and Muslims collaborate for the integral development and liberation of people.[9] Christians and Muslims engage in the dialogue of action in some joints projects for the good of the community without discrimination. Some of these projects include the clearing of bushy areas within their neighourhood, joint efforts against thieves or intruders, constructions of bridges for the good of the community. They belong to the same political parties and become running mates while contesting for different political offices.

Dialogue of Theological Exchange

Dialogue of theological exchange provides forum where specialists seek to deepen their understanding of their respective religious heritages and to appreciate each other's spiritual values[15]. The Nigeria Inter-religious Dialogue Council had in the past provided avenues whereby the Muslims and Christians came together to reflect on common themes in both religions. This forum provided great opportunities for the Muslims and the Christians to learn about each other's religions. The dialogue is not about finding what is acceptable to both religions or to point out where a religion is better than others, it is all about efforts at presenting the doctrines and practices of other religions in a sincere way as it is understood and practiced by the adherents of the religion[16]. It is expected that participants in this dialogue will put aside their preconceived notion of the religion being presented and learn the religions without imposing their negative or positive biases.

Dialogue of Religious Experience

The dialogue of religious experience gives opportunity for persons, rooted in their own religious traditions, to share their spiritual riches, for instance with regard to prayer and contemplation, faith and ways of searching for God or the Absolute[17]. In Yorubaland, there have been many instances whereby Christians joined the Muslims for ceremonies like weddings, naming ceremonies etc and the Muslims joined the Christians in their Churches for the same ceremonies. However, Muslims and Christians rarely engage in dialogue of religious experience with the adherents of African Traditional Religion.

It should be pointed out that the different forms of dialogue are interrelated. For instance, the exercise of the dialogue of life cannot be understood without the dialogue of action since both are the daily experiences of the adherents of the different religions. Again, even though dialogue of theological exchange is for specialists who have better understanding of their various religions, it cannot be denied that in informal settings, the adherents of the different religions asks questions about the beliefs of the religions of the other. In the same vein, the dialogue of religious experiences is a common occurrence between the Muslims and Christians in Yorubaland save for the African Traditional Religion.

The Muslims encourages dialogue with other Religions

The literal meaning of Islam, derived from the Arabic word *Salaam*, means peace. The word "Islam" has another root derivation *Slim* which means surrender or submission. In short, Islam means peace acquired by humans by submitting their will to the Will of Allah.

Moreover, Islam not only fosters love between fellow <u>Muslims</u>; rather it is a mercy for all of humankind. The "peace" of Islam has got many dimensions: peace with Allah, peace with society and peace with all of mankind irrespective of caste, creed and religion. Islam guides people to the path of non-violence and tolerance and shows the path of righteousness and piety[18].

It is enshrined in the Holy Qur'an that there is no compulsion in Islam. Muslims are prohibited to force people of other faiths to accept Islam. There is no tolerance for one who forces another person to submit to his/ her will and convert to the religion unwillingly. Allah says:

> "Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from
> Error: whoever rejects evil and believes in Allah has grasped the most
> trustworthy hand-hold that never breaks. And Allah hears and knows all
> things. " (Qur'an 2:256)

This is the foundation for tolerance towards any and every religion and their people. There is no force and no compulsion on any individual to accept Islam. If he or she wants to accept Islam, it has to be necessarily out of their own free will and not at the point of sword. This is the essence of Islam. Islam is an open invitation to mankind and they have the full right either to accept it or to reject it. One interesting way of understanding the Islamic view on freedom of religion is to look at the role of Prophet Muhammad. Once the people of Mecca said to Prophet Muhammad that if God did not want them to worship idols then why does he not forcefully prevent them from doing so?. Then God sent the following message:

> "(O Muhammad) This is not a new excuse; those who weft before, them made, the
> same excuses. Is there anything upon the messengers except the dear conveying of
> the message" (Qur'an 16: 35).

So one can see that from the Qur'anic point of view, the mission of the prophets and messengers of God was not to forcefully impose their teachings on the people but to guide them and ask them to accept God with their own will. In another revelation, God says to Prophet Muhammad:

> "But if the people turn away (then do not be sad because) We did not sent you to be a
> guardian over them. It is for you only to deliver the message." (Qur'an 42:43).

The Qur'an clearly says that religion cannot be forced on anyone. It says, "There is no compulsion in (accepting) the religion (of Islam)…"

The Prophet of Islam faced much difficulty and opposition in his own birth- place, the city of Mecca. He was eventually forced to migrate to Medina. But in spite of all the opposition and physical torture that his followers suffered in Mecca, Prophet Muhammad always approached the unbelievers of Mecca with tolerance. At one stage of his mission, the Prophet read to them a short chapter from the revelation:

> "O you who do not believe! I worship not what you worship, and you are not worshipping what I worship; or am 1 worshipping what you worship; neither -art you worshipping what I worship. Therefore, to you is your religion; and to me my religion!" (Qur'an, 109: 1-)

When Prophet Muhammad migrated to Medina, he found that besides those who had accepted Islam, there was a large Jewish community in that, city but this did not bother him He did not contemplate on forcing them into the fold of Islam, instead, he made a peace agreement with them and called them *ahlul kitab,* the people of the Scripture. This was indeed the supreme example of tolerance shown towards the followers of other religions. The peace agreement between the Prophet and the Jews of Medina dearly guaranteed the physical safety and security of the Jewish community and also the freedom to practise their religion freely as long that community also abided in the terms of the treaty[19].

So, one can see that even historically, the Prophet of Islam was prepared to live in peace with the followers of other monotheistic religions, especially Judaism and Christianity. Even the letters that the Prophet wrote to the rulers of various countries and nations around Arabia are interesting documents for discussion. In none of the letters does the Prophet threaten them of a military aggression if they did not accept the message of Islam. The letter to the Christian King of Abyssinia ends with the words: "I have conveyed the message and now it is up to you to accept it. Once again, peace be upon him who follows the true guidance."

There is an interesting historical document from fourth Imam, 'Ali Zaynul Abidin (A.S,). This document is entitled as *Risalatu 'l huquq* which means "The Charter of Rights"[20]. In this *Risalah*, the Imam has mentioned rights related to various issues and people in human society, the last part is on the rights of non-Muslims in a Muslim society. Among other things, it says:

> "And there must be a barrier keeping you from doing any injustice to them, from depriving them of the protection provided by God, and from flaunting the commitments of God and His Messenger concerning them. Because we have been told that the Holy Prophet said, "Whosoever does injustice to a protected non-Muslim, then I will be his enemy (on the Day of Judgement),"

In a letter which Imam 'Ali wrote to his Governor in Egypt, he says,

> "Sensitive your heart to mercy for the subjects and to affection and kindness for them. Do not stand over them like greedy beasts who feel it is enough to devour them, for they are of two kinds; either your brother in faith or like you in Creation." [21]

From the foregoing, it is shown that, Islam, both in theory and practice, does not preach intolerance. Instead, it enjoins its adherents not only to be tolerant but also to respect and appreciate the point of view of others. We shall now have a cursory look at the Christianity on tolerance to see it's compatible to Islam.

The Christians Encourages Dialogue with Other Religions

There is example of Jesus, (John 13: 13) and at the same time is meek and humble of heart (Matthew 11: 29), acting patiently in attracting and inviting his disciples (Matthew 11: 28-30; John 6: 67-8). He supported and confirmed his preaching by miracles to arouse the faith of his hearers and give them assurance, but not to coerce them (Matthew 9: 28-29; Mark 9: 23-24; 6: 5-6). He indeed denounced the disbelief of his listeners but left vengeance to God until the Day of Judgment (Matthew 11: 20-24; Romans 12: 19-20; 2 Thessalonians 1: 8). When he sent His disciples into the world he said to them: "He who believes and is baptised will be saved; he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mark, 16:16): He himself recognised that weeds had been sown through the wheat but ordered that both be allowed to grow until the harvest which will come at the end of the world (Matthew 13: 30, 40-42). He did not wish to be a political Messiah who would dominate by force (Matthew 4: 8-10; John 6: 15) but preferred to call himself the Son of Man who came to serve and "to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10: 45). He showed himself as the perfect Servant of God (Isaiah 42: 1- 4) who "will not break a bruised reed or quench a smouldering wick" (Matthew 12: 20). He recognised civil authority and its rights when he ordered tribute to be paid to Caesar,[22] but he gave clear warning that the higher rights of God must be respected: "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God, the things that are God's" (Matthew 22: 21).

Also, he brought his revelation to perfection when he accomplished on the cross the work of redemption by which he achieved salvation and true freedom for men. He bore witness to the truth (John 18: 37) but refused to use force to impose it on those who spoke out against it. His kingdom does not make its claims by blows (Matthew 26: 51-53; Jude 18. 36), but is established by bearing, witness to and hearing the truth and grows by the love with which Christ, lifted up on the cross, draws men to himself (John 12: 32).

Taught by Christ's word and example, the apostles followed the same path[23]. From the very beginnings of the Church the disciples of Christ strove to convert men to confess Christ as Lord, not however by applying coercion or with the use of techniques unworthy of the Gospel but by the power of the word of God (I Corinthians 2: 3-5; I Thessalonians, 2: 3-5). They steadfastly proclaimed to all men the plan of God the Saviour, "who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (I Timothy 2: 4). At the same time, however, they showed respect for the weak even though they were in error, and in this way made it clear how "each of us shall give account of himself to God" (Romans 14:12; I Corinthians. 8: 9-13;10: 23-33) and for this reason is bound to obey his conscience[24]. Like Christ, the apostles were constantly bent on bearing witness to the truth of God and they showed the greatest courage in speaking "the word of God with boldness" (Acts 4: 31; Ephesians. 6: 19- 20) before people and rulers. With a firm faith they upheld the truth that the Gospel itself is the power of God for the salvation of all who believe (Romans16). They therefore despised "all worldly weapons" (2

Corinthians. 10: 4; I Thessalonians, 5: 8-9) and followed the example of Christ's meekness and gentleness as they preached the word of God with full confidence in the divine power of that word to destroy those forces hostile to God (Ephesians, 6:1117) and led men to believe in and serve Christ (2 Corinthians 10: 3-5). Like their Master, the apostles recognised legitimate civil authority: "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities . . . he who resists the authorities resists what God has appointed" (Romans 13: 1-2; 1 Peter 2: 13-17). At the same time they were not afraid to speak out against public authority when it opposed God's holy will: "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5⁻29, 4. 19-20).

Some Proposals for the Sustenance of Peaceful Co-Existence between Muslims and Christians in Yorubaland

With the background understanding in inter-religious dialogue, the forms of Inter-religious dialogue, it is good to locate the contexts whereby the acts of inter-religious dialogue could serve as a paradigm for the sustenance of the mutual co-existence between people of the different faiths in Yorubaland. Hence, it is good to propose the following as some of the steps that could help to sustain the peaceful co-existence among people of faiths. It is expected that the Inter-religious Dialogue bodies will also reflect on the proposals as parts of the steps that could help to sustain peaceful co-existence between their members.

Religious Leaders in Yorubaland Must be United

It is a known fact that the Nigeria Inter-religious Dialogue Council (NIREC) has been a body for the meeting/dialogue for the adherents of the different religions. In the words of John Cardinal Olorunfemi Onaiyekan, the former National Co Chairman of Nigeria Inter-religious Council, "...the main structure for Nigerian Inter-religious Council (NIREC) is formed by the initiative of the leadership of Christian and Muslim communities in Nigeria during the Presidency of former President Olusegun Obasanjo in 1999 as a forum for high-level dialogue between the leaders of Christians and Muslims in Nigeria while the different States of the Federation were commissioned to establish it in the 36 States of the federation."[25] Hence within the provisions of the Nigeria government concerning religious matters, the Nigeria Inter-religious Dialogue Council is the platform for the harmonization/utilization of structures for peaceful co-existence among people of faiths in Nigeria. This is because the leaders of the different religions have recognised the body as an avenue for heart to heart discussion on how to live together.

It is important to point out that before Yorubaland could guarantee the mutual co-existence among the Muslims and Christians, the religious leaders in Yorubaland must be united under the Nigeria Inter-religious Dialogue Council. This unity entails that the members should be reconciled among themselves. This is because as leaders of different religious traditions, they cannot preach reconciliation to others if they are not personally reconciled within themselves and with one another. The people of the world look up to them as people of faith bringing peace and hope. Their meetings strengthen bridges between religions. They also need now to promote healing and reconciliation in their own communities and in their wounded world. As religious leaders, they should set a good example as reconcilers[26].

The Traditional Home Training on Human Dignity and Sacredness of Blood Must be Revived as Part of Lessons at Home and Schools

For sustain a peaceful atmosphere in Yorubaland, there is need to bring to birth in homes and schools the traditional teaching that people have all taught their children down the ages that all men are endowed with a rational soul and are created in God's image, they have the same nature and origin[27]. It is also good to re-activate the reverence that was accorded to human blood which makes it a sacred object that should not be wasted. This teaching will help all to realize that human life should be treated with all dignity and should not be terminated by anybody for selfish reasons.

Education on the Constitutional Provisions on Freedom of Religion Should be an Important Aspect of Civic Education from Elementary Schools to Tertiary Institutions

Respecting the rights of others on the choice of religion is very important for the peace of any society. The natural law confers some rights on every human being. One of these rights is the right to freedom to practise the religion of one's choice. The fundamental human rights of all Nigerian treated in details in Section 38 (1) of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended has been able to put this better. The constitution says that "every person shall be entitled to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, including freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom (either alone or in community with others, and in public or in private) to manifest and propagate his religion or belief in worship, teaching, practice and observance"[28]

The Use of Dialogue of Theological Exchange

One of the causes of tension between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria is that the adherents of both religions lack the basic knowledge of each other's faith. As a result of this there is the fear of the other religion. It is good that dialogue of theological exchange should be organised in the different educational institutions as part of the extra curriculum activities. For example, the pupils should be made to know what the Qur'an is to the Muslims and the Bible to the Christians. It needs to be pointed out that a proper handling of the revealed books of the two religions is an important fact in sustaining peace between the adherents of both religions. The Muslims will not be happy to see that pages of the Qur'an are used as wraps in the market. So also the Christians will not be happy to see that the Bible is not treated with respect.

In the same vein, the person of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and Jesus Christ should be made clear to the pupils. Using of foul language to describe the founders of Christianity and Islam has been a source of clashes. For instance a wrong portrayal of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) that came out of the Danish Newspaper, Jyllands -Posten and republished in European media and in different parts of the world in September, 2006 led to protests from different Muslim communities in the different parts of the world including Maiduguri and Bauchi where Christians were targeted and 18 people were killed[29]. In the same vein, another negative presentation of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) during the Miss World beauty pageant in Lagos, Nigeria led to riots

which lasted for days in Nigeria even when the Miss World pageant had been relocated to London. Many other factors also bring clashes, such as ignorance, sentiments, emotions of worshippers and fanaticism.

Other central themes of the Christian and Islamic faiths should be made known to the pupils. It is good to educate the Christians to learn and accept to see the doctrinal and theological teachings of the Muslims as the Muslims understand it and vice versa. A prejudicial teaching of a religion by a non-believer of the religion could be a source of cold wars that could blow out of proportion in the nearest future. It should also be suggested that excursion to Mosque for Christians and excursion for Muslims to Churches will be of advantage. In all, we are called as Christians and Muslims to know and respect the religious convictions of the other, to discover that which unites us and what makes us different. Knowing and respecting these convictions does not necessarily imply sharing them. To be able to speak about them objectively and with respect forms part of the way we should behave as persons of belief.[30]

Examination of Political Factors that Could Lead to Conflicts among People of Faiths in Ekitiland

There is the need to implore the politicians in Yorubaland not to drag the Muslims and Christians into cold wars in their political campaigns. This is because it is possible for a Christian politician to sensitize the populace on the need to have a Christian to occupy a particular office that has always been occupied by the Muslims and vice versa. It is good to encourage the politicians to avoid using religions as a tool to achieve their political ambitions. The adherents of the religions should also be made to understand that the politicians could use them for their selfish gains. There is also the need to ensure that external influence should not be allowed to disrupt the peaceful co-existence in Yorubaland.

Media Reports on Religious People

The Media have been an important aspect of a society down the ages. In the contemporary world, many see the events on the media as the ideal practices and behaviours and the information on the media to be the only truth. In the same vein, many Journalists have, in one way or the other, in the past been sources of unity and conflicts in the different parts of the world. It is good to point out that Media reporting of religious events should be positive. Trained Journalists in religious reporting should be made to handle religious events in the State. Journalists should avoid any reports that could cause tensions between the Muslims and Christians. Information on the activities of the adherents of both religions should be confirmed and discussed before it is aired on the Television and Radio stations.

Concerning religious affairs in Nigeria, it may be necessary to redefine the role of the Mass media practitioners, particularly in terms of what events they will find newsworthy. Experience has shown that the Mass media reports, news analysis and features are capable of playing a positive or negative role in the relationship between Muslims and Christians depending on the intention and orientation of the journalist concerned. More often than not, the reactions of the Muslims to Christian's actions or vice-versa are determined by the Mass media reports[31].

In the same vein, during the Second Republic in Nigeria (1979-83) a press report stormed the whole nation like thunderbolt. It was alleged that the Muslims had been given ten million Naira, (N 10, 000,000), by the then Federal Government, to build a central mosque in Abuja, the new Federal Capital. The gesture was considered a favour to the Muslims and contempt for, or neglect of, the Christians. The tension created by the report was better imagined. Even the prompt intervention of the government to explain the matter could not help the situation. The truth of the matter, as given by a prominent member of the ruling party who incidentally was a Christian, was that both Muslim and Christian groups were given ten million naira each to build a mosque and a church respectively in the new Federal Capital. The circumstances that led to the speculation arose when the Muslims started their mosque project in earnest. They had mobilized their resources to contribute more money sufficient to build a mosque to their taste. About the Christian Church, information gathered indicates that the Christians had to hold prolonged deliberations to resolve some nagging problems. First would it be possible for them to build a united church where all naira given to them had to be shared, among how many denominations? These and related questions could not be resolved easily and no project could take off. The Muslims were not faced with any problem of the nature[32].

Archbishop Ignatius Kaigama, the Catholic Archbishop of Jos Archdiocese commenting on the religious crises in places like Bauchi town, Kotongora, Tafawa Balewa in Bauchi State, Kaduna, Maiduguri and of recent Jos in Plateau State states that

> Most of these crises have largely received unfair and biased media coverage that has always aggravated the crises in the country. International media houses like the V.O.A, Deulche Welle, French Overseas Service, and BBC among others, in collaboration with their Hausa/Fulani employees broadcast biased news in the Hausa service to the disadvantage of Christians who do not have the same access to these media houses. Fresh in our memories is the recent political crises in Jos which degenerated to a religious conflict[33].

Examination of the Place of Illiteracy on Peaceful Coexistence among People of Faiths

Mass illiteracy in Yorubaland could lead to the breeding of agents that could disrupt the peaceful co-existence between the adherents of the various religions in Yorubaland. It is good then, that efforts should be geared toward seeing that many children are given the opportunity to embrace formal education at least to the secondary school level. Afterwards those who would like to further the education to the tertiary level could continue and those who do not want could learn a trade. For example,

> Malam Yusuf [the acclaimed founder of Boko Haram] may have had a dim view of Western education, in preference for Arabic education... The truth is that for members of the Boko Haram sect, it is not a question of whether they like Western education but whether they have access to it, even if they liked it. Many of us have always wondered how, in spite of all the privileges that Northern Nigeria has enjoyed at the expense of the rest of us in the past 50 years or so, a state like Delta would still boast more JME (sic) candidates than those of the entire seven states in the Northwest put together. Or is it not embarrassing that JME (sic) candidates from the five states of Imo, Delta, Ekiti, Ondo and Anambra put together far outnumbered those from the

entire 19 northern states put together?. It is in the nature of man that what he cannot have he often discredits or even tries to destroy. But if you ask me, I would even say that the Boko Haram laggards were not actually rebelling against Western influence in their lives as much as they were rebelling against the system that made it difficult for them to have access to the opportunities for a better life inherent in Western education, a system that drove them to the periphery of life while a few of their compatriots, sometimes even from the same neighbourhood lived in unimaginable privilege[34].

Attention on Eradication of Poverty as a Determinant Factor for Peace in the Land

Poverty is another important factor to be tackled by the government in order for us to continue to enjoy a peaceful atmosphere in Yorubaland. *Boko Haram* incident was not so much about religion as it was about a disenchanted, disinherited people deciding to vent their anger and frustration, in a very violent way, against the rest of society. Boko Haram is, thus a metaphor for poverty. Just take a casual look at the states where the sect is said to be active and one will find that some of them are among the states with the worst poverty rates in the country. People with little or nothing to live for, who have no hope for, or faith in, a better tomorrow, who feel short changed by life, are almost always likely to offer themselves for use for nefarious purposes by persons who often masquerade as religious men but who only hide under religion to exploit others' weaknesses for personal aggrandizement. The young men and women in Boko Haram in Borno, Yobe, Bauchi, Gombe, Niger and Kano States who confess their hate of Western education and way of life generally, and say that they have a mission to Islamize Nigeria, fall under such group of low-lifers ever ready to do the bidding of any person who comes with a promise of heavenly rewards for religious piety; however illusory since they know no better[35].

To buttress this fact better, going through their photographs, it was obvious that most of the people who [have been fighting] the police and army for Boko Haram and got killed [are] the lowliest of the northern poor [as at now], a media tour of some six northern states, organized by UNICEF Nigeria Office [shows] that in peace-time, [in] oil rich Nigeria, malnutrition is ravaging children in six northern states of Kebbi, Sokoto, Katsina, Kano, Adamawa and Gombe![36]

It is acknowledge that some efforts have been put in place to see that some of the Yoruba indigenes are gainfully employed. However, even though, it is impossible for any governments to employ all her citizens more efforts should be put in place to ensure that those who cannot embrace studies in tertiary institutions are provided with the means of fishing for themselves in the rivers of life. The religious bodies could be employed to offer initiative on how this could be achieved.

Strong Security System in the State

The ineffectiveness of the security system should be another major fact to be examined in Yorubaland. This had provided some individuals with the liberty to take laws into their hands. For example, no one knows what the security personnel in Yoruba have been doing to

avoid an influx of *Boko Haram* members. Therefore, there should be peace meetings with the indigenes of Northern Nigeria, most especially North-eastern Nigeria in Yoruba on the need for them to be aware that their business and religious practices would be guaranteed in the Yorubaland in so far as there is no importation of violent activities from their members to Yorubaland. There is also the need for adequate surveillance of some of the *sabo* in the different parts of Yorubaland so that people may not be biting their fingers when the worst has been done in Yorubaland.

Proper Interpretations of Biblical and Qur'anic Provisions

It is a known fact that the two revealed books have provisions for those who have not embraced the faith. Appeal should be made to the religious leaders to ensure that the interpretations of the Holy books of both religions will not make their adherents to go out on verbal or physical attacks on the adherents of the other religions. The interpretations of the Holy Qur'an and the Bible by the different religious leaders should be done with the mind that all people need to sustain the peaceful co-existence of the people of Yorubaland.

Traditional Festivals Should be Limited to the Shrines

It has been noted earlier on that the activities of the Nigeria Interreligious Dialogue Council has been limited to the Muslims and Christians in Yorubaland. It is good to find ways of dialoguing with the adherents of African Traditional Religion through the traditional rulers who are close to them. This is because, in the past it has been noted that in some towns, festivals of the adherents of African Traditional Religion affect the whole town especially in cases, where a dust to dawn curfew is imposed on the whole town. It is good to propose that traditional festivals should be limited to a close area of the town. The idea of imposing a dust to dawn curfew on a particular town is not the best. This is because there are Christians, Muslims and free thinkers in the different towns who may not want to be disturbed. Hence, these ceremonies should be done in such a way that there will be free movements of vehicles for travelers who may want to pass through such towns and who may not be aware of the events. Such events should be limited to the shrines and worshippers and tourists who are interested in the ceremonies could be part of the ceremonies without any disturbances.

Yorubaland Has a Lesson to Teach the Whole World

As it has been noted in Yorubaland, Muslims, Christians and adherents of African Traditional Religion have been co-existed peacefully for many years more than in any part of Nigeria. This is evidence from the word of Fr Louis Taiwo Omojola: As a child in our family, I grew up with the fact that My Uncle, a Muslim was responsible for the slaughtering of our Easter and Christmas goats. He was expected to partake in the meat. In the same vein, he would not celebrate any of the Muslims festivals without giving us some gifts in cash and kind as a way of celebrating with him. My father had done this in order to see that our religious differences within the extended families did not bring division in the large family since my uncle would not participate in the meat if a Christian had killed it[37].

As a result of this, it is worth saying that Christians, Muslims and adherents of African Traditional Religions should find ways to continue to maintain this relationship. They should continue to teach the world that they can live in peace in the land in spite of their religious differences and thereby offering the world their communitarian living. Everybody must acknowledge that they inherit this from African Traditional Religion since the devotees of the different part of Yorubaland were able to live together and even participate in each other's festivals in the past.

Conclusion

There have not been religious clashes in Yorubaland, thus the effect of the peaceful co-existence of the adherents of the three religions in Yorubaland could be scored high. Nevertheless, Government should create more job opportunities especially for the youths in educational institutions, ministries and other government parastatals so that jobless youths would not be employed as agents of religious clashes. Poverty alleviation programs should be followed strictly and payment of worker's salaries not compromised. Government policies on religious matter should be communicated in a language that will be clear to Nigerians.

The Mass Media is capable of reaching and influencing not only individuals but also whole masses of people and indeed, the whole of humanity; it is good that the tools of the print and electronic media should be employed to educate Ekiti indigenes on the need to ensure peaceful co-existence among Christians, Muslims and adherents of African Traditional Religion in Ekiti. For example, radio programmes; news, documentation programme, interview programme, talk programme, commentaries and features, radio-drama, the magazine programme, music radio and commercials are avenues to educate the Ekiti people on the fact that there is evil in violent activities, and that presentation of religious faith should be done in a convincing manner and not through violence. In the same vein public worship should be done with the intention that others also deserved their peace within this neighourhood.

The Nigerian inter-religious dialogue council should be established in all the elementary schools, secondary schools, tertiary institutions and Local Governments throughout the Country. This will provide a stable environment where the aggrieved member of any religion could present his/her grievances to the council and members from the different religions could look into the issues.

Notes and References

1   M. O. Moses, *Religion, Violence and Conflict Resolution* in Cyril Obanure, (ed), Religion, Violence and Conflict Resolution in Nigeria. Proceedings of 22nd Conference of the Catholic Theological Association of Nigeria, (CATHAN), Makurdi: Aboki Publishers, 2008. pp. 7-8

2   F. Arinze, *Meeting Other Believers,* Kenya: Paulines Publications Africa, 1997. p.10

3   http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dialogue, [accessed on 10th May, 2014], See also, S. K. Uzoukwu, *Peace through Dialogue and Solidarity. The Basis* of *True Humanism,* Enugu: Snaap Press, 2004, pp. 144-145.

4   http://www.viewpointlearning.com/about-us/what-is-dialogue/, [accessed on 10th May, 2014], See also, The Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue, *Dialogue and Proclamation: Reflection and Orientations on Inter-religious Dialogue and the Proclamation* of *the Gospel* of *Jesus Christ,* no. 9 in Francesco Gioia, Inter-religious Dialogue, The Official Teaching of the Church from the Second Vatican Council to John Paul 11, *(1963-2005).* Boston: Paulinc Books and Media, 2006, p.1160

5   M.A. Bidmos, *Inter-Religious Dialogue,* Abuja: Panaf Publishing Inc, 2006, p. 5

6   N.Y.S. Ijaiya, "Promoting Peace Culture in Nigeria through Education", *Journal of Women in Colleges of Education (JOWICE) Vol. 9,* Lagos: Association of Women in Colleges of Education (WICE), 2005, p.32

7   John Paul II's 1990 address the leaders of other confessions and religions in Dar-es-Salaam:http://www.vatican.va/holyfather/johnpaulii/speeches/1990/september/documents /hfjp-iispe19900902msimbazi-centreen.html, John Paul II's 1990 encyclical Redemptoris Missio, no. 56 http://www.vatican.va/holyfather/johnpaulii/encyclicals/ documents/hfjp-iienc07121990redemptoris-missioen.html,"Dialogue and Mission", no. 20:http://www. cimer.org.au/documents/DialogueandMission1984.pdf,John Paul II's 1999 message for the Word Day of Peace, no. 11: http://www.vatican.va/holyfather/john paulii/messages/ peace/documents/hfjp-iimes14121998xxxii-worldday-forpeaceen.html,   John   Paul   II's 1986 message for the Word Day of Peace, no. 4: http://www.vatican.va/holyfather/ johnpaulii/messages/peace/documents/hfjp-iimes19851208xix-world-day-for-peaceen. html, Culture and Society", p. 10, available at: www.ajol.info/index.php/afrrev/ article/ download/72338/61267, and John Paul II's 2002 address to the Bishops from Argentina, no. 3, http://www.vatican.va/holyfather/johnpaulii/speeches/2002/february/ documents/ hfjp-iispe20020212ad-liminaargentinaen.html,[accessed on 10th May, 2014]

8   Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue, *Dialogue and Proclamation: Reflection and Orientations on Inter-religious Dialogue and the Proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ,* no.2 in Francesco Gioia, ed., *Inter-religious Dialogue: The Official Teaching of*

*the Catholic Church from the Second Vatican Council to John Paul 11(1963-2005),*P.1171

9   Ibid.

10   Sulaiman, K.O. (2010) "Management Techniques of Muslim/ Traditionalist Conflicts in Ancient Ekiti Communities" *ORISUN: Journal of Religion and Human Values*. Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Vol, 9 No. 9, 60-80

11   Ibid.

12   Pope PaulV 1, *Encyclical Ecclesiam Suam,* no.3 http://www.vatican.va/holyfather/pain vi/encyclicals/documents/hf.p-vi enc 06081964_ecclesiam_en.html, accessed on 7th May, 2014

13   S. B.Mala "Peace-Passages in the Qur'an and their Implications in Inter-religious Relations", J.K.Olupona (eds.) *Religion and Peace in Multi-Faith Nigeria*, O.A.U, 1992, 94-95

14   S.J samartha, *Courage for Dialogue: Ecumenical Issue in Inter-religious Relationships*, Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1981, p, 124.

