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Editorial

It would seem legitimate today to wonder about the place of literature in our life. The world having shifted, under the pressure of market economy, into new conceptions of man and the environment, human value is measured against consumerist criteria both at the physical and moral levels. The change has affected not only our conceptions of ourselves and the world around us, but in so doing has necessarily impacted our vision of education and culture. For, in the past thirty years, the academy has witnessed a gradual marginalization of the humanities, in favor of the more useful and practical disciplines that the culture of globalization has imposed, thus reducing education to qualifying students for the job market.

In such an atmosphere, the ideal of humanity, of good citizenship lies in drinking in the fountain of common sense so as to perpetuate it and function within an established design. Thinking and conceiving have become superfluous, if not undesirable, or even dangerous sometimes, because they are often misconstrued as opposition and troublemaking. Consumption, on the other hand, is raised to the status of absolute value and so mass education is geared towards the production of executives who become part of often short-sighted plans that turn out to be action plans for problem solving and crisis resolution.

The new face of progress and development has shrunk for the individual to simple contentment that results from satisfaction of basic needs, ones that keep changing due to the work of the media in programming life and defining its priorities. Even knowledge and research have been transmogrified to fit in the new era of mass consumption. Instead of thinking and researching that are knowledge production activities through synthesizing information, today’s education often relies on learning as much as possible so as to become ‘knowledgeable’. From a scientific, qualitative approach we have moved to a cultural, quantitative one that often amounts to celebrating the past and its figures, instead of understanding their contributions and utilizing them in the present. This change partly explains young students’ inability to distinguish research from copy-pasting and plagiarism – activities that reinforce the already inculcated beliefs, their lack of self-confidence and self-reliance.

In a world that praises action, functionalism, and efficiency, it is useful to wonder about the status of literature. In this ‘new world order,’ which equates the humanities with uselessness, should we still read books and poems, and even scholarly articles written about them, or should we assign them to an irrecoverable past? Should we still teach literature today when it is believed to cultivate laziness and joblessness?
The answer is definitely yes. For literature is not a useful field in the sense, say, geography, medicine, or political science are. It is rather part of a field of knowledge, not a discipline, together with religion, philosophy, and art, whose object of study is the human condition. Unlike other fields and disciplines that are useful and utilitarian, literature is concerned with the ontological status of humanity and its gradual shift to the margin is symptomatic of a gradual dehumanizing process in which consumerism, both physical and moral, is a pillar.

Part of this concern with ontology is a strategy that was theorized by Jacques Derrida and which consists in deconstructing establishments of different kinds. In spite of the many meanings given to the term, I am using it here in a strictly simple sense – that of dismantling, or bringing down a standing edifice. In a world of discursive competition whose target is the Truth that would set the agenda of human life, acquiring the habit of deconstructing is a human duty that guarantees survival.

In this framework one can consider most of the articles in the 2015 AWEJ special issue on literature. They, in different ways, try to deconstruct established views, received opinion, and critical assumptions about different works. They start from the assumption that a work of literature, of art, is like an empty space which you can conceive in different ways and suggest different ways of approaching their subject of study. While some articles in this issue deal with philosophical issues and the way they are tackled through presumably pure technical procedures or stylistic devices, others are concerned with the way discourse constructs truths that often pass for absolute ones.

While perusing them, let us remember that the merit of these article lies not in whether they are right or wrong, truth being always postponed, but in that they offer alternative ways of approaching literary texts, thus asserting the freedom that is part of the meaning production activity and which undermines the myth of the one final meaning of things.

I would finally like to thank all those who have contributed to this issue with their articles, the reviewers, whose task is always tough and time-consuming, and AWEJ for providing a platform of communication and dialogue between different researchers in the humanities.

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Abstract
The pro-suffrage campaign to elevate the Oriental female did not give emphasis to Arab women; however, they were vividly presented in religious literature and romances of a religious nature. The inferior position and the victimisation of Arab women, attributed to Islam, delivered a political and a religious message that helped steer the Victorian reader’s opinion towards a desired effect. The paper will focus on the image of the Arab woman in some of these publications to highlight that the use of the biblical element of the Middle East was employed to reinforce Christianity and combat Ottomans. The image of the victimised Arab woman also prepared the public for a future military involvement in the Middle East. The paper suggests that the Victorian depiction of the Arab female may well be the precursor of present-day use of Islam-phobic slogans that trigger sorrow easily transformed into anger at the men, culture and the religion that victimise women.

Keywords: Arabs in British Nineteenth Century periodicals, Arab proximity to Bible, Arab Women, Revival of mediaeval polemic, Victorian perception of Arabs
Introduction
To regard Arabs with wonder has long been the proper function of all European writers, and for some thousands of years yet the untameable rover of the desert will in all probability be an interminable source of astonishment. (Stigand, 1872, p. 39)

William Stigand’s remarks published in Belgravia in July 1872 capture the curiosity which characterised Victorian interest in Arab ways and practices. Articles, from as early as the late eighteenth century, and throughout the nineteenth century, focused on Arab life, customs, proximity of their life style to stories in the Bible, and the treatment and position of their women. Those early accounts, whether fiction or impressions, regardless of their reliability, have largely contributed to stereotyping Arabs in general and Arab women in particular: as Michael Wolff rightly notes, “An attitude, an opinion, an idea did not exist until it had registered itself in the press” (Codell, 2010, p. 17).

The idea for this paper began with my surprise at the large number of Victorian works on Arabs returned from the British Periodicals Online’s search engine for the keywords “Arab” and “Arab women”. I found them hugely varied and spread over a long period of time. I was intrigued by works that highlighted the biblical element of the Arab region and Arab proximity to Scripture. My major concern here is to investigate the presentation of Arab life and Arab women in Victorian literature of religious context to assess their possible impact on the reading public. Through the textual analysis of two English romances and two articles that focus on the biblical element of the Middle East, the impact of Islam on culture and on Arab women, I argue that common themes suggest the existence of a common factor or factors; thus works of this nature contributed to delivering a religious or a political message or both. Religiously, they reinforced belief in the authenticity of the Bible and evoked Christian prejudice to liberate the Holy Land and defend the Cross (Warburton, 1845, p. 242) from the “Paynim” hand of “Mohammedans” This religious-political goal gradually generated anger against the Turks and sanctioned the later invasion of the Arab region.

To further clarify my argument, I have also chosen a book by Reverend H. H. Jessup, The Women of the Arabs, 1874, and a review of the same book to highlight not only the observations but also the recommendations to handle the issue of Arab women. The presentation of Arab women, of other religions, suffering under Muslim rule, further consolidated the negative image of Arabs and evoked sorrow for Muslim and non-Muslim females in Arab countries. This in turn convinced the Victorian reader of the need to shoulder the burden of rescuing the helpless women by dispatching civilising missions and sanctioning future military intervention in the region.

Checking the dates of many articles showed that the main output of religious literature highlighting Arabs were published from the 1830s to the 1870s, which also coincides with rising religious doubt evoked by the works of eminent philosophers, like Charles Lyell’s Principles of Geology (1830-33), David Friedrich Strauss’s Das Leben Jesu für das deutsche Volk bearbeitet (The Life of Jesus Critically Examined),¹ long before Darwin’s On the Origin of Species (1859). These books challenged the credibility of the biblical stories on the basis of the time-scale of creation given in Genesis (Jay, 1986), creating strong controversy over the credibility of the Bible among the intellectual classes and threatened reaching those of the slightly lower social level. Records show that by 1849 religious books and sermons formed a third of Macmillan’s list
(in Scott, 1973, pp. 213-223) of publications and continued to rise. Similarly, 213 out of 516 magazines were estimated to have been of a religious nature (Scott, 1973) and had become increasingly available to a larger readership with the reduction of stamp duty and the successive repeals of advertisement duty.

The period also coincides with several Ottoman massacres against Christians in Syria, Lebanon and Crete, and the Russian–Turkish war in 1877, all of which were covered by the European press. Western misconceptions over the treatment of women under Islam were emphasised and later echoed during the British occupation of Arab countries, and horror stories about Muslim misogyny were reiterated by Western patriarchs to justify imperialism, excuse sex discrimination against British women and oppose the rising calls for their enfranchisement. Lord Cromer, British colonial administrator in Egypt 1883-1907 and ardent anti-suffrage figure, believed the veil demonstrated Egyptians’ moral and cultural inferiority in the treatment of women and demanded they be “persuaded or forced” to become “civilised” by disposing of the women’s veil. In 1924, Gertrude Bell, British Oriental Secretary in Iraq, described her work with women as British efforts for the “advancing of Moslem women” (Bell, 1924). This paper proposes that the presumed plight of the Arab Muslim woman continues to be an “effectual” argument for sanctioning military intervention.

The British View of Arabs

The first cultural and political contact between the British and the Arabs took place when the Arabs were under Ottoman occupation (Nasir, 1979, p. 18). Apart from official envoys and ambassadors’ reports on the region, trade companies using the Middle East route for their trade in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries also allowed communication with Arabs (Al-Rawi, 2008), but the expansion of the Ottoman Empire influenced the prevalence of the negative image of Arabs as they were seen as identical with the Turks (Hollenbach, 1972). This is largely due to their participation in the Ottoman wars and in several massacres against Christians. The power of the Turks over Christians generated hostility which sought to revive and consolidate Christian mediaeval theory accusing Mohammad of engineering a religion, theft from Christianity and Judaism and supported by false revelations, designed to meet his various political needs and personal desires. The survival of this ideology is clearly illustrated in Thomas Carlyle’s description of Islam as “bastard Christianity” (1840).

Very little was added to the theoretic polemic before the nineteenth century (Al-Rawi, 2008, p. 6) and the most noticeable change then was the replacement of mediaeval polemic by exotic entertainment (Al-Rawi, 2008, p. 9). The Gothic revival and Romantic Nationalism, manifested in the national feelings of primacy and superiority participated in reviving considerable European and British interest in the Middle Ages (Chapman, 1986). Religion was estheticized and writers felt free to draw on Biblical themes with freedom and with very little reverence. Religion, a dominant factor in England, along with the development of values and moralities, criticised the corruption of the mediaeval Church thus generating nostalgia for the conventional Christianity of the East. The second contact with Arabs came through fiction about the “inscrutable Orient,” the mysterious “phoenix of Arabia,” “stories of assassins” and “evil spirits of the desert” (Nasir, 1979, p. 18). Open British political interest in what is now known as the Arab Middle East was not clearly defined until the purchase of almost half the shares of the
Suez Canal in 1875, followed by Britain’s competition with France and the dual control over Egypt in November 1879 (Cleveland, 1986, p. 92).

The increasing number of travellers in the Middle East generated wider interest in Arab literature. Edward William Lane’s translation of the *Arabian Nights*, published in monthly parts in the years 1838 to 1840 became an immediate success amongst the British. The fact that the *Nights* offered “very little of the sectarian peculiarities of religion” (“Popularity of the Arabian Nights,” 1834, p. 264) explains its renown. The *Nights* “uniformly acknowledge” the “care of beneficent Providence,” (“Popularity of the Arabian Nights,” 1834, p. 264) but do not give emphasis to Islam. Intense popularity led to its being published in three volumes in 1840 and a revised edition in 1859. According to Nasir, *The Arabian Nights* changed “the English attitude towards Arabs and the region in general” (Nasir, 1979, p. 39) yet the term “Arab” evidently remained the synonym of a scoundrel in the titles of several serialised works about thieves and rogues from the 1850s and well into the 1890s.²

The British perception of Arabs was shaped by intellectuals and theologians over a number of centuries. As the cradle of all the monotheistic religions, the Arab lands became an arena for religious clashes over sacred history, prophets and divine revelations. The sensitivity between Christianity and Islam and the efforts to prove the authenticity of Scripture and falsehood of the rival religion go as far back as the twelfth century when an oriental polemic was developed depicting the Saracens as evil (Nasir, 1979, p. 20). Lacking first-hand experience, most Western mediaeval understanding was influenced by perceptions of Christians under Muslim rule that “saw the conquest of Islam as a punishment from God” (Blanks, 2007, p. 142). Polemists targeted the Christian audience; their polemic horrified those at a distance from Muslims and fortified those close to Muslims against it (Norman, 1993, p. 295). The image of Arabs generally depended on the genre of the periodical; the Bedouin romance “Antar” was, for example, published, serialised and discussed in a number of British periodicals such as *The Literary Gazette, The New Monthly Magazine, Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine* and others between 1819 and 1825, but the major concern here is to highlight the image of Arabs depicted in literature of religious context to highlight their relevance to the above-mentioned points.

**The Biblical Element of the Middle East**

In both “Antar” and “The Arabs and the East,” Arabs are highlighted in relation to Scripture and to Christianity. They are depicted as unchanging like the geography of their region since biblical times. In an article on the historical Arabic “Bedouin” romance “Antar,” Arabs’ “peculiar destiny” as “Ishmaelite,” unlike other nations, was to live in “a fixed condition of existence” and continue to hold on to the same “habits, tastes, customs and manner of [their] remotest ancestors” (“Antar,” 1850, p. 1). The author states that he aims “generally to point out Scripture parallels sufficiently exact, and often more strikingly analogous” (“Antar,” 1850, p. 12). Although he acknowledges that there may be “no direct analogy to any circumstance or usage mentioned in Scripture,” he confirms that the ideas and the elevated language of the poem are “entirely in the style of the Bible” and nothing like the *Arabian Nights*.

From marriage to sharing the spoils and revenge, the writer toils to demonstrate exactness despite the outright differences; war in the romance is described as greatly analogous to Scripture usage despite the absence of horses in the biblical stories (“Antar,” 1850, p. 12). Despite the great differences between the two, the writer claims that Antar reminds of David. The analogy is
quite strained as the two essentially differ in characteristics and temperament; The writer merely contradicts himself when he writes that unlike David, Antar is ugly, of base origin and has a “tyrannous temper” (“Antar,” 1850, p. 21). The analogy is thus made on the less significant parallels of their professions and esteem; both Antar and David tend their fathers’ flocks and are admired warriors. Similarly, the comparison between David’s conflict with the lion and the bear and Antar’s adventure with the wolf show them to have nothing in common apart from the slaying of animals that attack their flocks. The effort the writer makes is further demonstrated when he describes it as having “remarkable” similarity although David’s story is “better and more beautifully told” (“Antar,” 1850, p. 21). The practice of revenge in warfare is said to be exact as in Scriptural instances of this practice shown “in the case of David and Goliah,” (“Antar,” 1850, p. 13) and the duration of the wedding feast in the romance is compared with the wedding feasts of Jacob and Samson. Quotation from Genesis is intended to approximate the discontent felt by the bride, Tamadhur, for marrying without a dowry, with Laban’s daughters even if the example is unsuccessfully applied. It is clear that Tamadhur’s father had no knowledge of king Zohair’s scheme to pass himself as a hero by organising an attack on Zohair’s tribe and thus Tamadhur’s dowry was thought to have been received in the form of Zohair’s great service (“Antar,” 1850, p. 17). Laban on the other hand had confiscated his daughters’ dowries: “He hath sold us, and also quite devoured our money” (“Antar,” 1850, p. 19).

However, in “The Arabs and the East” the tone becomes more convincing as the reader is advised to acquire “an accurate knowledge of the mode of life, the style of phraseology, and the mould of thought, of the Ishmaelites, the Israelites and other eastern races to read “Scripture aright” (“The Arabs and the East,” 1861, p. 497). The comparisons are more vivid and Abraham is only a “little different from the Bedouin sheikh of the present” and lives in a very similar tent (“The Arabs and the East,” 1861, p. 498). In food and drink, the Arab “obeys as strictly and unanswerably the injunctions of his creed as did Jonadab the son of Rechab”. The comparison with the Bible continues to include wells, women, hospitality and revenge and the reader is assured that everything in the land “in which the patriarchs sojourned” reminds “of some passage of Scripture story” (“The Arabs and the East,” 1861, p. 499).

The works, published at a time of rising religious scepticism, clearly demonstrate they were written for a purpose; the generalisation that Arabs do not progress because they are destined to live like their forefathers serves to prove to readers that the biblical stories are authentic as if it is ordained, by God, for the inhabitants in the land of Abraham to continue to live in the same manner. However ancient pre-Islam women were highlighted as leaders and ferocious fighters like queen Rohab who killed the King of the Abs and Adnan tribes (“Antar,” 1850, pp. 13-14). The images of pre-Islam Arabs in “Antar” reflect preconceptions of Arab exoticism, similarity to Western traditions of chivalry, and the elevated position of Arab women. Analyses of pre-Islam social customs and conduct highlighted similarities with Western ideals; Antar’s gallantry was described as bearing “a more striking resemblance to the custom of [Western] chivalry” than Arabs in Islam (Stigand, 1872, p. 39). Pagan days were “the golden age of the Arabians” (“Antar,” 1850, pp. 4-5).

The Position of Women: Oppressive Image of Islam

The articles above depict women in relation to Scripture; women were highlighted as wearing nose rings in the same fashion “with which the servant of Abraham adorned Rebecca’s face when he chose her as the bride of his master’s son” (“The Arabs and the East,” 1861, p. 498)
Apart from the biblical comparisons, two interesting images of women emerge; the image of queen Rohab and the image of the slave, Zebeeba, Antar’s “negro” mother, whereas scant notice is paid to the object of Antar’s love, Abla or Ibla, whose face “was lovely as the full moon, and perfectly beautiful and elegant” (“Antar, An Arabian Romance,” 1837, pp. 55-56) Rohab’s image received more attention and was the topic of several articles throughout the century which painted her as the victorious queen who drove a “spear through [the king’s] chest” (Reynolds, 1853, p. 360). However, as a slave, Zebeeba’s position remained inferior despite the little privileges she was awarded on Antar’s birth.

The spread of Islam or “Mohammedanism” is clearly held responsible for the inferior position of women and the pro-women legislations of Islam were dismissed as oppressive and “more fitted for one sex than for the other” (“ART. V.,” 1834, p. 113). Islam is described as appealing “to the pride and sensuality of the Arabians” (“ART. V.,” 1834, p. 115) whereas pagan days were “the golden age of the Arabians” (“Antar,” pp. 4-5). However religion becomes a decisive factor in determining the position of Arab women in the Victorian romances. In Aubrey De Vere’s romance “Antar and Zara” (1877) or “The Only True Lovers, an Eastern Romance,” the Arab woman is Christian and thus less oppressed and more gentle than the Muslim woman presented by the anonymous poet of “The Arab Maiden” (1851).

The revival of the mediaeval treatment and understanding of Islam found expression in romances highlighting the virtuous Christian East suffering under the Ottoman Muslims and in the recreation of the Crusade scenes that reminded readers of a holy land awaiting salvation. De Vere’s romance attacks both the Muslim Turk and the Christian “Frank” and expresses high regard for the land of the “ancient Race.” The romance, written in 1855 but not completed until 1877, attacks Islam and the Muslim Prophet. The fact that it took twenty-two years to finalise and publish suggests an accumulated resentment to what was magnified and circulated to the public as Ottoman atrocities against Christians, such as the massacres in Aleppo 1850, Nablus 1856, Damascus 1860, the Druze-Maronite massacre in Lebanon 1858-1860, the revolt in Crete 1869, the massacres of 1876 in Batak and the Russian-Turkish war 1877, all of which received considerable attention in the European press (Gaunt & Beṭ-Ṣawoce, 2006, p. 32).

De Vere, who had converted to Catholicism in 1851 (Lennon, 2004, p. 163), highlights the 1877 massacre by lamenting the West’s neglect of Middle Eastern Christians (De Vere, 1877, Introduction). He briefs the reader on the history of Arab Christians forced out of the Euphrates and Mesopotamia when the sword of the ‘False Prophet’ invaded their regions (De Vere, 1877, Introduction). The reference to the persecution of Christians in Lebanon and the massacres against Christians in Turkey suggest that the reason behind his attack was his great sympathy for Christians under Ottoman rule rather than his being influenced by the Irish Famine (Lennon, 2004, p. 163).

The direct criticism of the “imposter prophet” and the “trenchant Moslem sword,” the “suffering of the Native Land” and the “martyr-crown” (De Vere, 1877, III), all emphasise Arab-Muslim aggressions and direct the reader’s attention to the “hundreds of years” of “unequal strife” with bearers of “the crescent flags of Saladin”. The “dusty track” of pilgrims reminds the reader of Muslim control of Jerusalem. Zara or Z[a|h]ra, the name given to the Christian maiden, carries the positive Arabic meaning of flower which reflects chastity and coyness; she draws her veil tighter when embarrassed or afraid of a stranger. When separated from Antar, Zara laments...
her resistance to her beloved’s approaches for the fears “to seem too quickly won” (De Vere, 1877, II, p. vii). This is further clarified by Antar’s ecstasy at the fall of Zara’s “rosy girdle” which for him holds “the earth, the sun, the stars … and the sea” (De Vere I, p. i). Although De Vere’s image of the “fawn with trailing cord” highlights Zara’s destiny, like most Arab women, regardless of their religion, is in the hands of others. Although the trailing cord permits movement in the forest, the reins may be pulled at any time. However no reference is made to its being an oppressive measure or a sign of inferiority. It is also worth noting that Zara’s veil and long dress are highlighted as signs of chastity and modesty.

Similarly, all the other characteristics, depicted as exclusive to Christian Arabs, are more or less typical of the region, such as the importance of women’s chastity, adherences to patriarchal traditions, gallantry and generosity. Although critics do not see this particular work to be as successful as his other works, De Vere’s conversion to Catholicism, and his dislike for both the Eastern and the Western dominations, revived the glorification and elevation of ancient Christianity. His hostile introduction and his animosity to Islam throughout the poem reflect his abhorrence of Ottomans which is quite symptomatic of the period.

Similarly, “The Arab Maiden” conveys parallel messages; while the work secures no tribute is paid to Islam, it criticises the mediaeval Church and stresses the Evangelical assertion “Believe and thou shalt be saved.” Although critical of religious authority, the work emphasises that God, not Man, will take vengeance, punish or reward. The “flower of English Chivalry”, Sir Raymond of Altondale, had killed his English wife and is thus punished. His punishment, at the hands of an Arab Muslim female, highlights two points; the existence of a Creator who punishes wrongdoers and the sinful Muslim who defies God by taking vengeance into her own hands. The reader is constantly reminded of the Crusades while the unyielding and vengeful image of the Arab protagonist is being constructed. Although the mediaeval Church is accused of sending “blood-seeking gentry,” with no mental skills to fight for the “Land of Romance,” the moral, the imagery and the reference to Peter the Hermit, not only convince the reader of the authenticity of Scripture but evoke and revive the desire to “win Christ’s tomb from paynim hands”.

It is not clear if the poet had intentionally named her Zillah, which conveys the negative Arabic equivalent of “flaw,” but the reader is tipped from the beginning that this “pretty” dove-like creature “was scarcely mild” and thus prone to flaws. Like Rohab, Zillah has a “strong dash of spirit-a something fière.” She is “bird in a cage” with “fierce dark passion” and a mixture of the oriental tigress and dove and must thus be dreaded and feared more than “Ten thousand battle-fields” (“The Arab Maiden,” 1851, p. 292). Once out of the cage, Zillah is capable of killing not once but twice. The reader’s unfamiliarity with Arab customs makes it almost impossible to comprehend that Arab maidens are, under no circumstances, prepared to compromise their honour. Thus the cultural gap is utilised to create a brutal image of an action highly revered by Zillah’s culture.

Zillah, a victim of patriarchal customs, is held captive by the invading Frank. On both occasions she is victim of the “wicked men,” but the difference for Zillah is vast; the customs are her people’s way of life and demonstrate protection rather than oppression, but to be taken among the spoils by an invader is a different story; the Oriental “tigress” quickly replaces the dove when she stabs him the first time to put an end to his advances. With honour safe, the dove takes over again and she nurses the wounded knight to full recovery. Although she falls in love
with him, she remains conservative in her attitude and continues to wear her hijab, but takes off the burqa which is not a requirement for Muslim women. The fatal incident, however, takes place in England when Zillah follows the knight all the way home. Although Altondale denied taking a wife, it was rumoured that he had abandoned a Muslim wife back in Arabia. Upon marrying him, Zillah would have become an outcast and would not have dared return to her people as she would face a death punishment.

Though her revenge is culturally justified, the work gives no explanation and the Victorian reader is left abhorred with the Arabs’ thirst for revenge. Zillah, disguised as a minstrel, sings her story before stabbing Altondale in the heart. In both incidents, Zillah is provoked into committing crime. Her suicide is another failing as the poet concludes that she is cursed with the crime of Cain by taking the matter of terminating lives, a matter only for God to decide, into her hands. Had Arabs’ veneration of women’s honour been clarified, their restrictive attitude towards women may then be understood as over-protection.

Arabic literature, especially poetry, from pre-Islamic times to this very day, reflects the high esteem and the central position of women in Arab societies. Several pre-Islam and Islamic poems translated by British men of letters in the nineteenth century praise women: “Behind us come our lovely, our charming damsels, whom we guard so vigilantly that they cannot be made captive, or even treated with disrespect” (Clouston, 1881, p. 67).

This particular verse not only shows the high regard for women but also explains why Zillah called upon her folk to “mourn” and “weep.” Zara’s reserve and Antar’s contentment that she will be watched while he goes to battle the “upstart” Muslim demonstrates that the position of Arab women is governed by culture not Islam. In both romances the Christian and Muslim maidens as reluctant to let passion overrule in compliance with the conventions of society. Although the Christian maiden is named a flower while the Muslim is called a flaw, both Zara and Zillah are coy and reserved but not out of their own free will and are restricted in their movement; Zara’s trailing cord allows some freedom of movement but Zilla is caged and thus a fiercer more oppressive image is created. The recreation of images of the Crusades and the Muslim violations against Christians in Lebanon would have undoubtedly evoked rage and the urge to defend the Cross (Warburton, 1845, p. 242) while filling the reader with sorrow for the female victims.

The plight of women in Arab countries is better clarified in Jessup’s *The Women of the Arabs*. The book itself is remarkably similar to the above mentioned works in its presentation of pre-Islam women as dignified and capable of exercising their rights (Jessup, 1873, p. 4), attributing the degradation of women and the beating of wives to Islam. He declares that violence will be practiced “as long as Islamism as a system and a faith prevails in the world” (Jessup, 1873, p. 9). Although Jessup acknowledges that ‘Moslem girls, thanks to missionary efforts, have been taught to read and write and sew’ in American, British and Prussian schools, he says a long time is required before the ‘debased minds of Arab Mohammedans’ comprehend women’s right to dignity (Jessup, 1873, Chapter 2). Jessup restricts wife-beating to the British lower order, seen as inferior as natives and in need of elevation (Cannadine, 2002, p. 5), but generalises that ‘scourging and beating of wives’ is a ‘features of Moslem domestic life’ (Jessup, 1873, Chapter 2)
Jessup also recognises the European misconception of the treatment of women in Islam and recommends “even enlightened European writers be taught that Mohammedans do not believe women to be without souls.” However this is immediately undermined when he emphasises that “their treatment of them may favour such a supposition” (Jessup, 1873, p. 42), quoting a debated saying attributed to the second Caliph Omar Bin al-Khattab (577-644) that “women are worthless creatures and soil men’s reputations” (Jessup, 1873, Chapter 2).

A review of The Women of the Arabs published in the Athenaeum (1874) describes the book as dealing with “a most important subject, the position of women in the East and the [European, American and British] efforts that are being pursued, in Syria and other places, towards promoting women’s education and advancement” (Jessup, 1873, p. 42). This “brutality” the writer says can only be cured by elevating the “Oriental character” which “can only be done by educating the women” (Jessup, 1873, p. 43). The review hails the Christian civilising missions “cordially” for their efforts to elevate the natives. The well-known apologetic remark, “ajellak allah” (saving your presence) is also quoted to indicate and affirm the “degraded positions” of women which requires “prompt joint action” to “remedy the evil” (Jessup, 1873, p. 43). Although the review highlights wife-beating as universal phenomenon practised by the “Greek Christians” who “are by no means behind their Moslem neighbours in this particular,” (Jessup, 1873, p. 43) he stresses that it is an integral part of Islam because the Muslim’s “Koran” sanctions wife-beating (Jessup, 1873, p. 43). Both the book and the review hold Islam particularly responsible for women’s secondary.

None of the above works hint at the existence of intelligent or educated Arab Muslim women despite the fact that efforts to emancipate women in Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq had in fact began from as early as 1855 when pioneers of women’s emancipation, such as Gamal El-Din El-Afghani, propagated progressive ideas on women’s education. This was followed by the publication of books such as Ahmad Faris El-Shidyak’s One Leg Crossed Over the Other (1855) encouraging women’s emancipation and others such as Rifaa El-Tahtawi’s Guide to the Education of Girls and Boys in 1872 (El-Saadawi, 1980, p. 170).

The generalisations seem to have been more in vogue and more favoured than the objective; the ill treatment of Arab wives was, for example, strongly refuted in Emily Ruete’s (1844-1934) Memoirs; “It is an absolute myth that the Arab husband treats his wife with less regard than is the case here” (Al-Rawi, 2008, p. 22). As an Arab Muslim woman, married to a German merchant, she was able to closely examine the positives and negatives of both worlds, affirming that that the “Christian institution” does not “stand much higher than the Mahometan, or insures much greater felicity” (Al-Rawi, 2008, p. 22). However, Ruete’s book吸引了 very little attention and was somewhat trivialised as being the product of a bitter memory (“Book Review,” 1887, p. 421).

The Ottoman treatment of Christians and the plight of Arab women undoubtedly had their impact on readers and helped raise public sympathy for women. The image of Islam highlighted by Jessup and religious articles would lead people to question: if those people were so cruel towards their women what atrocities can fellow Christians suffer under their rule? Although some Victorian writers emphasised that Arab characteristics have been wrongly attributed to Islam (Poole, 1865), the majority of writers, even those who knew otherwise, were content with the long-held view attributing Arabs’ resistance to modernisation and the secondary
position of their women to Islam. Many used second-hand observations on the treatment of women, even if they themselves observed that there were women who stood up for their rights (Bell, 1947, p. 66).

The image of the barbaric Muslim becomes more influential in an article in a religious periodical if supported by historical evidence. The trivialisation of *Memoirs of an Arabian Princess* (1886), for example, raises the question as to whether it had been intentional because it differed with both colonial and religious interests, whereas the Arab’s apologetic expression on the mention of women is highly emphasised. In all the above works, Islamic legislations in favour of women are totally ignored regardless of the fact that Muslim women were in a better legal position than their European sisters. Although Arab Muslim women, like their sisters in Europe, were restricted from exercising their rights by norms and conventions, strong women could always stand up for themselves backed by the law. In comparison, British women, for example, did not gain the right to own property until the First Woman’s Property Act was passed in England in 1870 and were only granted custody of infants in 1873 (“Companion,” 1875, p. 229). Indeed, their full control over property acquired during marriage was not granted till 1893 and similarly very few women chose to take advantage of these rights in fear of criticism.

**Conclusion**

Victorian periodicals became influential means for persuading the public. The accessibility of printed material attracted large-scale readership and converted the newspaper and the periodical press from a luxury into what seems to be a necessity of daily life. In turn the availability of the press allowed public opinion to become a decisive tool for influencing opinions and events. By magnifying an issue and overlooking another the press shaped the Victorian opinion in conformity with the views of the influential elite. Apart from the above, works of religious nature were seen as benign and focusing at the people’s good. Therefore publications, refuting the “false claims” of science, claims of Biblical discrepancies (C.K.J., 1854), were more convincing, for the Victorian reader, than most secular arguments. Similarly the depiction of Islam as false and degrading to women in works of a religious nature had a strong impact on the Victorian readers.

Taking into consideration that the first British invasion of an Arab country did not take place until in 1882, it becomes possible to rule out any immediate intention to invade the Arab region and also the British Empire’s work on the replication of British life in the colonies (Cannadine, 2002) However, depicting Muslims as brutal, magnifying what the British press regarded as Ottoman atrocities, the plight of women, living under Islamic rule, regardless of their faith and ethnicity, and the recreation of the Crusade scenes gradually built up resentment among generations of readers and helped in sanctioning the later invasion of the Arab region. The handy revival of mediaeval polemic, the praise of pagan Arab culture and chivalry, the analogy with Scripture language, phraseology, style and mode of life suggest that the publication of these religious works was among the “effectual weapons” employed to reinforce belief and contest the faith crisis among Victorians without risking their conviction or conversion to the rival religion. Apart from religious prejudice, the portrayal of abused Arab women, Muslim and otherwise, gradually fuelled readers with animosity to Muslim men, culture and religion. The effect of this type of literature did not merely evoke religious prejudice, it also generated anger and the will to avenge fellow Christians.
This resentment has most likely developed into a sense of obligation and a duty to shoulder the responsibility of elevating the “oriental savages” whether those “savages” wanted it or not. Whether this British obligation, later known as ‘the white man’s burden’, is interpreted as a form of “cultural imperialism” to develop the “undeveloped” nations or philanthropically; to guide natives incapable of self-government towards “becoming civilised”, the impact of this type of material, written by passionately dedicated editors, was effective in generating an impact that laid foundation to some long-lasting pretexts; the plight of the Muslim woman was and continues to be one of the compelling themes employed to gain support for a military intervention (Bush, 2001; Clinton, 2001). To combat Taliban terrorists, the predicament of Afghan women was advertised as a major concern by the West, that it seeks to instill “universal values… throughout the world” (Bush, 2001; Clinton, 2001).

Notes:
1 *The Life of Jesus Critically Examined* was first published in German in 1835 then translated into English by Marian Evans (George Eliot) and published in Britain as *Life of Jesus* in 1846.
3 Jonadab in the Book of Jeremiah prohibited his followers from drinking alcohol, and commanded that they live in tents, rather than houses.
4 Peter the Hermit in 1095 preached in favour of a war against the Muslims to rescue the Holy Sepulchre and other sacred sites from the hands of ‘Mohammedans’
5 Ruete’s book originally appeared in German as *Memoiren einer arabischen Prinzessin*. It was published by a Berlin firm in 1886. It was followed by an English edition in 1907. Both editions seem to have attracted little interest and the book soon fell into obscurity and went out of print.

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Biblical Proximity and Women: The Image of Arabs

Witwit


Narrativising Illness: Edward Said's *Out of Place* and the Postcolonial Confessional/Indisposed Self

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Abstract
Although Edward W. Said published a considerably large amount of articles and books during his professional life, his autobiographical memoir *Out of Place* (1999)—written during acute illness—remains a peculiarly special case for further study and assessment for what it is worth. For that, the book is a remarkable documentation of postcolonial themes within the general frame of a personal story taking the form of a confessional illness narrative. Illness, we argue, is what augments the writer’s identity crisis of being an exile. The memoir interrogates mixed notions like terminal illness, the divided affiliations of the self, identity confusion, cultural dislocation and linguistic displacement. As the memoir makes clear, Said’s name reflects the conflicting affiliations of his identity: the Western part and the Eastern Arabic one. Moreover, his American citizenship and Christian background add more conflicting values to his upbringing in Palestine, Cairo and Lebanon in dominantly Islamic societies and his early exposure through education and lifestyle to English, Arabic, and French. Therefore, the book is a confessional story of the postcolonial theme of cultural dissonance and identity confusion augmented by a sense of living through terminal illness, namely leukemia. As a non-fictional work, *Out of Place* is a book that interrogates postcolonial themes while it simultaneously edges into an illness narrative, reflecting a unique embodiment of the interplay between theory and non-fiction. Hence, the book is a hybrid cultural text par excellence working at the intersection of the private experiences of the individual and the public, sociopolitical context.

*Keywords*: confession, Edward Said, identity, illness narrative, *Out of Place*, non-fictional memoir, postcolonialism,
I. Introduction: Out of Place and Postcolonial Identity Politics

Studies on Edward Said (1935-2003) have often highlighted his contributions to postcolonial studies and his role as a political intellectual and cultural critic (see Faysal & Rahman, 2013). Critics have often examined his work against a wide range of themes like orientalism, imperialism, the case of Palestine, literary criticism, cultural theory, media and music, to mention just a few examples. However, in as far as we know, critics have not examined the socio-cultural orientation of Said’s memoir in question or its very human dimension as a private story of pain and mental anguish prior to ultimate death, which is what we endeavor to accomplish is this article. It is our contention to suggest that in this memoir Said is compelled by illness to write earnestly about a life of being “out of place.” The memoir’s confessional value as an account of family life and growing up in a turbulent Middle East before moving to the U. S. is directly linked to its position as an illness narrative. As Lezard (2000) writes, the memoir is “all about recovering his [Said’s] early years after being diagnosed with leukemia.” The candid details given about family life—like his father’s stern nature and his mother’s manipulative personality as well as intimate details about the writer’s sexual life—are given in a necessary context of illness. The honesty and truthfulness of the memoir do not stem from its openness about all aspects of the writer’s life. Rather, they stem from frankness about the details the writer chooses to share with/confess to the reader.

As a hybrid text, Out of Place (1999) interrogates the role of writing in coping with illness as well as revisiting earlier (and healthier) stages in a life of dislocation. Illness made Said more of an exile. It banished him from the realm of the well and healthy. It intensified his fear of displacement and rupture. Before his illness, Said viewed his typical life “as a series of farewells, a record of departures” (Barbour, 2007, p.299). Such feelings, we argue, got intensified by illness—by “the rigors of chemotherapy and the anxiety and pain of a long losing battle with cancer” (Barbour, 2007, p. 299). Just as the experience of cultural dislocation has been important to Said’s sense of his fractured identity, the experience of terminal illness has added another dimension to this sense of identity crisis. Therefore, the discourse of identity that propels the text’s postcolonial orientation finds a parallel path in the text’s cultural import as an illness narrative.

Edward Said was born to a Palestinian father and a Lebanese mother. He went to English and American schools in Cairo, thus receiving colonial education and getting shaped as a colonial subject by colonial masters. And he lived as an exile, a dispossessed Palestinian leading a life of constant travel. This is the apparent postcolonial aspect of the work. The theme of exile is, therefore, often found in canonical literary texts, and this feeling of being out of place is a common postcolonial theme we often encounter in modern postcolonial fictional works in Arabic like Tayeb Salih’s Season of Migration to the North (1966; trans.1969) and the short fiction of Ghassan Kanafani, among others. It is that of Mustafa Sa’eed and his divided loyalties—African and Western—in Salih’s novel. It is also the overriding theme of Kanafani’s short stories and novellas whereby Palestinians suffer the tragic consequences of dislocation and loss of their land as in Men in the Sun (1962) and “The Land of Sad Oranges” (1958). However, in Out of Place it is the memoir writer rather than a fictional character who expresses this sense of not belonging, that ambivalent space of in-betweenness postcolonial critics often project and negotiate.

According to Buruma (1999), the memoir has a political (but even more so) a clearer cultural aspect: “the hero emerging from his memoir is not the Palestinian activist so much as the
alienated intellectual”, i.e. making the Palestinian plight serve his position as an intellectual because of the pity involved. In “Reflections on Exile,” Said (2000) rightly argues that exile has become “a potent, even enriching, motif of modern culture” (p. 173). Said adds that exiles are “cut off from their roots, their land, their past” (p. 177). And Said asserts that the overriding theme of his memoir is, contending (and confessing) “an exile … always out of place” (p. 180). This phrase (“out of place”) is the dominant postcolonial theme of up rootedness shaping the entire memoir, giving it a sense of order and development. In addition to the appeal this memoir has for the literary and cultural critic, readers might as well be interested in what it offers about our understanding of illness and its social construction as will be demonstrated in the next section after we establish the postcolonial thrust of the work and its implicit critique of the dynamic extension of imperial power.

Throughout his memoir, Said (2000) presents himself as a (post)colonial “subject.” Trying to capture his exilic sense of his being, he memorably says:

I have retained this unsettled sense of many identities—mostly in conflict with each other—all of my life, together with an acute memory of the despairing feeling that I wish we could have been all-Arab, or all-European and American, or all-Orthodox Christian, or all-Muslim, or all-Egyptian and so on. (p. 5)

According to Dahab (2003), the overriding theme of this memoir is feeling anxious and restless because of displacement from Palestine but importantly because of “the Protean nature of his identity and talents that were to exfoliate into the multiplicity of persona we have come to know” (para. 4; web.) like the public intellectual, the musician, the literary and cultural critic, the political figure, …etc. In a sense, Said fashions himself after the cultural misfits we encounter in postcolonial literature. He comes to embody the theories of hybridity, cultural marginality, expatriation, immigration, and ambivalence we encounter in postcolonial literary discourses and related critical jargon.

As a matter of fact, Said’s relationship with autobiographical criticism began with his Ph.D. dissertation on Joseph Conrad and the Fiction of Autobiography that became his first book in 1966. In this study, as Said (2000) makes clear in Reflections on Exile, he works at the intersection between the writer and the writer’s work, in particular the writer who acquires a language and writes masterfully in it without getting rid of a sense of exile (p. 554). This is basically the same experience communicated to us when we read Said’s memoir Out of Place in English. The memoir, we are told in the preface right away, was written upon his diagnosis, few years before the onset of writing, with “a fatal medical diagnosis”, leukemia in 1991, a fact that made him feel the urge to leave behind “a subjective account of the life I lived in the Arab world …and in the United States …” (p. xi). Plainly put, illness becomes an occasion for stories that can help the sick handle their new lives and make such lives more meaningful for generations of readers. In this sense, the memoir seems to be propelled by an ethical duty on the part of the writer toward the reader. Frank (1995) put it memorably in a general discussion of illness and storytelling this way:

Ill people’s storytelling is informed by a sense of responsibility to the commonsense world and represents one way of living for the other. People tell stories not just to work out their own changing identities, but also to guide others who follow them. They seek not to provide a map that can guide
In fact, Said comes to embody the split between the East and the West, the Orient and the Occident he articulated in his remarkably famous book *Orientalism* (1978) many years before he came to write this non-fictional memoir in the 1990s. Armstrong (2003), for example, reads Said’s memoir as an account of the construction of narrative identity, of “how personal identities and community affiliations are created” (p. 98). Armstrong reads the memoir in terms of the contradictions and complexities of Said’s life by juxtaposing the memoir against other texts and books Said wrote (p. 98). The essay articulates the doubleness inherent in Said’s identity. By contrast, Abuhilal (2013) reads the memoir as a depiction of the exilic and diasporic identity of Said, as an ambivalent account of his “experiences of exile, displacement, and homelessness” (p. 30) beyond the essentialized position and dichotomies of colonial discourses where “Diasporic identities function with a multiplicity of roles and categories in a Post-Orientalist colonial discourse” (p. 32). However, both articles share a common postcolonial theoretical focus on identity politics at the expense of the cultural import of the memoir as an illness narrative.

The memoir, hence, is evidently a text interrogating identity politics within an unavoidable postcolonial framework. Besides religion and language, geography is another factor to consider in Said’s identity conflict, based on a life of exile, dislocation, and travel between “Jerusalem, Cairo, Lebanon, the United States” (p. xiv). The writer was not only torn apart between divided loyalties and cultural affiliations, but also trapped in a life of geographical dissonance. For that, this aspect of the memoir, one might still argue, is a bit obvious for the theory-oriented critic or reader. Although rich and significant in its own—and although critics who argue this aspect of the memoir may not necessarily be stating the obvious—it is our contention that equally important and relatively more novel is the memoir’s cultural value as an illness narrative, as a private and confessional story of pain, ill health and suffering. We further develop this idea in the next section.

II. *Out of Place* as an Illness Narrative

A scrupulous scrutiny of Said’s memoir reveals that it can legitimately be read as an illness narrative because we are reading it now after Said’s death in 2003 from the illness he refers to several times in the course of the text. One critic has listed some known functions of the illness narrative as “biographical reconstitution, identity-work, political resistance to organized medicine” (Atkinson, 2009). Another critic has suggested that illness narratives can present “a corrective to biomedicine’s objectification of the body and, instead, embody a human subject with agency and voice” (Riessman, 2002, p. 4). Such criteria can be applied to the memoir under discussion. The memoir writer voices his identity and builds a life story against a personal history of hospital visits and difficult treatment sessions. Reading the memoir leaves the audience with the voice of the ill narrator trying to construct a life story out of shreds of travel and study years. According to the body theorist Slattery (2000), the body is “both a location and a field for experience as well as for interpretation” (p. 8). Just as the memoir writer experienced his failing health and used his physical condition to ground his diverse life events, we as readers can use the indisposed, unwell body as a cultural site for locating and understanding human experience as well as cultural texts like the one under discussion.
To reiterate, the preface tells readers that the memoir was triggered by illness as an event, by “a fatal medical diagnosis” (p. xi) that made it important for the writer write an autobiography, “to leave behind a subjective account of the life” (p. xi) he lived in the Arab World of his birth and early life and the United States of his mature life and education (p. xi). The writer clearly articulates from the start the confessional nature of this memoir and its possible nature as an illness narrative. The book was written for the most part “during periods of illness or treatment” and begun in “May 1994 while I was recovering from three early rounds of chemotherapy for leukemia” (p. ix). The writer’s “memory” was essential to the conception of the work because the book was written during times of “debilitating sickness, treatment, and anxiety” (p. xi). If the book is “a great autobiography: measured, penetrating, and exact” as Lezard (2000) described it, it is also a worthy illness narrative written after the onset of leukemia. As a cancer patient, Said would find himself sometimes proudly “intransigent” and other times “devoid of any character at all, timid, uncertain, without will” (p. 3). This is the confessional aspect of the memoir associated with illness. Said articulates the anxieties and uncertainties caused by cancer. Moreover, the embodied experience of suffering the text communicates and presents as an outcome of chemotherapy makes it more of an illness narrative rather than a typical autobiographical memoir.

One reader (2007) once wrote that Said’s memoir was begun in 1994 “with a sense of urgency” after a diagnosis with leukemia in 1991 (“Literary Studies”). It is this urgency that can be understood in terms of narrating illness and experiencing a sense of fatality. In fact, Said’s illness gives his memoir an individual peculiarity of articulating a personal experience of suffering beyond the political and historical value of such a text written with the loss of Palestine, WWII, and the civil war in Lebanon. The sense of urgency the text communicates to the reader equally underscores the effect of viscerality that the language of the body leaves on the reader. And the immediacy of description heightens the emotional and imaginative appeal of the text.

As an illness narrative in the first person, the memoir has an expressive potential about Said the man, thus creating a personal history for the writer out of a larger historical and political context of events in the Arab world in the early 20th century. The memoir, in its capacity as an illness narrative, bears witness to personal suffering related to illness while simultaneously testifying to an ethical dimension of concern with the other, i.e. the reader to whom Said confesses a personal history by way of purging a tumultuous life history. During five years, the writer worked on the manuscript under medical care and rounds of chemotherapy (p. ix). Eager to be remembered and wanting to deal with the imminent loss of self, the writer draws on memory to document his life and give it shape through writing. Early in the memoir, Said asserts the following: “My memory proved crucial to my being able to function at all during periods of debilitating sickness, treatment, and anxiety. Almost daily, and while also writing other things, my rendezvous with this manuscript supplied me with a structure and a discipline at once pleasurable and demanding” (p. xi). The critic Frank (1995) argues that “Stories have to repair the damage that illness has done to the ill person’s sense of where [he] is in life, and where [he] may be going. Stories are a way of redrawing maps and finding new destinations” (p. 53). This makes memoirs a means of identity construction necessary after the shattering illness effects. It is as if illness augmented Said’s already existing sense of identity crisis and conflicting affiliation—linguistic, religious, and cultural.
In fact, Said struggled with cancer for more than a decade. While illness shaped the last years of his life, Ali (2003) praised Said’s will to life and “refusal to accept defeat” (“Remembering Edward Said”). In this memoir, we find the discourse of illness, that of confessional autobiography, and that of postcolonialism. The book is not an illness narrative in a conventional sense of expressing pain and trauma. Rather, illness is used as an occasion for examining the writer’s life and reconstructing this life from different pieces. For example, Said’s life story is written against a background of the political situation in Palestine and the rise of Israel and the political turmoil in Lebanon and Egypt. Said’s desire to reconstruct his life in the act of writing the memoir is clear when he asserts: “The main reason, however, for this memoir is of course the need to bridge the sheer distance in time and place between my life today and my life then” (p. xiv). Throughout the memoir, the personal story of the writer’s life is intertwined with the political situation in Middle Eastern countries, namely a colonial Egypt, a lost Palestine, and a Lebanon in a state of civil war.

The book was written during diverse phases of illness. Therefore, the writer heavily drew on memory to overcome the impact of absence of health on his body. The book is thus an attempt at recalling the past—which is what many illness narratives do. It is no wonder that Said sees it a “record of an essentially lost or forgotten world” motivated by the onset of disease (p. xi). Commenting on the cultural dissonance of his life, Said writes: “I have retained this unsettled sense of many identities—mostly in conflict with each other—all of my life, together with an acute memory of the despairing feeling that I wish we could have been all Arab, or all-European and American, or all-Orthodox Christian, or all Muslim, or all-Egyptian, and so on” (p. 5). Therefore, the memoir is an attempt to articulate this identity chaos by way of ordering or structuring his life. If he is not to accept such multiple identities or adopt the American one, he should seek and try another alternative. Said contends: “I was to open myself to the deeply disorganized state of my real history and origins as I gleaned them in bits, and then to try to construct them into order” (p. 6). Regardless of Said’s success in any regard, what he articulates here is one of the functions of illness narratives. The writer is examining his life from the vantage point and enlightened perspective of a sick man assessing the truth of his professional and personal life.

Bury (2001) studies different kinds of chronic illness narratives in terms of nature and function. One relevant kind he calls “moral narratives” gives accounts about “the changing relationship between the person, the illness and social identity” (p. 265). Unlike core narratives or contingent narrative, the focus here is not the cultural or metaphorical meanings of illness or the causes and symptoms of disease (p. 265). In moral narratives, Bury argues that sufferers seek to “account for and perhaps justify themselves in the altered relations of body, self and society brought about by illness” (p. 274). In a related line of thought, Said contends: “The basic split in my life was the one between Arabic, my native language, and English, the language of my education and subsequent expression as a scholar and teacher…” (p. xiii). The moral aspect of the memoir becomes its truth value about the writer’s dislocated life—now wasting life—and his conflicting affiliations. In fact, the memoir’s written nature as a record for future generations of readers endows it with an authenticity stemming from its serious occasion. Frank (1995) repeatedly asserts that illness is “an occasion for stories” (p. 53) and that telling a story of illness is “the attempt, instigated by the body’s disease, to give a voice to an experience that medicine cannot describe” (p. 18). No wonder, Said’s last interview (2002) before his death in 2003 begins
by underscoring—to his interviewer Charles Glass—his incurable illness as one of his main personal preoccupations since it altered the crux of his life, not allowing him to listen to music or play the piano or work as an adequate academic (www.youtube.com). At the beginning of this interview, Said clarifies the lack of energy leukemia brings about and his inability to master the disease mentally (www.youtube.com) despite his refusal to rest from intellectual and critical endeavors. Just as in the memoir, illness is used in the interview as an occasion for storytelling. And in both outlets, Said narrativises his illness.

Just like Frank, Hayden (1997) argues that “One of our most powerful forms for expressing suffering and experiences related to suffering is the narrative” (p. 49). Hayden also adds that those with chronic illness use narrative “as a means for understanding the attempts of patients to deal with their life situations and, above all, with the problems of identity that chronic illness brings with it” (p. 51). This attempted understanding can take the form of reconstructing one’s life history, trying to make sense of a new social reality, or reexamining one’s life at different levels. In this regard, the overall goal of the memoir is exposing how Said felt out of place. The memoir writer rhetorically asks: “Could ‘Edward’s’ position ever be anything but out of place?” (p. 19). This self-justification of Edward Said as the creation of his parents and odd circumstances makes the memoir fulfill the promise of an illness narrative that seeks to make its writer come to terms with his life. It is the enlightened position of illness that makes the sick storyteller see the truth of his/her life. It is ironic, though, that this memoir—written in late age and after disease—mainly attempts to capture the early years in Said’s life, his childhood years with his family in Palestine, Lebanon, and Egypt and the strict discipline his parents exercised over him. This is apparently the phase in his life that he probably forgot or missed most after achieving international fame as a literary/cultural critic and leading the hectic life of a public intellectual.

As would be expected in an illness narrative, there is a manifest personal dimension that cannot be missed. On many occasions, the narrative arouses our sympathy by telling us about a fatal illness. Moreover, the family shots and portraits incorporated in the memoir, together with school report cards, (reproduced in between pages 110 and 111 with a total number of 32 items) and featuring Said the child, the young boy, and the young man augment the personal investment of the memoir and heighten its pathos effect. One would guess that compiling the graphic illustrations into the memoir touched the writer looking into his life in retrospect just as it might touch the reader. The shots and portraits taken in different years show the noticeable effects and ravages of time on the Saids.

Aside from the memoir’s allusions to illness, Said articulates his neurotic anxiety over his own thin tall body as compared with his father’s broad and strong body (p. 55). In a way reminiscent of Franz Kafka’s sense of the inadequacy of his body compared with the father’s masculine body articulated in Letter to His Father, Said moves from the initial assertion of the memoir as a reaction to terminal illness to a description of “innumerable physical defects” he acutely felt early in his life (p. 55). Said asserts that he developed his “awareness of [his] body as incredibly fraught and problematic” (p. 61) mainly through his mother’s attention to her children. Moreover, we are told that his sense of his body was formed by “a demanding set of repeated corrections” ordered by his parents (p. 62). Again, and like the Austrian writer Kafka who became emblematic of modern man’s fears and anxieties—bodily and otherwise—with relation
to authority figures in the first half of the twentieth century, Said says, “Neither a winner nor a star, I sensed myself at a threshold of a breakthrough, particularly in tennis, but routinely found myself held back by the doubts and uncertainties about my body inculcated in me by my father” (p. 191). Said mentions problems like flat feet, convulsive shuddering while urinating, stomach problems, and shortsightedness (pp. 62-63). On another occasion, Said complains: “My parents’ fear of my body as imperfect and morally flawed extended to my appearance” (p. 66). What Said states is a form of uncertainty and anxiety about his physical identity. The hypochondria Said articulates in terms of “sometimes feigned, sometimes exaggerated” illness (p. 105) was used by him during school years as a way out of school discipline. Such details ground the memoir in the genre of illness narratives that feature the body in its different states as their main concern. Ironically, as if the body reacts to Said’s childhood fears and anxieties, the memoir writer finds himself sick with a serious blood disease he tries to suppress. Said’s treatment of this bodily affliction is the basis for our contention that the memoir is an illness narrative:

And now by some devilish irony I find myself with an intransigent, treacherous leukemia, which ostrich like I try to banish from my mind entirely, attempting with reasonable success to live in my system of time, working, sensing lateness and deadlines and that feeling of insufficient accomplishment I learned fifty years ago and have so remarkably internalized. But in another odd reversal, I secretly wonder to myself whether the system of duties and deadlines may now save me, although of course I know that my illness creeps invisibly on, more secretly and insidiously than the time announced by my first watch, which I carried with so little awareness then of how it numbered my mortality, divided it up into perfect, unchanging intervals of unfulfilled time forever and ever. (p. 106)

In September of 1991 forty years after leaving the Middle East for America, and while in London attending a seminar for Palestinian intellectuals, Said received his annual blood test results which indicated that he had “chronic lymphocytic leukemia” (p. 215). It took Said weeks and months to fully absorb the diagnosis and deal with his new life as a cancer patient in need of medical care (p. 215). It is logical that writing such a memoir was one reaction to the writer’s illness because the memoir probes into Said’s past life. As he states, “So many returns, attempts to go back to bits of life, or people who were no longer there: these constituted a steady response to the increasing rigors of my illness” (p. 215). This took the form of visits to Palestine and Cairo or attempts at vague letter communication with his dead mother, who died from the same cancer illness, all to get in touch with familiar people or places (p. 215).

Said had to take chemotherapy about two months before beginning to write this memoir. By the time he was under therapy and simultaneously writing the memoir, he was certain that he was living his last years and that he could not regain health: “By the time I began treatment in March 1994 I realized that I had at least entered, if not the final phase of my life, then the period-like Adam and Eve leaving the garden-from which there would be no return to my old life. In May 1994 I began work on this book” (p. 216). The first-person description of illness that follows confirms the status of the memoir as an illness narrative and builds a correspondence between the unfolding illness and the writing process: “As I grew weaker, the number of infections and bouts of side effects increased, the more this book was my way of constructing...
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something in prose while in my physical and emotional life I grappled with anxieties and pains of degeneration” (p. 216). In addition, Said directly establishes a relationship between recording his life via the memoir form and his aggravating illness: “This record of a life and ongoing course of a disease (for which I have known from the beginning no cure exists) are one and the same, it could be said the same but deliberately different” (p. 216). The memoir writer attempts to construct another self hidden behind years of travel and work and displacements.

The memoir, hence, logically emerges as a reaction to illness, as an attempt to assimilate it and make sense of it. In “Between Worlds”, Said (1998) states that a few months after the medical diagnosis of his cancer in 1991 he found himself writing “a long explanatory letter” to his dead mother and that the letter “inaugurated a belated attempt to impose a narrative on a life that [he] had left more or less to itself, disorganised, scattered, uncentred.” This letter was written before the writing and publication of *Out of Place*. By implication, the memoir can achieve the same function a personal letter aspires for: coming to terms with illness and making sense of a life of exile by giving it some form and significance.

Just as the memoir began with an account in the Preface of “a fatal medical diagnosis” (p. xi) that prompted the writer, aided by memory, to leave an account of the formative influences in his life in the Arab World and then in United States, the memoir also returns to the same issue of illness at the end. The writer recalls the cancer of his own mother and her refusal to take chemotherapy to avoid the pain of it and the misery of trying to but not being able to sleep (p. 294). Unlike his mother, Said took “four wasting years of it [chemotherapy] with no success” (p. 294). But like her, he cannot sleep well during illness: “Now I have divined that my own inability to sleep may be her last legacy to me, a counter to her struggle for sleep” (p. 294). In fact, Said’s life story is framed by references to illness at the beginning of the memoir and toward its end. The last couple of pages of the memoir articulate the misery of drugs taken to ward off fever and chills and the helplessness, “the sense of being infantilized” by aggravating illness (p. 295) and being upset by “induced somnolence” (p. 295). The very end of the memoir confirms its status as an illness narrative in which the storyteller recounts a personal history and resists established medicine: “I fought the medical soporifics bitterly, as if my identity depended on that resistance even to my doctor’s advice” (p. 295). It is a new form of identity struggle related to life and death that Said here articulates rather than one based on cultural dissonance and a sense of exile as he does early in the memoir and sporadically elsewhere. Up until his college years, Said lived with the sense of being “unaccomplished, floundering, split in different parts (Arab, musician, young intellectual, solitary eccentric, dutiful student, political misfit)” (p. 281). This sense of identity crisis is the overriding theme of the memoir as we have stated before. However, it is illness that intensifies this feeling.

III. Conclusion: Illness and Confession

Although the preceding argument has focused on what the memoir says, equally important, we believe, is what Said’s memoir *Out of Place* leaves out or implies. So touching is the insight it gives into the emotional and psychological state of Said in his last years before death. However, the personal or subjective experience should not necessarily be given priority over “social thought” or reduce the sociological value of narratives of illness as Atkinson (2009) argues. Nor should our goal be placing this memoir within the field of narrative medicine or judge its value in terms of what it offers to the medical practitioner. The memoir can easily lend itself to the
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postcolonial critic looking for the discourse of identity or the theme of exile that the memoir’s title captures. However, it is by reading the memoir against the grain that we can present it as an illness narrative within a postcolonial context. Scarry (1985) argues in her well-known study on *The Body in Pain* that since “the person in pain is ordinarily so bereft of the resources of speech,” it is logical that “the language for pain should sometimes be brought into being by those who are not themselves in pain but who speak on behalf of those who are” (p. 6). To be fair, Said’s memoir does not dwell on bodily pain. Nor should it necessarily do so or become pathetic to appeal to us. What it does, nevertheless, is articulate a certain level of bodily consciousness and suffering related to illness at a serious juncture in his life. And it was our intention to speak “on behalf of” an indisposed Said in this regard. In fact, a conventional postcolonial reading of the memoir in terms of identity politics and exile seems to be modeled on Said’s career and writings as a cultural and postcolonial critic. *Out of Place* as an illness narrative is not what classical historical and political kinds of literary criticism would care to tackle but what cultural theorists would fondly pursue.

One thing the memoir leaves out for the reader to infer/interpret is its form and structure as an illness narrative with a confessional value. Illness is typically an occasion for confession, for confession as a form of autobiographical writing tells “an essential truth about the self” (Coetzee, 1985, p.194). Illness narratives are often personally invested and emotionally intense. In this sense, the memoir has an autobiographical value beyond doubt in documenting the lost or forgotten Arab world of Said’s early life—an aspect of his life that his intellectual fame and western education his eclipsed. As the famous South African writer Coetzee argues (1985), secular confessions can be fictional or autobiographical (p. 194). *Out of Place* is, to be sure, an autobiographical confession communicating the truth of the writing self while also, as a memoir, trying to recapture “the historicity” of the self (Coetzee, 1985, p. 194). Said does establish a history of family life and growing up in different places. And the memoir constructs the writer’s life story. However, what the memoir persistently confesses is the writer’s sense of cultural dislocation, homelessness, and his being eternally “out of place,” physically torn apart as a living death! Nevertheless, in his death, is his life. It is what Said confesses about a troubled life altogether, a confession speeded up by illness and imminent death, that ultimately allows us to experience the memoir’s grim, indisposed postcolonial ramifications.

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Morocco as an Exotic and Oriental space in European and American Writings

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Abstract:
The engagement of western writers with Morocco is part and parcel of a wider long running encounter with exotic cultures. The exotic world and its chanting appeals stimulated the interest of a host of travel writers and anthropologists around the globe. The exoticist and orientalist appeals associated with North Africa prompted many American and European travel writers to venture to Morocco to embrace a new cultural otherness. This geographical space seems to be totally different from the old and new worlds respectively. This, in fact, is due to the opportunities it offers. After all, both American and European travel writers and novelists headed to this location to look for exoticism and for stories of oriental decadence and splendor. The paper is mainly intended to explore western writers involvement and assessment of the Moroccan cultural difference.

Keywords: cultural otherness, exoticism, orientalism, the exotic
Introduction

Historically and culturally speaking, the Maghreb or the orient in general has always been qualified as a site of exoticism and oriental splendor. Edward Said explicitly maintains that “the Orient was almost a European invention, and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences”. (Said,1978:1). Such a geographical space had a strong grip on both the Europeans and Americans consciousness. The Orient was a myth, a haven, and hence a locus of exoticism and romance. This was due in great part to the spread and influence of the Arabian Nights and to the fantastic stories found in travelers’ accounts. In fact, the Arabian Nights were first introduced to the west in 1704 when Antoine Galland translated these stories in an attempt to produce narrative accounts which would represent an imaginary geographical space that encapsulated the thousand and one fancies and reveries. The Orient in these stories was, then, conceived as a romantic location where both enthusiastic travelers and perverted European painters could project their own fantasies and at the same time vent their own sensual emotions. This was due to the fact that in this exotic world, both violence and sensuality seemed to be on the move. In other words, they were not controlled by the western rigid rules of rationality.

Still, the orient as a location was associated with the vogue of exoticism and romanticism. The impact of Orientalism on romanticism was indisputable so much so that the former was “a powerful shaper” of the latter. As a matter of fact, it “is difficult nonetheless to separate such institutions of the Orient as Mozart’s from the [wide] range of pre romantic and romantic representations of the Orient as exotic locale”.(Said,1978:118). The Orient in western discourse was conceived as a myth and as a sublimated location. William Beckford, Lord Byron and Thomas Moore, for instance, were not interested in the oriental matter of its own sake. Rather, such a preoccupation with oriental issues was a kind of aperture to their concern with “Gothic tales, pseudo medieval idylls, visions of barbaric splendor and cruelty”. (Said,1978:118).

The orientalist vogue spread and with it a whole myth of the Orient was established with its lasting lures and influences. For Europe, the exotic Orient had a lot to offer. Throughout the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, the West turned its steady gaze on the Orient. It, therefore, positioned itself as a superior subject toward the Orient, which became the target of its gaze. The Orient became the subject of diverse orientalist representations in photography, painting as well as the cinema. Such representations were thought to be significant because they instilled a Eurocentric vision of the location. Whether in travel accounts, paintings or in the cinema, the Orient was represented as a sublimated and exotic location, which was perceived and assessed through the colonial ideological lenses. Such an ideology consolidated colonial power and canonized the different stereotypes, prejudices towards the Orientals or what can be referred to as Europe’s others. The Orient as an exotic location and as a desired myth was in a sense controlled and documented by the west. Its reality was, then, revealed through the colonizers’ gaze.
This location served as a medium of consumption. It was invested and qualified as an exotic land, an elsewhere of romantic fantasy as well as a haven of imagination and diverse types of pleasure. It was there where travelers and painters let their imagination roam in exotic palaces reminiscent of the romantic world of the Arabian Nights. For French and British painters, the orient was a sort of captivating realm, hosting a whole range of sensations and evoking a sense of violence and death. The Orient was also conceived as an imaginary and romantic world. This exotic location hosted different treasures and fabrics. Still, this place was bound up with romantic and sensual passion and shimmered with opportunities. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, travelers were entranced by an orient that promised a sexual space for their repressed desires and an escape from the rigidity of bourgeois moral values.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the exotic Orient was transformed into a myth and metaphor to serve the colonial powers’ urgent needs. Travelers of the period be they Europeans and Americans were pretty much intrigued by an enigmatic Orient swathed in a kind of veil encapsulating a sense of mystery as well as voluptuousness. For instance, both European enthusiastic travelers and painters were entranced by an Orient that was full of possibilities, an Orient that promised a sexual space as well as a sort of trip away from the self. The European traveler was obsessed with the encounter with an Orient full of opportunities denied him or her in the western world. This Orient was, then, transformed into a woman substitute to serve the Europeans urgent needs and desires. The European traveler’s reaction to the distant Orient was like a man’s reaction to his own wife. His relationship and reaction toward the Orient was ambivalent. He manifested strong attraction and repulsion towards it. Edward William Lane’s description of Egypt best exemplifies this vogue: “As I approached the shore, I felt like an Eastern bridegroom about to lift the veil of his bride and to see, for the first time the features that were to charm, or disappoint or disgust”. (Kabbani,1986:67).

The European travelers and painters in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were led into the Orient by sexuality. This orient was embodied either in the image of a woman or a young boy. Travellers and painters of the period were invited to lift the Oriental’s veil and to penetrate an imaginary harem, and hence, to embrace a metaphorical and painted orient marked by a whole range of infinite possibilities and unrestricted longings. The eroticism that the exotic Orient promised was mysterious and tinged with violence. The Oriental woman’s tricky physical appearance happened to arouse affection and violence. This woman was like a “femme fatale” to be loved and to be avoided as her charming qualities might bring danger and death in the long run. Oscar Wilde’s Salome (Kabbani,1986:68) is another case in point which illustrates the eroticism coupled with violence in the East. Oscar Wilde’s interpretation of Salome’s murderous love and desire for Jokanaan’s head, as the source of her sexual pleasure and passion for him provides some hints about the treacherous nature of women and eastern sexuality in general. Salome’s dance is sexual. She dances on blood and kisses Jokanaan’s head in an attempt to arouse his feelings:
Ah I have kissed thy mouth, Jokanaan, I have kissed thy mouth. There was a bitter taste on thy lips. Was it the taste of blood?.....Nay, but perchance it was the taste of love….They say that love hath a bitter taste…But what matter? What matter? I have kissed thy mouth. (Kabbani,1986:68)

The dance here is intertwined with an exhibitionism that attracts and fascinates the onlooker. The dance is transformed into a metaphor for the whole exotic Orient. Still, in the orientalist paintings of the nineteenth century, such a dance became a sort of trope for the Orient’s sense of freedom and abandon. It seemed to be different from the western one. This dance was not a mere social expression, but was meant to please visitors and onlookers who did not take part in it and who just remained passive observers. Salome’s dance could, therefore, be conceived as a medium that best exemplified the exotic Orient’s inherent qualities. Such a dance revealed the erotic activities that the east promised for its perverted travelers. It was just one example among many that portrayed female nudity, sexual violence and languor. Above all, the dance encapsulated in a sense the exotic Orient.

In a similar fashion, the exotic Orient was revealed to the west through some exalted painters who made the trip there and by those chamber painters who just remained in their studios in Europe and never set foot in the orient. Despite the fact that they were far and detached from the exotic Orient, they managed to create a fabricated orient relying on props and trinkets. The far away East was brought to Europe for consumption. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Orient became the target of imagination and even the source of inspiration for many French and British painters in Europe, who were strongly interested in the picturesque Orient, that is to say, the kind of orient that could be transformed into a kind of tableau and which ultimately would carry “representation into visual expression”. (Said,1978:118). The orient was therefore a very suitable theatrical stage in which the European could play out “the egocentric fantasies of romanticism”. (Kabbani,1986:11). This distant space provided most chamber naturalists and painters with an unrestricted material to construct their own image of the east and, by the same token, to transform their visions and imagination into a kind of tableau vivant.

It is important to point out here that orientalist painting is essentially a nineteenth century phenomenon which is intrinsically linked to the colonial enterprise and its ideologies. The first French painter who initiated orientalism to France was Gros who was, then, accredited to praise the Egyptian expedition of Bonaparte. He continued to create for a century the “prototypes of oriental landscapes, costumes and faces”(Baker,1985:2) without setting his foot in Egypt in the first place. Relying on certain artefacts and trinkets brought from the east to his studio, Gros was convinced that his paintings were the outcome of a close actual contact with the east and even the result of a direct observation of the oriental setting.(p.2). In the same stream, Bonington,
another eminent English painter was qualified as the first important specialist of harem scenes and odalisques who actually did not travel to the east and just stayed in Italy. Furthermore, there were many other French painters who were extremely fascinated by the exotic Orient and its luring qualities. Among them, there was Theophile Gautier, whose artistic tastes and romantic feelings intermingled to mark his allurement toward eastern objects, enfolding him in what can be called “Europe’s collective day dream of the orient”. (Kabbani,1986:73). His visit to Constantinople is a good case in point which illustrates his intense allurement to oriental objects as well as his great interest in Turkish women’s dress. Most orientalist painters and chamber naturalists managed to depict a romantic as well as an “opulent east” relying on certain imported trinkets which functioned as a kind of buttress in their studios. The painted East turned out to be tinged with sensuality and violence. These painters were very much influenced by the Arabian Nights and its captivating tales that they had read about before, to such an extent that their knowledge and imagination helped them to recreate for instance the cave of Ali Baba as well as other oriental objects as real. In their depictions of the “Opulent East”, many other aspects of barbarity and violence were added in order to represent “what they imagined to be a particularly violent East”. (Kabbani,1986:75).

The exotic Orient seemed to keep its promises for painters. There was so much inspiration for those who made the journey. William Makepeace Thackeray confirmed this while he was in Cairo on his grand tour: “There is a fortune to be made for painters in Cairo. I never saw such a variety of architecture, of life, of picturesqueness, of brilliant colour, of light, and shade. There is a picture in every street, and at every bazaar stall”.(Thackery,1846:278-279).The exotic and painted orient, following Thackeray’s perspective, was full of opportunities. In Cairo, painters would be exposed to exoticism anywhere they go. The sense of picturesqueness unfolded the whole city. As a matter of fact, a painter could avail of every picture he encountered or saw in the street or in a particular bazaar. All the scenes seen in the East could therefore be transformed into a myth and a metaphor.

Still, this geographical setting was brought to the western public consciousness by the exoticism and romanticism it unfolds. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries respectively, this space was constructed as an exotic realm, a locus of romance, adventure and magic. The location further gained a strong ascendancy with the translation of the Thousand and One Nights. In most travel literature of the period, the Orient was represented as outlandish, strange, mysterious, picturesque and as a romantic haven redolent of the world of the Thousand and One Nights. William Makepeace Thackeray made it clear that the exotic Orient hosted a whole range of opportunities for travelers. According to him, the picturesqueness and the outlandishness of Constantinople and Smyrna, for instance, could then be revealed and made known to the west by a mere trip there:

If they love the odd and picturesque, if they loved the Arabian Nights in their youth, let them book
themselves on board one of the peninsular and oriental vessels and try one dip in Constantinople or Smyrna. Walk into the bazaar, and the East is unveiled to you. (Thackeray, 1846:131).

Constantinople and Smyrna, following Thackeray’s account, represent the sense of picturesqueness, outlandishness and strangeness that are associated with the exotic Orient. Yet, such elements are not the sole luring qualities that have pushed travelers of this period to embrace these exotic lands. The body of romantic literature initiated, at the time, by the translation of Antoine Galland’s Nights made the Orient appear like a locus of romance and adventure. For the romantics in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Orient happened to be a source of inspiration. It offered them an enunciative space as well as a scope to flee into the world of imagination.

Similarly, other British travelers of the period referred to the world of the One Thousand and One Nights while they were in the exotic Orient. A case in point here is Lady Mary Montague whose experience in the exotic Orient turned out to be very unique. While she was in Turkey, she was impressed by the oriental setting and its exotic appeals. Upon her arrival there, she revealed her feelings to her sister when she was invited to a dinner in Constantinople prepared for her honor as the wife of the British ambassador:

This is but too like (says you) the Arabian tales, these embroidered napkins and a Jewl [Sic] as large as a turkey’s egg. You forget, dear sister, those very tales were written by an author of this country and excepting the enchantments are a real representation of the manners here. (Montague, 1965:385).

Constantinople best exemplifies the Orient in its romantic and exotic appeals. It is redolent of the world of the Arabian Nights. The setting hosts a whole range of elements that makes it part and parcel of the Nights. Embroidered napkins and Jewellery are a sort of oriental costume associated with the exotic Orient. They are a reminder of the romantic appeals inherent to those stories of the Nights. Constantinople has here been transformed into a myth and a metaphor reminiscent of the sort of romantic enchantments, exotic abandon and languor happening at the time in most oriental settings. This is due in part to the influence and spread of the translations of Galland’s Nights on European travelers before and even after embracing the exotic Orient. Most of these travelers mixed the actual Orient with that of the imagination. For them, the oriental world of the Nights and the actual Orient were in a sense interchangeable. As a matter of fact, it was not easy to make a distinction between the two.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the strangeness and outlandishness of the oriental world of the Thousand and One Nights, and the whole range of images bound up with
the mysterious and sexual Orient, were fused together to enshrine a romantic image of the East. In the accounts of most European travelers of the period, the exotic Orient was represented and conceived as a locus of romance, sensuality and idleness. Thackeray’s experience of the Orient’s sensuality was unique. The Turkish bath, the harem and the narguile were, for him, the ingredients of sensuality and romance. His experience of the Turkish bath turned out to be an instance of romantic repose:

When the whole operation of the bath is concluded, you are led with what heartfelt joy I cannot say softly back to the cooling room, having been robed in shawls and turbans as before. You are laid gently on the reposing bed, somebody brings a narghile, which tastes as tobacco must taste in Mahomet’s paradise, a cool sweet dreamy languor takes possession of the purified frame, and half an hour of such delicious laziness spent over the pipe as is unknown in Europe, where vulgar prejudice has most shamefully maligned indolence, calls it foul names, such as the father of all evil, and the like, in fact, does not know how to educate idleness as those honest Turks do, and the fruit which, when properly cultivated, it bears. The after bath state is the most delightful condition of laziness, I ever knew, and I tried it wherever we went afterwards on our little tour. (Titmarch, 1846:62).

Much emphasis here is on the moments of repose in the Turkish bath. This setting has been transformed into a romantic realm, where the traveler is immersed in sensuality and laziness. The exotic Orient breeds idleness and this is exemplified by the narghile. The after bath scene has in, a sense, plunged Thackeray into a wonderful and dreamy world of freedom and pleasure. It is obvious now that the East is the source of idleness and sensuality. For Thackeray, idleness and indolence are part and parcel of the exotic Orient. According to him, the European traveler can not enjoy such moments in Europe. It is in the exotic Orient that “the pure idleness is the best, but I shall never enjoy such in Europe again”. (Titmarch,1846:63).

Morocco in Western Writings

So far, I have extensively dealt with the orient as an exotic space as well as a locus of romance, adventure and magic. My main objective in the last section of this article is to show how Morocco has been conceived and represented in some European and American travel narratives. My critical reading of the texts would endeavour to explore the notion of cultural otherness. My contention is that Morocco is an exotic space par excellence. Travelers at the time were in constant search of a sort of paradise, freedom, wisdom and ecstasy. For these aspects as well as other reasons and motivations, hosts of European and American travelers headed toward Morocco in an attempt to experience a new cultural otherness that was totally different from the
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one they experienced in their homeland. These travelers did not seem to be interested in the center anymore. They had actually left the civilized and mundane world to embrace a new haven and horizon where their imagination and creativity could be “sparked and enlivened by the romance and charm of Moorish culture”. (Hibbard, 2004:20). Such was the case with the narrator of Mark Twain’s The Innocents Abroad. Like most American travelers, the narrator was amazed and struck by the Maghreb’s mysteriousness and by Tangier’s exoticness. His descriptions brought to the core the imaginative world of the Arabian Nights:

Tangier turned out to be the exotic ideal space Mark Twain was looking for. The American traveler was actually driven by an urgent need to embrace a new and different cultural otherness unobtainable in his modern and civilized new world. Away from the mundane life in the west, Twain got in close contact with an orient that was both drastically different and full of unusual aspects. His longing for Tangier was repeatedly stated because there was nowhere else where the “novelty of the situation” could be found (p.26). Such a novelty of situation, in his opinion, might actually lose its value as well as “a deal of its force” (p.26) because both he and his American compatriots on their trip around the globe managed just to find “foreign looking people, but always with things and people intermixed that we were familiar with before” (p.26). Twain could not just content himself with such an ordinary experience. He further anticipated something new and opted for a novelty of situations that would set him apart, though momentarily, from the modern world he came from. Twain was, in fact, searching for an exoticism defined by its essential foreignness in its true and absolute sense:

We wanted something thoroughly and uncompromisingly foreign-from top to bottom-from center to
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The conspicuous repetition of the word “foreign” is very striking as it consolidates the readiness of the American tourist abroad to explore and to discover places wholly different from those available in his homeland. The passage further confirms how totally tourists see the world beyond their national borders as other. Twain and his fellow tourists are now invited in Tangier to a sort of spectacle to be savoured and consumed. The Moroccan city seems to encompass all the characteristics of an imaginary world that is reminiscent of the mysterious world of the Arabian nights. Like all tourists, Twain identifies the “foreign” in terms of its difference from home. Tangier appears to him as “an oriental picture”. His reactions to the city encapsulate all his preconceived images and expectations of what this part of the world should look like. Despite the fact that he has never been to Tangier, he has a preconceived idea of what the city would be like. The inculcated oriental images vibrate in his mind at the mere thought of the North African land. It is, therefore, these pictures that Twain responds to in a deliberate and rapturous way. Tangier is a foreign and mysterious land. It is an oriental space that is redolent to the romantic and fantasized world of the Arabian nights.

In the same stream, the Moroccan cultural otherness haunted the European travelers’ consciousness so much so that some of them headed toward the country to trace some aspects of this geographical space foreignness. An example to illustrate my point is Nina Epton’s experience in Morocco. The British travel writer toured the country and wrote about her experiences, mixing both ethnography and travelogue. Most of her narrative accounts were, in fact, structured around the intertwining subjects of sorcery and magic. In Morocco, Nina Epton went to shrines to look for aspects of exoticism. Still, the different meetings of religious brotherhoods, sorcerers, magicians, snake charmers, stories of djin, legendary accounts of miracles, buried treasure and clairvoyance, were essentially examples of rituals and magical practices that evoked the sense of mystery, foreignness, the bizarre and the exotic associated with the land. In so many instances, Nina Epton was compelled to make sense of the unfamiliar and strange practices taking place in some religious shrines or among members of religious brotherhoods. While traveling across the country, she got in close contact with the exotic other and saw some exotic practices. While visiting the Sheikh of Beni Salim, she witnessed “the ecstatic dance of the Derkaaua” near Ceuta. According to her, “every one of his gestures and attributes was easy and rhythmical”. (Epton, 1958:33). Furthermore, “sitting beside him, one shared in the harmonious ebb and flow of his spiritual breathing, it was as peaceful as listening to the tide on a calm summer day. He was one of those blessed people who are totally unencumbered”. (p.33). Here, the exotic journey to the Maghreb turned out to be a sort of magical pilgrimage during which the western traveler was surrounded by an array of new rituals.
Morocco as an Exotic and Oriental space in European and American

The mysteriousness of the Moroccan land as well as its people’s exotic practices would soon be discerned and accepted as normal. Nina Epton’s journey across Morocco enabled her to discover the Moroccan cultural otherness in all its features. For instance, in her cultural assessment of the world of magic, she came to the conclusion that Moroccan people tended to articulate their existence using magical formulae. To clarify better her approach, she provided the example of the “moon foam” which, following the Moroccans perspective, would “make a husband faithful for life and cure him of impotence and make him madly passionate”. (pp.44-45). These magical practices might look unusual and unfamiliar to a British travel writer like Nina Epton, who had actually spent most of her life enveloped by the inexorable influence, sprawl of western culture and all its modern features. Yet, the Moroccan bizarre practices ought to be assessed as they are. The exotic, following Graham Huggan’s approach, is a cultural entity that is hard to be assimilated easily. It is basically a concept that has to be “kept at arms length rather than taken as one’s own”. (Huggan,2001:13). At the same time, it is very pertinent not to “neutralize its capacity to create surprises”. (p.13). Nina Epton came to Morocco to encounter the exotic other and to preserve it in an anthropological way. Her main objective was to write a travel narrative account which would encapsulate all the diverse exotic magical and ritual practices she witnessed in such a way as to salvage the exotic from a probable negligence and erasure. Following Stephen Foster’s approach, the exotic has to be salvaged and incorporated into the “humdrum of everyday routines”.(Foster,1982:22).

Such was one of the fundamental preoccupations of Nina Epton. Her exposure to the Moroccan cultural otherness enabled her gradually to salvage, to incorporate and even to commodify the exotic to the western world. Her diverse encounters with the Moroccan exotic paved the way for the incorporation of the Moroccan different exotic practices into what Foster calls the “humdrum of every day routines”. Though Nina Epton was culturally enthralled by the Moroccan strange practices, she realized in the long run that such ceremonies and practices were deeply rooted in the country and ought to be accepted and adopted as they were. A good case in point which illustrated clearly the traveler’s exposure to the Moroccan cultural otherness was the “hadra” of the famous religious brotherhood, the Aissaoua. There, on the spot she witnessed the members’ strange practices. The Aissaoua were involved in a whole range of exotic practices. Epton remained transfixed in front of the group’s diverse bizarre acts. Though such practices evoked both admiration and repulsion, Nina Epton was determined now not to miss any thrilling exotic scene. About her experience among the members of the religious brotherhood and the hadra, she wrote with a tone of rapture:

There is fairytale perfection about Moorish hadra that makes them satisfying to watch quite apart from one’s private views on their spiritual content. The rustic
performers transformed under the influence of age old esoteric rhythms, transcend their limited personality and slowly become imbued with a secret power. We are not really astonished to see them roll in palm fronds or pierce their flesh with knives that have lost their power to wound, they are characters in fairy tale, beyond time and space, beyond earthly laws and logic, creating magic in themselves under the guidance of an invisible alchemist. (Epton, 1958:171).

Nina Epton’s exposure to the bloody rituals performed by the Aissaoua revealed her ambivalent attitude to the exotic practices. In fact, she seemed be enthralled and amazed by the members’ strange practices. She was not repulsed or offended by the violent acts in which the Aissaoua were involved. Rather than discard the exotic and relegating it to a secondary position, she was extremely entranced by the group’s diverse movements and acts. The piercing of the cheeks, shoulders and throats with swords did not trigger off or engender the traveler’s annoyance or disgust. Rather than being the case, she felt that the Aissaoua’s rhythmical dances together with the glowing coals in their mouth could, therefore, be transformed into a spectacle and into an important source of entertainment and pleasure for other travelers.

Another eminent travel writer who was very much concerned with the cultural otherness of the oriental world was Edith Wharton. This American writer was commissioned to write a travel guide book about Morocco at a critical historical period, when the country in question was not made known to the rest of the world. She managed in her own way to fill in this void and deficiency by commodifying her cultural experiences in Morocco in a very special travel guide book conducted under the auspices of the French authorities. Travel guide books were, in fact, crucial linguistic tools for the commodification of the other. Such a contention is revealed in Ali Behdad’s chapter entitled “From Travelogue to Tourist Guide: The Orientalist as Sightseer”. Behdad strongly argues that the travel guide book in its informational assessment and vision of the other contributes to the “commodification of the orient for tourists belatedly searching for the disappearing exotic”. (Behdad, 1994:46-47). The guide book, in this respect, consolidates the notion that the orient as an alien and far away destination can, therefore, be commodified to the entire world and be an object of consumption as well as a source of entertainment and pleasure. For Behdad, the Orient and its titillating features have to be geared toward “the use of the tourist consumer”. (p.47). In fact, with the rise of tourism, every orientalist traveler has “become a sightseer”. (p.48). Behdad further establishes a comparison between the orientalist traveler and the tourist. According to him, the latter is not very much concerned with the capturing of the exotic signified but rather is preoccupied with the “sliding over the signifiers of otherness”. (p.48). The tourist, following Behdad’s perspective, is different from the orientalist traveler as his main goal is “to identify the already defined signs of exoticism as exotic”. (p.48).
Wharton’s *In Morocco* fits into the orbit of the orientalist and exoticist approach. In this travel account, Wharton explores Morocco, its people and records her impressions of the exotic non-western world. Throughout her journey, Wharton describes many Moroccan cities and offers her observations concerning the country’s architecture. She further provides accounts of some religious ceremonies and at the same time depicts the Sultan’s palaces. The trip across the country enabled her to have access to the exotic and to the mysterious world of the harem. For Wharton, Morocco is an exotic land par excellence. It is perceived as the exotic other. On the opening page, she asserts that “there is no guide book to Morocco” (p.21), suggesting that the lack of tourist information “rouses the hunger of the repletest sightseer”. (p.21). Her observations establish Morocco as “unkown Africa” which is exotic, remote, and hence “untouched by the tourist industry”. (p.21). Still, her first Moroccan images show North Africa as a place immersed in mystery. Such a mystery has in fact remained unsolved by Glossam or Baedeker. The Moroccan land’s foreignness as well as its mysteriousness haunted much the traveler’s consciousness. After all, her main objective of undertaking such a trip was to explore the country’s cultural otherness. Such an entity became a sort of blank slate upon which she inscribed both her insights and impressions.

The absence of an established tradition of travel writing on Morocco, at the time Edith Wharton was touring the country might seem in a sense normal and liberating. But, it also signaled a whole range of representational difficulties the traveler was exposed to. In Morocco, Wharton was supposed to formulate her own observations in order to make sense of the mystery, in which the country was veiled and in a way to lift the “vast unknown just beyond” Tangier (p.21). Wharton’s journey to Morocco turned out to be coupled with a throng of impressions, visions, challenges as well as expectations. She was compelled to bridge the gap between her travels in North Africa and to come up with her own signifiers to uncover the mystery and the unknown in which Morocco was immersed. The Moroccan secrets Wharton sought to disclose and, hence, reveal to the western audience remained beyond her reach. *In Morocco*, as a travel narrative dealing with Moroccan otherness seems to trap the American traveler within the trope of mystery. This travel account refers to North Africa and Morocco in particular as an ancient world of mystery and beauty. Wharton’s cultural encounter with the Moroccan exotic and her confrontation with the Moroccan otherness, tended to be marked by contradictions. Wharton asserts that she has been brought:

Back to the central riddle of the mysterious North African civilization: The perpetual flux and the immovable stability, the barbarous customs and sensuous refinements, the absence of artistic originality and the gift for regrouping borrowed motives, the patient and exquisite workmanship and the immediate neglect and degradation of the thing once made. (Wharton, 1984:127).
Morocco is conceived, here, as a paradoxical site that “cannot be solved by Euro-American gazes”. (Edwards, 2001: 105). In other words, the country remains a sort of enigma which is hard to decipher. Wharton proceeds her interpretation of the Moroccan cultural otherness by foregrounding the difficulty of penetrating the Moroccan culture and disclosing its secrets to a western viewer. Even the text’s title is ironical. This is due in part to the American traveler’s cultural detachment from North Africa. She remained detached from the Moroccan land and was to some extent unable to position herself in proximity to Morocco as an exotic and oriental space.

Wharton’s travel book on Morocco encapsulates a whole array of orientalist and exoticist representations of the landscape and the inhabitants. Throughout her journey in the mysterious land of Morocco, Wharton managed to establish a sort of analogy between the Moroccan exotic other and Orientals. The trip to the heart of Morocco turned out to be governed by a whole range of preconceived ideas, which in fact found their resonance in the body of orientalist texts, whose cultural and epistemological configurations were unquestionable. Hence, anything written on the orient was taken for granted. To back up her approach, Wharton argued in strong terms that such a body of orientalist texts established a certain hegemonic reality and truth about the Orientals and the orient as an exotic geographical space. The American traveler further contended that “every step in North Africa corroborates the close observation of the early travelers … and shows the unchanged character of the oriental life as the Venetians pictured, and Leo Africanus and Charles Cochelet described”. (pp. 71-72). Wharton found herself in a dilemma. She could not actually get rid of the well established stereotypes, dogmas and preconceived ideas on the orient. Rather than discarding this burden of the past, she reproduced the same preconceived biased judgments and applied them to Morocco and its inhabitants. Her travel narrative is, then, placed within the body of orientalist literature so much so that it echoes Edward Said’s major argument about the orient and orientalism as a system of representation that serves the west’s colonial policies and objectives. Above all, Orientalism for Edward Said is “premised upon exteriority, that is, on the fact that the orientalist, poet or scholar, makes the Orient speak, describes the Orient, renders its mysteries plain for and to the west”. (Said, 1978: 20-21).

Wharton’s journey to Morocco turned out to be an attempt to disclose the country’s foreignness and exoticness to the western world. In spite of the fact, that the country is freezed in the past and is represented as a space that does not change, Wharton managed to position herself to the landscape in such a way as to assess the country’s radical difference. Her trip across the Moroccan cities enabled her to discover the Moroccan other and to assess better its cultural difference. Still, the American traveler’s confrontation with the exotic Moroccan ceremonies is very significant as it both reflects her deep foreign gaze as well as assessment of the Moroccan exotic practices:

The spectacle unrolling itself below us took on a blessed air of unreality. Any normal person who has seen a dance of
the Aissaouas and watched them swallow thorns and hot coals, slash themselves with knives, and roll on the floor in epilepsy must have privately longed, after the first excitement was over to fly from the repulsive scene. The Hamadchas are much more savage…and, knowing this, I had wondered how long I should be able to stand the sight of what was going on below our terrace. But the beauty of the setting redeemed the bestial horror. In that unreal golden light the scene became merely symbolical: It was like one of those strange animal masks which the Middle Ages brought down from antiquity by way of the satyr-plays of Greece, and of which the half-human protagonists still grin and contort themselves among the Christian symbols of Gothic cathedrals. (Wharton,1984:54-55).

The above passage is a good instance of Wharton’s encounter with the Moroccan cultural otherness. Here, she positions herself as a western voyeuristic traveler gazing at the exotic “bloody” festival scenes from a distance. The expressions which are used to describe the Hamadchas’ different exotic practices evoke a sort of linguistic structure within which the western traveler and the exotic dancers are placed. The terms “Bestial” and “Savage”, for instance, are meant to reinforce a strong difference between the observer and the participants. The reason why such a differentiation was maintained between the western traveler and the participants in the exotic rituals, was that Wharton wanted to establish herself as a detached outsider and to draw the reader’s attention toward her status as a gifted travel writer, connoisseur who had to remain somehow outside the Moroccan culture in order to represent it using her own cultural background, value judgments and lodged sweeping generalizations. The emphasis in Wharton’s exposure to the Moroccan ceremonies is on the exotic monstrosity and violent performances of the Aissaouas. Observing these people swallowing thorns, hot coals and slashing themselves with knives for an extended period of time, might engender wonder and repulsion at the same time. Wharton’s representation of the bloody ritual dances is ambivalent. At the very first glance, the American traveler seemed to be offended by the violence going on among the participants in the rituals. Yet, the exotic bloody performances were somewhat thrilling to observe and to enjoy. Wharton did not seem to be culturally shocked or hurt by the Hamadchas’ violent practices. The bloody performances were far from being repulsive. The ambivalence of such practices resided in the fact that they both evoked wonder and repulsion. Wharton was rather excited by the movement of these people and remained transfixed to the strange and exotic features of their private world. Above all, Wharton’s reconstructions of travel narratives in her book In Morocco are considered as a sort of contribution to the Saidian orbit of intertexts, which essentially aim at “filling in the textual void with imaginative projections”. (Edwards, 2001:112).
To sum up, travel accounts about Morocco became very fashionable in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Many American and European travel writers went to this geographical space in order to see the degree to which that location was different from their own culture and civilization. The Moroccan cultural otherness became, therefore, the target of their investigations. The country proved to be a thrilling space as it encompassed all the exotic features of the amazing oriental world. Morocco seemed to keep its alluring features for the travelers of the period. Edith Wharton, Nina Epton and Mark Twain were not the only travel writers of the era who were enthralled by the Moroccan cultural otherness. There were other gifted travel writers like Vincent Crapanzano, Paul Rabinow and Paul Bowles who were also very much preoccupied with the Moroccan radical difference. These writers managed in their own way to assess the country’s radical difference. Their assessment had, in fact, a tremendous impact on the audience in Europe and the United States respectively. The travel writers accounts mentioned in this article were actually spread and read for their portrayals of the exotic customs of the east.

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Anger, Resistance and the Reclamation of Nature in Audre Lorde's Ecopoetics

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Abstract:
After decades of literary criticism that is solely focused on one dimensional reading of literary texts, some of the relatively recent studies are turning towards a more comprehensive analysis that lies at the intersection of numerous literary theories. Eco criticism and post-colonial analysis for example can form a dual prospective that open the doors for a deeper understanding and appreciation of literary texts that can never be reached via the traditional one dimensional reading. Post-colonial theory, for instance, provides very specific critical tools that help to explore the ways in which black literature as an example, addresses the intersection between racial oppression and the exploitation of nature. Nature is usually pictured in literature as a place of pose and meditation, yet due to the long history of discrimination and abuse it is represented differently in African American Literature. However, recent analysis of African American poetry like Katherine Lynes' (2015) for instance, refers to the ecopoetics of nature reclamation. Selected examples from African American poetess Audre Lord are to be examined here via this particular scope. Black dragon fish, angry trees, shattered branches, black unicorns and buried diamonds are only few examples of Lorde’s ecological angry "others" and ecopoetics of reclamation. What is the role played by nature in the African American struggle of self- definition and liberation? How does ecocriticism as a form of literary critique respond to the post-colonial interrogation of equity and sustainability? How can literature and poetry in particular enable African American poets to reclaim their voice and textual authority over nature? These are the questions that come at the core of the ecopostcolonial dual critical reading employed in this study.

Keywords: African American poetry, Audre Lord, ecocriticism, Ecopoetics, post–colonial poetry, reclamation of nature
Introduction:

The 1990s witnessed the call for greener literature and critical approaches that brings more awareness to the environment. Recently known as eco-centric or ecocriticism; the name can be relatively new but the awareness of nature in literary writings and critique is not. In addition to the Romantic concern with nature and creatures, many poets and writers are known for their empathetic tendencies towards the environment and the wellbeing of other creatures, to name a few Wordsworth, Li Po and Basho are probably among the well-known examples. During the late years of the twentieth century literary texts with eco focus had tremendously increased that the 1999 summer issue of New Literary History was in full about eco literature and criticism as well as the October forum of PMLA which reflect the growing interest in such themes. However, the traditional Wordsworthian love for nature and pastoral landscape are no longer enough for the more recent wave of what is now known as the eco literature and criticism, for the current pursuit of the ecological lit determines more than the classical admiration of the rural and the pastoral landscape of the Romanticism (Slaymaker, 2001, 130).

Buell, (1995). suggested four criteria that distinguish the tradition of nature writing from that of literature inspired by environment and ecological concern in his book The Environmental Imagination: Thoreau, Nature Writing, and the Formation of the American Culture. The presence of natural history in human history, the interest of nonhumans, the ethical orientation of human beings towards the environment and considering the kinetic force of nature and criticism to the static model of nature are the four criteria presented by Buell (1995, 7-8). In that sense nature is not to be considered as a static background and rather to be included as a dynamic factor in the lives of people and in the literary production as well. Such human and nonhuman interaction with nature is what increasingly characterizing environmental literature and recently becoming at the core of ecocriticism.

Introducing his article documenting the urge of rereading African American literature in the lights of ecocriticism, Scott Hicks identified the task of the eco-critics in the last decade as to engage the cultural production of the people of color in their theorizing and discussions (2006, 202). He suggested employing alternative tools of analysis while reading African American literature eco critically some of which are; integrating a post-colonial viewpoint and avoiding the traditional clichés of nature presentations (Hicks, 212).

According to the editors of The Ecopoetry Anthology (2013), three definitional categories are presented to ecopoetry which comprising many different subcategories: nature poetry, environmental and the ecological poetry (Fisher- Wirth and Street, xxviii-xxix). The first considers nature as a subject like the poetry of Romanticism, it always demonstrates the human reaction to an emotional experience while interacting with nature, nature is usually a "backdrop" or an aesthetic object helps the human to "contemplate and repose" (tad. in Lynes, 2015, 50). The second is linked with the environmental movements of the 1960s which is more committed to the question of injustice and also the issues of damage and degradation, while the third includes poems that are often described as more "experimental" and "representational" (2013, p. xxix), they also pointed out that some poems may participate in multiple categories (xxx).

Nature in African American writings was never a place of repose and meditation. It is always associated with fear, anger and danger (Lynes, 2015). The lynching and torture scenes, escaping plans, slave meetings etc. all happen in the woods and were linked with fear and horror.
of the masters who are the aggressors of both humans and nonhumans in the environment. Contemporary readings of African American literary productions show opposite tendencies towards nature as an active element in survival equation and struggle. Such writings reclaimed the nature through self-identification with other nonhuman members in the eco systems.

No single African American poet and writer can provide the multiplicity of dimensional literary reading such as Audre Lorde. She can be viewed, as suggested by many critics, as the embodiment of “Otherness” in the American society. She is known as a black woman activist, a mother a cancer survival in addition to many other identities that are always attached to her name. Most of all, Lorde is known for her anger and the ability to survive amidst multiple discriminative situations. Images of angry nature elements and re-connectedness with African ancestors especially women clearly mark and distinguish Lorde's poetry which can be viewed as examples of reclamation ecopoetics. What is the role played by nature in the African American struggle of self-definition and liberation? How does ecocriticism as a form of literary critique respond to the post-colonial interrogation of equity and sustainability? How can literature and poetry in particular enable African American poets to reclaim their voice and textual authority over nature? These are the questions that stimulated the eco postcolonial reading of Audre Lorde’s poetry. With reference to Lawrence Buell’s ethical concern to the environment together with Lynes' concept of reclamation, AudreLorde’s poetics is to be examined here. Three particular approaches to her ecopoetics come at the core of this study to answer the study questions. The first demonstrates the twin ship and duality between human beings and nature as they struggle against discrimination and aggression, the second exemplifies the black race identity and self-definition and connectedness to nature, and the third is the use of mythology as descriptor of the fetishized self. Three poems are to be thematically analyzed here as examples of the three approaches respectively: "Afterimages", "Coal" and "The Black Unicorn" which are among Lorde's frequently anthologized and widely read poems. A dual post-colonial and eco reading of the three poems will be applied here.

Theoretical Framework:

Post-colonialism
Post-colonial theory grew out of discontent over the ways the indigenous is treated. It expresses rejection to the ways of reading the indigenous and to the aggression and marginality "he" is treated with. Resistance to the practices of the colonizer generally marks post-colonial writings as asserted by Barbra Harlow in her Resistance Literature (1987) and S. Slemon in his Resistance in Caribbean Literature (1995) for instance. Harlow defines resistance as "an act to rid people from the oppressors, and it so thoroughly infuses the experience of living under oppression that it becomes an almost autonomous aesthetic principle"(2). In post-colonial studies, the relation between the colonizer and the colonized is marked by oppression and resistance, it is a relation between two humans where nature in usually marginal or a backdrop. Resistance to the fixities and the ideological construction of otherness is defined by (Said, 1978), (Derrida, 1983), and (Bahaba, 1983). However, with the increased attention to ecological concerns, nature is no longer in the background of the colonized/colonizer relationship the investigation of the construction of otherness in the colonial discourse currently includes non-humans and natural elements as well.
Post-colonial Ecocriticism

The theoretical backbone of both post-colonialism and ecocriticism simply lies in the ethical concept of justice, for justice provides a space for theoretical bridging between the two, whether it is justice towards human beings or towards the environment (Ross, & Hunt, 2010). Since humans are the most valuable entity in nature, Julie Sze groups writings that address environmental concern alongside with those with social justice concerns. She emphasized that race and labor as part of what constitutes "nature" and thus people especially the racialized communities are "at the center of what constitutes environment and nature" (Sze, 2002, 163). Therefore poems that address human concerns as part of the concern of aggression against environment are clearly linked to the ecopoetics. In that sense, resistance links between the two as both lines of literary writings challenge different forms of exploitations against environment and humans. Connectedness between human and nature is suggested by Hamoud (2012) and Glotfelty & Fromm (1996) among others. Glotfelty & Fromm define ecocriticism as a subject that takes into consideration the "interconnections between nature and culture" (97). Thus finding parallel lines of resistance among the two is not farfetched as both were subjects of aggression from the colonizer/aggressor and both use resistance in different forms as means of reversing the aggression and back fighting. The dual ecopostcolonialreading is suggested by others as well such as; Christine Gerhardt (2002), Anthony Vital (2008) to name a few.

Ecoresistance

The term "ecoresistance" is coined by Ahmed, & Hashim (2014) in their analysis of Mahmoud Darwish's poems of resistance; it provides a dual framework from both post-colonial and ecocriticism as parallel lines of analysis to literature of resistance. Ecoresistance is to be used in this study as a tool of analysis combined with the post-colonial tool to read Audre Lorde's selected poems as examples of her reclamation poetry.

Reclamation Ecopoetics

Reclamation as defined in Oxford English Dictionary "rescue from error" or "return from the right course", the Reclamation ecopoetics is used here based on Lynes', (2015). Analysis of the African American history of reclamation of ecopoetics which she suggests extends the definitional categories of The Ecopoetry Anthology mentioned above. Lynes emphasizes that along with the dangers brought to nature, the history of endangering the black humans should also be considered and thus the reclamation ecopoetics by African American poets is to be suggested as an additional category of the ecopoetics (2015, 51). In contrast to the Romantic Wordsworthian fascination with nature as a source of inspiration and meditation to man in general and to poets in particular, nature may bring to the African American poet images of exploitation and aggression, thus it is a source of fear and anticipation of danger, the African American history does not fail short to bring memories of lynching and torture that took place on the trees and in natural scenes.

Anger & Survival

Audre Lorde represents a clear example of resisting the exploitation of the black race in particular and all forms of exploitations and discrimination in general. An ecopostcolonial reading to her poems provides an explanation to her understanding of the eco system as an
undivided whole. Aggression against nature in any form like racial discrimination against any group of people results in the anger of other forces of nature.

Born to Caribbean immigrants from Grenada in New York (1934), Lorde learnt the hard way to survive different types of discrimination. Being a poor black woman growing up in one of the toughest cities and toughest times as well taught her to develop several surviving techniques some of which were inspired by nature and by her ancestral connections. Being in a very disadvantageous position as a black child to hardworking parents and experiencing very severe health conditions at an early age as she was born at the verge of blindness and remained as such for few years taught her to live with multiple frustrations, it also taught her survival techniques that became real handy in her race struggle as a grown up woman and black academician. She also survived another health trauma as she was later fought and survived cancer. "I learned to define myself in order to survive. Survival was programmed into me as essential", “Whatever my mom thought would mean survival” Lorde emphasized in an interview, (Hammond, 1980, 18).

Lorde's survival techniques included self-identification on the multiple levels of her being and rechanneling the power of anger. Anger is one of Lorde's reactions to racism, anger against the belief of inherit superiority of some people over others or over other being is evidently clear in her poetic and other literary works. Her poem "Who Said it Was Simple", opens with "There are so many roots to the tree of anger" (Lorde, 1995, 32), color, gender and poverty are among those roots. The poem describes the roots as being tangled and deeply imbedded in the ground yet it ends with the poet's questioning her ability to channel the anger and survive. In that sense she sees anger as a liberator if used wisely as she channels anger into words instead of the silence choice she was taught earlier in her life and was taken by many others in the same disadvantageous situations she explains in her " The Use of Anger":

My response to racism is anger. I have lived with that anger, ignoring it, feeding upon it, learning to use it before it laid my visions to waste, for most of my life. Once I did it in silence, afraid of the weight. My fear of anger taught me nothing (Lorde, 2007, 124).

Anger becomes the fuel needed to survival of African women against the negative forces of destruction and marginalization; however anger should not be destructive as it has to be channeled to be a useful energy and power for change:

Every woman has a well-stocked arsenal of anger potentially useful against those oppressions, personal institutional, which brought that anger into being. Focused with precision it can become a powerful source of energy serving progress change. And when I speak of change, I do not mean a simple switch of positions or temporary lessening of tensions, nor the ability to smile or feel good. I am speaking of a basic and radical alteration in those assumptions underlining our lives (Lorde, 127).

Therefore anger is to be utilized as a survival technique and used for change and improvement not as a destructive power (Lorde, 2007, "Anger"131). The child who was almost voiceless for few years at her early age learnt to regain and reclaim voice through poetry. Poetry
allowed her to regain voice, reclaim her identity and to channel and diverted her anger; she explains how she becomes a poet saying: *I am a reflection of my mother's secret poetry as well as her hidden angers* (Lorde, Zami 1982, 32).

Poetry as taught by the mothers of Africa and the ancestors is what give African American women the energy to survive and to impose change in their communities. "Poetry was something I learnt from my mother's strangeness and from my father's silence". A "warrior" she was raised to be, and learnt how to create connections with nature, people and ancestors to "survive" (Hammond, 1980, 18). Poetry, to Lord opens places of possibilities and becomes an indispensable tool of survival as she expresses in her "Poetry is not a Luxury": same as above For women, then poetry is not a luxury. It is a vital necessity of our existence. It forms the quality of the light within which we predicate our hopes and dreams toward survival and change (Lorde, 2007, 37).

**Poetry of Survival and the Reclamation of Nature:**

Lorde's poetry is not a luxury as she repeatedly emphasized (Lorde, 2007), it is instrumental in her struggle of survival and equity. In Lorde's poetry nature is not a backdrop; it is an interactive element in the lives of people. The different objects in nature revolt against the exploitation of humans and against the stereotypical fixities. The support of nature to the revolution of the human against subjugation is supported and signified by a parallel revolt of the elements of nature as trees, wind, fish, rocks etc. Lorde's poetry in terms of her reclamation of nature can be viewed within John Frow's framework of intertextuality and the integration of intertextual and pretextual materials (1982, 231). Many critics pointed out the fact that Lorde's works are to be read in connectivity to each other as there is certain intertextual dialogue between her works both prose and poetry. The points of origin of her texts are discourses of race which occur before the texts and are "retroactively summoned" for the purpose of this particular text (Dhairyam, 1992, 253). For example Sagri Dhairyam suggested that Lorde uses to name her autobiography *Zami a New Spelling of my Name* 1982, a biomythography instead of a biography “recognizes the tactical uses of fictional identity but refuses to grant the author primacy over the textuality of her life”. She uses such strategy in her poems as well denying themselves the surety of any simple reality outside the text, they engage in dialogue across an array of texts and discourses (Dhairyam, 1992, 231).

Nature is reclaimed in Lorde's poetry through different possibilities of resistance to the colonial discourse as will be detailed in the analysis below. Three alternative possibilities are recurrently observed in her poems, these possibilities are never distinctive from each other, and they are rather over lapping forming an intertextual connectivity. The first is the connectedness between the lives of people and those of that of the other elements of nature which unite them as comrade in the struggle of liberation and equity. The second is the reclamation of one's voice through the self- identification and connectedness with one's roots and origins. The third can be observed through the reclamation of the black aesthetics and beauty as distinctive, genuine and different from the colonial constructs of fixities, and the use of mythology as a descriptor of the fetichized self. "Afterimages", "Coal" and "The Black Unicorn" are three from Lorde's milestone poems, the following discussion will address Lorde's reclamation of ecopoetics in the three poems as they represent her alternative possibilities of reclamation respectively.
"Afterimages" and the Survival of the Dragon fish

"Afterimages" is one of clear the examples of Lorde's nature reclamation poems if not the clearest. The lynching of a young African American boy and the destruction of a white woman's home by the flooding in Jackson Mississippi are the two events around which the poem is centered. The poem links between the two in a cause and effect relation despite the twenty four years that separate them. The terror, aggression and injustice caused by the first one resulted in the destruction in the second. The memories of pain caused by the lynching of Emmitt Till in the woods in the first story are linked to the pain caused by the destruction of the White woman's home. Like most of Lorde's poems the meanings are not easy to grasp at the first reading and it has to be read in full to put the pieces of the puzzle together. The four parts of the lengthy narrative poem presents a lively collage of Lorde's recollection of visions and images created by the two horrible events and her reactions to both. The poem presents a mixture of narrative tools, dialogues and what Gail Lewis describes as mental conversations to link the two events with poet's personal experience and emotions (2005, 140). Images of the revolting nature and the angry river summons many other painful images in the poet's mind. The first part of the poem acts as an introduction to the two stories and the poet's statement of how she learns survival techniques from other creatures in nature like the dragon fish:

However the image enters
its force remains within
my eyes
rockstrewn caves where dragonfish evolve
wild for life, relentless and acquisitive
learning to survive
where there is no food
my eyes are always hungry
and remembering
however the image enters
its force remains.
A white woman stands bereft and empty
a black boy hacked into a murderous lesson
recalled in me forever
like a lurch of earth on the edge of sleep
etched into my visions
food for dragonfish that learn
to live upon whatever they must eat
fused images beneath my pain. (Lorde, 1997,36)

The interlocking relation between the two events happened in the poet's mind is her approach to reclaim nature. Like the poet herself, nature never forgets the aggression happened twenty four years back and was continuously happening against young black men and the black race in general. Emotions of terror stirred anger in the poet's memory as well as the nature's, "the force" of the memory remains alive in the poet's mind forever as the painful images are "etched" into the poet's vision. The memory of pain transcends the poet until she sees another person in pain and was able to link between the two. The flooding and the revolution of the river is the
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nature's way of getting back against the aggressors and avenging the victims. Though happened only in the poet's mind, the link between the two stories is not coincidental; for both happened in Jackson Mississippi, both happened in nature the first in the woods and the second in the flooding river. People are horrified and agonized in both of them. The poem presents a collage of overlapping images from both stories along with the images created in the poet's dreams or nightmares as a result of being horrified by the first story. What helped in making these images alive in the poet's memory for a long time is the media. The poem exemplifies how the story of the boy accused of rape was the center of the media attention for a long time which lobbied the public opinion of the white community against the blacks and pictures of the tortured boy's body was used to satisfy the whites and avenge for the boy's alleged crime.

The white woman kept repeating: "hard but not that hard" as she tries to climb over anything high to escape the flood, the same sentence uttered by the boy. Only this time it is the judgment passed by the river not by people that is being effective "now the Pearl River speaks its muddy judgment /and I withhold my pity and my bread" (stanza IV line 8). The river is the judge and the avenger at the same time; it remained angry for so long, and now it is time to revolt and get back to the aggressors. The river is the ethical judge who turned to be on the side of the victim to enforce justice.

The poem also presents a personal experience for the poet's own survival techniques. Reclamation of nature occurs in this poem in the poet's mind in a form of dialogic imaginaries, as she identifies herself with one of the nature's smallest yet toughest creatures; the dragonfish. A line of similarity is drawn here between the two "Othered" creatures or as Lawrence Buell puts it "doubly otherized" as nonhumans and nonwhites are othered by the white race and are seen as aliens (1995, 20-21). The dragonfish is not considered a beautiful creature and lives on very little food. Likewise the poet herself is not considered beautiful by the white social standards, marginalized by the mainstream Americans and learns how to survive on very little means. Additionally, Lorde resembles the dragonfish in her relentlessness and acquisitive power. The weight of agonies remembered by the poet made her "wade through summer ghosts" and transformed her into a dragonfish, the poet's anger is working within herself to help her to survive her awkward social situation exactly like the dragonfish. Nature is reclaimed here as it avenge the injustice happen to the black boy and also through the identification with other creatures who are likewise othered. Though the term " other" is an "overworked term in current academic discourse", as described by Derick Attridge, nevertheless, he made use of the "Derridean and Levinasian" concepts of "creating the other", as a practice of empowering and lending agency to existants who have little voice or power (1999, 21). In the lights of Attridge's lending agency and power, Lorde's boy victimized and butchered by the whites is given voice through nature, and the river that witnessed his suffering is the same agent that avenged him. Similarly the dragonfish is given voice through the reversal of the othering process; it is given voice from nature and learnt how to revolt and voice her anger. By the same token the poet as an exploited black woman is given voice through the agents of nature and was able to reclaim her power through nature; the poet was given power through poetry and her ability to speak out her anger. The river is given power by flooding. The support in the struggle of survival here comes from the river which is lifelong companion of the African Americans in their freedom struggle. It is a recurrent image and symbol that is frequently used by African American poets to refer to the
origin of life in Africa and the subjugation the black race suffered as they sold by the sides of the Mississippi river in America.

**Reclamation through self-identification**

"Coal" is one of Lorde's most anthologized poem is another example of her reclamation ecopoetics. It is one of the most widely read poems representing the black aesthetics as it celebrates the beauty and singularity of the black race (Dhairiam, 1992, 231). The poem forms a significant part of Stephen Henderson's *Understanding The New Black Poetry and Black Music as Poetic References* (1973) which is considered the literary manifesto of the Black Power movement of the sixties (qtd. in Dhairyam, 1992, 231). "Coal" also symbolizes the connection between the black race and nature as it creates the linkage between the black people and earth referring to the authenticity and originality of the black race. By creating and highlighting these connections with nature, Lorde is stating a clear example of self-identification and self-definition that resents all other forms of labeling and categorization. The idea is clearly set at her prologue to the biomythography *Zami* as it opens with her self-definition as being part of nature that defies all other man-made definitions and compartmentalization: “Woman forever, My body, a living representation of other life older longer wiser. The mountains and valleys, trees, rocks. Sand and flower and water and stone. Made in Earth” (Lorde, 1982, 7).

"Coal" sends a clear message of nature reclamation as the poet identifies with earth as the origin and root of her being. She gain voice through reconnecting with earth. The black beauty can resemble the diamonds which come from the same source form the earth's inside:

I
Is the total black, being spoken
From the earth’s inside.
There are many kinds of open.
How a diamond comes into a knot of flame
How a sound comes into a word, coloured
By who pays what for speaking (Lorde, 1997, 78).

Nature is reclaimed here through the act of speaking which gives voice to those who are neglected and overlooked like the "total blacks". Anger becomes word formations in this poem; some may see the light and explode on the poet’s tongue while others remain as a disease irritating her throat:

Some words are open
Like a diamond on glass windows
Singing out within the crash of passing sun
Then there are words like stapled wagers
In a perforated book—buy and sign and tear apart—
And come whatever wills all chances
The stub remains
An ill-pulled tooth with a ragged edge.
Some words live in my throat
Breeding like adders. Others know sun
Seeking like gypsies over my tongue
To explode through my lips
Like young sparrows bursting from shell.
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Some words
Bedevil me(Lorde,1997,78).

Poetry as it is composed of words is thus the poets' venue to express her anger after being enabled by connection with earth to speak up. Coal is chosen here for its color as a representation of blackness and also for its value as a source of energy; it can also be considered as an example of the exploitation of earth. Yet another type of the earth's treasures is revealed here which is the diamond because of her ability to speak and express anger the poet resembles the diamond of the earth as she is able to "open", and express her emotion of anger against the exploitation of her race and of the violence of forcible extraction of earth's riches.

The importance of "Coal" lies not only in its clear self-identification and reclamation of nature but also in its clear emphasis of black art and black athletics as being a source of black power and empowerment through biologism (Dhairyam, 1992, 232). It highlights the authenticity of black poetics and its role in creating the precise identity as the visionary ending lines of the poem suggest:

I am black because I come from the earth's inside
now take my word for jewel in the open light(Lorde 1997,78).

The Fetishized Others and the Poetics of Reclamation

"The Black Unicorn" is the title poem of Lorde's collection of poems (1978) and undoubtedly a unique example of Lorde's reclamation ecopoetics. The poem can be seen as one of Lorde's poems celebrating the notion of human difference as she respects other beings no matter how different they are from the "norm" (Lewis, 2005, 141). It is also another example of Lorde's plea for the defense of alterity and its acceptance as Slaymaker puts it (2001, 132) based on Attridge's ethical response to nature (1991).

The unicorn is a rare creature that belongs to the ancient mythology it is also prominent in Western culture as a fabulous beast and is symbolically used as a black creature by Lorde in the poem to refer to the race and gender of the poet (though the gender reference of the unicorn and other mythological reference in this study are of no less importance than their race and ecological references, due to the specific interest of this current study, my analysis will be focused on the post-colonial and eco critical reading of the myth.

The black unicorn is greedy.
The black unicorn is impatient.
The black unicorn was mistaken
for a shadow or symbol
and taken
through a cold country
where mist painted mockeries
of my fury(Lorde, 1997,93).

The unicorn as a recurrent myth symbolizing beauty and one of the very few harmless wild beasts is used by Lorde here as reference to her connection with African mythology. It connects the poems in the collection that includes a long list of other mythical images and symbols to nature and to African ancestry. (Though not the core interest of this particular study
but Lorde's usage of ancient African mythology is the topic of many scholarly writings and still deserves more academic attention)

The image of the unicorn resonates on Edward Said's (1978, 72) and Homi Bahaba's (1983, 24) fetishized imageries of the "Orient" as it speculates the inferiority of the "Other" that is described with strangeness and difference. The poet clearly identifies with the unicorn in its blackness and expresses the restlessness and agitation of the unicorn as he is mistaken for a shadow and was taken to a cold country which clearly does not suit him and does not acknowledge his/her history and identity.

It is not on her lap where the horn rests  
but deep in her moonpit 
growing. 
The black unicorn is restless  
the black unicorn is unrelenting  
the black unicorn is not free (Lorde 1997,93).

There is an overlap between the voice of the poet and the personal experience of the unicorn itself. The poet is not an objective observer, she is one of the alienated creatures in unsuitable surroundings. The misery of the unicorn as an alien and fetishized being that was evicted from his natural environment and kept in captivity in the cold country does not end by the end of the poem. The poem presents no solution or end to his agonies as his difference and strangeness is "irremovable" as Homi Bahaba puts it (1998), he thus stayed "not free" as suggested by the abrupt ending of the poem, and the subject con not actually exist without being free so now freedom is a condition to his existence (Rudnitsky, 2003, 480).

**Conclusion:**
The relation between nature and nature is neither surprising nor new, writings with environmental inspirations and concerns are produces for centuries. However writing with ecological concerns and highlighting the human aggression towards nature is what became crucial in the late twentieth century. Multiple analysis to literary works is becoming more appropriate to literary readings as it brings more depth and appreciation to the literary texts. In that sense many critics and researchers are employing joint literary tools to their examinations of literary writings. Poetry is no exception, increasing number of studies are focusing on reading poetry from a multiple prospective. Justice and equity as a common backbone to both the Ecocriticism and post-colonial theories allowed critics to investigate African American poetry in particular through wider prospective. Ecopoetics as it became more commonly used recently brings a fresh outlook to the relation between nature and liberation in African American poetry. Due to the aggression against humans and nonhumans alike, eventually nature became an active agent in the struggle for liberation. Anger against the aggressor, silence and deprivation of authority over self and other elements of nature is gradually being reversed via creating connectedness with ancestry and nature. The outlook to nature in African American writings has changed; instead of nature being a place where humans relax and repose it became an active component of ecopoetics.
Anger as a motivational power was used by Audre Lorde to produce creative word formations and poems. It taught her survival and was a step forward to her reclamation of voice and of nature. Like many other African American poets, Lorde's prospective to nature has changed as she gradually gains control over her voice and power over her words.

Notes:

1 The term “reclamation of ecopoetics” is used here from Kathrine R. Lynes recent article “ a responsibility to something besides people” African American Reclamation Ecopoetics, African American Review 48. 1-2, 2015: 49-66.
1 See Adrian Rich “Interview with Audre Lorde” in Sister Outsider Essays and Speeches by Audre Lorde 1984, 2007. For instance
1 Lorde is one of the prominent African American feminist activist however due to the specific purpose of this study, the examination of the poems presented here is to be focused on the ecopostcolonial reading only. It is not the intention of this study in any way to disregard Lorde’s activism in that stance.
1 See Langston Hughes “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” in the Weary Blues 1926 and others.

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The Introduction of a Sub-plot in Shakespeare’s Play King Lear and its Dramatic Effect

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Abstract
There has been so much controversy about the inclusion of a sub-plot in Shakespeare’s play King Lear. Some critics think that having a secondary story, woven within the main story, is a defect and lessens the dramatic effect of the main plot in particulars, and the whole story in general, while others believe that it is an advantage and it enhances the dramatic effect of the main story. To come up with a clear idea and to answer the research question, which is, whether Shakespeare should have included a sub-plot in his tragedy, and in order to account for this intuition, and to substantiate the assumption that the sub-plot adversely affects the main plot, the drama’s form and structure have been thoroughly analyzed and critiqued through analyzing and examining the plot of the play. The research concluded that including a secondary story within the main story is an advantage, and that the two plots (the Lear story and the Gloucester story) greatly resemble each other, in so far as in both cases an infatuated father proves to be blind towards his good-hearted and well-meaning child, Lear in the case of the main plot, and Gloucester in the case of the sub-plot, while the unnatural child, whom he prefers, causes the ruin of all his father’s happiness. The paper also concluded that the two stories support each other, and that the sub-plot enhances the main plot’s tragic or dramatic effect rather than weakens it.

Keywords: Dramatic effect, Form, King Lear, main plot, William Shakespeare, structure, sub-plot, tragedy
The Introduction of a Sub-plot in Shakespeare’s Play King Lear

Nafi’

Introduction

Whether William Shakespeare was aware of the rule prescribing the unities and deliberately rejected that rule, or whether he violated this rule in sheer ignorance of its very existence, is unknown to us. It is quite possible that he deviated from this rule and violated it just by chance and in ignorance of it. Nor is there any reason for us to deplore his ignorance in this matter. Ribner (2013) has pointed out that “Such violations of rules are a natural result of the comprehensive genius of Shakespeare.” Only petty-minded critics would disapprove such deviations from rules in the case of a genius. According to Johnson (1765), “Nothing is essential to the fable but unity of action, and as the unities of time and place arise evidently from false assumptions” (p. 4). Johnson demolishes the airy castles of pedantry with the breath of the facts known to every theater-goer. He shows that unity is required not for the sake of deceiving the spectators, which is impossible, for the sake of bringing order into chaos, art into nature, and the immensity of life within limits that can be bounded by the powers of the human mind. The unity of action, which assists the mind, is therefore vital. The unities of time and place, which are apparently meant to deceive the mind, are empty impostures. Although unity of actions is considered essential by Johnson, he defends Shakespeare’s violation of it for the sake of novelty and to be true to nature. “Such violations of rules merely positive become the comprehensive genius of Shakespeare,” added Johnson. (p. 5).