15   C.A. Dine, "African Religion in the Quest for Peace", S.B. Mala and Z.I. Oseni (eds.) *Religion, Peace and Unity in Nigeria Ibadan*: Nigerian Association for the study of Religions, 1984, p. 3.

16   P.A Dopamu, "Religious Particularity in Nigeria" S..B Mala and Z.I Oseni, (eds.) *Religion, Peace and Unity in Nigeria Ibadan*: Nigerian Association for the study of Religions, 1984, p.211

17   G.O. Ibikunle "The role of Religion in National Development" A Paper presented at the Ist National Conference of the School of Arts and Social Sciences, Federal College of Education, Abeokuta, 1995, Pp. 1-3

18   Sulaiman, K.O and Ojo, M.A (2012) "The Roles of Religious Education to Peace, Security and Sustainable Development in Nigeria" *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences,* International Organization of Scientific Research (IOSR) New Delhi, Volume3, Issue 6, 01- 05.

19   E. Ikenga-Metuh, "Religion as instrument of peace in Nigeria". *Religion and Peace in Multi-Faith Nigeria*, Ile-Ife: Obafemi Awolowo University, 1992, P.21

20   Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue, Memorial Speech of H. E. Cardinal Paul Poupard read on his behalf by Fr. Felix Machado on the Occasion of the Twentieth Anniversary of the Religious Summit at Mount Hiei, Reconciliation and Cooperation.

Vatican City, 3rd August, 2007<www.vatican.va/roman-curia/pontifical-councils/interelg/index.htm-38k> [accessed 8`h May, 2014]

21   Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue, *Documents of the Dicasteries of the Roman Curia: The Church in the Face of Racism* in Francesco Gioia, ed., *Inter-religious Dialogue: The Official Teaching of the Catholic Church from the Second Vatican Council to John Paul 11* (1963-2005), p.1135

22   S. 38 (1) of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended

23   http://www.christianpost.com/article/20060224/violent-clashes-continue-in-nigeria-death-toll-tops-120.htm [accessed on 10th May, 2014]

24   Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, *Message for the End of Ramadan Id Al-Fitr 1420, A.H./2000 A.D.* Vatican City, 2000<www.vatican.va/roman-curia/pontifical councils/interelg/ index.htm-38k> [accessed 8th May, 2014]

25   M.A. Bidmos, *Constraints against Inter faith Co-existence in Nigeria. Identification and Resolution. Nigeria. Inter-Religious Council (NIREC), Inter faith Seminar, Towards Religious Harmony and Understanding for the Promotion of Peace,* Unity and National Development, Ekiti State Chapter, . Ado Ekiti, 2nd March, 2007, pp. 51-52

26   M A. Bidmos, *Inter-Religious Dialogue, The Nigerian Experience, p.* 52

27   M. Ekpeyong (ed), *The Threshold of Apostles, Pamphlet of Presentations Made During the Ad Limina Visit,* Abuja: Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria, 2009. p.23

28   F. O. Abugu, *Boko Haram: Poverty,. Not Islamists, On The March,* The Guardian, Saturday, 81h August, 2009. p. 11

29   Kenneth Cragg, *The Event of the Qur'an. Islam in its Scripture*, Oxford: Oneworld, 1994, p.112.

30   Hasan Turabi, "The Islamic State," in *Voices of Resurgent Islam*, ed. John Esposito, New York: Oxford University Press, 1983, p. 250.

31   Rev Fr Louis Taiwo Omojola Being a paper delivered at the Inter-religious Dialogue Seminar/Workshop at Pope John Paul 11 Pastoral Centre, Ado Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria on 5th June, 2014, pp, 5-7

32   Ojie A. E. (2004) Religious Fanaticism in Nigeria; The Way Forward, *African Conflict Profile vol. 1,* pp, 10-14

33   M.O Opeloye, "The Qur'anic Guideliness on Inter-religious Relations: An Overview" J.K.Olupona (eds.) In religion and Peace in Multi-Faith Nigeria, O.A.U, 1992, 85-87

34   M.A Folorunsho, et al, National Association for the Study of Religions and Education, Alanamu S. A. (2004). *Reflections on Religious Violence in Nigeria 1999 - 2003.* In *Issues in Political Violence in Nigeria,* Ilorin: University Press pp, 5-8

35   M.O Opeloye, "A Comparative study of socio-theological Theories Commons to the Qur'an and Bible" Ph. D Thesis university of Ilorin, 1988, p. 548

36   See Dipo Laleye, "Human Rights abuse worries African Ministries", *Nigeria Tribune,* Friday 1 December 1989, pp, 1-5

37   For a detailed discussion on the Advisory Council for Religious Affairs, see S.B Mala "Advisory Council on Religious affairs: Nigeria Solution to Inter-Religious Conflicts" N. P, pp, 7-11

The Advantages, the Disadvantages, and the Obstacles from Students' Perspectives on a Short-term University Drama Play as a Service Participation

Shu-Chin Su
Aletheia University, Taiwan

Abstract

This qualitative research examines the main outcomes of a short-term dramatic presentation offered as a community service, utilizing a survey and semi-structured interviews of students enrolled in a drama course who participated in the play. These views were compared with the advantages, the disadvantages, and the obstacles students perceive in having an annual play in a three month period. Findings suggest that using drama as a social service may increase the students' technical and professional language skills, enhance their interactional teamwork skills, and foster an ethic of contributing to society. Students stated that they faced specific difficulties during the drama activities; however, learning through drama was meaningful to them. They stated that that this effort prepared them for their future work environment, and they gained a sense of responsibility. However, having a short- term drama play also consumes significant amounts of time and other resources, creating challenges for students and teachers. Students identified factors that may affect the quality of these outcomes, including participants' language proficiency and the intensity of rehearsals.

Keywords: Perspectives, Drama course, Annual graduation play

1. Introduction

As Huang (2012) noted, "Applied drama in language and literacy development has long been recognized since 'Drama in Education' or 'Process Drama' gained currency during the 1990s" (p. 85). Classroom drama activities are an effective teaching method for second language learning. Applying drama in second language learning is especially effective because it is used in real and meaningful learning situations and often presents learners with new cultural roles. The natural spoken language in drama elicits purposeful learning which increases student's motivation and knowledge of culture, literature and verbal translation (Chang & Su, 2002; Via, 1976). However, According to Heinig (1988), classroom drama is more informal than theater performance, and is treated strictly as a learning medium rather than an art form. Taking drama out of the classroom offers students even further opportunities for personal growth. For this reason, in order to incorporate students' professional development with community service learning, the study began with a Senior Class Play. A project titled *The Dream of the Queen Esther-1920-a Biblical Drama in Three Acts* was presented in 2013 by Aletheia University Associate Professor and Play Director Dr. Scott.

The story of the play- Mordecai is a noble captive Jew living in the Persian city of Shushan. He is loved by all and dwells with his slave Meesha Zabeel and his adopted daughter, Esther. Hegal comes to him and informs him that the King is about to choose a wife from among the maidens of the kingdom, and Esther has been selected to present herself for the contest. Mordecai thinks that if Esther is chosen Queen she may help her people, who are the captives of the King. The King, in disguise, has saved the life of Esther and she cherishes a high regard for the unknown hero and therefore hesitates before presenting herself before the King. She loves the mysterious man who saved her life, not knowing that it was the King himself. Mordecai tells her to enter the contest for the sake of her people, and Esther hesitates between love and duty. As she sleeps, she has a vision! Eight heroines of biblical history appear to her and offer their advice. The first act closes with several beautiful tableaux, including a scarf dance.

The second act takes place in the palace of the King. The King tells his chamberlain, Hegai, that he had saved the life of a little unknown maiden, and that he hopes she will be one of the contestants. The King retires and several Maidens enter the contest. To the comical delight of Koosh, a little Ethiopian handmaiden who attends the contestants, each maiden thinks that she will be the chosen Queen. One by one the maidens are rejected until Esther appears. The King recognizes her and she is chosen Queen, to the delight of Koosh. A Flower Dance and Song occur in this act and the act ends with a tableau: The Crowning of Esther.

The third act of the play takes place nine years after the second act. The King neglects his wife and through A Dream of Queen Esther the wicked influence of Haman, one of his princes, issues a decree that all the Jews in his kingdom are to be slaughtered. Mordecai visits Esther and in a great patriotic and dramatic scene appeals to her to save their people by going before the King and pleading for them. Meesha, the old nurse of Esther, loves her and warns her that if she appears before the King without his invitation it may mean her death. Mordecai pleads for his people, Meesha pleads for Esther to save herself. Esther decides to appeal to the King and "if I

perish, I perish." She appears before the King, who receives her and promises to aid her people. Among the characters introduced in the play are Rebecca, Deborah and the five points of the Eastern Star: Esther, Adah, Ruth, Martha and Electa.[112]

According to Astin and Sax (1998), "participating in service during the undergraduate years substantially enhances the student's academic development, life skill development, and sense of civic responsibility." Moreover, "the effects of participation in volunteer service programs have important implications not only for the students, but also for long-range institutional policy" (p.251).This study explores the learning experiences encountered by students during drama courses and a play. The objective of this research design is to develop a rational framework that describes the types of learning that occur during presentation of a drama and explains how such drama pedagogy learning take place. This play also provides the students with service learning opportunities and benefits, which reflects one of the goals of this study. The research covers practices through a three- month learning process which involve students' perspectives on the advantages, disadvantages, obstacles, and suggestions students offer in a short-term drama play at a school community project.

Research Question

This paper employs a narrative research to transcribe the experience in conducting drama at the Civic Center in Danshui, north of Taiwan. The research question is as follow:

1. From students' perspective, what are the advantages, disadvantages, and obstacles relevant to participating in a drama course and an annual graduation play as a community service at the Civic Center during a three month period?

The theme of this paper and transcribed stories both share the experiences and processes to the problems of linking up short-term drama play at the Civic Center and bring up ideas of sustaining the operation of campus-community service.

2. **Literature Review**

In this section, the pedagogy of drama in education/ theater in education will be introduced. Secondly, the reasons why drama education shares a similar learning process with language learning are also explained. This study not only reviews different drama/theater elements and techniques which are commonly used in EFL classrooms, but also lists the benefits of using drama/theater as supplementary teaching tools. Some empirical studies of using drama learning and teaching conditions in university regarding age groups, subjects, durations, or English proficiency are emphasized. Based on these concepts, this study aims to investigate students' perspectives on graduation plays and drama production courses. The examples lay a foundation for the evaluation of students' participations toward drama, and whether drama as a teaching method can benefit students' learning. Farris and Parke (1993) distinguished the major differences between drama in the classroom activities and dramatic performances or theater.

---

[112] Resource from: http://hl001.epage.au.edu.tw/ezfiles/207/1207/attach/38/pta_49981_7171609_33333.pdf

Theater is audience-centered, i.e., theater involves considerable concern for communication between actors and the audience (Way, 1967).

Drama in Education

Chen (2012) used drama strategies to guide the audience to think more deeply, such as: some pre-activities for (1) image theatre: leading participants to do all kinds of actions in everyday life or letting them have interactions as good friends or family members in groups to break the shyness or nervousness. (2) Thought-tracking: the facilitator sometimes pauses the performance and pats the actor's shoulder to let the actor speak a sentence from bottom of his/her heart to create the opportunity to comprehend the motivation and meaning behind the scene in order to reflect and analyze the plots and characters. (3) Working in role: role play and conceptual learning guide the audience to get involved into the roles and plots in depth and put themselves in the roles' situations to think and evaluate for the issues. (4) Discussion: this strategy is the direct way to know the participants' thinking and it is the best way of communication between the facilitator and the audience. It is used as a transition function for moving to the next scene. (5) Meeting: it is the time that all the participants can present their opinions in a get together. (6) Taking sides: there are seats to be placed on each side for the issues of agreement and disagreement on stage for participants to choose to sit on. Then, the audience can share their reasons and thoughts with others to think more deeply about themselves. (7) Body sculpture: the facilitator invites the audience to do the movement to express their thoughts. Through this activity, people can observe each individual and aid them in how to show their empathy and development.

A dramatic performance is 'situated cognitive learning.' Dramatic performance and the learning process are closely associated. Students' interpretation of virtual scenarios such as plays enables them to broaden their depth of emotionality and enhance the learning process with motivation. Teachers should pay attention to the ideas, acting, and performances of students by coaching them to create new knowledge and to form genuine relationships (Booth, 1985; Mclnnes, 1985). Furthermore, drama as performance can be used effectively in second foreign language learning. Numerous studies note that performances of dramas or scenes from dramas create a positive learning environment, offering various peer-learning opportunities (Conrad, 1998; Eisner, 1998; Rose, Parks, Androes, & McMahon, 2000; Wagner & Barnett, 1998).

Types of Theater

Readers Theater (RT) as Teaching Method

For teachers whose courses include some type of literature, another form of drama as a teaching method has played a major role. McCaslin (1990) defines 'Readers Theater' as an 'oral presentation of drama, prose or poetry' (p. 263).Readers Theater is "active, analytical, socially negotiated and interpreted through both verbal and non-verbal means" (Wolf, 1993, p. 541). Most importantly, the main participants are readers that are invited to use their imaginations to interpret the author's ideas. Readers Theater requires no costumes, make-up, properties, stage sets, or line

memorization. Any type of literature can be used (plays, poems, novels, short stories) and a narrator is a useful device to convey the story's setting and action and get the audience involved emotionally in the plots (Carrick, 2000).

There are many experimental studies to demonstrate that using RT enriches students' foreign language learning. Forsythe (1995), Latrobe (1996); and Liu (2000) found RT had positive effects on learners' writing. Stewart (1997) used E.B. White's novel, *Charlotte's Web*, for children's literature class and improvement was found in students' writing. Martinez, Roser and Strecker (1999) used thirty minutes per day of RT for a ten-week period for second graders and discovered that oral reading fluency increased. Corcoran and Davis (2005) showed that the effects of RT on twelve second and third graders with learning disabilities resulted in an improvement in their reading skills and confidence on the platform in front of the class. Katz and Boran (2004) stated that the classroom experience showed how much the learners appreciated and enjoyed their engagement with RT.Doherty and Coggeshall (2005) utilized RT and students gained a deeper level of understanding of character, history, setting, and literary background; moreover, their abilities of reading, interpreting, and writing increased. Kabilan and Kamaruddin (2010) reported that RT significantly enhanced twenty unmotivated learners' understanding and increased their interest and motivation to learn literature. The results found in Kabilan and Kamaruddin (2010) revealed learners benefited from RT in the following stages: first, the experienced intensive construction of the characters and scenes during the abstract conceptualization phase, Second, they participated in development of characters, narration, dialogue, and plot in the active experimentation phase. Third, they benefited from during experience of performance; and finally, evaluation and reflection during the reflective observation period offered opportunities for further growth. This whole cycle experience had a deep impact on the learners. (p. 153)

Playback Theatre

The concept of 'Playback Theater' is based on the insight that every character has his or her own story. It is a form of improvisational theatre that includes different forms of techniques such as 'fluid sculptures', 'pairs', and 'tableau stories' and so forth to elicit group members to tell their stories from their lives and enact on the performance .This technique follows certain steps, such as opening with music, using a host to introduce the main character's story and the main topic of the play, and then the actors briefly perform abstract remarks and actions based on reactions from the audience toward the topics. When an audience has become accustomed to this way of performance and interactions, then the show will begin (Lu, 2012).

Image Theatre

An image theatre is a form of drama which seeks to use a performer's body as clay. The 'spect-actor' can role-play as a sculptor and transmit the thoughts, feelings and situational transformation to different forms of physical sculptures (Lu, 2012).

Forum Theatre

Augusto Boal created forum theatre; it is also called 'Theatre of the Oppressed.' It is an innovative and influential way of bringing audience members into the performance to have an input into the dramatic action. Boal applied 'simultaneous dramaturgy' as a process to make the actors or audience members able to stop a performance because characters were being oppressed in a short scene by audience's suggestions in an attempt to change the outcome (Boal, 2005). For example, when the facts of the actor participants' true stories cannot be changed in real life, the joker and actor-teacher can lead audience members to change the outcome and have the interactions with the actors or use role-play to take part in the drama to discuss the issues and plots to change the dramatic action (Lu, 2012).

Newspaper Theatre

Newspaper Theatre may be defined as a system of techniques and methods devised to give a term for a theatrical form presenting factual information on newspapers or articles (Lu, 2012). The drama and applied theater share very similar techniques and some skills are overlapping.

Drama /Theater in Education as Process Learning

Process drama developed primarily from the work of Brian Way, Dorothy Heathcote, and Gavin Bolton. It is a dynamic way for teachers to reflect in action with novel approaches, and requires learners to embrace every culture in the world. It relies on building belief as students create their own imagined worlds with co-participation. Process drama is a method of teaching and learning drama where both the students and teachers are working in and out of roles. School settings usually involve the whole class working with the teacher in made up scenarios. When they are working in process drama, the students and teachers work together to create an imaginary dramatic world where issues are considered and problems can be solved. In this world they work together to explore problems and issues (Aitken, Fraser, & Price, 2007; Heathcote & Bolton, 1995). It focuses on the process of dramatic enactment for learners not for audiences (Way, 1967). The word 'process' usually indicates a continuing event, unfinished product that implies conclusion, result, and a finished goal (Andersen, 2001). Learner self-expression is the important outcome of drama in the classroom. This process allows the learners to combine and to translate thoughts into a personally meaningful form.

Drama and Creative Pedagogy

One of the educational objectives of drama is creativity and it is powerful in fostering students' development in creative thinking, social skills, problem-solving skills and language development (Lin, 2012). The core characteristics of creativity are self-determination, innovation, action, development, depth, risk, being imaginative, posing questions, and play (Craft, 2001). Creative drama is a spontaneous impromptu classroom activity; in other words, through participants' body dynamics, ad hoc pantomime, feelings, situation dialogue, and various drama applications including pretending, imagining and using body, sound and expressions, facing, analyzing and solving problems through life experiences, interpersonal relationships and building

up confidence in turn become a learning experience (Lin, 2001). Creative drama teachers learn how to guide students, mainly aiming at promoting effective learning, personality development, and participation.

Drama and Language Teaching/Learning

Wessels and Maley (1987) noted that drama could be used in language teaching because it applied to in-depth communication skills making it one of the important language learning theories. The drama teaching method is currently a mainstream theory for university foreign language learning. The variety of learning styles of drama motivates students to learn; its principle is to encourage the students' active participation rather than passive learning. Creative drama is especially widely used in foreign language classes in many universities (Conard, 1998; McCaslin, 1990). Maley and Duff (1988) pointed out that drama and language learning shared similar learning processes. They both contained four phases: (1) setting; (2) role and status; (3) mood, attitude and feeling; and (4) shared knowledge. Actors in a play and language learners have something in common because they both need to communicate and exchange information. According to Evans (1984), drama is the basic method of English teaching for assisting students to develop their language, text analysis, imagination and creativity abilities. Hornbrook (1991) also said that drama is a teaching method to increase English proficiency which means (learning through drama) or (learning in drama). In England, drama has used four roles in the national curriculum: (1) drama as method, (2) drama as communication, (3) drama as text; and (4) drama as subject (Somers, 1994).

Fleming (2006) pointed out that students situated in the interesting learning environment of dramatic performances that imitate real life learn practical living skills. By way of the imagination, characterization, interpretation, visualization, and other acting skills, learners in an authentic, emotional drama use language naturally, and overcame the psychological fear of making errors. In addition, performance training for the sake of an audience helps students reach new levels of excellence in vocalization, projection, intonation, articulation, diction, and rhythm (Maley & Duff, 1988). Through dramatic performance rehearsals, teachers could help students to gain full understanding and appreciation of the playwright's ideas. Teachers could coach students to interpret the drama, and through rehearsals, students would become immersed in the plot, and learned how to justify authentic human actions through truthful characterizations. The rehearsal process includes development of emotion, ideas, language, cooperation, relationships and application of student imaginations (Booth, 1985; Neelands, 1984). Drama in the classroom activities require: (1) students to use hand gestures and actions to express meaning; (2) student teamwork; (3) students to visualize narrative stories that limit a situation and promote repetitive language drills. These are the reasons why process drama is one of the best teaching methods for second language learning (Barnes et al., 1996).

Significance of the Study using Drama as a Community Service

Many terms have been used to describe the experiential nature of service learning: civic awareness, collaborative learning, community-based education, cooperative education, experiential education, field experiences, internships, public service, volunteerism, youth involvement, and youth service. However, what moves service learning beyond just volunteerism

or just community service is an intentional focus on the academic. In service learning, individuals engage in community activity in a context of rigorous academic experience. Service learning allows teachers to employ a variety of teaching strategies that emphasize students-centered, interactive, experiential education (O'Grady, 2012, p.7). "Drama play" is a course at the university and "Drama education" can be one of the course-based serviced learning activities which are emphasized for the future studies on partnership development between campus and community. The study began with a Senior Play Class to investigate the professional and practical knowledge from the drama educator and provided the insight to understand the difficulties, problems, and suggestions on short-term drama play with a community service. Importantly, this is the first cornerstone for building a mutual relationship between campus and community by using short-term drama at the Civic Center. It is hoped to incorporate students' professionalism with community service learning and build relationships with neighborhood residents in the community and to cultivate mutually beneficial aesthetic and social results.

3. Method

3.1 Research Design

A qualitative research was seen as the approach best suited to provide the local grounding and detail required to understand the influence of drama education and students' perspective towards it (Ritchie and Lewis 2004). This study takes place in a university setting, Aletheia University, located in New Taipei City, Taiwan. This study analyzes English major students' perspectives on performing a short-term senior drama play-*The Dream of the Queen Esther-1920,* a Biblical Drama in Three Acts; American Playwright, Walter Ben Hare. "Narrative researchers often "describe in detail the setting or context in which the participant experiences the central phenomenon" (Creswell, 2008, p. 522). Both a narrative inquiry and the in-depth interviewing skills were utilized in this study.

3.2 Participants

Nineteen English department students (3 males and 16 females) from the senior play class participated in the play. These are the participants filled out the survey. The play was directed by Aletheia University faculty director, Dr. Scott on December 27, 2013. However, for the interviews were the 8 students who were the main theater actors including 3 male and 5 female students and one head-teacher and who perform at Danhai Civic Center. Dr. Scott has taught drama class since 1984: first at Soong Sil University, Seoul, South Korea for 5 years, then at Fu Jen Catholic University from 1989 to 2009, and finally at Aletheia University from 2009 to the present. She has taught drama courses and directed drama plays more than 40 years and is surely an experienced director for drama education (see Table 1).

3.3 Data collection

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 8 students and 1 teacher. The respondents were provided with an information sheet including background information on the study and confidentiality rights. The main data collection tool used was a written survey completed over a 2-week period. Each survey asked respondents to detail a relevant 'drama play learning' they had experienced in relation to their work in the preceding three months, including learning outcome, the main influence (trigger), the background activity or situation in which the learning occurred (learning context), and how the learning had influenced their performance. Each interview lasted approximately 30 min to one hour and the interviewers minimized bias by meeting in school and encouraging respondents to discuss both benefits and challenges of implementing drama play. The researcher debriefed after each interview to discuss responses and coded all documents. Researchers once again compared codes and resolved any differences to ensure consistency among analysis.

Table 1 The background information & Codes of Transcripts of Interviewees

Interviewees' Number	Gender	Age	Job Title	Codes of Transcripts	Department of English
S1	M	22	Theater Actor	20140111S1	√▫
S2	M	23	Theater Actor	20140111S2	√▫
S3	M	22	Lead Actor	20140111S3	√▫
S4	F	22	Theater Actress	20140111S4	√▫
S5	F	22	Theater Actress	20140112S5	√▫
S6	F	21	Theater Actress	20140112S6	√▫
S7	F	22	Theater Actress	20140112S7	√▫
S8	F	23	Lead Actress	20140112S8	√▫
T1	F	69	Faculty Teacher	20140315T1	√▫

4. Results and Discussion

One hundred percent of the students indicated that the play production course could stimulate their interest in learning English. All the students also thought that graduation play performance was the best way of evaluating the success of their four years university learning. All of students thought that presenting a graduation play was more appropriate than writing a senior thesis. The development of having the annual play may be more effective because they have higher

expectations for personal gain and greater accountability. The reasons were as follows: 1. students were good at acting on stage; the interaction of performing a drama play helped them to learn more things, such as improving their language ability, organization skills, confidence in oral expression and teamwork experience.

Only 44% of students thought the play production course should be a required course. One question asked was, "When students are acting the annual graduation play, in what areas do they think they usually do not receive sufficient support?" The results showed that concerns included money (77%); space for rehearsal (56%); students' cooperation (33%); help with making costumes and props (33%); help from other faculty (22%); help from staff (22%); help from other students (22%); professional help from someone who is experienced in theatric performance and directing (22%). According to the results, the budget was the worst impediment to implementing a drama play,

The advantages students and the teacher perceive in having an annual graduation play

The opportunity to perform a drama play and gain acting experience also has important effects on students (20140111S1; 20140112S8). The positive atmosphere within the learning process and the encouragement between classmates is a form of cooperation that can foster relational values and intimacy (20140111S4). After the training, moreover, students who self-reported that they were shy felt they had improved in a number of aspects: their acting skills, expression ability, English ability, the sense of teamwork, body language expression, and the performance on stage and in presenting their own acting styles. Especially, stage fright can be overcome from the repetitive drills as well as learning motivation and performing experience being increased(20140315T1). The experience of the drama play especially will be a good method to acquire skills, enhance the contents of a resume or even get a job more smoothly (20140112S8). Seventy-eight percent of students reported that they generally perceived having the annual graduation play as an activity helpful to them find a job in the future, because, they believed that after the training of the drama play they would not be so nervous when facing an interview,.

Fleming (2006) pointed out that students situated in an interesting learning environment of dramatic performances that imitate real life learn practical living skills. By way of the imagination, characterization, interpretation, visualization, and other acting skills, learners in an authentic, emotional drama use language naturally, and overcome the psychological fear of making errors. In addition, performance training for the sake of an audience made the student reach new levels of excellence in vocalization, projection, intonation, articulation, diction, and rhythm (Maley & Duff, 1988). Through dramatic performance rehearsals, teachers could help students to gain full understanding and appreciation of the playwright's idea. Teachers could coach students to interpret the drama, and through rehearsals, students would become immersed in the plot, and learned how to justify authentic human actions through truthful characterizations.

The rehearsal process included development of emotion, ideas, language, cooperation, relationships and application of student imaginations (Booth, 1985; Neelands, 1984).

In addition, the faculty director was professional and detailed oriented and she asked everything to be done perfectly with a high standard. The faculty teacher observed that "as students' confidence operating 'inside' the self-complacent grew, some began using sophisticated native-like accents to achieve performing outcomes (20140315T1). For example, several acting students were in low spirits during their rehearsals." After the teacher used positive praise as a teaching strategy, students' pronunciation became articulate and their confidence helped achieve the goals. The faculty teacher said that "the majority of the students' own cognitive frameworks, including increased awareness of one's own learning, developing new frames of reference, seeing and incorporating different perspectives into decisions, and recognizing patterns" were appeared."In effect, their deep immersion in the drama play provided a counter-point that broadened their perspective on their own self-growth, their work and their relationships with classmates." The faculty teacher mentioned that students' engagement through short-term drama made the students' successes in athletics, emotional life, and self-development and drama activities very interesting, motivating and exciting to the students(20140315T1).The advantages students perceive in having an annual graduation play may also incorporate the reasons why students participate in community service are as follows: to help other people; to feel personal satisfaction; to improve my community; to improve society as a whole; to develop new skills; to work with people different from me; to enhance my academic learning; to fulfill my civic or social responsibility; to enhance my resume (Astin & Sax, 1998, p.255).

The disadvantages students perceive in having an annual graduation play

The results showed that the students' motives may affect outcomes (20140315T1).For example, the absence of rehearsing, limited students who attended this class and performed in the play (20140315T1; 20140112S6). The ignorance from teachers (20140112S8), the sacrifices of students' schoolwork and time (20140112S5), and the disagreement aroused between classmates may affect individual motivation and preparation (20140112S7). Students also cited a few examples of ignorance from head of the school that may have had negative impacts on the organization and students (20140112S8; 20140112S5). Seventy-eight percent of students mentioned that the heads (leaders) of their school really did not care about the drama class and the annual play. Students complained about lacking an adequate financial budget which limited the outcome. They stated that the heads (leaders) of the school never showed up to visit during the rehearsals (20140112S8; 20140112S6; 20140111S1). When students went to the chair to ask for help or gave suggestions on drama matters, excuses were always given in reply (20140112S6). According to the respondents, the head of the school can provide significant support to gain more funding to cover the expenses on drama needs and allow the teacher to have more resources and time for preparing the drama activities.