It’s argued that only King Lear (1606), among the great tragedies of Shakespeare (Macbeth, Hamlet and Othello), has a fully-developed sub-plot. While the main plot in this play deals with Lear and the misfortunes that he has to face as a consequence of the ingratitude of his two eldest daughters, the sub-plot deals with the misfortunes which Gloucester has to experience as a consequence of the ingratitude of his bastard son Edmund. The parallelism between the two stories is obvious. Both men suffer the disastrous consequences of their folly and want of judgment in relying upon their wicked children. Each father is consoled and comforted by his good child, Cordelia, in the case of the main plot, and Edgar, in the case of the sub-plot.

The introduction of the Gloucester’s story (the sub-plot) is necessary, since Gloucester offers much assistance to the mad Lear of the main plot; he finds Lear and the others of the heath without shelter on their heads, he wants to take the king with him and provide both food and shelter to him. He tells the king that he cannot bear the king’s misery even though the king’s daughters have issued strict orders that neither he nor anybody else should provide any relief to the king. When Kent tells him that the king is going mad, Gloucester says that the ingratitude of the king’s daughters is enough to drive him mad. He then says that he himself is also going mad because his own son, whom he used to love dearly, had turned against him and had tried to put an end to his life. Referring to Edgar’s supposed intrigue against him, Gloucester says: “The grief hath craz’d my wits” (3.4. 1966). Thus Gloucester rightly brackets himself with Lear because both of them are suffering the evil consequences of their own lack of judgment.

Gloucester’s help to Lear does not end with his taking Lear to his farm-house and providing food, shelter, and rest to the King. Soon afterwards he learns that there is a plot to murder the King, whereupon he arranges a carriage and deputes Kent to drive the King away to Dover where the King will get both welcome and protection. Thus Gloucester’s loyalty to Lear, like the loyalty of Kent, is a quality deserving much appreciation and admiration.
Now, it is a curious fact that there is a difference of opinion among the critics with regard to the effect of the introduction of the sub-plot in this play. According to some, the sub-plot interferes with the structural unity of the play and, at the same time, weakens the dramatic effect of the Lear story by diverting our attention to the characters and events of the sub-plot. Others point out the skillful manner in which Shakespeare has interwoven the main plot and the sub-plot, thereby keeping the unity of the whole play intact; and they also express the view that the dramatic effect of the main plot is reinforced by the sub-plot, rather than weakened by it. Before arriving at our own conclusion, it would be worthwhile looking at these two approaches to the play. In his discussion of the six elements of tragedy, The Greek philosopher Aristotle attaches great importance to the plot, putting it even above character and thought. He devotes seven or eight chapters to the kind of plot which he thinks is most suited to tragedy. By plot he means the structure of the incidents. The incidents and the plot he says “are the end of tragedy” (n. p.), and the end is the chief thing of all, in his view. The plot, he goes on to say, is the first principal and, as it were, the soul of a tragedy. Aristotle then speaks about the need of the unity of plot. The unity of plot, he says, does not consist in the unity of the hero. Just because a tragedy has one hero, it does not follow that its plot would possess unity. Since “The meaning of hamartia in respect of the tragic hero underwent a drastic change during the Renaissance. The Renaissance critics were the first critics and commentators to have seen the original Greek text of The Poetics” (Adade-Yeboah, Ahenkora & Amankwah, 2012, p. 55). This suggests that both, Lear, the hero of the main plot, and Gloucester who can be considered the hero of the sub-plot, support each other in adversity.

Infinitely various are the incidents in one man’s life, and all these cannot be reduced to unity. Similarly, one man performs so many actions in his life that an author cannot make one single action out of them. What Aristotle meant by unity is that a tragedy should contain one main plot, instead of two plots, as seen in King Lear. Thus by introducing the Gloucester’s story, Shakespeare has violated one of the classical rules recommended by Aristotle, and introduced a secondary story that aroused many contradictory views by the critics. Some were in favor of introducing another story, while some were against the idea, as will be clarified in the following discussion throughout this paper. (Aristotle, trans. 1986).

Discussion
Criticism of the Sub-Plot

According to Taylor (2001), Bradley’s influence on Shakespearean criticism was so great that the following anonymous poem appeared:

I dreamt last night that Shakespeare’s Ghost
Sat for a civil service post.
The English paper for that year
Had several questions on King Lear
Which Shakespeare answered very badly
Because he hadn’t read his Bradley. (p. 46).

Bradley (1991) regards the sub-plot in this play as a defect. He is of the view that “this play suffers from a structural weakness which arises chiefly from the double action” (p. 3),
which is a peculiarity of *King Lear* among the tragedies. He points out that by the side of Lear, Lear’s daughters, Kent, and the fool, who are the principal figures in the main plot, stand Gloucester and his two sons who are the chief persons of the secondary plot. By means of this “double action” (p. 3), says Bradley, the dramatist secured certain highly advantageous effects from the strictly dramatic point of view; but the disadvantages were dramatically greater. According to Bradley (1991):

The number of essential characters is so large, their actions and movements are so complicated, and events towards the close crowd on one another so thickly, that the reader’s attention is rapidly transferred from one center of interest to another, and is in this way over-strained. (Pp. 9-10).

The reader becomes intellectually confused or at least emotionally fatigued. The battle, on which everything turns, hardly affects the reader. The deaths of Edmund, Goneril, Regan, and Gloucester seem only trifles as compared to the incomparable pathos of the close. The insignificance of the battle is evidently due to the fact that there was no room in the play to give to the battle its due importance and effect among such a large number of competing interests. Bradley goes on to the point that, on account of the double plot in the play, we have in the last scene no fewer than five persons who are technically of the first and foremost importance—Lear, his three daughters, and Edmund, not to speak of Kent and Edgar, of whom the latter is at any rate technically of great importance. And again, owing to the pressure of persons and events, and owing to the concentration of our anxiety on Lear and Cordelia, the duel between Edgar and Edmund, which occupies so much of the space, fails to excite sufficient interest. The truth is that all through both Act IV and Act V, Shakespeare has too vast a material to use with complete dramatic effectiveness. Xia (2014), states that “Shakespeare even has doubts about what he has already written and enters the deepest ethical confusion in which he sees no meaning for the rest of his life” (p. 55). But this criticism reflects the opinion of the critic, and does not necessarily devaluate Shakespeare, who remains the greatest dramatist of all ages.

**Defense of the Sub-Plot**

On the other side is the view of Schlegel (1965), who forcefully defends the sub-plot in this play. Schlegel is surprised that the incorporation of the two plots should be centered as destructive of the unity of action. According to him, “the two stories have been dovetailed into each other with great ingenuity and skill” (p. 2). Schlegel also thinks that the sub-plot “heightens the dramatic and emotional effect of the main plot” (Schlegel, 1965, p. 2). The pity felt by Gloucester for the sad fate of Lear becomes the means which enables his son Edmund to bring about Gloucester’s complete destruction, and affords the outcast Edgar an opportunity of becoming the savior of his father. On the other hand, Edmund becomes active in his support of Regan and Goneril against the French forces; and “the illicit passion which both sisters entertain for him leads them to execute justice on each other and on themselves” (Sisson, n. d.). The laws of the drama have therefore been sufficiently complied with; but that is the least. It is the very combination of the two stories which constitutes “the sublime beauty of the play” (Muir & Wells, 1982, p. 1). The two cases resemble each other in the main; an infatuated father is blind towards his well-disposed child; and the unnatural children, whom he prefers, bring about the ruin of all his happiness. But the circumstances in the two cases are so different that these stories also from a strong contrast to each other. Were Lear alone to suffer from his daughters, the
impression would be limited to the powerful compassion felt by us for his private misfortunes. But two such unheard-of examples taking place at the same time have the appearance of a great commotion in the moral world. The picture becomes vast and gigantic, and fills us with such alarm as we would experience at the idea that the heavenly bodies might one day fall from their appointed orbits. Thus in Schlegel’s opinion, the dramatic impact of the play is greatly increased by the Gloucester story.

Another noteworthy remark regarding the inclusion of a sub-plot is that of Hazlitt (1818) who claims that the indirect part that Gloucester takes in these scenes where “his generosity leads him to relieve Lear and his resent the cruelty of his daughters, at the very time that he is himself instigated to seek the life of his son, and suffering under the sting of his supposed ingratitude, is a striking accompaniment to the situation of Lear” (p. 16). Indeed, the manner in which the threads of the story are woven together is almost wonderful in the way of art as the carrying on “the tide of passion, still varying and unimpaired, is on the score of nature” Campbell (1930, p. 6). Among the remarkable instances of this kind are Edgar’s meeting with his blind old father; the deception he practices upon him when he pretends to lead him to the top of Dover cliff to prevent his ending his life and miseries together; his encounter with the perfidious Steward (Oswald) whom he kills, and his finding the letter from Goneril to his brother Edmund upon him which leads to the final catastrophe, and brings the wheel of justice “full circle home” to the guilty parties.

Raj (2013) points out that some other critics have also commented on Shakespeare’s ability to provide thematic unity to his plays, “underlying his dramatic action and expressed through his imagery” (p. 32), by taking up and forcibly shaping every little incongruity at the level of plot to fit into a play’s general scheme in the belief that everything in that play, however insignificant, has a dramatic purpose. ”The creative imagination has abundance and employs it lavishly, yet never casually, but always in contribution to the main design” (Evans, 1952, as cited in Raj, 2013, p. 32). Thus the words prove that the two stories support each other, rather than confuse the readers or include anything that can be considered irrelevant.

The Sub-Plot, a Parallel to the Main Plot

An examination of these two points of view shows that there is more substance in Schlegel’s approach. From our own reading of the play, also we would feel that the fate which Gloucester meets serves to enhance the dramatic effect of the Lear story. In fact, the presence in the play of a second father, who meets a sad fate on account of the malignity of his own son, and on account of his own folly, lends additional force to the sad fate which the main protagonist meets for similar reasons. Knight (1972) is of the view that “the sub-plot in this play offers, not so much of a contrast to the main plot, as a close parallel to it” (p. 7). As if to indicate at the outset that this is going to be so, Shakespeare cleverly echoes near the beginning of the sub-plot a word that has been impressively used near the beginning of the main plot. The word “nothing” links the two stories at the very start, suggesting that they are going to be in the same key. In Lear’s interrogation of Cordelia, the word “nothing” (1.1. 26) is emphasized unforgettably. In Act I, Scene ii, when Gloucester finds Edmund reading a paper, he asks what Edmund is reading. Edmund replies: “Nothing, my Lord” (1.2. 76). Gloucester then makes a remark in which the word “nothing” occurs twice.
The Dramatic and Emotional Effect is Reinforced

The two plots reinforce each other in a remarkable manner. Lear lacks sound judgment at the start; and so does Gloucester. Gloucester betrays the same want of judgment which we find in Lear. Just as Lear had thought Goneril and Regan to be devoted to him, and Cordelia to be lacking in affection for him, so Gloucester thinks Edgar to be his enemy, and Edmund to be very devoted to him. In other words, Gloucester commits a folly similar to the folly of Lear. Both fathers suffer at the hands of children in whom they had put an implicit faith. Gloucester’s credulity is almost shocking to us because he could easily have found a way of personally contacting Edgar and interrogating him, in which case Edmund’s villainy would surely have been exposed.

Lear rejects the loving daughter and clings to the false ones; Gloucester likewise rejects the loving son and clings to the false one. Both fathers bring dire suffering on themselves through their own folly. At the same time, both are the victims of dynamic evil, existing outside themselves, and bringing itself to bear upon them. Both are comforted in their sufferings by those whom they have wronged, Edgar being as full of loving forgiveness as Kent and Cordelia are. Both Lear and Gloucester learn wisdom through suffering, and achieve spiritual salvation. The wisdom that each learns is essentially the same. Like Lear, Gloucester comes to sympathize with the poor and the down-trodden. Lear in his misery during the storm had expressed his deep sympathy for the poor houseless persons who had no roof over their heads to protect them against the fury of the elements. He wished the rich people to part with some of their “superflux” and to give it to the poor. The following speech by Lear best illustrates his state of mind:

Poor naked wretches, whereso’er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
Your loop’d and widow’d raggedness, defend you
From seasons such as these? O! I have ta’en
Too little care of this. Take physic, Pomp;
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That thou mayst shake the superflux to them,
And show the Heavens more just. (3. 4. 28-36).

In the above lines, Lear describes the misery of the poor naked fellows who suffer badly at this time because they are exposed to the fury and violence of the storm. He feels sorry that the untouchable and poor people have to endure the assaults of this merciless storm, because they have no houses where they could take shelter. These poor people do not get enough food to eat, and they have to wear ragged clothes which are full of holes and openings. Such people live a desperate life and are deprived off all the necessities that provide humans with a decent life. Lear deplores the fact that he has never in the past taken much notice of the distress of the poor people. He then says that pompous men, who have authority in their hands, should learn a good lesson from the present situation. These men should expose themselves to such conditions in order to know how the miserable people feel. From their personal experience of such conditions, they would learn to shake off their superfluous possessions and pass them on to the poor. This will cause justice and lead to a more equitable distribution of wealth. As has been stated by Elton (1988), “there will be more justice in the world, and the gods will appear to be fair-minded” (p.
These words mark a clear development in the character of Lear. At the outset of the play, we found Lear to be haughty, arrogant, and self-centered. But his personal experience of human suffering and misery has opened his eyes to the general misery in this world and the sad fate which the poor people in this world have to meet. He realizes the gulf between the rich and the poor, and he expresses a strong wish that there should be a more equitable distribution of wealth in the world. This is what can be called the benevolent effect of nature; it is the storm that changed Lear and made him more sympathetic, especially with the poor.

Gloucester, in his misery, not long afterwards, cries out to the heavens, wishing the “superfluous” to give away some of his wealth so that an equitable distribution should undo excess, and each man has enough. In this connection he says:

Heavens, deal so still!
Let the superfluous and lust-dieted man,
That slaves your ordinance, that will not see
Because he does not feel, feel your power quickly;
So distribution should undo excess,
And each man have enough. (1.1. 65-70).

As has been seen above, Gloucester prays to the heavens always to deal with people in this charitable and just way, so that one man’s misery is comforted by another man’s. That Gloucester is miserable, should be a source of comfort to Edgar who too has been feeling miserable. Besides Gloucester’s having given some money to Edgar should relieve some part of Edgar’s misery. Gloucester would like the gods above to treat human beings in the same generous manner. In his study of the world of Shakespeare’s tragedies, Reibetanz (1977) stresses the fact that there are some people in this world who have much more than they need and whose desires are fed to the utmost. Such persons subordinate the divine will to their own pleasures and interests instead of submitting to the divine will. Such persons do not feel any sympathy for those who are miserable. Gloucester would like such persons to feel the divine power quickly so that they may give away their superfluous wealth and so that everybody in the world may have enough for his needs. This speech shows the development that has taken place in Gloucester’s character. And this can be considered a psychological journey.

The parallel between Gloucester’s “superfluous” and Lear’s “superflux” is noteworthy. Again Gloucester, like Lear, learns in his torment the value of patience. Gloucester makes up his mind to commit suicide and asks the Bedlam-beggar to lead him to a cliff-top. For Gloucester’s own good, Edgar deceives him, and Gloucester’s life is preserved. Through this experience, Gloucester learns the lesson of endurance, and resolves henceforth to bear affliction. Lear, likewise, learns the lesson of endurance, humility, and tolerance as a result of all that has gone through. Furthermore, in both cases, we feel that the sufferers have to endure much greater suffering than could be justified by the faults in their characters and by the blunders which they committed (Hazlitt, 1818). In both cases, the sufferers have been more “sinned against than sinning.” Thus Shakespeare’s management of the main plot and the sub-plot (or under-plot) is masterly. Circumstantial differences between the two provide the interest of contrast; and at the same time the essential similarities emphasize the message of the play and deepen the dramatic...
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effect. In any case, the play does not suffer under the burden of the sub-plot, because the sub-plot is not really a burden on, but a support to, the main plot.

The Same Paradox in Both Cases

It is noteworthy that Lear, though technically sane at the outset, really behaves like a madman; and that, when he goes mad in a literal sense, he begins to speak wisely because in his mad speeches there is a plenty of reason and wisdom. This is a paradox about Lear. There is a corresponding paradox in the case of Gloucester. At the beginning, Gloucester can see with his eyes, but is lacking in a full mental, moral, and spiritual vision; and that is why he cannot see the worth of Edgar. It is when he loses his eyesight in the literal sense that he begins to attain this fundamental vision, and he then begins to realize the worth of the son whom he had wronged and learns also the value of endurance. In this respect also, the two plots are the same; they are the same in fundamental significance.

The Close Interweaving of the Two Stories

The interweaving of the main plot and the sub-plot is also perfect and has been effected with great skill. Edmund, the villain of the sub-plot, is brought into a direct contact with two of the principal evil-doers (Cornwall and Regan) of the main plot early in the play, and they take him under their wings. They can be described as evil because the same manipulation is depicted in Hamlet (1603). According to Safaei and Hashim (2012, p, 86), “in Hamlet, Gertrude immediately reports the death of Polonius to the king, though she tries to soften the committed crime by ascribing it to Hamlet’s madness”: here is what she says in this occasion: “Mad as the sea and wind….In his lawless fit….And in this brainish apprehension kills / The unseen good old man” (4.1. 7-12).

It is through Edmund that Cornwall and Regan learn about the secret activities of Gloucester, and it is on account of this betrayal by Edmund that Gloucester is blinded for having given succor to the mad Lear and for having sent him to Dover for protection. In this way both Edmund and Gloucester play an important role in the main plot. Not only that, Edgar, the third character in the sub-plot, is also brought into a close relationship with the main plot. During the storm, Edgar encounters Lear who is accompanied by Kent and the Fool. Lear begins to take an unusual interest in Edgar who now comes into the forefront, pushing the Fool into the background. Lear in fact does not make a move from this place unless he is assured that Edgar would also go with him. Subsequently, the mad Lear, fantastically dressed with wild flowers, appears before Gloucester and Edgar in the countryside near Dover. Here Lear delivers some of his most important speeches which contain much wisdom, he says:

…Tremble, thou wretch,
That hast within thee undivulged crimes,
Unwhipp’d of justice; hide thee, thou bloody hand,
Thou prejur’d and thou similar of virtue
That art incestuous; caitiff, to pieces shake,
That under convert and convenient seeming
Has practis’d on man’s life; close pent-up guilts
Rive your concealing continents, and cry
These dreadful summoners grace. I am a man
More sinn’d against than sinning. (3.2. 49-59).

Although the above words are being delivered by a man who has lost his wits; and the audience who listens to these speeches in wonderment and dismay comprises Gloucester and Edgar. It is here that Edgar finds reason in Lear’s madness, and he responds by saying “O, matter and impertinency mix’d! / Reason in madness!” (4.6. 2779). Lear wants the gods to find out their enemies during the night of the storm, because during such a night, all sinners will tremble with fear and will thus expose their reality to the gods. The wretch who has committed undisclosed crimes and against whom no court of law has yet passed a sentence of punishment will tremble in such a night. The murdered will hide himself in such a night to escape the fury of the elements. The perjurer and the pretender to virtue, who is in reality guilty of forbidden sexual relations, will also tremble with fear in such a night. The base wretch will tremble because he plotted against somebody’s life and because he did so behind a surface appearance which was effective in concealing the truth and which was suited to the evil purposes planned by him. Closely hidden crimes will burst the covering which hide them, and the criminals guilty of such crimes will cry for mercy to the elements which are summoning such persons to the divine court to stand trial for those crimes. So far as he is concerned, Lear says, he does not belong to any of these categories because he is a man who has not done so much wrong to anybody as the wrong that has been done to him.

Edmund’s role in the main plot becomes more and more important in the last two acts. After the death of Cornwall, he is appointed by Regan to command her forces, and he is largely instrumental in winning a victory over the invading French army. Meanwhile, both Regan and Goneril have fallen in love with Edmund, and Goneril has even been plotting with him against the life of her husband. It is on account of her jealousy that Goneril poisons Regan, and it is on account of her frustration in love that she herself commits suicide. (Another reason for her suicide is, of course, the exposure of her plot against her husband’s life). When Lear and Cordelia having been taken into custody, it is under Edmund’s orders that they are sent to the prison where, under his instructions, a captain undertakes to hang both of them. But he fails to do so when a challenger in the person of Edgar fought and wounded him, thus protecting the life of Lear. Thus Edmund, who is from the sub-plot, affects the incidents of the main plot and enhances the tragic ending of the play by taking the life of the innocent Cordelia. To illustrate Shakespeare’s criticism of women when matters of love are concerned, it would be worthy to refer to his play Hamlet (1603).

Traub (1992, p. 30, as cited in Safaei & Hashim, 2012, p. 85) asserts that the Ghost in the play explains the second marriage of Gertrude as a “plunge into a whorish abyss; in other words, the text of Hamlet is, by virtue of its patriarchal ideology, assigning a dualistic role to women.” The words suggest that women are either angels or harlots though the play arouses the suspicion that “women are prone to harlotry and their angelic features are more a matter of disguise,” added Safaei and Hashim. These views suggest a grim picture of the women that Shakespeare created in his dramatic works.

The relationship between the two stories is further strengthened when Albany, acting upon Edgar’s suggestion, summons Edgar to prove Edmund’s treachery, and when Edgar fights a
duel with Edmund who receives a fatal wound in the fight. The interweaving of the two stories could not have been closer or more intimate.

**Dramatic Irony in Lear’s Praise of Regan**

If we consider the dramatic irony in both stories (in the main plot and the sub-plot), we find a great similarity in both cases, especially in the father-son/daughter(s) relationships: When Lear is pleading his case to Regan and when, on a reference being made to Goneril, Lear begins to utter curses upon Goneril, Regan says that Lear will curse her also whenever, during his stay with her, he happens to become angry for one reason or another. To this, Lear gives a reply saying: “No Regan, thou shalt never have my curse / Thy tender-hefted nature shall not give…” (2.4. 1456).

These words are fraught with dramatic irony. Soon Regan will treat her father in a most heartless manner and will have even the doors of the castle shut against him. But Lear has no idea of what is going to happen. At this moment he tries to assure her that he will never curse her. He says that she has got a very gentle nature and that she will never speak to him or to anybody else harshly. He says that Goneril’s eyes are fierce but that Regan’s eyes are a source of comfort. He goes on to say that Regan will not grudge him his pleasures, will not try to reduce the number of his knights, will not exchange hot words with him, will not diminish his allowance, and will never bolt her doors against his entry. He adds that she knows the duties of a daughter and that she will never forget that she had received from him half of his kingdom as a gift. Now, Regan is going to prove just the opposite of all that Lear has said; and the reality about her will appear only a few moments later. This particular speech by Lear therefore becomes ironical in the light of what is going to happen shortly. The cruelty to which Lear is going soon to be subjected will appear to be much greater to us when we recall this particular speech in which Lear has rightly praised Regan’s nature and temperament. Thus the use of dramatic irony here will intensify the tragic effect of what is about to happen.

**Dramatic Irony in Gloucester’s Faith in Edmund**

In the brief scene in which Gloucester tells Edmund that he is going to help the discarded King secretly, and that he has received a confidential letter about certain developments in the country, we again have an example of dramatic irony. Gloucester is reposing his full faith in Edmund, but we know that Edmund is his father’s enemy, exactly like Goneril and Regan to Lear, and that he has already set afoot an intrigue against him. Gloucester does not know the reality about Edmund, but we know it, and Edmund too knows it. The irony in this case arises from a contrast between what a character thinks is the case and what actually is the case. Gloucester thinks that Edmund is his devoted son, but the reality is that Edmund is his father’s bitterest enemy. Thus the tragic implications of the relationship between Gloucester and Edmund are reinforced by the irony in the situation.

Again, there is dramatic irony in Gloucester’s telling Kent on the heath during the storm that his son Edgar had plotted against his life and that he has got that son of his declared an outlaw. Gloucester says that he had loved that son of his, very much, but that the treachery of that son has driven him almost mad, just as the ingratitude of Lear’s daughters has driven Lear mad. In this connection he says: “Our flesh and blood is grown so vile, my lord, / That it doth hate what gets it” (3.4. 1937). Here again the dramatic irony arises from the contrast between
Gloucester’s belief that Edgar is his enemy, and the factual position, which is that Edgar, is still devoted to him. Here again the tragic effect of the situation is heightened by the dramatic irony or by the contrast between appearance and reality.

In the scene which follows, there is another example of dramatic irony. Here Edmund, while conveying all the information to Cornwall, pretends that he is giving this information to Cornwall on account of his loyalty to him, even though his duty as a son requires that he should keep all this information a secret. In other words, he gives to Cornwall the impression that his loyalty to him is greater than his sense of filial duty. Actually, however, the position is that Edmund is giving this information to Cornwall in order to promote his own advancement in life, and because he has already started an intrigue against his father.

The Deaths of the Two Protagonists in the Same State of Mind

It has already been pointed out that the dramatic effect of the Lear story gains in intensity on account of the sub-plot. When Gloucester comes to aid Lear during the storm on the heath, Lear has already gone mad, while Gloucester tells Kent that he himself is going mad, his reason being that the son whom he had been loving very much had proven treacherous towards him. Gloucester does not go mad, but he is soon afterwards blinded. The blinding of Gloucester adds to the emotional effect of Lear’s madness on us, and this effect is further accentuated when the mad Lear faces the blind Gloucester in the countryside near Dover, claims Holloway (2005).

Similarly, the pathos of the situation, when Lear recovers from his madness and recognizes Cordelia, is enhanced by the fact, already known to us, that Gloucester’s life has been saved by Edgar on two occasions, first when Gloucester wanted to commit suicide, and again when Oswald wanted to kill him. Subsequently, Gloucester dies experiencing the extremes of the two passions, joy and grief: joy at discovering that Edgar had been with him all the time after he had encountered him on emerging from his castle where he had been blinded; and grief at the thought that Edgar had deeply been wronged by him in the beginning.

Lear dies in a similar mental state: he is feeling heart-broken at Cordelia’s death, but at the same time, he thinks that she is not dead and that her lips seem to be moving. Thus both men die in a similar state of mind, and each dies after being reunited with his loving child to whom he had been so unjust. Here again the Lear story gains in dramatic effect by the proximity of the Gloucester’s story.

Another Key to the Unity of the Play

A different approach has been made to this aspect of the play by Heilman (1963). According to him, “Lear and Gloucester are two different types of men” (p. 3). Lear imposes on the whole world his own erroneous conclusions about children and court. He invites tragedy by three errors of understanding—errors with regard to the nature of kingship, the nature of love, and the nature of language (the value of certain statements about love). Gloucester, on the other hand, accepts rather than imposes. His error of understanding is that he too easily falls under the influence exerted upon him. He accepts the will of others (of Edmund, for instance) without effectually questioning their rightness. Thus Lear and Gloucester are, in terms of structure, not duplicates, but complements. This says Heilman is “one key to the unity of the play” (p. 3). The completeness of the play, its cosmic inclusiveness, is in part attributable to this double-focused
presentation of the tragic error of understanding. We see its basic forms which are action and inaction: one tragic character imposes error; the other accepts it. The roles continue consistently throughout the play-Lear as active, Gloucester as passive.

Conclusions

As is clear from the preceding arguments in this paper, and by looking at the form and examining the structure of *King Lear*, it can be claimed that the two plots greatly resemble each other in so far as in both cases and infatuated father proves to be blind towards his good-hearted and well-meaning child, while the unnatural child or children, whom he prefers, cause the ruin of all his happiness. The same problem (Moral problem) of the main plot appears soon afterwards in the sub-plot. This moral problem is created largely by Lear in the very opening scene, but Cordelia too contributes to this problem by her conduct. Lear divides his kingdom between his two elder daughters, and disinherit and disowns the youngest daughter, Cordelia, at the same time banishing the Earl of Kent. Lear fails both as a king and as a father, and proved even more unjust when he denies his youngest daughter Cordelia any share in the kingdom because she has failed to come up to his expectations in the matter of the expression of her love for him; therefore, Cordelia too fails as a daughter by her inability to humor Lear. She fails to realize the nature of her father who loves to be flattered, and she utters the following words which had a disastrous effect upon her: “Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave / My heart into my mouth, I love your Majesty / According to my bond, no more nor less” (1.1. 100-103). Even Lear himself is aware of Cordelia’s love, and he knows that she loves him the most, just as he loves her the most, but because he is embarrassed in front of his court by her failure to express herself hurts his ego and annoys him deeply, he decides to disinherit and banish Cordelia from his kingdom. He even tries to prejudice both her suitors against her. He feels even more offended when she tells him that, after she gets married, half of her love will go to her husband. Now, strictly speaking, there is nothing wrong in what Cordelia has said, even though there may be something wrong in her incapacity to express her affection in glowing terms. In short Lear becomes hostile and antagonistic to his own flesh and blood. This is a flagrant violation of all codes of justice by a man who is expected to be himself a dispenser of justice and who is expected to rectify all wrongs. The king who should be the fountain of justice here gives way to “the dragon’s wrath.” Cordelia’s fault is small, but the punishment given to her by Lear is colossal.

But one shouldn’t forget Cordelia’s true feeling for her father. To quote the following words would be noteworthy: “Cordelia’s maternal love for her father, motherly in the sense that she is loyal and unselfish and she loves unconditionally, causes the resolution of their problems, and their unity at the end” Rahmani (2015, p. 27).

Kent incurs an undeserved penalty by his straightforwardness and sincerity. Thus the opening scene gives rise to the problem of domestic and personal relationships which are closely linked with royal power and authority. The same problem appears soon afterwards in the sub-plot. The rest of the play is a working-out of the complex problem. And yet the circumstances of the two cases are so different that the two stories form a complete contrast for our imagination. At the same time, two cases of a similar nature produce an impression of a great commotion in the moral world, so that the total picture becomes vast and gigantic. Thus on the whole, the sub-plot (double plot) in this play is an advantage, rather than a disadvantage. It enhances the dramatic effect of the main plot and adds essence to the play’s form and structure.
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Demythologizing the Sacred: F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* as a Misnomer

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Abstract:
The first moment the reader catches sight of the cover of F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel *The Great Gatsby*, the thing that most immediately strikes him is the 'greatness' of the eponymous character which is taken for granted as early as the very title given to it. Nevertheless, as the book unfolds, the reader comes to realize the irony that lies behind this title, thereby conjuring up the old saying "all that glitters is not gold ". Surprisingly enough, the title turns out to be no more than a mere misnomer ironically referring to a racketeer whose ill-gotten money makes of him a prominent person. The present article attempts to demythologize the *ideals*, if it is in anyway meaningful to call them so, of Gatsby who is considered to be *great* and venerable. In demythologizing Gatsby, the article challenges such values as romanticism, the American Dream and the new American elite, if not modern Western society values, held by him. This is done through dismantling the mythical and mysterious elements from Gatsby's character, thereby dealing with him as an ordinary, if not 'ungreat', man.

*Key Words*: Demythologization, loose morality, misnomer, quixoticness, the American Dream
Introduction:
Ninety years have passed now since the eminent American novelist F. Scott Fitzgerald (1896-1940) first published *The Great Gatsby*, his real *tour de force*, in 1925. Yet its fame still goes far beyond America and the Western countries: it is read throughout the world by English and non-English readership altogether. It is a set book at some world universities and high schools. Furthermore, it still attracts significant critical attention. The more one reads this text, the more one is astonished at the remarkable artistry of its language, structure and themes. As Lehan (2000) puts it, "It is a novel, the meaning of which refuses to be limited: every reading offers a new insight" (p. 78). Likewise, part of the fame given to this novel is ascribed to its penetrating description of the American society in the 1920s, a period in the modern history of the United States that is often referred to as the Roaring Twenties. For many critics, Fitzgerald is considered to be one of the best American novelists who gave a full description of the social ills which were quite prevalent at that time, such as loose morality, superficiality and flapper culture with its opulent revelry, wild parties, adulterous behavior and scandalous speakeasies that led to the failure of the ideal of the American Dream. Slater (1973) contends, "The writer who is usually considered to have created the most penetrating literary accounts of the American 1920's is F. Scott Fitzgerald" (p. 53).

Despite the quantity of scholarly work on *The Great Gatsby*, some tend to reduce it to a mere rags-to-riches story that simply chronicles a *nouveau riche* whose wealth and humble social background fail him to reclaim his past mistress. However, a more thorough critical analysis of this literary work shows how oversimplified this reading is. When reading *The Great Gatsby*, it would be more appropriate to take the symbolic and mythic dimensions of Gatsby's story into consideration as his successes and failures are those of America and the American Dream as well. Pelzer (2000) may not be exaggerating when she writes, "Gatsby's story is, however, more than the story of an individual. It is, in fact, the story of America. Gatsby's dream is the American Dream; his successes and failures are America's successes and failures. And in this correspondence, Fitzgerald creates his own version of national tragedy" (p. 77).

Demythologization of Gatsby's 'Greatness':
As early as the very opening pages, money or gross materialism is introduced as one of the predominant driving forces, along with social class. A better understanding of the tremendous impact of money is significant enough right here, since it provides a clue into understanding the true nature of Gatsby and those who are close to him, thereby contributing to demythologizing the ideals they hold. Tredell (2007) appositely comments that *The Great Gatsby* is simply a novel about money and that money is crucial to the understanding of its characters who are all defined by their relationship to it,

In this novel, money is sexy, in both the erotic and the more generally exciting sense; it gives the kind of buzz that it would give again in the heady financial sprees of the 1980s. But it is also one of the most romantic and mysterious elements in the novel…it is crucial to the American Dream; and it is crucial to the twenty-first-century dream of global capitalism. All the major characters, perhaps all the minor ones as well, in the novel are significantly defined by their relationship to money. (pp. 50-51)
As the book opens, the reader is first introduced to the narrator, Nick Carraway, whose need of money brings him from Minnesota to New York to work in bond business. As he puts it himself, he belongs to a family that trades in bonds and that he has come to New York, the centre of this business, for the same reason. Later, it turns out that money is the driving force that sets in motion most, if not all, of the significant threads of the plotline. The division of the novel's main settings is mainly based on money, along with social background: East Egg is the village where the 'established rich' people of aristocracy and landed gentry like the Buchanans live; whereas the 'newly riche' people, who are often offensively called *nouveaux riche*, like Jay Gatsby inhabit the "less fashionable" West Egg (Fitzgerald, p. 3). Halfway between these two districts and New York a third setting, the Valley of Ashes, stands. It is a place where the hardworking or 'no money' people such as the Wilsons live. The wealthy East and West Eggers have to pass through this place to and fro New York. The narrator first emphasises the role money-oriented social stratification plays in society through his description of the Valley of Ashes, where utter desolation is juxtaposed with the luxury of the rich Eggs. It is described as a sinister and lifeless place, where the New York ashes are dumped:

This is a valley of ashes—a fantastic farm where ashes grow like wheat into ridges and hills and grotesque gardens where ashes take the forms of houses and chimneys and rising smoke and finally, with a transcendent effort, of men who move dimly and already crumbling through the powdery air. Occasionally a line of grey cars crawls along an invisible track, gives out a ghastly creak and comes to rest, and immediately the ash-grey men swarm up with leaden spades and stir up an impenetrable cloud which screens their obscure operations from your sight. (Fitzgerald, p. 14)

In symbolic terms, this desolate and barren area is significant as it bears witness to the loose morality of the neighboring Eggs, if not the whole community depicted in the novel. For Hauhart (2013), the ashes of the Valley of Ashes and the gigantic eyes of Dr. T. J. Eckleburg, a big billboard located at the entrance of this place, serve as "a form of reproach" (p. 201) for those living in these places. As an inevitable corollary of their decadence, the eyes of God represented by the Dr. T. J. Eckleburg signpost seem much angry: "their retinas are one yard high. They look out of no face but, instead, from a pair of enormous yellow spectacles which pass over a nonexistent nose" (Fitzgerald, p. 14).

Of the characters whose moral corruption challenges the values of the new American elite, if not all modern Western society, are Gatsby, the Buchanans and Gatsby's party attendants. Before embarking on analysing the character of Gatsby, a point to be stressed right here is that it is unfair to stigmatize Gatsby as corrupt and unscrupulous as any of the aforementioned characters. With the exception of Nick, "the moral center of The Great Gatsby" (Pelzer, 2000, p. 85), all the characters do pale in comparison with Gatsby because of his ideal, if not quixotic and impractical, love of Daisy that never wanes in time—a point that will be discussed in some detail later as the discussion progresses. However, regardless of his romanticism, Gatsby is still a person with moral blemishes. He is one of those whose love of the glittering of ill-gotten money corrupts them. Despite his being the cynosure of all eyes in New York as the fantastically generous and hospitable host of opulent parties, it turns out that his whole fortune is amassed through illicit production of alcoholic beverages. Indeed, the idea that Gatsby is simply a bootlegger is sufficient enough to demythologize his 'greatness' which is taken for granted as
early as the very title of the book. To reduce the mounting crime and corruption rates in the 1920s, the Eighteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution was passed to prohibit bootlegging, thereby encouraging bootleggers like Gatsby and the like to show up. Ironically enough, it is corrupt money that makes of James Gatz, a poor farm boy from North Dakota, to forge a new identity as the "Trimalchio" of New York (Fitzgerald, p. 69). Although the novel is called after Gatsby, he makes his debut in the third chapter. He turns into a mystery about which nobody seems to know anything. Part of this mystique is attributed to his late appearance which gives way to a lot of rumors around him. The opening parts that precede this appearance speak of his lavish parties given frequently to which a great number of people are admitted without invitation. It is through the obvious opulence of his parties that the reader is given a peek into the excessive extravagance of the upper class of the Roaring Twenties. Nick, "one of the few guests who had actually been invited" (Fitzgerald, p. 25), can hardly believe his eyes once he first attends one of such parties. Hundreds of people from New York, and even beyond, are seen there, and all of them are generously and lavishly enough catered. Everything at Gatsby's magnificent mansion seems within the hand reach of the partygoers, such as his most expensive cars, boats, beach, hydroplane, and so forth:

In his blue gardens men and girls came and went like moths among the whisperings and the champagne and the stars. At high tide in the afternoon I watched his guests diving from the tower of his raft or taking the sun on the hot sand of his beach while his two motor-boats slit the waters of the Sound, drawing aquaplanes over cataracts of foam. On week-ends his Rolls-Royce became an omnibus, bearing parties to and from the city, between nine in the morning and long past midnight, while his station wagon scampered like a brisk yellow bug to meet all trains. And on Mondays eight servants including an extra gardener toiled all day with mops and scrubbing-brushes and hammers and garden-shears, repairing the ravages of the night before. (Fitzgerald, p. 24)

Surprisingly enough, Gatsby's excessive generosity and hospitality are met with much ingratitude on the part of his guests as they are always heard circulate innumerable rumors about their host. Chief of such rumors are his being a murderer; his being a spy for the Nazi regime during the First World War; his being an Oxford man; and his being a bootlegger and bond-sharper. Rumor-mongering is one of the social ills scathingly criticized in The Great Gatsby. It is through his description of gossip and scandalmongers, all members of the social upper classes, that Fitzgerald challenges what may be described as the ideals of the elite. This is the reason why Nick, who can be taken as an authorial mouthpiece, is discomfited and feels an outsider in such a gossipy company once he comes to hear of their rumors about Gatsby. However, it seems that Gatsby has been pleased with the common gossip whispered about him as he does nothing to dispel such accusations. One may go further and claim that Gatsby has helped reinforce such scandals. In one of his usual idle chats with Nick he acknowledges he is quite aware of the rumors going around: "Well, I'm going to tell you something about my life...I don't want you to get a wrong idea of me from all these stories you hear " (Fitzgerald, p. 40). What comes to prove this claim is Gatsby's confirmation to Nick of the rumor of his being an Oxford man: "I'll tell you God's truth...I am the son of some wealthy people in the middle-west—all dead now. I was brought up in America but educated at Oxford because all my ancestors have been educated there for many years. It is a family tradition" (Fitzgerald, p. 40).
Likewise, Nick asks Jordan Baker, another 'old money' lady and famous golfer, about Gatsby and she says that he is an Oxford man and that it is Gatsby himself who has once reported this about himself. As the book unfolds, it turns out that Gatsby's association with Oxford University is a mere lie fabricated by him. This is disclosed during Gatsby's encounter with Tom Buchanan at the Hotel Plaza. Tom asks, "By the way, Mr. Gatsby, I understand you're an Oxford man", and Gatsby, embarrassingly enough, replies, "It was in 1919. I only stayed five months. That's why I can't really call myself an Oxford man" (Fitzgerald, p. 80). The idea that Gatsby has spent a five-month period at Oxford stands in stark contrast to his earlier statements to Jordan and Nick, thereby reducing him to a liar. This act may have further implications. First, by linking himself with a prestigious university like Oxford, Gatsby seems serious to improve his self-image in front of Daisy following the circulation of the rumors of his direct involvement in the criminal underworld. Second, it may be interpreted as a way through which he tries to disown the common gossip about his poor family and low Midwestern origin. Third, it can be a way through which he does not want to be inferior to Tom, his main rival over the heart of Daisy, who is a Yale graduate. However, his fabrication is by no means skillfully interwoven: with the exception of Gatsby's notorious business associate Meyer Wolfsheim, all around him seem to doubt this. Jordan tells Nick, "Well, he told me once he was an Oxford man…However, I don't believe it". When asked why, she replies, "I don't know…I just don't think he went there" (Fitzgerald, p. 30). Nick, too, is quite doubtful about what Gatsby has first reported about his early life and experiences, especially his version about his being an Oxford man:

He looked at me sideways—and I knew why Jordan Baker had believed he was lying. He hurried the phrase 'educated at Oxford,' or swallowed it or choked on it as though it had bothered him before. And with this doubt his whole statement fell to pieces and I wondered if there wasn't something a little sinister about him after all. (Fitzgerald, p. 40)

Most of Gatsby's fabrications, starting with his new identity down to his aristocratic social background, are disclosed by Tom who digs deep into his corrupt past and humble origin and comes to validate what is rumored about him. He unravels the Gatsby mystery and exposes his association with gangsters and bootleggers, thereby shattering Daisy's admiration for him.

Gatsby's moral imperfections trigger the decline of the American Dream ideal: his material gains, initiated by his quest for his mistress, come to dominate all his life to the exclusion of any morals. According to Pelzer (2000), in the post-war America of *The Great Gatsby*, the commodification of people, in which Gatsby is involved, also distorts the American Dream and turns it into an impossibility:

Money, it seems, can buy anything in this world, from a dog leash of leather and braided silver to an easy life and a new identity. For the right price, and with the right currency, even Daisy is for sale. Money, then, has changed the nature of the American Dream; it has destroyed its finest conception. The result is The Great Gatsby world of diminished things, and that world reflects Fitzgerald’s tragic awareness of loss, given what it has become. (pp. 91-92)
Demythologizing the Sacred: F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*  
Youssef

**Love Commodified by Gross Materialism:**

However, the so-called elite values and the American Dream ideal are not the only ideals corrupted by money. Love, too, is much corrupted by gross materialism. Money and love are inextricably associated in this book. For Shain (1961), "Gatsby's mingled dream of love and money, and the iron strength of his romantic will, [that] make up the essence of the fable" (p. 34). Gatsby throws opulent parties in order to win back the heart of his past girlfriend, Daisy, who is now married to the 'old money' man Tom. This is the reason why the parties come to an abrupt end once Nick and Jordan orchestrate that reunion. Gatsby's excessive exhibition of wealth is also manifested as early as the epigraph of the novel:

"Then wear the gold hat, if that will move her;  
If you can bounce high, bounce for her too,  
Till she cry "Lover, gold-hatted, high-bouncing lover,  
I must have you!" –  
Thomas Parke D'Invilliers

In this short poem said ostensibly by Thomas Parke D'Invilliers, a fictitious poet and a character in Fitzgerald's first novel *This Side of Paradise* (1920), love-struck man is advised to show off in front of his beloved to keep her: to wear a hat studded with gold if this will move her; to bounce up and down till she notices his deep love for her and hurries back to him. And this is what Gatsby literally does. The question here is why is Gatsby instructed to do such bizarre things like wearing a gold hat or bouncing high in particular? For Bloom (2006), such things would impress Daisy, a typical flapper of the 1920s: "such feats as high-bouncing and wearing a gold hat might impress a young woman of the time" (p. 22).

It is money and its glittering appendages, such as the lavish parties, magnificent mansion, expensive cars, piles of clothes of all colors and so forth that forge a reunion between Gatsby and Daisy. Yet, Gatsby's wealth fails him, too: money alone, when not tempered by social background, is insufficient to reclaim the heart of an 'old money' lady like Daisy Buchanan. For Gross and Gross (1998), money alone is inadequate to "bridge the gap between his world and that of the Buchanans" (p. 5). Although Daisy seems at first sight much impressed by Gatsby's new life, she prefers Tom to him and, consequently, refuses to renew their old relationship. Pragmatically enough, Daisy finds Tom as the one who is able to secure her the sort of life she aspires to, along with his 'old money' privileges. The idea that Daisy succumbs to Tom's money and his 'old money' appendages to the exclusion of Gatsby's deep true love reduces her to a shallow woman who is attracted to people because they can secure her fleeting things. Also, in so doing she willingly accepts to be commodified: she is dealt with as a commodity sold and bought for the one who is ready to pay more. However, Gatsby seems oblivious to all this, thereby conjuring up the old saying "love is blind". Platonic love seems to haunt him and blind his eyes to Daisy's moral corruption. Samuels (1966) may not be mistaken when he contends, *The Great Gatsby* tells another tale: a tale of the blindness of desire and of the rock-like indifference of the universe. Nothing lives up to your image of it" (p.788).

**Challenging the Elite Values:**

Similarly, Daisy's adherence to Tom reveals her classist nature and shows the struggle between love and gross materialism. It is money that finally dominates love in *The Great Gatsby*: love vanishes once Tom Buchanan shows up in the life of Daisy. This may be interpreted as an indication that love, pure love to be more specific, is an outsider in such a decadent environment. As Froehlich (2011) aptly comments, love has no existence in the presence of such social ills as
gloss materialism: "there is little possibility for authentic love or desire separate from the economic realm" (p. 210). Also this shows obviously that Gatsby's idea that money is his way into the world of the social elite has been proven inaccurate, if not incorrect as well. The Great Gatsby abounds in other occasions proving the invalidation of this presupposition, thereby verifying the apparent class stratification and tensions in the 1920s. Once Tom, accompanied by a gentleman called Sloane and another unnamed lady, all 'old money' gentry, drop in Gatsby's house. They are cordially welcomed by Gatsby who generously offers them something to drink. The lady, slightly drunk, offers Gatsby to have supper with them, something that infuriates both Tom and Sloane. Tom, angrily comments, "My God, I believe the man's coming. Doesn't he know she doesn't want him?" (Fitzgerald, p. 64). Once Gatsby leaves to prepare himself for this occasion, the three, haughtily enough, ride off leaving him behind.

On his part, self-betrayed Gatsby is unaware of Daisy's flighty nature as well as the incapacities of his seemingly potential wealth. Once he comes to realize these two major weaknesses in his character, it is too late as he is shot dead by George Wilson who blames him for the death of his wife. In a desperate attempt to run away from her husband, terrified Myrtle rushes to the street and waves to a passing car she erroneously thinks to be Tom's and is run over on the spur of the moment. Though the "death car" (Fitzgerald, p. 86) is driven by Daisy, Gatsby, naively enough, holds himself responsible for the murder so as to save Daisy. For many critics, Gatsby's romanticism is naïve and may be aptly described as unreasonable as well as it triggers his destruction:

Gatsby's idealism is entirely misdirected. He worships a sort of life that he thinks come with great wealth. To him it is a life filled with wonder, excitement, fine things, and absolute self-worth. If one has a vast amount of money, one becomes a wonderful person and enjoys a wonderful existence. For Gatsby Daisy Buchanan is the embodiment of that life. His failure becomes tragic as he is destroyed by what he has pursued and loved so innocently and wholeheartedly. (Gross & Gross, 1998, p. 5)

That Daisy's carelessness and negligence of Gatsby's romanticism precipitate his sudden demise, and thereby the denouement of the novel, is significant, too, as it makes of Daisy a femme fatale, or what Settle (1985) describes as a "wrecker-temptress" (p. 118), the beautiful wicked woman whose mere presence in the life of a man devastates it entirely.

The idea that Tom blames Gatsby for Myrtle's death to cover up Daisy's hit-and-run along with Daisy's evasion of the moral responsibility for the crime are worth considering here. The implication of this misdeed is as obvious as it is painful, since it offers the reader another peek into the loose morality of the Buchanans, thereby demythologizing anew the upper class values which they are supposed to represent in The Great Gatsby. Nick comments, "They were careless people, Tom and Daisy—they smashed up things and creatures and then retreated back into their money or their vast carelessness or whatever it was that kept them together, and let other people clean up the mess they had made" (Fitzgerald, p. 112). This is the reason why some critics are of the view that this book is meant to be a scathing criticism of such values, which the author does through stigmatizing the upper class characters as careless and inconsiderate, if not unscrupulous, people getting power from their money:

Tom Buchanan represents the new American upper class, whose members value money and material possessions, not the development of character and taste. The
kind of interior riches cultivated by the old aristocracy had acquired effete, effeminate connotations in the new century...He is all physical and material force; he appears to have no emotional interior, and he demonstrates, repeatedly, that he has no manners, taste, or intelligence. (Kerr, 1996, p. 420)

The old truism that "money is power" is pertinently applied to many characters in the book that draw power from their wealth and social position to the exclusion of any code of ethics. Racism and classism are inextricably associated with money. This is also represented through the Buchanans. Throughout the nine chapters of the book, Tom gives himself the absolute right to snub Gatsby, to have an extramarital relationship with a married woman, to help Daisy get away with Myrtle's murder and to insult non-white races. Pelzer (2000) notes, "[H]e does so with the certainty that his money, which has conferred respectability on him, insulates him from the consequences of his actions...social standing alone has conferred on him the right" (p. 86). In so doing, he embodies the corrupting nature of money in its thorough sense. Slater (1973) also contends that obsessive concern with ethnic distinctions had always been part of the American culture in the 1920s though it was not as well remembered as the flappers and the bootleggers (p. 53).

Most of the racist comments made in The Great Gatsby are represented through Tom who has the ideology that the white race is the dominant race and that it has the right to control the other races, whom he regards much inferior. For him, the idea that the whites are the racial dominant group is scientific: "It's all scientific stuff; it's been proved" (Fitzgerald, p. 8). Much alarmed at the prospect of the submergence of the white race by the rise of the colored races or Afro-Americans in the American society, he says that the rise of the colored ethnic groups is dangerous enough as it will render the white ethnic group extinct and hold back civilization: "Civilization's going to pieces...I've gotten to be a terrible pessimist about things. Have you read The Rise of the Colored Empires by this man Goddard?" (Fitzgerald, p. 8). He goes further to add that what is said by Goddard in his book, "a pseudonym for Lothrop Stoddard and his The Rising Tide of Color Against World White Supremacy" (Slater, 1973, p. 54), is proven by science and that the whites have to do something to thwart this matter before things go wrong: "This fellow has worked out the whole thing. It's up to us, who are the dominant race, to watch out or these other races will have control of things" (Fitzgerald, p. 9). He speaks of what he refers to as the 'superiority' of the Nordics who, as he puts it, have "produced all the things that go to make civilization—, oh, science and art, and all that" (Fitzgerald, p. 9).

In his defence of the white race, Tom defends himself and his place in the world which seems to be in jeopardy because of the rise of non-white races. Nevertheless, his racism is not that limited to what he offensively enough stigmatizes as the "colored empires"; rather, it extends to include the rise of 'new money' whites, such as Gatsby and the like, whose social status and financial privileges are in the rise. For him, the ascension of such people is as dangerous as the rise of the black people. This reflects his deep inner fear of the decline of the 'established rich' people against the aggrandizement of the nouveaux riche in the American society. Therefore, Gatsby's advances to Daisy infuriate him much and drive him to comment, "Nowadays people begin by sneering at family life and family institutions and next they'll throw everything overboard and have intermarriage between black and white" (Fitzgerald, p. 81). Though Gatsby is not black, Tom insists on excluding him from the white race. As a mouthpiece of the racism and chauvinism of the 'old money', Tom cannot stand the rivalry of any other social class. This is
the reason why he looks down on Gatsby at the Plaza Hotel once they meet, stigmatizing him as "Mr. Nobody from Nowhere" (Fitzgerald, p. 81).

Tom is not the only classist in The Great Gatsby who alienates Gatsby and the like because of their social class or socioeconomic status. Gatsby is just a sample standing in symbolic terms for the rich American people who are ostracized from the upper social class because of their humble origin, something that provides evidence of the increasing social inequality in the 1920s America. Nevertheless, Tom's scathing criticism and harassment of Gatsby seem justified to some extent, since he simply defends his family against someone who tries to shatter the stability of his family and snatch his wife from him. On the other hand, this reduces him to a hypocrite as his extramarital relationship with Myrtle, a married woman, has shattered the entire family of George Wilson and finally led up to Myrtle's murder and Gorge's suicide.

**Gatsby's Quixoticness—Sanctification of Daisy:**
Likewise, Daisy is depicted as unscrupulous as her husband. Nevertheless, Gatsby idolises her, spending his life amassing money and hosting lavish parties to bring her back. Since he cannot reclaim her in reality, he turns into a quixotic dreamer who is much immersed in a world of his own imagination, where Daisy is sanctified and invested with celestial attributes that make of her an angel-like figure. As Pelzer (2000) contends, "[she] comes to embody, in her beauty and purity and essential aloofness his dream. For Gatsby, to possess Daisy is to possess the ideal" (p. 77). By the end, self-betrayed Gatsby meets a tragic end while trying to achieve "a dream that can never be attained in a reality tainted by gross materialism, cold indifference, and moral corruption" (Pelzer, 2000, p. 78). His quixoticness, coupled with the mystical aura he creates round Daisy, prevents him from accepting as true that she is an ordinary human being who is married and has a little daughter. This sanctification seems to blind his eyes from accepting her moral imperfections:

Daisy's appearance as a sacred image devoid of sensuality explains Gatsby's refusal to recognize her marriage and her child and reveals his inward desire to restore her to a virginal state. One does not really know whether this concept of virginity is related to Daisy's pre-marriage years or to an unconscious desire for mystical purity. However, in the novel, poetic elements are introduced to illuminate this "Madonna" quality, especially terms evoking soft and bright colors radiating a certain lightness, freshness, similar to Gatsby's dream. One finds here an ethereal atmosphere which carries the reader into a timeless and spaceless universe inhabited by angelic figures. Women are dressed in white, and at times the characters' lives do not seem real. We enter a supernatural realm aloof from the concrete and earthly reality. (Assadi & Freedman, 2007, p. 23)

This way, Gatsby is not that good at evaluating people which is manifested in his mythologization of Daisy whose flighty nature has been obvious on different occasions. Back to 1917 when the two lovers first meet, Daisy turns her back on Gatsby and accepts another suitor. According to Jordan, Daisy fails Gatsby's love and prefers Tom "who had purchased her" for a $350,000 pearl necklace (Pelzer, 2000, p. 86). What quixotic Gatsby considers as pure love turns out in time to be nothing but a mere illusion. What he cannot understand is that Daisy, the then Daisy Fay before she gets married to Tom Buchanan, has first pursued him because of his
military uniform which has mesmerized her. If it was not for that uniform, it could have been too
difficult, if not impossible, for such a young man of humble origin as Gatsby to be accepted by
Daisy who does mind class differences: "The uniform of an army officer admits him to the Fay
house because it erases all sartorial evidence of class status" (Balkun, 2006, p. 133). Balkun
(2006) goes further and add that Daisy Fay does not have to wait long for Gatsby, since she is a
most sought-after commodity:

A one-of-a-kind item, she is intensely sought after (Jordan Baker describes
her as the most popular girl in Louisville), and both Gatsby and Tom
single-mindedly pursue her in their turn. This situates her as more than
just a common consumer item; she is a prized collectible, and whoever wants
her can expect to pay dearly, which is exactly what Tom Buchanan does (his
wedding gift to her is a 350-thousand-dollar pearl necklace). (p. 134)

That young Gatsby's military uniform is his only carte blanche into the elite society
reduces this society to a pack of inconsiderate, careless and materialistic people. Fitzgerald's
assertion of this point deepens the reader's understanding of the moral corruption of the upper
class in the 1920s and helps demythologize the façade of its principles. It is portrayed as a selfish
social group that only seeks its own personal gains to the exclusion of any morals or code of
ethics altogether. Likewise, this group is seen keen enough on keeping itself aloof from other
groups by setting long barriers between itself and the other social strata. On his part, ambitious
Gatsby does his best to overcome such barriers by fabricating information about his working
class background so as to make Daisy secure: "][H]e had deliberately given Daisy a sense of
security; he let her believe that he was a person from much the same stratum as herself—
that he was fully able to take care of her (Fitzgerald, p. 93). Even after he becomes a millionaire, Gatsby
still lies to Nick and many others close to him regarding his origin, since he wishes such
fabricated information would reach Daisy and entice her into coming back to him. Furthermore,
he erroneously attributes his first parting from Daisy to money. As illustrated before, it is by no
means money alone that establishes the barrier between classes. Although the two Eggs harbour
wealthy people, the East Eggers look down on the residents of West Egg. It is not money alone
then that sets the dichotomy between the two neighbouring districts. In close tandem with
money, other factors such as social snobbery help establish class distinctions.

Despite Gatsby's love of Daisy, part of his very attraction to her is attributed to her being
a member of the aristocracy: he is in love with Daisy and her glittering world altogether. Gross
and Gross (1998) may not be exaggerating when they describe this as "Gatsby's worship of the
monied world of Daisy Buchanan" (p. 2). Similarly, Balkun (2006) contends that Daisy has
obviously been a treasure that cannot be resisted and is worth obtaining: "She is "safe" when
Gatsby meets her (that is, worth investing in), a luxurious object on the marriage market, whose
value is determined by the simple rules of supply and demand: many men have desired Daisy,
and so she is clearly worth having" (pp. 133-134). That Gatsby's love of Daisy is partly money-
oriented does not necessarily invalidate the previous opinion that his love for her is idealistic.
Gatsby is justified to have harboured aspirations of making himself financially and socially
better which Daisy's very presence in his life initiates in him. It is his right, and he cannot be
blamed for his ambitions. He is predestined to be born in a modest family, and it is not a stigma
at all to aspire to become rich. Yet, the real problem is that following his meeting of Daisy he
betrays his detachment to his working class people. Furthermore, he "can never again be satisfied
with less than this [life]" (Balkun, 2006, p. 134). His goal to be a member of the elite haunts him to the core, driving him willingly enough to be involved in the labyrinths of the criminal underworld.

Likewise, Fitzgerald's portrayal of Gatsby's party attendants helps demythologize the upper class values. Though the 'old money' people at East Egg have derogatory opinion of their neighbours at West Egg, many of them attend the parties thrown by Gatsby whom they stigmatize as socially inferior. This reduces them to a hoard of hypocrites who take full advantage of those whom they denounce. By the very end of the novel, Nick is shocked enough when they do not show up in Gatsby's funeral. To his dismay and surprise as well, all his attempts to hold an honorable funeral for Gatsby by bringing some mourners to attend the funeral fail: "[I]t wasn't any use. Nobody came" (Fitzgerald, p. 102). He telephones Daisy and Tom and is told that they are on a trip somewhere. He sends the butler to New York with a letter to Wolfsheim who replies that he will not be able to come as he is too busy. That afternoon the phone rings and Nick answers. Once he tells the speaker that Gatsby is dead, the speaker abruptly ends the call. Klipspringer, one of Gatsby's partygoers, calls up only to ask about a pair of tennis shoes he has left at Gatsby's house. Nick goes to New York to meet Wolfsheim who tells him that he does not want to attend the funeral as he simply does not want to cause himself any trouble.

Ironically enough, Gatsby's mansion which has always been seen overcrowded with people enjoying themselves to the full is now empty. With the exception of a handful of mourners including Gatsby's father, the minister, one single party attendant nicknamed Owl Eyes, the West Egg postman along with four or five servants, Nick finds himself alone on dead Gatsby's side. Indignantly enough, Owl Eyes wonders at the ingratitude of the partygoers, "Why, my God! They used to go there by the hundreds" (Fitzgerald, p. 102).

**Conclusion:**
In demythologizing the ideals of the elite, the American Dream and romanticism held by Gatsby, the title of the book turns into a real misnomer simply because Gatsby's moral imperfections do betray these principles and, consequently, make of his 'greatness' an impossibility. The reader, who is first asked to accept this attribute for granted as early as the very title of the novel, comes to realize the irony that lies behind it once the Gatsby mystery is unraveled. Likewise, Gatsby's moral corruption makes of him the very antagonist of himself and renders his tragic end as convincing as it is appalling. Nevertheless, to one's surprise and dismay as well, there is still an aura of uniqueness around this character that prevents one from stigmatizing him as a villain, a particular quality that makes him somewhat far better than all those close to him. With the exception of Nick, the rest of figures do pale compared to Gatsby as the reader still finds in him certain character traits they admire, more specifically his unbelievably unwaning belief in the power of love that never withers in time. This way, although love, quixotic love to be more specific right here, is a major weakness in Gatsby's character that aggravates his life and precipitates his tragic end, it wins him the reader's sympathy and makes him rather unique—even distinguished, but not great.
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Children of the Alley: Mahafouz's Allegory of Violence and Oppression

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Abstract
The study is an attempt to read the novel as a political allegory of exploitation and oppression in post-independence Egypt. An important objective of the study is to show how the use of allegory in the novel is necessitated by a political reality characterized by violence and oppression and how this allegorical aspect gives the novel a sense of timelessness and universality that makes it relevant to today Middle East. It tries to answer questions like; how repressive regimes are created? The study finds out that Mahfouz employed the existing myths to deal with political themes like oppression, tyranny, revolution and abuse of power. He also secularized the religious history of humanity to show us how repressive regimes are created and how can people get rid of them?

Keywords: allegory, Mahfouz, oppression, political novel, violence
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The importance of politics in Third World Literature is increasing in our times which can be attributed to the increasingly important role politics plays in our life especially in the globalized world in which we live. In a region like the Middle East with its continual political instability, the relation between politics and literary production assumes great importance. This relation is clearly seen in the works of the Nobel Prize winner Naguib Mahfouz (1911-2006) whose works cannot be fully gauged without understanding the spirit of the time in which he lived. His achievement as a novelist should be viewed not only against the background of social and political developments in 20th century Egypt but also the current political upheavals in the whole Middle East. Some of his novels can be read as political allegories with timeless themes which make them relevant to today Middle East. One of these novels is Children of the Alley, (1957, English Tran.1996) a political allegory with timeless political themes. How does Mahfouz employ the existing myths to deal with political themes like oppression, tyranny, revolution and abuse of power? How does he secularize the religious history of humanity to show us how repressive regimes are created and how can the people get rid of them? What kind of change does Mahfouz prefer? Is he seeking total or partial change? How is the novel relevant to today Middle East? Light will be shed on the way he criticizes the Egyptian people for their passivity and acceptance of tyranny.

I.A. Cuddon (1999) defines allegory as “a story in verse or prose with double meaning: a primary or surface meaning and a secondary or under-the-surface meaning. It is a story, therefore, that can be read, understood and interpreted at two levels (and in some cases at three or four levels)” (The Penguin Dictionary). To read a novel as a political allegory is to try to find the under-the-surface meaning. A work is called allegorical when it says one thing in order to mean something else. The allegorical mode can be conducive to fiction in a police state like Egypt where the government employs a strict mode of censorship. This is because the authority usually does not see the underlying meaning and this enables writers to use allegory with social and political implications. Children of the Alley, Mahfouz’s first novel after 1952 revolution is an important text of its kind in the post-revolution era. It was serialized in Al-Ahram, the official newspaper in Egypt in 1959 and proved to be the most controversial of all his novels. It has never been published in book form in Egypt because of the ban imposed by the religious authorities at the time and which has not been lifted since 1959. But the novel has been published in book form elsewhere in the Arab world. The controversy stirred by the novel in the Arab world continues even now. Religious authorities still attack it on the allegation that it is injurious to Islam and the prophets. Mahfouz was unjustly accused of blasphemy and apostasy. When Salman Rushdie’s Satanic Verses appeared in 1988, some people were quick to compare it to Children of the Alley which was published twenty nine years before. A leading figure in the Islamic movement in Egypt went to claim that “Khomini’s fatuwa is correct. Salman Rushdie must be killed. Had this sentence been passed on Naguib Mahfouz when he wrote Awlad Haritna [Children of the Alley], it would have served as a lesson for Salman Rusdie to heed” (qtd. Mehrez, 1993, 68). Those who compare the two novels tend to read Mahfouz’s work in religious terms which was not the intention of the author. El-Enany sees these comparisons as ill-informed (Pursuit 239). Fox(1990) argues that unlike Rushdie, Mahfouz is not a lapsed Muslim and his work is in a sense “a pious book” that has been misunderstood by the religious authorities. Fox goes to say that, “It is ironic that (Children of the Alley) should have been consigned to hell in the same hand-basket as the mischievous Satanic Verses, considering its message” (93).
Children of the Alley is labeled political allegory because its secondary meaning or under-the-surface meaning is political. It is political allegory in the same sense that Animal Farm is. The use of allegory in the case of Mahfouz is often necessitated by a political reality in which the freedom of expression is curtailed. Thus he is motivated more by a need to have a space to express his views that he cannot express otherwise than a desire to explore new techniques or make contemporary reality more real. His use of allegory and fantasy together is not an escape from reality but a means of examining and exploring it. The allegorical aspect gives the text a sense of timeless and universality, enabling Mahfouz to tackle the themes of tyranny, oppression and abuse of power in a wider human framework. The novel explores various forms of exploitation and oppression not only in Egypt, but anywhere, at anytime. Mahfouz uses the allegorical mode in Children of the Alley as a means of political comment. This refers to mankind's inability to achieve a lasting just and humane social order coming out of his perception of a betrayal of hopes in the wake of the 1952 revolution and the post-independence regimes in Egypt.

This novel can be fully understood only if it is read against the writer’s response to consequences following the 1952 revolution in Egypt. It is a known fact that Mahfouz and other intellectuals who welcomed the revolution enthusiastically were later “disenchanted, frustrated, and alienated by the turn the revolution took – first in imposing military rule, and banning political parties, then in establishing the one party state, suppressing individual freedoms, and ruthlessly crushing all opposition” (Badawi, 1985,144). As an intellectual, Mahfouz was disillusioned with the conditions of his country. He had to strive through his writing for a commitment that would fulfill the ideals of the revolution and save his country. But the freedom of writers was curtailed under the new regime. Censorship controls of all stifling kinds are usually imposed by totalitarian and repressive regimes in all parts of the world. But writers like Mahfouz, who are committed to voice their people’s concerns and aspirations, can not be completely silenced by these repressive measures. Mahfouz was aware of both the positive and negative results of the revolution. It succeeded in creating a new social system in which the peasants and workers were given rights to education and work. It also helped to achieve a measure of political and economic independence for the people in Egypt. In an interview with Nabeel Faraj, Mahfouz gives credit to the leadership for making several reforms in the industrial and agricultural sectors, but laments the fact that these achievements were at the expense of the individual freedom, the natural civilizational growth of the Egyptian individual. The new political reality in his view created a passive personality unable to think or participate positively in nation building. It helped in creating an atmosphere of insecurity, loss and hypocrisy (66-7).

One of the most important qualities of a great writer is the speed and flexibility with which he adapts to the changing social and political scene. In the Arab world in particular, the writer must have this adaptability in abundance, to be able to carry on his mission and survive. Mahfouz is acutely aware of the relationship between literature and politics in this part of the world. He tells us that:

Sometimes the artist finds it difficult to express himself, especially when we consider the state’s position towards him. This is generally true in the Arab world where we can not dissociate art and politics. The artist’s dilemma depends to a great extent on the state’s position
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vis-à-vis freedom of expression. Should the state ignore the writer’s voice, it is alone the loser, for his is the voice of truth…. a voice that knows and offers what no intelligence apparatus is capable of providing. (qtd. in Mehrez 1993, 61)

Mahfouz’s awareness of his role as a writer in expressing the aspirations and fundamental problems of his countrymen and of the delicate relation between this role and the state’s position towards literary production is behind the turning point that occurred in his literary career at this stage. After writing social realistic novels in the 1940s, he relied heavily, in the 1950s and 60s, on such technical devices as allegory and symbolism to get his message through. The first point that must be made about this novel is that although it cannot be understood properly unless it is studied in the context of post-independence Egypt, it should be regarded not merely in terms of Egypt in the post-revolution era, but also in terms of issues which are common to all countries. The story is not only of Egypt or the Egyptian people, but of humanity’s general plight and problem. It is not only an allegory of the Egyptian people’s quest for a just and humane society, but also of all mankind’s endless quest for social justice right from Adam till now.

As stated earlier, Mahfouz’s employment of allegory is not an escape from reality but an investigation of that reality, an attempt to understand the social and political reality of modern Egypt. There is an assumption that the use of fantasy in a fictional work makes it remote from the living social and political reality. But the use of allegory, myth and fantasy does not always lead to escapism and at the hands of creative writers, like Mahfouz, they can be used as an effective means of examining and exploring reality, “The Writer”, Mahfouz tells us, “may employ fantasy, but he always has an eye to reality. I belong to this type of writer. I may invest my work with abstract dimensions, but this is only to get to the heart of reality” (Faraj, 1986, 20). Mahfouz, thus, deals with reality indirectly using allegory to create his vision of Egyptian reality. He is trying to create a dream world in which he can take problems which he could not treat directly. He uses the existing myths and creates his own myth to critique reality and make a scathing criticism of the failure of the leaders of Egypt to create social and political justice.

One must emphasize here that what is important is the message that Mahfouz intends to convey through his novel and not how he presents the stories of the three monotheistic religions. To say that the work shows Mahfouz’s disrespect for Islam is to misinterpret the message of the work. Even if it deals with religious themes, it must be said that it does not deal with this religion or that but with the role of religion in modern man’s life without focusing on one particular religion. The fact remains that Mahfouz is not interested in presenting a religious history of mankind, nor in addressing himself critically to any religion. In fact he secularizes the history of the three monotheistic religions turning them into sociopolitical movements or political revolts against tyranny and oppression. The prophets are presented as revolutionary leaders with an entirely socio-political agenda that aims at establishing a just and humane society in the alley and that has nothing to do with religion. He presents the events in the life of the prophets in a realistic way without the metaphysical trappings that are usually associated with these events. According to El-Enany(1993), “God, Satan, Adam, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad are all there but without the halo of religious myth: The novel is an attempt at demythologizing humanity’s religious quest” (142).

The narrator throughout the novel says our alley and never says my alley. This emphasizes the importance of the collective identity of the inhabitants of the alley. The alley is
our alley, our Egypt, our world. This also emphasizes the concept of equality among the inhabitants of the alley, which is the central message of all the reformists who appear in the alley. The significance of the ‘hara’ or alley as a source of inspiration for Mahfouz’s work must be emphasized here. In his realistic novels including The Trilogy, the alley is real and symbolic, real because it is in a sense an honest and precise record of the old quarters of Cairo, and symbolic because it is meant to be a microcosm of Egypt. Al-Gitani tells us that the alley “remains the pivot around which his [Mahfouz’s] work rotates during his long literary career. It assumes further dimensions and becomes the epitome of the whole world” (“The Alley” 42). If the alley in the realistic novels is the microcosm of Egypt, it is in Children of the Alley that we see the alley, “taking more extensive dimensions and becoming a symbol of the world at large” (Al-Gitani, 1993 42). Although the alley, as it appears in the novel, has the general features of a modern Cairene alley of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, it is the symbolic level that is of paramount importance. The alley is a mini Egypt and a micro-universe. One can call it a global alley because the author intends it to be the symbol of the entire globe. This is why he deliberately isolates it from any specific framework of reference both in terms of time and place. Talking about the alley in Children, Al-Gitani tells us that it is, “a new alley, one that bears no name and represents no place, an alley that derives its significance from actual reality but has been refashioned by the writer’s vision” (“The Alley” 43). The alley undergoes no major physical change in spite of the long span of time that the novel covers. Generations come and go but the alley remains unchanged. El-Enany(1993) sees this lack of physical progress as “an indictment of the human experience for its ethical failure despite all the material progress it may boast” (150).

Children of the Alley is not a continuation of what Mahfouz had been doing through his realistic novels, namely, chronicling the modern history of Egypt. But it is a continuation of his main mission which is finding an answer to the problems of Egypt. In his novels till this stage, history, be it pharoanic or recent history, had been the core of his writing. Now he began to investigate the entire human history to explore his theme of power and its abuse. At the beginning of The Journey of Ibn Fattuma(1983), a novel written by Mahfouz in 1983, the narrator who is dissatisfied with the conditions in his country because it is full of corruption and injustice, sets on his travels in an attempt to “learn and bring back to my sick country the healing remedy” (19). It seems that Mahfouz’s journey through the human history in Children of the Alley, is in search of the healing remedy for his sick country. In one of his monologues Kamal in The Trilogy tells us:

For too long the nation had patiently endured the blows it received. Today, it was Tawfiq Nasim, yesterday Ismail Sidqy, and before that Muhammad Mahmud. This ill-omened chain of despots stretched back into pre-history. Every bastard has been deluded by his own power and has claimed to be the chosen guardian for us children. (Sugar Street, 1992 32) It is this long chain of despots stretching back into pre-history that is the main concern of Mahfouz in Children of the Alley. The point that the novel makes is that “generation after generation of Egyptians live in a perpetual master-slave relationship under one despot after another” (Fox 91). In the novel the alley suffers from long periods of oppression at the hands of the overseer and his gangsters who subject the people to all kinds of mistreatment and injustice. If the mythical language is translated into political language, the picture that emerges is that of a police state with the overseer as the dictator, the gangsters his apparatus of oppression and the
poets of the coffeehouses as the government controlled media which sing the praise of the dictator and his policies.

Read within the context of the political reality at the time, one tends to agree with Fox when he says that Mahfouz “saw Nasser as yet another incarnation of pharaoh, indistinguishable in essence from countless previous tyrants in a chain of tyranny stretching back thousands of years into Egypt’s mythic past” (91). But the novel is not only about Nasser and Egypt. The alley as pointed out earlier is a global alley and the timelessness that characterizes the events in the novel makes its message a general one even if Mahfouz’s main concern is his own country. What the novel offers is “a potent and much needed message for the powers that be, not only in Egypt and other Arab countries, but everywhere in the world” (Abu-Haider 1985 119).

Unlike Gulliver’s Travels, the allegory in Children of the Alley consists entirely of human beings and not Yahoos or Lilliputians. Mahfouz is not presenting unusual or improbable events and appearances, but ordinary and probable events. There are no divine characters or superhuman heroes, and all actions of the protagonists lie within the human capacity. Even Gebelawi who stands for God in the allegorical frame of the novel is presented in human terms. With the exception of his long age which lasts for several generations till he dies in the last part, everything else about him is human. He is described in the last part as “conqueror of the desert, master of all men, the symbol of power and courage, owner of the estate and the alley, and first father of succeeding generations” (Children 407). He appears in person in the first part which is a recreation of the story of the Fall, then he retreats to his mansion at the end of the alley never to be seen again. The only role he plays in the rest of the novel is sending messages to the reformists that he has bestowed the estate on all the inhabitants of the alley as they are all his grandchildren and must have equal share in the revenue of the estate.

The four prophets or reformists are Gabel, Rifaa, Qassem and Arafa who stand for Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, and the modern man of science respectively. The novel is not constructed as a single sustained myth but various myths. Unlike Thomas Mann in his recreation of religious myths in Joseph and His Brothers, Mahfouz did not need encyclopedic knowledge of the myths he is using because he used myths which are known to almost everyone. Hatfield tells us that Mann’s intention in his novel is “less to recreate a period of the past than to show typical and timeless figures against a more or less distinct background” (95). The same can be said about Mahfouz’s intention in his novel which is not to recreate Jewish, Christian and Islamic myths, but to dramatize Man’s quest for freedom and justice.

The use of different myths by Mahfouz makes it difficult to maintain an organic unity in the novel, and the result is “a number of very fast-moving short novellas, held together by means of certain parallelism and continuities, and, of course, one unifying concept” (Badawi, 1985 143). The repetitions that we find in the novel are of thematic significance. There are several words, phrases, and events the recurrence of which not only points to their symbolic potentialities but also establishes the dominant mood in the novel. For example, the clubs used by the gangsters to suppress people are found in every part because they are intended to be the symbol of all the repressive apparatus used by those in power to maintain their position by force. The ‘Futwat’ or the gangsters stand for the police, the army and the security intelligence. They are used for the purpose of maintaining the predominance of the overseer in the same way that
the police and the army are used to maintain the power of the individual military man, the dictator or the party. They serve to carry out the personal wishes of one individual or a group of individuals at the expense of the people. The ruling regime continues throughout the four parts in the sense that the ruler known as the overseer continues in power. His name may change but the policies and the nature of the regime remain unchanged. This unchangeability is part of Mahfouz’s message that dictators are the same everywhere in the world and at any time in history. According to Abu-Haider(1985), the novel is:

essentially a parable of authority and power, not only in Egypt (its author’s country), but everywhere in the Arab world, or rather in the Middle East. It is a story of an endless struggle for power, a perpetual Armageddon, in which nothing seems to avail except Machiavellian machinations in their most sinister and primeval aspects. (119)

With the exception of the power of Gebelawi which he asserts only in the first part when he expels his sons, the power that is ruling the alley is that of the overseer and the thug gangs leaders. We are kept aware that Gebelawi has the power to change everything in the alley but he never uses his authority to set things right. This aloofness on the part of Gebelawi is employed by Mahfouz to indicate that oppressed people must not wait for divine intervention to liberate them from oppression. It is their duty to do it themselves. But how?

Mahfouz sees that there are two types of power, good and bad. The bad power is the one that is found in the overseer and his gangs while good power is that of the reformists Gabal, Rifaa and Qassem. Qassem. The power of the reformists is not an individual power and their revolts against the oppressors are not individual revolts. It is the collective power of the people and not their individual strength that helps them overcome the power of the gangsters. Arafa fails in his revolt because it is an individual revolt which lacks the popular base that his predecessors built. Here lies Mahfouz’s idea of the role of the people in resisting tyranny. One feels that Mahfouz is criticizing indirectly the Egyptian people for not asserting their power in the same way they did in the pre-independence era, before and during the 1919 revolution. In this novel as well as in The Harafish, there is a harsh criticism of the way the inhabitants of the alley and the harafish endure silently and patiently the oppression and inhumane treatment meted out to them by their leaders. Gabal expresses this idea when he says,

And yet, strange to say, the people of our alley laugh! How can they laugh? They celebrate winners, any winner and cheer any strong man, no matter who he is and bow down before bullies’ clubs—all this to conceal the terrible fear deep inside them. We eat humiliation like food in this alley. (Children 111)

One of Qassem’s men declares that, “Cowardice is the curse of our alley, that is why they’re such hypocrites with the gangsters!” (Children 315). According to Barakat the Egyptian is portrayed in Mahfouz’s works as “resorting to public compliance as a way out of his powerlessness. Those in power are deceived for they believe they are admired” (132). To cure this illness Qassem says, “Courage is the most important thing for the people of this alley, if they aren’t going to be trampled down for the rest of their lives” (Children 316). It is this courage that people in the Middle East have shown in their revolutions against their regimes in the first part of 2011.
What the people need to realize their potential power, in Mahfouz’s view, is a true leader who with his intelligence and devotion can employ their power to establish a just order free of tyranny and exploitation. The three good leaders in the novel are presented as having democratic temperaments. They are not tyrants but companions to those who serve them and share in their enterprises. In this context Mahfouz’s comment on his main intention in writing the novel sounds true. Mahfouz is quoted by El-Enany saying that *Children of the Alley* depicts the conflict between prophets and thugs. … I wanted to ask the revolutionary leaders which path they wanted to choose: the prophets’ or the thugs’. The stories of the prophets provided an artistic framework, but my intention was to criticize the revolution and the existing social system. At that time I had noticed a new class evolving and growing extraordinarily rich. The question which then agonized me was whether we were moving towards socialism or towards feudalism of a new kind. (100)

Mahfouz seems to have written his novel in a mode of gloom and disenchantment over the failure of the new leaders to fulfill the dreams of the people. But this gloomy vision was not unique in the writings at the time. It is to be found in the works of many leading writers in Egypt such as the plays of Yusuf Idris, the famous Egyptian writer of plays, short stories and novels, and the poetry of Salah Abd Al-Sabur the Egyptian free verse writer and a leading figure in modern Arabic poetry, to name but a few. What is remarkable about Mahfouz’s novel is that it shows that modern society in general is in no way better than the ancient society, for in the past as well as in the present the plight of the inhabitants of the alley remains unchanged.

The novel presents a view of the human history as a long line of injustice and tyranny that is interrupted by short periods in which justice and equality are established. Jacquemond,(2003) who believes that the novel betrays Mahfouz’s distrust of authority and his belief in the inevitability of its corruption, argues that Mahfouz does not offer any solution to the problem of the corruption of authority, other than the moral solution by establishing justice at the hands of a good man and its disappearance after his death (125). Somekh also sees that the work gives no definite answers to the questions it raises. “As the work ends,” he tells us, “the struggle is still as fierce as ever, the questions as disturbing” (139). But One cannot but agree with El-Enany(1993) when he concludes that *Children of the Alley's* main message is:

Popular revolution, is the answer to oppression offered by Mahfouz. This is perfectly understandable, seen in the context of his apotheosis of Egypt’s only popular revolution in its contemporary history (the 1919 revolution) and, conversely his bitter disillusionment with its later militarily-led … revolution of 1952. (156)

Mahfouz again and again advocates popular revolution or the active involvement of the people in standing up to oppression. This is why Gabal, Rifaa, and Qassem, succeed in their revolts. Mahfouz has a firm belief in the people’s capacity to mould or fashion their political and social system, this is exactly what is happening in the Arab World these days.

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Children of the Alley: Mahafouz's Allegory of Violence and Oppression

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Imperializing Femininity: Falsehood Production and Consumption in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*

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Abstract
Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* has received a torrent of painstaking research as an intricate literary work which portrays the horrifying details of Marlow’s physical and philosophical quest. However, within this framework does lurk a matrix of male chauvinism which relegates the female characters in the novella to irreversibly inferior positions and silent bodies. This necessitates a reading of Conrad’s text that goes beyond the context of sexist innuendos in order to attain a deeper comprehension of the novella; that is, a contextualized reading which directs attention towards the variable of colonization and imperialism in the novella and its imperialist exploitation of femininity which makes women embrace specific roles and identities assigned to them while being deceived into thinking that they are ardent keepers of noble dreams. This paper argues that the female figures in the novella are imperialized by men in ways that make them consume the falsehood men produce about ―the noble cause‖ and ―the white man’s burden‖. It also attempts to identify the reasons which make women accept such a subservient role by elaborating on the idea of human mimicry as discussed by Rene Girard in *Deceit, Desire and the Novel*. Girard claims that the person’s desire for a certain object is not provoked by the object itself, but by another person who possesses the same object. This implies that the attraction of Conrad’s women to the noble cause and to the wealth of the Congo extorted along with it has made them unquestionably accept the ancillary roles assigned to them by men, the possessors of the object. As more and more white people consider Africa a source of wealth, they became rivals, and since rivalry in Girard’s theory leads to violence; a scapegoat is needed to prevent the disintegration of the colonizers. So, in *Heart of Darkness*, all the violence is directed against the black natives who are held responsible for violence to the extent that they fit in Girard’s theory as the “scapegoat.”

**Key Words:** Conrad, Gender in *Heart of Darkness*, Post Colonial novel
Imperializing Femininity: Falsehood Production and Consumption

Sabrah

Introduction

The devotion of the female characters in *Heart of Darkness* to "the noble cause" and their attraction to the wealth that comes along with it made them willingly accept the inferior roles that men, the possessors of the object, assign to them. Since the white imperialists consider the Congo a source of wealth, rivalry was generated among them. This eventually leads to violence which was mostly vented by assaulting the black natives. Therefore, they fit into Girard's theory as the victimized scapegoats. To conclude, this new way of reading the novel accounts for the violence that is inflicted on the black natives.

This suggests that the women inhabiting the world *Heart of Darkness* provide the text with a subtle background for a cultural and psychological discussion of gender issues. They show characteristics specific to the Victorian appropriations of anti-feminist Christian and medieval stereotypes. The atmosphere of the novella articulates the silence befitting the conventionally approved archetypal virgo. It is then followed by a sequence of female images which are truthfully decorous, and no attempts at candor seem necessary to communicate what they feel or think because they just say what they ought to say.

Although women are important pillars of the novella, they are demoted to subsidiary roles of being appendages to men whom they love and look up to the extent that they annihilate their own identities and voices as women. This is attributed to the fact that the women seek oneness with the imperialists who carry the white man’s burden and work for the so-called “noble cause”. This type of depiction calls into memory the saintly persona inherent in the Victorian literary canon. For instance, the tears and the naïve devotion of The Intended, a female character in Conrad's text, to the memory of Kurtz, the male protagonist inscribe her character with the marks of laudable virgo femininity. This type of dignified devotion to a man that Marlow knows to have betrayed her with his African Mistress enormously awes him simply because he belongs to a culture in which the virago was regarded with apprehension and disdain while the virgo was regarded with love and reverence.

One of the thematic challenges fraught with connotations of sexism is Marlow’s awareness of the evils of European imperialism while oblivious to gender prejudice or what might be called female otherness and subalterinity. It might be argued that the novelist seems to have been interested in images of women in terms of their otherness from men, and, specifically, in their ambiguous or complex status as simultaneously essential members of the imperialist framework and second-class citizens in imperialist states, excluded from full participation in decision-making. This is why it is important to examine the complex or contradictory presence of women in the text, as this paper attempts to do through establishing a connection between Girard’s mimetic theory and the motives behind the female characters’ adherence to the traditional patriarchal code of female silence.

An example of the ideologically complacent role women in the novella subscribe to and unquestionably embrace is the silence of the African Mistress. Her imposed silence reinstates her position as the loveable intriguing female who is similar to the African continent in its darkness and bewitchingly attractive magic. Another striking example is the naivety of the Intended and her decision to silently love Kurtz and live on his memory for the rest of her life because she believes that true love defies the capacity of language to communicate it fully. Psychologically,
Kurtz is not only her fiancé but also an ideological model worthy of her emulation and devotion. This relates to the idea of the contagious human mimicry which is deeply rooted in the human nature.

The springboard for Girard’s mimetic theory is “acquisitive mimesis” (Girard, 1979, p. 9). Girard suggests that much of human behavior is based on “mimesis” or imitation. What Girard describes is a situation where two individuals desire the same object, and since they both attempt to obtain this object, their behavior becomes “conflictual,” because there is only one object and two people. This results in “Violence” which “is generated by this process; or rather, violence is the process itself when two or more partners try to prevent one another from appropriating the object they all desire through physical or other means” (Girard, 1979, p. 9). In this way, Girard “takes issue with the dominant conflict models” that concentrate on aggression or scarcity as the basic sources of conflict. These models maintain that most of our problems directly result from the concentration of wealth and power as well as from colonialism and exploitation (Farley, 1987, p. 17-18).

In light of the aforementioned arguments, this paper examines gender identity in Conrad’s novella in order to provide answers for the following questions: Why is it throughout Heart of Darkness that the female characters are muted and silenced? What is the writer’s motive behind his insistence on the argument that female voicelessness epitomizes the most desirable feminine attributes? To what extent can women in Heart of Darkness be analyzed with reference to Girard’s mimetic desire - triangle theory? The paper also makes connections between the novella, the theory and the passivity of its female figures as accounted for within the stable slots of the theory. This is to fill some of the gaps that may exist in Girard’s triangle by the addition of two extra slots to the Girardian shape, namely the slot of violence and the slot of the reader’s response.

**Purpose of the Study**

This study aims to probe into interpretations of gender identity in Conrad’s novella and to provide answers for the following questions: Why is it throughout Heart of Darkness that the female characters are muted and silenced? What is the writer’s motive behind his insistence on the argument that female voicelessness epitomizes the most desirable feminine attributes? To what extent can women in Heart of Darkness be analyzed with reference to Girard’s mimetic desire - triangle theory? The study also examines the connection between the novella and the theory and the passivity of its female figures as accounted for within the stable slots of the theory. This is to fill some of the gaps that may exist in Girard’s triangle by the addition of two extra slots to the Girardian shape, namely the slot of violence and the slot of the reader’s response.

**Methodology**

The paper adopts an analytical framework for the study of the female figures in Conrad’s text. It attempts to account for their passivity and naivety by placing them in the subject slot of Girard’s triangle with its angles labeled each by its distinctive title, and then to stick Kurtz in the model slot while Africa in that of the object. This is to argue that the impression the researcher has got about the women of the novella and its events needs to be modified in order to show that femininity is the victim of a special kind of imperialism. Therefore, Girard’s triadic shape, for
the purpose of this paper, is the main variable, according to which any mimetic relationship could be expanded into three dimensions, and then configured, in a triangular shape. That being said, Girard’s model provides a convenient framework that adequately accounts for the acceptance of the female characters in Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* to the traditional roles ascribed to them on two stages. The first stage is when Marlow and the women are the subject while Africa is the “object” and “Kurtz” is the “mediator “or the model and the second stage is when the shift takes place and things are inverted. However, this subtle understanding of the human psyche does not mean that Girard has not missed other corners that would be useful if added to his model. Hence, this paper elaborates on the psychological triangle and expands it a little in order to incorporate both the slot of “influence” which is basically violence as an end product of the violent mimicry and the slot of the "reader’s position” who takes a certain position from the narrative events.

**Figure.1.** The positions of Conrad’s characters in Girard’s model prior to Marlow’s journey into the 'heart of darkness'

**Girard’s theory**

In his first book *Deceit, desire and the Novel* published in 1961, Girard promotes his mimetic-desire triangular theory, arguing that the person’s desire for a certain object is not provoked by the object itself but by another person who possesses the same object. In other words, individuals’ relation to the desirable object they wish to possess is indirect since there is always another thing in between the object and the “_desirer_” of that object which is the slot of the object-possessor or the “mediator”. Consequently, what is seen as a direct relationship turns out to be an utterly triangular one consisting of three autonomous slots. The first one is the “subject” slot that is the person who desires to possess something. The second one is the “model” slot or the object possessor who is highly dignified and valued in the eye of the subject. And the last angle of Girard’s triangle is the “object” corner which exceeds its being a mere physical or materialistic object to include other psychological desires.
According to Girard’s theory, we, the subject of the system, are not directly attracted to the object we desire to have. Rather we are first attracted to the model, and then perceive the model in a highly desirable or perfect situation. Thus, we persistently attempt to attain such a high position, and be as perfect as the model itself by possessing the object, the thing that ascribes the sense of perfection to the model at least in the eye of the subject. Girard concludes that the desire for the subject is quenched, and that s/he’s satisfied when s/he becomes in a parallel corner to that perfect one in which the model stands. This, therefore, makes the “satisfied” subject a model in the eye of many other subjects. Moreover, Girard emphasizes that we borrow our desires from others. In doing so, we realize that we are not autonomous; rather, we are intricately engaged in a sophisticated system in which our desires for a certain object are provoked by the desire of another person for the same object (1961, p. 138).

To conclude, the basis of Girard’s mimetic theory is the principle that human beings are mimetic creatures because they imitate what they see in other people. In other words, our desires are copied from others and not largely our own. The more we imitate each other, the more similar we become. Consequently, “[d]istinctions between individuals are blurred as they mirror each other,” and the boundaries between individuals which keep order start to disintegrate. This rivalry creates violence, and the blurred boundaries pose a serious threat which destabilizes the social fabric” (Skylar, 2012, p. 1).

According to Girard’s theory, the primitive man found the scapegoat as a solution to this threat by placing responsibility for his distress and hatred on one individual or group of individuals. To phrase it differently, a community’s violence becomes polarized against the ones being blamed for the violence, so they become the scapegoats for the bad happenings in the community. Order and peace can only be restored by expelling or killing the scapegoat. This “single act of sanctioned violence becomes like a vaccination against the disease of chaotic, out of control violence” (Skylar, 2012, p. 2). The above-mentioned aspect of Girard’s theory is useful in the discussion which places the black natives and the female figures in the same slot in the same vicious machine which sustains imperialism, as will be argued later.

**Analysis of the female characters in the light of Girard’s theory**

According to Hayder Ali, the female figures in the novella are relegated to “a one dimensional state” because Conrad “promotes” sexism by depicting them as feeble, ignorant and grieving persons who are completely dependent on men. (Ali, 2008, p. 1).

Marlow “submits to the prejudices” of his period with regard to things which are important to the dignity of women. (Ali, 2008, p. 1). In attempting to interpret this prejudice in light of Girard’s theory, one finds that Mark I. Wallace lists several common victims who are fit to be scapegoats in the world of men: one group is women along with the poor, old people, those with physical abnormalities, members of racial or ethnic minorities, and "those whose natural endowments (beauty, intelligence, charm) or status (wealth, position) mark them as exceptional" (1994, p. 253). Depending on this view, Marlow and Kurtz seem to manipulate women in the novella in order to attain their goals, not to be at one with their social norms. This makes the female characters one dimensional especially as the males in the novella decide not to tell them about the Congo experience because women would never accept to remain in the subject slot and would never look up to men as models.
Marlow’s and Conrad’s sexism emerges from “the entirely patriarchal European world of which both author and character were products” (Roberts, 2006, p. 458). Men, unlike women, are the only ones who are ascribed the roles of power in this culture. In order to keep this patriarchal system of control, they treat women as “sexual scapegoats” (Roberts, 2006, p. 458). Being a scapegoat is a second important step in Girard’s theory: “bringing into existence a scapegoat, which is necessary due to the increasing cycle of violence that occurs between the doubles. Their anger and hostility must be vigorously dispersed or vented, as opposed to being a process open to transformation by introspection or meditation (i.e. something like a psychoanalytic or spiritual approach)” (Townsley, 2003, p. 5).

Obviously, Andrew Roberts views women in the novella as sexual objects whose femininity is subjected to scapegoating on the altar of colonialism. Kurtz’s African Mistress is as violated betrayed and as Africa itself , and his fiancé’s long tantalization during his stay in the Congo and her perpetual morbid attachment to his memory after death are tantamount to the subjection of the black natives, if not much more agonizing. Here, it is possible to draw a parallel between, Townsley’s argument and the women of Heart of Darkness in the sense that men use women as scapegoats physically or psychologically in order to release their anger. Above all, women seem to blindly subscribe to the role of the scapegoat, thinking that they are serving and guarding glorious ideas and noble dreams. Thus, possessing the body of the black native woman by Kurtz is a way of subduing Africa. By the same token, imperializing the mind of the Intended is Kurtz’s only way of marketing his colonialism in Europe.

In addition, Jeremy Hawthorn contests that Conrad denies the women of Heart of Darkness the right of possessing human dimensions such as self-expression and participation in decision-making. By juxtaposition Kurtz’s Intended to the African mistress, Conrad makes women one dimensional. The Intended is extremely devoted and exceptionally chaste while the other is “sensual and sexual flesh” (Hawthorn, 2006, p. 409). This juxtaposition is crucial to the argument about imperializing women and exploiting them to be tools for Imperialism, as will be shown in this paper. On the one hand, the Intended is mentally colonized as to serve in the subject slot in Girard’s theory. As a Christian virgo, she believes that her fiancé is devoted to a noble cause and that the least she could do for him is to show devotion and to identify with the ideal world he, according to her, represents. On the other hand, the African mistress is physically colonized by those who colonize and rob the land and hence are entitled to possess its women. The sexual union of Kurtz and the African mistress is marred by the violence of the imperialist against the imperialized ; that is, if the African mistress were a man, Kurtz would kill her and hang her head on a post as he did to the rebels of her people. This is part of the violence that results from rivalry between the black natives and the colonizers for the same object; i.e. Africa.

Relevant to this argument is Amanda Conklin’s analysis of the role of women in Heart of Darkness where states that Conrad treats his female characters in a traditional way although his critique of imperialism is essentially progressive (2014, p. 1). In his attempt to highlight the belittlement of women in a male-dominated society, Conrad leaves his female characters unnamed while their speech is reduced to the minimum in ways that make it unheard. Conrad’s treatment of women reinforces the chasm between the realms of men and women, where the latter are portrayed as “unnatural entities, voiceless and agentless, to their male counterparts” (Conklin, 2014, p. 1). They either hold “ignorant” conceptions like Kurtz’s mistress or seem to
be alien to the material found in men’s world; therefore, calamity befalls the men who have the courage to breach the boundary between the two separate realms (Conklin, 2014, p. 1).

This decision to keep the female figures ignorant of the Congo experience implies that women are kept away from the world of men for a good reason. If a woman is granted the right to cross the boundaries, she may denounce her own beliefs, and this justifies why Conrad’s women glorify false ideals and embrace naïve illusions made by men to get their support. It thus seems that women’s bodies and minds are an indispensible provision in the world of imperialism.

Accordingly, for the female figures in Heart of Darkness to remain provisional tools of imperialism they should remain invisible and silent. Gabrielle McIntire sums up female invisibility in two instances. The first instance is when Marlow’s insistence on inviting the readers to believe that women are outside the world of the Congo experience by “figuring [them] as palimpsestic, ghost-like, half-presences” (McIntire 2002, p. 258). The Second one is further bolstered by the unwillingness of some critics like Murfin and Ross to look into their roles per se but rather their ancillary position to Marlow’s adventure and their relevance to the details of his quest in the Congo which is indeed an excessively feminized and passive position (McIntire 2002, p. 258). It is probably deemed plausible for Marlow to approve of the marginal roles that the female characters in his narrative have in order to be at one with the stereotypes of his time because the opposite would be endowing them with an inappropriately masculine voice. Hence, women are needed to thoughtlessly support men rather than to step into men’s world as equals.

Oh, she is out of it – completely. They – the women I mean – are out of it. We must help them to stay in that beautiful world of their own, lest our world gets worse. Oh, she had to be out of it (Conrad, 1996, p. 29).

Obviously, this protected sexist separation can be accounted for by applying Girard's mimetic theory. In other words, for imperialism to achieve its purposes, women should remain in the subject slot in Girard’s triadic theory where they willingly, or unwillingly, serve men either in the colony such as the African woman who does the laundry and Kurtz’s mistress or in the metropole such as Marlow’s aunt and Kurtz's Intended who are devoted to the glorious idea of civilizing and Christianizing the African people the they think their role models represent.

This poses a critical question here regarding the reasons why men refrain from explaining the Congo experience to the women of the novella. Amanda Conklin maintains if the male experience of the Congo is explained to the women, the boundary separating women from the truth will be blurred. Only one woman is able to see that men who are removed from civilization are substantially transformed. Kurtz’s mistress is equipped with more forceful language than any other female character in the novella. Even though she is voiceless, she has a force of her own. However, Kurtz’s attachment to her proves to be eventually “fatal”. By having a mistress, Kurtz seems to have crossed the boundary between the world of men and that of women and, therefore, he loses “the stability of brotherhood bonds,” which brings about his horrid death (2014, p. 2). This implies that the model of Girard's theory loses its glamour when it gets closer to the subject.

Consequently, the separation of the sphere of women from that of men is the bond that links Marlow to Kurtz even after the latter’s death, given that it maintains the brotherhood of
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Sabrah

males in *Heart of Darkness*. This accounts for Marlow’s lie to the Intended since it serves to position women in a world of falsehood manipulated by men who keep women ignorant of the truth (Bloom, 2008, p. 30). As Nina Strauss contests, “[h]eroic maleness is defined precisely in adverse relation to delusional femininity” and this elucidates a vaguely expressed idea that haunts the text regarding the patriarchal orientation and the Victorian stereotypes of the epoch in which the novella was written (2004, p. 207). It is possible to say that women’s ideals of heroism can only be achieved through their men, and that women should accept naively the falsehood that men present to them. This relates to Girard’s theory. Men are the ones who possess the ‘object’ _ Africa_ which they want to get hold of in order to civilize and Christianize the native brutes living there. This, on the one hand, unmasks the propaganda that men spread among women in their virtual world. It, on the other, shows that women willingly embrace the role of the ‘subject’ who imitates the mediator, or the role model, in order to reach his status of fullness by possessing the same ‘object’ which, in this case, is the noble cause and its resultant wealth that women benefit from as a reward for being the sole keepers of the naïve illusions that men force them to protect.

Thus women in Conrad’s novella live in a dependent inferior world. Conklin is justified in saying that women are “unnatural parts of a man’s world because, unlike men, they have no voice and/or agency” (2009, p. 3). This is what stimulates Harold Bloom to conclude that what Marlow fears the feeling that strong females would “threaten to devour his masculine identity”(101). In other words, *Heart of Darkness* clutches to the older ideology of separate gendered spheres in an attempt to “resolve the contradictions of Marlow’s position vis-à-vis Kurtz” (Smith, 1996, p. 176).

This shows that Conrad silences or objectifies women in his text by depriving them of their voice in order to keep them outside the sphere of men which they would never understand (Hinkle, 2007, p. 3). This means that women are kept in the dark to emphasize the need for two separate worlds without a grey area in the middle (Conklin, 2014, p.3). This ideology of separate spheres emphasizes how “the masculine production of feminine identity works in the interests of the dominant identity (Murfin, 1996, p.30). Hence, women find themselves forced to depend on men’s version of the truth in order to have clear notions of what happens outside their households.

‘You forget, dear Charlie, that the laborer is worthy of his hire,’ she said brightly
It’s queer how out of touch with truth women are. They live in a world of their own, and there had never been anything like it and never can be. It’s too beautiful altogether, and if they were to set it up it would go to pieces before the first sunset. Some confounded fact we men have been living contentedly with ever since the day of creation [until something] would start up and knock the whole thing over (Conrad, 1996, p. 27).

Subsequently, the aim of Conrad’s narrative is to “colonize” and “pacify” both women and savage darkness. Like the black natives, women are not only denied the right to oppose the will of the white men, but they are also expected to facilitate the task of the white imperialists. Even Marlow’s speech is expressed in a way which enables him to produce his own masculine version “to keep the darkness at bay”(Smith, 1996, p. 169). He manages to do so by symbolizing
Kurtz’s mistress and the company women as well as by silencing the native laundress; eventually he reconstructs his experience of the darkness they stand for (Smith, 1996, p. 169). On the other hand, Dmitri Kaminiar states that Conrad criticizes the way the English society treats women and scorns their treatment of native Africans. It seems that Conrad views the white man as the culprit who relegates women to an inferior position and treats them the way he treats the people of another race as both are assigned submissive roles (2007, p. 4). It seems that both the Africans and women are required to play the roles assigned to them by the white men, and that both will be punished if they deviate from boundaries set to them. Still, women will benefit from imperializing Africa unlike the black natives who get nothing but victimization and violence.

An in-depth reading of the novella can reveal the gap between imperial oppression and masculine oppression. The former is clearly visible to Marlow when the natives are sent to the grove of death, while the latter is intentionally invisible to him because he believes that it is natural for a native woman to do a white man’s laundry. In a sense, Marlow’s power as a masculine narrator is indicated through the laundress’s silence power that conceals her story and the stories of other silent women in Heart of Darkness (Smith, 1996, p. 173). This suggests that the novella reiterates the ambivalence of both the characters and their author regarding their efficacy and propriety of speech for the principal female figures. Thus, it is possible to find a connection between speech as opposed to silence and otherness as opposed to silence: to be excluded from a powerful manner of speaking confirms one's place outside an established community. If Marlow’s remarks are related to the status of women as “Other” in Heart of Darkness and to the popular perception dominant in the time of writing the novella, one finds that women's speech or lack of speech, confirms their positions with respect to an institutionally circumscribed environment—which, according to this logic, justifies their being ostracized as “Other.”

As Marlow distances women from his memory as he embarks on his journey to the Congo, the memory of the old woman imposes itself on him again as she intrudes in the shape of “the knitting old woman with the cat (Smith, 1996, p. 176).” This reappearance suggests that Marlow attempts to separate the “realm of domesticity” from the “colonial adventure,” and, therefore, the separation of the feminine from the masculine (Smith, 1996, p. 176). Indeed if these realms are to meet, colonialism will lose its sustaining discourse of deception. Hence, women should never come to realize that their femininity is a special form of imperialistic victimization.

… What [men] have said so far, for the most part, stems from the opposition activity/passivity, from the power of relation between a fantasized obligatory virility meant to invade, to colonize, and the consequential phantasm of woman as a dark continent to penetrate and to pacify (Cixous, 1976, p. 877).

The complex undertones of Hélène Cixous’ notion obviously question the validity of the stereotype of the silent passive woman: a virginal, enclosed, uncorrupted woman, privileged as having attained a status closer to the traditional ideal than that of her loquacious female counterparts simply because women are treated not only as objects but also as tools of imperialism penetrated and colonized exactly like the dark continent.
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The final aspect to elaborate on in relation to Girard’s theory is Kurtz’s self-destruction at the end of the narrative. “Kurtz’s tragedy could not be a simple revolt of the inhabitants of the area. It had to symbolize the destruction of the white man through his very inspirations which led him, tainted by the greed for profit, too close to the primitive and barbarous which released the same suppressed instinct in himself” (Sherry, 1970, p. 118). Following Girard's theory of the scapegoat, it is possible to say that Kurtz’s violence against the black men emerges as a revengeful attempt to restore his “stolen” mode of being the prestigious “model” of Girard’s triangle. Thus, Kurtz does not measure his victory upon his victims by the mere fact that he succeeds in urging them to worship him and to allow him to rob the wealth of the Congo. On the contrary, he does so by the real level of their devastation. As a result, Kurtz’s revengeful behavior emphasizes Kenneth Buke's argument that “it is not enough for the person to succeed in his endeavors to accomplish what he wants;” rather the person who competes with him “must also fail or even be crushed out” (1975, p. 177). On top of that, the endeavor is more serious because law and order are completely missing in the Congo experience, so the darkness in Man’s heart and his propensity for violence go unchecked. The following sections analyze the female figures in light of the aforementioned arguments. The first female figure is Marlow’s aunt who is enthusiastic about getting Marlow appointed skipper of a river steamboat thinking that in doing so she serving a noble cause and promoting a glorious idea; yet, she is ignorant of the horrible atrocities of the white men in the Congo. Demonstrating ignorance similar to that of the aunt, Kurtz’s Intended turns a deaf ear to anything that distorts Kurtz’s image, and prefers to live in her own false shell. In contrast to the idealized presentation of the Intended, the African mistress is a second-rate sensual figure incarnating the usurped African continent. In short, even though Conrad’s female figures are disproportionately deprived of power positions and attaining full humanity, the black mistress suffers a two-forged type of prejudice, and is put to a more inferior position than that of the two white women.

The Aunt

Conrad’s presentation of Marlow’s aunt reveals sexism. The aunt is anxious about helping Marlow; still, he is ashamed of having asked her for help (Ali, 2008, p. 1-2). This suggests that it is degrading for a man to gain access to work through asking women’s help:

… I tried the woman. I, Charlie Marlow, set the women to work to get a job. Heavens! (Conrad, 1974, p. 8).

The idea that a man’s access to work by means of women’s help might be an embarrassing thing that Marlow repulsively rejects. This tells why Marlow’s use of the word “women” in plural form makes this attitude amount to the level of a fixed rule. Here one may say that Marlow is aware of the “_otherness_” of women and of the importance of keeping them away from the sphere of men even before he gets involved in the Congo experience. This means that male chauvinism is deeply rooted or inscribed in his mentality and behavior to the extent that he realizes that women are relegated to the back seats just to clap for the white imperialists.

Moreover, the portrayal of the aunt shows that she is a woman “out of touch with the truth because she has no idea of what life in Africa is really like. According to her, Marlow is on a mission of some sort while he tries unsuccessfully to convince her that the aim of her company is first and foremost to make profits. The aunt, the doctor and the women who keep knitting in
the company show indifference and ignorance of the realities of colonialism (Jeffares, 1994, p. xviii). Actually, the aunt is not specifically ignorant; rather, she has her own falsified attitudes towards imperialism, as is evident in her tendency to legitimize robbing the colonized natives as a reward that the white deserve for the alleged services of civilizing and Christianizing them oblivious of the claim that this mission is the noble cause that the white claim they voluntarily serve.

Marlow’s aunt and Kurtz’s Intended, the two European women in the novella are not silenced. Nevertheless, Marlow mocks their lack of imperial experience, and offers his manly experience to them as he considers himself essentially aware of the truth. Both women merely echo Kurtz’s beliefs about imperialism; thus, Marlow’s portrayal of these women represents his relentless effort to combine an ideology of imperialism with that ideology of separate sexiest spheres (Smith, 1996, p. 177). Part of this ideology states that women should perceive imperialism as a service which the white men perform to the black natives (Christianizing and civilizing Africa) and-in turn this service deserves provision (the wealth of Africa). This is to keep women blind from and unaware of the real intentions or motives of imperialism. Otherwise, it will reveal the underlying level of a hideous reality marred by rivalry and violence which goes a step further when Kurtz is about to kill his Russian friend for a piece of ivory.

Therefore, both the aunt and the Intended are kept away from the reality of their _world_, for the two characters, despite their differences, are women who merely accompany the imperialistic manly men of Europe (Kaminiar, 2007, p. 1) as ardent believers in their illusions. Both white men and white women have families, friends and social relationships and it is normal that they will support them or argue on their behalf if they get hurt. Yet, this does not apply to the black people if they are victimized by the white people. Hence, they all unite against the natives in a way identical to the Girardian concept of scapegoating those people whose death will not lead to reprisals.

In short, Marlow’s aunt fits in the subject slot of Rene Girard’s model because she looks up to the white imperialists and legitimizes their possession of the object of her mimetic desire, Africa. A keeper of imperialist claims to the wealth of Africa, the aunt’s moral support compensates her inability as a female to go to the heart of darkness in order to colonize the Congo. She seems to idolize the white imperialists who make her believe their chivalric lie.

**Kurtz’s Mistress**

Kurtz’s African mistress represents “an allegory of Africa” who has a future that imperialist Europe may never have (Kaminiar, 2007, p. 3). A black native woman, she represents the untamed wilderness and, hence, serves to “facture Kurtz’s self-control.” (Simons, 2007, p. 102). She worked to break Kurtz’s bonds with his society and promoted his loss in the freedom of the jungle (Simons, 2007, p. 102). Having associated himself with the African mistress, Kurtz crosses the boundaries between the subject and the model of Girard’s theory thereby resulting in the devastation of the model.

Despite having a black skin color, Kurtz’s mistress is described as lavishly decorated with all sorts of flashy decorations, beads and charms as well as with tattoos of various colors. The way she is described in the novella corresponds with her role as “an avatar” of the Dark
Continent in the sense that both are full of life; yet, this life is mysteriously dark and dangerous (Kaminiar, 2007, p. 2). According to Edward Said, Conrad realizes that “darkness” could be either colonized or illuminated, and this implies that colonialism in one way or another is nothing but dominance and land-grabbing. However, what is missing in Conrad’s argument here is the fact that imperialism has to come to an end, and that the native Africans should be freed from European domination. “As a creature of his time, Conrad could not grant the natives their freedom, despite his severe critique of the imperialism that enslaved them” (1994, p. 30). This is represented in the character of Marlow who is closer to the subject slot; that is, because it is impossible for him to be in the slot of the black natives. Thus, colonialism and violence go hand-in-hand because the object of imperialism has its legitimate possessors who will give their lives to defend it.

On the other hand, Padmini Mongia maintains that the “savage” woman who appears when Marlow is carried unto Marlow’s ship stands for “the nexus where the discourses of imperialism and patriarchy coincide” because her physical union with Kurtz brought two opposite poles together (1993, p. 146-7). The black mistress’s love for Kurtz denotes both colonialism and betrayal. That is her body is colonized exactly like Africa; however, her soul betrays her nation when she surrenders to the colonist.

The white colonists consider her an African plunder. Marlow, for example describes the savage woman’s adornments in details and then concludes that “she must have had the value of several elephant tusks upon her” (Murfin HOD, 1996, p. 77). Here the woman’s body is commodified; it becomes a commodity on which value is placed. This entails that she is associated with the wealth of Africa which nurtures the greed of the white man.

However, Kurtz’s mistress with her “animal vitality” stands in sharp contrast to his European fiancée who dedicates her entire life to his memory or rather to the lie she wants to believe, making her home and life similar to a cemetery (Cox, 1974, p. xviii). Therefore, the Intended’s position in the subject slot, according to Girard’s theory, is secure unlike the African mistress who can be placed in both the subject slot and the object slot.

Commenting on the differences between the European fiancée and the African mistress Chinua Achebe contests that:

The most significant difference is the one implied in the author's bestowal of human expression to the one and the withholding of it from the other. It is clearly not part of Conrad's purpose to confer language on the rudimentary souls of Africa. In place of speech they made a violent babble of uncouth sounds. They exchanged short grunting phrases even among themselves. But most of the time they were too busy with their frenzy. There are two occasions in the book, however, when Conrad departs somewhat from his practice and confers speech, even English speech, on the savages. The first occurs when cannibalism gets the better of them (1977, p. 4)

Achebe’s criticism is better understood in light of the early responses to Heart of Darkness, they mainly focused on the aesthetic aspects of the text. They show that the narrative language is “atmospheric and beautiful” while the “race” aspect is completely missing. This is
not unexpected if one takes into consideration that “racism was not even a word and race thinking was seen as something so natural, that they were completely blind to it.” (Svensson, 2010, p. 17)

To sum up, the African Mistress is the only female figure in the novella who transcends the barrier between the subject and the object slots. She occupies both the subject slot through her love and admiration of Kurtz and the object slot when she allows a white man to possess and commodify her the way he possesses her own country. However, she is not perceived as a suitable soulmate to Kurtz. Unlike the Intended, she is likely to go over Kurtz’s death.

The Intended

A keen reading of Conrad’s portrayal of the Intended reveals that Kurtz is the very reason of her desire to live. Her disparate need for Kurtz explains why his death shatters her and deprives her of the wish to survive. Having comprehended her plight, Marlow lies to her “not only to escape the darkness that enveloped Kurtz but also to perpetuate a world in which women are dependent upon men, no matter how falsely virtuous they might perceive the men to be” (Ali, 2008, p. 3). Conversely, Marlow suggests that he has actually sacrificed Kurtz’s a bereaved Intended to her own “saving lie”. This validates the pain that Marlow has inflicted on her as she asks him to repeat Kurtz’s last words with unspeakably wild ecstasy (Smith, 1996, p. 181). Kurtz must have felt extremely guilty for having fabricated this lie as he feels that the sky is about to fall on his head. Broken-hearted, she beseeches Marlow to say them again:

Repeat them, ‘she murmured in a heart-broken tone. ‘I want- I want– something- something to live with’” (Jeffares HOD, 1994, p. 117)

On the other hand, Marlow could have had a hidden desire to possess Kurtz entirely, so he must “shield” his only competitor—the Intended—from the truth about Kurtz and keep his awful legacy “safe and unsullied by feminine hands” (Walker, 2006, p. 43). As Nina Strauss emphasizes Marlow constructs his own version of the truth in order to guard his secret knowledge from the woman who is capable of “deconstruct[ing] and demystify[ing] ” it, should she attain access to the masculine sphere (2004, p. 214). In doing so, Marlow’s position in the subject slot in Girard’s triangle is more fixed than that of the women of the novella. This suggests it is necessary for him to eliminate any grounds for women’s departure from the subject slot, that is why he covers Kurtz’s back and protects his position in the model slot.

In addition, the dedication and fidelity of Kurtz’s Intended along with her morbid grief stimulates Marlow to utter a lie. He prefers to lie than to shatter her world of love and her belief world of make-believe for that matter (Conklin, 2009, p. 2). In doing so, Marlow fails his test of devotion to the truth; still he succeeds in keeping the Intended away from the reality of his world as a man. Hence, she will never know the transformation that befalls Kurtz in the jungle and she will always clutch to a false image of the man. It seems that there is a bond linking Marlow to Kurtz even after the latter’s death (Simmons, 2007, p. 102).

Furthermore, Kurtz’s Intended is “a perfect spiritual counterpart to Kurtz” whose “tomb-like dwelling floating walk and black clothes” seem to be melding with Kurtz. Her deep
mourning after one year of Kurtz’s departure symbolizes not only her role as a bride but also her role as the metaphor for the imperialistic Europe which only considers the white man’s side of the story and fails to give the least attention to the devastation of those who possess the object they are after (Kaminiar, 2007, p. 2-3). Accordingly, being conceived with the admiration of the colonizer of Africa who also colonizes her heart and her existence, she seems to cherish her sorrow and delight in her mourning:

She carried her sorrowful head as though she were proud of that sorrow, as though she would say, I-I alone know how to mourn for him as he deserves. But while we were still shaking hands, such a look of awful desolation came upon her face that I perceived she was one of those creatures that are not the playthings of Time (Jeffares HOD, p. 113).

Although Kurtz’s fiancée is essentially an idealistic person capable of belief, fidelity and suffering, she manipulates life to be what she wants to be. When Marlow lies to her in order to keep her ideal of Kurtz the way it is, she does not try to find the truth for herself. Obviously, she can be regarded as a symbol of European idealism or rather of Europe’s purposeful production of falsehood pertaining to the motives of imperialism(Jeffares, 1994: xviii):

―I have been very happy –very fortunate. Too happy for a little while. And now I am unhappy for-for life‖ (Jeffares HOD, 1994, p. 116).

The way Marlow treats the Intended epitomizes “the good Victorian imperialist and patriarch” in ways similar to Kurtz who stands for “the enlightened Victorian missionary” who has gone corrupt in his relations with the native Africans within the story told by Marlow (Walker, 2006, p. 43-44). A question arises at this point: does Kurtz’s Intended need to be protected by lying? As Walker suggests, she does not need this type of rescue because she is capable of securing her authorship, of “an alternative narrative or 'lie' which performs the work of a feminist critique on Marlow's narrative that precedes it, and exposes the many 'delusions' at play” (Walker, 2006, p. 48). Different from other female figures, she steps in and imposes her co-authorship on the narrative and in doing so she disrupts Marlow’s narrative and forces him to tell a different version of the truth. In contrast to Marlow’s scheme, the Intended imposes her own authorship on both “the story that will govern her life, and of the Modern age that imagines it can leave her behind” (Walker, 2006, p. 48). To wrap things up, the Intended is irreversibly dedicated to her subject of idolatry and a lie is not needed to keep her in the subject slot of Kurtz’s fans. In addition, a thorough analysis of her discourse with Marlow reveals that she goes as far as putting words which embody her wishful thinking into his mouth.

However, if one seeks to account for the Intended’s sickly attachment to Kurtz even after his death, one finds she fits into something similar in Girard’s theory which Forsyth describes as “Deindividuation”. In other words, individuals can get deeply submerged in the group to the extent that they no longer need to stand out as individuals. This feeling could result in a “reduction of inner restraints and, in the extreme, atypical actions” (1990, p. 442). As such, the Intended is typically a white woman who fully identifies herself with the so-called white man’s burden and “the noble cause” which as a collective European principle that she reduces in the
character of her fiancé. Consequently, her radical dedication to model leads to her total submersion in Kurtz whom she sees as all Europe.

The Painting

When analyzing the role of women in *Heart of Darkness*, one should not overlook two important points. Firstly, the reason why Marlow “exerted an effort to keep them mostly out of his narrative in an attempt to keep them out of his own world” although he knows that his world would go into pieces without them (Starrett, 2012, p. 1). Secondly, the symbolic value of the painting of the woman who is “draped and blindfolded, carrying a lighted torch” (Conrad, 1947, p. 523). It is possible to argue that Conrad wants to say that women are the ones who carry the torch to light the way for men. However, one needs to interpret why the woman in the painting is blindfolded, unlike all women in the novella who are ascribed indispensable roles in directing the helm of Marlow’s quest despite being unaware of their self-esteem and the inspiration they unknowingly provide. In light of Girard’s theory, Marlow is a model who is looked up to, thus all women are blindly ready to give him help without questioning his motives. As such, men produce the falsehood about the noble cause of Christianizing and civilizing the brutes while women consume it with great devotion. Men mask their real intentions and women fail to unmask them as their desired deluded femininity is cautiously sheltered.

Imperializing women and Girard’s model

As argued in the previous sections, the white male characters in *Heart of Darkness* do not only imperialize Africa and its natives; rather, they succeeded in imperializing femininity in order to achieve their ulterior motives. Women are portrayed in ways similar to the pieces of chess in the sense that they are assigned certain roles and identities and are then checkmated when the player decides to do so. Ostensibly, each woman in the narrative plays the role assigned to her without realizing that she is not allowed to transcend the margin or the space that confines her, literally and metaphorically.

As far as Girard’s theory is concerned, one finds that women are not only subjects who aspire to the model but are also objects exactly as is Africa and its natives who are victimized in order to satisfy the salient desire of the white men for (the ivory of the Congo). This means that rivalry does not only exist between the white men and the black natives; rather, it exists among the whites themselves. The black natives are ignorantly attached to Kurtz and worship him as do the women of the novella who not only embrace the marginal roles assigned to them but also believe in them as the only ones they can have.

Women are indeed similar to the scapegoats of Girard’s theory, where Jeramy Townsley argues that “the victim often does not disagree with the charges laid against him/her, and the scapegoaters themselves believe the charges. Part of the nature of the scapegoating mechanism is that, not only do the scapegoaters not know that they are scapegoating, but often the scapegoat believes the charges to be true”(2003, p. 12).

Since change dominates all stages of Marlow’s quest, things change and need to be viewed through a different scope after Marlow filters the Congo experience through his own consciousness and offers a modified mild view of imperialism. Roles are altered; consequently, all that we have to do is simply to interchange the Girardian constant labels and the novella
characters; that is, to put Marlow in the “model” corner and the people of the Congo in the “subject” angle of the triangle. At the beginning, Kurtz is admired and unrivalled; yet, at the end of the story Marlow seems to be closer, at least for the white readers, to the slot of the model because he neither approves of the atrocities of the white colonizers, nor utterly denounces the legitimacy of their presence in the Dark Continent. The idolatry of Kurtz by the black people secures his movement to the object slot because they want to possess Kurtz and keep him for themselves. The resulting modified shape appears as follows:

![Diagram](image_url)

Figure 2. The positions of Conrad’s characters in Girard’s model after Marlow’s journey into the heart of darkness

Since the reader’s response is one of the major factors in reading a literary work, one should always take the reader’s position into consideration. In most cases the reader identifies with a specific narrative character; yet, his/her position changes as the events of the story change. Hence, the view of the reader changes through the progression of the narrative. This shows that Kurtz does not keep the role of the powerful model admired by readers; consequently, the reader’s obsession with Kurtz, the previous model, is directed toward Marlow.

All in all, it might be concluded that the reader is not actually attracted to the changing characters themselves as s/he seems to be; instead s/he is attracted to the stable or fixed “model” slot of the triangle or more precisely to the “model” slot of the quinary circle. Irrespective of the character occupying this slot, the reader can be still obsessed with the same model slot, and that whoever stands in that corner, becomes undoubtedly the reader’s model. In other words, the reader is neither drawn to Kurtz nor attracted to the one who receives his legacy, Marlow. More or less; he is rather attracted to the model, the slot whose characters are not stable.

Accordingly, the reader’s perspective to things remains an outsider one since the reader is obviously still to some extent a detached observer standing away from the novella and the theory.
because s/he is not one of its characters, and so his view has been treated with some caution to distinguish it from the one held between the characters themselves towards each other. Hence, another question at this stage is: Is the reader’s attitude towards the model in reality different from that towards the same model s/he reads about in a work of fiction such as Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*?