The biggest obstacles students faced when acting the short-term annual graduation play

The learning process involved in participating in a short-term annual play was difficult for some students, especially for those who were acting for the first time. There are several significant obstacles students face when acting the annual play, such as (a) acting into their roles (20140112S6; 20140111S1); (b) memorizing the lines (20140111S3; 20140112S7); and (c) performing on stage (20140112S8;20140112S6).These three were the most difficult tasks for students. Other obstacles included (d) facing stage fright (20140112S7); (e) poor communication occurring between classmates and faculty director (20140112S8); (f) weak cooperation between students (20140111S3); (g) a lack of the space for the rehearsals and the preparations of the props (20140112S7); and (h) having a shortage of helpers backstage(20140111S4).

Students think that the annual graduation play should be a requirement for every English major student before their graduation

Those students that did the drama play were mostly optimistic and positive.Approximately89% of the students thought that annual graduation play should be a requirement for every English major student. The reasons are that through the drama practices they could improve English and communication with the teacher and learn teamwork. Drama is a good tool for evaluating language skills, and a good way for students to improve their memory and vocabulary. The problem-solving skills used in the drama rehearsals will most likely be applicable to their future jobs. Only 22% of students thought having an annual play would affect the time schedule for them finding a job.

Students think they generally perceive having the annual graduation play as an activity helpful to their language acquisition and overall professional development

In most cases, having annual play was positive for students to their language learning because they believed drama would be helpful for their language acquisition and professional development (20140112S6; 20140111S1). Some said drama could bring a professional development on oral speaking by reading script lines and their reading ability was also increased (20140112S6; 20140112S8). In addition, acting skills, expressions, natural intonation, theatre theories and problem-solving skills were also learned (20140111S3; 20140112S7; 20140111S1).

The things that students like about having the annual graduation play

According to some students, the benefits of having an annual play could also increase the level of achievement and openness of classmates' relationships and professional practices. For example, students enjoyed the performance while they presented themselves successfully in roles and received applause from the audiences (20140112S7; 20140112S6). Two students mentioned that they could more freely express their emotions when acting out (20140111S3; 20140112S7). Two students said that when all the classmates were into the drama theme and they acted better and better each time, the sense of achievement was great because all the team members thereby

were encouraging mutual learning and reciprocity in skill sharing. Finally, while the time they spent together was enjoyable even when they had a disagreement, NG time, made mistakes, or were practicing the songs and dances and so on (20140111S3; 20140111S2).

The things that students dislike about having the annual graduation play

Some respondents described things that they disliked about having the annual play. One unexpected problem involved difficulties communicating with classmates who had different opinions (20140111S3). Some classmates liked to divide themselves into small groups. Moreover, the schedule for the rehearsals was not suitable for everyone (20140111S1).   The funding was not sufficient even for the post-performance celebration (20140112S7). The props were cheap quality because of the limited budget and they looked very informal (20140112S6). Approximately33% of the students also mentioned the emotion of the faculty director because she changed the model of the play depending on her mood. However, the teacher emphasized that she tried to simplify the play script to meet the students' abilities and added to her understanding in the in-classroom practices where she worked with students (20140315T1).

The faculty teacher cut about one-third of the original play script—deleting long monologues, speeches, and several roles. In their place, the teacher took some ideas from other, newer experimental scripts and added short visual scenes of the captives, the Astrologer/fortune-teller, and the Scroll scenes. She also changed the music, sound effects, and dance of the original play to Jewish and Persian themes, including the belly dance choreography and live guitar music. These changes were made to suit the students' abilities and to make the play performance more visually and musically attractive for the audience (20140315T1). The results showed that students complained about the teacher's emotional problems and difficulty communicating, however, in the teacher's position; she tried to make the performance better by her own professional experience. There was a huge knowledge gap between teacher and students; this is an area that needs to be worked on. Finally, students indicated that three months of preparation was not enough for a graduation play. Drama practicing for longer durations would allow parts to integrate better creating a better outcome in the play, and students could be trained to perform more complex tasks. Because student members were often required to utilize the technical, professional, and linguistic skills of acting, the drain on students' time could be considerably higher when performers served for very short terms. The implication for the field is that ensuring an effective match among the students' capacity, time, and the task at hand is crucial.

Students' suggestions or reflections for the drama class and the annual play

Students hoped that the school could pay more attention to the drama activities, since without the support from the English Department there was no space for performing, and therefore the drama play was held off-campus (20140112S6). Students felt they were alone for the activity (20140112S8; 20140112S6). They opined that the school needs to grant funding and

credits for the drama education, expand the time for practicing needs to two semesters. They also believe that when the teacher wants to make any decision, she needs to discuss it with students first (20140111S3; 20140111S2). Future research should validate findings from this study with additional drama activities in other contexts. Understanding how differences in duration, drama activities, institutional support, and acting outcomes can help inform evidence-based practice and drive effective methods on drama education is obviously needed. Combining data from larger, more representative samples may also offer a clearer view of patterns across contexts and time.

5. Conclusion

The results of this study could provide evidence of benefits, in that, most of the students remarked that drama might add to their professional skills and knowledge base. In sum, drama pedagogy might be a correct method for students' foreign language learning and an efficient way of testing students' four-year learning performance. One unique benefit of presenting such a drama play is the nature of the role itself. Students took on a role or a task, highlighted by interaction and skill exchange with classmates through formal and informal capacity building. This function, while serving as the foundation for their developmental work within a small class, allows students to deepen and broaden their repertoire of experiences and knowledge both directly and vicariously. Students also face the challenge of having to bring about and direct change to develop more flexible and strategic communication skills in order to achieve the transformation in the individuals, teams, or organizations with which they work. In addition, students emphasized the match between need for language abilities and other communication skills in the workplace and the significant gains they felt they had achieved. Students experience greater language immersion because they need to communicate with foreign teachers to develop more meaningful understanding of issues which happen in practice and to exchange comments, skills and knowledge with their teacher.

However, the drama and language coaching and training, external support (from the school, the English department and Taiwan's Ministry of Education), the teachers' supervision, students' collective reflection and peer cooperation also influence the effectiveness of drama education. The interviews with the students brought insight, difficulties, problems, and suggestions on "Play Production Course" and "Graduation Play" in this study and it is suggested that English departments pay more attention to these two drama activities. It is important that future research should continue to assess the skills and strategies that drama education utilize and their relevance to language learning. The findings may help address the problem of closing the gap between school, organization, and drama play performances and make room for a smoother transition.

References

-Aitken, V., Fraser, D., & Price, G. (2007). Negotiating the spaces: Relational pedagogy and power in drama teaching. *International Journal of Education &the Arts, 8*(14)*.*

-Andersen, C. (2001). Thinking as and thinking about: Cognitive and meta-cognitive processes in drama. *Playing betwixt and between: The IDEA dialogues*,265–270.

-Astin, A. W., & Sax, L. J. (1998). How undergraduates are affected by service   participation. *Journal of College Student Development, 39*(3), 251-263.

-Boal, A. (2005). *The aesthetics of the oppressed*. London: Routledge.

-Booth, D. (1985). "Imaginary gardens with real toads": Reading and drama ineducation. *Theory into Practice*, *24*(3), pp. 193–198. Retrieved fromhttp://www.jstor.org/stable/1477040

-Carrick, L.U. (2000). *The effects of Readers Theatre on fluency and comprehension infifth-grade students in regular classrooms.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation.Lehigh University. Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

-Chang & Su. (2002). Junior high school students' attitudes and perceptions toward participation in role-plays.Retrieved from National Taiwan Normal University Institutional Repository. http://ir.lib.ntnu.edu.tw/retrieve/51221/metadata_02_02_s_05_0022.pdf

-Chen, C. L. (2012). Integrating Educational drama strategies into English teaching at a primary school-an example of fifth graders. *Research in Drama Education &Theatre Studies, 1*, 109-138.

-Conrad, F. (1998). Meta-analysis of the effectiveness of creative drama. In B. J.Wagner & L. A. Barnett (Eds.), *Educational drama and language arts: what research shows* (pp. 199–211). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

-Corcoran, C., & Davis, A. (2005). A study of the effects of readers' theater on second and third grade special education students' fluency growth. *Reading Improvement*, *42*(2), 105–112.

-Craft, A. (2001). Little c creativity. In A. Craft . B., Jeffery, & M. Leibling (Eds.), *Creativity in Educatio*n (pp.45-61). London: Continuum.

-Creswell, J. W. (2008). "Analyzing and interpreting qualitative data" and "Narrative research designs." *Educational research: Planning, conducting and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 243-270; 511-550). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.

-Doherty, J., & Coggeshall, K. (2005). Reader's theater and storyboarding: Strategies that include and improve. *Voices from the Middle*, *12*(4), 37-43.

-Eisner, E. W. (1998). Does experience in the arts boost academic achievement? *Journal of Art & Design Education*, *17*(1), 51–60. doi:10.1111/1468-5949.00105

-Evans, T. (1984). *Drama in English teaching*. London: Croom Helm.

-Farris, P. J., & Parke, J. (1993). To be or not to be: What students think about drama. *The Clearing House*, *66*(4), 231–234.

-Fleming, M. (2006). Justifying the arts: Drama and intercultural education. *Journal of aesthetic education.*, *40*(1), 54–64.

-Forsythe, S. J. (1995). It worked! Readers theatre in second grade. *Reading Teacher*,*49*(3), 264.

-Heathcote, D., & Bolton, G. (1995). *Drama for learning. Dorothy Heathcote's mantle of the expert approach to education.* Portsmouth, NH: Heineman

-Heinig, R. B. (1988). *Creative drama for the classroom teacher*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

-Hornbrook, D. (1991). *Education in drama: Casting the dramatic curriculum*. Taylor& Francis.

-Huang, H. Y. (2012). Learning to be a social being: Process drama and puppetry inliteracy learning, *Research in Drama Education & Theatre Studies, 1*, 83-108.

-Kabilan, M. K. K., & Kamaruddin, F. (2010). Engaging learners' comprehension, interest and motivation to learn literature using the reader theater. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*, *9*(3), 132–159.

-Katz, C. A., & Boran, K. (2004). Shared reading theatre: An invitation to the world of story. *The Alan Review*, *31*(3), 31–36.

-Latrobe, K. (1996). Encouraging reading and writing through readers' theatre. *Emergency Librarian*, *23*(3), 16–20.

-Lin, J.-T. (2001). *The study of the influence of creative drama on elementary student' life adjustment*. National Taipei University of Education, Taiwan.

-Lin, Y. S. (2012).The Relationship between drama and creative pedagogy. *Research in Drama Education & Theatre Studies, 1*, 63-82.

-Liu, J. (2000). The power of readers' theater: From reading to writing. *ELT Journal*, *54*(4), 354–361. doi: 10.1093/elt /54.4.354

-Lu, Y. H. (2012). Spring in a jail cell: applied theatre practice in prison. *Research in Drama Education & Theatre Studies*, *1*, 1-20.

-Maley, A. & Duff. A. (1988).*Drama techniques in language learning*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

-Martinez, M., Roser, N. L., & Strecker, S. (1999). "I never thought I could be a star":A reader's theatre ticket to fluency. *Reading Teacher*, *52*(4), 326–334.

-McCaslin, N. (1990). *Creative drama in the classroom*. New York: Longman.

-Mclnnes, J. (1985). The drama of reading. In J. Kase-Polisini (Ed.), *Creative drama in a developmental context* (pp. 73–83). New York: University Press of America.

-Neelands, J. (1984). *Making sense of drama: A guide to classroom practice*. London: Heinemann.

-O'Grady, C. (2012). *Integrating service learning and multicultural education in colleges.* Mahwah: NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

-Ritchie, J., and Lewis, J. (2004), *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers.* London: Sage.

-Rose, D. S., Parks, M., Androes, K., & McMahon, S. D. (2000). Imagery-based learning: Improving elementary students' reading comprehension with drama techniques. *The Journal of Educational Research*, *94*(1), 55–63.doi:10.1080/00220670009598742

-Somers, J. (1994). *Drama in the curriculum*. London: Cassell.

-Stewart, L. T. (1997). Readers theatre and the writing workshop: Using children's literature to prompt student writing. *Reading Teacher*, *51*(2), 174–175.

-Via, R. A. (1976). *English in three acts*. Hawaii: University Press of Hawaii.

-Wagner, B. J., & Barnett, L. A. (1998). *Educational drama and language arts: What research shows*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

-Way, B. (1967). *Development through drama*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities   Press.

-Wessels, C., & Maley, A. (1987). Drama. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

-Wolf, S. (1993). What's in a name? Labels and literacy in readers' theatre. *The Reading Teacher*, *46*(7), 540–545.

Henry James's Emerging Subconscious and the Wandering Transatlantic Tourist: The Search for Artistic Freedom

Sharon Worley
University of Phoenix, USA

Abstract

With the publication of Roderick Hudson in Atlantic Monthly in 1875, Henry James anticipates the Freudian theory of the ego, super-ego and id.   Through the impulse to create, James defines the will as the artist's desire to achieve self-actualization.   But this will is in conflict with society's social mores and responsibilities.   Consequently, the artist is doomed to a limbo world in which the will creates idealized representations of nature, without – like Pygmalion -- having the ability to bring his creation to life.   In describing the aesthetic pleasures of visual perception, James tacitly acknowledges pioneering research in perceptual cognition and makes the transition to emerging psychological theories of the subconscious will and desire.   James reevaluates the purpose of art in an increasingly commercialized society that depends upon aesthetics for its viable existence and cohesion without providing the tangible means of supporting the emerging artist.

Keywords: Henry James, William James, Art Criticism, American Realist novels, psychology

Fig 1. Caspar David Friedrich. *Wanderer Above the Mists.* **1817. Kunsthalle, Hamburg.**

With the publication of *Roderick Hudson* in *Atlantic Monthly* in 1875, James anticipates the Freudian theory of the ego, super-ego and id.   Through the impulse to create, James defines the will as the artist's desire to achieve self-actualization.   But this will is in conflict with society's social mores and responsibilities. Consequently, the artist is doomed to a limbo world in which the will creates idealized representations of nature, without – like Pygmalion -- having the ability to bring his creation to life.   James begins his story with a foreshadowing of the conflict between society and the artist's will through the character Rowland Mallet, who becomes quite literally, the instrument who facilitates Roderick's trip to Rome where he realizes his dream of becoming a sculptor. A reevaluation of traditional family role models and an institutional challenge to Nineteenth-century aesthetics was made by Henry James when wrote about Venice in his series, "Italian Hours." Though he appeared to be following a European and American tradition that objectified the city as an aesthetic mecca, he in reality explored the fallow field of the artist's subconscious and arrived at total social despair. In rejecting middle class familial social models in favor of the artist's pursuit of creative freedom, James plunged the depth of the cultural matrix to discover the angst of Freud and existentialism of Sarte, and the modern politics of divorce. He emerges a Dantesque character who seeks acceptance from the Madonna's image he formerly admired, imploring her forgiveness for having endeavored on the artist's journey of recrimination and persecution. The female character permeates all of James aesthetic endeavors as a matriarchal role model he rejects as he struggles to free himself from traditional family roles and values as they were defined by Victorian society. Instead, he trades her for the stern taskmaster of the "man above the mantel," engaging in the paranoid dialectic between the parental sound boards represented in the artwork where he seeks refuge [Wexler 118-33].

Northampton, Massachusetts represents the standard of social values for wealthy Americans. Steadfastly grounded in their aristocratic colonial heritage and rising global influence, it was a position that could only be maintained by adhering to traditional social decorum. Though Mallet obligations toward his cousin's widow are unwritten, his subconscious will interprets his resistance to offer assistance as an escape from the bondage of marriage altogether. "It was the consciousness of all this that puzzled Mallet whenever he felt tempted to put in his oar." Mallet feels sympathy for his cousin's widow, Cecilia, but finds that "he would rather chop off his hand than offer her a check, a useful piece of furniture, or a black silk dress." When his cousin first married, "he had seemed to feel the upward sweep from the empty bough from which the golden fruit had been plucked." Even his ambiguously misplaced modifying pronoun reinforces Rowland Mallet's identification with his dead cousin, who escaped matrimony for the grave, leaving Mallet with an "uncomfortably sensitive conscience" with respect to Cecilia. When Cecilia meets Roderick Hudson, James again confuses the modifying pronoun, suggesting that Mallet represents the Freudian ego while Roderick represents the id. Referring to Cecelia's flattery of Roderick as a eulogy, James then points to Cecilia's plans for Rowland's future. In her eyes, Mallet's resources obligate him to promote culture through charity. Culture is a reflection of the ideal values which are integral to preserving society. "You are rich and unoccupied, so that it might be abundant. Therefore, I say, you are a person to do something on a large scale. Bestir yourself, dear Rowland, or we may be taught to think that virtue herself is setting a bad example" [2]. Conflating the characters of Rowland and Roderick, allows James to define the motivating drives and conflicts behind the psyche and the will.

The creative subconscious, the aesthetics of modernity and the impulse to freedom lay in the emerging tourism market abroad. The Venice-Paris experience defined the new aesthetics as Henry James, the connoisseur experienced it in the French Impressionist paintings of Claude Monet, James McNeil Whistler and their contemporaries which James described as "the momentary effect of a large slippery sweet, inserted, without a warning between the compressed lips of half-conscious inanition" [Notebooks, 45-46]. Simulating the experience of Marcel Proust's madeleine cake in *À la recherche du temps perdu* (1913), James articulates a cogent theory of modern aesthetics and cognition, anticipating and assimilating transatlantic currents in art and psychology. Paris laid the artist's course with museums, salon art exhibitions, and the recent success of the Impressionists. Thus, when the American author James' British character, Nicholas Dormer in *The Tragic Muse* (1890) seeks training in Paris, a transatlantic catharsis takes place as Nick and other English-speaking art converts encounter resistance in French culture, and are relegated to the convalescents' childhood experience in which absorption occurs on a semi-conscious level while the id wrestles with super-ego over goal actualization and social decorum. Dormer and his id give up much more than a dreary ho hum lifestyle in a London office, however. According to James, Dormer threatens to transfer the entire destiny of state to an uncertain future by relinquishing his political and financial security to a fleeting aesthetic impulse.

Like James' earlier artist-protagonist Roderick Hudson, the word and name play associations become transparent. Nicholas Dormer is clearly identified with St. Nicholas who tempts the id while in a dormant subconscious state, when he joins his family on holiday in Paris. The linguistic barrier forces the would-be artist to fall back on his perceptions as a guide to

experiential politics: "The people of France have made it no secret that those of England, as a general thing are to their perception an inexpressive and speechless race, perpendicular and unsociable, unaddicted to enriching any bareness of contact with verbal or other embroidery" [17]. In the Palais de l'Industrie, "persons sat together in silence." As English speakers with a cultural barrier, James' characters co-mingle their discussion about the art world with primitive theories of child development. Whether art is a necessary step to childhood development is followed by a discussion of the sensory stimulation offered by the salon exhibitions when Nick Dormer comments to his mother: "This place is an immense stimulus to me; it refreshes me, excites me – it's such an exhibition of artistic life. It's full of ideas, full of refinements; it gives one such an impression of artistic experience" [23]. Nick's tragic conflict arises when he gives up a brilliant career in London in Parliament and his family's noble connections, to pursue life as a bohemian artist. But the conflict is a pretext for James' psychological enquiry into the Freudian personality divisions, and the role of aesthetics in a definition of the subconscious and the will. James the traveler falls prey to the id's desire to seek pleasure above all else, while James the psychologist documents and analyzes the symptoms and delusions.

When Henry James wrote about Venice in his series, "Italian Hours," he was establishing a transatlantic tradition that objectified the city as an aesthetic mecca within Parisian modernism. In James criticism, the watery canals of Venice establish the epistemological foundations of Impressionist aesthetics. The city was literally transformed into an animated waterway of light and color synapses that shaped modern Impressionist aesthetic sensibilities. Thus, it is not surprising that James' most significant aesthetic criticism was based on the Venetian tourist experience. Artists and writers who visited the city in the Nineteenth-century established a correlation between Romanticism and the city's unique sights and haunts [Dupperay]. What attracted James' predecessors like Lord Byron and John Ruskin was the assimilation of visual beauty with the momentary fleeting impression of the tourist-observer. In this respect they anticipated the aesthetics of modern life as it was defined by Charles Baudelaire in his *Painter of Modern Life* (1863) and affirmed by later French Impressionism. Venice represented a cross-current of cultural traditions dating from the Byzantine period to the Renaissance, and later Baroque and Rococo periods. The city had actively defined the standards in academic art. But in 1879, the Neo-platonic aesthetic which supported the academic tradition was giving way to empirical psychology and experiential literature that focuses on sensations rather than idealism or dramatic narrative. The new materialism was found in the novels of naturalism to the sociology of Karl Marx. In the aesthetic experience, it is marked by a shift from idealism to symbolism. James' *Wings of the Dove* (1902) and *The Golden Bowl* (1904) use Italy as an aesthetic backdrop, while redirecting the former edifying role of academic art to the aesthetic symbol – the wings of the dove and the golden bowl. Both novels make identifications between the unattainable state of Love, and the material symbol which is mortal, lost and broken. This transposition in aesthetics is sometimes called "art for art's sake." The aesthetic impulse, or immediate response to beauty, is perceived as a justification for art. But in Venice, and by extension, Paris, the aesthetics of the city were also complemented by its society of artists, writers, musicians and tourists. The aesthetic impulse was not experienced in a vacuum, like the Romantic sublime in Caspar David Friedrich's *Wanderer Above the Mists* (1818) (fig. 1)*,* rather it was a synthesis of sociability and solitary perception which established Paris as the art capital of the world. Baudelaire's artist is a transatlantic mutation, a world voyager who experiences the sublime in a

single transitory moment as part of the emerging modern experience. But Baudelaire, like James and his predecessors goes beyond the sensory experience to analyze the underlying psychological conditions of modern aesthetics:

> Now imagine an artist perpetually in the spiritual condition of the convalescent, and you will have the key to the character of M. G. But convalescence is like a return to childhood. The convalescent, like the child, enjoys to the highest degree the faculty of taking a lively interest in things, even the most trivial in appearance. Let us hark back, if we can, by a retrospective effort of our imaginations, to our youngest, our morning impressions, and we shall recognize that they were remarkably akin to the vividly colored impressions that we received later on after a physical illness, provided that illness left our spiritual faculties pure and unimpaired. The child sees everything as a novelty; the child is always 'drunk'. Nothing is more like what we call inspiration than the joy the child feels in drinking in shape and color. I will venture to go even further and declare that inspiration has some connection with congestion, that every sublime thought is accompanied by a more or less vigorous nervous impulse that reverberates in the cerebral cortex [Baudelaire III]

The pleasure of aesthetics overwhelms the traveler-art critic James, and induces his retreat from social responsibilities. Aesthetics affects the viewer's subconscious rendering him a passive follower of the pleasure principle: the pursuit of pleasure and escape from pain. When James described "a narrow canal in the heart of the city – a patch of green water and a surface of pink wall… a great shabby façade of Gothic windows and balconies," he substituted words to evoke the ethereal paintings of his compatriot artists. He reference to Ruskin's *Stones of Venice* is lost however in James' sublimation of Ruskin's detailed descriptions of Gothic architecture to James' cognitive studies of light and color. To the elder Ruskin, Gothic architecture was a designation of class and metaphysics, and a manifestation of the noble, the immortal and divine [35]. The philosophy which supported such esoteric diaphanous nuances of light and color was articulated in the evolving dialectic between William James, psychologist and brother of the novelist Henry James, and mystic Emmanuel Swedenborg. It was here that issues such as consciousness and unconsciousness were freed of formal idealist boundaries and were reattached to the symbol. While William James argued in favor of the existence of God by virtue of extended hypothesis, his theories of attention and association form proofs for the subconscious perception of images and ideas while at the same time arguing against a modern theory of the subconscious as independent.   Henry James seemingly disconnected and incoherent associative musings reproduce contemporary theories of perception as an act which vacillates between a focused consciousness perception and a passive unconscious perception. The same theory is at work in Whistler's [Honour and Fleming 15-35] and Monet's paintings which rely on a subliminal dormant perception of form for their aesthetic enjoyment. Shrouded in shadow or bathed in light, the atmospheric effects of light and reflected light lull the viewer into a subconscious perception of experience through form with the slow and peaceful ebb and flow of breeze and waves. William James' *Principles of Psychology* in its concise articulation and summary of contemporary trends can rightly be called the modern successor to Edmund Burke's *Enquiry in the Origins of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757) in its analysis of perception and ramifications for emerging modern aesthetics. For example, William James quotes Herman Helmholtz' proof for conscious and subconscious perception in describing a diagram of two series of diagonal lines converging at the central vertical line much like the perspectival lines of the canals of Venice (fig. 1). An equilibrium:

of the attention, persistent for any length of time, is under no circumstances attainable. The natural tendency of the attention when left to itself is to wander to ever new things; and so soon as nothing new is to be noticed there, it passes, in spite of our will, to something else. If we wish to keep it upon one and the same object, we must seek constantly to find out something new about the latter, especially if other powerful impressions are attracting us away [fig 36; 422)]
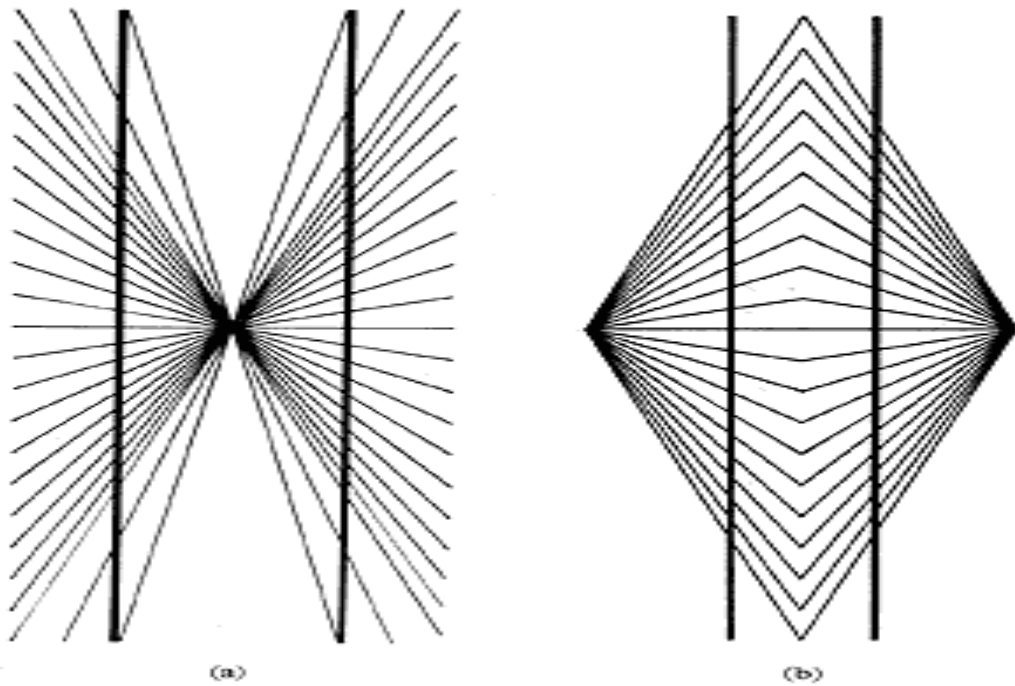
(Fig. 2) a)Hering Illusion 1861. B)Wilhelm Wundt's variation, 1896. (Gregory Fig. 4)

In other words, how does the brain's visual cortex perceive cognition beyond the focal point (fig. 2)? Helmholz's assistant, Wilhelm Wundt created the variation on the Hering illusion, and observed that as a result of optical illusions, a vertical line appears longer than a horizontal line of equal length [Gregory 179-296].   In describing the aesthetic pleasures of visual perception, Henry James tacitly acknowledges pioneering research in perceptual cognition and makes the transition to emerging psychological theories of the subconscious will and desire. In his essay, "Venice," Henry James writes that that the best way to enjoy Venice is to focus on "simple pleasures." The simple pleasures include looking at Titian or Tintoretto, but now James equates these great masterpieces with "the way one falls into the habit, -- and resting one's light-wearied eyes upon the windowless gloom; or than floating in a gondola, or hanging over a balcony…it is of these superficial pastimes that a Venetian day is composed, and the pleasure of the matter is in the emotions to which they minister" [4]. The subtle illusory experiences in Venice contrast the narrow canals, and unexpected dynamic architectural variations with the effervescent effects of light, shadow and color. Absorption of the viewer's attention is clearly through subconscious perception and wandering attention. The synthesis of aesthetic and social patterns can be absorbed from the sights and sounds of a lazy mid-day sun, the subtle afterglow of twilight or the approaching dawn (fig. 3).

The watery streets of Venice and its reflection in the "dramatic" doorsteps pose an actual perceptual map where the visitor co-mingles past and present. The correlation between the physical perception of the city and its psychological impression suggest that James followed emerging theories of cognition, and that these coalesced with theories of visual perception to form a cogent theory of the subconscious. A latent apprehension of sights and memories form the basis of both existence and reflection for James. But they also inspire the traveler, the artist, the author and the lover. These drives are purely the focus of pleasure via the aesthetic impulse. According to James, "Venetian life is a matter of gossiping and gaping, of circulating without a purpose, and of staring…"[591]. Venetian life, James concludes, is "a mere literary convention" where in the "solemn presence of the church…I forsee I should become even more confoundingly conscious of the stumbling-block that inevitably, even with his first few words, crops up in the path of the lover of Venice…"[591]. Language and visual perception become part of the same subliminal process of absorption where the literal reflection of the Grand Canal entertains the viewer through its free play of form, image and memory. Life has also come to end in Venice since its height as a center of commercial and cultural life during the Renaissance. All that remains is "the most beautiful of tombs" where the traveler contemplates in coldly engraved stones the pleasing impressions of past glory.