The answer to this question directs attention towards another important dimension namely the “violence” dimension, as argued previously. Firstly, the reader’s desire to imitate fictional characters seen as role models, is similar to that desire of any “subject” character to imitate the model and to reach a parallel situation. Yet, the reader-model relationship is not accompanied with the tendency of violence or revenge towards the model as it is the case when it comes to the character-character relationship. Therefore, the reader’s desire remains merely a desire not replaced by the idea of revenge. Nonetheless, violence stands in the heart of the matter when it comes to real situations in which the reader is not a reader, but a real slot holder deeply involved in Girard’s imitation process.

This leads to the stage when two necessary extra slots are added into Girard’s triadic system: the “scapegoat” slot and the “readership” slot. By that, Girard’s triangle becomes a circular shape that is more comprehensive than the triadic previous one, at least in this paper which applies the theory to Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*. The modified shape appears as follows:

![Modified Girard's Model](image)

**Figure 3. The modified shape of Girard’s model after adding violence and reader’s position**

**Conclusion**

The female figures in *Heart of Darkness* are as colonized and violated as Africa and its natives. The portrayal of women in the novella demonstrates sexism and deprivation of any power position. Ostensibly, each woman in the narrative plays the role assigned to her ignorant of the fact that she is a special victim of imperialism and not a keeper of noble dreams.

However, attaining deep understanding of the novella requires the reader to go beyond the sexist innuendos and to steer the helm towards colonist exploitation and victimization of femininity to show how women came to embrace the role assigned to them without realizing...
that they are naive keepers of illusions. Eventually, women in the novella are colonized by their males to consume all the falsehood they produce about “the noble cause” and “the white man’s burden”. Once the mission is achieved, both the white and the black female figures are checkmated.

There is a perfect match between the novella and Girard’s theory, and, therefore, the passivity of the female figures in the novella is accounted for within the stable slots of his theory. Women obviously accept the ancillary roles assigned to them because they are humans, but human beings are mimetic creatures who borrow their desires from whom they look up to as models possessing the object of their desire. Men colonize Africa (the object of desire), which is the source of wealth and provision. In addition, women (the subject of desire) are seen as essential benefactors, who approve of imperialism partially because they are deceived into thinking that the white colonizers (the model) are Christianizing and civilizing the “brutes.” This can be attributed to the fact that the Congo experience is never explained to them and in doing so they become the naïve consumers of male falsehood.

In attempting to interpret this prejudice against women in light of Girard’s theory, it becomes clear that women are among the common victims who are fit to be the scapegoats in the world of men. Marlow and Kurtz manipulate women in the novella in order to attain their goals, not because they want to conform to the stereotyped views of gender roles. This makes the female characters in the novella one dimensional because the males decide not to tell them about the Congo experience, for, if they did, women would never accept to remain in the subject slot and would never look up to men as models.

In short, colonization can be seen as an act of violence and hostility which must be vigorously dispersed or vented, as opposed to being a process open to transformation by introspection or meditation. Much of this violence is released by assaulting the black natives; however, women have their own share of this violence. They are treated not only as objects but also as tools of imperialism undergoing suffering and oppression because they are physically and mentally penetrated and colonized as is the Dark Continent. As far as Girard’s theory is concerned, one finds that women are not only subjects who aspire to the model but also objects as is Africa and its natives who are victimized in order to satisfy the salient desire of the white men for the ivory of the Congo.

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Imperializing Femininity: Falsehood Production and Consumption

Sabrah

References


Colonel Jack's Americas and Spiritual Allegory

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Abstract
What seems to be interesting about Daniel Defoe's novel Colonel Jack (1722) is the apparent eagerness of its protagonist colonel Jack to achieve the status of a gentleman! Born as an orphan, turning later into a petty thief and somewhat a reluctant pickpocket, Jack however believes that he is destined to become a gentleman. Defoe creates in Colonel Jack a parallel narratives, a spiritual journey from sin to repentance and a journey to realize the dream of becoming a gentleman. Jack goes through these two parallel journeys and ultimately synthesizes an extraordinary reality: spiritual repentance leads to becoming a gentleman! The place where this remarkable transformation in the destiny of Jack happens is Virginia, both an actual physical location and a spiritual site of atonement. Ultimately, Jack realizes that his earlier dreams of becoming a gentleman were desires for spiritual and moral penitence. Defoe seemed to have intended Jack's life of crime, repentance and eventual prosperity as a moral tale. He examines how Jack's poverty prevented him from achieving his promised gentry's status. However throughout the narrative of the life of Colonel Jack we realize that his spiritual journey toward prosperity and permanent settlement continues to be problematic in the sense that Defoe creates an erratic route toward repentance which goes through crime!

Keywords: allegory, gentleman, parallel, repentance, Virginia.
Colonel Jack's Americas and Spiritual Allegory

What seems to be interesting about Daniel Defoe's *Colonel Jack* (1722) is the apparent eagerness of its protagonist colonel Jack to achieve the status of a gentleman! Born as an orphan, turning later into a petty thief and somewhat a reluctant pickpocket, Jack however believes that he is destined to become a gentleman. His nurse tells him through "oral Tradition" that he is the offspring "a Gentle-woman and "a Man of Quality. " He grows up bothered by the fact that he was "a Child to keep that should not be seen or heard of," however, he insists on realizing the advantages of his original state of a gentleman (Defoe, 1722, p. 2). Acquiring the status of gentility may come sometimes through ambiguous means. For example, according to Eve Tavor Bannet (2011) in her book *Transatlantic Stories and the History of Reading, 1720–1810: Migrant Fictions* colonel Jack shares one of Defoe's characters' problems: "obsessed with becoming genteel." What is problematic here according to Bannet is that achieving a higher social status in Defoes' narratives usually comes through "crime, prostitution and polygamy in order to obtain wealth and property, and to rise in the world"(p. 78). Moreover, according to *The New International Webster Comprehensive Dictionary of the English Language* (1998) a Gentleman is" a well-bred man with good manners...a man above a yeoman in social rank" (p. 527). As a case in point, John Selden (1584-1654), a seventeenth century English scholar reports in his *Table Talk* (a posthumous work written and published in 1689 by Richard Milward) how hard it is to "define" a gentleman. According to Selden whoever "is reputed to be one" in Westminster- Hall, is one!" He adds that the "Gentleman by Creation" is better than the Gentleman by blood because the later may be a "debauched man" the other "a person of worth" (p. 52).

Not knowing exactly what a "gentleman" is, Jack starts for example to associate this ambiguous term with being a good pickpocket, who does not harm his victims! A gentleman-pickpocket does not lead his victims to any great suffering; therefore, Jack shuns serious crimes and frequently feels rather sympathetic towards some of his victims. He continually reflects on the legitimacy of a gentleman stealing from other people, and always reminds himself that as a gentleman he should have a conscience and should not engage in serious crimes. His nurse insisted while raising him to remind him of his gentry's parentage. Paraphrasing his nurse's speech, Jack explains:

My Mother was a Gentle-woman, that my Father was a Man of Quality, and she (my Nurse) had a good piece of Money given her to take me off his Hands, and deliver him and my Mother from the Importunities that usually attend the Misfortune, of having a Child to keep that should not be seen or heard of." (p. 2).

After listening to his nurse's recommendation, Jack is convinced that he is a gentleman because according to the nurse, his father "gave [her] something more than was agreed for at my Mother's request, upon her solemn Promise that she would use me well, and let me be put to School, and charg'd her that if I liv'd to come to any bigness, capable to understand the meaning of it, she should always take care to bid me remember, that I was a Gentleman. (p. 2).

According to Jack, this "was all the Education he [his father] would desire of her for me, for he did not doubt, he said, but that sometime or other the very hint would inspire me with Thoughts suitable to my Birth, and that I would certainly act like a Gentleman, if I believed myself to be so. "(p. 4). This feeling of ingrained sense of privilege, even though not supported
with evidence in real life, seems to inspire Jack toward creating his own imagined sense of the appropriate behavior of a would-be gentleman. Throughout his life journey from childhood, adolescence to maturity, Jack attempts to find an appropriate allegory which best represents the fulfillment of his desires to become a real gentleman.

What seems to dominate Defoe's narrative in Colonel Jack is the representation of the Americas as a spiritual allegory. The English colony of Virginia in particular comes to embody toward the second half of the novel a physical terrain where Jack seems to find what has preoccupied his mind since childhood: to be a gentleman and realize whatever advantage thereof.

I argue in this article that Daniel Defoe in his novel Colonel Jack (1722) creates parallel narratives, a spiritual journey from sin to repentance and a journey to realize the dream of becoming a gentleman. Jack goes through these two parallel journeys and ultimately synthesizes an extraordinary reality: spiritual repentance leads to becoming a gentleman! The place where this remarkable transformation in the destiny of Jack happens is Virginia, both an actual physical location and a spiritual site of atonement. Jack realizes that his earlier dreams of becoming a gentleman were desires for spiritual and moral atonement.

Kirstin Olsen for example in her book Daily Life in 18th Century England (1999) explains that during the eighteenth century it "was becoming increasingly important to seem genteel [emphasis added]" She explains further: "people studied books and the behavior of others to learn to be ladies and gentlemen." A "polite person" according to Olsen "was supposed to be sensitive to the plight of the unfortunate, a good conversationalist, susceptible to strong feelings, inoffensive, discrete, courteous, frugal, religious, apolitical, calm, modest, interesting, and above all natural [emphasis added]." (p. 256). Defoe seemed to have been fascinated with the status of a gentleman in many of his novels. In addition to Colonel Jack, he also discusses gentlemanly behavior in Captain Singleton (1720), Robinson Crusoe (1719). However, Defoe's conception of a gentleman does not necessarily relate to being a political, courteous, or natural, to quote Olsen, but he relates this status to financial security.

One of the problematic aspects of Jack's desire to fulfill his destiny of becoming a gentleman is his apparent lack of accurate understanding of the "typical" character of the gentleman. Jack bases most of his impressions about a gentleman on what others have told him. Jack follows mistakenly certain behaviors he assumes a gentleman does! His lack of accurate information about any typical gentleman's behavior motivates him to come up with his own imagined genteel tendencies. For example, while still a child, he was always reluctant to hurt his pick pocketing victims, something he argues a gentleman would not do. Later, he goes the extra mile to rectify his past mistakes; for instance, returning the money he stole from an old poor woman. George Starr argues that the narrative in Colonel Jack "has become paramount, and largely eludes thematic control," because Jack's story "preserve distinct vestiges of the spiritual autobiography, but virtually abandons both its characteristic spirit and shape" (p. 183).

Jack begins The History and Remarkable Life Of the truly Honorable Col. Jacque, commonly call'd Col. Jack [sic] by first revealing one of his childish desires of salvation. After seeing his" Life has been such a Checquer Work of Nature," Jack realizes that his fate is better than other transported convicts, and wishes that his personal history is "diverting, or instructing" (p. 2) What is interesting in Jack's autobiography is that since childhood he wishes to achieve
financial security, which he accomplishes later by owning two Virginian plantations. What seems to have been one driving force behind his achievements is Jack's constant and conscious desire to be good, as a gentleman would. Jack looked at pick pocketing "as a kind of Trade, that [he was] to be bred up to, and so [he] enter'd upon it, till [he] became harden'd in it beyond the Power of retreating." Yet he realizes earlier in his career as a thief that he "was made a Thief involuntarily, and went on a Length that few Boys do, without coming to the common Period of that kind of Life. I mean to the Transport Ship, or the Gallows"(p. 10). What seems to drive the young Jack toward pick pocketing is his paradoxical belief that he might finally achieve a gentleman status! As a child-pickpocket, he abstained from committing violence against his victims due to that nagging feeling that a gentleman does not do such things!

Jack's personal narrative of transformation starts to take its parallel routes in adulthood, combining both social and spiritual ascending as soon as he arrives in Virginia. This American colony represents for Jack a melting pot of his previous 'chequered' personal experiences. Virginia becomes a spiritual allegory, a journey from sin to repentance, from unstable living to personal and financial security. Jack's transformation into a repentant former pickpocket takes place while he watches his "Master," a plantation owner, where Jack is transported into as an indentured servant; dictates the new life to a group of newly arrived indentured servants. Listening to the Master addressing his newly arrived servants, Jack informs us that he tells them "they ought to look upon the Life they were just a going to enter upon, as just beginning the World again. If they "thought fit to be diligent, and sober, they would after the time they were order'd to Serve was expir'd, be encourag'd by the Constitution of the Country, to Settle and Plant for themselves." The plantation's owner informs the new servants that even he himself would be so kind to them, that if he liv'd to see any of them serve their Time faithfully out, it was his custom to assist his Servants, in order to their Settling in that Country, according as their Behaviour might Merit from him [sic]"(p. 62). His Master impresses Jack that he would not quit his Service for the best Plantation in Maryland. He "had been so good to me, and I believ'd I was so useful to him, that I cou'd not think of it; and at last, I added, I hop'd he cou'd not believe but I had as much Gratitude as a Negro [sic]"(p. 77). Jack admires how his master manages his plantation: "the Plantations in Maryland were the better for this Undertaking, and they are to this Day less Cruel and Barbarous to their Negroes, than they are in Barbados, and Jamaica." However, he qualifies his previous statement by explaining that slaves in Virginia are not "so desperate, neither do they so often run away, or so often Plot mischief against their Master, as they do in those"(p. 78). What seems to develop here is a favorable association between the plantations in Virginia and the new opportunities it provide. After he was released from his indentured contract, Jack acknowledges "I was Set up in the World." He was "removed by the degrees that you have heard from a Pick-pocket, to a Kidnapp'd miserable Slave in Virginia; (for Maryland, is Virginia, speaking of them at a distance,) than from a Slave to a Head Officer, and Overseer of Slaves, and from thence to a Master Planter"(p. 79).

Jack's spiritual journey from sin and guilt to repentance and forgiveness takes place in Virginia. Virginia becomes in Jack's mind, the land of unlimited opportunities. However, Virginia does not offer a free ride to repentance! For instance, Jack identifies certain requirements for spiritual ascending in Virginia. One of the requirements for an indentured servant to become a planter is repent first from his former sins. Next, a transported criminal
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needs to become "a diligent Servant." Jack explains for example that hard work would ultimately win a transported individual a good character (p. 79).

Achieving a good character in Virginia, according to Jack, might represent a new beginning for the "most despicable Felon that ever went over [sic]." According to Jack, if an individual proves himself with hard work and commitment even if he is the "poorest," he shall find financial and spiritual salvation in the Americas (p. 79). Virginia seems to provide a new opportunity for Jack's salvation, or for that matter "every Newgate Wretch, every Desperate forlorn Creature; the most Despicable ruin'd Man in the World, has here a fair Opportunity put into his Hands to begin the World again." According to Jack a desperate individual can "find himself "upon a Foot of certain Gain," raised from the "Condemn'd Hole in Newgate"(p. 80).

Spiritual Allegory:

An allegory according to the OED refers to A story, poem, or picture which can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning, typically a political one. Defoe seemed to have been very interested in moral allegories throughout his career. He seems to develop his allegories, usually, on foreign lands, Crusoe as a case in point. However, in Jack's autobiography, we witness a new kind of spiritual allegory. In Robinson Crusoe, the protagonist's daily experiences take the form of series of practical challenges. His agonizing journey to survive on the Island carries Crusoe on a spiritual journey where he discovers God's providence, chastising himself along the way about his former sinfulness and disobedience to his parents. Instead of becoming a representative of all humanity, as happens in a typical spiritual allegory, Crusoe seems to go through a very personalized spiritual awakening. Likewise, Jack does not see himself as a sinning Adam banished from paradise, but as a reluctant repentant, who sometimes forgets his repentance for the sake of commercial and financial gains!

One of the indications that Virginia represents for Jack a physical, and a spiritual haven, is Jack's excitement about it. He informs us that he" can give no Description of; it was an inexpressible Joy to [him,] that [he] was now like to be, not only a Man, but an Honest Man; and it yielded [him] a greater Pleasure, that [he] was Ransom'd from being a Vagabond, a Thief, and a Criminal, as [he] had been from a Child." Jack is enthusiastic about Virginia because he "was deliver'd from Slavery, and the wretched State of a Virginia Sold Servant." This new opportunity to begin a new life makes Jack almost elated to the extent that he " had Notion enough in [his] Mind, of the Hardships of the Servant, or Slave, because [he] had felt it, and Work'd thro' it.' Moreover, his improved condition in Virginia reminds him of "a State of Labour and Servitude, Hardship and Suffering." Jack thinks of "Reflections upon Hell, and the Damn'd Spirits; it struck me with Horror, it was Odious and Frightful to look back on, and it gave me a kind of a Fit, a Convulsion or nervous Disorder, that was very uneasy to me [sic]" (p. 81). Yet, he does not inform us about the crimes he committed earlier which seem to cause him so much agony. When he was a pickpocket, Jack did not murder any of his victims. In fact, he was a reluctant petty thief, more eager to compensate for his crimes by helping his former victims. However, Jack seems to find it appropriate to exaggerate his spiritual and mental agony by associating his physical handicap as an indentured servant with slavery. He creates in his mind a would-be spiritual journey of sin, repentance and salvation. Nevertheless, Jack does not acknowledge, for example, the need for blacks to acquire any spiritual tranquility or freedom. As usual, Defoe
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deals with blacks as subhuman and it is only whites who can absolve their sins if they mend their ways.

**White Slavery in Virginia:**

After adopting/adapting to the life of a *slave* in Virginia, Jack describes the life of a slave in Virginia as "to be preferr'd to that of the most prosperous Thief in the World." He argues that a slave in Virginia, even though while living "miserable, but honest; suffer wrong, but do no wrong; [his] Body is punish'd, but [his] Conscience is not loaded."(p. 84). What is ironic here in Jack's moral and spiritual reflections about slavery in the American colony is that it seem to emphasize the life of a white indentured servant, not black slaves. Defoe seems oblivious here of the fact that Virginia turns out to be, in Jack's narrative, a white-only- spiritual allegory! Black slaves in Jack's narrative do not share with him his spiritual ascending. They cannot look at Virginia as a place where they can achieve spiritual redemption, and seem only to deserve correction and physical punishment if they transgress. When we consider the fact that all white indentured servants are actually criminals and convicts, yet they seem to Jack to deserve another chance to rectify their ways. Jack does not acknowledge black slavery as a moral sin, and he only describes himself as a slave within the framework of white slavery.

**Black Slaves in Virginia: Lack of Spiritual Redemption**

George Boulukos (2008) argues in his book *The Grateful Slave: The Emergence of Race in Eighteenth-Century British and American Culture* that Jack, as soon as he was appointed as an overseer "sets about articulating 'racial' differences between 'black' and 'white' people,while leaving a side the much-debated question of Jack's aspiration to gentility" (p. 75). Even while he was an indentured white servant, Jack never experiences any physical punishment like a Virginia's black slave, nor does he mention one single incident where a white convict receives any form of brutal treatment at the hands of other white overseers. It is important here to question Jack's account of slavery in Virginia because even though his circumstances were dire, being kidnapped, sold and forcibly indentured , yet his situation in the plantation was much lighter than an actual black slave. He does not seem to consider the life of an African slave as equal in human value with the life of a white servant. For example, later when Jack started to work in his new job as an overseer, he informs us that a "Horse-whip was given me to correct and lash the Slaves and Servants, when they proved Negligent." He believes that "whipping the Negro Slaves, was not so much owing to the Tyranny, and Passion, and Cruelty of the English[…]but it is due to "the Brutality, and obstinate Temper of the Negroes." Black slaves according to Jack "cannot be mannag'd by Kindness, and Courtisy[sic]" (p. 66). Cruelty toward slaves exposes one of Jack's ultimate contradictions: achieving spiritual repentance, while condoning the sin of slavery. Jack does not seem to consider black slavery as a sin, yet he discovers in Virginia a place where one can atone for their moral sins!

**Temptation of Sin:**

Jack recognizes the importance of Virginia as a place where all temptation seizes. For instance, he explains that "Virginia, and a State of Transportation, may be the happiest Place and Condition they were ever in [unhappy Wretches]" (p. 89). Life in Virginia for a transported villain is a kind of life, if backed by "sincere Repentance, and a diligent Application to the Business they are put to; they are effectually deliver'd from a Life of a flagrant Wickedness"(p. 89). Moreover, he informs us that "I was deliver'd from the horrid Temptation of Sinning, to
Support my Luxury [sic]"(p. 86). Virginia seems to provide a place where it "is sufficient to Sweeten the bitterest Sorrow, and make any Man be thankful for Virginia, or a worse Place, if that can be [sic]"(p. 86). Yet, Jack feels awkward about acknowledging his sin. For example, he is eager to distant himself from other convicts by informing his master "that I did not come over to Virginia in the Capacity of a Criminal, or that I was not Transported; which considering how many of the Inhabitants there were so" (p. 87). Jack seems to go through a rather pungent spiritual dilemma, even though he appreciates his new life in Virginia, but he seems troubled about accepting all its implications. In other words, Jack accepts his repentance as a new opportunity to begin a new life; but he seems quite troubled with the fact that all transported servants had a serious criminal past, while he has none.

Jack, sometimes, does not seem to be aware of his own sins! He explains that "I had no knowledge of better things to be thankful for, which he had [his servant/teacher]; but in return for that, I was deliver'd, and set up in the World" (p. 88). This apparent inability to recognize fully the nature of his previous condition seems to contradict with his previous appeals for repentance. Jack sometimes fluctuates between full self-acknowledgment of his former sinful life, and his disappointment of not having the chance to enjoy what some others in his condition had enjoyed. For instance, Jack's only crimes revolve around childhood pickpocketing experiences; and he has so far related his current prosperity in Virginia to his redemption. Referring to one particular indentured servant who was working for him that he "was in, I mean a sold Servant; but that he remain'd so still, so that if his Sin had been greater than mine, so his Distress'd was still greater" (p. 88).

Virginia and Self-Esteem:

Jack also recognizes the great opportunities Virginia offers him to recreate a new identity. According to Jack, he achieved a prosperous financial "Condition now," that it does not matter anymore to others what he "had been, and as it was grown pretty much out of Memory" (p. 87). Becoming a plantation owner in the Americas requires Jack to attempt erasing any previous memories about his former life. For example the fact "I was ever a Servant, otherwise than Voluntary, and that it was no Business of mine to expose myself; so I kept that Part close" (p. 87). Secrecy is compulsory for Jack in order to gain a new identity in Virginia. The wealth he amasses in Virginia will also later buy him a new life, a new identity and a clean slate for a fresh start. He can transcribe in Virginia whatever biographical records he wishes to dictate for himself and to show to the world. Spending more time in Virginia improves Jack's self-esteem: in one soliloquy, after becoming a rich plantation owner, he address God directly saying" I thank thee for all that I have been sav'd from, or all that I have been brought to in this World [original emphasis]." Feeling grateful to God makes Jack not to forget that his "Life has been as full of Variety, and I have been as miraculously deliver'd from Dangers and Mischiefs, and as many of them." He recognizes God's "invisible Hand in Mercy to me, what have I been doing, and where have I liv'd? that I only should be the most Thoughtless, and Unthankful of all God's Creatures!" (p. 87). He adds that "I had certainly as much to be thankful for [was] made a Master, and easy, and was in good Circumstances, being rais'd from the very same low distress'd Condition" (p. 88).

Jack is not always sure about the kind of opportunities Virginia can provide. He reflects melancholically on his life in the British colony by claiming that "I look'd upon myself as one
Buried alive, in a remote Part of the World, where I could see nothing at all, and hear but a little of what was seen, and that little, not till at least half a Year after it was done" (p. 89). However, being financially comfortable in Virginia does not seem to reduce Jack's desire to go back to England. Sometimes he spends "a Year or more," then returns to England.

Even though, Jack sometimes confesses that "It was true, that this [his stay in Virginia,] was much nearer to it [Gentlemanity], than that of a Pick-pocket, and still nearer than that of a sold Slave" (p. 89). However, "But in short, this would not do, and I cou'd receive no Satisfaction in it" (p. 89). Jack is unable to achieve a moral satisfaction because he does not see fully the link between his spiritual condition and his material condition. In other words, even though that his financial conditions have improved in Virginia because he "had now a second Plantation, a very considerable one, and it went forward very well;" and he "had on it almost 100 Servants already, of sundry Sorts, and an Overseer," yet he is not satisfied. Furthermore, he " had a third [plantation] in Embrio, and newly begun, I had nothing to hinder me from going where I pleas'd" (p. 89).

A Life to be remembered:

Jack's spiritual and moral experiences in Virginia constitute a model for other former convicts, or this is what he claims: "Virginia, and a State of Transportation, may be the happiest Place and Condition they were ever in, for this Life" (p. 89). However, in order to achieve a happy existence in Virginia, the individual must show "a sincere Repentance, and a diligent Application to the Business they are put to" (p. 89). According to Jack, repentant former convicts need to remember, "They are effectually deliver'd from a Life of a flagrant Wickedness, and put in a perfectly new Condition, in which they have no Temptation to the Crimes they formerly committed, and have a prospect of Advantage for the future" (p. 89). All temptation is supposed to end in Virginia because former culprits would receive more advantages by becoming transported/ indentured slaves in the colony. They can reap the fruits of whatever they work for; and according to Jack, "the meanest, and most despicable Creature after his time of Servitude is expir'd, if he will but apply himself with Diligence and Industry to the Business of the Country, is sure (Life and Health suppos'd) both of living Well and growing Rich" (p. 89).

In addition to providing Jack with numerous opportunities to forget his sad past; rectify his past mistakes and achieve good existence; Virginia also represents a resourceful place for other accomplishments: it creates a life to be remembered. For example, Jack informs us that during one of his frequent trips to England, he carried with him from his plantation in Virginia "about six Hundred Hogsheds of Tobacco" as he "left the Capes of Virginia, on the first of August" (p. 90). Virginia's resourcefulness enables Jack to feel "at the height of my good Fortune; indeed I was in very good Circumstances" (p. 95). This good financial stability and security materializes because "being of a frugal Temper from the beginning, I Sav'd things together, as they came, and yet liv'd very well too" (p. 95). Instead of constantly being haunted by his past experiences as a pickpocket, Jack is now able to achieve the "Reputation of a very considerable Merchant." He is reputed to be "one that came over vastly Rich from Virginia, and as I frequently brought Supplies for my several Families and Plantations there, as they wrote to me for them, so I pass'd, I say, for a great Merchant" (p. 95).
A Gentleman Pays his Debts:

Jack fears discovery by one of his former wives' creditors. While visiting England, he lives "retir'd, because I knew she [the former wife] had Contracted Debts, which I should be oblig'd to Pay, and I was resolv'd to be gone out of her reach, with what Speed I cou'd." Jack insists on paying the debt of his wife because all gentleman are supposed to do so. However, he has to wait for his Virginia's cargo because I look'd for at least 300 Hhds of Tobacco from thence, which I knew would heal all my Breaches; for indeed, the Extravagance of three Years with this Lady, had sunk me most effectually; even far beyond her own Fortune, which was Considerable, tho' not quite 1500l. as she had call'd it" (p. 102). Believing himself to be a real gentleman, Jack accepts the responsibility of paying his former wife's' loans; bills, etc., Fearing discovery; he keeps a low profile while in England; until he is able to return to Virginia; the only save place he trusts. By referring to Virginia as his true "home," Jack projects the colony as a place where he can feel secured. "In Virginia, he is "out of the way of Villains, and Assassinations." Jack takes precautions "for every time I stir'd out here [London] I thought I went in danger of my Life, and therefore, as before I went out at Night, thinking to be conceal'd; so now I never went out, but in open Day that I might be safe, and never without one or two Servants to be my Life Guard" (p. 105). Jack is alluding here to a previous incident when he was severely beaten by one of his wife's lovers. Ultimately, he concludes that he cannot feel safe in England at all. What is contradictory here is that Jack feels obliged to pay his former wife's creditors; an indication of some of the challenges he faces while trying to become a gentleman.

Virginia: A Sense of Belonging

Jack's plantation in Virginia is part of his American home where he feels a sense of belonging to "my People in Virginia" (p. 118). Virginia provides Jack with a financial security he did not enjoy in his past life, being retired in a "solitary manner I now liv'd in; and I experienced the Truth of the Text, that it is not good for Man to be alone; for I was extremely Melancholy and Heavy." Jack does not even "knew not what to do with myself" outside his home in Virginia. He finally resolves to "go to Virginia again, and there live retired as I could" (p. 118). He does not like to remain in Virginia permanently. His curiosity pushes him not to be satisfied with a secluded life where he "could not live in the World, and not enquire what was doing in it." He does not accept to remain permanently in Virginia, where he only hears "News twice a Year" and receives out-of-date stock's news (p. 118). Nevertheless, Jack feels the burden of his success in Virginia. For instance, while meditating about what to do in England even though he "had no Body to keep but myself," and his plantation in Virginia "return'd me from 400 to 600 l. a Year, one Year above 700l," he "concluded, [I] was to be bury'd a-live; so I put off all Thoughts of it [returning to Virginia for the time being],and resolv'd to settle somewhere in England" (p. 118).

Virginia: a Seat of Power

After succeeding financially in Virginia, Jack, like Robinson Crusoe, starts to perceive his plantation as his own kingdom. He informs his readers that while " [talking] to myself; if I Marry an honest Woman, my Children will be taken care of; if she be a Slut and abuses me, as I see every Body does; I'll Kidnap her and send her to Virginia to my Plantations." There "she shall work hard enough, and fare hard enough to keep her Chast, I'll warrant her" (p. 124). The plantation in Virginia represents for Jack a seat of his newly acquired power. He believes that he can send his former wives to the plantation to rectify their infidelities; punish them at his will.
Moreover, after failing to find refuge in his native country (England,) Jack resolves to return permanently to Virginia. He informs us that after deep thinking about his current situation, while hiding in England, Jack starts to believe that "Heaven summon'd [him] to retire to Virginia" a placed where he "had- been bless'd at, or had met with any thing that deserv'd the Name of Success." He "resolv'd to leave my native Country once more, and taking my Son with me, and leaving Moggy's Daughter with her Grandfather"(p. 126). Moggy was one decent wife Jack married in England. She passed away after few years. Jack decides to leave Moggy's Daughter with her Grandfather, and he makes arrangements for her financial maintenance by which if he died, she will receives a "portion to be paid by [his] Son out of the Estate [he] had in Virginia (p. 126).

**Re repentant Wife in Virginia:**

After spending twenty four years traveling, Jack returns to his plantation. The return to the plantation brings with it other happy news! One of Jack's former adulterous wives arrives in the plantation as an indentured servant. While examining the arriving transported servants, Jack, by now a very prosperous plantation owner notices that one of the female transported faints. Being sometimes quite credulous, Jack imagines that "the poor Creature was afraid of [him], for Masters in Virginia are terrible things; bad [his manager] tell her she need to be under no Concern at my calling for her." In fact, the woman was afraid of being discovered to be Jack's former adulterous wife (p. 128). Jack accepts his repentant adulterous wife, and she actually helps him later escape detection by the British government as a Jacobite conspirator.

**Fear of Discovery**

Fearing being exposed by the captured and transported Jacobite rebels as a former rebel, Jack does not listen to the advice of his wife to remain in Virginia. He starts to imagine that his spiritual repentance and his financial prosperity will come to an end. He flees to the West Indies pretending that he was ill. Reflecting later on his difficult experience Jack feels more humble. Talking to his wife, while hiding in the West Indies, about his difficult situation, she informs him that "the State of Life that [he] was now in, was as perfectly calculated to make a Man compleatly happy, as any private Station in the World could be [sic]" (p. 132). However positive were his wife's assurances, Jack "was not thoroughly easy in [his] Mind, and secretly wish'd [he] was in my own Dominions in Virginia, to which, in a little time, other Circumstances concurring, [he] made Preparations to remove with my whole Family" (p. 134).

Jack fears of "to be against every Day, be taken up, and sent to England in Irons, and have all [his] Plantations seiz'd on as a forfeited Estate to the Crown" (p. 134). However, listening to his wife's "Design" who intends not "kidnap [him], and transport [him] from Virginia as other People are transported to it." The faithful wife informs him that he "shall find [her] the same faithful humble Creature"(p. 136). Indeed, the reformed wife proofs a good loyal partner to Jack because she succeeds in manipulating the public sphere in the plantation informing others that Jack is sick and will soon travel to England.

**Virginia: a Rescue Needed**

In addition to being a spiritual allegory of sin and repentance, the colony also provides Jack with a much-needed rescue. For instance, when Spanish privateers capture Jack, and take him as hostage for ransom in Havana, Virginia provides rescue. For example, seeing no other way but to pay his ransom, Jack resolves to inform his captors that he has a plantation in Virginia to which
the Spaniards "seem'd very easie [sic]" (p. 141). Jack is also able to use his plantation as a much-needed material asset to make more money. He actually "make[s] a kind of an Acquaintance with the Spaniards which came in the Canoes, and we became so intimate, that at last, with the Consent of the three Spaniards of the Havana," he returns to Virginia (p. 145).

After returning to Virginia, Jack "came Home [with] above 4000 Pieces of Eight richer than I went out" (p. 146). In addition to representing a place where Jack gains a gentlemanly respectability, repents from his past sins, Virginia also provides him with a fortune as if the "Golden Rivers of Mexico flow into my Plantation of Virginia." Jack "Dream'd of nothing but Millions and Hundreds of Thousands [sic]" (p. 148).

Thanks to Virginia, Jack ends his adventurous career as a new individual, not a pickpocket or a transported servant, but a rich and a satisfied gentleman. Hal Gladfelder (2003) argues that the last page of the novel reiterates conventional criminal confessions. The same appeal "was made by criminals at the gallows to those within earshot on execution day…evoking a shared bloodline of transgression, the relationship is equally grounded in the problematics of an emerging individualism" (Gladfelder, 2003).

Defoe seemed to have intended Jacks' life of crime, repentance and eventual prosperity as a moral tale. He examines how Jack's poverty prevented him from achieving his promised gentry's status. Throughout the narrative of the life of Colonel Jack, we realize that his spiritual journey toward prosperity and permanent settlement began as a child. However, what is remarkable about his spiritual journey is that it parallels his realization of his gentry's destiny. His nurse told him since a child that his father was a gentleman, yet, Jack remained most of his life unaware of the nature of his class "moral" principles. He adopts at the beginning of his journey a naive and a rather chaotic interpretation of a gentleman's behavior. For instance, Jack believed that a gentleman-pickpocket should never harm his victims. Moreover, while attempting, although inadvertently, to achieve his gentlemanly destiny, Jack continues to reflect constantly about his spiritual agony. Defoe confuses his readers in his delineation of the spiritual condition of his character; Jack for instance does not seem to espouse any determined sectarian position: if he was among the Catholic or the Protestants, it is not apparent whether he adopts any particular religious dogma.

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A Postcolonial Reading of two Arabic Novels Translated into English: Abdel Rahman Al-Sharqawi’s *Egyptian Earth* and Jabra Ibrahim Jabra’s *The Ship*

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Abstract
The paper examines the politics and strategies of decolonization in Abdel Rahman Al-Sharqawi’s *Egyptian Earth* (1954) and Jabra Ibrahim Jabra’s *The Ship* (1973). In *Egyptian Earth*, the village’s struggle against unpopular government which is aligned with the former British colonizers of Egypt provides the dramatic backbone of the action. The peasants’ developed sense of nationalism manifests itself in their attachment to the land as a part of the decolonizational process at work in the novel. Obsession with land is presented as an overarching theme in *The Ship*, especially in the life of Wadi Assaf one of the central characters in the novel. Assaf, I would argue, is cast as a Palestinian Ulysses whose homecoming sentiment is the main driving force in his life. On a particular occasion in the novel Assaf, identifying himself with Ulysses, says: “There has to be a return.” The mode of representation used by Jabra in this novel is realism, but through the Homeric parallel mythical realism, in the terminology of Declan Kiberd, combines with realism in the presentation of action, thus giving the Palestinians’ struggle against the Israeli occupation of their land a universal epical dimension. From a decolonizational perspective, intertextuality seems to enable Assaf to hold on to his poetic homecoming sentiment in the face of the bleakness of the prosaic world of reality in which he is barred from returning home as a result of the Jews’ occupation of the country.

*Keywords*: decolonizaion, land, postcolonial, politics, strategy
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In his book *Marxism and Literature*(1977) Raymond Williams writes:

> If generally there is always a link (of influence or determination) between any literary text and the context from which it emerges, and if the particular text under discussion comes from a period of colonialism or decolonization, then it follows that the particular text must be marked in some way by colonialism or decolonization. The task is to find that marking. (Williams, 1977, pp. 192-3)

In light of the hypothesis set out in this quotation, the first chapter of *Egyptian Earth*(1954) provides an unequivocal ‘marking’ which supports examining the basic tension in the novel in a colonial/postcolonial context. Here is how the young narrator of the novel describes the state of affairs in Cairo during the period in which the plot of the novel is set – the 1930s:

> For at that time Cairo was in a state of continual unrest. From what my brothers said amongst themselves, as well as from the newspaper, I knew that a man called Sidky ruled Egypt with fire and iron, having first suspended the Constitution in the interests of the English. And I had seen him unleash English soldiers with red faces on the streets of Cairo, to bolster up his authority. At that time I was in the Muhammadiyah Primary School, and every day I heard machine-gun fire. On my way home after school, the whole city would vibrate with firing, and nevertheless every morning the workers were on strike once more, and the students were demonstrating. The Khedivial Secondary School used to pour on to the streets every morning, shouting: Long Live The Constitution! Freedom! Independence! Down with Sidky and his English masters. (Al-Sharqawi, 1990, P11)

Instead of using a broad canvas to dramatize the basic tension in his novel, al-Sharqawi sets the action in a small village at which the private lives of the peasants are tremendously impacted by the turn of events on the public scene in a transitional historical period in Egypt characterized with political upheavals and social instability. Al Sahrawi’s attempt to give marginalized Egyptian peasants ample opportunity to express their voice in a transitional period in the history of modern Egypt fits in with the colonial/postcolonial discourse at work in the novel.

The most important political event presented in the early part of the novel which has immediate impact on the fortunes of ordinary people is the suspension of the 1923 Constitution, one of the great achievements of the 1919 revolution (against the British occupation of Egypt and Sudan), which led to Britain's recognition of Egyptian independence in 1922 and the implementation of a new Constitution in 1923 by the national Wafd Party under the leadership of the famous national hero Zaad Zaghlool. This Constitution was replaced by a new one imposed, we are told during the period in which the action of the novel is set, by the reactionary People's...
Party led by Ismail Sidky the newly appointed prime minister who is frequently referred to as the lackey of the British.

Mohammad Abu Suweilim, the chief guard, was dismissed from his job for supporting the old Constitution; Sheikh Hassouna, the headmaster of the village school and a highly respected political activist, was transferred to a more remote part of Egypt as a result of his protest against the new Constitution; Sheikh Yusif, the grocer, is another casualty of the protest against the change of the Constitution, the price he has paid is the loss of the half acre of land he owns at the village.

These three victims of the tyranny of the government play a major role in stirring up public protest against the rigging of elections which brought the so called The People's Party to power and consequently the appointment of Sidky as a prime minister. The implementation of a new Constitution generates a great deal of feuds and conflict between the supporters and protestors to the change. The unnamed Pasha, the Omda, and Mahmud Bey, the chief of police, figure as the main supporters of the corrupt government.

Sheikh Hassouna provides instructive insights into the corruption and malpractices of the Government. Addressing himself to his nephew the school teacher Muhammad Effendi, Hassouna says:

'Strange! You beware of the rope and take no heed of the snake? What Is the difference between the Omda, or the Pasha, or Mahmoud Bey?

Then he raised his voice as his words jumped out, one after the other. 'The English, what are they? The Government, what are they? They're all one … one chain, one filthy chain.'

Muhammad Effendi tried to say something to save himself from his embarrassment. 'You are enough blessing for all of us, Headmaster, you are enough!'

'But you, too, in this village can play your part. This land belongs to all of us. If only you have courage, you too can defy the oppressor. After all, who are the people fighting our corrupt regime and their foreign supporters? The students and the railway workers, people like that. Don’t you read the newspaper, don’t you know what's going in Egypt?'(Al-Sharqawi,1990,PP.159-160)

Sheikh Hassouna's self-imposed mission of raising awareness about the urgency and necessity of standing against despotic Government and exposing its corruption highlights the decolonizational aspect which informs the narrative in *Egyptian Earth*. Amilcar Cabral's views on the basic requirements of "National Liberation" may illustrate the point I am trying to make:

For all that has just been said, it can be concluded that in the framework of the conquest of national independence and in the perspective of developing the economic and social
progress of the people, the objectives must be at least the following: development of a
popular culture and of all positive indigenous cultural values; development of a
national culture based upon the history and the achievements of the struggle itself;
constant promotion of the political and moral awareness of the people (of all social
groups) as well as patriotism, of the spirit of sacrifice and devotion to the cause of
independence, of justice, and of progress. (Amilcar, 1994, P.164)

One of the main incidents in the novel which reflects blatant rampant corruption among
government agents is the government's order to cut irrigation of land period to five days instead of
ten. This provokes a harsh condemnation of the government by Abdul Hadi, a well respected
quintessential peasant:

You call this a Government? A Government which steals half our water- and for whose
benefit, Alwani? You know, as well as I do, … for the Pasha , the Pasha who's recently
bought a stretch of new land, land not fit for dogs to eat off, and he wants to improve it
by taking our water … Wonderful, wonderful, this Government of ours! Stop the
wheels, shut the canals. … I can see blood will be flowing before water. (Al-
Sharqawi, 1990, p.48)

In protest against this unjust measure by the Government, the peasants decide to write a petition to
the Minister of Public Works to cancel the new irrigation measures. Writing the petition becomes a
rallying point for the solidarity and the resistance of the peasants against a government supported
by the former colonizers of the country. It is in terms of the colonial/postcolonial contex of the
narrativet that the act of writing a petition receives special emphasis throughout the novel.
Through the manipulations of the Omda and Mahmud Bey, the corrupt chief of police, the
peasants’ attempts to cancel the unjust irrigation measures were thwarted by changing the petition
in the interest of the Pasha:

That's child's play,' said Abu Suweilim violently. 'As for you, Diab, run off and greet
your brother.' In delight Diab ran off. The two others walked together, Abu Suweilim
beating one fist against the other. Suddenly he stopped, and taking Abdul Hadi by the
arm, explained the situation which made him so anxious. The new Petition, which
Muhammad Effendi and Mahmoud Bey had taken to Cairo, had nothing to do with
irrigation. The Omda had tricked the village, and in collaboration with Mahmoud Bey
had forced the villagers to sign a document requesting the construction of a highway,
to run cross their land, linking the Pasha's new Palace with the main road to Cairo. (Al-
Sharqawi, 1990, p.128)

In remarks which seem to be particularly applicable to the turn of events in Egyptian Earth, Fanon
says:

The peasantry is systematically disregarded for the most part by the propaganda put out
by the nationalist parties. And it is clear that in the colonial countries the peasants
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alone are revolutionary, for they have nothing to lose and everything to gain. The starving peasant outside the class system, is the first among the exploited to discover that only violence pays. (Fanon,1963,p.47)

The role played by the peasants in their struggle against unjust and oppressive practices of the imperialism agent Egyptian government is reminiscent of the active role of the villagers, who were at the forefront of the non-violent resistance against the British role of India in Raja Rao’s novel Kanthapura, one of the most outstanding postcolonial Indian novels.

Indeed, the peasants in al-Sharqawi’s novel seem to be unable to compromise, especially in their attachment to the land, attachment which figures as an integral part of the decolonization process which runs throughout the novel. The celebration of land as a symbol of honour, identity, dignity and independence in a colonial/postcolonial context is well described in a passage in which al-Sharqawi bestows a romantic halo on Abdul Hadi, the most devoted peasant to land cultivation and ownership:

The earth itself seemed to him a symbol of strength, of that which will endure forever, and of honour! In all the night there was nothing to see. And yet he knew it all, he knew every inch of it, every detail. This land was his own life and his own history. When a boy Abdul Hadi had been given a little hoe, the same tool that his father had carried before him. And when he had grown up, and his history of this land, of its crops, of its beats, since the time he had first tethered a buffalo … that had been when he was eight. .. he remembered hammering the wedge into the earth. Not one detail connected with this land would he ever forget, and after him his son would inherit his memories with the land itself: … the land never let you down. (Al-Sharqawi,1990,p.40)

Again here we are strongly reminded of Fanon's general remarks on the significance of land in the postcolonial context: “For a colonized people the most essential value, because the most concrete, is first and foremost the land: the land which will bring them bread and, above all, dignity”(Fanon,1963,p.47).

The confrontation between the peasants and the government escalates when they violate the curfew imposed upon the village by the government to prevent the peasants from obstructing its implementation of building the new highway which would unjustly swallow some of the villagers' land. The peasants' violation of the government’s unpopular measures and regulations culminates in their destruction of the banks of the river to irrigate their land outside the new regulations period. This brave stand on the part of the peasants led to the arrest of three leading figures by the police: Abdul Hadi, Abu Suweilim, and his brother Diab.
The main source of inspiration for the peasants’ resistance and anti-government sentiment in the novel is the 1919 Revolution which led to the expulsion of the British from Egypt in 1922. When the deputy of the People's Party paid a visit to the village, Sheikh Hassouna, the most distinguished political activist, refused to receive him at his school, he even incites the peasants to revolt and protest against the visit invoking the spirit of Saad Zaghloul:

‘So the headmaster was sent, as a simple teacher, to a remote village near the Barrage, the one means of access to which was by river-streamer. Sheikh Hassouna vainly tried to incite the village to revolt, as they had done when the English exiled the national leader, 'So he's Saad Zaghloul, is he?'' (Al-Sharqawi, 1990, p.133)

The novel abounds in references to the glorious days of the 1919 Revolution, that is as a political strategy to stir up protest, thus accelerating the process of decolonization and national independence. Ironically enough, even the agents of the Government try to benefit from the practices of the proponents of the 1919 Revolution to promote the political standing and fortunes of the People's Party. I am referring here to the attempts of the Magistrate, a notorious agent of the government to instruct the peasants how to cheer Sidky and the Ministers on the occasion of their visit to the village:

He returned to the villagers. They must shout: Long Live His Glorious Majesty! Long Live the People's Party! And above all, Long Live Sidky! And this last shout must be intoned rhythmically, many times.

You must shout in rhythm. .. You know what rhythm is? .. You have your beledi drums. .. You must shout rhythmically, as to a drum! Just as you used to do, in 1919. Didn’t you shout, Long Live Egypt … very musically? Long Live Egypt! And in the elections, you used to shout Long Live The Wafd! Didn’t it go like that? Now you must shout Long Live Sidky in the same rhythm. Just the same. (Al-Sharqawi, 1990, pp.178-179)

This cutting irony leveled against the native agents of colonialism reflects al-Sharqawi’s deep commitment to promote the cause of decolonization and the liberation of Egypt from the British colonial legacy. Al-Sharqawi’s celebration of the peasants’ sense of nationalism, patriotism, and their attachment to their land look forward to the remarkable attention given to the peasants in 1952 Revolution.

Obsession with land figures as an overarching theme in Jabra's novel The Ship (1995). Most of the events in this novel take place during a cruise at sea, yet preoccupation with land is presented as the overriding issue which highlights the personal yearnings of the main characters in The Ship, especially the Palestinian passenger Wadi Assaf. Frequently throughout the novel Assaf indulges in lengthy reflections on his passionate attachment to his homeland. On a particular occasion, the cruise triggers off Assaf’s deep contemplation of his experience in comparison with archetypal adventurers and travelers especially Sindbad, concluding that while he shares with Sindbad his lust for travel, unlike him he is deprived of the luxury of returning home in occupied Palestine:
In spite of everything," I said, "these adventures of yours remain runaways, or as you said, escapists. They're in search of something more difficult, intractable, worthwhile; fair enough. But they're "escaping" nevertheless. They're strangers in their own countries and in other countries as well. They discover the unknown in distant places in order to forget their own alienation, to put an end to it, and to return victorious to a world that they dearly wish would embrace and accept them. Like all adventures, however, like every Sindbad, they can never remain among people for long. This feeling of alienation and this lust for escape soon takes hold of them again.

"But don't you see?" Wadi interjected, "they have a place to go back to and be measured by. Henry Layard goes back to the British Museum with winged bulls, and Sindbad returns to Baghdad laden with jewels. Real alienation is alienation from a place, from roots. This is the crux. Land, Land, that's everything. We return to it bringing our discoveries, but as long as we hang on to the racing clouds, we remain in this fools' paradise. We are continually escaping, but now we must go back to the land, even if we are forced later to start off again. We must have terra firma under our feet, a land that we love and quarrel with, a land that we leave because of the intensity of our love and our quarrel and return to once more. (Jabra,1995,pp.74-75)

Jabra employs this archetypical pattern of departure and homecoming to highlight in a postcolonial context the plight of the Palestinians who are of course barred from returning home by Israel. To develop the process of decolonization, Jabra uses another myth of departure and homecoming, namely the story of Ulysses. Towards the end of the second section of the novel entitled ‘Wadi Assaf’, we get the impression that Assaf is inclined to identity himself with the Homeric hero: ‘The Corinth Canal is behind us now. The Greek Sea now envelops us in its moonlight, a night full of tales of love and murder. The smell of the earth attracts Ulysses as he roams amid the perils of the sea. There has to be a return’. (Jabra,1995,p.64)

In a more straightforward manner in the final section of the novel, Assaf reveals his unequivocal self-styled identification with Ulysses:

The few occasions when Maha and I quarreled were all false starts, just like this one. Each time we had to start again, to go back to the rock. The sea is foreign to me, however much I love it. However much I enjoy wandering among islands, I can find no haven there. I have to go back to the land. Ulysses was a much better sailor and voyager than any of us. Yet even he, like us,, would escape so that he could eventually reach somewhere where he could plant his feet firmly on land and say, "This is my soil." And, when he most needed rest after the toils and travails of his voyage, did not Calypso the enchantress give him the choice of remaining with her on the island forever as a deity or returning to his homeland as a mortal man? Yet he refused immortality and chose to return home. (Jabra,1995,p.188)
Thus while the juxtaposition or contrast with Sindbad provokes Assaf's lamentation over his less fortunate status as Palestinian who is destined to live perpetually in exile, the comparison with Ulysses provides him with mythical solace, so to speak, that he would one day return to his homeland. The mode of representation used by Jabra in this novel is realism, but through the Homeric parallel mythical realism, in the terminology of Declan Kiberd, combines with realism in the presentation of action, thus giving the Palestinians’ struggle against the Israeli occupation of their land a universal epic dimension. From a decolonizational perspective, intertextuality seems to enable Assaf to hold on to his poetic homecoming sentiment in the face of the bleakness of the prosaic world of reality in which he is barred from returning home as a result of the Jews’ occupation of the country. The point is, it might be argued, the Ulysses-inspired illusion in Assaf's life seems to be used as in figurative decolonization strategy which helps him to maintain his resistance to occupation and its attendant issues of rootlessness and loss of identity brought about by his forced exile from the homeland. Interestingly, Assaf, in what seems to be an echo of Ibsen's often quoted remark (Rob the overage man of his life-illusion and you rob him also of his happiness says: "Take away illusion, and darkness will prevail." Isam Salman, an Iraqi close friend of Assaf confirms Assaf's conviction when he tells him: "What I mean is that, however pretentions a man may be, illusion is something that he cannot avoid … so let man sing as long as he wants. Singing is all illusion. Illusion is all the sweet things in life"(Jabra,1995,p72-73). Interestingly, in his book Culture and Imperialism Edward Said argues that the occupied land by colonialism is “recoverable at first only through imagination” (Said,1994,pp.271).

To push the Homeric analogy further, I would argue that just as the Sirens failed to prevent Ulysses from carrying on his journey toward Ithaca, so Assaf manages to resist all forms of seduction by female characters (Maha, Jacqueline and Emilia the sirens, as it were, of his odyssey) to make him give up his strongly cherished dream of returning to Jerusalem. Interestingly, he eventually succeeds in persuading Maha, his Lebanese beloved, to live with him in Jerusalem.

Arabic literary tradition provides Assaf with another poetic device to maintain his passionate attachment to the land and to cope with the consequences of colonialism against all the odds. Talking to Fernando an Italian passenger, Assaf says:

Do you know that the ancient Arab poets used to fall in love with place-names, and that they repeated them in their poems as frequently as they repeated the names of women they loved?
"'Halt, my two friends, and let us weep for memory of lover and abode/ in the sand dunes between Dakhul and Hawmal,' says Imru al-Qays. And don’t you remember these lines by Abeed Ibn al-Abras, of whom we know nothing except that King al-Mundhir killed him because he met him on one of his unlucky days:
Malhub is desolate, all its people gone,
And Qutabiyyat, and Dhanub
And Rakis and Thuaylibat
And Dhatu Firqayn and Qalib
And Arda, and Qafa Hibirrin. (Jabra, 1995, p. 26)

Against this background, Assaf gets into the habit of identifying the girls he falls in love with (Maha) with Jerusalem his home town. Inspired by this Arab literary tradition, Assaf tells Isam Salman who, in turn, suffers from alienation and was forced to escape from his country.

And to utter the words 'Luma and Baghdad' is to trigger in our imagination the most fantastic poems. Isn’t it so, Isam? Are you really innocent of all this, or are you simply an architect who cannot be stirred by place-names or the names of women like Luma? (Jabra, 1995, p. 26)

In a more poetic manner, Assaf combines flirtation with women with his love of the rocks of Palestine:

Some time later, when my father bought a piece of land in Upper Baqaa, I used to flirt with the rocks—as I always did when Fayiz and I were together. We built a house on one part of the property while I flirted with the rocks. I ran after beautiful girls because they seemed like rocks, like the earth from whose firm surface we extracted our gorgeous vegetables and sweet-smelling fruit. (Jabra, 1995, p. 55)

According to Muhsin Jassim al-Musawi, it is not uncommon in Arabic postcolonial novels to find legends and folklore used as figurative tools to highlight postcolonial and decolonization issues, such as resistance to occupation and the defence of the land:

The love for land is not necessarily limited to problems of exploitation, as the subject has its many sides and attractions. The postcolonial novel takes the land as trope and subject because the whole scope of the struggle revolves around the human and the land. Such is the case with the Saudi-born novelist Abd al-Rahman Munif’s Al Nihayat (1978; English translation: Endings, 1989), and the Palestinian Ghassan Kanafani’s (assassinated in 1972) Rijal fi alshams (Men in the sun, 1963). In these, as in a number of the other novels dealing—alegorically or otherwise—with the plight of the Arab in his own land, the agonized tone as well as the prophetic note of fertility and future growth link the genre with legendary lore and ritualistic traditions, being the writer’s defence mechanism against uprootedness and cruel annihilation (Al-Musawi, 2003, pp. 122-123).

Like Assaf, Isam Salman, Maha and Emilia express their nostalgia for their own countries, but they are not as passionate as Assaf about their yearnings. Assaf’s passionate attachment to Palestine acquires its force by virtue of the postcolonial dimension of the narrative, dimension which receives more emphasis in highlighting Assaf’s sense of guilt as a result of not staying in his homeland:
"Deep inside, we're all alone. Our life resembles Chinese boxes, one box inside another, each getting smaller and smaller until we come to the smallest one in the heart of them all. And what do we find there? Not one of the precious rings of the Sultan's daughter, but a secret which is even more precious marvelous: loneliness. Why was I uprooted and cast about under hoofs and fangs, driven into flaming deserts and screaming oil-producing cities? I know why; too well, I think. The canvas is huge; black is everywhere, and the spots of color are few and far between. The young student who stole away from her father's house in order to meet her lover for two awesome minutes among the graves has lit a spot in the heart of the black canvas. Then I revert to an agony, an agony of the cross, the tragedy that renews itself. And people talk about me. 'He's a decadent, cunning fellow,' they say, 'who contradicts himself. He worships money, and his land no longer means anything to him.' (Jabra, 1995, p. 25)

Sense of guilt on account of the departure from Palestine in the aftermath of 1948 debacle figures as a recurring theme in Palestinian postcolonial literature. When they first returned to Haifa after twenty years have elapsed since they have left Palestine, Said and Safiya, in Ghassan Kanafani’s novella Return to Haifa (1984) face embarrassing questioning by their own child Khaldoun whom they left in Palestine to be adopted by a Jewish family when they fled the country in 1948.

In so far as it perpetuates passionate preoccupation with the land, sense of guilt in Palestinian resistance literature serves the same function as memory, especially in Mahmud Darwish’s poetry. In Darwish’s Memory for Forgetfulness, memory is presented as a tool of resistance and protection against forgetfulness of the land (Darwish, 1982, p. 70).

To conclude, the discussion of the two novels has revealed that each of the two novelists Al-Sharqawi and Jabra employs specific decolonization strategies and postcolonial discourse determined and shaped by their distinct idiosyncratic modes of regard, political conditions, and socio-historical circumstances which frame the basic tension in the two novels under consideration. In comparison with highlighting the role of land occupation as the major factor in weaving the texture of the main conflict in The Ship, the Egyptian Earth places more emphasis on politics as the main source of struggle in the lives of main characters. Yet, in both of the two novels land is used as a metaphor for resistance, perpetual striving for liberation, and the formation of anti colonial structure of feelings.

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Revisiting the Theatre of the Absurd in Christopher Durang’s  
*For Whom the Southern Belle Tolls* (1993) and *Desire, Desire, Desire* (1995)

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Abstract:  
Contemporary American playwright and actor, Christopher Durang (1949- ) has carved himself an important niche in the American theater. He has been awarded several writing fellowships and grants. Noted for his outrageous and absurd comedy, his plays have been produced nationally and internationally. He has been influenced by Eugène Ionesco (1909-1994) and Tom Stoppard (1937- ). His plays satirise preconceived ideas and institutions which lend themselves to the Theatre of the Absurd that deliberately parodies all the traditional assumptions of Western culture. This present study attempts to read Durang’s *For Whom the Southern Belle Tolls* (1993) and *Desire, Desire, Desire* (1995) as different manifestations of the Theatre of the Absurd. The former play is an eccentric comedy about a troubled parent-child relationship which spoofs Tennessee Williams’s *The Glass Menagerie* (1945). As to the latter play, it is a parody of several Tennessee Williams’ plays: *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1947) and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (1955) as well as Marsha Norman’s *Night, Mother* (1983). It tackles a tensed marital relationship. Thus, through the deft use of parody, Durang satirises man’s difficulty of accepting reality and the impossibility of true escape. As a result, it is perceived that Durang has delineated the Absurd Theatre from extreme farcical boundaries through parodying the inconsistencies in institutions and the human condition.  
*Keywords:* absurd, comedy of errors, memory play, parody
Revisiting the Theatre of the Absurd in Christopher Durang’s
For Whom the Southern Belle Tolls (1993) and Desire, Desire, Desire (1995)

The purpose of this paper is to revisit the Theatre of the Absurd through Christopher Durang’s (b. 1949) two plays: For Whom the Southern Belle Tolls (1993) and Desire, Desire, Desire (1995). The researcher will introduce the Absurd Theatre from a different perspective employed by Durang who uses parody as a tool to impart his message. He spoofs a number of Tennessee Williams’ plays in an endeavor to pinpoint his own point of view. Durang’s plays are compared and contrasted to Williams’ in an attempt to satirise preconceived ideas and institutions.

Introduction: Reflection on the Absurd Theatre

It is the Second World War that has brought about the radical changes in all aspects of life. As a result, existentialists have emerged and proposed that man perceives life as meaningless and futile. They delve deep into man’s sense of futility and nihilism which stems out of the catastrophic aftermath of World War II. It is the strong influence of the traumatic horror of the 1945 nuclear annihilation that has resulted in the birth of the Absurd Theatre. According to Carter & McRae (1997):

the subject matter is still, essentially, the human condition, but the means and the methods of exploring it are infinitely richer and more varied than ever before …. There is the individual; solitary, responsible for his or her own destiny, yet powerless when set against the ineluctable forces of the universe (p. 449-450).

According to Arnold (2001: 194,) the Absurd Theatre was established by a group of international playwrights: Samuel Beckett (Irish), Eugène Ionesco (Romanian), Arthur Adamov (Russian), and Jean Genet (French) who lived in Paris, as he adds, “… found traditional value systems bankrupt. They wrote about the meaninglessness of human existence and the inability of language to communicate in an effective way …” (p.194).

The term ‘Theatre of the Absurd’ was derived from the French existentialist philosopher Albert Camus’ (1913-1960) seminal essay, “The Myth of Sisyphus” (1942), where he asserts that man is in a continuous conflict between what s/he needs to find in the world and what s/he eventually finds. Sisyphus is a Greek mythology figure who was punished to keep pushing a rock up a mountain to see it roll down again. To surpass this ordeal manifested via this absurd situation, he has to accept it. He elaborates that man's continuous search for order, values, and security is doomed to failure for s/he finds nothing but a meaningless universe. Camus, therefore, endeavors to solve this conflict by proclaiming that man should accept to live in a world which has neither meaning nor purpose. This has given rise to the feeling of absurdity which has been overwhelming during this period. According to Carter and McRae 1997: 449, “The sense of fragmentation developed into a sense of absurdity, of existential futility …” as they add, “… There is a veritable explosion of expression around the question of the atomic bomb, around the possibility that all life could end at a moment’s notice …” (p. 449).