Fig. 3 James McNeil Whistler. *Ponte della Canonica.* **Watercolor. 1903. Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston.** *Gondola Days: Isabella Stewart Gardner and the Palazzo Barbaro Circle* **2004.**

In his theory of visual perception, William James is largely indebted to Herman Hemholtz's "The Facts of Perception" (1878). Hemholtz begins by acknowledging that one of the central questions in philosophical debates is to what extent our perceptions are an accurate measure of reality. The Romantic transcendentalists believed that reality was internal, and ideals existed independently of material experience [Giesenkirchen 112-32]. By contrast, the natural

sciences have posited theories of perception which empirically distinguish word definitions from symbols and fields of perception by applying principles of geometry.

It is apparent that all these differences among the effects of light and sound are determined by the way in which the nerves of sense react. Our sensations are simply effects which are produced in our organs by objective causes; precisely how these effects manifest themselves depends principally and in essence upon the type of apparatus that reacts to the objective causes. What information, then, can the qualities of such sensations give us about the characteristics of the external causes and influences which produce them? Only this: our sensations are signs, not images, of such characteristics. One expects an image to be similar in some respect to the object of which it is an image; in a statue one expects similarity of form, in a drawing similarity of perspective, in a painting similarity of colour. A sign, however, need not be similar in any way to that of which it is a sign. The sole relationship between them is that the same object, appearing under the same conditions, must evoke the same sign; thus different signs always signify different causes or influences.

In divorcing the sensory perception from the object, Hemholtz makes the epistemological transition from image to symbol. It is significant because it implies a synthesis of cognitive perceptions with language, and no longer distinguishes between them. Thus, in the cognitive act of perception, one also intuits the language of signs accompanying it, thereby stimulating a subliminal repository of images connected to linguistic antecedents. For James, these sensory perceptions were keys to human experience through emotion and memory. Time and again, James makes analogies between a character's feelings and sensory cognition in the form of light and reflection. For example, in his last unfinished novel, *The Sense of the Past,* he writes: "…after the flush of the amusement of his extraordinary consciousness having begun a bit to abate in the light of the brutalities…his dawning anguish glimmers and glimmers; what it means to see himself married to the elder sister and locked up with her there in *that* form of the Past" [297]. Memory and image form a diaphanous mosaic of associations among which the mind lingers and responds. The pleasurable sights and sounds of Venice transport the traveler to a place of desire where the subconscious lazily synthesizes meaning and image to create symbols of beauty, passion and repose. With the benefit of reflection, a Jamesian character decodes the visual matrix to determine action and response. But the drives behind goals are lost to the inspiration of the moment: a swirling mosaic of sensations and alliterations:

> the windy lanterns flickered in the square and were reflected in the wet, and he turned about for another prowl – his last decidedly this one – he assured himself that he had in his pocket matches for tobacco and that, should he require them, the numerous brave stiff candle-sticks of silver and brass (oh what people knew, even Aurora herself would have given for them!) were furnished with tall tapers [81].

In *The Wings of the Dove* set in Venice, it is ultimately in death and its contemplation that the subconscious mind finds its ultimate repose, distinguishing between present and past, margin and future. The subliminal drives of the moment only record loss as a fixity in time, and a measure of desire. Consummation can only be enjoyed in the post-coital state after repose and in submerged memory. While the dove symbolizes the flight of the soul to heaven, it also signifies the fall from grace. The paradise of Eden exists only in the mind, and according to Freud the biblical totem is primary to European culture [Seligson 68-84]. Anticipating Freud's *Totem and*

Taboo (1912) and its recapitulation of anthropological colonial studies of the early 20th century, James' symbol – the wings of the dove – is inspired by animism and totem animals which become "receptacles of souls which have left the body on account of their rapid movements or flight through the air"[qtd. in Freud *Totem* 119]. Totemic primitive cultures were defined as those which established prescribed customs and codes of behavior. James emerging subconscious – like the Wings of Dove --- seeks to free itself from the prescribed codes of social conduct, and return to the ether of primitive semi-conscious cognition. The frequency with which Jamesian characters abandon their social responsibilities is the calculated result of another subliminal force at work [Rowe 226-232]. Synonymous with the subconscious, it reveals itself through the aesthetic impulse, and the momentary, fleeting pleasure of the tourist.

Among his most dramatic expositions of the relationship between the will, the ego and artist is found in *The Sense of the Past* (1917), one of two novels left unfinished at the time of the author's death, it can be read as James' conclusion and resolution of the conflict introduced in *Roderick Hudson*. Here the emerging ego defines itself as a consciousness that seeks identification with beauty, or the aesthetic impulse; a source imbues the fleeting momentary consciousness with value. In response to the demand that he become "intellectually great" he replies: "A beautiful?...a delicate classified insect? A slow crawling library beetle? Slightly iridescent, warranted compressible – that is resisting the squash when the book is closed to on him?"[James. *Sense of the Past,* 12]. With a Kafkaesque reference to emerging modernist existentialism, James returns to the aestheticism of the past century in seeking pleasure, and the inevitable social reprimand for evading social responsibilities. What is remarkable in James' writing is an awareness of his cultural peers: Freud, Kafka, Impressionism and Post-Impression. Writers and artists who defined the emerging modern era are synthesized with his own aesthetic consciousness, one that is grounded in American aesthetics, metaphysics and psychology. The artist for James is the Romantic who is driven to achieve, yet resists. Here the conflict between the id and super ego results in an impotent aestheticism in which Baudelaire's Impressionist definition of modernity as the "fleeting, the momentary, the contingent" arrests the motivation of the artist whose metamorphosis into the passive observer becomes the defining characteristic of the Jamesian subconscious will.

What is remarkable in James's develop, is the consistency of plot lines, as James the psychologist turned novelist assimilates emerging modernism and grafts it onto his protagonists' conflict [Ellman]. A rise in manufacturing and business resulted in an increase in the affluent bourgeoisie class which gave way to an intellectual crisis concerning value and meaning in life. When Nick contemplates and his rejects a seat in the House of Commons, James the psychologist examines the way in which generational role models establish standards circumscribed by class and wealth. Sir Nicholas, who formerly held the seat passes away; he is Nick's role model. But the same role model play is found in *The Sense of the Past* in the form of a portrait of gentleman admired by Ralph. It is located above the fireplace mantel, and the figure wears a great military cloak or mantle which recalls the Napoleonic military cloaks of Caspar David Friedrich's Romantic paintings of clandestine Germans during a nationalist resistance movement, such as the man portrayed in his *Wanderer above the Mists* (fig. 1) .Friedrich's man above the mists demonstrates the imperturbable will and covert identity which develops in adolescence. He was designed by the artist as a role model for youth to emulate in joining the nationalist movement to

protect the German-speaking nations during the Wars of Liberation against Napoleon (Koerner). The viewer assumes the identity of the figure by literally entering the image from the rear of the *rückenfigur* through a process of visual identification and cognitive illusion. This establishes a tension between duties demanded by society and the pursuit of pleasure and independent identity. The obvious word play on the homonyms mantel/mantle is a function of James' psychology, and represents the protagonist-artist's desire to escape the responsibilities of society. It also suggests that the subconscious makes a deliberate choice in perception which intentionally plays with, and perverts the social order to retreat to the level of a child: "This it was that constituted the prodigy, for Ralph had truly never seen a gentleman painted, and painted beautifully, in so thankless a posture" [72]. James the art critic observes: "Painters always have a great distrust of those who write about pictures. They have a strong sense of the difference between the literary point of view and the pictorial, and they inveterately suspect critics of confounding the two" [*Painter's Eye* 35]. As a psychologist, James probes beyond the surface of salon criticism and academic training [Bersani]. Painted from the rear, like Friedrich's Romantic *rückenfigur* in *Wanderer Above the Mists* (fig. 1)*,* the figure begins a polar personality transference with the observer. Ralph concludes that the subject had been "young and gallant," and "was a man of his time at the "dawn of a modern era." The experiential shift from viewer to role model produces in Ralph Pendrel the effect "of a worshipper in a Spanish church who watches for the tear on the cheek or the blood drop from the wound of some wonder-working effigy of Mother or of Son" [78]. James notes "The huge strangeness…of a gentleman… to meet him and share his disconnection" produces dissociation in the observer. The effects were magical and divine where the portrait like a "saintly image itself reigned, clear and sublime" [78]. But James the Impressionist connoisseur knows that this magical transference occurs through the medium of light, and light which reproduces the technology of a camera. At the same time, he seeks to probe the neurological structure of the subconscious will:

> He had after this an instant of confusion, an instant in which he struck himself as catching at a distance the chance reflection of his candle flame on some polished surface. If the flame was there, however, where was the surface? – the duplication of his light showing, he quickly perceived, in the doorway itself …The young man above the mantel, the young man, brown-haired, pale, erect, with the high-collared dark blue coat, the young man revealed, responsible, conscious, quite shining out of the darkness, presented him the face he had prayed to reward his vigil; but the face – miracle of miracles, yes – confounded him as his own [86].

James thus anticipates in the culmination of his aesthetic theory from 1872 to 1917 and personality development the sophisticated theory of Freud's id, ego and superego first outlined in his *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920). In this theory, Freud first defines the personality divisions which act independently of one another creating psychological conflicts:

> Most of the 'pain' we experience is of a perceptual order, perception either of the urge of unsatisfied instincts or of something in the external world which may be painful in itself or may arouse painful anticipations in the psychic apparatus and is recognized by it as 'danger'. The reaction to these claims of impulse and these threats of danger, a reaction in which the real activity of the psychic apparatus is manifested, may be guided correctly by the pleasure-principle or by the reality-principle which modifies this [I].

In refusing to follow the career path of his double ego, Sir Nicholas, Nick Dormer retreats from reality and pain into the playful den of the artist. He escapes the responsibility – and the

discomfort and pain -- of the both the soldier and the politician and businessman. His will is subsumed to the aesthetic response and the signs of art are absorbed subliminally. The double above the fireplace mantel who turns his back on Ralph Pendrel wearing a large blue great cloak or mantle subsumes the protagonist-artist's conscious will to the subconscious desire to retreat from pain and follow the pleasure principle. But the *rükenfigur* also becomes a projection of the viewer's id, and represents a personality split between the role model of the super ego and the seduction of the id or subconscious.   He invites his double to literally turn his back on social responsibilities. The ramifications for society are echoed by Nick Dormer's mother who laments his loss: "He scarcely needed to hear her wail with a pleading that was almost tragic: 'Don't you see how things have turned out for us? Don't you know how unhappy I am – don't you know what a bitterness -?'" [*Tragic Muse* 163]. Here Ralph Pendrel's Madonna weeps over her son's expulsion from Eden, as the artist-protagonist tragically and heroically decides to leave the security of society's mantle, of business and his mother's protection to venture into the domain of pleasure without society's protection.

Infused with the vitality of the modern world, Paris at the turn of the century represented a crossroads of cultural, intellectual and scientific ideas. The emerging aesthetics of modernism were founded on the eroding academic traditions. To survive, the modern artist had to forge a new ideology that synthesized the psychology of perception with rugged individualism. The man above the mantel is just such an individual, but his message is sent to viewer's subconscious like the libidinous advertising of the latter 20th century.

References

-Baudelaire, Charles."The Painter of Modern Life." *Selected Writings on Art and Literature,* Trans. P.E. Charvet, NY: Viking Press, 1972: 395-422.

-Bersani, Leo. *The Freudian Body: Psychoanalysis and Art.* NY: Columbia UP, 1986.

-Dupperay, Annick. "Symptom or Idea? Venice and Italy in James's Early Prose (1869-1875)." Eds. Melanie Ross and Greg Zacharias. *Tracing Henry James.* Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2008.

-Ellmann, Maude. *The Nets of Modernism: Henry James, Virginia Woolf, James Joyce and Sigmund Freud.* NY: Cambridge UP, 2010.

-Freud, Sigmund. *Beyond the Pleasure Principle.* Trans. second German edition by C. J. M. Hubback. London-Vienna: International Psycho-Analytical, 1922.

-_ _ _. *Totem and Taboo.* Trans. James Strachey. Reprint 1950, 1999. NY: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 119. Web. 2003.

-Giesenkirchen, Michaela. "Adding Up William and Henry: The Psychodynamic Geometry of Q.E.D." *American Literary Realism.* Winter (2011) 43.2: 112-32.

-Gregory, R.L. "Perceptual Illusions and Brain Models." *Proc. Royal Society.* B171: 179-296.

-Hemholz, Hermann. "The Facts of Perception." (1878) from *Selected Writings of Hermann Helmholtz.* Ed. Russell Kahl. Wesleyan University Press, 1971.

-Honour, Hugh and John Fleming. *Venetian Hours: Henry James, Whistler and Sargent.* Boston: Bullfinch Press, 1991.

-James, Henry. *The Notebooks of Henry James.* F.O. Mathiessen and Kenneth B. Murdoch. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981.

-_ _ _. *The Novels and Tales of Henry James: The Sense of the Past.* Ed. Percy Lubbock. NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1917. Reprint.

-_ _ _."The Grand Canal." *Scribner's Magazine.* XII.5 (November 1892): 531-50. *Making of America.* 2011 Cornell UP. Web.

-_ _ _. *The Painter's Eye: Notes and Essays on the Pictorial Arts.* Ed. John Sweeney. Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1989.

-_ _ _. "Roderick Hudson." *The Atlantic Monthly.* 0035. 207 (January 1875): 1-15. *Making of America.* 2011 Cornell UP. Web.

-_ _ _. "Venice." *Century Magazine.* 25.1 (1882): 3-24. *Making of America.* 2011 Cornell UP. - Web.

-_ _ _. *The Tragic Muse.* Ed. Philip Horne. NY: Penguin Books, 1995.

-James, William. *Principles of Psychology,* NY: Holt, 1890.

-Koerner, Joseph Leo. *Caspar David Friedrich and the Subject of Landscape.* New Haven: Yale UP, 1990.

-Rowe, John Carlos. "After Freud: Henry James and Psychoanalysis." *The Henry James Review.* Spring (1984) 5.3: 226-232.

-Ruskin, John. *The Stones of Venice.* Ed. J.G. Links. NY: Da Capo Press, 1960.

-Seligson, Judith." Visual Intertextuality: Drawing Comparisons in *The Wings of the Dove*." *The Henry James Review.* Winter (2010) 31.1: 68-84.

-Wexler ,Joyce. "Speaking Out: Dialogue and the Literary Unconscious."*Style.* Spring 1997. 31.1: 118-33.

-Winner, Viola Hopkins. *Henry James and the Visual Arts.* Charlottesville: U of Virginia P, 1970.

Puck and Theseus or the Parallels that Never Meet

Nizar Zouidi
University of Manouba, Tunisia

Abstract

It is quite common to consider Robin Goodfellow the jester of fairy king Oberon, a trickster. His tricks, however, are in no way common. He plays tricks on time and space. There is an abundance of words that belong to the semantic field of time and place in the play. The majority of these words are uttered by Theseus, the Duke of Athens. Un-playful as he might appear to be, the Athenian Duke guarantees the success of Puck's tricks. The fairy and the Duke seem to be playing similar roles. In this article, we attempt to challenge the tradition that casts the actor playing Theseus in no other role than that of Oberon. We will endeavour to show that Theseus and Robin are the parallels that never meet.

Keywords: Doubling, trickery, time, parallels, performance

As early as the seventeenth century, critical accounts seemed to underscore the central role of Puck in determining the course of events in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In our age, Harold Bloom evokes certain lines from John Milton's "L'Allegro" as one of the earliest critical accounts of the play (49-51). The lines run as follows:

> Tells how the drudging goblin swet,
>
> To ern his Cream-bowle duly set,
> When in one night, ere glimps of morn,
> His shadowy Flale hath thresh'd the Corn
> That ten day-labourers could not end,
> Then lies him down the Lubbar Fend,
> And stretch'd out all the Chimney's length,
> Basks at the fire his hairy strength;
> And Crop-full out of dores he flings,
> ere the first Cock his Mattin rings.

(John Milton "L'Allegro" 105-114)

In these lines, Milton seems to confine the play to what Puck does. This perhaps is why the sporting fairy can only be taken seriously if one wishes to better fathom the plot of Shakespeare's play. Emphasising the importance of the goblin's actions hardly means that we should overlook their playful nature. On the contrary, "it is quite common to consider Puck a trickster" (Evans, 109).

The Challenging Parallels

Less common is to consider Theseus, the duke of Athens, as his accomplice. At first glance, the two characters seem different. Indeed, Puck is in every respect a free-spirited player, whereas Theseus is usually regarded as the paragon of formality. While "the vocabulary of Puck is the most vernacular in the play" (Von Doreen, 106). Theseus and Hippolyta speak more poetically.

Nevertheless, the play is known for accommodating such differences. Indeed, as August Wilhelm Von Schlegel remarks, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, "the most extraordinary combination of the most dissimilar ingredients seems to have been brought about without effort by some ingenious and lucky accident" (Schlegel, 63). This perhaps explains that many productions of the play rely on doubling. Indeed, since 1970, the actors playing the roles of humans are sometimes cast in the roles of the fairies. For example, it is common that the actor that play Theseus alsoplaysthe role of Oberon.

The Critical Wedlock

However, suggesting that this actor may play the role of another fairy may be considered a profanation. The very tradition of doubling does not seem to deem separating the royal couple of Athens in the fairy world a viable course of action. In this paper, we will not go as far as arguing that the roles of Theseus and Puck should be played by the same actor. We will rather attempt to challenge the tradition that rigidly refuses to consider Theseus' undeniable parallels

with Robin Goodfellow. We will argue that the Athenian Duke is hardly comparable to Oberon. Indeed, his role rather overlaps with that of Robin Goodfellow. Not only are the roles of these two characters similar, but they also are complementary.

Schlegel, similarly toVon Doreen, consigns Theseus to a role he shares with Hippolyta. The German critic writes: "Theseus and Hippolyta are, as it were, a splendid frame for the picture, they take no part in the action, but surround it with a stately pomp" (64). The royal couple are no doubt the patrons of festivity in the human world. This very role makes the human Duke utterly different from the king of the fairies.

The role of Theseus, as Schlegel argues, is to frame the play's action. We can hardly attribute such a role to the king of the fairies. Indeed, according to William Hazlitt, "The leader of the fairy band" (61), is Puck. The playful fairy controls the play's action in the forest. "Puck [...] promotes "the night rule" version of misrule over which" (Barber 118) he and not Oberon "is superintendent and lord" (Ibid) in all but name.

The Invisible Ruler of the Night

The Fairy's visible hyperactivity may be read in this light. Ironically, this visible hyperactivity makes him hardly visible. Even Bottom, whose transformation seems to have allowed him to see the invisible, could not see the one who literally has made an ass of him. Indeed, It seems that "the only rustic who can see, hear and speak to the fairy folk" (Bloom, xi) cannot see Robin.

This cannot be ascribed to magic alone. Indeed, after the metamorphosis of Bottom, the shield of invisibility that protects the fairies from mortal eyes is no longer in effect. For example, the Queen of the fairies can no longer enjoy her ethereal nature. As a result, she is vulnerable to the trickster who somehow remains invisible till all his tricks are successfully carried out. It is easy to see that the very success of these tricks depends on the trickster's invisibility.

Puck's voice, however, is audible. It is heard both by humans and by magical beings. Still, it is impossible to identify him. It is a voice that freely haunts the woods and that can take any shape. To the humans it is human and to the fairies it is fairylike.

'What hast thou done?'

As a matter of course, the essence of Robin remains fluid. He can only be described as hyper-dynamic as his speech seems to reflect:

> Up and down, up and down,
> I will lead them up and down.
> The people fear me in the country and the town.
> Goblin, lead them up and down.
>
> (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*. III. ii. 408-411)

Puck is never asked 'what art thou?' (*Hamlet*.I .i.46) like the other goblin in *Hamlet*. Instead Oberon asks him: 'What hast thou done?' (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*. III.ii. 90). It

seems that action is all that matters when we speak about/to Puck. What the fairy is means very little to those who meet him. The words of the other fairy in act two scene one testify to this:

> Either I mistake your shape and making quite,
> Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite
> Call'd Robin Goodfellow. Are not you he
> That frights the maidens of the villagery,
> Skim milk, and sometimes labour in the quern,
> And bootless make the breathless housewife churn,
> And sometime make the drink to bear no barm,
> Mislead night-wanderers, laughing at their harm?
> Those that Hobgoblin call you, and sweet Puck,
> You do their work, and they shall have good luck.
> Are not you he?

(*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, II, i, 32-42)

Puck's fellow fairy could only refer to his actions rather than to his shape – for his shape can be mistaken. Indeed, there is an abundance of the verbs of action in this speech. Even the two adjectives used to describe Robin, "shrewd" and "knavish", refer to his acts. It seems that Puck's identity is related to what he does.

The Vulnerability of the Past

The nature of action in the play is quite problematic. According to Schlegel, "the loves of mortals are painted as poetical enchantment which by contrary enchantment, may immediately be suspended, and then renewed again" (Schlegel, 64). This shows that what has been done can be undone. Indeed, Robin assures the audience that

> If we shadows have offended,
> Think but this, and all is mended—
> That you have but slumbered here
> While these visions did appear.
> And this weak and idle theme,
> No more yielding but a dream,
> Gentles, do not reprehend.
> If you pardon, we will mend.
> And, as I am an honest Puck,
> If we have unearnèd luck
> Now to 'scape the serpent's tongue,
> We will make amends ere long.
> Else the Puck a liar call.
> So good night unto you all.
> Give me your hands if we be friends,
> And Robin shall restore amends..

(*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, V, i, 423-438)

Everything that has happened appears as no more than a possibility. It may after all be (made) a dream. Indeed, Puck even tells us that he may give a different version of the play if the audience wishes him to do so.

The Missing Joint in Time

The technique used by Shakespeare is comparable to stage magic. Lysander and Hermia are made to seal their love with the most sacred of vows. Assured of Lysander's unwavering devotion, Hermia goes to sleep. She wakes up to find him courting her friend.
Waking up to find herself wooed by two young men, Hermia's friend Helena accuses her friend of using her two lovers to trick her and screams:

> O spite! O hell! I see you all are bent
> To set against me for your merriment
> (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*. III. ii. 145-146 [emphases mine])

then adds

> Lo, she is one of the confederacy!
> Now I perceive they conjoin'd all three
> To fashion this false sport in spite of me
> (*A Midsummer Night's Dream* III. ii; 192-194)

In the two utterances quoted above, Helena uses verbs of perception to refer to what she has not seen rather than to what she sees. What is that which she has not seen? The answer is what happens inside the closed fist of the stage magician.

The game is like the silk handkerchief changing colour magic. All we can see or believe we see is a handkerchief changing from one colour to another as it passes the closed fist of the stage magician. The secret seems to be literally in the hand of the stage magician.
Therefore, Helena's surprise and disbelief is caused by a missing joint in time. This missing joint in time can be seen at work when the charmed characters sleep (Titania, Lysander and Demetrius) or when they leave the stage (Bottom).

The latter example is quite interesting. It brings to mind the costume change magic. The assistant disappears for a little while then appears in a new costume. The same happens to Bottom who leaves the stage only to be "translated" (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, V, iii, 59). As he re-enters, his companions are struck with terror and put to flight.
Like Helena and Hermia, "the troupers" cannot understand the change that occurred to their friend. They too are the victims of a missing joint in time. This testifies the centrality of time to Shakespeare's stage magic in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.
At the very beginning of the play, Theseus complains alternatively about the fast and slow pace of time:

> Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour
> Draws on apace. Four happy days bring in
> Another moon. But oh, methinks how slow
> This old moon wanes! She lingers my desires,
> Like to a stepdame or a dowager
> Long withering out a young man's revenue.

(*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, I, I, 1-6 [Emphases Mine])

The time expressions used in these lines show that Theseus Oscillates between excitement and despair. Words and phrases like "apace", "happy days" and "nuptial hour" contradict with the expressions "how slow", "old moon" etc. This disclose an initial ambivalence towards time. This ambivalence will be emphasised as the four days seem to magically dream themselves away in an immeasurable night. Indeed, Titania assures us that the whole forest adventure has taken a single night saying:

> Come, my lord, and in our flight
> Tell me how it came this night
> That I sleeping here was found
> With these mortals on the ground.

(*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, IV, ii, 84-87)

Time, therefore, is a problematic category. Still, it is the key to understanding the parallels between Theseus and Puck. "There's no/ clock in the forest" (As You Like it, III, ii, 235-236), but one might add that if there is any time measuring mechanism in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, it can be found in Theseus who always tells the time. This perhaps is why he seems to be absent in the forest adventure. However, as soon as the forest scenes end, we hear the word "day" (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, IV, ii, 90) from the lips of the Duke.
Theseus announces the end of that long night before he dismisses it as an idle dream. His description of his hounds in act four scene one brings the play back to Greece, while the word day brings it back to the realm of measurable temporality. In this sense, he is the one that signals the lovers' return to human History and Geography.

Before this scene, the lovers are lost in the forest's winding paths that seem to lead nowhere. They are directed by false voices that have no fixed identities. There, timealso ceases to be finite. No matter how many times the characters sleep and wake, it is – as Titania claims – the same night that unfolds. The forest, therefore, seems to be hedged from the determinants of the real.

Guardian of the Magical World

In His speech on the lover, the lunatic and the poet, the Duke of Athens claims that what happened in that long"night"were mere illusions created by the "seething brains" (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, V, i, 5) of the lovers. Hyppolita's protest is to no avail. Still, it makes the verdict seem as unreasonable as that which it denies.
The dismissal of the strange events is further questioned(maybe unwittingly) by Theseus himself when he says:

> Lovers, to bed; 'Tis almost fairy time.
> I fear we shall out-sleep the coming morn
> As much as this night we have overwatch'd

(*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, V, i, 354-356)

These lines show that Theseus, the time measuring character, is trying to make sure the two worlds never meet again. He thus guarantees the invisibility of the trickster. Therefore, we may argue that in the play, he acts as the guardian of the magical world. Accordingly, he cannot be excluded from the forest adventure altogether.

(Un)staged Doubles

In 1970, Peter Brook casts Alan Howard as Theseus and Oberon, Sara Kastleman as Hippolyta and Titania, John Kane as Philostrate and Puck, and Philip Locke as Egeus and Quince. Since then, a tradition of performative doubling has been established.
This tradition still holds its sway over the theatrical performances of the play. Nevertheless, in the 2011 Nancy Meckler's production of the play, the doubling has been seasoned. In that production, only the two royal couples are played by the same actor/actress, Joe Stone-fewings and Pippa Nixon.

There may be a mysterious link between The Duke of Athens and the fairies, but whether it justifies casting the same actor in the roles of Theseus and Oberon or not, is questionable. In her broadcasted lecture on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Emma Smith emphasises the interchangeability between characters. She gives the example of Demetrius and Lysander. Smith refers to the scene in which Theseus says that "Demetrius is a worthy gentleman" (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, I, i, 52) and Hermia retorts: "so is Lysander" (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, I, I, 53).

However, what Smith seems to overlook is that Lysander and Demetrius are interchangeable only within the value system that considers each one of them "a worthy gentleman" in his own right. Indeed, both Lysander and Egeus resist the parallelism by referring to two distinct value systems. The former refers to the love Demetrius professes for Helena while the latter clings to the ancient law of Athens.

A Matter of Actions

These value systems are used to judge actions. Indeed, Egeus wants to sue his daughter for refusing to marry the man he has chosen for her not for her being in love with Lysander. In the same vein, Lysander reminds Demetrius of what he has done to Helena saying: Demetrius, I'll avouch it to his head,

> Made love to Nedar's daughter, Helena,
> And won her soul. And she, sweet lady, dotes,
> Devoutly dotes, dotes in idolatry
> Upon this spotted and inconstant man.
>
> (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, I,i, 107-111)

He blames him for his past actions. Therefore, it seems that only actions do matter.
In terms of action, there are more parallels between Theseus and Robin Goodfellow than between the former and the king of the fairies. Within the framework where only actions matter, Oberon hardly resembles Theseus. The role of Oberon in the fairy world can scarcely be compared to that of Theseus in the world of the humans. In the human world, Theseus directs the

action on stage. It is he that removes Egeus and Demetrius from the scene to allow the lovers, Lysander and Hermia, to plan their eloping. Moreover, He allows them enough time to tell Helena about their plans. She in turn will reveal all to Demetrius.

Then, the couples will chase each other in the forest where Robin Goodfellow intervenes to prevent the angry lovers from meeting each other onstage. Thus, Like Theseus, who postpones his verdict (in the case of Hermia's marriage), he prevents the play from turning into a tragedy.

The Parallels that Never Meet

Curiously enough, Puck and Theseus seem to be the parallels that can never meet. This may explain why Theseus withdraws from the stage at "fairy time" (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, V, i , 354). He also orders everyone to go to sleep and literally clears the stage for the fairies. He says the last mortal word in the play while Puck utters the last fairy word.
Like Theseus, Puck frames the action of the play. As a matter of course, it is quite significant that the first line uttered by a fairy is Puck's "How now, spirit? Whither wander you?" (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, II, i, 45). This question marks a shift from the real to the imaginary. The geographical exactitude of Thesues is replaced with the open generalities of the fairies speeches:

Over hill, over dale,
Thorough bush, thorough brier,
Over park, over pale,
Thorough flood, thorough fire.
I do wander everywhere
Swifter than the moon's sphere.
And I serve the fairy queen
To dew her orbs upon the green.
The cowslips tall her pensioners be.
In their gold coats spots you see.
Those be rubies, fairy favors.
In those freckles live their savors.
I must go seek some dewdrops here
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.
Farewell, thou lob of spirits. I'll be gone.
Our queen and all our elves come here anon.