Camus (1975) proclaims that suicide is not the opted solution to man’s absurd reality. To overcome despair, Camus calls for revolt which entails acknowledgement, acceptance and
accomplishment. By acknowledgement, Camus means that man should acknowledge the absurd as neither foreign nor unpleasant (p.11). Then man has to accept this absurdity which is a more difficult step. It is this inner revolt that will eventually lead to Sisyphus’ success from falling into the abyss of despair. Camus (1975) elaborates:

At each of those moments when he leaves the heights and gradually sinks towards the lairs of gods, he is superior to his fate. He is stronger than his rock ... Sisyphus, the proletarian of the gods, powerless and rebellious, knows the whole extent of his wretched condition; it is what he thinks of during his descent. The lucidity that was to constitute his torture at the same time crowns his victory. There is not fate that cannot be surmounted by scorn. (p.109)

Moreover, ‘The Theatre of the Absurd’ is a term coined by the critic Martin Esslin (1918-2002) who says that “The Theatre of the Absurd strives to express its sense of the senselessness of the human condition and the inadequacy of the rational approach by the open abandonment of rational devices and discursive thought” (1961, p.24). In his introduction to Absurd Drama, Esslin (1965) explains that the Absurd Theatre “attacks the comfortable certainties of religious or political orthodoxy. It aims to shock its audience out of complacency, to bring it face to face with the harsh facts of the human situation” (n.d.).

Furthermore, the term ‘Absurd’ is defined by Eugène Ionesco (1909-1994) in reference to the man who “is devoid of purpose … [c]ut off from his religious, metaphysical, and transcendental roots.” He adds that the “man is lost; all his actions become senseless, absurd, useless” (qtd. in Carter, 1991, p. 140). Extremely baffling and overwhelming is the world perceived by the absurdists. They hold the view that life is sated with uncertainty, thus shunning away any hope for a better life. Furthermore, they envision a world bereft of any values. Consequently, man has become an aimless wanderer in a meaningless universe who encounters nothing but despair. As a result, man’s deplorable status in the universe is the material tackled by the absurdist dramatists.

As to the form, absurdist writers do not follow a particular structure as they portray nihilistic ideas: “The plays themselves lack a formal logic and conventional structure, so that both form and content support (while emphasizing the difficulty of communication) the representation of what may be called the absurd predicament” (Cuddon, 1976, p. 968). The absurd plays aimed at shocking the audience through an unconventional form. In an online article, Culik, 2000, defines:

[A]bsurd plays assumed a highly unusual, innovative form, directly aiming to startle the viewer, shaking him out of this comfortable, conventional life of everyday concerns. In the meaningless and Godless post-Second-World-War world, it was no longer possible to keep using such traditional art forms and standards that had ceased being convincing and lost their validity. ( n.d.)

In other words, absurd playwrights broke away with the shackles of conventional theatre form.

The language employed is that of normal daily life routine; nevertheless, it is a language uttered by absurdists who fall into the abyss of despair. Carter and McRae (1997) believe that
“Their language is more naturalistic and shows gaps, repetitions, silences, and incoherences, modelled on normal conversation” (p.451). Not only this, but also language was perceived as “a very unreliable and insufficient tool of communication …”(Culik, 2000). The Absurd Theatre was totally antithetical to the conventional theatre; therefore, Absurd drama “uses conventionalised speech, clichés, slogans and technical jargon, which distorts, parodies and breaks down. By ridiculing conventionalised and stereotyped speech patterns… [it is aimed to] make people aware of the possibility of going beyond everyday speech conventions and communicating more authentically” (Culik, 2000). Speaking in the same vein, Esslin (1961) remarks:

The Theatre of the Absurd … tends toward a radical devaluation of language, toward a poetry that is to emerge from the concrete and objectified images of the stage itself. The element of language still plays an important part in this conception, but what happens on the stage transcends and often contradicts the words spoken by the characters. (p.26)

Therefore, the object is much more important than the language in the absurd theatre. Culik (2000) elaborates “…what happens transcends what is being said about it. It is the hidden, implied meaning of words that assume primary importance in absurd theatre, over and above what is being actually said. The Theatre of the Absurd strove to communicate an undissolved totality of perception - hence it had to go beyond language…”

Being defiant to the traditional dramatic theory, the Absurd Theatre shuns away with Aristotle’s notions of plot, character, thought, diction, music and spectacle. There is no plot with a beginning, middle and an end as absurdist hold the belief that life is not necessarily outlined as such and is not shaped according to a climax. The objective of the absurdist writers is to delineate life and highlight man’s ordeal. Therefore, characters come to the fore in absurd drama to reflect the inner workings of the mind. Culik (2000) expounds:

Absurd dramas are lyrical statements, very much like music: they communicate an atmosphere, an experience of archetypal human situations. The Absurd Theatre is a theatre of situation, as against the more conventional theatre of sequential events. It presents a pattern of poetic images. In doing this, it uses visual elements, movement, light. Unlike conventional theatre, where language rules supreme, in the Absurd Theatre language is only one of many components of its multidimensional poetic imagery. n.d.)

Moreover, absurd writers employ satire mixed with parody. Parody is a mimicry of an established concept, idea or a person, unlike satire which involves mockery not mimicry. Parody is reckoned a fundamental art form in the 20th century which reflects the divergence between modernism and postmodernism. Linda Hutcheon (1989) holds the belief that postmodernism is “…self-conscious, self-contradictory, self-undermining statement” (Politics, p.1), which could be manifested through the use of parody. Dino Felluga remarks: “One way of creating this double or contradictory stance on any statement is the use of parody: citing a convention only to make fun of it.” Hutcheon (1985) in her book Theory of Parody asserts that parody in the twentieth century “is an integrated structural modeling process of revising, replaying, inverting, and ‘trans-contextualizing’ previous works of art” (p.11).
In view of this, parody is an important functional tool employed by postmodern writers. Hutcheon argues that "through a double process of installing and ironizing, parody signals how present representations come from past ones and what ideological consequences derive from both continuity and difference" (*Politics*, p. 93). Felluga points out, “Parody de-doxifies, to use a favorite term of Hutcheon’s; it unsettles all doxa, all accepted beliefs and ideologies.” Similarly, Dan Harries asserts that postmodern parody revolutionises previous texts and dominant modes of thought and consequently has “an almost emancipatory function by jolting people out of their normatively-constructed compliance with social rules and norms” (127).

**Revisiting the Absurd through the Eyes of Durang**

Contemporary American playwright, Christopher Durang (b. 1949) is known for his outrageous and absurd comedy. Influenced by the Absurd Theatre, Durang goes beyond the nihilism of conventional absurdity in order to disseminate his message. He deftly employs parody as a tool to mock all preconceived notions, such as parochial religion, popular culture, literature, theater, and middle-class familial relationships. This paper attempts to revisit the Theatre of the Absurd through the focal lens of Durang depicted in his two plays: *For Whom the Southern Belle Tolls* (1993) and *Desire, Desire, Desire* (1995) in which he spoofs the plays of Tennessee Williams (1911-1983).

Durang parodies Williams’ *The Glass Menagerie* (1945) in his *For Whom the Southern Belle Tolls* (1993). Williams’ *The Glass Menagerie* is a ‘memory play,’ a term coined by Williams “to describe non-realistic dramas … in which the audience experiences the past as remembered by a narrator, complete with music from the period remembered, and images representing the characters' thoughts, fears, emotions, and recollections projected on a scrim in the background.” (superglossary). A seven-scene play is ridiculed in a one-act play by Durang (1995) who remarks that his play is “… a parody spin-off of Tennessee Williams’ *The Glass Menagerie*” (p.10). He spoofs Williams’ memory play by turning it into a play performed, not reminiscized by its characters.

Although Williams (1982) prefaced his play with an appeal for a new form of realism, he remarks that the use of untraditional techniques to delineate reality does not shun away reality. It rather entails finding new means of expression (*Menagerie*, p. 1). He elaborates

… The straight realistic play with its genuine Frigidaire and authentic ice-cubes, its characters who speak exactly as its audience speaks, corresponds to academic landscape and has the same virtue of a photographic likeness. Everyone should know nowadays the unimportance of the photographic in art: that truth, life, or reality is an organic thing which the poetic imagination can represent or suggest, in essence, only through transformation, through changing into other forms than those which were merely present in appearance. (*Menagerie*, p. 1)

Nevertheless, Durang has changed the realistic setting delineated by Williams into a two-line vague, unclear and unrealistic one through the use of the word “maybe” twice. The play opens with a very short description: “Scene: A warm, fussy living room setting. A couch, a chair, homey and warm. *Maybe* a fringed throw over the couch. *Maybe* a vase of jonquils” (*Southern*, p.12). This highlights Durang’s rejection of realistic setting which implies that everything is
meaningless and not as clear cut as depicted by realists. On the other hand, in spite of the fact that Williams’ *Menagerie* is a memory play which is nonrealistic as voiced out by Williams’ himself, he carefully and meticulously sketches the setting as follows: “The Wingfield apartment is in the rear of the building, one of those vast hive-like conglomerations of cellular living-units that flower as warty growths in overcrowded urban centers of lower middle-class population…” (*Menagerie*, p.5). Here Durang finds that the meticulously sketched setting by Williams is meaningless and should be crossed out.

Music is another element of drama highlighted by Williams as he believes in the importance of the role played by music in drama. He employs a tune “The Glass Menagerie” which is repeated throughout the play to add an emotional impact. He explains:

> This tune is like circus music, not when you are on the grounds or in the immediate vicinity of the parade, but when you are at some distance and very likely thinking of something else. It seems under those circumstances to continue almost interminably and it weaves in and out of your preoccupied consciousness; then it is the lightest, most delicate music in the world and perhaps the saddest. It expresses the surface vivacity of life with the underlying strain of immutable and inexpressible sorrow. (*Menagerie*, p. 3)

Unlike Williams who employs music, Durang has no music in his play because absurd means “out of harmony” in a musical sense.

From the vantage point of an absurdist, Durang holds the belief that a play should dispense with linear narrative manifested via the Aristotelian plot which has a beginning, a middle and an end. Comparing the absurd drama to others, Esslin (1961) elaborates:

> If a good play must have a cleverly constructed story, these have no story or plot to speak of; if a good play is judged by subtlety of characterization and motivation, these are often without recognizable characters and present the audience with almost mechanical puppets; if a good play has to have a fully explained theme, which is neatly exposed and finally solved, these often have neither a beginning nor an end; if a good play is to hold the mirror up to nature and portray the manners and mannerisms of the age in finely observed sketches, these seem often to be reflections of dreams and nightmares; if a good play relies on witty repartee and pointed dialogue, these often consist of incoherent babblings. (p. 21-22)

**Durang Spoofs Tennessee Williams’ The Glass Menagerie**

*The Glass Menagerie* revolves around the Wingfield family who lives in a shabby apartment in St. Louis. Amanda Wingfield, the mother, works from home selling magazine subscriptions to earn money to support her family after being deserted by her husband years ago. She always thinks in retrospect of her past when she was young and had a lot of callers; nevertheless, she cannot forget her indigent hard life. As to Tom Wingfield, he is Amanda’s son and the narrator of the play. He works at a shoe warehouse to support his family. He is a frustrated young poet. Whereas his sister, Laura Wingfield, is fragile and slightly crippled. Unable to cope with reality, she lives in a world contrived by her. She escapes reality through her
glass animals and old phonography records. In addition, Jim O’Connor, who works with Tom at the shoe warehouse, is the gentleman caller that both Amanda and Laura will be waiting for.

Through the visit of Jim O’Connor, Williams outlines the parent-child conflict; “through his [Williams] unique alchemy transforms a single incident- the visit of a dinner guest- into a universal revelation about parent-child conflict and brother-sister bonding” (Griffin, 1995, p. 21-22). Tom narrates the story and introduces others characters in the play, namely, his mother, Amanda, and sister, Laura. Amanda refuses to accept her children as they are. She refuses to admit that Laura is crippled. Moreover, she rejects the idea that Tom might be a creative writer and deems the books he reads hideous. Therefore, she keeps reminiscing about her past and her many gentlemen callers. The visit does not go as they have wished for as O’Connor turned out to be engaged. Laura goes back to her glass animals. The play ends with Tom, after the passage of many years, fired from his job and joined the Merchant Marine.

Durang spoofs the tensed parental-filial relationship delineated in Williams’ *The Glass Menagrie*. He replaces Williams’ Laura with the hypochondriac hypersensitive son, Lawrence who escapes his reality through his collection of glass cocktail stirrers instead of Laura’s glass animals. Jim O’Connor, the gentleman caller, is replaced with Virginia Bennett (Ginny), the feminine caller, who has a hearing impairment and is overfriendly. Whereas Amanda Wingvalley is the frustrated Southern belle mother who wants to change her children’s reality into a better one. Durang finds Laura’s character in William’s play the most annoying and frustrating. In his Note, the author points out: “It’s out of this irritation with Laura’s sensitivity- a feeling greatly at odds with Williams’ original – that I seem to have written this parody, *For Whom the Southern belle Tolls*” (Southern, p.10). In other words, it is Laura’s character that has provoked Durang to parody Williams’ play.

Durang satirises the character of Laura through Lawrence. He finds her ridiculous; therefore, he adds to Lawrence’s limping problem other ones, such as eczema and asthma. He ridicules Laura’s glass animals by replacing them with a collection of glass swizzle sticks. When his mother tells him that he looks lovely, Lawrence brings up his silly ailments; “I have a pimple on the back of my neck” (Southern, p. 12), which reflects teenagers’ silly obsession with their appearance. He pinpoints Lawrence’s silly apprehension: “It upsets my stomach to meet people, mama” (ibid, p.12). “I don’t like the world, mama. I like it here in this room” (ibid, p.13). When Amanda asks Lawrence to make himself a living by getting a job, he tells her: “I can’t work, mama. I’m crippled” (ibid, p.13). He ridicules the silliness of Laura’s obsession with glass animals as he declares in the Author’s Note: “as an adult I started to find Laura’s sensitivity frustrating. I mean, how hard was typing class really? ... I felt restless with her little hobby. Did she actually spend hours and hours staring at them? [glass animals] Couldn’t she try to function in the world just a little bit” (Southern, p. 10)?

Durang is a constructive critic as Howard Stein writes in his introduction to Durang’s *Twenty-Seven Short Plays*:

Durang shouts for reason in an unreasonable universe and in an unreasoning society. He is, in the best sense of the critic, attempting to be corrective while fulfilling his primary purpose of entertaining his audience. He has to be offensive
to be effective...That offensiveness is in the service of an objective to aid an audience to see not only its follies and vices but also its misplaced values, its lies and deceits, its infirmities, even its cruelty and callousness. Only by having such conditions razed in front of us can we begin the process of building, of correcting. With his uncommon talent, Christopher Durang lights a candle rather than curses a darkness. (Southern, p.viii)

During lends himself to Camus who invites man to stand up against his futile, absurd reality through ‘acknowledgment’, ‘acceptance’ and eventually ‘accomplishment.’ Speaking in the same vein, Esslin (1961) remarks: “… For the dignity of man lies in his ability to face reality in all its senselessness; to accept it freely, without fear, without illusions- and to laugh at it” (qtd. in Hinchliffe, 1969, p.12-13). Thus, the reader is invited to reconsider the Theatre of the Absurd, and to perceive it from a different vantage point as that perceived by Durang.

Characters are of prime importance for absurd writers. Not only does Durang replicate and parody Laura’s character, but also he overdramatises Jim O’Connor’s by replacing him with the female character, Virginia Bennett (Ginny). Ginny is described by Durang as “a vivacious, friendly girl dressed in either factoryclothes, or else a simple, not-too-frilly blouse and slacks” (Southern, p.15). She is the most absurd character in the play. Unlike in Williams’ play, Jim is a realistic ambitious character, “I’m planning to change. I’m right at the point of committing myself to a future that doesn’t include the warehouse and Mr. Mendoza or even a night-school course in public speaking” (Menagerie, p. 62-63). Durang mocks Jim by having Ginny raise her voice to demonstrate her public speaking skills. She tells Amanda, “You’re asking why I am speaking loudly. It’s so that I can be heard! I am taking a course in public speaking, and so far we’ve covered organizing your thoughts and speaking good and loud so the people in the back of the room can hear you” (Southern, p. 15-16).

Moreover, Ginny seems to be Durang’s mouthpiece, unlike Tom who narrates the story in Williams’ play. Through Ginny, Durang ridicules Laura’s obsession with glass animals through Ginny who mistakenly abuses Lawrence’s collection of swizzle sticks. When Lawrence holds up a swizzle stick and explains: “I call this one Stringbean, because it’s long and thin” (Southern, p. 18), Ginny puts it in her glass and stirs. When Lawrence shows Ginny another one and says: “I call this one Q-tip, because I realized it looks like a Q-tip, except it’s made out of glass and doesn’t have little cotton swabs at the end of it” (Southern, p. 19), Ginny puts it in her ear. Nevertheless, he keeps showing her the rest of the collection: “I call this one Pinocchio because if you hold it perpendicular to your nose it makes your nose look long” (ibid). He adds, “And I call this one Henry Kissinger, because he wears glasses and it’s made of glass” (ibid). When Lawrence offers Ginny one of his cocktail stirrers as a souvenir, saying: “I want you to keep this. It’s my favorite one. I call it Thermometer because it looks like a thermometer” (Southern, p. 21), Ginny throws it away and calls him ‘queer.’ Thus, in a sharp jab at the stupidity of man who does not face reality, Durang does not sympathise with Laura (Lawrence).

It is the futile human condition that Durang endeavours to criticise which lends itself to Camus’ analysis of man’s meaningless life in a world of no beliefs. Camus (1942) in his seminal essay The Myth of Sisyphus believes that
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A world that can be explained by reasoning, however, faulty, is a familiar world. But in a universe that is suddenly deprived of illusions and of light, man feels a stranger. His is an irremediable exile, because he is deprived of memories of a lost homeland as much as he lacks the hope of a promised land to come. This divorce between man and his life, the actor and his setting, truly constitutes the feeling of Absurdity. (qtd in Esslin *The Theatre of the Absurd*, 1965, p.23)

Nevertheless, he calls for standing up against one’s bitter reality instead of falling into the abyss of despair. He ridicules Laura through Lawrence and Ginny who is his spokeswoman.

He parodies Amanda, the south belle mother, who reminisces about her past all the time as she has been deserted by her husband years ago. She is one of the most absurd characters who hates her reality. She has to live with her “weird” children as she calls them. She tries to set him up with a girl who works with his brother Tom at the warehouse. She hates her life:

I suppose it’s unmotherly of me, dear, but you really get on my nerves. Limping around the apartment, pretending to have asthma. If only some nice girl would marry you and I knew you were taken care of, then I’d feel free to start to live again. I’d join Parents Without Parents, I’d go to dinner dances, I’d have a life again. Rather than watch you mope about this stupid apartment. I’m not bitter, dear, it’s just that I hate my life. (*Southern*, p.14)

After the visit of Ginny who ridicules Lawrence’s silly collection of cocktail stirrers by throwing away one of them, Amanda realises that she has to accept her reality. In spite of the mother-son tensed relationship, Amanda decides to have a wish similar to her son’s. She asks him to make a wish because she can see the evening star. When Lawrence wishes for more swizzle sticks, Amanda says that she also wishes for more swizzle sticks: “The same thing, honey. Maybe just a little happiness, too… but mostly some swizzle sticks” (*Southern*, p.27). The play ends on an acceptance note that Durang calls for. In other words, he has parodied Williams’ *The Glass Menagerie* from an absurdist vantage point.

**An Analysis of Durang’s Desire, Desire, Desire**

Not only does Durang parody Williams’ *The Glass Menagerie*, but also he spoofs *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1947) and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (1955) as well as Marsha Norman’s *Night, Mother* (1983) in *Desire, Desire, Desire* (1995). He begins the play with “Scene: A shabby New Orleans apartment” (*Desire*, p.183). Unlike Williams who starts off on a detailed delineation of the setting as he sketches the setting as follows:

The exterior of a two-storey corner building on a street in New Orleans which is named Elsyian Fields and runs between the L & N tracks and the river. The section is poor but, unlike corresponding sections in other American cities, it has a raffish charm. The houses are mostly white frame, weathered grey, with rickety outside stairs and galleries and quaintly ornamented gables to the entrances of both. (*Streetcar*, p.1)
The setting sets the tone of the play for Williams. On the contrary, Durang does not believe in the importance of a setting as nothing is utterly real. He downsizes Williams’ one-page setting into one short sentence which merely mentions the location. Durang who writes absurd comedy gives the characters absolute importance to impart his message.

Moreover, Williams deftly plays with music as a tool to describe the characters’ emotions. The reader can ‘hear’ music in all scenes of A Streetcar Named Desire as it is mentioned through the stage directions. He makes use of two types of music: the blue music and the Varsouviana Polka. The blue music is employed to reflect any feelings of distress, sadness and death. When Blanche speaks about the loss of her family and Belle Reve, (beautiful dream) her house, the blue music is played in the background. Williams explains from the beginning of the play: “In this part of New Orleans you are particularly always just around the corner, or a few doors down the street, from a tinny piano being played with the infatuated fluency of brown fingers. This “blue piano” expresses the spirit of the life which goes on here” (Streetcar, p.1). When Blanche informs Stella that they lost Belle Reve, the stage direction reads: “The music of the “blue piano” grows louder …” (Streetcar, p.21). At the end of the play, when Blanche is taken to a mental institution, Stanley and his friends resume the poker game and the blue piano music plays again. Finally, the play is permeated with this music going up and down to mirror the characters’ feelings and emotions.

Whereas the Varsouviana Polka is run when death or disaster is mentioned. When Blanche reminicises about her past, the Polka music is played. When she talks about Allan, her husband, who committed suicide, the polka music is heard. “Polka music sounds, in a minor key faint with distance. We danced the Varsouviana. Suddenly in the middle of the dance the boy I had married broke away from me and ran out of the casino. A few moments later- a shot! (The Polka stops)” (Streetcar, p.115). The polka music is linked to Blanche’s state of mind. When she realizes that she is not welcome anymore by Stanely as he gives her a ticket back to Laurel, she feels imminent disaster. “The rapid, feverish polka tune, the “Varsouviana,” is heard. The music is in her mind; she is drinking to escape it and the sense of disaster closing in on her, and she seems to whisper the words of the song…” (Streetcar, p.139). Thus, through the polka music, Williams depicts Blanche’s workings of mind.

Unlike Williams who makes use of music, Durang rarely employs it. In Desire, Desire, Desire, there is no mention of either the blue music or the Varsouviana Polka music. Nevertheless, the play ends on a sad note with the stage directions reading, “Mournful saxophone music-as in the soundtrack of the Streetcar movie. Blanche sadly puts the rabbit head on her own head. She sits there, tragically, sadly. Lights dim. End” (Streetcar, p.193). So, music is not a pivotal element for an absurdist writer.

Williams’ A Streetcar Named Desire has a realistic, well-developed plot. Blanche Dubois is the protagonist who arrives at her sister’s Stella Kowalski in the Faubourg Marigny neighborhood of New Orleans, on Elysian Fields Avenue. Stella is not thrilled to meet her sister as she is afraid of her husband’s reaction. Blanche explains to her sister that their Southern plantation, Belle Reve in Laurel, Mississippi, has been lost due to the epic fornications of their ancestors. She adds that as an English teacher, she is given a leave by her school supervisor to forget about her loss. Nevertheless, she has been fired because she has had an affair with a
seventeen-year-old school boy. Not only does she have this defaming affair, but also she is engaged in other seductive affairs. Therefore, she escapes to Laurel and falls into the abyss of illusions and despair.

Blanche’s presence has caused the Stanely-Stella marital relationship tensed. Stanely manages to know about Blanche’s defamed past from a co-worker who has travelled to Laurel. He informs Harold Mitchell (Mitch), Blanche’s would-be suitor, about her past. Stanely confronts Blanche with her past, and finds her pretense despicable. He rapes her which results in her nervous breakdown. Consequently, she ends up in a mental institution. Apparently, Williams has a traditional plot with a beginning, development, climax and dénouement which conforms to the norms of a traditional play.

Unlike Williams’ A Streetcar Named Desire which has a well-knit plot, Durang’s Desire, Desire, Desire has no beginning, development, climax, and dénouement; nevertheless, it is situational. He parodies a bunch of characters from different plays which he points out in his Note to the actors: “Blanche, Stanely, Stella and the Young Man are from Williams’ A Streetcar Named Desire. Big Daddy and Maggie are from Williams’ Cat On A Hot Tin Roof. Cora is a character from O’Neill’s The Iceman Cometh...” (Streetcar, p.194). In Desire, Desire, Desire, the male protagonist is Stanley Kowalski, whereas his wife Stella is replaced by Blanche DuBois. The play starts with Stanley yelling “Stella!” continuously until he renders Blanche on the verge of a nervous breakdown as she points out. Then the doorbell rings and a census taker shows up, and starts to ask about the number of people who live in the house and whether they are democrats or republicans. Meanwhile, instead of responding to the census taker’s questions, Blanche flirts with him.

In addition to these situations, Blanche is interrupted by Big Daddy and Maggie from A Cat On A Hot Tin Roof as Maggie says that she wants to have a child because Big Daddy is dying of cancer and they (Maggie and Brick) do not want other people to inherit all the money. Afterwards, Cora from Iceman Cometh enters to speak about “pipe dreams” illusions. Then Blanche decides to eventually use the ticket Stanely bought her. She feels extremely lonely. Stella, her long gone sister, comes back with a cherry coke instead of a lemon coke. A Rabbit comes in who turns out to be Stanely who asks about Stella. The play ends on a sad note as Blanche puts on the rabbit head and sits alone. In fact, Durang does not write a traditional play with a clear plot; however, he criticises characters that he could not stand in other plays. He parodies scenes from a number of plays to point out his own point of view.

As to the language employed, it is a simple everyday language in addition to the some sentences that he takes from other plays to poke fun at. Unlike Williams who employs as Griffin (1995) elaborates: “The language, symbolism, and theatrical effects create the extra dimension Williams sought, beyond realism. The heightened language only sounds realistic, for Williams excels in creating dialogue that is unique and individual to its speaker. Stanely’s idiom is made up of army and conventional slang, trite expressions...” (p. 63). In other words, Stanely uses army-related expressions. Williams also makes Blanche an English teacher which allows him “full play for lyricism and literary allusions, which are quite in character” (Griffin, 1995, p.63). Thus, Durang does not focus on language to impart his message. He highlights what characters do and how they think rather than on how they talk.
It is obvious that Durang imparts his message through the characters he parodies. Stanley Kowalski is Blanche’s brother-in-law, unlike in Durang’s play, he is Blanche’s wife. Williams, in an interview, describes Stanely as “pretty primitive and primordial in his instincts, but in many ways defensible. He was reacting with an animal’s instinct to protect its own, its own terrain from invasion, by that element that he could not comprehend, which happened to be Blanche” (Brown, 1986, p.266). He does not like Blanche staying around. He tells Stella: “Wasn’t it all okay? Till she showed here. Hoity-toity, describing me as an ape” (Streetcar, p.137). He is cruel to her from the very beginning as he has been rude to her at the first interview, then when he buys her a ticket to go back to Laurel, and finally when he rapes her which has caused her down fall. Therefore, Stanely is delineated as a mean well-developed character in Williams’ play.

In Durang’s play, Stanley is the careless, undedicated husband not the brother-in-law. He keeps calling Stella declaring that he misses her throughout the play. He pays no heed towards his wife’s flirtation with the census taker. He either pretends that he does not hear her, or pokes fun at her sexual innuendos. He even buys her a bus ticket to travel to Glengarry Glen Ross, a place that Blanche does not like which amounts in her augmented feeling of loneliness. He tries to explain to Blanche that nothing is perfect. Durang jabs at Stanely by turning him from a loving aggressive husband into a homosexual one who has an aberrated affair with his friend, Skipper. He ridicules him as he could neither tolerate the presence of his sister-in-law nor live with her promiscuous past. In Durang’s play, it is Stanely who falls into mental disorder. After spending some time with Skipper, his friend, he goes back home dressed up like Harvey as Blanche asks him “Are you Harvey From the Pulitzer Prize-winning play by Mary Chase” (Desire, p. 192)? Harvey is the imaginary friend of Elwood P. Dowd in Mary Chase’s comedy of errors, Harvey (1944). Due to Elwood’s eccentric behavior, Veta, his sister confines him to a mental asylum in order to avoid embarrassment. Nevertheless, in spite of his mental illness, he is accepted by Blanche who will put on the rabbit’s head which lends itself to Harvey’s ending when Veta stopped the doctor before giving Harvey an injection that was going to turn him into a normal human being as a sign of acceptance.

The female protagonist, Blanche Dubois, in Durang’s play is a parody of Williams’ A Streetcar Named Desire. However, he has changed the role she plays from the sister to the wife. Her name is symbolic and significant. “Blanche” is a French word which means ‘white’ and is a symbol of purity, innocence and chastity. Ironically enough, her name is a mask of her true real character. In Williams’ play, she pretends to be a woman of virtue and endeavours to conceal her defamed past experiences by making up stories in order to maintain her social status among family, acquaintances and friends. When this contrived image falls apart by Stanely, she could not stand this exposure and as a result she falls into the abyss of mental disorder. Blanche is a round character that undergoes different phases in the play.

Durang criticises Blanche’s character as she could not stand up against Stanley and broke down. He gave her the role of Stella, the oppressed wife, in order to jab at her. In Durang’s play, Blanche is startled to death by her husband, Stanely, who keeps yelling Stella! and the play starts off on a melancholic note as Blanche says: “Oh Lord. There’s no hope” (Desire, p. 184). Unlike Blanche in Williams’ play who incessantly hides her promiscuous nature, Blanche in Durang’s play bluntly flirts with the census taker in front of Stanely. She says that he reminds her “of someone young and tender who touched my [Blanche’s] heart when I was a young girl at Belle
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Reeve …” (Desire, p.184). She also tells him that “Did anyone ever tell you you look like a Prince out of the Arabian night” (Desire, p.184)? The word ‘desire’ is repeated three times at the end of almost every sentence she utters. As a reaction to her flirting, Stanely pretends that he does not hear her or pokes fun at what she says. When the census taker asks her whether they are registered democrats or republicans, she answers him by saying that she is registered a southern belle. She wants everybody to flirt with her since she is a beauty.

Blanche is a typical twentieth century desperate, hopeless woman who finds life futile due to her husband’s carelessness. She decides to leave and commit suicide. She tells Stanely: “I am making an exit, but it’s going to be a final one, Stanely. Because it’s So Long, Sam; it’s good-bye, Charlie; it’s night, mother...” (Desire, p. 188). This line is taken from Marsha Norman’s Night, Mother (1983). The play is about Jessie who tells Thelma, her mother that she will commit suicide in the evening and be dead by morning. Blanche then reads from a long sheet of paper the whereabouts of all items at the house:

Now I’ve made a list of where everything is so you won’t be confused. The paper lanterns are in the top shelf in the bedroom closet, along with broken dreams and extra filters for the vacuum cleaner. The little white tie-things that go with the plastic garbage bags are up above the refrigerators in an empty Nestle Quik box … .” (Desire, p. 188)

Durang explicitly explains in his To the Actor Note that follows the play:

Most people who know theatre well will get the allusions I’m making in this play, but in case there are some who don’t, I’m going to risk being obvious and just out tell you who’s from what… When Blanche gives a long mundane list of “where everything is” for Stanely to know after she’s dead, this is a reference to and parody of Marsha Norman’s Night, Mother .... (Desire, p. 194)

Nevertheless, Blanche is reluctant as she tells Cora, a prostitute from Eugene O’Neill’s The Iceman Cometh (1939), and Stanley: “Isn’t anyone going to try to talk me out of suicide” (Desire, p.188)? She gives a silly reason for wanting to kill herself: “say you’ve been on a streetcar a long time. It’s hot and it’s bumpy and noisy, and you want to get off, but your stop isn’t for fifty more blocks when it reaches Elysian Fields. But then you realize maybe the streetcar may not ever get to Elysian Fields, so you figure, why not get off the streetcar now?” Durang shows how shallow Blanche is as she declares that “I want poetry and art and music, and if I can’t have them, I’d rather be dead” (Desire, p.189). She asserts: “I don’t want realism, I want magic” (Desire, p. 189)! In other words, she wants to live in her fantasy world rather than to stand up for herself and try to solve her problems.

She goes through the acknowledgement mode that is voiced out by Camus as she admits: “A woman with illusions shattered, livin’ in a place where death is as close as you are, and where the opposite of death is desire. Desire, desire, desire” (Desire, p. 189). She has acknowledged her problem and that desire is her way out. Afterwards, she moves on to the acceptance phase when her sister, Stella, who has been absent for six years comes back for a short visit, then leaves again to get her a lemon coke instead of a cherry coke. “She’s gone. I’m all alone. For six years
at least. All alone. Oh desire, desire, desire. Desire under the elms; desire under the arms. Farewell to arms. For whom the belle tolls. For whom the southern belle tolls. Waiting, waiting…” (Desire, p.192). Durang’s Blanche is different from Williams’ although they both say the same words at the end. “I have always depended on the kindness of strangers” (Desire, p. 193). Nevertheless, she does not go crazy as Williams’ Blanche. She accepts her ‘unpleasant reality’ which depicts Durang’s message.

Conclusion:
Durang has spoofed a number of Tennessee Williams’ plays from an absurdist vantage point to depict the ridiculousness of man who overrates his bitter reality in a world bereft of meaning, value or purpose. He adopts Albert Camus’ theory of acknowledgment, acceptance and accomplishment. Camus has held the belief that man is incessantly going through a conflict between what s/he seeks to find in life and what s/he eventually finds. He asserts that man should not commit suicide as a way out of this meaningless, futile universe. Nevertheless, man should surpass this ordeal through the suggested triad.

In For Whom the Southern Belle Tolls, Durang has parodied Williams’ The Glass Menagerie to depict through the acknowledgement, acceptance and accomplishment process that man can prevail and transcend the difficulties encountered in life. He imparts his message through Ginny, his mouthpiece, who jabs at Laura’s unjustified obsession with glass animals through an elaborate parody. He replaces Laura with Lawrence who escapes reality through a collection of cocktail stirrers instead of facing and standing up against an unreasonable world. He deftly acts as a beacon of light for his audience to show them that man has to accept all negative facades of life. He shakes his audience out of their bolted chairs to acknowledge reality, accept it and eventually begin to accomplish. Nevertheless, he does not forget his primary task which is to entertain his audience.

Similarly in Desire, Desire, Desire, Durang has basically spoofed Williams’ A Streetcar Named Desire and he also evokes characters from other plays, such as A Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, Eugene O’Neill’s The Iceman Cometh and Mary Chase’s Harvey. He jabs at all characters that cannot live in a world void of either meaning or purpose. He ridicules Blanche DuBois, a Tennessee Williams’ character, who could not forget about her past and falls into the abyss of despair when her defamed past experience is revealed. He parodies Blanche’s character highlighting the workings of her mind and converting her into a daring person. As a result, she goes through the acknowledgement phase where she admits that she is a woman with illusions. Afterwards, she reaches the acceptance phase as she accepts her reality, unlike Williams’ Blanche who could not live with it, got a mental breakdown, and ended up in a mental institution. Influenced by Camus’ suggested acknowledgement-acceptance-accomplishment triad to find a way to face the absurd futile life, Durang has parodied the inconsistencies in the human condition with an unprecedented humorous talent.

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The Concept of Nature in the Poetry of William Wordsworth and Robert Frost: A Comparative Study

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Abstract
This research aims to investigate the different meanings for the term “nature”. Moreover, it seeks to identify the major similarities and differences in the use of nature in the poetry of William Wordsworth and Robert Frost. Since this research is theoretical in nature, it depends primarily on reviewing already published works on the topic. The researchers consulted a significant number of published references on the topic as well as specialized literary dictionaries, encyclopaedias, and the internet. The research concludes that the term “nature” has not always had the same meaning or carries the same level of significance. Also, the concept of nature in British literature should be studied, not only as it was employed by English romantic poets, but also as it was used by authors before and after the English Romantic Movement in order to see if nature was used in the same way. Moreover, scholars and literary critics should also research the concept of nature as used in the United States of America before and after Robert frost. Finally, the use of nature in poetry that reflects meditation under the influence of the bible should be explored especially that composed by early colonial poets.

Keywords: Frost, nature, romanticism, transcendentalism, Wordsworth.
Introduction
Poets have long been inspired to tune their lyrics to the variations in landscape, the changes in season, and the natural phenomena around them. The Greek poet Theocritus began writing idylls in the third century B.C.E. to glorify and honor the simplicity of nature—creating such well known characters as Lycidas, who has inspired dozens of poems as the archetypal shepherd, including the famous poem "Lycidas" by John Milton. An idyll was originally a short, peaceful pastoral lyric, but has come to include poems of epic adventure set in an idealized past, including Lord Alfred Tennyson's take on Arthurian legend, The Idylls of the King. The Biblical Song of Songs is also considered an idyll, for it tells its story of love and passion by continuously evoking imagery from the natural world. The more familiar form of surviving pastoral poetry that has retained its integrity is the eclogue, a poem attuned to the natural world and seasons, placed in a pleasant, serene, and rural place, and in which shepherds often converse. The first eclogue was written by Virgil in 37 B.C.E. The eclogue also flourished in the Italian Renaissance, its most notable authors being Dante and Petrarch. It became something of a requirement for young poets, a form they had to master before embarking upon great original work. Sir Philip Sidney’s Arcadia and Edmund Spenser’s The Shephearde’s Calendar are English triumphs of the form, the latter relying on the months of the year to trace the changes in a shepherd's life (Irwin, 1963). In "January," Spenser compares the shepherd's unreturned affection with "the frosty ground," "the frozen trees" and "his own winter beaten flocks" (Moyihan, 1958). In "April," he writes "Like April showers, so streams the trickling tears." It was the tradition of natural poetry that William Wordsworth had in mind when he proposed that poetry "takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility"—(Juhnke, 1964; McBride, 1934; Morse, 1943). "This tranquil state might be most easily inspired if the poet would go out into nature, observe the world around him, and translate those emotions and observations into verse. Later, transcendentalists such as Henry David Thoreau did exactly that in his poem, "Ode on Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood’ (Nye, 2014).

Purpose
This research aims to investigate the different meanings for the term “nature”. Moreover, it seeks to identify the major similarities and differences in the use of nature in the poetry of William Wordsworth and Robert Frost. The research discusses how nature is employed by both poets taking in consideration the research questions specified below.

Research Questions
This research will attempt to answer the following questions:
1. What are the different definitions of the term “nature” throughout history?
2. What differentiates Wordsworth attitude towards nature from that of other English romantic poets?
3. What differentiates Frost’s attitude towards nature from that of English romantic poets?
4. How did Wordsworth’s view of nature differ from that of Frost’s?

Importance of the Research
As explained above, nature has always been a source of motivation for poets throughout history even during the Greek and Roman empires. Today, Frost is considered by a number of literary critics as the William Wordsworth of America due to his importance and poetic style. Therefore, this research is important because it sheds light on the similarities and differences between the
two poets in terms of their attitudes towards nature in an attempt to familiarize the readers with
the poetic styles of both poets and their view regarding nature as a historically known source of
motivation and inspiration.

Research Limitations
This research is limited to the discussion of the concept of nature in the poetry of only two poets
William Wordsworth and Robert Frost. It discusses nature in America through Frost’s attitude
towards it and attempts to see if that can be explained in relation to the Transcendentalism
Movement in America pioneered by Ralph Waldo Emerson. This paper compares that to
Wordsworth’s attitude towards nature in relation to the English Romantic Movement in the 18th
century. In addition, it is limited to only two poems: One poem by each poet specifically
Wandered Lonely as a Cloud” by Wordsworth and "Stopping by woods on a Snowy Evening" by
Frost.

Methodology
Since this paper is theoretical in nature, it depends primarily on reviewing already published
works on the topic of research. The researchers consulted a significant number of published
references on the topic. Other sources of information including the internet were consulted.
Moreover, specialized literary dictionaries and encyclopaedias were used to obtain relevant
information regarding this subject. Wordsworth’s "I Wondered Lonely as a Cloud" and Frost’s
"Stopping by Woods on a Snowy evening" were used as illustrative examples.
Information related to the topic of nature was collected from major websites that specialize in
literary topics, such as www.poets.org, archive.thedailystar.net, www.wikipedia.com, and
www.shmoop.com. This information was carefully reviewed and evaluated by the researchers in
terms of its significance to the topic of research. The data collected from a certain website were
compared to data available on other literary websites. Information was then categorised and
adopted by the researchers. The concept of nature was carefully examined in terms of its use by
William Wordsworth in relation to how it was used by English romantic poets in generalising “I
Wondered Lonely as a Cloud” as an illustrative example. On the other hand, the concept of
nature was also explored thoroughly as it was used by Robert Frost in the United States of
America. Frost’s use of nature was carefully examined in terms of how nature was used by
American poets during his time and by American poets who preceded him. Frost’s “Stopping by
Woods on a snowy Evening” was used as an illustrative example. Frost’s use of nature was then
compared carefully to Wordsworth’s use of the same concept. A serious effort was made to
investigate if nature in America was used in exactly the same way as it was used in England.
Moreover, the concept of nature in Frost’s poetry was carefully examined and closely studied in
relation to the transcendentalist movement that became popular in the United States during the
1840s.

Explication
I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud
The Daffodils (Dance, Dance Revolution): In the first line, the daffodils are like little yellow
people who keep the speaker company when he is feeling lonely. The happiness of the daffodils
can always cheer him up, and he can tell that they are happy because they dance. Some variation
of the word "dance" occurs in each of the four stanzas (see appendix 2). Also, the speaker is
taken aback by how many daffodils there are. We often think of daffodils as a flower that people
The Concept of Nature in the Poetry

plant in their gardens in the springtime, so it would be surprising to come upon thousands of
them by an isolated lake.

Lines 3-4: The daffodils are personified as a crowd of people. This personification will continue
throughout the poem.

Lines 6: Daffodils cannot actually "dance," so Wordsworth is ascribing to them an action that is
associated with people.

Line 9: The speaker says that the line of daffodils is "never-ending," but we know this can’t be
strictly true: all good things come to an end. This is an example of hyperbole, or exaggeration.

Lines 12: The personification of the daffodils becomes more specific. The "heads" of the
daffodils are the part of the flower with the petals. It is larger and heavier than the stem, and so it
bobs in a breeze.

Lines 13-14: The waves also get in on some of the dancing (and personification) action, but the
daffodils are not to be out-done – they are happier than the waves.

Lines 21-24: Wordsworth imagines the daffodils in his spiritual vision, for which he uses the
metaphor of an "inward eye." His heart dances like a person, too.

Clouds, Sky, and Heavens: "I wandered lonely as a Cloud" has the remote, otherworldly
atmosphere that is suggested by the title. The speaker feels like a cloud, distant and separated
from the world below. But this distance becomes a good thing when he comes upon the
daffodils, which are like little stars. It’s as if the problem at the beginning is that he hasn’t
ascended high enough.

Lines 1-2: The beginning of the poem makes a simile between the speaker’s wandering and the
"lonely" distant movements of a single cloud. Clouds can’t be lonely, so we have another
example of personification.

Lines 7-8: The second stanza begins with a simile comparing the shape and number of the
daffodils to the band of stars that we call the Milky Way galaxy.

Angels and Spirits: You have to read into the poem a bit, but we think that Wordsworth is
definitely trying to associate the flowers with angelic or heavenly beings. Maybe he was thinking
of Dante’s Paradiso from The Divine Comedy, in which all the angels and blessed souls of
heaven form a big flower. However, Wordsworth is a more naturalistic (i.e., strictly realistic)
poet than Dante, and so the imagery of angels is extremely subtle.

Line 4: You may have heard the phrase, "heavenly host" in reference to angels or spirits. We
think Wordsworth adds the word "host" in order to suggest this connection. Also, the color of the
flowers is golden like a halo.

Line 10: Stars are associated with angels, too, so the simile comparing the flowers to "twinkling"
stars reinforces the connection.

Line 12: The word "sprightly" is derived from the word "sprite," meaning a local spirit, almost
like a fairy.

William Wordsworth is a worshipper of Nature, Nature’s devotee or high-priest. His love of
Nature was probably truer, and more tender than that of any other English poet, before or since.
Nature comes to occupy in his poems a separate or independent status and is not treated in a
casual or passing manner as by poets before him.
Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

Woods: The woods in this poem are something to meditate over. Our speaker cannot get enough of them, telling us that "the woods are lovely, dark and deep" (13), as though he were hypnotized. The woods must be so attractive and compelling, because the speaker is compelled to stop and stare at them in the freezing, dark winter evening. There is a mysterious element to these woods as well, and we get the sense that the speaker is not alone, even though he is very much by himself. Whenever we see woods in literature, we almost automatically see them in contrast to civilization (see Appendix 3). If you have read The Scarlet Letter, think about the woods Hester Prynne frequents. People also think of woods as being mazelike and full of hidden obstacles, like the Fire Swamp in The Princess Bride. These are some pretty intense woods, so the reader can feel free to interpret them how he or she desires. We will offer a few ideas below.

Lines 1,4,7,13: Some interpret the woods as an extended metaphor for death.

Line 4: Here we see woods as a clear and crisp image as our speaker describes them filling up with snow.

The Natural World: Our speaker is digging the natural world. Picture him hanging out with his horse, between a frozen lake and the edge of the woods, while the snows falls gently all around him. The ideas of the village, of a farmhouse, or of the promises he must keep are not nearly as appetizing to our speaker as the cold beauty of the world around him. There's something very lulling about the "easy wind and downy flake", and we get the sense that the natural world is pretty compelling and pretty good at convincing our speaker to forget about civilization. Nature is powerful in this poem (Irwin, 1963).

Lines 6-8: With these lines, we get a crystal clear image of the snowy woods and frozen lake at night.

Line 11: We can almost hear the sound of the wind in the alliteration of "sound's the sweep."

Line 13: While the fact that the woods are "lovely, dark and deep" might not seem visually helpful, this description actually helps us visualize the image of the woods even more clearly.

Others: Alone as alone can be. That's our speaker on this snowy evening. Why then, do we feel like he's not alone? Is it his little horse that seems to have a mind of its own, is it the landowner who is snug in his cozy house in the cozy village, or is it the presence of something else entirely?

Line 2: The "village" can be interpreted as a symbol for society and civilization.

Line 5: Horses have thoughts? We knew it all along. The horse is personified in this line.

Line 6: Farmhouses may not be the most hoppin’ places in the world, but they do usually involve people. Because of this, the farmhouse that our speaker mentions seems like a symbol for society and civilization.

Line 10: Giving his harness bells a shake, the horse is personified once more as he asks "if there is some mistake."

Lines 15-16: "Sleep" is a solitary activity, no? In these lines, "sleep" could be interpreted as a metaphor for death.

Although Frost spent much of his time in cities, his poetry, like Wordsworth's reflected his use of rural settings to get his ideas over in what appears to be very simple verse. The following ideas come from Helen Bacon’s essay on Frost entitled, Frost and the Ancient Muses:

In 1927 Frost said, "I almost think a poem is most valuable for its ulterior meanings. I have developed an ulteriority complex", Bacon then goes on to develop this aspect of Frost’s poetry in that in his most deceptively homespun New England poems, there are much deeper meanings, especially encompassing the wider world, very often using Greek myths and Greek and Roman poetry. His early poem, The Pasture, has this deeper meaning and Frost uses it throughout his
later poetry. Wordsworth, in contrast, is usually quite easy to read (as is Frost) but does not have the hidden depths of Frost (Faulkner, 1963).

**Transcendentalism Legacy**
The Transcendental Movement dramatically shaped the direction of American literature, although perhaps not in the ways its adherents had imagined. Many writers were and still are inspired and taught by Emerson and Thoreau in particular, and struck out in new directions because of the literary and philosophical lessons they had learned. Walt Whitman was not the only writer to claim that he was "simmering, simmering, simmering" until reading Emerson brought him "to a boil" (Johnson, 2015). Emily Dickinson's poetic direction was quite different, but she too was a thoughtful reader of Emerson and Fuller. In his own way, even Frederick Douglass incorporated many lessons of transcendental thought from Emerson. This is significant to the present research since it illustrates that various poets treated nature in differing ways depending on how they personally view it.

Other writers would deliberately take their direction away from transcendentalism, toward realism and "anti-transcendentalism" or what Michael Hoffman calls "negative Romanticism". Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Herman Melville found extraordinarily creative ways to object to many aspects of their transcendental contemporaries, even as they incorporated others. Few American writers since have been completely free of the influence of Emerson and Thoreau, whether in reaction or imitation.

Books have been written on this subject, and this is only an introduction. Perhaps the most visible manifestation of transcendental ideas and form today is in the developing genre of nature writing. With its roots firmly in a world-view adapted from Emerson's *Nature* and the literary inspiration of Thoreau's *Walden* in particular, this interdisciplinary yet literary genre has evolved under the pens of numerous writers, from John Muir and John Burroughs to writers as diverse as Annie Dillard, Aldo Leopold, Rachel Carson, Loren Eiseley, Ed Abbey, Gary Snyder, Barbara Kingsolver--and the list expands every year (Woodlief, 2015).

**Nature in Romanticism**
The Romantic association of nature and spirit expressed itself in one of two ways. The landscape was, on one hand regarded as an extension of the human personality, capable of sympathy with man's emotional state. On the other hand, nature was regarded as a vehicle for spirit just as man; the breath of God fills both man and the earth. Delight in unspoiled scenery and in the (presumably) innocent life of rural dwellers was a popular literary theme. Often combined with this feeling for rural life is a generalized romantic melancholy, a sense that change is imminent and that a way of life is being threatened (Johnson, 2015).

**Results and Discussion**
In this paper, the researchers will delve into the research questions as directly stated in the research questions section in the first part of this paper. The questions will be answered in the same order in which they appear.

**Wordsworth's Attitude towards Nature**
This section attempts to answer the second question specified in the research questions section of this research namely "What differentiates Wordsworth attitude towards nature from that of other English romantic poets?".
Since William Wordsworth is known as the father of English romantic poetry, his attitude towards nature is extremely important. The concept of nature is important not only for William Wordsworth, but also for other English romantic poets who lived during the time of Wordsworth and those who lived after him. Nature in itself is a very crucial component of English romanticism making it one of the most significant characteristics of English romantic poetry. This emphasis on nature becomes very obvious when looking at lyrical ballads, the very first volume of poetry composed by William Wordsworth and co-authored by his friend Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and published for the first time in 1798. The second edition of the same volume was published in 1800, while the third and final edition was published in 1802 (Cop, 2014). As mentioned above, the understanding of nature and the meanings associated with it depends primarily on the subject and age in which the natural work appears. This is also true for lyrical ballads. The poems included in this volume celebrate nature and put it before any other consideration. The poems were very simple and lyrical meant to be sung by shepherds who are naturally associated with nature and have a strong bond with it since they spend most of their time with their flocks in the open natural space in the countryside of England. The language in the volume is simple to reflect the simplicity of nature itself. In brief, for Wordsworth, nature is something holy and viewed as a teacher since he states specifically "let nature be your teacher"(Cop, 2014). On the other hand, other English romantic poets looked at nature as something enjoyable attempting to imitate Wordsworth’s attitude towards it and considering it as a primary source of inspiration for their poetry.

Frost’s Attitude towards Nature Versus English Romantic Poets
This section answers the third question of this research "What differentiates Frost’s attitude towards nature from that of English romantic poets?"
In an attempt to compare Frost’s attitude towards nature to the attitude of English romantic poets, it may be fair to claim that his attitude was significantly different. Using Frost’s poem "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" as an illustrative example, it may be concluded that he looked at nature in a different view point from that held by English romantic poets who resided in England. Frost seemed to be influenced by the transcendentalist movement pioneered by Ralf Waldo Emerson. Nature to Frost was somehow associated with the spiritual and supernatural. This view goes in line with the view of those who believed in the teaching of Transcendentalism of the 1840s.

Although Frost celebrates nature in a way similar to that of the English romantic poets in his poem used as an illustrative example for purposes of this research, his influence by Transcendentalism becomes clear in the last stanza when he talks about how the woods are lovely, dark and deep, but he adds that he has promises to keep and a long way to go before he sleeps, meaning before he dies. This signifies the relationship that Frost establishes between nature and death and the life here after. This goes along the same lines at Emerson’s school of thought represented specifically by the beliefs held by those who follow the Transcendentalist movement (Van Doren, 1923).

Frost’s View of Nature Versus Wordsworth’s
This last section attempts to make a comparison between frost and Wordsworth in terms of their attitudes towards nature and how the concept of nature was employed by each attempting to answer the final question “How did Wordsworth’s view of nature differ from that of Frost’s?”.

As hinted to above, Wordsworth, like other English romantic poets during his time, viewed nature as a source of beauty that can be enjoyed. This view and attitude were evident in his poem "I Wandered Lonely as a cloud", used as an illustrative example for purposes of this paper. Furthermore, and just like it was for other English romantic poets, Wordsworth viewed nature as a clear primary source of inspiration in the composition of his poetry. It was also used by Wordsworth as a means through which he can use his imagination that helps him in the creation of his verse. Finally, Wordsworth looked at nature also as a source of knowledge and information. Nature becomes an effective teacher. He specifically says” let nature be your teacher” (Van Doren, 1951).

Frost, on the other hand, viewed nature in a relatively different way. Although he seems to enjoy nature and being in the presence of nature which becomes a spiritual vehicle through which he can reach a higher and more elevated level of religion and spirituality. It seems to be used by Frost as a means for meditation to arrive at certain conclusions that have to do with the creation of the universe and the life here after. Frost’s view of nature seems to be influenced by the Bible and Biblical teachings (Irwin, 1963). This relates it directly to the church and to the Transcendentalist school pioneered by Ralf Waldo Emerson during the first half of the 19th century.

Conclusion
In light of the four research questions clearly stated in the research questions section of this research, a number of important conclusions can be reached. These conclusions may be summarized as follows:
1. The term “nature” has not always had the same meaning or carries the same level of significance. The meaning of nature has continually changed throughout history. This paper outlined such semantic changes in meaning starting with the Greek and roman empires leading to the meaning that nature carries and signifies at the present time. The paper also specified how nature was used by English romantic poets with special reference to William Wordsworth compared to how the same concept was used in America with special reference to Robert Frost.
2. Wordsworth’s attitude towards nature can be described as that of a source of inspiration for the composition of verse as well as a source of beauty to be enjoyed. Nature to Wordsworth was something to create a bond with and with which a very affectionate and passionate relationship can be established. In other words, it is something that an intimate relationship can be created with. To Wordsworth, nature can certainly be a source of knowledge and instruction. We can learn a lot from our surrounding environment and the natural things that live in our world. The attitudes of other English romantic poets such as Blake, Shelley and Keats were very similar to that of Wordsworth’s since he was the pioneer of English romantic poetry and the father of English romantic verse.
3. Frost’s attitude towards nature in comparison with Wordsworth’s can be explained in terms of the impact that Transcendentalism had on his views. Although Frost enjoyed nature and employed it in his poetry it was a means of meditation and religious inspiration for him to reach a higher level of spirituality and philosophy towards the life here after including what
happens after death (Ogilvie, 1959; & Pritehard, 1960). In comparison, English romantic poets looked at nature only as a source of inspiration to write poetry and a comfortable place in which a bond can be created and enjoyed with nature.

4. Finally, it may be concluded that although both Wordsworth and Frost celebrated nature and placed it in a very high place on their list of priorities, each of them viewed it in a relatively different manner. Wordsworth viewed nature as a source of inspiration in the composition process of his verse, he looked at it as something to be loved and enjoyed. It was also a means of inspiration and a source that triggers the use of imagination, which was very crucial for the process of composing poetry. In comparison, Frost was obviously influenced by the beliefs and principles of the Transcendentalist movement pioneered by Ralf Waldo Emerson and became popular during the first half of the 19th century in the United States. Nature to Frost was viewed as a means of meditation to take him to a higher level of spirituality. Therefore, Frost viewed nature as something that is related to the holy and divine, while Wordsworth and other English romantic poets simply enjoyed nature and viewed it as a simple source of inspiration to compose verse coupled with its power to be a teacher and to serve as a rich source of human knowledge.

**Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this research and the comprehensive discussion of the concept of nature in the previous sections, the researchers may provide the following recommendations that can be implemented for purposes of further research:

1. Professors of English literature should pay the concept of nature a considerable amount of attention in their literature courses prior to teaching topics related to English poetry and prose. The term "English literature" here is used as a cover term to refer to all genres of literature written in the English language regardless of the nationality of the author or the place of publication. A historical overview of the concept of nature should be provided and the various meanings of the term should be explained.

2. The concept of nature in British literature should be studied, not only as it was employed by English romantic poets, but also as it was used by authors before and after the English Romantic Movement in order to see if nature was used in the same way or in a different manner.

3. Scholars and literary critics should also research the concept of nature as used in the United States of America before and after Robert Frost. The concept of nature as used by early American writers such as Anne Bradstreet and Edward Taylor should be explored and compared to how it was used by authors who come after Robert Frost.

4. The concept of nature as it has been used in English prose should be paid more attention since primary attention has traditionally been paid to the use of nature in poetry.

5. Finally, the use of nature in poetry that reflects meditation under the influence of the bible should be explored especially that composed by early colonial poets as mentioned above. Meditation poetry and the use of nature by poets who employed this particular theme should be compared to the poetry of those poets who belong to the transcendentalist movement.

It is safe to conclude that nature has acquired numerous meanings throughout history. This concept has traditionally been used in creative writing in many different ways and to achieve a number of various literary effects. This use of nature is not by any means limited to English literature, but certainly exceeded that to include the literature of other languages and cultures.
This implies that there are universal meanings and effects associated with the concept of nature throughout the world and over the centuries. Regardless of the various meanings associated with the term nature, and regardless of the numerous functions connected to it in literature, the concept of nature is extremely valuable and plays a great functional role in English literature in general and English poetry in particular.

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**References**


### Appendix A. Definitions

#### Nature Poetry
A form of writing that focuses primarily on themes, ideas, emotions, situations, or images that have to do with nature or the wilderness (Moore, 2014).

**William Wordsworth (April 7, 1770 – April 23, 1850)**
He was a major English Romantic poet who, with Samuel Taylor Coleridge, helped to launch the Romantic Age in English literature with the 1798 joint publication of *Lyrical Ballads* (Cop, 2014).

**Robert Frost (March 26, 1874 – January 29, 1963)**
He was an American poet, highly regarded for his realistic depictions of rural life and his command of American colloquial speech. His work frequently employed settings from rural life in New England in the early twentieth century, using them to examine complex social and philosophical themes (Phillips, 2014).

#### Transcendentalism
Is a religious and philosophical movement that was developed during the late 1820s and 1830s in the Eastern region of the United States as a protest against the general state of spirituality and, in particular, the state of intellectualism at Harvard University and the doctrine of the Unitarian church taught at Harvard Divinity School (Jones, 2014).

**Romanticism**

The Romantic era entails a movement in the literature and art of virtually every country of Europe, the United States, and Latin America that lasted from the late 18th century to the early 19th century. It is characterized by a shift from the structured, intellectual, reasoned approach of the 1700’s to use of the imagination, freedom of thought and expression, and an idealization of nature. Certain moods and themes, including libertarianism, nature, exoticism, and supernaturalism often intertwined and, became the concern of almost all 19th-century writers. Inspiration for the romantic approach initially came from two great shapers of thought, French philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau and German writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. The preface to the second edition of Lyrical Ballads (1800), by English poets William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge was also of great importance as a manifesto of literary romanticism. The two poets reiterated the importance of feeling and imagination to poetic creation and disclaimed conventional literary forms and subjects. Thus, as romantic literature everywhere developed, imagination was praised over reason, emotions over logic, and intuition over science—making way for a vast body of literature of great sensibility and passion (Gorder, 2014).

**The French Revolution**

It was a period of radical social and political upheaval in France from 1789 to 1799 that profoundly affected French and modern history, marking the decline of powerful monarchies and churches and the rise of democracy and nationalism (Snow, 2014).

**Appendix B. I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud**

**By: William Wordsworth**

1. I wandered lonely as a cloud
2. That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
3. When all at once I saw a crowd,
4. A host, of golden daffodils;
5. Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
6. Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.
7. Continuous as the stars that shine
8. And twinkle on the milky way,
9. They stretched in never-ending line
10. Along the margin of a bay:
11. Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
12. Tossing their heads in sprightly dance
13. The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed--and gazed--but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

Appendix C. Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

By: Robert frost

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village, though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.
My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.
The woods are lovely, dark, and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

Appendix D. Definitions of Nature

This section attempts to answer the first research question specifically "What are the different definitions of the term “nature” throughout history?"

Origin of Nature (Philosophy)

Middle English, from Middle French, from Latin *natura*, from *natus*, past participle of *nasci* to be born, first known use 14th century.

*Nature* is a concept with two major sets of inter-related meanings, referring on the one hand to the things which are natural, or subject to the normal working of "*laws of nature*", or on the other
hand to the essential properties and causes of those things to be what they naturally are, or in other words the laws of nature themselves.

Understanding the meaning and significance of nature has been a consistent theme of discussion within the history of Western Civilization, in the philosophical fields of metaphysics and epistemology, as well as in theology and science. The research of natural things and the regular laws which seem to govern them, as opposed to discussion about what it means to be natural, is the area of natural science.

The word "nature" derives from Latinātūra, a philosophical term derived from the verb for birth, which was used as a translation for the earlier Ancient Greek term phusis which was derived from the verb for natural growth, for example that of a plant. Already in classical times, philosophical use of these words combined two related meanings which have in common that they refer to the way in which things happen by themselves, "naturally", without "interference" from human deliberation, divine intervention, or anything outside of what is considered normal for the natural things being considered.

Understandings of nature depend on the subject and age of the work where they appear. For example, Aristotle's explanation of natural properties differs from what is meant by natural properties in modern philosophical and scientific works, which can also differ from other scientific and conventional usage.