(*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, II, i, 2-16)

The notion of space seems hazy in these lines. Indeed, even the word "here" ceases to denote proximity; if both the King and the Queen of the fairies "doth keep [their] revels *here* tonight" (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, II, i, 17), how can Robin ask his fellow fairy not to let Oberon see the Queen? Indeed, characters may be "here" without meeting each other.

Replacing Theseus as the clock and the compass of the play, Robin loosens time and space and stretches them beyond their known limits. Indeed, while Theseus subjects every movement onstage to his spatiotemporal exactitude, Puck seems to stretch these two categories without losing control over the performance. Despite his initial mistake, which is caused by Theseus management of time, the Fairy is in total control of the forest performance. Even sleep and waking happen only when it suits the plans of the playful fairy.

In this play, trickery is primarily playing with time and space. Only two characters in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* can play with both categories. The Duke and the playful fairy seem to be working together. Both of them play tricks with time and space. They manipulate these two categories to guarantee the success of the forest magic.

Accordingly, we may agree with William Hazlitt that it may be "too much to suppose all this intentional"(Hazlitt, 65),but we cannot overlook the overlapping between the roles of the two characters. Whether intentionally or not, the leader of the fairy band and the lord of Athens help each other.

We know that to suggest that the role(s) of the Duke and the playful fairy should be played by the same actor may still seem unwarrantable. However, the parallels between these two roles cannot be overlooked. This is why, highlighting them in performance will certainly prove rewarding.

References

Print sources

-Barber, C. L. "May Games and Metamorphoses on A Midsummer Night's Dream". *Bloom's Shakespeare through the Ages: A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Ed. Harold Bloom and Janyce Marson.New York: Bloom's Literary Criticism, 2008. 118-154. Print.

-Bloom, Harold. "Introduction". *Bloom's Shakespeare through the Age: A Midsummer Night's Dream.* Ed. Harold Bloom and Janyce Marson. New York: Bloom's Literary Criticism, 2008. xi-xii. Print.

-Doreen, Mark Von. "A Midsummer Night's Dream".In *Bloom's Shakespeare through the Ages: A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Ed. Harold Bloom and Janyce Marson. New York: Bloom's Literary Criticism, 2008.105-110. Print.

-Evans, Robert G. "This Sport well Carried Shall Be Chronicled: Puck as Trickster in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*". In *Bloom's Literary Themes: the Trickster*. Ed. Harold Bloom and Blake Hobby. New York: Bloom's Literary Criticism, 2010. 109-120. Print.

-Hass, Laurence. "Life Magic and Stage Magic: A Hidden Intertwining". In *Performing Magic on the Western Stage: From Eighteenth Century to Present*.Ed. Laurence Hass and James Peck. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008. 13-32. Print.

-Hazlitt, William. "The Midsummer Night's Dream". In *Bloom's Shakespeare through the Ages: A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Ed. Harold Bloom and Janyce Marson. New York: Bloom's Literary Criticism, 2008. 64-66. Print.

-Hynes, William J and William G. Doty. "Inconclusive Conclusions: Metaplayers and Revealers". In *Mythical Trickster Figures: Contours. Contexts and Criticism*. Ed. William J. Hynes and William G. Doty. Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1997.202-218. Print.

---."Introduction: the Fascinating and Perplexing Trickster Figure". In *Mythical Trickster Figures: Contours. Contexts and Criticism*. Edited by William J. Hynes and William G. Doty. Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1997. 1-12. Print.

-Milton, John. "L'Allegro". In *Bloom's Shakespeare through the Ages: A Midsummer Night's Dream.* Ed. Harold Bloom and Janyce Marson. New York: Bloom's Literary Criticism, 2008. 49-51. Print.

---. "L'Allegro". In *The Annotated Milton: Complete English Poems*. Ed. Burton Raffel. New York: Bantam Classics, 2008. Print.

-Shakespeare, William. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Ed. Burton Raffel and Harold Bloom. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005. Print.

-Schlegel ,August Wilhelm Von. "From a Course of Lectures on Dramatic Arts and Literature". Translated by John Black. In*Bloom's Shakespeare through the Ages: A ----Midsummer Night's Dream*. Ed. Harold Bloom and Janyce Mason. New York: Bloom's Literary Criticism, 2008. 63-64. Print.

Electronic sources

-Smith, Emma . "Lecture: A Midsummer Night's Dream." University of Oxford Podcasts,21dec.2013.Web.2013. < http://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/midsummer-nights-dream>.

Performances
-*A Midsummer Night's Dream.*by William Shakespeare. Dir. Peter Brook. Royal Shakespeare Theatre. Stratford Upon Avon. August, 1970.

-*A Midsummer Night's Dream.*by William Shakespeare. Dir. Nancy Meckler. Royal Shakespeare Theatre. Stratford Upon Avon. August, 2011.

Women and Religion in Nigeria: a Reassessment

Leke Oke
Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria

Abstract

Religion, which presupposes belief in the existence of a God or gods, cannot exist exclusive of society. Indeed religion has a huge responsibility of shaping the peoples thoughts, beliefs, and values, correcting fallacies, and providing the adherents with the information and guidance to live lives that are more informed. In Nigeria, religion has unconsciously promoted a negative perception and stigmatization of women through its failure to accord women the same status with men. The argument the Church makes against ordination of women and their empowerment is that Jesus did not select any woman to serve among his Twelve Apostles. Since the hierarchy of the Church draws its authority from being the spiritual descendants of the apostles, it follows that like the apostles, the clergy should be male. The exclusively male hierarchy of the Church has the tendency of leading to male dominated decisions that work against the ordination of women. This religious belief and orientation have pervaded most societies in Nigeria to relegate womenfolk into the background socially, economically and politically. However, realities of modern societies and the quest for peace and human development are such that have obliterated any rigid commitment to religious ideals in subjugating the women. If the goal of religion, especially Christianity, is the betterment and upliftment of the human race, therefore women subjugation has no basis in modern public administration. Utilizing biblical evidences and empirical data, this paper contends that equal access of the two genders (male and female) is pivotal to good governance and administration both at the church and the society. It therefore canvasses paradigm shift towards engendering a peaceful milieu and developed nation.

Key words: Religion, women, peace, development

Introduction

In Nigeria today, women constitute almost half of the total population yet their political rights and participation even though guaranteed under the 1999 Constitution does not reflect their numerical strength in the country. They play a minimal role in the area of politics. One major impediment to their active participation in politics is religion: Christianity and Islam. It is also due to the nature of politics in Nigerian, which is highly monetized. A system where money rather than merit determines who becomes what in the political terrain is worrisome. The male because of this advantage seems to have monopolized the field. Even though the constitution guarantees this right, women appear still lagging behind their male counterpart in this regard. In addition, religious beliefs have also contributed significantly through its patriarchal posture of male dominance. Both the Christianity and Islam preach male supremacy, this is in spite of the fact that Nigerian constitution frowns at discrimination in its entirety. The Constitution equally guarantees the right of women in politics and in decision making of the nation. The controverted area is whether a woman can rule a nation or not. Therefore, to shut them off all key positions in Nigeria is inimical to societal health and development. This however does not call for division; after all, in a family unit, which is the nucleus of the larger society, the role of one gender is significant to the other. By extension therefore, women have special role to play in all aspects of human endeavour, be it legislative, executive, health, public administration, security, law, and order etcetera. However, in the Nigerian political terrain, men among other measures have capitalized on religious belief to discriminate against women and subjugate them in societal administration. Uchem[113] writes that very often, religion has been used for providing a rationale for the subordination of one sex to another. As Millet[114] puts it: "patriarchy has God on its side" that is, Christianity portrays Eve as an after thought produced from Adam's spare rib. Furthermore, it is held that the origin of gender discrimination began from their sins. Islamic doctrines strictly bar women from some political endeavour – public speaking etc.–that can facilitate their political ambitions. This tendency to perpetuate subordination in God's name through religious ideologies has been observed in all human cultures and religions in every part of the world. Oduyoye[115] succinctly puts it thus:

> …religion plays such a key role in enforcing societal norms and ethics …socio-political participation is truly imbued with religion even when they are not explicitly stated.

---

[113] Uchem, R.N. 2001. *Overcoming Women's Subordination An Igbo African and Christian Perspective: Envisioning an Inclusive Theology with Reference to Women*. Enugu: Snaap Press Ltd. P 157

[114] Millet, K. 1985. *Sexual Politics.* London: Virago.

[115] Oduyoye, M.A. 1990). Liberative Ritual and Religion . *Popular Religion, Libration and contextual Theology. P. 77*

Uchem[116] holds that this can be seen in the United States and Europe, where in spite of the achievement of the women's movement, white male supremacy and female cultural subordination continue to be very much in place due to religious conservatism and the effect of biblical/Christian cultural myths. Thus, literal approach and biblical proofs – texts have been and are still being invoked to support women's subjugation much the same way that some fathers of the church used the Bible to justify slavery for many centuries before it became eventually outlawed. Specifically, the Biblical injunction in 1st Corinthians chapter 14 verses 34-35, stipulates that:

> Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted
> unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience,
> as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their
> husbands at home; for it is a shame for women to speak in the church (KJV).

Thus, in both Christianity and Islam, there is a presumption of the inequality between women and men that did not necessarily exist in pre-colonial religion.[117] Thus, colonization brought with it Christianity that subjugated women and reduced them to instrument of labour in the hands of their husbands who were the only visible figures and voices during colonialism. In spite of Islamic provisions for the equality of all believers, *purdah* and polygyny are considered obligatory. Since peasants cannot afford to seclude their wives, these phenomena are linked to class.[118] In Christianity, the orthodox position is that women should be submissive to men. Women's restricted access to information in Islam, likewise encouraged them to accept a submissive role. Even in the case of Christianity, education and a re-conceptualization of the role of women is necessary if significant progress is to be made. This paper therefore examines the pivotal roles of women in religion and governance. It also considers the question as to whether a Christian woman possesses the right to rule and hold public offices in Nigeria in view of the restrictions imposed on women by the Biblical injunctions and the surreptitious move by men to use religion to their advantage.

Conceptual framework

This study adopts the concept of Democracy as its framework. Women's ability to actively shape political processes at the national and local levels and better participate in politics is predicated on the existence of democratic institutions and a stable political environment. However, over the past few years there has been an increasing recognition that in conflict situations characterized by instability and weak application of the rule of law, women's

---

[116] Uchem, R.N. 2001. *Overcoming Women's Subordination An Igbo African and Christian Perspective: Envisioning an Inclusive Theology with Reference to Women*. Enugu: Snaap Press Ltd. P 158

[117] Hauwa, Mahdi, "The Position of Women in Islam;" Mathew Hassan Kukah, "Women, the Family and Christianity: Old Testament, New Testament and Contemporary Concepts," in *Women and the Family in Nigeria: Edited Proceedings of the Second Annual Women in Nigeria Conference* Dakar: Codesria, 1985. pp. 55-59; 66-72.

[118] Hauwa, Mahdi "The Position of Women in Islam;" Mathew Hassan Kukah, "Women, the Family and Christianity: Old Testament, New Testament and Contemporary Concepts," in *Women and the Family in Nigeria,* op cit. 62.

participation in peace processes is essential to ensure their long-term success.[119] Since politics is about conflict and conflict resolution and democracy can only thrive in a peaceful milieu, women have assumed a fundamental role in democratic governance.

Democracy is a form of government organized in accordance with the principles of popular sovereignty, political equality, popular consultation, and majority rule.[120] Democracy is about a system of government, it is about the establishment of certain institutional and procedural characteristics designed to facilitate mass participation in decision-making process and to guarantee accountability and basic material needs of the people. Generally, democracy involves the opportunity to participate in decision-making in the political process. It repudiates arbitrariness and authoritarianism. It extols the consent of the governed and it protects human personality and values. Democracy includes fundamental recognition of popular sovereignty, equal opportunity for all, majority rule, representativeness, minority rights, right of choice between alternative programmes, popular consultation, consensus on fundamental issues and more essentially, periodic elections. The concept of democracy confers the opportunity to participate in decision on all adult citizens. The citizenry enjoys widespread participation in the political process.

Thus in the modern world, the term democracy has assumed a vantage position over all other forms of government, and has been so universally attractive that most nations could claim it as a label to be attached to its name. Hence, an overtly despotic regime still laid claim to being democratic. However, majority of views tend to see democracy from its popular participation perspective from which the power to vote and to enthrone a government flows.

Part of the attraction of democracy lies in the refusal to accept in principle any conception of the political good other than that generated by 'the people' themselves. From the pursuit of elements of popular sovereignty in early self-governing republics to the diverse struggles to achieve a genuinely universal franchise in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, advocates of greater accountability in public life have sought to establish satisfactory means for authorizing and controlling political decisions. Democracy has been championed as a mechanism that bestows legitimacy on political decisions when they adhere to proper principles, rules and mechanisms of participation, representation, and accountability. In the East European revolutions, the principles of self-determination and consent to government action have again challenged the principle of 'single person' or in these particular cases 'single party' rule.[121] Democracy has been re-celebrated as a way of containing the powers of the state, of mediating among competing individual and collective projects, and of rendering key political decisions

---

[119] African Report 2006: i

[120] Ranney, A. 1975. *The Governing of men.* 4th ed. Illinois: The Drydfn Press. P 309

[121] Held, D. 1996. *Models of Democracy.* 2nd ed. California. Stanford University Press. P 297

accountable.[122] In political circumstances constructed by a plurality of identities cultural forms and interests each perhaps articulating different perspective regimes, democracy is seen, to offer basis for tolerating and negotiating differences.

Generally, democracy involves the opportunity to participate in decision-making in the political process. It repudiates arbitrariness and authoritarianism. It extols the consent of the governed and it protects human personality and values.[123] Democracy, whether liberal or African or modern includes fundamental recognition of popular sovereignty, equal opportunity for all, majority rule, representativeness, minority rights, right of choice between alternative programmes, popular consultation, consensus on fundamental issues and more essentially, periodic elections. The concept of democracy confers the opportunity to participate in decision by all adult citizens. The citizenry enjoys widespread participation in the political process. Democracy is seen as the people's rule, for themselves and by themselves.

It follows then that both sexes should be engaged in rulership.[124] From the foregoing, it is clear that democracy does not favour inequality and discrimination in all its ramifications. Thus, democracy is all about equality of equals. Hence, the notion of gender discrimination, under the guise of religion, and inequality is incongruous to democracy and consequently development.

Women in the Bible

Biblically, leadership is the calling of God for service to humanity. The leaders, kings and judges in the Old Testament are specifically called by God to deliver their people. Though men are mostly called to this service, God has equally shown that these leadership qualities are found in women.[125] The book of Judges Chapter 4 gave a vivid account of the roles played by Deborah in liberating the Israelites from Sisera. But for Deborah, the leader of Israel would have lost in battle with Barak to save Israel from the terror of Sisera (Judges 4:1-24). Though ignoble, Jezebel performed the task of a great warrior in her day. She championed the priests of Baal, and she found herself confronting the Israelite prophet-Elijah. In a dramatic showdown on Mount Carmel, hundreds of her priests were slaughtered by the Jahwist devotees led by Elijah. Jezebel swore revenge, and Elijah went into hiding for a time. Despite her modern reputation as a floozy, Jezebel seems to have been fiercely loyal to her husband Ahab. He was almost constantly engaged in leading the army and fighting battles, and Jezebel would often have been in charge of

---

[122] Oke, L. 2006. Democracy, Gender Equity and the Challenges of Human Development in Nigeria. *EXPERTUS; Journal of Sustainable Development*. Vol. 4. No. 1 March. c/o Department of Sociology, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria. P 1

[123] Ake, C. 1991. Rethinking African Democracy. *Journal of Democracy* Vol. 2.

[124] Simbine, A. T. 2003. Women Participation in the Political Parties of the Fourth Republic: the case of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). *Contemporary Issues in Nigerian Politics*. Jibo, M. & Simbine, A. T. Ibadan: Jodad Publishers. P 142

[125] Nnoruga, T. N. 2009. The emerging Leadership Roles of Women in Religion and Politics: A means of Breaking Gender Inequality. *International Journal of Social and Policy Issues.* Vol.6. No. 1&2. Pp 1-9.

keeping government on track while he was away at the battlefield. She grew used to exercising power (1 Kings 16:29-34, 18:17-40, 19:1-3, 21:1-16, 22:29-40, 2 Kings 9:21-28, 9:30-37).

Furthermore, Miriam was a prophetess who led Israelites women in celebration after their triumph in Egypt. She was listed as one of the national leaders in the book of Exodus (Exodus 20:20-21). In addition, Elizabeth was a formidable woman socially and spiritually. The Bible recorded that she was well placed. She came from a long line of priests, and was eminently respectable and well connected. She had married sensibly too - her husband, Zechariah, was a member of the priestly order, and so they enjoyed a high social status (Luke 1:5-80). Esther: a beautiful young Jewish orphan who is cared for by cousin Mordecai. Chosen to be a possible wife for the great king Xerxes I. Becomes wife of the Persian emperor, who does not know she is Jewish. Intelligent, discreet-the perfect wife. She Saved the Jewish people from the danger of an ancient Holocaust (Esther chapters 4-10). In addition, Martha and Mary were women who, with their family members, provided hospitality for Jesus and his disciple. The book of Luke (10:38-42) gives a chronological account of this episode as follows:

> Now it came to pass, as they went, that he (Jesus) entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Marry, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her therefore that she helps me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha thou art careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her (The Bible passage is from KJV).[126]

It is clear from the above that Jesus Christ himself acknowledged the epochal role played by Mary; a woman of whom he said has chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her. This same Mary later took a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair (John 12:3) towards his (Jesus) crucifixion and resurrection. Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome were the first to see Jesus Christ when he resurrected and became the first bearers of the good news (Mark 16:1-8, Luke 24: 26-28).

Thus, God created man and woman equal in everything: intelligence, humane and leadership qualities. It has not been established anywhere that man is superior to woman naturally. In fact, God the creator commissioned both the man and woman to replenish the earth and subdue it and by implication, the duo was commissioned to rule and administer the earth and the nations therein. This is evidence in the book of Genesis (Chapter 1:27-28) as follows:

---

[126] The Holy Bible. KJV

> So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God bless them and God said unto them, be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

Odinamadu (1988) in Nnoruga[127] gave credence to the natural equality between man and woman when he maintained that 'man and woman are inseparable in their make up and functions and none can claim superiority over the other from God'.

Women and Christian Religion in Nigeria

Like gender, religious inhibition is a social bump erected by the male leaders of the church to subjugate and control women and was never implied by the creator- God when he created the woman out of the man. In fact, Jesus Christ himself acknowledged the contributory role of Mary towards the accomplishment of his task in fulfilling the scripture (Luke 10:38-42). The complementarily of sex roles in family living should permeate the society towards enhancing good governance and societal development. This will in no way desecrate/pollute the church of God since the result is righteousness, peace, fairness, and development. The ten commandment of the almighty God were discretely given to both the man and the woman and are expected to be obeyed samely. Thus in Exodus chapter 20 verses 3-18, God gave the Ten Commandments to his adherents as follows:

> I am the Lord thy God, which have brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shall have no other gods before me. Thou shall not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth…. Thou shall not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy…. Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. Thou shall not commit adultery. Thou shall not steal. Thou shall not bear false witness against thy neighbour. Thou shall not covet thy neighbour's house; thou shall not covet thy neighbour's wife, or his manservant, or his maidservant, or his ox, or his ass, or anything that is thy neighbour's (Holy Bible, KJV).

The literature is replete with women founders of great churches. Mother Florence Crawford established the globally recognized Apostolic Faith Church in USA. The Church has ordained women as its pastors. Similarly, Aimec Semple Macpherson founded the Four Square Gospel Church with women and men as pastors. In the same vein, Ellen, J. White founded the

---

[127] Odinamadu (1988) in Nnoruga, T. N. 2009. The emerging Leadership Roles of Women in Religion and Politics: A means of Breaking Gender Inequality. *International Journal of Social and Policy Issues.* Vol.6. No. 1&2. Pp 1-9.

Seventh Day Adventist Church (Nnoruga 2009:5).[128] These churches utilized Biblical precepts and injunctions and they all have men and women ordained as pastors.

Today, women occupy strategic positions in the church of God as pastors, reverends, church founders, deaconess, lay readers, church treasurers, interpreters etc. The Christ's Faith Mission has Mrs. Benson Idahosa, a woman, as Bishop. In fact, most of the wives of pastors and reverends now administer the church in conjunction with their husbands as pastor Mrs. or reverend Mrs. as the case may be. Nnoruga (ibid: 6)[129] opined that the Anglican Communion have accepted in principle the ordination of women as pastors. Citing Odinamadu (1988), Nnoruga maintained that the United States of America has produced first woman Bishop as Rev. Barbara Harris. It is also noted that Canada has ordained over two hundred women as pastors and over five hundred have been so ordained in England while Kenya, China, and parts of Asia have ordained women as pastors.

Therefore, relegating women in the name of religion (Christianity) symbolizes taking them back to the forbidden Egypt: into the house of bondage for oppression and subjugation. This will no doubt negates the Biblical injunction of pursuing peace with all men and be at peace and in love with one's neighbour. For the church of God to progress and the society to develop, these Godly commandments must be obeyed and women must be accorded their rightful place in governance and societal administration. Not until then, development may remain a toll order in Nigeria.

Women and Political Participation in Nigeria

Political participation thrives on democratic acquisition and utilization of state power as well as its dispensation towards the collective good of all the citizens. As one of the tenets of democracy, Political Participation is liberal and unrestrictive. Subscribing to this, Okolie perceives political participation as "freedom of expression, association, right to free flow of communication, right to influence decision process and the right to social justice, health services, better working condition, and opportunity for franchise"[130]. The cogent activities involved are holding public and party office, being a candidate for office, soliciting party funds, attending a caucus or strategy meetings, contributing time in a campaign. The citizenry (men and women) must participate fully on equal basis in all the activities of political participation before it can be said that they are participating in politics. Although, findings have indicated that the involvement of women in Nigerian politics is largely noticeable at the level of voting and latent support. Adeniyi has identified violence and other forms of electoral conflicts perpetrated and perpetuated

---

[128] Nnoruga, T. N. 2009. The emerging Leadership Roles of Women in Religion and Politics: A means of Breaking Gender Inequality. *International Journal of Social and Policy Issues.* Vol.6. No. 1&2. P.5. Ikot Ekpene, Nigeria. Development Universal Consortia.
[129] Ibid. P.6
[130] Okolie, A.M. (2004) *Political Behaviour*. Enugu: Academic Publishing Company. Pg. 53

by men and male youths as the major barriers confronting and inhibiting women active participation in Nigerian politics.[131]

Governments, in conjunction with women's organizations and political parties, have a vital role in ensuring women's empowerment. They do so by promoting gender-sensitivity among officials or establishing comprehensive women's policy forums such as women's ministries and equal opportunity bureaus. It is opined that what maters most in terms of a government's response to the needs and interests of women is not simply the number of women in parliament but that of equal importance are institutional mechanisms, such as support from political parties for women's rights, and the strength and coherence of women's organizations.

On assumption of office in May 1999, President Olusegun Obasanjo showed that women are the focal point of his administration as significant numbers of women were appointed into the administration. These women who to a large extent demonstrated the capability of women in position of authority, among others, included: Obiageli Ezekwesili (who has worked in the Budget Monitoring and Price Intelligence and Implementation office under the presidency as well as minister of Solid Minerals Development and Education), Leslye Obiora (Mines and Steel Development), Inna Maryam Ciroma (Women Affairs), Helen Esuene (Environment and Housing), Esther Nenedi Usman (Finance), Joy Ogwu (Foreign Affairs), S.A. Jankada (Youth and Development) Halima Alao (Minister of state for Health) and Grace Ogwuche Minister of State for Agriculture and Water Resources). Before the above women, there were Dr. Ngozi Okonjo – Iweala, Princess Funke Adedoyin, Mrs. Becky Igwe, Mrs. Pauline Tallen, Hajia Ndalolo, Obong Rita Akpan, Dr. Kema Chikwe, Mrs. Chikwe Obaji.

The ministeries of Education, Finance, Solid Minerals, and Foreign Affairs, for the first time since independence have women as ministers. Some women were also appointed by the president to head extra - ministerial departments and agencies and they equally distinguished themselves. They included Professor Dora Akunyili, Director – General of the National Agency for food, Drugs and Administration and control, NAFDAC, and Mrs. Maureen Chigbue, Director General, Bureau of Public Enterprises, BPE. Simbo Akintimilehin described them as "lionesses who have threaded where lions were reluctant to dare" (Newsworld, 2007:17).[132] The success of these women in the various ministries and agencies has humbled many of the male counterparts.

Doubtlessly, the Nigerian democratic government since the inception of the Fourth Republic in 1999 impacted on women participation in politics. In 1999, there was one (3 percent) deputy governor, and in 2003, two (6 per cent). There was 3.3% female representation in the lower house of the National Legislature in 1999, 6.4% in 2003 and 7.5% in 2007. In the 1999

---

[131] Adeniyi, E.F. (2003) "Effects of Political Crises on Women: Towards the Management and Peaceful Resolution of Conflicts" in Mike Kwanashie, ed., *Politics and Political Power Relations in Nigeria,* Lagos: Dat and Partners Logistics Ltd. Pg. 353

[132] Newsworld, 2007:17

Senate, 2.8% women representations increased to 3.7% in 2003 and further increased to 8.3% in 2007 (Field Research). Findings from the tables below clearly attest to this:

Table 1: No of Women elected in 1999, 2003, 2007, and 2011 Nigerian Elections

S/N	Position	Number of Available Seats	Number of Women in 1999	Number of Women in 2003	Number of Women in 2007	Number of Women in 2011
1	Presidency	1	0	0	0	0
2	Senate	109	3	4	9	6
3	House of Reps	360	12	23	27	23
4	Governorship	36	0	0	0	0
5	Deputy Governorship	36	1	2	6	1 (out of 26)
6	36 States Houses of Assembly	990	12	38	54	N.A.
Total		1532	28	67	96	30

Source: Fieldwork 2011.

However, the just concluded General Elections (April 2011) revealed the peculiarity of the Nigerian Democracy; it showed that the country's democracy is still largely patriarchal with most actors abhorring democratic political culture and values that could sustain the gains of women in Nigerian Politics. Consequently, therefore, the numerical gain by women in elective positions over the past four elections has waned especially at the level of the National Assembly. Thus, the number of elected women in the elections diminished both at the Senate and at the House of Representatives. This is in spite of government's commitment to implementing various treaties at international, regional, and national levels, in particular, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPFA), which provides for the Affirmative Action Policy, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) as well as the National Gender Policy. Despite these commitments and the numerical strength of women, they still occupy less than eight per cent of elective and appointive positions at all levels of governance in the country. Although the 2011 general

elections witnessed an increased number of women stepping forward to contest their parties' primaries, only few emerged as candidates and fewer still won any of the positions they contested. Female candidates, for instance, constituted 9.1 per cent of the total number of those who contested the last National Assembly election from all the political parties. Thus, out of the 3,306 candidates in this category, only 302 of them were women. Worse still, only seven of them won seats in the 109 seats Senate representing about 6.4 per cent. The story is not different at the House of Representatives where, out of the 360 available seats, women, accounting for about 5.27 per cent, won only 19. This is an abysmal drop in the light of the success recorded in 2007, 2003 and 1999 elections, where the figures were respectively 27 (7.5 per cent), 21 (5.8 per cent) and 12 (3.3 per cent). Similarly, out of the about 348 governorship candidates across the country, only 13 women, about 3.7 per cent of the total number, contested in 10 states, and none of these was successful. In addition, only one woman: Mrs. Joke Orelope-Adefulire from Lagos state was elected as a Deputy Governor out of the 26 states where elections took place.[133] What that means is that to date, Nigeria, is yet to produce a female governor. Except, of course, for the brief period when Dame Virginia Etiaba held forth for Governor Peter Obi in Anambra State. Likewise, there was only one female presidential candidate in the person of Mrs. Ebiti Ndok of the United National Party for Development. Mrs. Sarah Jubril, a presidential aspirant on the platform of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) earlier lost out at the party primaries held in Abuja where she succeeded in getting a self-vote (one vote). This scenario represents the exclusion of about half the population of the country from mainstream political activities and such exclusion fails the basic test of democracy and cannot facilitate Nigeria's achievement of its commitment to the MDGs and women empowerment. As with all other factors affecting women political participation, the effect of religion as an inhibiting factor can be mitigated by aggressive education of the female gender. It is doubtful if a woman-, professor, or doctor can be caged politically by veiling her face and avoids her profession in the name of any religion. The composition of the seventh National Assembly revealed that in spite of the religious inhibition, women (of various religions) composed of 23 members in the House of Representatives and 6 members in the Senate.

Conclusion

Thus, there is a continuing trend of male domination of political and other public positions. Other than religion, lack of internal party democracy has created a conducive atmosphere for discrimination against women based ostensibly on cultural and patriarchal perceptions of inequality, roles, and potential between women and men. In addition, weak compliance with democratic ethos has encouraged corruption and violence against women within

---

[133] Fieldwork 2011. Gubernatorial Election was not held in ten states of Kogi, Bayelsa, Adamawa, Cross-River, and Sokoto where the Court of Appeal ruled favourably on the one year tenure extension for the governors. Also, the Election did not take place in Anambra, Osun, Edo, Ekiti and Ondo states due to the victory of the incumbent governors at the Election Petition Tribunals.

the political parties. Political parties encourage women's nomination as deputies thus conforming to the notion of censored participation and second fiddleism of women in Nigerian politics.