Other Definitions of Nature
1. The material world, especially as surrounding human kind and existing in dependently of human activities.
2. The natural world as it exists without human beings or civilization.
3. The elements of the natural world, as mountains, trees, animals, or rivers.
4. The universe, with all its phenomena. (dictionary.reference.com).
5. The physical world and everything in it (such as plants, animals, mountains, oceans, stars, etc.) that is not made by people
6. The natural forces that control what happens in the world.
7. The way that a person or animal behaves: The character or personality of a person or animal (www.merriam-webster.com).
Materialism versus Human Values in the Victorian Novels: The Case of *Great Expectations* and *Wuthering Heights*

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**Abstract:** Dickens’ *Great Expectations* and Brontë’s *Wuthering Heights* share similar concerns at the thematic level. Both novels are critiques of the Victorian society since they show the differences between the upper and lower classes of the 19th century in England. Poor people are depicted as good characters while the rich are demonstrated as evil characters who find pleasure in manipulating and tormenting others. Poor Characters strive to be rich to achieve high social status, happiness and love. Once they become rich, they got plagued by the evil of materialism and thus become a replica of the upper-class characters who happened to inflict pain on them. In their turn, they become fake, snobbish, corrupt and revengeful. Through this recurrent vicious circle, in *Great Expectations* and *Wuthering Heights*, Dickens and Brontë emphasize the idea that no amount of money is enough to buy true happiness and true love. On the contrary, money is continuously trapping its owners throughout the novels.  
**Keywords:** Class differences, love, materialism, snobbery, Victorian society
Introduction

*Great Expectations* and *Wuthering Heights* show how materialism and class differences lead innocent characters to be arrogant, corrupt and manipulative. Characters are transformed into greedy machine-like entities blinded by their strong desire for ownership and revenge. Their money makes of them evil characters who exploit the poor people to reach their own cherished goals. This will be clearly discussed in the following sections.

**Dickens’ *Great Expectations***

*Great Expectations* shows rich characters that are snobbish and ashamed of their relatives. Materialism transforms these characters into evil people who are devoid of emotions. Materialism instantiates people and destroys all ties of love between families and lovers. For instance, Mr. Havisham is an arrogant character “He was very rich and very proud so was his daughter” (Dickens, 2001, p. 165). Mr. Havisham’s snobbery is the cause of a series of destructions that happens to his family and also to other people. Being from an aristocratic class, Mr. Havisham feels ashamed of his second wife, who has been his previous servant, he also degraded his son Arthur. This affects the son badly and leads to a great hatred not only between the son and his father, Mr. Havisham, but also between the son and his half-sister, Miss Havisham. “He cherished a deep and mortal grudge against her as having influenced the father’s anger” (Dickens, 2001, p.167).

Arthur’s hatred for his half-sister shows to what extent family ties and love are obscured by class differences and financial considerations. Arthur’s hatred goes further when he ruins and humiliates her. He conspires with a criminal called Compeyson against her; the latter pretends he is infatuated with her. “He practiced on her affection in that systematic way, that he got great sums of money from her […] it was a conspiracy between them; and that they shared the profits” (Dickens, 2001, p.178). Arthur wants to revenge on his half-sister because she belongs to an aristocratic class and she is too snobbish like her father. By ruining the life of Miss. Havisham, Arthur expresses his objection to the social system that makes of him a degraded person.

When Miss Havisham gets infatuated with Compeyson, she becomes “too haughty and too much in love to be advised” (Dickens, 2001, p.167). She rejects the advices of her poor cousin, Mathew Pocket, thinking that he is an opportunist or he is jealous of her fortune. Mathew “warned her that she was doing too much for this man (Compeyson), and was placing herself unreservedly in his power. She took the first opportunity of angrily ordering him out of the house in his presence” (Dickens, 2001, p.167). Since then, he never sees her again.

Miss Havisham does not accept Mathew’s advice not only because she is passionately and blindly in love with Compeyson, but also because she is an arrogant girl who despises her cousin (Mathew) since he belongs to a lower class. She sees that he does not deserve much attention; the reason why she kicked him out of her house.

Later on, Miss Havisham is jilted by Compeyson. Because of her devastation from the cancelled wedding, her life since that day has been spent in Satis House, resentful and unhappy. She decides to lead a life of seclusion. She is transformed from a loving character into an evil one who enjoys inflicting pain on male gender. She becomes a “poisonous” character who is capable of destroying love between people, especially, between Pip (the protagonist and narrator
of the novel) and Estella, the girl whom she adopted. Miss Havisham teaches Estella how to be snobbish and arrogant; she even pushes her to despise Pip. She does her best to prevent love and friendship between them; she makes Estella believe that he comes back to her house for her money but not because he loves her. This is depicted in Miss Havisham’s saying: “well […] I hope you want nothing you’ll get nothing” (Dickens, 2001, p.108). Since she becomes an evil character, she gets ignorant of love; she keeps on despising Pip saying that Estella is “abroad […] educating for a lady far out of reach, prettier than ever, admired by all who see her” (Dickens, 2001, p.109). Miss Havisham insists on showing Pip the difference between him, as a poor boy, and Estella as a rich and educated lady, and showing him that their love is impossible.

After being degraded by Miss Havisham and Estella, Pip is transformed into a corrupt and snobbish person too. Pip’s good virtues are corrupted by the temptation of money and wealth, as epitomized by Estella and Miss Havisham who is the embodiment of the aristocratic class. Knowing the difference between him and Estella, Pip, in fact, becomes unsatisfied with the forge, his home, and his family. This is indicated in his saying: “it is a most miserable thing to feel ashamed of home […] home had never been a very pleasant place to me, because of my sister’s temper […] Now it was all coarse and common, and I would not have had Miss Havisham and Estella see it on my account” (Dickens, 2001, p.100). Pip feels ashamed even of Joe, his brother-in-law, who brought him up and has been a close friend to him. This is clearly stated in his statement “I am afraid I was ashamed of the dear fellow I know I was ashamed of him when I saw Estella stood at the back of Miss Havisham, and her eyes laughed mischievously” (Dickens, 2001, p.95).

Pip loses his innocence and becomes unfaithful to his social class once he earned a premium for his apprenticeship. This shows to what extent materialism is, throughout the novel, the cause of destruction of relationships and love between people. Pip’s snobbery goes further when he becomes a rich gentleman. He thinks that real “gentlemaness” is associated with money and good manners. He starts thinking in terms of money; he believes that if money can prevent Joe from visiting him, he will send it to him. Pip says: “If I could have kept him away by paying money, I certainly have paid money. […] I had little objection to his being seen by Herbert or his father, for both of whom I had a respect” (Dickens, 2001, p.201). Pip becomes concerned about his reputation; he does not want to be seen with Joe since, for him, Joe is not refined. Pip does not realize that the real gentleman is Joe since he is good at heart, and he cherishes the relationship with Pip, that’s why he insists on visiting him in London.

Pip’s snobbery got intensified during his travel to Satis House to attend Miss Havisham’s birthday. Pip feels disgusted to share the coach with two convicts during his travel, he said: “There were two convicts going down with me […] their coarse mangy ungainly outer surface, as if they were lower animals, […] a most disagreeable and degraded spectacle […]. It is impossible to express with what acuteness I felt the convict’s breathing, not only on the back of my head, but all along my spine” (Dickens, 2001, p.210). Pip feels superiority in front of those two criminals. He considers them “lower animals” and “degraded spectacle”. He feels disturbed and disgusted by their bad breath. Pip criticism of the two criminals is ironical since he ignores that he is also associated with the world of criminals throughout the novel. Actually, his benefactor is the convict Magwitch and his beloved, Estella, is the daughter of two criminals: Molly and Magwitch.
After Miss Havisham’s party finishes, Pip decides to return back to London without paying a visit to his own family in the forge. Instead, he “sent a penitential codfish and barrel of oysters to Joe (as reparation for not having gone)” (Dickens, 2001, p.227). Pip substitutes his love to Joe by material things. He thinks that sending Joe a present will compensate for not seeing him in person. This emphasizes the fact that Pip becomes a fake copy of the aristocratic people; his concern about money and reputation leads his relationship with his family to be deteriorated.

Being rich and snobbish, Pip becomes lonely the same way as Miss Havisham who is a very wealthy woman, but she spends her days bitter and craving revenge on the male population. “Although he has ready money in his pocket, his snobbishness forced him to keep his relationship with Joe a secret” (Dickens, 2001, p.228). Pip thinks that the “‘civilized’ world is far from the emotional life he shared with Joe, and his internal conflict is between these two possibilities. Pip has not yet realized that people all around him, including Joe, Miss Havisham, and Jaggers are living examples of how money, or lack of it, cannot determine anyone’s happiness. Pip needs to save himself from the trap that lures by falsely advertising that money is the source of happiness, and realize that happiness depends most on how a person perceives and treats his or herself” (Overbey, 2013, p.34)

**Brontë’s *Wuthering Heights***

As it is the case in *Great Expectations*, materialism in *Wuthering Heights* also leads characters to be snobbish and corrupt. Materialism is depicted, throughout the novel, as a downfall because the characters consider money and social status more important than love, respect, spiritual, intellectual, or cultural values. From the first time Heathcliff (the orphan who is adopted by Mr. Earnshaw’s family) is brought to Wuthering Heights (the house of the Mr. Earnshaw), he is despised by Mr. Earnshaw’s family. Nelly (the narrator) says: “Mrs. Earnshaw was ready to fling it out of doors” (Brontë, 1999, p.45). In another example, Nelly mentions that the daughter of Mr. Earnshaw “Chatherine has showed her humor by grinning and spitting at the stupid little thing” (Brontë, 1999, p.46).

Being a poor and an orphan kid, Heathcliff is treated like an unwanted pet. He was called an “it” and a “thing”; besides, he has received spits and prevented from entering the room of Chatherine and her brother Hindley. He is kept in a place where the family keeps pets. Heathcliff is degraded again when Hindley, the son of Mr. Earnshaw, becomes the master of Wuthering Heights: “Hindley becomes tyrannical […] He drove him [Heathcliff] from their company to the servants, deprived him of the instructions of the curate, and insisted that he should labour out of the doors instead” (Brontë, 1999, p.52). The tension between materialism and love is evident in this passage; Hindley’s power and tyranny is manifested once he gained the property. As in *Great Expectations*, materialism in *Wuthering Heights* is a symbol of evil that pushes rich characters to inflict pain on poor ones.

Heathcliff is not only despised by Hindley, but he is also degraded by the Lintons (a wealthy family). When the Lintons detect Chatherine and Heathcliff spying at them, they catch them. Once they have learned that Catherine is a daughter of a landowner, the Lintons treat her fairly. On the contrary, knowing that Heathcliff is a poor, orphan kid, they wish that the country “should hang him at once” (Brontë, 1999, p.55). Isabella, the daughter of old Linton, says that
Heathcliff is a “frightful thing![…] put him in the cellar ” (Brontë, 1999, p.56). Catherine is kept by the Lintons, to “tame her savageness” and transform her into a “lady”, while Heathcliff is expelled out.

When Catherine returns to the Heights (her home), she is already transformed from a “heatless little savage” (Brontë, 1999, p.57) to a “very dignified person” (p.57). In fact, Catherine is changed into a snobbish person who starts despising Heathcliff the same way the Lintons and her brother Hindley do before; this is clearly depicted when she “burst into a laugh, exclaiming, why, how very black and cross [Heathcliff] look[s]! And how funny and grim”(Brontë, 1999, p.58). Catherine becomes accustomed to a style of living where class status and privilege place her above those who work and produce for her. Since Heathcliff is filthy and neglected, he remains a member of the inferior social class.

Catherine’s snobbery becomes quite apparent when she chooses to Marry Edgar Linton rather than Heathcliff, though she loves him. She says: “it would degrade me to marry Heathcliff” ”(Brontë, 1999, p. 80). She also claims that Edgar “will be rich, and I shall like to be the greatest woman of the neighborhood and I shall be proud of having such a husband” (p.80). Money and social attitudes have destroyed the love between Catherine and Heathcliff; Catherine becomes aware of her class superiority, the reason why she prefers Edgar. This leads Heathcliff to leave the Heights and starts working towards gaining social status, money and power.

When Heathcliff becomes a rich “gentleman”, he loses the simplicity of his spirit, love and innocence the same way as Pip in Great Expectations. The modern world transformes him into an evil character; it makes him disdain the simplicity of his own home and torments the households. The first thing Heathcliff does once he arrives to the Heights is to take revenge on all the people who degrades him. Like Arthur in Great Expectations, Heathcliff’s revenge on Both the Earnshaws and the Lintons is, in fact, revenge from the upper class system. Once Heathcliff becomes the landowner of the Heights, he becomes corrupt, arrogant and proud of his property. After the death of Hindley, Heathcliff starts tormenting his son Hareton who “lives in his house as a servant, deprived of the advantage of wages: quite unable to right himself” (Brontë, 1999, p. 164). He wants Hareton to suffer the same way he has suffered when he was a kid.

Being poor and brutish, Hareton is also disdained by Cathy, the daughter of Catherine and Edgar. She mistakes him for a servant and gave him orders. When she has been told that he is her cousin, she shouted “with a scornful laugh. He my cousin! Oh Ellen! Don’t let them say such things! […Papa is gone to fetch my cousin from London: My cousin is a gentleman’s son” (Brontë, 1999, p. 170).

Cathy feels superior than Hareton; according to her, he does not deserve love or good treatment because he lacks money and social class, this is evident when “she cried in a tone of disgust. I can’t endure you! […] I despise you” (Brontë, 1999, p. 248). On the contrary, Cathy sympathizes with her other cousin, Linton, and treats him fairly. The latter belongs to a wealthy family; he also has social attitudes that separate him from the inferior class embodied in Hareton. When Linton asks her “you don’t despise me, do you?” (Brontë, 1999, p. 203). she replies “Despise you? No! […] I love you better than anybody living” (p.203). Being “a gentleman’s
son” and having social attitudes and privilege, Linton is as proud as Cathy. He treats her respectfully but he despises his cousin Hareton. When he has informed Cathy that he cannot read the writing on the wall of Wuthering Heights, Linton sarcastically says: “he does not know his letters […] could you believe in the existence of such a colossal dunce” (Brontë, 1999, p. 189).

Like *Great Expectations*, *Wuthering Heights* shows how materialism and class differences lead innocent characters to be arrogant, corrupt and manipulative. They use other characters as puppets to reach their goals. Miss. Havisham in *Great Expectations* is jilted by Compeyson; as result, she starts taking revenge on Pip using Estella to achieve that goal. Heathcliff in *Wuthering Heights* is jilted by Chatherine; as a result, he uses Isabella Linton to reach the property of the Lintons family and take revenge. Once they lose their innocence, characters fall in their own trap since they become governed by their own greed for money, property, power, social status.

**Conclusion**

Both *Great Expectations* and *Wuthering Heights* were published during the historical period of a great economical change, industrial unrest and political instability. That period witnessed the growth of full-scale capitalism accompanied by cycles of boom and crises. “The emergence of trade unionism around the struggles against the poor law and for empowered factory conditions, enabled class battles between organized labour and their employers to be conducted on a new, much larger scale” (Cookson and Loughry, 1998, p.82). Manipulation of poor characters in both novels refers to the manipulation of the bourgeois employers, assisted by the government, against the working class. Heathcliff and Pip (as poor characters) are representative of the nineteen’s- century “provertyless” proletariat. They are not only used as engines by their superiors (masters), but also victimized by them. Characters’ exploitation in both novels stems from materialistic purposes. This, however, results in a series of destructions such as the transformation of innocent characters into evil ones as the case of Pip in *Great Expectations* and Heathcliff in *Wuthering Heights*. These characters resolve to free themselves from the humiliation of oppression by attaining for themselves the status of oppressors. They, thus, become a replica of the socioeconomic situation and the bourgeois who manipulate and dehumanize the poor. Ironically, as oppressors, these characters become trapped by their own money as they become controlled by the world of materialism and social status. Materialism reduces them into machines living for the sake of snobbism and revenge.

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Materialism versus Human Values in the Victorian Novels

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Altery in Moroccan Francophone Literature: Rethinking Postcolonial Reading in Light of an Aesthetics of the Text

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Abstract
The paper deals with the identity problematic and the self/other binary, in particular. It aims at avoiding the risk of mummifying such concepts within the postcolonial discourse taking into consideration that they carry far more significance than what a postcolonial reading would offer. So the adapted strategy is shifting the perspective from a postcolonial treatment of the problematic to an aesthetic one through setting in opposition the postcolonial and aesthetic undertaking of these concepts. The study is carried out at a textual level as it focuses on the aesthetics of the text itself away from any theoretical framework. Two Moroccan Francophone literary texts are subjects to this study: Tahar Benjelloun’s *L’Auberge des Pauvres* (1999) and Driss Chraibi’s *Le Passé Simple* (1954). The study of these two works stimulates the reader to reconsider and rethink what have been taken for granted as postcolonial theory has flooded works of the same kind.

Keywords: aesthetic, alterity, Francophone, Other, postcolonial, text
The self/other binary constitutes a significant problematic in Moroccan Francophone literature. The main question here relates to the way this binary is processed from a postcolonial perspective and the extent to which it can be broadened within an aesthetic framework. So the aim is twofold: display the postcolonial practice in tackling the self/other binary and, then, reconsider this binary from a different perspective through analyzing the notion of the Self and the Other in Tahar Benjelloun’s *L’Auberge des Pauvres* (1999) and Driss Chraibi’s *Le Passé Simple* (1954).

Inquiring into the postcolonial configuration of the Self and the Other is to be performed at cultural, social and gender levels. It is obvious that no interpretation other than the one related to the center/periphery can be introduced at the cultural level. Since postcolonialism, as a discourse and critical practice, has emerged as a reaction to colonialism, it has developed a certain allergy to Othering. Consequently, it has directed its efforts towards carving out the acts of injustice and the discursive statements and practices considered to be residuals of colonialism. As a counter discourse, postcolonialism takes colonialism as a point of departure and this is the very reason why it cannot move beyond its label as a reaction. This is not to minimize the efforts of postcolonial critics in exposing the errors, arranging discourses into galleries, and parodying the practices belonging to colonialism, but this has proved to be reductive in the sense that it lacks astuteness. Regarding otherness or alterity, it seems that what postcolonial critics have been trying to do is to define and describe the Other and attribute qualities to it: “But, again and again, postcolonialism runs into the problem of narrating Otherness” (Khair, 2009, p.147). Nonetheless, terminology is very critical in this matter:

In post-colonial theory, the term has often been used interchangeably with otherness and difference. However, the distinction that initially held between otherness and alterity that between otherness as a philosophic problem and otherness as a feature of a material and discursive location is peculiarly applicable to post-colonial discourse. The self-identity of the colonizing subject, indeed the identity of imperial culture, is inextricable from the alterity of colonized others, an alterity determined, according to Spivak, by a process of othering. The possibility for potential dialogue between racial and cultural others has also remained an important aspect of the use of the word, which distinguishes it from its synonyms (Ashcroft, 2000, p. 10).

Alterity refers to cultural alienation and is thus viewed as a postcolonial notion par excellence. However, the “Other” as it is used in this paper can be interpreted differently from any cultural connotation. The problem lies in treating notions in terms of a discourse and a whole culture or a society. It is true that the issue of the Other has been also formulated to fit in gender studies, but it has clung to its colonial gene and postcolonial origin. The problem of cultural and sexual identity has been regarded as topoi in Moroccan Francophone texts and postcolonial literature in general: "S’il est un thème sur lequel l’attention doit être portée et qui mérite une véritable réflexion, c’est celui de l’identité culturelle telle qu’elle se manifeste dans les romans de la littérature maghrébine de langue française» (Varga, n.d, p1).
However, it has always been about subordinating one culture to the other, one race to the other and one sex to the other. The postcolonial Other is by definition a reference to collective identity that leaves no room for the individual who exists only as a subject within an unbelievably immense set of cultural and social discourses and codes of practice. The hybrid self constitutes an important rubric of the identity problem. The Hybrid, the “Mimic Man” (Bhabha, 1994), the “Becoming” (Deleuze&Guattari, 1987, p. 262) and the “Black man with a white mask” (Fanon, 1967) are all descriptions that have been attributed to the postcolonial subject:

The third trend in maghrebine fiction involves the problems of identification, the search for identity, for one's roots and ancient heritage. The search for a father and for an identity, both individual and collective, was one of the main themes in the books of the Generation of 1952; but now that independence has been won, one finds analogous questions and approaches (Dejeux, 1983, p.401).

The postcolonial subject can only exist in opposition to the discursive other. And they are both molded collectively in a manner that leaves out the individual. This is what justifies the reading and construction of identities in literary texts as fragmented, hybrid, and always in resistance to the colonial Other. Taking a narrative identity and analyzing it outside the literary milieu entity is but a clear potential to caricature the character not as literary but as a replica of a real identity. This is an extension of the realist reading dealt with in the previous part of the paper. It is true that the share of critical importance granted to sexual identity is a plausible one, but still it derives its motif from the postcolonial reading. It is no more about political or cultural minorities but also about sexual minorities, i.e. females and homosexuals. Inquiring into sexual identity in literary texts from a postcolonial stand may not serve a critical purpose:

_L’Enfant de sable_ formulates the proposition that gender is a colonization of the body by melding together the troubled gender identity of its main character with the (de)colonization of Morocco and a reticulate narrative architecture of multiple and feuding storytellers, enigmatic journals, and mysterious letters... The conclusions to Ahmed’s tale allegorize possible scenarios for decolonization: a violent, suicidal struggle against a rapacious aggressor; a slowly decaying, nostalgic isolation; or the piecing together of an eclectic collage from the fragments of past and present, self and other, here and elsewhere (Dejeux. 1983, pp. 136-137).

This passage is taken from a study of Benjelloun’s _L’Enfant de Sable_ (Benjelloun, 1985). The study examines the gender identity of the main character, Ahmed or Zahra, and reveals the process of moving from one sexual identity to another while drawing a parallelism with decolonization. The primary premise here is to discuss the sexual ambivalence and transformation of the character in a specific context which is that of the Moroccan decolonization process. The validity of the study can be easily refuted on the basis that it has realist echoes while the novel carries far more significance. The allegory cannot be drawn between reality and what occurs in a literary work. There is the assumption that such an identity issue is specific to the Moroccan context.
In retrospect and at a deeper level of analysis, apart from specificities, there is no difference between The rebel in Herman Melville’s Bartelby (Melville, 1970) and Driss Chraibi’s Driss, Edgar Allan Poe’s Roderick Usher and Tahar Benjelloun’s Anna Maria Arabella, Bahaa Trabelsi’s Adam and James Baldwin’s Giovanni (Baldwin, 1957), and James Joyce’s Leopold Bloom and (Joyce, 1946) Benjelloun’s Laarbi Bennaya, and the list can indefinitely be extended. Though this is not a comparative study, a close examination of the characters mentioned shows the overlap with respect to the way a character exists narratively. The construction and formation of narrative identity within a literary text does not have an extension or reference in reality, thus the postcolonial reading cannot be imposed in a manner that makes characters in Moroccan Francophone texts fall back on one possibility of existence. It is up to the writer and reader to create, formulate and visualize the character and these operations can be performed outside a postcolonial framework. These characters cannot be subjected exclusively to a postcolonial treatment because they exist only in the text and nowhere else.

Besides L’Auberge des Pauvres, the rationale behind selecting of Le Passé Simple is that the novel has been viewed as an autobiographical work in that the main character refers to the writer. In doing so, the autobiographical reading, which is similar to a realist one, does not allow the reader to configure possibilities for reading Driss’s identity and his relation to the other. Concerning L’Auberge des Pauvres, the stories of the characters intersect at a point which is that of conflict with the other. In this sense, the mission is to take the issue of identity away from the prevailing orthodoxy of treating it within a specific tempo-spatial context.

In Chraibi’s Le Passé Simple, the other bears no resemblance to that in postcolonial studies in the sense that the other transcends its cultural and colonial character. In addition to the conventional appropriation of the term, the analysis provided here tends to probe the perception of othering. In doing so, it would be appropriate to take a stand on the process of identification and the cultural perspective of othering before yielding a fresh insight into one of the most salient dimensions to be attained in the novel, which is self-othering.

Othering in Le Passé Simple is a process of identification through which the individual develops a sense of independence from the outside world. This process starts with the observation phase. When Driss questions the given and taken-for-granted in a hermetically closed and determined set of values, he examines the cultural and religious malaise as it evolves to shape the human condition. It is through observation and examination that he becomes conscious of the other as an alien entity: “……La présence du Seigneur assis buste droit et regard droit, si peu statue qu’il est dogme et si peu dogme que, sitôt devant lui, toute autre vie que la sienne, même le brouhaha de la rue vagi par la fenêtre ouverte, tout est annihilé” (Chraibi, 1954, p. 17). Driss shuns the possibility of dissolving in a ‘mêlée’ of enslaved beings. He detachés himself to take on the role of an observer. Examination and self-detachment are pre-requisites for the process of othering. The act of calling his father “Le Seigneur” signifies an intense sense of estrangement. The latter boils over the limits when Driss transcends othering to annihilation : “J’appelle point mort tout ce qui définit, comme ce derb que je traverse et cette maison vers laquelle je me rends” (Chraibi, 1954, p.14).
In breaking the spell of the classical Other, Driss does not escape Moroccan cultural miasma to find refuge in the French one. His opposition to both cultures is the result of his conviction that they are a mere incarnation of the other as a discursive presence that binds and jails human existence:

Le tableau noir est un assemblage de planches, somme toute, les bottillons, si je les chaussais, les ferais sonner bien autrement, avec application et méthode, piétinant mes dernières excroissances mais qui donc m’a parlé de symbiose? « Symbiose de génie oriental, des traditions musulmanes et de la civilisation européenne…» Vague, très vague, c’est-à-dire : brisons-en là, étouffions amiablement l’affaire, au fond du pot de miel il peut y avoir de la merde. Symbiose oui, mais : symbiose de mon rejet de l’Orient et de du scepticisme que fait naître en moi l’Occident. Cela s’appelle un poème, père. Je trempai ma plume dans l’encrier et me mis à écrire (Chraïbi, 1954, p. 205).

The claim that Driss is a hybrid or a prodigal son is shortsighted and can be easily challenged by the idea that othering covers far more terrain than what one might be inclined to consider culturally visible and tangible. The threat of being a subject to the Other’s power reaches the physical surface. Driss’s intellect is immune to the injections of the practices embodied in religious, cultural and institutional practices in general. Intellectual freedom rises above the mire of constraints and restrictions. It cannot be violated simply because he is entirely conscious of the underlying inconsistencies and contradictions of traditions and beliefs. When he voices out his attitudes, he faces hostile and violent reactions. The concept of the “Other” ought to be enlarged to include Driss othering himself or, more precisely, his cultural being per se. When he withdraws into himself and embarks in his Odyssey inside the underground trajectories of his being, estrangement turns inward. Being self-conscious, he struggles against being contained within what is broadly cultural and what is narrowly individual. Such analysis finds echoes in Johnson’s The Body in the Mind (Johnson, 1987). Johnson argues that we are situated into containers that appear to be physical at the beginning but later become cognitive. The forces residing in those containers determine one’s choices in life. In this respect, through his self-estrangement, Driss consciously emancipates himself from the cultural container. Catherine Belsey’s definition of culture as being the element we inhabit as subjects is relevant here (Belsey, 2002, p.49). Such a definition catches the very essence of the term and allows for reconceptualizing what seems to be institutionalized. After escaping the cultural sphere, Driss goes on to get away from all identification or entanglement that would lead to pinning his being to an already established framework. He cannot even be absorbed or swallowed into his own experience which is rebellion:

Plus qu’il ne le croit. A l’école coranique, si j’avais des réflexes, sensations, sentiments, idées, ils n’étaient les uns et les autres que premiers. Victor Hugo, Kant, et les faux-monnayeurs les ont dérivé, bien dérivés qu’ils m’ont aidé, moi qui m’étais révolté et candide considérais ma révolte comme une délivrance à me délivrer de cette révolte (Chraïbi, 1954, p. 202).
The point that emerges from all that has been mentioned above is that there is a need to interrogate the illusionary state of being. The array of roles and seemingly solid identities makes the individual wander in a fog of fabricated social roles and functions. On the basis of the aforementioned arguments, the other is an extension of the alien that haunts the self. As these two entities are in conflict, there exists no clear cut in that it is difficult to say where the self ends and the other begins.

In *L’Auberge des Pauvres*, the reason behind the narrator leaving Marrakesh for Naples is the threat of dissolving into the ‘mêlée’ around him: “J’étais devenu une impression, une illusion d’optique une respiration qui produit de la buée sur la vitre, qui halète et se perd dans le bruit du robinet qui fuit goutte à goutte» (Benjelloun, 1999, p.17). The danger of the Other, who is not necessarily a colonizer, occupying his space and violating his privacy, negates his independence. His space as a writer is an abode and a refuge for him to keep away from the chaos of his everyday life, though he pushes himself to the extreme to experience another mode of existence. At this point, it is clear that “le Je collectif” (Varga, n.d, p.1) as a marker of Moroccan Literature has no relevance or significance in this work. The narrator alienates himself within his environment in the sense that he cannot co-exist with others impinging on his freedom. He can only survive through his work and his dream to have his own Ulysses. The husband, father, and professor are but social roles and his function is to fulfill them as a member of a certain society, but the status of the writer does not fit in the social configuration:

J’imagine que tu as du mal à accepter de ne plus me voir à la maison, de ne plus m’avoir sous la main, prêt à te servir, à jouer le rôle du mari qui ne dit rien. Il faut t’avouer que ce départ ressemble à une fuite. J’étais arrivé à un tel état d’exaspération que j’étais prêt à tout. Tu ne te rendais même pas compte de ce que j’endurais. Pour toi, tout était normal : les enfants faisaient leurs études, moi j’enseignais comme toi, certes j’étais à l’université, toi au lycée, je gagnais plus que toi. Tu ne savais pas que j’écrivais, je me cachais comme un enfant timide pour écrire. Je ne publiais rien. Donc je n’existais pas comme écrivain, ni pour toi ni pour les autres (Benjelloun, 1999, p.57).

As soon as he turns his back on all those functions, Naples offers him the space to live his true identity through the seclusion of the auberge and the characters inhabiting it. In that space, identity is not a social formation with a pre-determined molding or a fixed status with no possibility of changing. The narrator has the ability to construct, deconstruct and reconstruct identity all along the narrative. Relevantly, his identity along with other characters’ identities are narrated as they undergo the process of creation. It is not to be viewed as an alternative to his social “identity” since, as mentioned earlier, it is merely a set of roles rather than an identity:

The characters’ self-perception relies on their concept of their narratives. Characters in a literary text exist through narration, but in postmodern literature, mimesis is toned down, and their narratives are often fragmented, contradictory and challenge the readers’ ability to perceive the characters as personae (Berge, n.d, p.1).
This self-creation ability is demonstrated throughout the old woman’s narrative accounts. It is interestingly noticeable how she creates her character differently in the two accounts she narrates. First, there is the character that the main narrator constructs in his account a part of the auberge. Second, the character of a beautiful woman who loses her fortune because of Marco to end up in the auberge and a third character which is that of Anna Maria Arabella, a Jew married to a Nazis who resorts to the auberge after being destroyed by her husband. It is not only the case of the old woman, but also of other characters, the narrator, Gino, and Momo:

The other aspect of narrative selfhood is correlative: I am not only accountable, I am one who can always ask others for an account, who can put others to the question. I am part of their story, as they are part of mine. The narrative of any one life is part of an interlocking set of narratives. Moreover this asking for and giving of accounts itself plays an important part in constituting narratives (Alasdair, 1982, p.11).

As their narratives overlap with one another, their lives and choices are intertwined. This overlapping does not evolve from a common fate of being abandoned or ruined by society, but from conscious or unconscious choice of a trajectory over another, of a person over another and mode of life over the other. A careful examination of the characters’ narrative accounts leads to the conclusion that Laarbi, Anna Maria, and Gino are damaged by their relationship with the other. Laarbi’s wife (Fatouma), Anna’s husband (Piero) and Gino’s lover (Idé) are all embodiments of one concept, “The other’s inferno” : « le mal ce n’est pas vous. Ce sont les autres. » (Benjelloun, 1999, p. 224).

As the main narrator keeps fluctuating between narratives, he loses control over the narrative orchestration of the events. He is not the only one who has access to the lives of the other characters; the other characters have access to his story as well. The narrator is not detached from the narrative; nor does he stand as an outer observer or have the power to shape the narrative in a way that subjugates the reader along with the characters. In this case, the question of the other centers around the relation between the individual and his environment away from any cultural specification: « C’est reposant d’être comme les autres, c’est rassurant, c’est surtout triste» (Benjelloun, 1999, p. 14).

The narrator cannot accept the normal state of being like the others, of existing according to an already established pattern of stimulus and response, action and reaction. For him the state of comfort, reassurance, and stagnation is abnormal. Through reflecting on his life, he realizes that as time goes by, he loses his independence and sense of individuality, which leads him into a state of annihilation. The state of alienation is the most suitable one for Laarbi Bennaya, the writer or Gino, the composer:


For his family and society by large, Gino is a fool who cannot fulfill his duty as a father or husband. He is left only with an idea in his mind, solitude and his musical compositions. He can live as one of the auberge inhabitants who are refuted by society as well and find their places among the archives in the auberge. When the narrator leaves Naples back to Marrakesh after five years, he finds himself into an alien and hostile environment in which he is not recognizable. Most importantly, the idea that identity as a construct is narratable establishes the validity of viewing identity from a textual perspective while it cancels out that of incorporating a realist-based conception of the matter.

The contrast set between the postcolonial undertaking of the identity issue and the aesthetic dimension in *Le Passé Simple* and *L’Auberge des Pauvres* brought into sharper focus the idea that narrative identity as a construct has no extension outside its narrative texture. Since the dichotomization of the self/other is based on accusation and victimization, the application of such a binary on a literary text is irrelevant. The problem of identity in these works exceeds postcolonial expectations in the sense that it emerges as a rich and abstruse problematic rather than a monolithic idea.

**About the Author**

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Dublin: Of the City and its Literary Legacy

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Abstract:
Recently, the academia have been witnessing calls that universities regard humanities as ineffective in national growth. Instead, applied and vocational sciences are encouraged since they have an obvious and immediate impact on the work market. The study aims at contradicting this trend, and proving that literature, art, and the humanities can prove vital to economic growth and provide a good resource for national economy. The paper takes the example of the city of Dublin, capitol city of The Republic of Ireland, as a city that endorsed and capitalized on its literary and cultural legacy to attract literature tourism, and by doing that it turned around its economical doom into prosperity and overcame the notorious 2008 recession, to which European countries like Spain, Portugal, and Greece suffered greatly. Through the approach of cultural criticism, the paper encourages tourism planners in cities of the third world countries to follow the Irish paradigm and hit two birds with one stone: achieve economical gains and at the same time sustainability of their cultural treasures.

Keywords: cities of literature, cultural studies, Dublin, Irish literature, literary tourism
1. Introduction:

Academic studies of humanities and arts have seen a decline in the number of students due to a growing assumption that such fields of study do not translate into national financial resources. Universities increasingly preoccupied with ensure that its students secure job opportunities after their graduation, encourage students to enroll into departments of health studies, computer sciences, technology studies, and similar fields that promise immediate employment, which the humanities do not always promise to provide. However, some experts warn against this trend and argue that a world without academic and critical rendering of ethics, aesthetics, and philosophy is an ugly space. Philosophy, criticism, anthropology, and cultural studies are unnoticeably but organically relevant in the civil world’s war against the increase of intolerance, extremism, and violence. Institutions involved in educational planning seem to believe less in the importance of cultural studies and arts, not knowing that, with good governance, they can be equally beneficial to the economy as any other discipline.

In this paper, Dublin, the capital city of the republic of Ireland is taken as an example of a city that has relied on its wealth of literary heritage, accumulated through generations of artists who enriched English literature with classics, to attract millions of tourists to come to the country. Through wise and careful planning, the city was successful in achieving a stable economy, despite its countable resources. And by ‘Literature’, which will be often referred to in this paper as Dublin’s asset to become a recognized cultural capitals, I am referring to the notable creative writing, like novels, fictional writing, poems, and plays. Cultural criticism is used to approach the hypothesis, as the paper obviously integrates literature with touristic planning.

‘Literary tourism’ is another recurring term during this study, and it is characterized by cultural merging: “literary attractions and sites draw upon built and artefactual heritage, landscape, and the performing arts, and they tap into diverse tourist preference and motivations including personal and collective nostalgia, reminiscences of nationalism, and cultural enlightenment, or at last cultural engagement.” (Robinson, 2002, p. 7)

2. Review of the Literature:

Interest in the correlation between literature and tourism include Newsby (1981), Pocock (1992), Rojek (1993), Urry (1995), Hilty (1996), Herbert (1996), and Squire (1996). These fine works drew attention to ‘literary tourism’ as a possible pathway for governments to enhance national income and rapid growth. The above-mentioned pioneers encouraged more specific studies of applied literary tourism and for scrutinizing research of methods used by some cultural destinations to improve literary and cultural tourism.

3. Literature as Commodity in Contemporary Tourism, or, ‘Literary Tourism’:

Tourists read literature. In countries where literature is marketed proudly as part of their national identity, the marketing campaigns begin as soon as one arrives at the airport. Along with newspapers and magazines, one finds in Dublin for example the novels of Joyce, Oscar Wilde and others, promising the traveler a vacation of literature and art. By the end of trip, the faces of the writers on the covers of these books become familiar to the traveler; the Irish promise that!
Literature has proven to lend itself successfully to the processes of commodification and conception, which are central to tourism. In fact the fusion between the two: tourism and literature has proven that literature is a successful means to market touristic places and spaces. At the same time, tourism lends much of its hype, wide clients dynamicity to the more quiet, somewhat static, and exclusive literature. Following Lefebvre’s (1991) notion of production of space in the pursuit for a capitol for the capital, some cities have moved “from passive, informal, almost incidental encounters with literary locales to deliberate creations of literary spaces for tourists”. Further, “sites and sights of literary association are no longer targeted and experienced by a travelling minority, but are consumed by major segments of the touristic market” (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 7).

Discourse on the relation between literature and tourism has positioned literature as a reservoir of cultural understanding, as Robinson puts it:

In the main, the focal point for studies has been the tri-partite relationship between the author, his or her writings, and the concepts of place/landscape. Works of literature are recognized as expressive of economic, cultural, and political change replete with intimate revealing perspectives on the relations between people and place at various scales. (Robinson, 2002, p.3)

Such connection is the drive for tourists to come and explore a city’s nature through its literature. This curiosity is the recognized and targeted by literary tourism planners. As Pocock puts it well: “It is the ability of the writer and the writings alike to filter, explore, and intellectually meander in space that makes literature such a valuable instrument of geographical and humanistic inquiry” (Pocock, 1981, p.11).

Locating literature as one kind of public legacy, expressed in emotional as well as spatial terms, enables us to talk of a literary heritage. Though literary fashions may come and go, we can turn a collective and cumulative past as defined by published works, their performance and interpretation. These are cultural reference points that sit with conceptions of social and cultural identity, ideas and ideals of nationality and nationhood, and popular discourses of historical development. Accordingly, we can understand terms such as Shakespeare’s England, Joyce’s Dublin, Hardy’s Wessex, not only geographically but epistemically. Heritage, in other words, can be emphasized as a cultural capital. The packaging of literary heritage as cultural capital for tourists generates dissonance at various levels: amongst tourist promoters/developers and literary amateurs, and among the tourists seeking the authentic. Without Shakespearean inheritance it would be hard to imagine Stratford as being in any position to generate such economic benefits.

The best example of the new trends of cultural/literary tourism in Europe is probably (European Capitals Of Culture (ECOC). It is one of several European entities designated to addressing and serving cultural and literary tourism: The ECOC constitutes a boost for the development of cultural tourism in terms of realizing experience economy, enhancing city image, facilitating urban regeneration, promoting cultural production and consumption, as well as establishing partnerships.” (Evans & Foord, 2009, p.13) Cultural tourism is regarded as a
means of supporting culture and economic development as well as increasing the understanding between different cultures. In Europe, many cities are now actively developing event-based strategy as a means to develop comparative advantage in an increasingly competitive tourism marketplace, and to create local distinctiveness in the face of globalization. The ECOC has provided resources for the growth of tourism, urban, and economic regeneration, and materialization of a plurality of cultures. (Evans and Foord, 2009, p.14)

The main concern of the host cities has been to gain the economic benefits associated with increased numbers of visitors. In order to maximize the benefits, a long-term factor of attraction to the visitors was to be generated and that is by these cities providing their visitors with a unique and authentic experience. Cities can also ensure the achievement of experience economy by staging a series of events in order to convince visitors that there is always something happening in the city. (Liu, 2012, p. 511)

4. Why Dublin?

This paper takes the city of Dublin as an example of success of a city that employs its literary treasures and cultural legacy by turning it into an important national revenue. In fact, what is unique about Dublin’s experience is its transformation from conflicting with its literary men and culture, into complete embracing and taking advantage of the legacy, and even going as far as taking it up as the national identity of the city, and the country at large.

The major sector of writers, as it is well-known today, are Irish. Since the 1400s, the literature written for the English-speaking reader, was largely composed, shaped, and altered, by Irish writers. As Dublin fell in and out of British colonization, many of its writers were considered by critics of the time as English. Such were Richard Brinsley Sheridan, long-term owner of the London Theatre Royal and Drury Lane, Oliver Goldsmith, and George Bernard Shaw. But as the country was fighting for its independence, many of its sons were key creators of what is known as modern literature, as James Joyce, Samuel Beckett and W. B. Yeats. There is also the iconic Temple Bar, which is emerging now as the new cultural hub in Dublin, due to its historic significance. It can be easily compared to London’s Soho and Paris’s Montmartre. Today, Dublin has it that is considered one of the fastest growing cities in Europe mainly because of cultural and literary tourism, thanks to utilizing and marketing such spaces. (Montgomery, 2010, 137)

The main reason remains to select Dublin’s experience to prove the argument in this paper is that, and according to Lennon and Seaton (1998), Dublin’s growth in tourism revenues has been faster than other European cities. Arrivals to the city have been steadily increasing, ensuring record levels of visitors’ numbers. (qtd. in Lynch, 2011, p. 49)

5. An Ancient City, a Rich Past:

The area (the island now known as Ireland) was inhabited since early pre-history, and was known to be a monastic centre. The Vikings also settled there in the 9th century AD, and became largely integrated with the community. But the city continued to be invaded and colonized: by the Anglo-Norman invasion under King Henry II of England in 1169, the English
colonization during the reign of Elizabeth I in the 1500s and 1600s, the battles with King William II in 1690, which marked a long period of Catholics repression. (Bartoletti, 2001, p.19)

By the seventeenth century, the city of Dublin was dominated by a Protestant aristocracy and benefited from certain benefits: the construction of beautiful Georgian Squares, the Leinster House, today the Irish Parliament, The Custom House, The Four Courts, and the National Botanic Gardens.

Dublin witnessed a series of failed rebellions against British rule. It was not before 1829 that the Catholics achieve their emancipation under “The Liberator”, Daniel O’Connell, after whom the central boulevard of the city is named.

Another defining historical episode in the Dubliners’ history, and had a great influence on the culture until today is The Great Famine of 1845-51. The failure of the potato crop, on which the population depended, resulted in the population falling by 1.5 million by death or emigration, mainly to North America. Between riots, street violence, extreme poverty, and starvation, Dublin was home to some of the worst slums in Europe. The fine 18th century houses declined into tenements were overcrowding, poor sanitation and disease were rife. (Bartoletti, 2001, p.32)

The famous revolt against an 800 years-long-British rule began at Easter 1916. The unrest left much of the city in ruins. The subsequent War of Independence ended with the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty in 1921, by which the southern part of the island became what is now known as The Republic of Ireland, with Dublin as its capital city. However, the following two years witnessed some of the bloodiest battles among the Irish themselves, as an after math of the treaty’s dividing of Ireland. O’Connell Street and the centre of the city was heavily shelled. A truce in 1923 signed between the warring parties, and they agreed to begin the process of building a new state. For the decades that followed, the republic struggled with issues related to poverty, urban decay, and emigration of the youth. (Foy & Barton, 1999, p. 41).

6. The Never-Return of the Prodigal Sons:
The city in those times was winning some of its loyal sons and losing others, as it was becoming the capital of the independent Republic of Ireland. Such were hard times for the Irish men of letters, many of whom were driven out of the country either willingly or by force, pressured to blindly endorse an independent that was marred with Irish blood. Dublin drove away her sons and daughters by starting to reject its work on grounds of strict Catholicism known of the Irish at the time:

The Dubliner was not unaware of his city’s ambivalence towards her writers: An old bag of words, but mother and foster-mother of some famous sons and with no intentions of letting you forget the fact. She will never tire of showing you where her James used to walk, recalling what her Sean used to say, how her Willie and George and Oscar used to behave; she will breathe her George Bernard down your ear until you scream for mercy. And she will blindly forget that when she had them she used to clip their ears
every time they opened their mouths. (Lynch, 2011, p. 6)

Dramas of hunger, illusion, exile and death overshadowed the lives of these creators. George Bernard Shaw chose to escape Dublin’s slums in search of a better life, which he found in England. His chances to return to his homeland became even flimsier when he took up socialism, a radical movement that was not welcomed in the more liberal European countries. He spent his life in London. Orphan novelist James Stephens stole bread from the Stephen’s Green ducks. Oscar Wilde was scarred for life by the loss of his first two great loves. Buck Millington in Ulysses, was kidnapped by political opponents. John Mellington Synge died at the tragically early age of 38.

James Joyce, master of the modern novel, was driven out of Dublin after being shot at. He was becoming increasingly a controversial figure in the city, known for his explicit writings and heretical views in a very conservative country. Two of James Joyce’s closest friends, were shot by the resistance fighters. (Lynch, 2011, p. 13) Walking to Leeson Street, Stephen Dedalus, (the protagonist of James Joyce’s autobiographical novel A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man) proclaimed his commitment to art and his decision to leave Ireland:

I will not serve that in which I no longer believe, whether it call itself my home, my fatherland, or my church; and I will try to express myself in some modes of life or arts as freely as I can, using for my defense the only arms I allow myself to use - silence, exile and cunning. (Tomedi & Bloom, 2007, p 19)

James Joyce’s Stephen Dedalus had not been mistaken: “Do you know what Ireland is? Asked Stephen with cold violence. Ireland is the old sow that eats her farrow.” (Tomedi & Bloom, 2007, p 19) James Joyce left at the earliest opportunity and called his country the “afterthought of Europe”, “the old sow that eats her farrow”, and “a priest-ridden land”. (Maddox, 2004, p 38) He emigrated in 1904 and settled in Trieste, and after a bitter visit to Ireland in 1912 never returned there, not even to his dying father. World-famous after Ulysses was published in Paris in 1922, he refused Yeats’s invitation to the Free State’s new Irish Academy of Letters. He resolutely remained a British citizen until his dying day in Zurich in 1941. That is how much he resented his fatherland. (Maddox, 2004, p 39)

But the resentment was mutual between Joyce and Ireland: his sisters in Dublin never wanted to be associated with him, and his name remained anathema among the Irish, and his country refused his wife, Nora Barnacle, the request to transfer and bury him in Dublin. He ended up fleeing to Trieste in the night with his companion, Nora Barnacle, and from there to Zurich, only to settle in the city were he had his own disciples of literary men and women: Paris. He died and was buried in Zurich. Two senior Irish diplomats were in Switzerland at the time, neither attended Joyce's funeral, and the Irish government later declined Nora's offer to permit the repatriation of Joyce's remains (Ryan, 2012, p. 102). But conservative Ireland is long gone. Today, in modern Dublin, Ulysses is part of the school curriculum, and Joyce is acknowledged as one of the greatest Irish writers ever lived.
Master of the theatre of the absurd, Samuel Beckett, was born in 1906 in Foxrock, a suburb south of Dublin. He had a decent job teaching French in renowned Trinity College. He resented teaching and tried to find an opportunity away from Ireland: “he wanted to put some distance between himself and his mother and to surround himself with new images, new sounds, streets not Dublin’s.” (Donoghue, 2009, p. 13). Moving to Paris, he fought with the French forces against the Italian fascist regime, when he did not consider fighting with the Irish Republican Army (IRA) in its war for independence. Samuel Beckett’s Irish contemporary and companion, Liam O’Flaherty, proclaimed that France was “the only country where there is a profound respect for the human intellect in itself” (Donoghue, 2009, p. 17). In Paris, Beckett celebrated the publication of Sean O’Casey, the prominent playwright, was chased out of Dublin after his plays were performed in Abbey Theatre and found unacceptably controversial by the Irish audience. He was responded to with rotten tomatoes and eggs sent flying across to the stage by a very angry audience. Upon the performance of The Stars and the Ploughs in 1926, ten years after the Easter Rising of 1916, and on the night of the fourth performance, the Abbey Company was met by an unruly audience who protested against what they believed was a grotesque distortion of historical events slandering those who had died for Ireland. The riot featured a coordinated appearance by the widows and bereaved women of 1916. During the disruption W.B. Yeats rose to praise the new play and addressed the audience saying:

“You have disgraced yourselves again. Is this to be an ever recurring celebration of the arrival of Irish genius?” Yeats, the owner of the theatre engaged with O’Casey in a series of well-kept letters, discussing and questioning the latter’s nationalism and loyalty to his fellow-Irishmen. The pressure left O’Casey no option other than heading to London until his dying day. (http://www.abbeytheatre.ie/110moments/category/all-moments/#the-plough-and-the-stars)

This inspirational play has been presented 56 times by the Abbey Theatre at the heart of Dublin as recently as 2012 and April 2015.

7. The Transformation:

In the 1960s Dublin’s fortunes began to change and the city finally experienced expansion and development, which slowed down by the 1980s recession, and causing the city to lose much of its talented work force to emigration. The trend was reversed in 1991 when Dublin was named European Capital of Culture, beginning an intense programme of city centre rejuvenation and improvements. This was followed by a an economic boom which brought huge developments to the city: increased trade, new housing projects, better infrastructure, better services for the tax payer. Reports tell us “Local government fostered initiatives to help the cultural life of the city with increased funding and provision for all the arts.” (Evans, 2009, p. 22) Many Irish people who had emigrated in the 70s and 80s returned.

Creativity has been acknowledged as a vital resource in Dublin and the city is committed to developing this as a key element in economic policy:

Dublin’s economic plan also recognizes the importance of a vision and a brand for the city, one that exploits its heritage, current skills, location, environment, resources and
talent—all that the city does best. At the centre of this economic vision is the aim of highlighting Dublin as a creative city where the arts, and especially the literary arts, are crucial. (Evans, 2009, p.24)

Dublin City Council’s innovative strategies have been major factors in growing and shaping Dublin’s economy, especially in the current climate where traditional industries and financial services cease to be the major generator of economic growth. The first step for the city council towards solidifying a plan that is likely to succeed in this endeavor was to establishing Creative Dublin Alliance (CDA), collaboration between the local universities, business and local government leaders. (Bolger, 2011, p. 28) Thanks to this project, Dublin, which suffered extreme conditions in the near past, enjoys today fine Georgian architecture, a cosmopolitan social scene, a lively cultural life of theatre, music, highly regarded education system, good housing provision, and a highly-rated quality of life. (Evans, 2009, p. 64)

8. A Recipe for Success:

Dublin was lucky to have an ancient history rich with literature and culture, but that was not enough to guarantee the project will make the city a global literary destination. Planning, strategizing, and having the right team on board was essential to make the plan work. One of the steps taken by the city council was to designate the right institutions to collaborate and implement the plan. Dublin City Council, along with its partners took certain steps collaborating with the right institutions and creating events.

8.1. Institutions:

Dublin City Council and Fáilte, are two important offices that are responsible for tourism and literary tourism. Dublin City Council, headed by the Lord Mayor of Dublin is the democratically elected body that governs Dublin City. We are the largest Local Authority in Ireland. The council runs the city, and supervises actions related to tourism, (http://www.dublincity.ie/main-menu-your-council/about-dublin-city-council, 2015).

But the more immediate action came under “Fáilte Ireland”. Fáilte Ireland was formed in May 2003 under the National Tourism Development Authority Act as Ireland’s national tourism development authority, responsible for supporting Ireland’s tourism industry and sustaining Ireland as a high-quality and competitive tourism destination. As part of this, Bórd Fáilte Éireann merged with CERT in order to increase the focus on achieving a cohesive tourism strategy for Ireland to ensure a strong and sustainable tourism industry. In 2012, Dublin Tourism merged with Fáilte Ireland. (http://www.failteireland.ie/Footer/What-We-Do/Our History.aspx#sthash.4Flw5AMj.dpuf, 2015).

The city’s universities with their publishing trade thrived at achieving a contemporary literary scene: conferences, discussion hubs, and literary and cultural events contributed to make a powerful image of Dublin as a place with literature at its core. Universities are not the only cultural institutions that contributed to the campaign led by Dublin City Council. Dublin is the home of the National Library, National Gallery, Abbey Theatre, The Peacock Theatre, Gaiety Theatre, The Dublin Writers’ Museum, Trinity College, The National Concert Hall, and Irish Writers Museum, among many others.
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As part of the collaboration between the government’s entities, Dublin City Council arranged with the National Tax regime to support Artists and writers in Ireland and enable them to avail of exemptions on income derived from their creative work. Supporting writers and artists will ensure that the city sustains its status as a home of literature and art. (Coogan, 1983, p. 51)

‘Aosdána’, a body set up by the Arts Council, reflecting the innate value the state places on the role of the creative artists. The Arts Council established Aosdána in 1981 to honour artists whose work has made an outstanding contribution to the arts in Ireland, and to encourage and assist members in devoting their energies fully to their art. Through providing the artists with financial support, Aosdána’ ensures the artists well-being and productivity.

8.2. Business Tourism:
Cities around the world have taken steps to encourage ‘business tourism’ with special attention to ways of increasing its rapidness, as it is relevant to prosperity of tourism in general. Dublin (like main European and Asian attraction cities) has done a lot in this direction. Indeed “Fáilte Ireland” has included a specific strategic objective concerning business tourism. By business tourism, we mean encouraging global clients o hold conventions, events, and courses, in Dublin. Studies have shown that many of those who come to a city to attend a business event, usually come back with family or friends for leisurely tourism. (Urry, 2002, p. 13) This objective is stated very broadly by Fáilte Ireland: “development of conference and incentive visits and on events –led strategy to build a solid year-round tourism business” (http://www.failteireland.ie/Footer/What-We-Do/Our-History.aspx#sthash.4Flw5AMj.dpuf, 2015). Dublin City has gone to build a new district in Dublin called IFSC (International Financial Services Centre), with an architecturally unique building as a convention centre, overlooking the River Liffey. Many global companies and corporations are now occupying the buildings in the area as their new headquarters in the continent.

8.3. Literature as Brand:
In a way of promoting Dublin’s literary identity, one of the efforts that has become quite noticeable is the endeavors to create brand names of prominent Irish works of literature. James Joyce’s Ulysses is probably one of the best examples, with the closest paradigm being England’s Pride and Prejudice, and Denmark’s Hamlet. In order to create this brand name, there are annual events associated with the novel. On the week of June the 16th of every year, the Irish, the literary tourists, and the Joyceans, as they prefer to call themselves, walk the streets of Dublin, dressed in the costumes of the characters in the novel, and follow the steps of Mr. Leopold Bloom in his walks around Dublin on the June, the 16th, 1904. Indicative plaques have been planted around the city to point to the trail of Bloom. Recently, a hotel was called ‘Bloom’ off Temple Bar district is established right in the place of the hotel where Nora Barnacle, Joyce’s partner, used to work. It is decorated with the era’s style and design to ensure the maximum Ulyssesian experience for the clients. It does not stop here, as memorabilia, stationary, and souvenirs are sold around the city carrying pictures and drawings of the characters. Of course, such practice by the Irish tourism office enhances the literary hue of the city, and of course commodifies the work of art for public consumption. The same
glorification goes for Yeats, where a pilgrimage to his favourite town Sligo is arranged as inspired by his of his poems.

Another strategy that helped making Irish literature into a brand is creating the ‘celebrity literary figure’. Three of the city’s newest bridges are named after three literary giants: James Joyce, Samuel Beckett, and Sean O’Casey. The cafes and pubs these writers went to where made into shrines, statues where erected for the men of literature, their pictures are printed on consumer goods, like stationary, clothes, bags…etc.

Like it is in Europe and other parts of the world, the more immediate model for literary-related tourism is created the ‘literary shrines’, which are visited by hundreds of thousands of tourism every year. Such examples include Shakespeare’s Globe in London, Kronberg Castle in Denmark, best known as Hamlet’s Castle, and the Edinburgh Castle, which performed as the setting for Macbeth, and other sites around the world. Such examples represent the: consumption, production, re-production, commodification, transformation, communication, and distribution of literature for tourists, processes that are riddled with contestation, social and political tensions, power plays, and [conflictual] encounters of meaning.” (Robinson, 2002, p. 2) The spaces and places of literature and the literary have long been noted as sites to visit within the context of homage, pilgrimage and education. A persistent and mainly accurate view is that spatial expressions of the lives and works of creative writers have held appeal for the traveler rather than the tourist, and following Fussell, are positioned more in bourgeois nostalgia than the proletarian realities of the ‘moment’. (Fussell, 1980, p. 43)

The home of the writer is arguably the most powerful tourism resource with appeal across a range of markets. Contained within this notion of ‘home’ are houses, apartments etc., that are represented in tourism contexts as having borne witness to various stages of a writer’s life. Writers’ homes as focal destinations provide a tangible connection between the created and the creator, allowing tourists to engage in a variety of emotional experiences and activities. For literary pilgrims, here lies the potential for intimacy, authenticity, and inspiration. In visiting such spaces the literary tourist can hope for some similar inspiration and aspirations for, or at least a shared moment of connection between creativity and these particular ‘homely’ spaces. Internally, a writer’s space is a hybrid between a home and office, often surrounded by intimate and revealing memorabilia, often serving as a reflection or extension of the writer’s character. (Robinson, 2002, p. 8)

In Dublin, rich with writers’ homes, iron plaques on the exterior of the houses indicting who lived there and when. Over the years, the focus of presentation in writers’ homes has moved away from ‘museum staging’ with formal displays of associated objects to the recreation of more naturalistic settings which the author would have inhabited beyond the writing process. Thus the birthplace of George Bernard Shaw, a Victorian terraced house in Dublin, is presented to visitors as having the appearance that the family has just gone out for the afternoon. (Robinson, 2002, p. 9)

One of the factors that helped and guided key players in the city to transform it into a geo-literary icon is that much of the city is reflected in the literature. Eimear McBride
comments on one of James Joyce’s novels, Dubliners: “It has become the most approachable face of the city and its literature” (McBride, 2014, p.55).

Dublin’s abundance in literary spaces has undoubtedly encouraged the tourism planners to utilize it. A good example of such literary spaces would be Baggot Street, which was the nuclear of the Dublin Bohemia:

Baggot Street had its origins in the Viking village of Baggotrath, where muskets flashed in 1549, as Parliamentarian defeated Royalists and paved the way from Cromwell’s conquest of Ireland. Starting in St. Stephen’s Green, both Baggot and Leeson Streets were the main medieval roads from Dublin to the south. In the late 1700s, they framed a bustling new Dublin. Georgian society originally centered on the North side of the city. (Lynch, 2011, p. 3)

Olivia Robertson arrived in 1949 and observed: “Dublin has its own special colony of Bohemia, its ‘Latin Quarter’. My first act on arrival was to walk up Baggot Street, our little Chelsea.” (qtd in Deegan and Dineen, 1998, p. 27). In addition to Abbey street where playwrights and actors used to room close to the legendary Abbey Theatre, once run by W. B. Yeats and lady Gregory, or Marrion Square, where Oscar Wilde lived. Such streets rich with stories and silhouettes of great writers did not fail the Irish in their endeavor to become a city of literature.

8.4. Awards:

The city council took other measures to accentuate the literary hue of the city, and that is by turning it into a host of the literati and intelligentsia hub. One way was to introduce a bundle of international awards, like The International Dublin Literary Award (IMPAC), is presented annually for novels written in or translated into English. The award is an initiative of Dublin City Council, the municipal government of Dublin, which retains full ownership. It is the world’s richest prize for fiction and is now in its 20th year. The award aims to promote excellence in world literature. Nominations are submitted by library systems in major cities throughout the world.

Dublin Library Literary Prize is also turning heads in literary circles and is expected to attract entries from countries around the globe. Established as “the biggest award in the world for a single fiction title,” (of $63,000), “involves the public library services of national capital cities worldwide in nominating up to three titles selected from across the total range of best contemporary fiction being published,” said Eithne Massey, project manager and senior librarian with Dublin Corporation Public Library Service. (qtd. in Byrne & Skinner, 2007, p.16). The award was launched by Dublin Lord Mayor John Gromley at an April reception in the Irish capital, where the city granted a special charter to IMPAC, “the world’s largest productivity improvement company” and the city’s partner in the venture, which is being managed by the Dublin’s public library system. (Kniffel, 1995, p. 508)
8.5. Festivals:
The Franco-Irish Literary Festival, the Spanish-Irish Literary Festival, are but two of many festivals in which international literature is showcased in the city of Dublin. The Dublin Writers Festival and The Dublin Book Festival are also high-profile annual events that made the city of interest to many writers and literary tourists. (Kniffel, 1995, p. 508)

10. Conclusion:
Within the context of an expanding tourism culture, literature’s role has been underestimated and largely under-researched. This paper has only touched upon some aspects of the relations and correlation between literature and tourism in the knowledge that further work needs to be carried out.

Certainly, but not exclusively, within the western developed world literature is a powerful and dynamic field of cultural expression. Despite the rising curves of hyper-realities and the virtual, we nevertheless continue to inhabit a culture of books and literature. As John R. Short expresses:

The inescapable fact remains: literature is an aspect of society. It coheres, structures and illuminates many of its most profound meanings. It is, in a particular sense, an institution of society, an inheritance of artistic practices and values, appoint of formal interaction where writers and audiences meet, a means of social communication and involvement, and a manifest expression of our curiosity and our imagination. (Short, 1991, p. 159)

How easily this analysis is applicable to contemporary tourism. We encounter the world and meaning through tourism as a first world institution and as a form of communication that is in itself ‘an expression of our curiosity and our imagination’.