References

-Adeniyi, E.F. (2003) "Effects of Political Crises on Women: Towards the Management and Peaceful Resolution of Conflicts" in Mike Kwanashie, ed., *Politics and Political Power Relations in Nigeria,* Lagos: Dat and Partners Logistics Ltd. Pg. 353

-Ake, C. 1991. Rethinking African Democracy. *Journal of Democracy* Vol. 2.

-Hauwa, Mahdi, "The Position of Women in Islam;" Mathew Hassan Kukah, "Women, the Family and Christianity: Old Testament, New Testament and Contemporary Concepts," in *Women and the Family in Nigeria: Edited Proceedings of the Second Annual Women in Nigeria Conference* Dakar: Codesria, 1985.   pp. 55-59; 66-72.

-Held, D. 1996. *Models of Democracy.* 2nd ed. California: Stanford University Press.

-Millet, K. 1985. *Sexual Politics.* London: Virago.

-Nnoruga, T. N. 2009. The emerging Leadership Roles of Women in Religion and Politics: A means of Breaking Gender Inequality. *International Journal of Social and Policy Issues.* Vol.6. No. 1&2. P.5. Ikot Ekpene, Nigeria. Development Universal Consortia.

-Odinamadu (1988) in Nnoruga, T. N. 2009. The emerging Leadership Roles of Women in Religion and Politics: A means of Breaking Gender Inequality. *International Journal of Social and Policy Issues.* Vol.6. No. 1&2. Pp 1-9.

-Oduyoye, M.A. 1990). Liberative Ritual and Religion . *Popular Religion, Libration and contextual Theology.*

-Oke, L. 2006. Democracy, Gender Equity and the Challenges of Human Development in Nigeria. *EXPERTUS; Journal of Sustainable Development*. Vol. 4. No. 1 March. c/o Department of Sociology, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria.

-Okolie, A.M. (2004) *Political Behaviour*. Enugu: Academic Publishing Company. Pg. 53

-Ranney, A. 1975. *The Governing of men.* 4th ed. Illinois: The Drydfn Press.

-Simbine, A. T. 2003. Women Participation in the Political Parties of the Fourth Republic: the case of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). *Contemporary Issues in Nigerian Politics*. Jibo, M. & Simbine, A. T. Ibadan: Jodad Publishers

-Uchem, R.N. 2001. *Overcoming Women's Subordination An Igbo African and Christian*

Perspective: Envisioning an Inclusive Theology with Reference to Women. Enugu: Snaap Press Ltd.

-The Holy Bible. KJV

-Newsworld, 2007, Abuja. Nigeria

The Poetics of Transnational Belonging, Displacement and Fragmented Identities in Layla Halaby's *West of The Jordan*

Nawel Zbidi
University of Sousse, Tunisia

Abstract

The narrative of four Arab female protagonists, Mawal, Soraya, Khadija and Hala tackled in Layla Halaby's West of The Jordan (2003) depicts the complexities of transnational belonging and fragmented identities for Arab American women physically and psychically displaced between America and Palestine. These female characters live in an in-between space where they vacillate between the Arab and American cultures. While they yearn to clinch to their Arab inheritance, they cannot identify with the patriarchal aspects of this culture. On the other hand, they cannot wholly belong to the American culture, which often rejects them because of racial and ethnic differences. They all strive to reconcile fragmented American identities with the cultural intricacies of being Arab American women. Three of these women (Soraya, Khadija and Hala) are dislocated by their geographic location, facing the challenge of having to find their path in a new hostland western culture. They hardly try to fit in and sustain their lives in the "contact zone" where "disparate cultures, meet, clash and grapple with each other" (Bhabha, The Location of Culture 23). Mawal, their Palestinian cousin, on the other hand, has never left her homeland Palestine, yet, feels displaced by the pressure of political and mental colonization of her land by the Jewish occupier.

Keywords: Poetics, Transnational belonging, Displacement, Fragmented identities

Introduction

Laila Halaby, the author, poet, and children's book writer is an Arab American of Lebanese and Jordanian descent. Her works, including her first novel, *West of the Jordan* (2003), reflect on issues of displacement, migration, exile, and racial belonging. Like much of the Arab American women's literature, I discuss throughout this paper, the way Layla Halaby's writing seeks to provide American readers with insights into the complexities surrounding Arab American women lives.

To start with, Through *West of the Jordan,* the Arab American novelist Laila Halaby highlights the multifariousness of the experiences of Arab women through an interrelated net of youthful Arab women's narratives. More importantly, I perceive that through the storytelling technique that the novelist skilfully uses in this novel, the four narrators in the novel manage to disclose a multitude of different meaningful episodes of their lives. They tend to portray their daily experiences and to show how the intersections of gender, race, class, ethnicity and religion crucially inform their lives whether in Palestine (in the village of Nawara) or in America. Steven Salaita draws attention to, despite the fact that the four girls in *West of the Jordan* share "an identical cultural origin and belong to the same extended family, each is vastly different than the other three in disposition and personal circumstance" (135). The fragmentation of the structure of the novel seeks to highlight each story of the four female narrators on its own. Each independent story crucially sheds light on the dilemma surrounding the identities of the four teenage narrators within an Arab and Arab American cultural context. According to Paul Gilroy, the scrutiny of one's cultural identity endows with a means of assessing the interchange between "our subjective experiences of the world and the cultural and historical settings in which that fragile subjectivity" takes shape. For him, identity "is '*always particular*, as much about difference as about shared belonging".

I. The Poetics of Transnational Belonging

I employ the word poetics to refer to a methodical theory that attempts to define the nature of Arab women novels, the principles that rule them, the themes that differentiate them and the circumstances that have paved the way to their production. A transnational poetics denotes a poetics based on a commitment with the confusing confrontations of a seemingly borderless world, in which the novelist manages to get rid of nationally enclosed identities and approaches her novel as an creative product that defy the claims of universality. In *The Blackwell Guide to Literary Theory*, Gregory Castle defines cultural poetics or the poetics of culture as the way

> often used to describe the methodologies of cultural criticism in New Historicism and textualist anthropology. Sometimes referred to as *poetics of culture*, this perspective calls into question the objectivity or scientific status that anthropology and other disciplines claim for their representations. It argues that all representations of culture are determined by the same linguistic constraints and freedoms that govern aesthetic discourse. (309)

Laila Halaby struggles through her narrative with the freedom and demands of merging within the American culture. On the one hand, she defies difference in her poetics in such a way

that it ends up being radicalized. She also opts to bridge cultures and languages to create a new kind of American poetics. In the same vein, as she faces the legacy of civil rights infringement and devaluation of women in Palestine, she attempts to provide voice to the disenfranchised and establishes linkages with like-minded writers from other countries. What I argue to be the transnational features in Laila Halaby's *West of the Jordan* are the following interrelated themes: highlighting formal variations and insertion of manifold literary and linguistic traditions; questioning the role of the female narrators' memories and consciousness in forging certain forms and structures; challenging the politics of location within national, local, and gendered borders; and a dynamic understanding of matters of audience, i.e. the production and reception of this narrative. According to Steven Salaita, "*West of the Jordan* is a title that denotes both geography and political orientation. On the one hand, it directs readers' attention to the West Bank and to the geopolitical West, the United States in particular. On the other hand, it identifies a locus of concerns that combine an emphasis on the United States and the Middle East" (79-80).

The novel defies and to deconstructs the stereotypical homogenized representations of Arab women. It also explores the distinctiveness of each character in order to investigate their gendered features within a larger framework of identity, such as Arab American or Palestinian. In her interview with Steven Salaita, Halaby admits: "I find it endlessly interesting to explore people's paradoxes and try to understand their motivations, to look not just at the character of this moment in this scene, *but how the character got there, what influenced the character*, and what choices the character made prior to the reader meeting up with her/him" (Salaita). So, Halaby's depiction stems essentially from the context that shapes the identities and behaviors of her female characters.

While the stories by Arab women writers portray the experience of "growing up female in traditional Arab society" (Cohen 8), Laila Halaby's *West of the Jordan*, depicts the experiences of Arab American women growing up in America. They are enduring the obligations and restrictions of an Arab identity demands in the West. They all strive to fit in the category of 'good Arabian girls'. Adding to this, they face the burden of racial stereotypes and are deemed to obey male authority (in particular the figure of an authoritarian father such as the case of Khadija's father).

II. Displacement and Fragmented Female Identities in Layla Halaby's *West of The Jordan*

II.1. Khadija and Her Sense of Loss and Displacement

Khadija's first story 'Sand and Fire' initiates some of the patterns that shape Khadija's manners and inform her insight of the world around her. Khadija thinks her name is a source of nuisance for her in the US and she wishes she could have a different one. Right at the beginning of Khadija's unfolding; she starts by giving a positive account on the origin of her name by probing into its Islamic roots. She mentions that "in Islam, Khadija was the Prophet Muhamma's wife. She was much older than he was and had a lot of money. He was said to have loved her very much" (36). Khadija stresses the amount of respect and love that surrounded the life of the prophet's wife. Later on, however, Khadija underscores the ugly reality of her Arabic name in America: "In America my name sounds like someone throwing up of falling off a bicycle. If they

can get the first part of it right, the Kha' part, it comes out like clearing your throat after eating ice cream. Usually they say *Kadeeja*, though, which sounds clattering clumsy" (36).

The ridiculous disparity Khadija makes between the "beautiful origin of her name and the ungraceful way that Americans have to pronounce it seems almost like someone waking up from a dream and facing a very different and practical reality" (Aguiar 33). She is aware of the misapprehension that the contrast between her Arabic name and her white features are likely to trigger in the minds of their American friends and teachers. She chiefly has to endure her father's rudeness and lack of responsibility, which he thinks is due to his unsuccessful American dream. Khadija points out that her father "has many dreams that have been filled with sand. That's what he tells me: 'This country has taken my dreams that used to float like those giant balloons, and filled them with sand. Now they don't float, and you can't even see what they are anymore'" (37). Khadija's father worked as a part-time mechanic is addicted to alcoholic drinks. In *Global Cities*, Mark Abrahamson perceives that "[a]lthough immigrants are often viewed negatively because they are culturally different, the reality is that they routinely fill niches left vacant by natives" (50). For him, a majority of immigrants who immigrate to global cities are distressed. Their aptitude to sustain "themselves or their families is so limited in their native country that they may perceive emigration as the only solution. To emigrate, they are often prepared to take enormous risks. (Abrahamson 51). Khadija's father is occasionally physically offensive to his daughter as he penalizes her when she offends his wishes. That disturbance makes him callous in his relations with his family. In other words, he is not a steady flat character, but is attributed a hesitant ambivalent situation vis-à-vis his family. As Khadija says, "[s]ometimes my father loves my mother –and the rest of us– so much that he becomes a kissing and hugging machine. Sometimes, though, he is an angry machine that sees suspicious moves in every breath. But most of the time he is sad, his thoughts somewhere I cannot visit" (37).

Khadija's father behavior is owing to his deep-seated melancholy, his depression and his homesickness to his homeland. Khadija explains: "'[m]y ache comes from losing my home', my father tells us a lot" (39), or "[t]hat evening my father started talking about the sand that filled his dreams again. 'How could you not be a little crazy when you have watched your dreams be buried the way I have?'" (192). Khadija's father typifies that of a very oriental Arab man. He is very tied to traditions and to conservative ideas of family honor. Indeed, "[Khadija's father] thinks that his daughter's reputation is the most important thing in the world" (30), and does not even let her to speak to boys.

Nevertheless, his aggressive manners are often criticized by other members of his family. Laila Halaby wants to prove that this sort of stereotypical traditional patriarchal behavior is not the standard norm in the Arab world and thus, cannot not be accepted. Indeed, there is one instance in the novel where "Esmeralda cursed Khadija's father in Arabic and said he was an old shoe with a hole in his head as well as one in his ass" (34). Apart from that, the repulsive nature of Khadija's father conduct is also highlighted in the novel through referring to the significance of fatherhood. He is described not to be a good father because of his disobedience and lack of reverence to his own father: "Baba might be crazy because of all the things he did, especially because he didn't respect his father properly" (192). He is not only the poorest of the male immigrants in the novel, but also the most religious. His rudeness culminates, while heavily

drunk, when in a he attempted to harass both his father and baby son. This incentive event pushed Khadija to call the police though she would be held responsible for doing such daring deed and for shrinking the unity of her family.

II.2. Hala as a Moderate Negotiator Between Two Cultures

The four narrator-characters In *West of the Jordan* are evenly significant in the investigation of gender and diaspora matters in novel. Indeed, through their tangled maternal relations, they all uncover many pertinent features of the diasporic experience in the US. Nevertheless, the character Hala is chiefly fascinating, since she appears the only cousin who is capable of accomplishing a remarkable degree of equilibrium between the two extremes of the hyphen. She is somehow proficient in categorizing herself as a hybrid individual i.e. as both Arab and American at the same time. Yet, it is very important to stress that Hala does not attain an ideal equilibrium between these two cultures, as it is quite unfeasible for a diasporic individuals whose circumstance is inescapably correlated to dislocation and agony.

Hala, a student in Tucson, struggles to make sense of her Arab American identity during her trip back to Jordan for her mother's funeral, where she confronts her father. He informs her he does not wish her to return back to the United States to proceed her university studies there. Hala's father, a widower, is strong-minded to instruct all choices about his daughter's life on his own. Hala declares that, "[w]hile she [Hala's mother] was alive, my father respected her wishes, but not even two days into my mourning her death, he made it clear that he was going to be the one to make the decisions about my life from then on" (45). His ultimate decision afterward that she obeys him by accepting to continue her studies in Jordan and "put [her] roots here as a woman" (45). Hala delivers the bitter reality when saying, "I was to replace my mother with a husband. I was to stay in Jordan forever. Marry […]. Have children. Be someone else's burden" (45), In other words, this decision imposed upon her was to force her pursue the conventional Arab modes of feminine conduct. Nevertheless, surprisingly, Hala's father experiences a remarkable shift in his attitudes as the story goes on from a traditional father who is solely preoccupied with his family's honor at the expanse of his daughter's wishes, to a ""new father", more open-minded, more caring and nurturing, a father that accepts his daughter's wishes and is proud of her" (Bosch 108).

Toward the end of *West of The Jordan*, in her way back to the United States, Hala symbolically glorifies the significance of her Arab roots, and chooses to put on a *roza*, a typical Jordanian dress, "while her father has learnt about opening to other cultures and tells her that she should wear jeans" (203). In this respect, Steven Salaita affirms that "[o]ne really interesting thing about [*West of the Jordan*] is the way nothing, human or geographical, ever descends into a tidy stereotype" (3). This account is chiefly remarkable with respect to the Arab fathers characters that Laila Halaby employs in her novel. In her article "The representation of Fatherhood by The Arab Diaspora in The United States," Marta Bosch perceives that: [a] wide variety of fathers appear in this novel, making clear the situational position of Arab fatherhood and masculinity" (108). In other words, Arab fathers alternate between "traditionalism and

liberalism" (Bosch 108). Khadija's father for instance, is portrayed as oriented to traditionalism while Soraya's father is oriented to liberalism. However, "others change their mind throughout their life (as is the case of Hala's father) making clear that evolution is possible." (Bosch 108)

West of the Jordan is delved into in Amal Talaat Abdelrazek's book entitled *Contemporary Arab American Women Writers: Hyphenated Identities and Border Crossings* in which she underscores how being in-between cultures shapes the works of Laila Halaby, Mohja Kahf, Diana Abu-Jaber and Laila Halaby and other Arab American women writers. In her analysis of the character of Hala, she perceives that she (Hala) is "[t]he most developed character" in the novel (153). She maintains that Hala's break in Jordan and then her going back to America is a very telling experience/ journey because she can now "experience her duality not as an alienation and rupture but as an empowering hybridity, seeing the connection and the continuities between the two poles of her identity" (170).

As a matter of fact, hybridity has flourished as a significant dimension of postcolonial cultures in Latin America, Asia, Africa, and the diaspora in the West such as the US. According to Stuart Hall, taking into consideration the fact that identities are created "within, not outside, discourse, we need to understand them as produced in specific historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices, by specific enunciative strategies" (Hall 4). Apart from that,   he also highlights the fact that identities appear within "the play of specific modalities of power, and thus are more the product of the marking of difference and exclusion, than they are the sign of an identical, naturally-constituted unity - an 'identity' in its traditional meaning" (Hall 4).

Anne D'Alleva, in her book *Methods & Theories of Art History,* in discussing race, perceives that "Stuart Hall argues that there are two kinds of identity: identity in being (which offers a sense of unity and commonality) and identity as becoming (or a process of identification, which shows the discontinuity in our identity formation)". (D'Alleva 78). According to him, identity is vital, but it is a procedure of "imaginative rediscovery" (D'Alleva 78). Likewise, he opposes the perception of identity as accurate or fundamental, stressing instead "the ways in which cultural identities are subject to the continuous "play" of history, culture, and power" (D'Alleva 78). In *West of the Jordan*, Hala undergoes a process of advanced hybridization. Indeed, she could be regarded as an example of hybridized subjects given by Hall taking the fact that she smoothly can cope to live with different features of both the Arab and American cultures. Heterogeneity is a focal element when accounting on Hala's construction of her own identity. Clearly, she is capable to combine a number of different features into her way of life and identity.

II.3. Soraya: An Embodiment of The Rebellious Amoral Arab Female Figure in the West

The third character-narrator cousin, Soraya, could be regarded as the reverse of Khadija's character. She autonomously lives in Los Angeles, and is an incredibly self-determining girl, frank, and very attentive to her sexuality. Soraya, according to Abdelrazek, is 'fully aware of her situation as in-between hybrid that does not completely belong in either culture" (147). "Soraya represents the amoral waywardness of the United States and conflicts over individuality and community" (Salaita 80). Her father, an obviously disempowered man, does not seem to have

accountability and command over for his family. His only source of power stems essentially from the money he makes in his business. Soraya once declares: "[m]y mother is the strong one in our house and people would probably make fun of my father if it weren't for all the money he has. Money is his favorite thing, like somewhere along the way he decided he could only focus on one thing and he thought better money than family, less headaches. So men respect him because of his success" (26). Indeed, Soraya's father could be regarded as emblematic of the metamorphosis in the deep-seated established Arab ideals for immigrants in America. In other words, he represents a great shift from the conventional significance of fatherhood that is omnipresent in the Arab world. Definitely, instead, he has accomplished the American economic dream of success, yet, he has escaped his fatherhood duties.

Soraya undergoes a process of self-inflicted sense of displacement. Apparently, she is unable to anchor herself in any of her heritages (the Arab one and the American one). She is "fragmented, not only by her desire to follow her own wishes and to express herself in her own way, but also by her Arab heritage that her parents try to impose upon her and against which she rebels" (Abdelrazek 140). She defies her parent's conventional values and longs for the American sense of self-determination and autonomy. Instead, she takes pleasure in outside the manacles and restrictions imposed on her at home. Soraya undertakes a profound sense of dislocation. She lives in two dissimilar cultures and fails to establish herself as constituent of either one. She smoothly swings "between an Arab world that she looks up to but cannot attain…she continues to lead a double life in which she has no special space for her own" (Abdelrazek 140).

Alixa Naff, in her essay "The early Immigrant Experience" perceives that in their enthusiasm to accomplish their dreams in America, "the immigrant generation neglected to preserve their cultural heritage. Much of what that generation knew of their heritage was, in any case, centered on village life and its mythology. About the great-Arab Islamic contributions to world civilization the majority of the immigrants knew little, and refracted through traditional biases"(35). Consequently, second and third generations of Arab Americans showed negligible attention to, or awareness of their ethnic origins. Soraya, for instance, detests obedience and communicates her resentment and insurgence against her mother and her Arab culture through the act of dancing, something that her family often criticizes her for because they only care about what other people will say if they see her dancing. Nicholas Saunders elucidates that the deliriousness created by dancing "can be viewed as a transcendental mind altering experience providing psychic relief to alienated people in a secular, repressive, and materialistic society" (*Ecstasy.org*). Certainly, Soraya uses dancing to release her discontented aspirations and to flee from her dislocation in a world of cultural clashes where she has to undergo the burden of a binary life. In other words, while attempting to realize her own desires in a land of freedom, Soraya has to obey her parents' traditions. She often outrages them and quench her desires and needs regardless of what Arab morals (that her mother often reminds her of) state and dictate. In her story "Fire," she confesses:

> This year I told my family a thousand and a one lies and went to disco and danced for a beautiful man who came to love me, love me so much that I carried his credit card, wore his jewelry, and had lunch with him until I satisfied him in every way. Then he returned to his blond American wife and two blond American children while I folded myself into the boxes that once bulged with sparkling promises, waiting for the ache to leave, which it did

eventually. Dance, shake it all out—*hiz hiz hiz*—with eyes closed and hips racing those awful drums.

II.4. Mawal's stories: As Authentic Depictions of Gendered Patriarchy in the Arab w World

Throughout *West of The Jordan*, Mawal, their Palestinian cousin (I mean Khadija, Soraya and Hala), has never left her homeland Palestine, yet, feels displaced by the pressure of political and mental colonization of her land by the Jewish occupier. Out of thirty seven stories in the novel, only seven are narrated by Mawal. These stories relate some important sequences in the lives of the character-narrator and other Palestinian women in Palestine. In her first story 'Nawara', for instance, she introduces her Palestinian village and its people using a very poetic style highlighting the importance of places in one's identity. For her, "lots of places have special marks, while other places are just daytime normal with occasional scary night, too thick, silence, or a shrill scream, to jazz them out of dusty boring" (14). The reader get introduced to her village straight forwardly through the detailed descriptions she makes. She even uses direct transliteration to make it easier for non Arabic speakers to understand the context she is describing. She says "our village is called Nawara, which means flowers or blossoms. When you say it, *Nawa-waara-a,* a hillside of small white wildflowers comes to mind, or the fragrant new blossoms on an orange or almond tree" (15). She even goes further in introducing the cultural specificities that typify her village: "everywhere is famous for something: political activism, delicious vegetables, ugly women. Our village is an island famous for, beautiful embroidered dresses that we call *rozas* while most everyone else calls them *thobes*, and yet surrounded by villages that do not embroider at all" (15). Through the portrayal of the lives of different generations of Palestinian women including, her mother and her grandmother, Mawal creates a mosaic echoing the diversity and the richness of cultural and social history surrounding Palestinian women. Using Abdelrazek's words Mawal's stories highlight the socio-political issues that influence Palestinian women's lives and "capture personal moments that constitute the basic outline of [. . . their] agonizing history" (128).

Mawal's stories echo features of the gendered patriarchy and the Israeli occupation that monopolize Nawara. She discloses no real sense of safety and belonging to her homeland. She is not even permitted to quit this land, "she has never travelled outside of Nawara, and she know s that she never will until she marries someone who will accompany her confined to this location, Mawal feels displaced and uprooted" (Abdelrazek 127). The stories Mawal relates in her narratives are selected from her memory. She contextualizes salient personal moments that represent and materialize a plain depiction of the unbearable history of palestenian women. Nevertheless, these personal stories also reflect Mawal's own feelings of anxiety and displacement. These stories portray anguished women enduring diverse sorts of physical, political and social subjugations and confinements.

When scrutinizing Mawal's stories we comprehend the history of Palestinian women. "It is crucial to recognize that the history of the subjugation of Arab women still affects the lives of those Arab women who live in the Arab world and in diaspora"(Abdelrazek 127). Indeed, Mawal's sense of dislocation and un-belonging is mainly due to the harsh historical and political

condition of women in Palestine. Palestinian women are deprived from their own state and they are allowed a small restricted amount of free will in their own country. The fact that their land is occupied by the Jewish colonizer had made their lives tasteless, controlled, and under perpetual threat. *West of The Jordan* does not depict an ample portrait of Mawal's character and subjectivity if we assess it with regard to the three other character-narrators in the story. Yet, she bears an important task as the narrator of the other women's displacement. Thanks to her detailed description of the setting and the characters, "we understand the politics of location in Nawara with its political upheavals, gender struggles, and social conflicts" (Abdelrazek 127). Mawal's stories do not only mirror her own state of dislocation and un-belonging but also they are stuffed with ""little stories" of Nawara—stories stitched into rozas for which the village is known— stories that will need to be remembred always and that and are unknown to her Palestenian-American cousins" (Abdelrazek 127).

Conclusion

Indeed, for all the female characters in the novel, whether in Palestine or in America, no place is completely itself and no place is completely other. They feel alienated from the place where they belong. They endure personal challenges within their own communities regarding their sexual identities. Simultaneously, they face political and social impediments from the larger American community that exposes them to prejudice and discrimination. Thus, they have no choice but to live in a border zone, in the "third space". This latter, in-between Arab and American cultures, transgresses labeling, stability, and confinement. Thus, Arab American women live in a fluid space which enables them, to peacefully merge within both cultures.

References

Primary source:

-Halaby, Laila. *West of the Jordan*. Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 2003.

Secondary sources:

-Abdelrazek, Amal. *Contemporary Arab American Women Writers: Hyphenated Identity and Border Crossings*. Youngstown, New York. Cambria Press, 2007.

-Abrahamson, Mark. *Global cities*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

-Bhabha, Homi. *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge, 1994.

-Bosch, Marta (2008), "The Representation of Fatherhood by the Arab Diaspora in the United States", *Lectora*, 14: 101-112. ISSN: 1136-5781 D.L. 395-1995.

-Cardoso de Aguiar, Maria Luiza. *Diaspora and Gender Relations in Laila Halaby's West of The Jordan.* MA Thesis, Faculdade de Letras Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, 2012.

-Castle, Gregory. *The Blackwell guide to literary theory*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2007.

-D'Alleva, Anne. *Methods & Theories of Art History*. London: Laurence King, 2005.

-Hall, Stuart, and Paul Du Gay. *Questions of cultural identity*. London: Sage, 1996

-McCarus, Ernest. *The Development of Arab-American Identity*. Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1994.

-Naff, Alixa. "The Early Arab Immigrant Experience". McCarus, Ernest. *The Development of Arab-American Identity*. Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1994.

-Paul Gilroy, 'Diaspora and the Detours of Identity', in *Identity and Difference*, ed. by Kathryn Woodward (London, Thousand Oaks, CA, & New Delhi: SAGE Publications Ltd, 1997), pp. 229-343 (p. 301).

-Salaita, Steven. *Modern Arab American Fiction*. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2011.

Electronic sources:

-Salaita, Steven, "Interview: Laila Halaby", 8/01/0

-Saunders, Nicholas. 'Recreational use of ecstasy: The drug user's perspective'. *Ecstasy.org*, 1997. Online. Internet. 5 Jun. 2015. <http://ecstasy.org/info/bps.html.>

The breakthrough of the taboo in the Arabic novel between creative modernity and social modernity

Mohamed Salah Bouomrani
University of Gafsa, Tunisia

Abstract

This research broaches the issue of the novel and the values and their relation to modernity. Such endeavor is undertaken from theoretical perspectives that originate from social cognition and Critical Discourse Analysis as represented by eminent scholars such as van Dijk, Fairclough and Johnathan Charteris-Black among others. The present research focuses on their linking of theoretical, social and linguistic structures, their consideration of the relation between discourse and ideology, the relationship of the dichotomy of the taboo and the permissibility and their link with culture and literature. To decipher the role of the value-laden breakthrough of the taboo in establishing a social creative modernity, this article scrutinizes those topics via comparing samples of the Tunisian and Saudi Arabian novels.

Keywords: cognition, social cognition, Discourse, Critical Discourse Analysis, Novel, Modernity, Taboo

اختراق المحظور في الرّواية العربيّة
بين الحداثة الإبداعيّة والحداثة الاجتماعيّة

محمّد الصّالح البوعمراني
(جامعة قفصة/ تونس)

ملخّص:

يطرح هذا البحث سؤال الرّواية والقيم وعلاقتهما بالحداثة، منطلقا من تصوّرات نظريّة ترجع إلى العرفانيّات الاجتماعيّة وتحليل الخطاب النّقدي كما يمثّله أعلام مثل فان ديك وفاركلوف وجونثن كارتز بلاك وغيرهم، في ربطهم بين البني التّصوّريّة والاجتماعيّة واللّغويّة، وفي رؤيتهم لعلاقة الخطاب بالإيديولوجيا، وعلاقة ثنائيّة المحظور والمباح بالثّقافة والأدب. يبحث في هذه الإشكاليّات مقارنا بين نماذج من الرّواية التّونسيّة وأخرى من الرّواية السّعوديّة، في محاولة للكشف عن دور اختراق المحظور القيمي في التّأسيس لحداثة إبداعيّة واجتماعيّة.

المصطلحات المفاتيح: **العرفان، العرفان الاجتماعي ، الخطاب ، تحليل الخطاب النّقدي ، الرّواية ، الحداثة ، المحظور.**

تُعتبر الحداثة في أبسط تعريفاتها فعل تجاوز مستمرّ واختراق متواصل للسائد، ورفض للنموذج، إنّها "انطلاق خارج الحدود ورفض للنمط"، "فكأنّ أصلها الذي تعود إليه هو القطيعة مع كلّ ما هو سائد والتّطلّع الدّائم إلى كلّ جديد على الأنموذج".[1] إنّها هدم للأنساق الاجتماعيّة والثّقافيّة والأدبيّة، وسؤال متجدّد يعيد النّظر في الثّابت والمألوف والمقدّس، لذلك فالحداثة في جوهرها هي اختراق دائم للمحظورات، وهتك متواصل للأعراف والتّقاليد، إنّها إقامة على أرض غير ثابتة، وفي فضاءات متحوّلة، إنّها تأسيس متواصل لقيم جديدة مركزها الإنسان التّاريخي والمتحوّل بطبعه، لذلك فهي التّأسيس لإبداع خارج السّنّة. ويستدعي الحديث عن الحداثة في الرّواية العربيّة إشكاليّة اختراق المحظور باعتبارها إحدى وجوه حداثتها. نقارب هذه المسألة مستحضرين جملة من التّصوّرات الأوّليّة التي تضع هذا البحث في إطاره المعرفيّ، منها علاقة اللّغويّ بالاجتماعيّ وما انتهى إليه الأمر في تحليل الخطاب النّقدي عند فاركلوف N.Fairclough وفن دايك Teun A. van Dijk وغيرهما، وعلاقة ثنائيّة المحظور والمباح بالثّقافة من جهة وبالأدب من جهة أخرى، فاستحضارنا لهذه التّصوّرات سيؤدّي بنا إلى معالجة سؤالنا الأساسي هل كان هدف اختراق المحظور في الرّواية العربيّة تحقيق حداثة إبداعيّة أم حداثة فكريّة واجتماعيّة؟

1- في علاقة الخطاب بالمجتمع

اهتمّ تحليل الخطاب النّقدي Critical Discourse Analysis بالبحث في العلاقة بين الخطاب والمجتمع، وبين البنى اللّغويّة والبنى الاجتماعيّة، فالخطاب ليس فقط ممارسة لغويّة، بل هو كذلك ممارسة اجتماعيّة تساهم في تشكيل النّظم الاجتماعيّة، والوضعيّات، والمؤسّسات، والإيديولوجيّات التي يتضمّنها. نتيجة لهذه التّصوّرات فإنّ استعمال اللّغة ينتج ويحوّل المجتمع والثّقافة بما في ذلك علاقات القوّة.[2] فـ"اللّغة (عند فاركلوف) جزء من الحياة الاجتماعيّة لا يمكن اختزاله، وبينه وبين عناصر الحياة الاجتماعيّة الأخرى علاقات منطقيّة جدليّة تجعل من الضّروري أن يأخذ البحث والتّحليل الاجتماعي اللّغة دائما بعين الاعتبار".[3]

فالخطاب باعتباره منجزا لغويا غير مفصول عن الفاعلين الاجتماعيّين الذين ينتجونه ويتلقّونه في سياقات قول مخصوصة، وانطلاقا من مواقع اجتماعيّة تتحكّم فيها مرجعيّات معرفيّة واعتقاديّة مشتركة بين أفراد الثّقافة الواحدة أو الفئة الاجتماعيّة الواحدة،[4] وهو ما يوسم بالعرفان الاجتماعي social cognition، وهو جملة من التّصوّرات التي تحكم فئة اجتماعيّة مّا للعالم وإنتاجها للخطاب، أو عمليّة "التّصافح ما بين الخطاب والمجتمع، وما بين الأفراد المشاركين في الحدث التّواصلي والفئات الاجتماعيّة التي ينتمون إليها، كما تمثّل جملة الاستراتيجيّات الجماعيّة وجملة التّمثيلات المشتركة التي توجّه إنتاج الخطاب وتحكم تأويله".[5]

فلا وجود عند محلّلي الخطاب النّقدي لعلم "خال من القيمة"، فكلّ علم، بما في ذلك العلوم الإنسانيّة، يتأثّر بالبنية الاجتماعيّة، وينتج عن التّفاعل الاجتماعيّ. وتشكيل النّظريّة ووصفها وتفسيرها، بما في ذلك تحليل الخطاب، يقع في صلب الاجتماعي والسّياسي. فالتّفكير في دور الباحثين في المجتمع وفي السياسة هو جزء لا يتجزأ من مؤسّسة تحليل الخطاب.

هذا التّصوّر يعطي للخطاب دورا أساسيا في بناء المجتمع، فطريقة استعمالنا للّغة تعبّر ضرورة عن البنى الاجتماعيّة التي ننتمي إليها، ولكنّ في نفس الوقت تعيد تشكيل هذه البنى الاجتماعيّ. فالبنسبة لفاركلوف لا يحيل الخطاب فحسب إلى إنتاج واستهلاك النّصّ والكلام بل يحيل أيضا إلى مجمل عمليّة التّفاعل الاجتماعي. ليس النّصّ والكلام فيها إلّا عناصر مخصوصة، "لا تنتج النّصوص فقط من البنى اللّسانيّة

والنُّطق الخطابيّة، إنّها تنتج أيضا من البنى الاجتماعيّة الأخرى، ومن الممارسات الاجتماعيّة في جميع جوانبها. لذلك يصعب الفصل بين العوامل التي تبلور النّصوص".[6]

إنّ الفاعلين الاجتماعيين ليسوا أحررا حريّة مطلقة في إنتاج خطاباتهم فهناك قيود اجتماعيّة وقيود لغويّة تتحكم في إنتاجاتهم. فـ"النّصوص باعتبارها مكوّنة في الأحداث الاجتماعيّة لا تنتج فقط من الإمكانات التي تحدّدها اللّغات. نحتاج إلى نتعرف إلى كيانات منظّمة متوسّطة ذات طبيعة لسانيّة، هي العناصر اللّسانيّة الدّاخلة في شبكات ممارسات اجتماعيّة. أطلق على هذه الكيانات تسمية "نُطق خطابيّة" orders of discourse، والنّطاق الخطابي شبكة من الممارسات الاجتماعيّة في جانبها اللّغوي. ليست عناصر النُّطق الخطابيّة أشياء مثل الأسماء والجمل (هذه جزء من البنى اللّسانيّة)، إنّما هي ضروب خطاب وأصناف وأساليب (...) تنتقي هذه العناصر بعض الاحتمالات التي تحدّدها اللّغات وتستبعد أخرى، وتسيطر على التّغيير اللّساني في مجالات معيّنة من الحياة الاجتماعيّة، لذلك يمكن اعتبار النُّطق الخطابيّة هي التي تنظّم التّغيير اللّساني وتتحكّم به.".[7]

هذه العلاقة بين بنى اللّغة والبنى الاجتماعيّة، هي ما نجده في تمييز "جي" .Gee, J. P، بين الخطاب بـ d الصّغيرة discoures، والخطاب بـ D الكبيرة Discourse، أو في اصطلاحيّة فان ديك بين البنى الصّغرى والبنى الكبرى، الخطاب في المعنى الأوّل يحيل إلى مقاطع محدّدة من النّصّ و الكلام أو من النّشاط الذي يكشف عنه إنتاج واستهلاك النّصّ والحديث، أمّا الخطاب في المعنى الثّاني فيحيل على الممارسات التّواضعيّة، بما في ذلك الممارسات اللّسانيّة، حيث تكون خطابات أفراد المجموعة البشريّة، بالمعنى الأوّل للخطاب، منخرطة فيها وخاضعة لها. فالخطاب يحيل إذن في نفس الوقت إلى الطرق التّواضعيّة للتفكير في العالم وتمثّل ما هو اجتماعيّ، بما في ذلك اللّساني، وإلى الممارسات العمليّة التي يحتويها. والخطاب في كلا معنييه، موجود في مجالات مختلفة من التّجربة. ويستعمل فاركلوف مصطلح "نطاق الخطاب" ليحيل إلى كامل البيانات المشاهدة في جانب من الميدان الاجتماعي. وقد اهتمّ تحليل الخطاب بدراسة العلاقة بين الخطاب والعمل الاجتماعي في مجالات متنوّعة مثل العرق والهجرة والجنس والحرب والجريمة والتّعليم والبيئة.[8] لذلك فإنّ العلاقة بين الخطاب بمعناه الأوّل ولنصطلح على تسميته في العربية باسم الخطاب الأصغر، والخطاب بمعناه الثّاني، ولنصطلح على تسميته باسم الخطاب الأكبر، مترابطة، فالخطاب الأصغر، بمعنى كيفيّة التّعبير وأدواته، يخضع لمراقبة الخطاب الأكبر، ولكن في نفس الوقت فإنّ الخطاب الأكبر يتشكّل عبر النّماذج التي يقدّمها الخطاب الأصغر. فهيمنة ضرب من الخطاب الأكبر في المجتمع، يرجع إلى عدّة عوامل من بينها قوّة الفاعلين الاجتماعيين الممارسين للخطاب الأصغر. بهذا المعنى فإنّ الخطاب وخطاب الفاعلين الاجتماعيين الأقوياء أو المؤسّسات القويّة بشكل خاصّ، تمثّل موقعا لإعادة صياغة الإيديولوجيا، ولإعطاء شرعيّة للفعل الاجتماعي. ولعلّ هذا ما يفسّر تركيز تحليل الخطاب النّقدي على المستوى الأصغر، وعلى التّحليل النّقدي للّغة التي يستخدمها من هم في السّلطة.[9]

إنّ العلاقة بين الخطاب الأصغر والخطابات الكبرى المهيمنة هي أحد مظاهر تطبيع normalization الطّبيعة الإيديولوجيّة للخطاب، من خلال تجسيداتها المتكرّرة في الخطاب، ويخفي الخطاب بذلك الإيديولوجيا التي تجعل ما هو اجتماعيّ يبدو طبيعيا. ويضطلع تحليل الخطاب النّقدي أحيانا بدور تبديد الغموض وإزالة الإبهام الحاصل في العلاقة بين الخطاب الأصغر والخطاب الأكبر.[10]

نفس التّصوّر يقدّمه فان ديك من خلال مصطلحيّ الأكبر والأصغر Micro vs. Macro. إنّ استخدام اللّغة والخطاب والتّفاعل اللّفظي والتّواصل تنتمي إلى المستويات الصّغرى من النّظام الاجتماعي. والسّلطة والهيمنة وعدم المساواة بين الفئات الاجتماعيّة عادة ما تكون مصطلحات تنتمي إلى المستويات الكبرى من التّحليل. ما يعني أن تحليل الخطاب أقام جسورا نظريّة بين المقاربات الصّغرى والمقاربات الكبرى ذات الأسس الاجتماعيّة. في التّفاعل اليومي وفي التّجربة اليوميّة يرد المستوى الأصغر والمستوى الأكبر (وبوساطة "المستويات الوسيطة" 'meso-levels') بشكل موحّد، أي في شكل وحدة كلّيّة. ومثال ذلك أنّ كلمة عنصريّة في البرلمان هي خطاب في المستوى الأصغر، ناتجة عن التّفاعل في الوضعيّة المخصّصة للنقاش، ولكن في نفس الوقت قد تكون جزءا أساسيا من التّشريعات، وإعادة إنتاج العنصريّة، في المستوى الأكبر.[11]

لذلك فإنّه لا وجود في الواقع، كما يرى فاركلوف، لبحث متحرّر من القيم، وكل باحث يعلن موقفه وهو ينجز بحثه، يعتبر ضربا من الموضوعيّة. ونحن نعتقد أن القيام بتحليل نقديّ للخطاب أمر ممكن إذا تسلّحنا بالمعارف العلميّة اللازمة بما في ذلك نظريّات اللّغة.[12]

انطلاقا من هذه التّصوّرات فالخطاب الرّوائي، هو خطاب لغوي غير مفصول عن البنى الاجتماعيّة التي أنتجته، وهو في آن يسعى إلى تغيير هذه البنى، وهو خطاب غير مفصول عن القيم، بمعنى أنّه خطاب إيديولوجي، يقوّض قيما ويسعى إلى تأسيس قيم جديدة.

2ـ علاقة المحظور والمباح بالثّقافة وبالأدب

يمكن ننظر في علاقة ثنائيّة المحظور والمباح بالثّقافة انطلاقا من التّصوّرات التّالية:

أولا المحظور والمباح ثنائيّة ثقافيّة تحكم الوجود البشري، وعليها يتأسس متخيّل البدء، فمنذ خلق آدم بدأت تتشكّل فضاءات المباح والمحظور، فوجوده قسّم الفضاء إلى فضاء محظور وفضاء مباح، وقسم الفعل إلى فعل محظور وفعل مباح، فلحظة وجود البشر هي لحظة انفجار الفضاء من فضاء متجانس إلى فضاء ثنائي، نوّعت الثّقافة بعد ذلك تسمياته، الحلال والحرام، القانوني وغير القانوني، الأخلاقي وغير الأخلاقي، المقدّس والمدنّس، المحجّر والمباح، وهي ثنائيات ثقافيّة تحدّد للإنسان ما يجب وما لا يجب.

ثانيا أنّ ثنائيّة المحظور والمباح، بما أنّها ثنائيّة ثقافيّة، فهي محكومة بمقولتيْ الزّمان والمكان، فانقسم المكان والزمان بين المقدّس والمدنّس، وتحوّلت فضاءات المحظور والمباح من زمن إلى آخر فما يعدّ محظورا في عصر مّا قد يبيحه زمن آخر، وما يبيحه فضاء قد يحجّر في فضاء آخر.

ثالثا هي ثنائيّة غير مضبوطة الحدود، فبين المحظور والمباح صراع مجالات، قد تتسع دائرة هذا في زمن مّا وتضيق دائرة الآخر، وقد يتحوّل الأمر عكسيا في زمن آخر وفي مكان آخر.

هذه النّقاط الثّلاث تؤدّي بنا جميعها إلى الملاحظة الأساسيّة في هذا الموضوع، وهي أن مقولتي المحظور والمباح مقولتان نسبيتان، بمعنى تاريخيتان، محكومتان بالثّقافي وبالآني، والحدود بينهما رجراجة وضبابيّة.

يقول "جوستاف لوبون" في "سيكولوجية الجماهير": "الواقع أن أكبر همّين للإنسان منذ أن وُجد على سطح هذه الأرض كانا يتمثلان في خلق شبكة من التقاليد أولا، ثم في تدميرها عندما تكون آثارها الإيجابية قد استُنفذت. وبدون تقاليد ثابتة لا يمكن أن توجد حضارة. وبدون الإزالة البطيئة والتدريجية لهذه التقاليد لا يمكن أن يوجد تقدم. والصعوبة تكمن في إيجاد توازن بين الثبات والتحول. وهذه الصعوبة ضخمة جدًا. فعندما يُتيح شعب ما لأعرافه وتقاليده أن تثبت وتترسّخ بقوة زائدة طيلة أجيال عديدة، فإنه لا يعود يستطيع التطور".[13]

أمّا علاقة ثنائيّة المحظور والمباح بالأدب فيمكن إيجازها في النّقاط التّالية:

أوّلا إشكاليّة علاقة المحظور والمباح بالأدب خاصّة وبالفنّ عامّة إشكاليّة قديمة، لارتباط الفنّ باعتباره فعلا بشريا كغيره من النّشاطات البشريّة، بهذه الثّنائيّة، فكلّ فعل بشري يجب أن يصنّف في أيّ مجال أو أي فضاء هو، في دائرة المقدّس أم في دائرة المدنس، ليباح أو ليحارب ويمنع، هكذا كان حال الغناء والرسم والرّقص والشّعر وغيرها من الفنون، ويكفي أن نشير إلى ما أثاره التّراث العربي الإسلامي من إشكالية علاقة الدّيني بالشّعري، واختلاف وجهات النّظر في المسألة بين عين النّاقد والأديب والفقيه والسّلطان.

ثانيا الأدب محكوم دائما بالتجاوز لذلك كانت أرضه دائما أرض المحظور، يدكّ حصونه، وينتهك محرّماته، ويخترق تحصيناته، هو العدوّ الذي يشيّد على أرضه صروح انتصاراته، لذلك كان الأدب الخالد في الغالب هو الذي ينشأ في فضاء الممنوع والمحرّم والمحظور.

ثالثا كان الأدب دائما رأس الحربة في صراع المجالات بين المحظور والمباح، فكثيرا ما ساهم الأدب في توسيع أرض الثّاني على حساب الأوّل، فهو الأقدر على انتهاك أرض المقدس، وتحويله إلى عاديّ، وهو الأقدر على إباحة ما حظرته إنتاجات الثقافة الأخرى، كالدين والعرف والأخلاق...

رابعا علاقة المحظور والمباح بالرّواية العربيّة علاقة تلازم، فالرّواية العربيّة في ميلادها الأوّل ولدت في محضن المحظور، فرواية "زينب" الرّواية العربيّة الأولى توارى كاتبها ولم يفصح عن هويته، واتّخذ اسما مستعارا :"بقلم فلاح مصري"، خوفا وخجلا من عمل يراه النّاس من العبث والمجون الذي لا يليق أن يكتبه الإنسان الجاد المحترم.

3- المحظور والمباح في الرّواية العربيّة

نحاول في إطار موضوع هذه البحث المقارنة، انطلاقا من ثنائيّة المحظور والمباح، بين الرّواية الخليجيّة والرّواية المغاربيّة، ما المحظور في الرّواية الخليجيّة وما المحظور في الرّواية المغاربيّة؟ ما هي مقاصد اختراق المحظور في الرواية الخليجيّة ونظيرتها المغاربيّة؟ ما هي الأبعاد الاجتماعيّة والفنّيّة لاختراق المحظور في هذين النّموذجين؟ تنوّع المحظورات واختلافها بين الرّواية الخليجيّة والرّواية المغاربية، إشكاليّة مبدع أم إشكاليّة مجتمع؟ هل تمثّل خلخلة الثّوابت الاجتماعيّة في الرّواية العربيّة إشكاليّة فنّية أم إيديولوجيّة؟ كيف يمكن اعتبار اختراق المحظور ملمحا من ملامح الحداثة في الكتابة الرّوائيّة العربيّة؟

اخترنا نموذجا عن الرّواية الخليجيّة بعض الرّوايات السّعوديّة ومنها خاصّة الرّوايات النّسوية، رواية **"اختلاس"** لهاني النقشبندي،[14] ورواية **"أنثى العنكبوت"** لقماشة العليان،[15] رواية **"نساء المنكر"** لسمر المقرن،[16] رواية **"لم أعد أبكي"** لزينب حنفي.[17] ونموذجا عن الرّواية المغاربية بعض الرّوايات التّونسيّة، رواية **"المشرط"** لكمال الرّياحي،[18] ورواية **"شبابيك منتصف اللّيل"** لإبراهيم الدّرغوثي،[19] ورواية **"جحيم في الجنّة"** لعبّاس سليمان.[20]

3-1. اختراق المحظور وأبعاده في الرّواية الخليجيّة

تعتبر الجندرة، بمعنى علاقة الذّكورة بالأنوثة، من أهمّ المسائل التي طرحتها الرّواية الخليجيّة، وأغلب من طرح هذه القضيّة هنّ الرّوائيّات السّعوديات، وإن لم نعدم وجود القضيّة عند الرّوائيين الذّكور. هذه المسألة تقودنا إلى ملاحظتيْن أساسيتيْن أولاهما أنّ طرح هذه المسألة من طرف الرّوائيات، أي من طرف الصّوت الأنثوي، المووؤد في هذه المجتمعات، يجعلنا نفهم الرّواية باعتبارها تعبيرا ثوريا، هي ثورة المقموع والمضطهَد ضدّ البُنى الاجتماعيّة والثّقافيّة والدّينيّة والسّياسيّة التي شكلت آليات قمعه وقهره. والمحظور عندما يصدر عن صوت أنثوي، في مجتمعات ترفض صوت الأنثى في الخطاب العادي وتعتبره عورة، يحمل شحنة صادمة مضافة للبنى الفكريّة القائمة. وثانيتهما أنّ المسألة في ما نتصوّر أشمل من ذلك فالرّواية هي صوت المثقّف الخليجي الذي يقدّم رؤية اجتماعيّة وفكريّة تتجاوز السّائد والمهيمن، وتقدّم تصوّرات اجتماعيّة وثقافيّة جديدة.

لفتت هذه الظّاهرة الانتباه، بعد حرب الخليج الثّانية، حيث بدأت تظهر إلى الوجود روايات تصوّر المكانة الهامشيّة للمرأة السّعوديّة. 21 وتربط ظاهرة التّهميش الاجتماعي عموما ببنى ثقافيّة واقتصاديّة واجتماعيّة سائدة، وتموقع فئات اجتماعيّة وفق تراتبيّة ساهمت في تركيزها عوامل مختلفة، حتّى أضحى المساس بها من المحظورات. حدّا أضحت فيه صورة المرأة السّعوديّة قالبا stereotype للمرأة المسلمة تتكرّر حتى في الكتابات غير العربيّة. 22

ركّزت روايات المدوّنة التي اخترنا الاشتغال عليها، على المكانة الفوقية للذكر في المجتمعات الخليجيّة ومكانة الإناث الهامشيّة، لذلك تكاد تتماثل جميع الرّوايات في نقمتها على الذّكر، وما يمثّله من رمزيّة. يتجلّى هذا في الصّورة المقدمة عن أغلب الذّكور في الرّوايات التي نقارب، هذه الصّورة المصحوبة برغبة عنيفة في قتل الذّكر المتمثل في الأب أو الزوج أو الحبيب الغادر. هي رغبة في قتل هذه الثّقافة التي سحبت من الأنثى إنسانيتها، "ذلك أنّ أحدا لا يفهم ما تريده امرأة، في مجتمع الرّجال فيه أنصاف آلهة والنّساء ميّتات جاهزات للرحيل". 23 كما تقول سارة بطلة "اختلاس".

فالمرأة في الرّواية الخليجيّة مسكونة بتوق دائم إلى الحريّة والانفلات من القيود الذّكوريّة الصّارمة: "أعيتها رحلة البحث عن الحريّة وسط تقاليد صارمة نُصبت كتمثال الحريّة منذ عشرات السنين"24. وهي التي لم ترتق في هذه المجتمعات إلى مرتبة الكائن، هي شيء من الأشياء التي يؤثّث بها الذّكور عالمهم: "إنّها (المرأة) في حياة أبي شيء مملوك لا تقدير له ولا احترام، لا رأي له ولا صوت ... كقطعة أثاث... أو كجهاز كهربائيّ أو مقعد... شيء تبقى قيمته بقدر ما يفيد، ثمّ يُلقى به في أقرب سلة مهملات... مسكينة هذه المرأة فبقدر ما أشفق عليها وأرثي لحالها فإنّني أكره ضعفها وخضوعها". 25 فهذه المجتمعات لم تحسم في مكانة المرأة هل هي ذات أم موضوع. 26

وتظهر الرّغبة في قتل الأب الذّكر بوضوح في تشفي أحلام في رواية "أنثى العنكبوت" عند سقوط الأب في المرض، فسقوطه سقوط للثّقافة الذكورية المتسلّطة، وسقوط لثقافة كاملة تتمنى المرأة نهايتها: "مرض أبي ... نعم سقط الجبل الشّامخ الصّامد في نوبة حمّى طويلة ...أحالته سهلا منخفضا منبسطا بلا ارتفاعات أو التواءات... سقط بلا حول ولا قوّة كرضيع مازال يتلمّس خطواته الأولى عبر الآخرين". 27 وتظهر في وقتل الزّوج الذي يمثّل صورة أخرى لثقافة تمتهن المرأة وتهينها. تنتهي رواية "أنثى العنكبوت" بقتل الرّاوية لزوجها بعد أن رفضت معاشرته، معلنة التّمرّد على هذه الأعراف التي قيّدتها. 28 وأعلنتها صراحة في آخر جمل الرّواية: "أبي أنا لم أقتل زوجي... أنا قتلتك أنت". 29

لذلك يتحوّل الخطاب الرّوائي إلى خطاب عنف مباشر ضدّ الذّكر وما يمثّله من رمزيّة، تقول في "نساء المنكر": "يالكم من جبناء تنعتونها بالضّعيفة وما من ضعيف سواكم. تخشون المرأة ، تهابون لقاءها، وتعجزون عن كبت غرائزكم عنها. في حضرتها تتبخّر قوّة العضلات وتتلاشى هيبة اللّحى والشّنبات. فإيماءة منها تحرّككم في كلّ اتّجاه. ولن تكونوا حتّى كلعبة الشّطرنج لأنها للأذكياء. "30

هذه القضيّة المركزيّة تتجلى في طرح الرّواية السّعوديّة للعديد من قضايا المرأة ومشاكلها في المجتمعات الخليجيّة، مثل خروج المرأة رفقة محرم وزينتها، ولباسها والزّواج وما يرتبط به من قضايا تعدّد الزوجات، والفارق في السّن بين الزوجين، وطريقة المعاملة، والعلاقة الجنسيّة، والعذريّة، والشّذوذ الجنسي، والخيانة، والاغتصاب، والطّلاق، ومكانة الأرملة، والعلاقات خارج إطار الزّواج، والعلاقات الجنسيّة مع العمالة الأجنبيّة، وعلاقة المرأة بجماعة الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر، ونظام الرّقابة على الأنثى. نكتفي في هذا السّياق بالإشارة إلى بعض هذه القضايا الخارقة لمحظور مجتمع مغلق، شديد العنف مع من يخترق قيما بناها طيلة قرون وأحاطها بهالة من القداسة، وجعلها أغلالا تكبّل المرأة والمجتمع.

– وصف المشاهد الجنسيّة، من أهم المحظورات التي تنتهكها الرّواية السّعوديّة، اعتناء بتفاصيل الجسد الأنثوي وبالعلاقة الجنسيّة الحميمة، والعلاقة الجنسيّة المرغوبة. في رواية "لم أعد أبكي" تقول: "ضمّني إليه وأخذ يتحسّس جسدي، تمادى أكثر، وارى أصابعه بين فخذيّ، تطلّعت إليه مغتبطة، ظلّ على هذه الحال دقائق معدودة، غاب سواد عينيه، أخذت ساقاه ترتجفان، تراخت بعدئذ قواه، أحسست بسائل دافئ يبلّل ثوبي، قلت له ببراءة: لقد تبوّلت على نفسك يا زيد."[31]

وفي رواية اختلاس يصف الرّاوي البطلة: "تعود إلى سريرها بثيابها الشّفّافة، وقد انكشف جزء من ساقها حتّى الفخذ. تداعب قليلا ما انكشف، ثمّ تداعب أكثر، ثم تغطي جزءها وهي تستغفر الله وتستعيذ به من الشّيطان"، لكنّه ينهي الرّواية بمشهد البطلة الثّائرة على كلّ محظور: "تمدّدت على سريرها، وأغمضت عينيها، عادت تداعب نفسها من جديد بلا استغفار".[32]

وفي وصف المشاهد الجنسيّة جرأة على كشف المستور وتعرية المحجّب والمخفيّ الذي تحاول المؤسسات القائمة تغطيته، وهو عندما يصدر عن أنثى يكون أشدّ إثارة وأكثر حدّة، أضف إلى ذلك أنّها صادر عن امرأة سعوديّة بما يحمله المخيال الجمعي العربي عن المجتمع السّعودي والخليجي عامّة، فهذه المشاهد الجنسيّة قد لا تضاهي ما نجده في الرّوايات العربيّة الأخرى، لكن الخلفيّة الّتي يصدر عنها هي التي تزيده قوّة، وتزيده إثارة.

– الفارق في السن عند الزواج: استعارة الغول والأميرة الاستعارة الأكثر تداولا في حديث الرّواية السّعوديّة عن الذّكور العجزة الذين يتزوّجون بفتيات صغيرات، إنّها صورة الوحش المفترس الذي ينقض على الفريسة الوديعة المستسلمة. تنقل بطلة "نساء المنكر" جانبا من هذه الاستعارة: "تراءت لي ليلة الأمس بكل تفاصيلها المخزية البغيضة بدءا من تناوله أقراصا زرقاء اللّون ثمّ ارتدائه ثياب حيوان برّي متوحّش حتّى ارتداده على عقبيه يجرجر أذيال الهزيمة، تلوح علائم الانكسار على وجهه الدّميم... عرق غزير أنفاس كريهة تعبرني ببطء متعمّد، ثقل يجثم على صدري، الخشونة تطارد أجزائي فلا أشعر لها وقعا ولا أملك لها دفعا (..) إنّه ليس سوى كومة قذرة من الشّيخوخة والعجز والانكسار".[33]

وعن قضيّة المرأة يتفرّع الحديث عن أشكال أخرى من المحظور، مثل **نقد المؤسّسة الدّينيّة** الممثّلة خاصة في جماعة الأمر بالمعروف والنّهي عن المنكر، هذه المؤسّسة الكابوس التي تجثم على صدور السّعوديين، فلا تخلو رواية من نقد عنيف لممارساتها وتصوير كاريكاتوري لأعضائها: "في الأسواق صرخات رجال الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر على النساء، يتبعها تلقائيا تسارع في خطواتهن، وبلبلة وخوف وتوار خلف عمود أو حائط أو داخل أحد المحلّات. لتتخلّص بضعفها من قوّة رجل الشّرطة الدّينيّة الذي بمقدوره أن يفعل بها ما يشاء...".[34] وإجبارية التّدين الذي تفرضه هذه الشّرطة الذي يظهر أحيانا في صور مضحكة لا علاقة لها بالدّين: "هوت عصا أحد رجال الهيئة الدّينيّة عليه، وعلى عدد من الأسيويين في صرخات هيستيريّة تدعوهم إلى المسجد وقت صلاة العشاء. أخبرهم أنّه ينتظر سيّدته وليته ما فعل، فقد جرّوه من عنقه مخفورا إلى السّجن، ريثما يتأكّدون من وضعه. كان معه اثنان غيره أحدهما بوذي والآخر هندوسي، وجميعهم قد أمروا بالتّوجه إلى المسجد للصلاة. وقد فعلوا قبل أن يعادوا إلى سجنهم من جديد".[35]

ونقد للمؤسّسة القضائيّة وفهمها الغريب للنصّ الديني: "كانت (خولة) تجلس وتلملم بين أحضانها أمومتها، تحتضن "فاتن" ابنتها التي تزورها في السّجن الذي تقضي فيه عقوبة العشق، أربع سنوات وسبعمائة جلدة.

حتى في سورة النّور قد أمر تعالى بجلد الزّاني والزّانية مئة جلدة، ولا أدري كيف تضاعف العدد ومن أيّ شريعة جاء؟".[36]

ونقد للنظام التعليمي: "من هنا يأتي الدّرس الأوّل الذي تعلّمه هشام من مدرسته: إنّ الله موجود من أجلنا وحدنا، فلا مؤمن سوانا ولا صالح إلاّ نحن، وحدنا سنذهب إلى الجنّة ركضا، كما الآخرون سيدخلون النّار زحفا على بطونهم". وتتكرّر الأفكار ذاتها من جديد في كلّ مدرسة تعلّم فيها هشام، حتّى الجامعة والمسجد والبيت. "فمن لا يؤمن بما نؤمن به نحن في السّعوديّة، وبالطّريقة نفسها، يصبح كافرا مع الزّاحفين على بطونهم إلى النّار" كما كان يقول له بعض معلميه في الحلقات الدّينيّة.

النّار اللّصيقة الدّائمة بذاكرة الطّفولة، وغضب الله. "ما أصبح الله إلها بل سجّانا بكلّ صفات الجلّادين. أما كان من الأفضل أن يعلمونا أنّ الله يحبّنا ويغفر للمخطئ منّا؟""[37].

تبدو الرّواية الخليجيّة رواية بسيطة في بنائها الشّكلي، فهي لا تحتفي كثيرا باللّعبة الشّكليّة، فالسّرد فيها بسيط ومباشر، ومتسلسل في ترتيبه الزّمني. تخلو حبكتها القصصيّة من التّعقيد والتّجريب الشّكلي الذي انخرطت فيه الرّواية المعاصرة. هي رواية تذكّر بالرّواية العربيّة في بداياتها عند تيمور وحتّى عند جبران خليل جبران. لذلك جاءت هذه الرّوايات متشابهة ومتقاربة في أسلوبها حتّى تكاد تكون لكاتب واحد.

وتكاد في بنائها العام تكون تجميعا لأقاصيص قصيرة، لحالات ووضعيات تعيشها المرأة الخليجيّة. الرّواية الخليجيّة هي مرايا متعددة لصورة المرأة الخليجيّة كلّ مرآة تنقل جانبا من الصّورة.

وكثيرا ما تتحوّل الرّواية إلى خطاب فكريّ مباشر، يشخّص ويقترح الحلول، فيتداخل القصصي بالمقاليّ، كما نجده في أقاصيص البدايات.

تذكّر العديد من الروايات بالأقاصيص الجبرانيّة في تقديمها لوضع المرأة البائس، ودعوتها إلى علاقات إنسانيّة جديدة بين المرأة والرّجل.

لكلّ هذه الأسباب نعتقد أنّ الرّواية الخليجيّة بدأت من النّاحية الفنية من المراحل الأولى، فغايتها ليست فنيّة بالدّرجة الأولى، هي تحمل مشروعا إصلاحيا، مشروعا فكريا تؤسّس له وتسعى إلى تثبيته، محلّ منظومة فكريّة واجتماعيّة وثقافيّة سائدة، تعيق تقدّم الإنسان في هذه المنطقة، هي صاحبة مشروع وصاحبة إيديولوجيّة تدخل في صراع مع إيديولوجيا قائمة وتسعى إلى تقويضها، لذلك فالصّراع والقوّة مفهومان أساسيان يحكمان الرّواية الخليجيّة.

تسعى الرّوية الخليجيّة إلى التّأسيس لمجتمع حداثي في كلّ جوانبه، وتقدّم البديل المقترح الذي يجعل من الإنسان ومن المرأة خاصّة كائنا له وجوده المركزيّ في الوجود، ومن مظاهر هذا المشروع:

* التبشير بعلاقة جديدة بين المرأة والرّجل: يظهر هذا بوضوح في علاقات الحب التي تظهرها الرّوايات بعيدا عن مؤسّسة الزّواج التّقليديّة التي تحقّر المرأة، وتمتهن كرامتها، هي علاقات بديلة تعطي للمرأة مكانتها، ونجدها تقريبا في جميع الرّوايات التي درسنا، لذلك قلنا أن هذه النّصوص تذكّر بالنّصوص الجبرانيّة وإن كانت النّصوص الجبرانيّة أكثر جرأة وأكثر حلما بعلاقة إنسانيّة متعالية عن ضغوطات الثّقافة، فمقارنة بسيطة بين تصوير العلاقة الجنسيّة التي يسبقها الحب، والمبنية على رغبة الطّرفين، وبين العلاقة الجنسيّة المفروضة اجتماعيا يُبيّن الفرق بين تصوّرين تصوّر قائم وتصوّر بديل يسعى إلى فرض وجوده. تقول بطلة "نساء المنكر" في صورة تجمع المشهدين وتقارن بينهما: "فمضيت أرتوي وأروي واكتشفت عطش جسدي لسنوات لم يكن يبحث فيها إلاّ عن زفرة حقيقيّة تنبع من داخل عاشقة لا ماكينة جنسيّة تعمل وقت التّشغيل وتغلق وقت الإفراغ. القبلة الصّباحيّة مذاقها تعلّمته لأوّل مرّة عندما استيقظ بجانبي ليتوجّه إلى عمله"[38].

تجد المرأة حياتها الحقيقيّة كإنسانة في المجتمع الغربي الذي مثّل فضاء لحريّة مفقودة في المجتمع الخليجي: "أمّا في حرارة قلبينا فلم يكن لنا من حلّ إلاّ أن تتشابك أصابعنا كأنها تعلن بداية أن نكون، أن نصهر شتاء لندن، أن نمضي في مقاومة قسوة "الشرطة الدّينيّة" التي تنتظرنا في الرّياض وغلظة المجتمع ونعته للعاشق بالفاسق أمّا العاشقة فهي بلا شكّ مومس تستحقّ الرّجم"[39].

*بناء صورة جديدة للمرأة الخليجيّة، فأغلب بطلات الرّوايات الثّائرات المتمرّدات هنّ من المتعلّمات، يشتغلن في التّعليم أو في الصّحافة، ويمثلن صورة عن الكاتبات، اللاتي خرجن وتمردن على العباءة الذكوريّة للمجتمع الخليجي. تدعو البطلات صراحة إلى اختراق محظورات هذا المجتمع الذّكوري: "لماذا تظلّ تطلّعات المرأة معلّقة بجرّة قلم من الآباء والأزواج؟ هل يمثّل هذا وجها من وجوه العدالة الاجتماعيّة؟ لماذا يصرّ مجتمعنا على أن ينصّب نفسه حاكما على طموحاتنا؟ لماذا يكبّلنا بكلّ هذه القيود ولا يدع لنا الفرصة لكي نتنفّس بحريّة، ونقع ونقف ونعيد تكرار المحاولة مرّة بعد المرّة حتّى نضع أيدينا على ما نريده بقناعة ذاتيّة". [40]

* دعوة المثقّف إلى الاضطلاع بدوره الإصلاحي التّوعوي في المجتمع: "مازلت أؤمن أنّ دور المثقّف الحقيقيّ هو الكشف عن عورات مجتمعه حتّى يتمّ ترميم الصّدوع والآفات التي تريد التغلغل في بنيته". [41]

يقول طلال صورة المثقف في رواية "لم أعد أبكي": "مشكلتي لم تكن مع السّلطة وإنّما مع فئة دينيّة رأت أنّني قد أذنبت حين تجاسرت وحاولت تحطيم القيود الصّدئة التي توارثناها. ولكن إلى متى سنظلّ واقعين تحت أعراف من صنع البشر وليست من صنع شريعتنا؟". [42]

والمؤكد أن اختراق مثل هذه التابوهاتِ لن يكون دون عقاب من المؤسسات القائمة، والرّوايات تبيّن ما يعانيه المثقف في المجتمع السّعودي: "لقد أوقف طلال عن العمل ويخضع حاليا لتحقيق من السّلطات حول قصيدة كتبها عن المرأة. ثمّ نشرها أخيرا، واعتبرت أنّ في أبياتها دعوة إلى الفجور، وتحرير المرأة من أعراف المجتمع. وهذا يثبت بالدّليل القاطع استخفافه بالدّين الإسلامي. وقد طالبوا بحبسه وجلده في ميدان عام ليصبح عبرة لغيره". [43]

وفي رواية "لم أعد أبكي" نجد رسالة من طلال إلى غادة من الصفحة 138 إلى الصفحة 155، هي خطاب مباشر عن مشاكل المجتمع السعودي ومشكل التّحديث والمرأة ودور المثقف.

*تدعو الرّوايات الخليجيّة إلى قراءة جديدة للنصّ الدّيني بعيدا عن الفهوم الوهابيّة التي شوّهت الدّين الإسلامي، وفرضت تصوّرا للدين، أضحى هو المقدّس بعيدا عن النّص الدّيني.
*الحلم بتصوّر جديد لمؤسسات الدّولة، والتّوق إلى مجتمع شبيه بالمجتمعات الغربية في الحريّات واحترام المرأة، ومثّلت لندن في الرّواية الخليجية الصّورة النّقيض للرياض، والمتنفّس الحرّ للسعوديين، والنّموذج البديل الذين يطمحون إلى تحقيقه.

3-2. اختراق المحظور في الرّواية المغاربيّة

يبدو أنّ اختراق المحظور في الرّواية التّونسية ليس له نفس أهداف اختراق المحظور في الرّواية السّعودية، وهذا يرجع إلى أمرين في تصوّرنا، أمر فنّي وأمر اجتماعي ثقافي، أمّا الأمر الفنّي فيتمثّل في أنّ تجربة القصّ التّونسيّة لها تاريخ طويل يرجع إلى بداية القرن العشرين، وخلال هذه الفترة استطاعت التّجربة التّونسيّة أن تسقط في طريقها العديد من التّابوهات، والأمر الثّاني يتمثّل بكلّ بساطة في البني الاجتماعيّة والثّقافيّة للمجتمع التّونسي وهي مختلفة عن البني الاجتماعيّة والثّقافيّة للمجتمعات الخليجيّة، فالقضايا والتابوهات التي تثيرها المجتمعات الخليجيّة اليوم، لا تحسب من المحظورات في المجتمع التّونسي والمغاربي. لهذين السّببين الفني والإيديولوجي يختلف اختراق المحظور في التّجربة الرّوائيّة التّونسيّة عن نظيرتها السّعوديّة. فما يعتبر محظورا في المجتمع السّعودي لم يعد من المحظورات في المجتمع وفي الكتابة التّونسيّة.

لذلك نعتقد أن اختراق المحظور في الرّواية التّونسيّة ذهب شوطا أبعد ولم يعد من قضايا الرواية الكبرى، الحب وخروج المرأة ولباسها وعملها وسياقتها السّيّارة واختيار زوجها وتعدّد الزّوجات وغيرها. ونعتقد أبعد

من ذلك أنّ الغاية الإصلاحيّة والحداثيّة المهمومة بها الرّواية السّعوديّة لم تعد إلى حدّ بعيد من مقاصد الرّواية التّونسيّة.

يكاد يقتصر المحظور في الرّواية التّونسيّة في المحظور الجنسي، ولهذا أسباب أهمها أن الجنس هو المحظور المباح، في ظلّ سلطة دكتاتوريّة، تحسب لكلّ كلمة حسابا. ولم تستطع الرّواية التّونسيّة في حدود ما نعلم أن تلامس المحظور السّياسي مثلا، إلا ما ندر من إشارات معمّاة.

يهدف اختراق المحظورات الجنسيّة في الرّواية التّونسيّة إلى أهداف أهمّها إثارة المتعة، لشدّ الانتباه، ولفت نظر القارئ، وتحقيق الاختلاف، وهذا تحقّق بأسلوبيْن من تجريب هذا المحظور:

- أوّلهما الذّهاب بعيدا في وصف العلاقات الجنسيّة وتلقّط الشاذ منها والغريب، حتّى يصل الأمر إلى وصف نكاح الحيوانات والحيوان والإنسان، أو تصوير المشاهد الشّاذة جنسيا، السّحاق واللّواط ولقاء بين مخنّث وعاهرة، وغيرها.

يقول الرّاوي في شبابيك منتصف اللّيل: "هل تعرفون كيف تساق الكلاب الشّبقة إلى المشنقة وهي تستعدّ لممارسة الجنس؟ هناك عدّة طرق. ولكلّ طريقته الخاصّة التي لا يتقنها غيره. أنا مثلا، لي طريقتي التي برعت في إتقانها حتى صارت مضرب الأمثال. (...) وكلبتي التي تكون وقت السّفاد زائغة النّظرات لا يقرّ لها قرار. ألبسها قميصا من الحرير الورديّ. وأضع لها أحمر الشّفاه وأكحّل لها عينيها بالإثمد ولا أبخل عليها بما طاب ولذّ من المأكل والمشرب. (...) الكلاب تقفز في وقت واحد بين فخذي كلبتي. تركبها للحظة ثمّ تسقط عاوية، نائحة، مزمجرة. وكلبتي ترفض الجماع وتغلق أبواب الرّحمة في وجوه الجميع (...) أقف أمام الكلب الذي أسكرته اللّذة والذي كان يرفض ترك كلبته بعد الرّكل بالأرجل والخبط بالحجر ما بين العينين. وأشحذ السّكين إلى أن يقدح الشّرر ثمّ أمسحها على مؤخرة الكلب وبضربة خاطفة أقصّ ذكره من الجذر". [44]

"خطبت من "عبد المؤمن" حمارتهم (...) غمزني يوما وهو يشير إلى فرج الحمارة الذي كان ينفتح وينغلق في حركات بطيئة وقال: منذ أن منع عنها أبي حمار جارنا هذا الصّباح وهي كما ترى. ماذا لو ركبتها أنت" [45]

"رأت الرّوميّة القضيب الأعجوبة وقد انتصب انتصابا كاملا كعمود من الأبنوس، فانبهرت. نظرت إلى ذلك الشيء مبهوتة ثمّ قامت تتحسّسه بيدها" [46]

– وثانيهما يتمثّل في المحظور اللّغوي فليس الأمر مجرّد نقل لمشاهد جنسيّة بل إنّ اللّغة التي ينقل بها الجنس هي الصّادمة، فالرّواية التونسية تمعن في نقل الشّعبي السّوقي المبتذل. يقول كمال الرّياحي في المشرط "خارج البيت كانت زوجة الحارس، التي رافقتني لترشدني إلى الطريق، تقترب منّي وتتعمّد ملامستي بحركات مثيرة وعندما لم أبد تجاوبا رفعت ملاءتها عند الوادي وكشفت عورتها المشعرة وقالت: ألا ترغب في هذا". [47]

"لم بعد يعجبكم هذا الإست الذي قبّلتموه كثيرا وبكيتم عليه طويلا آخر الليل؟". [48]

وفي "شبابيك منتصف اللّيل"، ينقل الرّاوي: "نادته طفلة روميّة لا تتقن الكلام بالعربيّة. حفظت منذ مدّة قصيرة بعض كلمات من الدّارجة التّونسيّة. الكلمات البذيئة فقط. وكانت تستعملها في الغالب في غير محلها كأن تقول: "هيا اندز هولك" عوضا عن "هيا دز هولي" أو "شوف زبّورك ما أكبره" في مكان "شوف زبوري". " [49]

تستحضر الرّواية التّونسيّة في أحيان كثيرة الموروث الجنسي العربي من خلال أبرز مؤلفاته كتلك التي تعود إلى الشيخ النّفزاوي والتّيفاشي، وبعض نصوص الجاحظ، وتؤثّث به عالمها المتخيّل.

مثّل المحظور متخيّلا جديدا وجدت فيه الرّواية التّونسيّة والمغاربيّة فضاء خصبا، لتجديد المواضيع الرّوائيات. لكنّه عندما يتكرّر ويتعاود يضحي له دلالات أخرى، أهمها فيما نعتقد:

- عجز الرّوائي عن إيجاد متخيل بديل يصنع من خلاله عالمه الرّوائي، ويشدّ به جمهوره، ويحقّق به انتشاره.

– ضعف القدرات الفنيّة للمبدع الذي يحاول التّغطية عليه بالحديث في هذا الضّرب من الجنس، دون أن يواكبه عمل فنّي يحمل إضافة فنيّة. فيكون اختراق المحظور من باب التّجاوز لمجرّد التّجاوز لا يحمل أيّ أبعاد إصلاحيّة ولا أيّ أبعاد فنية. وهذا يتّضح في التّجارب الرّوائيّة والقصصيّة التي تعيد نفسها، مثلما نجده عند عبّاس سليمان من تكرار دائم لنفس المواضيع عن العاهرات والشّاذّات دون مقاصد واضحة فنيّة أو اجتماعيّة.

3-3. اختراق المحظور والتّأسيس لحداثة إبداعيّة والاجتماعيّة

أسّست الرّواية العربية، من خلال النّماذج التي اخترناها، لقيم اجتماعيّة وفنيّة مختلفة عن السّائد، فقد رنا كتّبها إلى مجتمع بديل وإلى أنماط عيش مختلفة، كما سعوا إلى تأسيس كتابة مباينة للسائد وخارجة عن المتداول، تحقيقا للتميّز والخصوصيّة. وقد انتهى بنا البحث في إشكاليّة المحظور وعلاقتها بالحداثة في نماذج من الرّواية التّونسيّة ونماذج من الرّواية السّعوديّة إلى النّقاط التّالية:

– يبدو أنّ الموضوع الجنسي هو الموضوع المشترك بين الرّواية الخليجيّة والرّواية المغاربيّة وإن اختلف مستوى القضايا التي تثيرها كلّ رواية لارتباط كلّ منهما بخلفيات اجتماعيّة وثقافيّة وفكريّة مختلفة.

– الرّواية الخليجيّة في اختراقها للمحظور كانت مشدودة إلى تأسيس حداثة اجتماعيّة وفكريّة وكانت الرّواية المغاربيّة مهووسة بحداثة فنيّة شكليّة، وإن لم تغب الأولى نهائيا.

– اختراق المحظور في كلا التّجربتين مثّل صدمة، قد تكون متأتية أساسا من الإطار الثّقافي الذي كتبت فيه هذه الرّواية ومن مصدره أي الذّات الكاتبة وخاصّة الذّات الأنثى، وقد يكون من النّص في حدّ ذاته. والمقصد أن قراءة المحظور في الرّواية لا يتأتى دون عمليّة تفاعليّة بين النّصّ ومنشئه وخلفيته الاجتماعيّة والثّقافيّة.

– تبدو الرّواية الخليجيّة في اختراقها للمحظور الاجتماعي وما يتعلّق منه بالجسد الأنثوي خاصّة أقرب إلى الرواية العربيّة في بدايتها، حين كانت الرّواية مسكونة بهموم الواقع، ساعية إلى تقديم تصور مجتمعي جديد، وتبدو الرّواية المغاربيّة في اختراقها للمحظور الجنسي أقرب إلى أدب المجون في الثّقافة العربيّة الإسلامية، هدفه المتعة والإثارة في المقام الأوّل، والتّأسيس لكتابة مختلفة، ويبقى هذا التّصوّر نسبيا في كلّ الأحوال.

– يبدو في الظّاهر والمتداول أنّ هذا الاختراق للقيم الاجتماعيّة والأعراف الأخلاقية ناتج أساسا عن تأثّر بالثّقافة الغربيّة، واندراج ربما لا واع في مشروعها، وانخراط في مسار عولمة ثقافيّة تريد أن تكسر الفوارق بين الثّقافات وأن تعولم الثّقافة الغربيّة، وتنتهك خصوصيتنا الثّقافيّة، لكنّنا نلاحظ في أحيانا كثيرة أن هذا المتخيّل الذي تبنيه الرّواية العربيّة يستمد بعض معالمه من التّراث العربي، التّراث الذي نقل لنا كتابات جريئة، هي أكثر جرأة من الكتابات الرّوائيّة الحديثة في كتب الجنس وكان أغلب كتبتها من الفقهاء، وفي أخبار العشّاق والمجان والمتهتّكين.

– كثيرا ما تُطرح عند تناول قضايا المحظور في الفنّ والأدب إشكاليّة الهويّة، فهذا الضرب من انتهاك القيم في الأدب يشكّل ضربا للهويّة، وللدين أحد أهمّ مقوّمات هويتنا. هذا الأمر يستدعي حديثا عن مفهوم

الهويّة ذاته هل هو ثابت أم متحوّل؟ وهل عندما كتب العرب في الجنس ضربوا مقوّمات هويتهم؟ هل الرّواية هي دعوة للمجون والتهتّك أم هي كشف له؟ ما يبدو للبعض من المحرّمات قد لا يكون في حقيقة الأمر كذلك.

– نحسب أنّنا لا نستطيع أن نحدّ من انطلاق الكتابة الرّوائيّة تحت شعار القيم والدّين والأخلاق، فالإبداع حصان جامح لا يروّض ولكنّ السّياق والثّقافة والتّقبّل هي التي تبقي ما يناسبها وتسقط الباقي.

– تتعلّق إشكاليّة المحظور والمباح في الرّواية بمسألة القراءة أساسا، والقراءة فعل متحوّل متبدّل تتحكّم فيه ظروف متعدّدة منها ما هو نفسي ومنها منا هو ثقافي وتاريخي وسياقي، ومنها ما هو إيديولوجي، لذلك فهي قضيّة متجدّدة الحضور في جميع العصور، ولا نتصوّر وجود مقاربة نهائيّة لها، بما أن كلّ مقاربة هي في حدّ ذاتها وجهة نظر محكومة بإكراهات متعدّدة.

– خاتمة

نعتقد أنّ مسألة ربط الإبداع بالقيم مسألة متجدّدة الحضور في كلّ المجتمعات وفي كلّ العصور، لأنّها مسألة متعلّقة بالوجود البشري الباني للحدود والمخترق لها في آن. وهي أساسا إشكاليّة تقبّل تتشابك فيها معطيات مختلفة منها ما هو نفسي ومنها ما هو واجتماعي وديني وسياسي وثقافي. فالإنسان بطبعه يسكن إلى المألوف ويتهيّب من الوافد الجديد، والمبدع بطبعه لا يطمئن إلى السّائد ويهفو إلى غير المألوف والشّاذ والخارج عن الأعراف، كذا كان حال المبدعين على مرّ العصور في الفنون جميعها. والرّواية فنّ دائم التّجدّد مؤسّس على التّجاوز الدّائم لأشكاله ومواضيعه، تسعى دائما إلى بناء عالم جديد وقيم اجتماعيّة جديدة، وتشكيل إنسان المستقبل الإنسان المتعدّد الذي يقوم وجوده على الاختلاف والتّنوّع. لذلك مثّلت الرّواية العربيّة صوتا من أصوات الحداثة الفنيّة والاجتماعيّة.

المصادر والمراجع:

المصادر:

– حنفي (زينب)، **لم أعد أبكي**، دار السّاقي، الطبعة الثّالثة، 2009.

– الدّرغوثي (إبراهيم)، **شبابيك منتصف اللّيل**، دار المعارف للطباعة والنّشر، 2004.

– الرّياحي (كمال)، **المشرط (من سيرة خديجة وأحزانها)**، دار الجنوب للنشر، تونس، 2006.

– سليمان (عبّاس)، **جحيم في الجنّة**، مآثر للإنتاج الثقافي الرّقمي، توزر، تونس، الطّبعة الأولى 2009.

– العليان (قماشة)، **أنثى العنكبوت**، دار الكفاح للنشر والتوزيع، 2010.

– المقرن (سمر)، **نساء المنكر**، دار السّاقي، الطّبعة الأولى 2008.

– النقشبندي (هاني)، **اختلاس**، دار السّاقي، 2007.

– المراجع:

– الزّنّاد (الأزهر)، النّصّ والخطاب مباحث لسانيّة عرفانيّة، مركز النّشر الجامعي ودار محمّد علي الحامّي للنشر، الطّبعة الأولى 2011.

– فاركلوف (نورمان)، تحليل الخطاب التّحليل النّصّي في البحث الاجتماعي، ترجمة طلال وهبة، مركز دراسات الوحدة العربية، الطّبعة الأولى 2009.

– محمّد قوبعة، الرّومنطيقيّة ومنابع الحداثة في الشّعر العربي (الرّابطة القلميّة أنموذجا)، جامعة الآداب والفنون والعلوم الإنسانيّة تونس 1، كليّة الآداب منّوبة، الطّبعة الأولى 2000.

– لوبون (جوستاف)، سيكولوجية الجماهير، ترجمة وتقديم هاشم صالح، دار السّاقي، الطبعة الأولى، 1991.

– Hart (Christopher), Discourse, Grammar and Ideology Functional and Cognitive Perspectives, Bloomsbury and the Diana logo are registered trademarks of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, First published 2014.

– Hamad Alhazza, *"Social Marginalisation of Women in the Saudi Novel after the Gulf War in 1990 »*, in International Journal of Social Science and Humanity, Vol. 5, No. 3, March 2015

– Mashael A. Al-Sudeary**, *« Rethinking Muslim Woman's Agency in Modern Literature »*, *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Vol. 2 No. 21; November 2012.*

– van Dijk (Teun A), Critical Discourse Analysis, *Second draft, January 1998*, http://www.hum.uva.nl/~teun/cda.htm

1ـ محمّد قوبعة، الرّومنطيقيّة ومنابع الحداثة في الشّعر العربي (الرّابطة القلميّة أنموذجا)، جامعة الآداب والفنون والعلوم الإنسانيّة تونس 1، كلّية الآداب منّوبة، الطّبعة الأولى 2000، ص 12.

2–Christopher Hart, Discourse, Grammar and Ideology Functional and Cognitive Perspectives, Bloomsbury and the Diana logo are registered trademarks of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, First published 2014, p3.

3ـ نورمان فاركلوف، تحليل الخطاب النّصّي في البحث الاجتماعي، ترجمة طلال وهبة، مركز دراسات الوحدة العربية، الطّبعة الأولى 2009، ص 19.

4ـ الأزهر الزّنّاد، النّصّ والخطاب مباحث لسانيّة عرفانيّة، مركز النّشر الجامعي ودار محمّد علي الحامّي للنشر، الطّبعة الأولى 2011، ص60.

5ـ المرجع نفسه، ص 60.

6ـ نورمان فاركلوف، مرجع مذكور، ص 62.

7ـ المرجع نفسه، ص ص 61، 62.

8-Christopher Hart, Discourse, Grammar and Ideology Functional and Cognitive Perspectives, op. cit, p4.

9 - Ibid, pp 4, 5.

10 - Ibid, p5.

11-Teun A. van Dijk, Critical Discourse Analysis, *Second draft, January 1998*, http://www.hum.uva.nl/~teun/cda.htm, p4.

12-Christopher Hart, Discourse, Grammar and Ideology Functional and Cognitive Perspectives, op.cit, p5.

13ـ جوستاف لوبون، سيكولوجية الجماهير، ترجمة وتقديم هاشم صالح، دار السّاقي، الطبعة الأولى، 1991، ص 101.

14ـ هاني النقشبندي، **اختلاس**، دار السّاقي، 2007.

15ـ قماشة العليان، **أنثى العنكبوت**، دار الكفاح للنشر والتوزيع، 2010.

16ـ سمر المقرن، **نساء المنكر**، دار السّاقي، الطّبعة الأولى 2008.

17ـ زينب حنفي، **لم أعد أبكي**، دار السّاقي، الطبعة الثّالثة، 2009.

18ـ كمال الرّياحي، **المشرط (من سيرة خديجة وأحزانها)**، دار الجنوب للنشر، تونس، 2006.

19ـ إبراهيم الدّرغوثي، **شيابيك منتصف اللّيل**، دار المعارف للطباعة والنّشر، 2004.

20ـ عبّاس سليمان ، **جحيم في الجنّة**، مآثر للإنتاج الثّقافي الرّقمي، توزر، تونس، الطّبعة الأولى 2009.

21 - Hamad Alhazza, "**Social Marginalisation of Women in the Saudi Novel after the Gulf War in 1990 »**, in International Journal of Social Science and Humanity, Vol. 5, N° 3, March 2015.

22- Mashael A. Al-Sudeary**, « *Rethinking Muslim Woman's Agency in Modern Literature »,** International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Vol. 2 No. 21; November 2012.*

23ـ اختلاس، ص8.

24ـ قماشة العليان، أنثى العنكبوت، دار الكفاح للنشر والتوزيع، دون تاريخ، ص 7.

25ـ أنثى العنكبوت، ص 69.

26- Hamad Alhazza, **"Social Marginalisation of Women in the Saudi Novel after the Gulf War in 1990»**, p 241.

27ـ أنثى العنكبوت، ص 109.

28ـ أنثى العنكبوت، ص 195.

29ـ أنثى العنكبوت، ص 203.

30ـ سمر المقرن، نساء المنكر، دار السّاقي، 2004، ص 9.

31ـ زينب حنفي، لم أعد أبكي، دار السّاقي بيروت، طبعة ثالثة 2009، ص 18.

32ـ اختلاس، ص 88.

33ـ نساء المنكر، ص 180.

34ـ نساء المنكر، ص 12.

35ـ اختلاس، ص 12.

36ـ نساء المنكر، ص 57.

37ـ اختلاس، ص ص 29، 30.

38ـ نساء المنكر، ص 16.

39ـ نساء المنكر، ص 16.

40ـ لم أعد أبكي، ص 51.

41ـ لم أعد أبكي، ص 79.

42ـ المصدر نفسه، ص ص 141، 142.

43ـ لم أعد أبكي، ص 112.

44ـ شبابيك منتصف اللّيل، ص ص 13-14-15.

45ـ شبابيك منتصف اللّيل، ص 42.

46ـ شبابيك منتصف اللّيل، ص 76.

47ـ كما الرّياحي، المشرط، دار الجنوب للنشر، 2007، ص ص 46، 47.

48ـ المصدر نفسه، ص

49ـ شبابيك منتصف اللّيل، ص ص 74، 75.