Clearly, not all literature is rich in landscape and imagery to tempt tourists, nor it can be mined for strong themes and characters as inspiration for literary theme parks. Nor, too, are all authors rich in the character and lifestyle that would encourage tourists to explore their homes. It is clear too that commodification of literature for touristic purposes is invariably selective so much so that art and literature can lose its authenticity. Yet this authenticity is itself a challenging concept, and relates more to the literary pilgrim rather than the common tourist.

The example of Dublin’s fight to establish a literary identity was a calculated one. It had the topography, the history, the heritage, the literature, and good governance. In a publication by UNESCO on Dublin as a world of literature, in 2009, a ‘context for literature’ was provided and reads thus: “Dublin City Council, the democratically elected body which governs the city, aims to ensure that Dublin is at the centre of a creative economic region—one which will continue to attract, retain and develop creative talent, harnessing all of its assets and capabilities.” (Evans, 2009, p. 9) But on the other hand, it suffered recessions, famines, poverty, and limited resources, and the stigma of political instability. But in the end, Dublin has won the battle, and exceeded expectations as it completely yielded itself to the project. By coming to terms with the past, it holds itself now synonymous with Jonathan Swift, Oscar Wilde, George
Bernard Shaw, W. B. Yeats, James Joyce and Samuel Beckett, among many others. But it is still home to renowned men and women of letters, like IMPAC award-winner, poet Colm Tóibín, the Man Booker-winner, Anne Enright, John Banville, Roddy Doyle, Iris Murdoch, among others.

In 2004, the city of Dublin was chosen by UNESCO as “a city of literature”:

Part of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network launched in 2004, Dublin is one of the only four cities in the world with the designation of UNESCO: City of Literature, joining Edinburgh, Melbourne, and Iowa City. The sought-after accolade, which is permanent, recognizes Dublin’s culture profile and its international standing as a city of literary excellence. (Bolger, 2011, p.8).

Today, literary tourism is a vital component of Dublin’s economy, employing within the industry of tourism %27 of the national workers. A total of 5.6 million visitors came to Dublin in 2013, contributing € 1.7 billion to the city’s economy. In the same year figures show that over 3 million visited cultural institutions located in Dublin. In 2013, Ireland announced that it was a debt free nation, despite the stressful economic situation in the EU countries.

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Dublin: Of the City and its Literary Legacy


An African Condition in a European Tradition:
Chinua Achebe and the English Language of Native Narratives

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Abstract:
This paper intends to investigate the passage from orature to literature in Africa, and the problem of the language used, in the context of the work of the Nigerian novelist and critic Chinua Achebe, whose novel *Things Fall Apart* (1958) is considered as the first African novel. The problematic dialogism that engaged the African writer with canonical literate traditions evokes the difficulty of writing an African history and narrative while the records are missing, for the Africans did not have a written tradition. It is true that writing about an oral society that did not know writing sometimes turns into a syncretic account, but the African writer is also faced with the paradox of representing the experience of *oral* societies using the colonizer’s *literate* language. Accordingly, we are led to question: how can such fiction do justice to the colonized culture? While this paper admittedly tries to figure out how the worldview in oral societies is cyclic since the past and the present are fused, it invites new perspectives by highlighting the empowering effects orature has had on African writers who learnt to revisit their oral tradition and make out of it their emancipating and decolonizing project.

**Key words:** decolonization, indigenization, notarization, Nigerianization, orature
An African Condition in a European Tradition: Chinua Achebe and the English Language of Native Narratives

In his latest book, the Trinidadian novelist Naipaul (2010) argues that in Africa “the absence of a script and written records blurs the past […] the oral story gives them only myths” (p. 28). With JanMohamed (1983), we also understand that writing engenders “a sense of change of the human past as an objective reality available to casual analysis, and of history as a broad attempt to determine reality in every (diachronic) area of human concern and this in turn permits a distinction between ‘history’ and ‘myth’ ” (p. 280). By allowing one to register events, to archive them for long periods, and to recall them in their original forms, writing consolidates a dense past and helps raise historical consciousness within the society, while the possibility of an easy access to a dense past enhances more sophisticated analytic tools. Oral cultures, on the other hand, are unable to develop an awareness of historical change, not because they are racially and culturally inferior but because they lack the archive. “The inability of oral cultures to document this past in a systematic and detailed manner, of course, means that they are dominated not by a historical but a mythic consciousness [The emphasis is added]” (JanMohamed, 1984, p. 24).

Adopting this point of view, one is forced to recognize Chinua Achebe’s double-anxiety. The first is the African novelist’s consciousness that his role in the society is to create new forms through which African culture can be justly represented. The second is the (im)possibility of an African literature in forms and a language borrowed from the European colonizer. In seeking new forms for African literature, Achebe and his literary peers may escape from the area of colonialist literature, but there is one overriding question: can an African culture, articulated in a European language and using European forms, really remain African? Since the upheaval in stigmatizing and suspecting any non-European trying his/her hand at writing in a European language, Eurocentric criticism believes that European languages are still the bearers of civilization to the bush. When Achebe started writing, it was not sure that a British audience would tolerate the ‘misuse’ of the English language by African writers. In this way, Achebe’s narratives could only be suspected as an anxious attempt to recover a lost, pre-colonial, identity. The second problem, which lends some credence to Chinua Achebe’s critics, e.g. Griffiths (1978), arises when the African writer tries to adapt the episodic and non-sequential structure of the oral tale to the linear structure of the written form. Griffiths (1978) recommends that “these adaptations must be away from rather than towards this as the norm” (p. 12). In an oral society, the characters can be fierce in verbal communication in terms of the oral culture in which they function. But because the medium they are given is a written English, their capacity to voice their counter-story is blunted. In an oral society, some words take on a material significance in contrast to their more restrictive figurative meaning when they are written down (Izevbaye, 2012, p. 65).

Prior to colonization African culture had been handed down from generation to generation using proverbial sayings, myths, and stories. Hence, Achebe tells us in Things Fall Apart (1958), “among the Ibo the art of conversation is regarded very highly, proverbs are the palm-oil with which words are eaten” (p. 7). More significant, perhaps as an example of the importance of oratory in African culture, Africans maintain that the law comes out of the mouth
of the elders who were the libraries of the society, and oral tales were its books (Griffiths, 1978, p. 12). The perpetuation of history and tradition used to be fulfilled by the griots and the community’s elders, but the European invasion ruptured this continuity. Therefore, the role of the modern African writer has been considerably modified since it was practically impossible for him to stretch the model of his precursor the griot. Furthermore, the conditions in which an oral tradition was produced and received have changed since the introduction of literacy. The target is not the same, as the postcolonial writer now admits a Western readership, and Achebe’s decision to write in English constructs “a secure, intelligible position for a Western reader to occupy” (Sugnet, 2001, p. 74).

However, most African writers maintain their predecessors’ role in educating people with nonetheless a tendency to preserve the oral tradition. The majority of them maintain that the annihilation of Africa’s oral culture comes with the colonialisit introduction of literacy. The African writer exhumes his ancestor the orator with the difference that he uses, cunningly, European tools and languages. The originality of African writings stems from their relationship with African oral literatures, for although the debt of African writing to the oral tradition has been difficult to prove, there has been considerable scholarship on the continuity and the alternating roles of the two genres. Some African critics, e.g. Awoonor (1973: 88-9), go as far to assert that there is no new or emerging African writing, only a continuity of a centuries-old literature. Achebe did not arrive on the stage of African literature from a vacuum. He continued a rooted tradition of orature. Things Fall Apart, for example, is a novel where, as Obiechina (1993) states it, “vital aspects of oral literature are absorbed into an emerging written literature” (p. 123).

The establishment of an African literary tradition has become the main preoccupation of many African writers during the heydays of independence movements. It is true that before African writers gain epistemological independence, they had been at first unable to detach themselves from the canonical tradition, finding themselves obliged to mimic the European model. But they adopted the methods and the languages of the canon in order to write back to it. Before the publication of Things Fall Apart in 1958, the dominant view was that African – any non-European, non-Eurocentric, in fact – writings were conventional in their adoption of the traditions of the European genres. Most African writers at the time have taken as their precursors canonical writers, yet starting from the 1950s the English critic Lorna Sage has described the direction of what was happening in English literature as centrifugal: “Much of what’s significant is written with ‘elsewhere’ very much in mind; written, in a sense, from elsewhere” (Rushdie, 1982, p. 8).

African writers have been accused of abandoning their African languages in favour of more prestigious and dominant languages. Many critics, e.g. Sartre (1963) and Griffiths (1978), have denied the existence of such hybridity insisting that metropolitan literature is rooted in a European tradition and that it cannot be delocalized to Africa. Jean-Paul Sartre (1963) detected the irony in the ex-colonial’s literature writing in French: “an ex-native, French-speaking, bends that language to new requirements, makes use of it, and speaks to the colonized only” (p. 10). According to this stance, what comes to be called ‘peripheral’ literature in English still cannot shake the solid basis of metropolitan tradition. At its best, this has resulted in what Zabus
(1992) has labelled ‘schizo-texts’ “in which the African language is latent and the European language is manifest, in which there is almost a Manichean opposition or power relation between the mother tongue and the other tongue” (p. 119). Sullivan (1991) is also for the view that “historically constructed forms, written literature in general and the African novel in particular, even as they forge new structures of defiance in new English languages and old African languages, acknowledge their roots in the writer’s psyche colonized by other texts” (p. 105). Sullivan’s Bakhtinian reading suggests that “African writers who use English are aware that their language is already populated with the political, social, and literary intentions of their colonial teachers, but they compel it ‘to serve [their] own new intentions, to serve a second master” (Sullivan, 1991, p. 102). For, according to Bakhtin (1934), all words are born in response to other words and languages, “the internal politics of style (how the elements are put together) is determined by its external politics (its relationship to alien discourse). Discourse lives, as it were, on the boundary between its own context and another, alien, context” (Bakhtin, 1934, p. 284). Achebe also found himself on the crossroads of discourses but also forced to use the available platform of colonialist and Eurocentric literatures and the language used in the process in order to revise the history of Africa. Critics who invited postcolonial writers to abandon European languages and forms are alive to the association of the small-scale literature produced in Africa with the absence of a literary tradition rooted in the continent, for, as Eldred Jones (1968) says, “it has been shown that several African authors that a work can be written in a European language and still convey something of the African experience in artistic form” (p. 71).

The African writer must strive to recuperate African aesthetic forms – mainly orature – that might corroborate the European literary tradition he had already acquired. Achebe escapes the pitfall by writing narratives thoroughly intertwined with English language and literary tradition. His writings try to link the idea of the nation, the concept of a common national culture, and the quest for a national narrative away, but not completely cut off, from the canon, hence engaging a dialogue in an area where there was only a monologue. The African writer should also strive to gain the recognition that although the language used is English, the recorded experience is purely African, and thus it may change the language and forms and come up with an ‘African English’ – “an english” (Ashcroft et al, 1989, p. 8) – totally different from what the metropolitan reader may expect. The different cultural background of African writers, ‘Third-Worlding’ English, may indeed urge metropolitan writers to revisit, maybe change, forms and therefore consolidate a new English literature defined by its hybrid nature. In fact, Achebe takes issue with those Western critics whose reactions swing erratically between considering the African writer a distorted image of the European writer and dismissing the former’s capacity to establish a tradition. According to Achebe (1975b), they have done no more than scratch the surface of what African literature can offer:

The latter-day colonialist critic […] sees the African writer as a somewhat unfinished European who with patient guidance will grow up one day and write like every other European, but meanwhile must be humble, must learn all he can and, while at it, give due credit to his teachers in the form of direct praise or, even better, since praise sometimes goes bad and becomes embarrassing, manifest self-contempt [emphasis added]. (p. 69)
Although some mainstream critics are still resisting the admission of postcolonial literature in the canon, an increasing number of works by those ‘unfinished Europeans’ coming from Africa, the Caribbean and Southeast Asia were crawling upon the centre, extending year by year the possibility of a hybrid English literature. In the words of Rushdie (1982),

Now, thanks to the imagination of the 1950s, 1960s, these new literatures are arriving in Britain. And it may be that English literature will benefit from the presence in these islands of observers with beady eyes and without Anglo-Saxon attitudes. It’s possible to argue that Britain needs decolonizing too; that too many of the old imperial attitudes – jingoism, xenophobia a sense of automatic moral superiority in all things – still lie, just below the surface, in British culture and even in “English” English. The condition of black people in Britain leads one to believe that the British, having lost one Empire, choose to import another. (p. 8)

The African writer’s struggle to establish an African tradition goes hand in hand with his endeavour to define a language for that tradition. In *The Empire Writes Back* (1989), the book’s triad argue that “one of the main features of imperial oppression is control over language. The imperial education system installs a ‘standard’ version of the metropolitan language as the norm, and marginalizes all ‘variants’ as impurities” (Ashcroft et al. 1989, p. 7). Thus, when the African writer snatches English away from its ancestral home, not only does he deconstructs the language of his former colonizer, he more importantly dispossesses him of a necessary and major tool in colonalist rhetoric. The adoption of a twisted English, what James Joyce has once called “jinglish janglage” (Joyce, 1939, p. 275, n. 6), turns to be the colonial’s way for expressing his true identity. The postcolonial writer deliberately started “writing with an accent” (Zabus, 1996, p. 34) to signal his detachment from his colonizer, thereby reaching out to what *The Empire Writes Back* coined “abrogation” and “appropriation” (Ashcroft et al. 1989, p. 37-8).

In *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952), Frantz Fanon believes that “to speak a language is to appropriate its world and culture” (p. 21); it is, above all, to assume the culture of that language, and to support the weight of its civilization. And whenever the colonised people deal with the language of the colonizer they are confronted with the culture of the mother country. “The more the colonized has assimilated the cultural values of the metropolis, the more he will have escaped the bush. The more he rejects his blackness and the bush, the whiter he will become” (Fanon, 1952, pp. 2-3). The European colonizer will admit the “humanity” of the colonized insofar as he recreates himself in the image of his colonizer by adopting a European language. How do African writers get Caliban to talk back to Prospero using Prospero’s own language without allowing that language to degenerate into a pidgin understood only by Caliban? In what language must Caliban engage in the dialogue and speak back to Prospero – in the still oral and illiterate African language or in a European language full of prejudices and misconceptions? If he decides to speak back in a European language, how can he avoid being like the voiceless African characters represented in Western narratives? How can he replace words and concepts that have no equivalent in European languages?
George Lamming has dealt with the cultural bearings of language in Shakespeare’s well-known colonial text, *The Tempest*. According to Lamming, Caliban, after having been colonized by language, and excluded by language, stands for Prospero’s proselyte to ‘civilization’. Caliban will be admitted to civilization only if he recreates himself in the image of Prospero by adopting the ‘civilized language.’ The mastery of the ‘civilized language’ is Prospero’s way of measuring distance between him and his servant Caliban (Lamming, 1960, p. 15, p. 110). Lamming’s view should not surprise us since his novel *Water with Berries* (1971) rewrites Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* by subverting the power dynamics between Prospero and Caliban: the latter corrupts his master’s narrative through the celebration of impurities, underlying how Otherness disturbs the authority of colonial narratives through redefining English identity and language. According to Brown (1976), “these finding are not really new. The European’s ethnocentric definitions of ‘language’ and ‘civilization’ have always been fairly self-evident. In presenting Caliban as a brutish savage without a language (and civilization) of his own, *The Tempest* remains faithful to the philosophical assumptions of Shakespeare’s culture” (p. 131). The European language, however, becomes Caliban’s means of cultural revolution against Prospero’s use of the ‘civilized language’ as a means of exclusion. George Lamming’s reading asserts that Caliban’s revolt in *The Tempest* “highlights Shakespeare’s character as a distorted image of the ex-colonial. The skill of Prospero’s language has rendered Caliban ‘aware of possibilities’” (Lamming, 1960, p. 109) and ready to transform linguistic impurities into stains soiling English purities.

Against the backdrop of *The Tempest*, an African novel like *Things Fall Apart* (1958) attributes the white man’s failure to understand African customs to his ignorance of African languages: “Does the white man understand our custom about land? How can he when he does not even speak our tongue?” (p. 166) Using the same tactic, the African writer alters the European language, and “Christen[s] the language afresh” (Lamming, 1960, p. 118) in order to translate and help regain his pre-colonial culture. As early as *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*, Achebe advocates the use of English because of its capacity to reach a wider audience. But this English, no longer a communicative device but an area of cultural and ideological debates, can be reworked to speak in an African voice and remodelled to hold an African culture. Linguistic variance is therefore turned into a site for ideological variance. The rehabilitation of Standard English with African variants can be identified within the deliberate “code-switching” Achebe enacts. In a conversation with Phanuel Egejuru (1980), Achebe says:

From the moment I decided to tell this story and played around with the forms or words to use, I quickly came up with a different kind of English, different from the kind of English that a British or American writer would use. And I think the beginning of this English was already there in our society, in popular speech. There was already a development of it in the Nigerian English. The English language seems quite capable of this kind of extension. That’s another thing. I am not sure if it is so in French. English is open to that kind of thing. And I think we haven’t the last say in how English is used. I think there’s the possibility for a lot more Africanization or Nigerianization of English in our literature. (Egejuru, 1980, p. 49)
For Achebe, the use of English is necessary in the process of writing back to colonialist rhetoric: “I feel that the English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience. But it will have to be a new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit its new African surroundings” (Achebe, 1975a, p. 62). The African writer needs an English which reproduces, in its new forms, African rhythm, syntax, proverbs, culture and history, hence creating what Rushdie has called, in his iconic newspaper article “The Empire Writes Back with a Vengeance” (1982), an “independent or denationalized English” (p. 8). According to Mercer Cook (1969), “taking the white man’s language, dislocating his syntax, recharging his words with new strength and sometimes with new meaning before hurling them back in his teeth, while upsetting his self-righteous complacency and cliché, our poets rehabilitate such terms as Africa and blackness, beauty and peace” (p. 52). The African writer, forcing the language of the colonizer to carry the weight of the colonized culture, performs the double-function of regaining his indigenous culture and hurling back the colonizing one. Ngugi (1986) may then be right when he urged “injecting Senghorian ‘black blood’ ” into the foreign languages’ “rusty joints” (p. 7). The African writer is more than ever required to transfuse the English language with his African culture and find what Osundare (2002) has called “the tunnel between two tongues” (Osundare, 2002, p. 115-31) though narrow and suffocating, allows discovery and freedom for “the language between” (Osundare, 2006, p. 3). As against the argument that African writers cannot write as finely in English as their metropolitan precursors, Achebe provides the example of Joseph Conrad, a Pole who became one of the finest writers in the Great Tradition. Nonetheless, for Achebe the African writer must not aim at using the same English as his canonical precursor.

My answer to the question: Can an African ever learn English well enough to be able to use it effectively in creative writing? Is certainly yes. If on the other hand you ask: Can he ever learn to use it like a native speaker? I should say: I hope not. It is neither necessary nor desirable for him to be able to do so. The price a world language must be prepared to pay is submission to many different kinds of use. The African writer should aim to use English in a way that brings out his message best without altering the language to the extent that its value as a medium of international exchange will be lost. He should aim at fashioning out an English which is at once universal and able to carry his peculiar experience. (Achebe, 1975a, p. 61)

Achebe indigenized the English language and reproduced African oral tradition in written texts. He began to nativize (‘Africanize’ and ‘Nigerianize’) his English as early as Things Fall Apart (1958). At first, maybe out of consideration of his postcolonial status and in order to reach out to a European readership, he introduced Igbo words with their English translations:

The elders, or ndichie, met to hear a report of Okonkwo’s mission. (p. 12)
His own hut, or obi, stood immediately behind the only gate in the red walls. (p. 13)
He had a bad chi or personal god, and evil fortune followed him to the grave. (p. 17)
eze-agadi-nwayi, or the teeth of an old woman. (p. 33)
jigida, or waist beads. (p. 67)
This man told him that the child was an ogbanje, one of those wicked children who, when they died, entered into their mothers’ wombs to be born again. (p. 73)
Using Igbo words in the English text allows the Western reader access to the cultural heritage of this Igbo society. To familiarize the reader with these words, Achebe first introduces the words with their closest counterparts in English, then left with the Igbo word alone. For example, the first reference to a hut, without the Igbo word *obi*, is on page five, then on page thirteen we move to “hut, or *obi,*” then on page twenty-nine we have *obi* alone. Similarly, on page fourteen, Achebe uses “personal god” to refer to one’s *chi,* then we have “*chi* or personal god” on pages seventeen and twenty six. The next references are to *chi* alone. It is equally important to note that some words in English belong to Africa e.g. yam, palm wine, and medicine-man. Other English words take on a different meaning in Africa. ‘Evil Forest’ is a spirit; the only “royal” thing is yam, the king of crops. A python is a sacred spirit addressed as “Our Father”; a “bother” means a kinsman; a “son” is a younger,untitled, member of the clan. The “Mother” is one’s land. It is thus part of the decolonizing project to use words in a different way from their dictionary meanings.

*The Empire Writes Back* asserts that in postcolonial texts “untranslated words do have an important function in inscribing difference. They signify a certain cultural experience which they cannot hope to reproduce but whose difference is validated by the new situation. In this sense, they are directly metonymic of that cultural difference which is imputed by the linguistic variance” (Ashcroft et al, 1989, p .52). More significantly, these untranslated words confront the European reader with the linguistic and cultural difference of the Igbo. The very presence of Igbo linguistic forms in a postcolonial text written in the language of the colonizer outlines “a cultural space” which is “left unfilled.” It is this ‘absence’ which “establishes a silence beyond which the cultural Otherness of the text cannot be traversed by the colonial language. By means of this gap of silence the text resists incorporation into ‘English literature’ or some universal literary mode” (Ashcroft et al, 1989, p .53). Taking the examples above, Achebe’s untranslated words, proverbs, and similes are a ‘cultural gap’ not because they cannot be rightly translated into the cultural experience and linguistic tradition of the Western reader but because they become, to borrow words from Bhabha, ‘the sign of the inappropriate’, a sign of cultural difference, which characterizes decolonizing projects. As such, this cultural difference turns into a site of resistance to incorporation into metropolitan literature. This method makes English, not only a direct conveyor of African culture, but more importantly the indicator that explains African culture, and metonymically signals cultural difference. It is here, as Booth (1981) argues, “that Achebe’s skill in handling ‘clean’ English, and his stylistic restraint stand him in good stead […] The style possesses a dispassionateness which neither condemns nor attempts to excuse” (pp. 80-1).

Another important aspect of Achebe’s language is his extensive use of Igbo proverbs in order to give a local flavour to his narrative. The proverbs are perfectly embedded in the speeches of the elders who incarnate experience and wisdom. Again, Achebe provides Western readers with an immediate context around the proverb. He first introduces the general principle the Igbo proverbs entail, then the proverbs themselves, followed by their various varieties. For example, the proverb: ‘a toad does not run in daytime for nothing’; Achebe contextualized the proverb to provide the Western reader with an area of immediate explanation around it:

Ogbuefi Idigo was talking about the palm-wine tapper, Obiako, who suddenly gave up his trade.
‘There must be something behind it,’ he said, wiping the foam of wine from his moustache with the back of his left hand. ‘There must be a reason for it. A toad does not run in the daytime for nothing.’ (Achebe, 1958, p.20)

The next references to the proverb do not include explanations, and it is no more contextualized. Now the reader is so familiar with the proverbs that Achebe needs only hints to refer to them. Rather than translating the Igbo Proverbs into English equivalents, for example “a toad does not run in the daytime for nothing” rather than “There is no smoke without fire” and “Let the kite perch and let the eagle perch also” instead of “Live and let live” (Onwuemene, 1999, p.1061), Achebe allows the reader what Lovesey (2010) calls “a kind of Berlitz Guide to Ibo, Ibo Made Simple” (p. 128). It is a carefully structured “Ibo Survival Guide” (Lovesey, 2010, p.128), which allows easy access to Ibo key-concepts and linguistic markers, useful to take the Western reader back to the pre-colonial Africa. The accumulation of these meanings gives the reader “insider knowledge” (Lovesey, 2010, p. 128), a sort of a guidebook or a map of African culture. According to Durix (1987), “by placing the reader at the centre of this traditional community, [Achebe] forces him to acknowledge its cultural specificities, its conceptions of time and social organization, its strength and weaknesses at a crucial period when Christianity and Western influences are about to upset the precarious balance” (p. 6). Such a method is indeed effective in preventing the Western reader from using culturally misleading interpretations. For example, “the transliterated proverbs,” JanMohamed (1984) argues, “reintroduce into the language a kind of figurative, analogical element that has gradually been displaced by the scientific-empiric consciousness that favours precision based on literalness” (p. 37). Things Fall Apart addresses both African and Western audiences. The novel can be read as an insider’s account of his Igbo culture and also as an attempt to explain African culture to a Western readership. Clearly, by writing in English, Achebe intends his novels to speak to Western reader, but it also intends to raise awareness among Africans, especially the awareness that they must provide their version of the story.

Achebe’s recording of these proverbs is enhanced by the need to regain the glory of Igbo oratory. He uses proverbs as a means to convince his Western readers that Africans have an authentic linguistic code distinct from all that can be corroborated by European languages. The proverbs are smoothly used in conversations between African characters, and it is here that Achebe Africanizes English and remodels it to engage the dialogue he seeks between Africans and Europeans. He advocates that a proverb and its metaphors are acquired through years of experience, a fact that denies the temporality of the African experience. Furthermore, these proverbs usually have hidden meaning beyond the most obvious one, and their perception needs a deep philosophical decoding. This is, it seems, Achebe’s way to convey the African’s thoughtful insights. The Igbo words and proverbs scattered throughout the novels do not only refer to notions that do not exist in English, but are also used to give Achebe’s English a local habitation (‘nativation’). The reader, Western in this case, is invited to understand these words and proverbs in their context and therefore, in the words of Durix (1987), “he will be forced to become aware of a foreign reality which he must accept as different. Language encourages the reader to leave his natural propensity for ethnocentrism” (p. 47). As such, Achebe invites his reader to become a kind of a co-author or what Paul Zumthor (1983), though in another context, has called a listener-author (auditeur-auteur): “‘amateur éclairé’, à la fois consommateur et
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juge” (p. 232). Achebe, in this sense, recreates a space in which the reader participates in the narrative and to which he/she adapts his/her attitudes. Without explanation, the reader is placed in Igboland. Achebe’s ability to at once write an African novel that refutes Western rhetoric and yet admit Western readers has been conceived of as one of Achebe’s great accomplishments.

In *Arrow of God* (1964), Achebe liberated himself more. Igbo words are left untranslated, while Igbo customs and traditions are rarely explained. The Western reader is left to detect the meaning from the context: “His ikenga, about as tall as a man’s forearm and having two strong horns, jostled with the faceless okposi of the ancestors black with the blood of sacrifice, and his short personal staff of *ofo*. One of the rough, faceless *okposi* belonged to Nwafo” (Achebe, 1964, pp. 6-7). The gap between the words *obi* and *hut* is also a gap between two worlds, Europe and Africa, which are forcefully brought to clash. To underline the uniqueness of each world, Achebe chooses to leave Igbo words untranslated. They are very disturbing in the English text. The implication is that the African world cannot be incorporated in the English context. The African world cannot be rightly and objectively translated. Kortenaar (1995, p. 35) provides a relevant example of this mistranslation. The glossary at the end of the novel translates the word *iba* as fever. The kind of mistranslation, hence misinterpretation, that Kortenaar invokes manifests itself well with Robert Wren who tried to provide a reasonable scientific explanation to the phenomenon. *Iba*, Wren (1980) argues, “is a symptomatic term, most frequently applied to the jaundice-like fever that accompanies a malaria attack. The association with jaundice arises from the fact that both jaundice and malaria attack the liver” (pp. 31-2). According to Kortenaar, on the other hand, Achebe left the word untranslated because the word ‘fever’ would have referred, as with Wren, to a sickness that can be diagnosed, then treated with medicine. In Igboland, however, *iba* is a manifestation of one’s spiritual disorder. When his/her *chi* disapproves his deeds, it punishes him with *iba*. Okonkwo is born with a bad *chi*. Throughout the novel, Achebe had occasions to depict the meanings of that concept in the entire portrayal of Okonkwo’s life, especially through the Igbo philosophy that “a person’s fortunes in life are controlled more or less completely by his *chi*” (Achebe, 1975c, p. 98).

In *A Man of the People* (1966), Achebe liberated himself more and more by writing whole dialogues in Pidgin English:

People wey de jealous the money gorment de pay Minister no sabi say no be him one de chop am. (p .16)
I no kuku mind the katakata wey de for inside. (p .16)
I no go tell you lie girls for this una part sabi fine-o. (p .17)
E fool pass garri … Which person tell am no bobby them de take do the thing? (p.67)

Instead of continuing to be an interpreter of Africa to Western readers, Achebe chose to turn to his people and write for them. To quote Lindfors (2009), “Achebe’s decision to use untranslated Igbo and unadulterated pidgin in his fiction is evidence of a significant change in his orientation as a writer” (Lindfors, 2009, p. 44). What gives Achebe uniqueness among other African writers is this ability to try out new techniques and a special prose style using the English language. His anglicized African characters will never use the same English as the other European characters. Achebe invented what Lindfors has called “an African vernacular
style, “a forging of English into a syntax that enhances the use of Igbo, his native tongue. This is what comes to be termed ‘relexification’: “a more radical method of inscribing language and ideological variance in a text in that it forces English to carry the weight of the colonized culture and attempts to convey indigenous concepts, thought-patterns, structures, and rhythms, and even linguistic features of the mother tongue” (Zabus, 1996, pp. 35-6). Lindfors provides an example from *Arrow of God* (1964), when a chief priest explains to one of his sons why it is necessary to send him to a mission school.

I want one of my sons to join these people and be my eye there. If there is nothing in it you will come back. But if there is something there you will bring home my share. The world is like a Mask dancing. If you want to see it well you do not stand in one place. My spirit tells me that that those who not befriend the white man today will be saying had we known tomorrow. (Achebe, 1964, p .55)

In his essay “English and the African Writer” (1965), Achebe shows that he could have written this passage in a different style:

I am sending you as my representative among those people – just to be on the safe side in case the new religion develops. One has to move with the times or else one is left behind. I have a hunch that those who fail to come to terms with the white man may well regret their lack of foresight. (p .30)

Achebe comments: “the material is the same. But the form of the one is in character and the other is not. It is largely a matter of instinct, but judgment comes into it too” (Achebe, 1965, p. 30). Achebe’s use of “an African vernacular style” includes proverbs and similes that work to contextualize his novels in their African setting. Indeed, one of the hallmarks of Achebe’s English is the use of similes drawn exclusively from an African environment. As the setting changes, so does his narratological technique. This is most evident if we compare – as does Lindfors (2009:54) – similes in his novels set in Africa (village novels) and those set partly in the metropolis (urban novels).

Okonkwo’s fame has grown like a bush-fire in the harmattan. (Achebe, 1958, p .3)
It was like pouring grains of corn into a bag full of holes. (Achebe, 1958, p .22)
It was as if water had been poured on the tightened skin of a drum. (Achebe, 1958, p. 46)
He grew rapidly like a yam tendril in the rainy season. (Achebe, 1958, p. 49)
his eyes were red and fierce like the eyes of a rat when it was caught by the tail and dashed against the floor. (Achebe, 1958, p .59)

However, in a novel such as *No Longer at Ease* (1960), similes are adapted to the setting of the novel and its readership:

...as a collector fixes his insect with formalin. (Achebe, 1960, p .1)
...swivelling their hips as effortlessly as oiled ball-bearings. (Achebe, 1960, p. 18)
...like a giant tarmac from which God’s aeroplane might take off. (Achebe, 1960, p. 24)
...like an enchanted isle. (Achebe, 1960, p. 28)
In the end, Achebe, like many postcolonial writers, developed new techniques fashioned to remodel English in order to incorporate his ex-colonial experience. In Achebe’s work, the Western reader is the outsider whom Achebe enlightens in the way of the villages, its mythology and oral tradition. The reader is led to question his expectations. Achebe’s use of the English language and literary forms must be seen in the context of his endeavour to create a dialogue between colonialisit literature, on the one hand, and postcolonial writers on the other. Faced by a centuries-long negation of Africa, and motivated by a strong desire to herald an African tradition, Achebe sets to rewriting history from the perspective of the colonized, using the methods of the colonizer. A novel like Things Fall Apart is able to do justice to African cultures especially by “determinatorializing the English language” (JanMohamed, 1984, p.37). African ways and modes of narration are valorized in a way that offers a space in which African writers can be “authentically African in English” (Dasenbrock, 1985-6, p. 316).

Endnotes:

i Carol Myers Scotton and William Ury define code-switching as “the use of two or more linguistic varieties in the same conversation or interaction. The switch may be for only one word or for several minutes of speech. The varieties may be from genetically unrelated languages to two styles of the same language. […] Our general hypothesis is this: code-switching occurs because at least one speaker wishes to redefine the interaction by moving it to a different social arena. There is, therefore, a relationship between (a) the linguistic code used and (b) the social meaning of the interaction,” “Bilingual Strategies: The Social Functions of Code-Switching,” International Journal of the Sociology of Language 13 (1977), p. 5.

ii I am referring here to F. R. Leavis’s influential book The Great Tradition (1948), in which Leavis names Joseph Conrad, Jane Austen, George Eliot, and Henry James as the greatest, somehow the only, novelists in English worth reading. Conrad, the Pole, being a great ‘English’ novelist, ushers in Achebe’s argument.


About the Author:

Dr. Nabil Baazizi has recently completed and defended his PhD dissertation at the University of Paris 3 – Sorbonne Nouvelle. Entitled “The Problematics of Writing Back to the Imperial Centre: Joseph Conrad, Chinua Achebe, and V. S. Naipaul in Conversation,” it traces the literary genealogies of colonial and postcolonial narratives, investigating the strategies of decolonizing fictions in Africa and the Caribbean. Dr. Baazizi has received many grants and fellowships to French, American and Canadian universities where he explored his main areas of research, namely postcolonial literature. He has also participated in numerous international conferences and published articles on these issues. His latest article appears in Commonwealth Essays and Studies 36.2 (2014).
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The Rise of the 20th Century American Novel in the Inter-War Phase

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Abstract
One cannot talk about the twentieth century American literature without referring back to some of the important issues that took place formerly in the second half of the nineteenth century. Consequently, most of the scholars and critics of American literature agree that the twentieth century American literature – “twentieth-century renaissance” originated in the previous century (Sculley, 1999, p. 12). Invocations of a great American novel began in the early nineteenth century during the period of “literary nationalism” between the middle of the century, and the turn of the nineteenth century into the twentieth (Thompson, 2012, p. 17). Basically, one can consider the period from the turn of the 19th century up till the end of the Second World War (WWII) as the time when the American literature reached its peak (Sculley, p. 906). The First World War (WWI) that constituted a broadcasting experience for many writers engendered the war novel. Moreover, the world depression in 1929 and its consequences in the 1930s grouped young American writers to express their malaise and feeling of their anxiety of the currents, by exploring the spiritual nature of man and the value of the American society and institutions. This paper investigates the circumstances that developed the American novel from being a mere reproduction of world works to become a novel reflecting the American authors’ maturity and enriching the world literatures with works of an American touch.

Keywords: American expatriate writers, inter-war period, moral standards, social novel, war novel
Introduction

The Civil War that resulted in one American nation; the urban industrialisation that had increased materialism, and moral corruption that lead to the disillusionment of many writers made basis for the would be twentieth American novel. Moreover, the American intervention in the First World War and the great world depression of 1929 caused many emerging young writers at the time to revolt against the situation and to depict the Americans’ nightmare, just after they had been dreaming of a brightened future along the century.

The Post Civil War period

When the war ended by the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 a new phase came to substitute for the abolitionists’ production and the writing of the slavery advocates; the thoughts were diverted to the development of industry, and the social revolt that had started to be obvious in most literary works at the turn of the 19th century and later. However on the eve of the 20th century “the black ebony of business” collapsed traditions and the underlying value systems that had shaped centuries of American life. Traditions were dissolved in the world of materialism.

There was a need for a novel of closely observed detail and considerable social significance. What was written in America was no longer thought to be an imitation of what had been produced other where. After the International Copy-right Law (1891), there were the emergence of mass periodicals with short fiction and a variety of sections depicting life in desperate regions in the country. This situation resulted in the increase of the readers taste in reading more and more about their own districts, landscape, customs and dress.

World masters of realism and naturalism such as Dostoevski, Turgenev, Balzac, Zola, Flaubert, Hardy, Moore, Synge and others inspired the new emerging American writers (Sculley, p. 905). Writers at the turn of the 19th century were deeply influenced by ideas from Darwin’s theory of evolution, Nietzsche’s attack on Christianity and social studies. The prevailing thought was to reconsider traditional social morality. Individuals were responsible and thus they must choose between good and evil no matter what outside forces governed them. The book of Frank Norris The Octopus (1901) where the battle is between California wheat farmers and the Southern Pacific Railroad – the conflict is between the farmers impersonating the power of nature against the railroad company standing for the threat of mechanization – is an example of this social revolt (High, 1986, p. 100). Other books emphasised the idea that humans are helpless in front of the immutable laws of nature; this was quite depicted in Jack London’s book Sea Wolf where even though Wholf Larsen was a super hero, he could not survive in the sea.

By the end of the 19th century for this new trend of writers including William Dean Howell in his the Rise of Silas Lapham (1885), Stephen Crane in his Maggie: A Girl of the Streets (1893) as well as Hamlin Garland in his social protest book as Main-Travelled Roads (1891), the novel had the power to become a political weapon. In reverse to Frank Norris’ thought that the individuals are victims to man-made civilization (mechanization), I can list Kate Chopin in her book, The Awakening (1899) in which she saw that the blame s upon the society that makes of individuals (females) victims. The novel was about female repression in
the American society. In her trial to break the taboos, the protagonist, Edna left home to run away with her lover Robert. When Edna felt that there was no escape from the overwhelming patriarchal social norms ensnaring women, she attempted to transcend her society’s bonds by surrendering to the waters of the Gulf of Mexico (Ruland, 1992, p. 191). The writer presents the society as being oppressive, in need of moral standards. The character Edna, impersonating the author, is separate from others fighting her own frustration. The book was one of the earliest attempts to women emancipation the subject that females did not dare talk about at that time and that had introduced a topic that much ink was spilt on later in the 20th century.

All in all, the latest decades of the 19th century writing paved the way for the 20th Century novel writing, as it gave the go-ahead to what had been “un-expressed to express itself... and to let the repressed to be spoken”, i.e., to reveal the truth and to publish information and ideas that were considered as taboo or kept hidden before the “Muckraker era”.* The interior or psychological realism was a variant form and fell into disfavor as part of an early twentieth century rebellion against the exaggerating "genteel tradition". Like in John Bunyan’s masterpiece *The Pilgrim’s Progress* when the author attacked human vice in attempt to correct them through the main character Christian (Bunyan, 1965, p. 140), the American writers challenged to correct graft and corruption in both government and business such as in the works: *The Shame of the Cities* and *History of the Standard Oil Company*, written by Lincoln Steffens and Ida Tarbell respectively in 1901 (Wilson, 2006, p. 485). The following extract is Steffens’ accounts American life as a whole to sound for the civic pride of an apparently shameless citizenship:

This is the wail of the typical American citizen. Now the typical American citizen is the business man. The typical business man is a bad citizen; he is busy, he does not neglect, he is busy with politics, oh, very busy and very businesslike. I found him buying bidders in St. Louis, defending grafters in Minneapolis, originating corruption in Pittsburgh... and beating good government with corruption funds in New York (Steffens, 1904, p. 5).

Development of communications by means the telegraph, camera, newspapers and the radio made a competition with books as sources of amusement and enlightenment. New forms of communication and new modes of transportation made American society increasingly mobile and familiar with many more regions of the country. Literary voices from even the remotest corners could reach a national audience. At the same time, American writers—particularly writers of fiction—began to influence world literature.

**The Early 1900s**

It is commonly agreed by critics that the early decades of the twentieth century were a turning point in the history of American literature. American literature was no longer a copy of British and European productions. Rather, the American writers started to enrich the world with their literary contributions rich of ideas based on what happened in the writers’ native country, America.
The rise of the 20th century American novel in the inter-war phase

The nature of the 20th century American literature was established early before WWI. In this phase of “Renaissance” the emerging generation of the American writers expressed their spiritual problems and disillusionment very sharply, providing the American novel with fresh themes.

Between 1914 and 1939, American literature entered into a phase which is still referred to as the beginnings of modern literature. Starting from 1915 onwards the period is known as the phase of social criticism because American writers became preoccupied with what was wrong in their social surroundings. Van Wyck Brooks (1886-1963) was the most influential critic for about twenty years. His early work was the principal factor in the erection of the lofty cultural standards that have encouraged the rise of a mature, serious, philosophical criticism. Brooks’ book, America’s Coming-of-Age (1915) made of him a spokesman of writers with indifference to leadership by giving courage to other American artists to overstate their disappointment (Cerrito & Dimauro, 1999, p. 152).

Theodore Dreiser (1871-1945) was one of the great American writers to depict the dismal of the urbanized society in favour of common men and women that turn to be its victims. Man is a mechanism and a miserable individual surviving in a social environment that is uncaring and unfeeling. Dreiser’ characters impersonate his pessimism that he could hardly hide in such works as Sister Carrie (1900). The world became an unfair universe, controlled by powerful people who did not tolerate any interference on their affairs. Yet in that entire horrible world, man could still stop and ponder — after all humans are all companions in the same sinking ship. Carrie Meeber, the main character in the book sought a better life in Chicago where she became an actress. Unfortunately, she found out that no matter what money and success a person can get in our civilized world; these cannot be keys to true happiness. We can get fame and materialistic things, at the expense of other valuable things such as our pride and social status.

Sherwood Anderson (1876-1941) emerged as influential experimentalist and pessimistic, social critic before 1920. He was taken as a model writer for his easy style and form of fiction by many contemporary young novelists including Hemingway, Faulkner and Wolfe. An example is the early writing of Hemingway—who parodied it cruelly in Torrents of Spring (1926) to make a clean break and become his own man. Sherwood’s writing is characterised by its simplicity, much similar to everyday ordinary spoken language (High, p. 120).

Anderson devoted himself to literature and was interested in proletarian fiction by presenting the lives of workingmen. This kind of writing properly springs out of direct experience of proletarian life and might not be available to other writers. Early in his a youth in Clyde, Ohio, he worked as a newsboy, house painter, farmhand, and racetrack helper. After a year, he worked as an advertising writer in Chicago until 1906. Then he tried without success to become a businessman while writing fiction in his spare time. As he was a paint manufacturer in Elyria, Ohio, he suddenly wandered off because he was mentally distraught. His characters grope unsuccessfully to discover the reality in themselves, and with equal frustration they
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Nebbou

The complexities of the machine age and conventionality in urban life (Sculley, pp. 1186-87).

Anderson did not deny the legitimacy of the writer’s concern with emotions, but he was wary of ‘bogus emotion that a writer may generate by uncritical use of language’ (Cunliffe, 1993, pp. 29-32). In fact, his characters express moments of self-understanding. *A Story-Teller’s Teller* (1924) is Anderson’s autobiography where he explained that “true history of life constitutes rare moments that we live” (p. 309).

The 20th century represented the progressive hopes of the Americans; especially by now, the USA. emerged as a very powerful country as she became the leading industrial nation of the world (Reeves, 2000, p. 3). The products that the United States exchanged with Germany alone in 1913 was valued at nearly two and a half billion dollars; the amount that was twice as great as the entire trade with Europe twenty years before (Lingley, 2006, p. 268).

When Wilson declared that “The world must be made safe for democracy” (Srivastava & Joshi, 2005, p. 188; Lingley, p. 186), it was a preparation of the American nationals to be ready for war. The United States officially entered war on April 6, 1917. Some of 3 million of the convinced civilians were enlisted to the armed forces. American soldiers participated in a grisly and often chaotic drive along a 200-mile front into the region of the Argonne Forest and the Meuse River (Reeves, p. 66). “The most impressive fact about the Americans, as far as the Germans were concerned,” historian Edward M. Coffman has written, “was that there were so many of them.” The American Expeditionary Force (A.E.F.) suffered 26,277 dead and 95,786 wounded during the fierce fighting. American losses included half a million young American were dead in WWI and 230,074 wounded (Reeves, p. 85).

The Inter-War Novel

Fiction in the post war period oscillates between commentary of social observation and imaginative works from apprehended experience. When Dos Passos became convinced that mechanization debased humans as an indication to his being inspired by the Marxist philosophy, he left for Spain in 1916. In Europe, he worked as a member of French ambulance unit, then with the Italian Red Cross and in the medical corps of the United States Army. As his contemporaries Dos Passos was considered a great 1920s writer reflecting his own experience and expressing his social idealism and disillusionment (Sculley, p. 1579). In *One Man Initiation* (1919) and *Three Soldiers* (1921), the writer moved from subjective view of history to establish a prevailing one with an aesthetic dismay, fear, and hopelessness at war. Much of the trilogy *USA* (1930-36) contains a collage of newspaper headlines, snatches of popular songs, advertisements, and clippings from news and stories. These items constituted implicit commentary on the events they recalled. The following extract concerns the author’s agony at the A.E.F. whose troops were sent to guarantee repayment of the Morgan loans to the Allied nations, which Dos Passos believed a powerful cause of American intervention in WWI.

They went over with the A.E.F. to save the Morgan loans, to save the Wilsonian Democracy, they stood at Napoleon’s tomb and dreamed empire, they had champagne cocktails at the Ritz bar and slept with Russian countesses in
Montmartre and dreamed empire, all over the country at American legion posts and business men’s luncheons it was worth money to make the eagle scream... (Sculley, p. 1583).

Two outstanding authors, Dos Passos and Steinbeck in the variety of their works after the war, USA (1930-36) and Grapes of Wrath (1939), respectively focussed on those two extremes in American literature when juxtaposing (placing side by side) a fictional narrative with characters of non-fictional nature in a literary form. In Passos’ trilogy USA and Newsreel. According to Sartre, Dos Passos is the author of the authorless novel that abides characterless characters (Ruland, pp. 344-47).

Another writer that belonged to the “lost generation”, is Earnest Hemingway (1899-1961). He is an outstanding figure of the 20th century American literature. As a veteran of WWI, his novels expressed the prevailing view against the war. His idea was that the Americans could no longer claim to be innocent or that their efforts were to seek democracy in the world.

Being influenced by his contemporary writers of the “lost generation” Hemingway wrote simple and short statements. His sentences are a series of balanced statements, very often without adjectives. The nouns are bleak and bare. In his dialogue we read statements as clear polished surfaces whose meanings remain oblique.

Like Sherwood Anderson, he is considered as one of the American expatriate writers in the inter-war phase including Dos Passos, Gertrude Stein, Thomas Wolfe Scott Fitzgerald, and Ezra Pound. These writers were young at the time of the WWI and they experienced the horrors of the machine guns and tankers. Hemingway interpreted the attitudes, the feelings and the troubles of the American soldiers who were enlisted from every pie in America. He was an ambulance driver with the American Field Service in Italy. He translated experience during the war together with its mental effect on American soldiers; some of whom returned home after 1920 but felt they were deceived by their government. In the short story Soldier’s Home, when the American soldiers who survived the war came home, they could not find it easy to lead a comfortable life among their families, nor could they easily mingle with people. Firstly, from the stories those soldiers recounted, people knew that their compatriot soldiers had not been for a humane mission in Europe. The soldiers confessed they had participated in one of the biggest atrocities the world ever had. About ten million soldiers were dead including Europeans and Americans, let alone European civilians (Reeves, p. 74). Hemingway is a sample of the American expatriate writers who encountered with reality by serving in WWI. Like his “lost generation”, he was stricken by the wounds of the war as portrayed in his book In Our Time (1925). He found his return to America very hard as American citizens were not easily convinced of their soldiers’ participation in the war. Hemingway described the return of a soldier named Harold Krebs home:

By the time Krebs returned to his hometown Oklahoma...People seemed to think it was ridiculous for Krebs to be getting back so late years after the war was over.
Later he felt the need to talk but no one wanted to hear about it. (Hemingway, 1925, pp. 99-100)

As Hemingway was a great writer, who according to many of his close friends: Fitzgerald, Pound and Perkins, he was not the man that would admit being governed by the circumstances. He was not the author that would accept being patronized (Wagner, 2007, p.84). The bitter bewilderment of Hemingway about the American soldiers’ wounds and anger when those youth could not figure out what their society wanted of them was further exacerbated by frustration in The Sun Also Rises (1926). The writer commented about many of his love affairs in this novel. While lying in hospital, all that remains for the main character, Jake Barnes is only his undefeated body that keeps him long to his previous friendship and love life. The Sun Also Rises is another example of modernist works in the 1920s characterized by the collage of the different scenes and events that the author witnessed or experienced. While reading this book, one can find out more and more about Barnes’ past life surfing from the fishing scenes, backwards to childhood amongst the native people and friends of the town and country, then recounting of movement about the crowded, smoky, and noisy Montmartre, Pamplona in Spain, the terraces of the Lilas Brett, the Café Aux Amateurs etc... “I figured rapidly back in my mind. It was three days ago that Harvey had won two hundred francs from me shaking poker dice in the New York Bar”. "No. When I get like this I don't care whether I eat or not”. These memories gave Barnes comfort and contributed to the quick healing of his injury.

I lay awake thinking and my mind jumping around. Then I couldn't keep away from it, and I started to think about Brett and all the rest of it went away. I was thinking about Brett and my mind stopped jumping around and started to go in sort of smooth waves. Then all of a sudden I started to cry. Then after a while it was better and I lay in bed and listened to the heavy trams go by and way down the street, and then I went to sleep. (Hemingway, 1926, p. 31)

The young writers in the inter-war American fiction pay better attention to ordinary reality which, for Hemingway, means to talk of his lived experience in much detail. The shift was conspicuous from dealing with exemplary things, or dramatic things that could be the basis for a lesson, for excitement, for social criticism. To the modern novelist, the focus must be about ordinary things and events, to get more directly at the substance of simple existence, and to highlight modernity’s effects on basic human relationships. For modernists in the 1920s, it was important to write fiction more true to daily life, primary feelings, and deep desires. In brief, Hemingway brought about building a narrative full of stirring events and based on historical developments known at first-hand, and at the same to have his personal problems and struggles interpreted by his protagonists. For Underwood (2008), Hemingway’s narrative constitutes an indifference towards classical moral values that is imposed by natural currents (p.122). Consequently, his style oscillates precariously between sadism and sentiment, terror and tenderness (Schlager & Lauer, 2001, p.158). Because of Hemingway’s easy and direct style, he hardly resorts to symbolism to convey the characters’ feelings by showing the facts and the actions that engender emotions (Skipp, 1992, p. 98).
Hemingway was described as one of the great authors, who honestly and undauntedly, reproduces the genuine features of the hard countenance of the age. In his works, *A Farewell to Arms* (1929) and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), the author talks of love, loss, death and survival, as well as the horror of war and its impact on humans. The latter work is acknowledged as a magnificent novel. It is based on real events that tell of an American named Robert Jordan fighting with the Spanish soldiers against Franco’s Fascists. The author’s experience in Spain and his reports of the war capture the minds of readers while learning of the Spanish Civil War with its fierce cameos of courage, cowardice and passion. Hemingway writes about the Maria’s love to Robert and how it grows deeper and deeper because of the horror of the war that draws them and binds them together:

‘You came barefoot through the snow?’
‘Yes,’ she said and wearing only my wedding shirt,
He held her close and tight in his arms and she rubbed her head against his chin.
‘Avoid the feet,’ she said. ‘They are very cold Roberto.’
‘Put them here and warm them.’
‘Nay,’ she said. ‘They will warm quickly. But say quickly now that you love me.’
‘I love thee.’

(Hemingway, 1941, p. 250)

Another prominent novelist of the twentieth century American literature influenced by Sherwood Anderson is William Faulkner (1897-1962). Faulkner combined the Southern romance and the modern fiction with sense of experimental form, by merging regional history depicting the social disintegration during the 1920s. While seeking to come to terms with the burdens of the Southern past, Faulkner treated history not just as a collection of factual events, but as an opportunity for reconstructing the past through the power and scope of his imagination (Campbell & Alasdair, 1997, p. 144). Apart from his friendship with Sherwood Anderson, Faulkner kept separate from friends, colleagues and literary circles. According to Ruland (1972), Faulkner came into his own only after he had decided to make sense of the world he had known best: the places, the people in and around the Mississippi in Lafayette County where he had grown up; as Faulkner stated:

“I discovered that writing was a mighty fine thing. You could make people stand on their hind legs and cast a shadow. I felt that I had all these people, and as soon as I discovered it I wanted to bring them all back” (p.312).

Faulkner’s first novel was *Soldier’s Pay* (1926); the theme of which was on the returned soldier. The book is a decadent text about the malaise of the post-war society, from the view point of a world war veteran. In his book *Mosquitoes* (1927), the author describes the bohemian life in New Orleans. The two novels reflecting Faulkner’s real life in the south were *Sartorius* (1929) and *The Sound and the Fury* (1929). In these two novels the author interprets the fundamental life of a southern society as being emblematic in human life in an age of war that constituted an age of lost hopes, stress and profound change in all domains.
Faulkner’s feeling of being free to write and his will to continue writing, no matter what readers would think of his work, induced him to come up with *The Sound and the Fury*. The story is a part of the author’s obsession with his past childhood recounting of his earliest years in the south. The novel consists of a moving story of the Compson family: four children and their inadequate parents. This story includes the tragedies of two lost women: Caddy and her daughter and the suicide of Quentin when in despair of having a love affair with his promiscuous sister Caddy he commits a suicide by drowning himself. The book is divided into four parts. It is only in the last episodes of the book that the story unfolds. The novel starts with Benjy as a moral conscience in which the rest of the family members can see their actions reflected. Benjy is the youngest and mentally handicapped sibling and the narrator of the first story on Saturday, April 7, 1928. Then, the second part is narrated by Quentin, the oldest sibling on June 2, 1910 at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The third section is narrated by Jason who is the third sibling, is set on Friday, April 6, 1928 in Jefferson, the day before Benjy’s section. The final section, narrated by a third-person narrator, occurs on Easter Sunday, April 8, 1928, and follows Dilsey Gibson, the Compsons’ cook, as she prepares meals and takes Benjy with her to church. Dilsey is the black servant who endures scolds and succumbs to the circumstances; she is a loving creature and has a strong will to preserve the Compsons’ family tied together. Just before Quentin’s death, the latter meets Herbert Head, Caddy’s fiancé. Quentin despises him for his flattery and ostentations: he does not only offer Caddy expensive wedding presents and promises Jason a job at the bank he runs, but he also has the intention to bribe Quentin for fear that he will worsen his reputation at Harvard. When Quentin is alone, he begs her not to marry Head, but she runs off. Once when Quentin wants to embrace his sister Caddy, she pushes him away, telling him she is pregnant and must marry:

It was raining we could hear it on the roof, sighing through the high sweet emptiness of the barn
There? touching her
Not there
There? not raining hard but we couldn’t hear anything but the roof and as it was
my blood or her blood.
She pushed me down the ladder and ran off and left me Caddy did. Was it there
it hurt you when Caddy did run off was it there...
You pushed me it was your fault it hurt me too
We were dancing sitting down I bet Caddy can’t dance sitting down
Stop that stop that
I was just brushing the trash off the back of your dress
You keep your nasty old hands off of me
It was your fault you pushed me down I’m mad at you

(Faulkner, pp. 123-24)

*The Sound and the Fury* addresses themes related to its fragmented structure as well as to gender and race. The treatment of racial marginalization constitutes one of the major themes in the novel. Dilsey Gibson, a woman who is marginalized by her race as well as by her gender. Faulkner clearly presents the racist attitudes of Mrs Compson who reprimands Dilsey when she...
is going to dress Benji instead of preparing breakfast for the family. Faulkner expresses Dilsey’s embarrassment at Mrs Compson’s indifference and racial attitudes:

Disley said nothing. She made no further move, but though she could not see her save as blobby shape without depth, Mrs Compson knew that she had lowered her face a little and that she stood now like a cow in the rain, as she held the empty water bottle by its neck.

‘You’re not the one who has to bear it,’ Mrs Compson said. ‘It’s not your responsibility. You can go away. You don’t have to bear the brunt of it day in and day out. You owe nothing to them... I know you have never had any tenderness for Jason. You’ve never tried to conceal it’ (p. 242).

Following the world depression in October 1929, everything was changed in America. Investments declined, businesses failed, stores and factories closed, banks collapsed, unemployment soared—from 5 million in 1930 to 13 million in 1932 (Reeves, p. 101). There were hardly any jobs available for job seekers. People lost their homes and savings, the jobless slept on park benches, the previously boating urban area and thriving resorts became poverty-stricken quarters.

The years of the 1930s constituted a turning point in American fiction. Many writers concerned with social class appeared. The authors started writing for the suffering masses, for example, Jack Conroy and Richard Wright who won the attention of the miserable minority groups. The slogan “art is a class weapon” was interpreted into the appearance of many partisan reviews such as The New Masses of Michael Gold which spoke of Jewish immigrants.

The first American Writers’ Congress was founded in 1934. It officially adopted socialist realism and called for socialist realism to express social values (Habib, 2005, p. 541). The congress was set to engage writer’s social class struggle and to assault liberalism. John Steinbeck (1902–1968), in this domain, came as a physical writer – concerned with material things and not spiritual matters – depicted the crowd with the emotions of strike in his book In Dubious Battle (1936) that was about the migratory fruit pickers when striking. One year later, he wrote his successful book, Of Mice and Men which was a tragic story of friendship between two migratory workers. Because of the currents, Steinbeck was much interested in social problems and was attracted to California where he had spent most of his youth and had had much experience of life. As quoted by Ruland, Steinbeck said:

The fascinating thing to me is the way a group has a soul, a desire, an intent, an end, a method, a reaction and a set of tropisms which in no way resembles the same things possessed by the men who make the group (Ruland, p. 310).

The Grapes of Wrath (1939) is Steinbeck’s depression epic which sums up the spirit of the 1930s. This work, besides being a social history about the migrants driven from Oklahoma farmlands, it is a protest novel. It was Steinbeck’s challenge against agronomic carelessness and capitalists’ indifference to peasants. It is also a ‘corporate novel’. The significance of the migrants housed by the residents in the Highway 66 and in California is on the primal human
spirit that transcends all other powers. A very moving example is when the character Rose suckles a starving man to bring him back to life:

“Awready,” Pa said.
Tom asked, “Where’s Rosasharn?”
“Over there,” said Ma. “Come on, Rosasharn. We’re a-goin’.”
The girl sat still, her chin sunk on her breast. Tom walked over to her. “Come on,” he said.
“I ain’t a-goin’.” She did not raise her head.
“You got to go.”
“I want Connie. I ain’t a-goin’ till he comes back.”

(Steinbeck, 1941, p. 171)

What is interesting of *The Grapes of Wrath* is not the social event depicted in the book, but it is quite in the *heroism* and *courage* of the common people through the characters of Ma, Joad and Tom.

**Conclusion**

The inter-war period witnessed the climax of the American novel. There were American novelists who were inspired or else deeply affected by the WWI and by the great depression of 1929. There were war novelists such as Dos Passos and Hemingway as well as social novelists like Falkner and Steinbeck. The works of both types of writers can be considered as protest novels as they express their authors’ anxiety and disfavour to their social surroundings, speaking on behalf of the commons and from experience. The number of the American authors I limited myself to discuss work and many others that neither the time nor the space are enough to talk about in this humble emerged mostly in the inter-war phase. Their literary influences ranged from their regional heir to cause a great impact on literature in the world over. Because of the “juxtaposition” i.e., the collage of the fragments collected from everyday life, most of the studied works in this phase blended the elite culture and popular culture. It is true that America is a huge melting pot. It is this multitude of the coexisting cultures and peoples in this part of the world that had enhanced novelists to spit out smart recounts of the currents in the form of stories imaginatively. Hemingway referred to society and American decision makers as the ones to blame for Harold Krebs’ nausea and mental torture. Similarly, Faulkner had to go back to his childhood to evoke his distress towards the Compsons who once had been aristocrats, but as time went by, the family was subject to disruption and tragedies when they started to run after their whims. The rise of the American novel in the inter-war phase came just in time to compensate the American readers generally and those citizens in the once-neglected areas to read about themselves and to be read about for years of neglect: Dilsey Gibson the negro servant from the south and the peasant family of Joad from the far west. Hemingway, Steinbeck, Faulkner and Fitzgerald came as avant-gard in making literature contribute to social problem solution and in narrowing the bridge among different trends in one society in one work; the thing that had never occurred formerly. They exposed the American social structure with its wide stratification, commenting on the sources of the social disintegration and letting the reader judge the situation. This genre of novel was a source of inspiration for many would be writers of protest and social novels in many world countries, particularly in the places...
where societies were cracked by colonisation. The literary innovation brought about by the 20th
century American novelists is a revolution in the history of literature. This has gained the inter-
war novel a high respect and that has made the American authors of this phase subject to much
debate in the literary realms.

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* Muckraking: John Bunyan's alluded to the "man with a Muck-rake" in his Pilgrim's
Progress (1678), a person who could look only downward as he stirred the filth, unable to
see the heavenly crown held above him. Mass magazines financed the investigations and
published the work of muckrakers. Examples of muckraking novels include: Phillips' Great God Success (1901); Upton Sinclair's Jungle (1901); and the later books of the American Winston Churchill…

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Crossing Borders: Narrating Identity and Self in *Willow Trees Don’t weep* by Fadia Faqir

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Abstract

The novel as a literary genre becomes the subject of critical interpretation with the rapid development of the major kinds of the twenty-first century fiction. The novelist of this epoch is Fadia Faqir who attempts to indulge in ever experimentations of the narrative technique. The present research examines and explores representation of narrative and cultural identities, resulting from crossing multiple borders in Faqir's novel *Willow Trees Don't Weep* (2014). Faqir's response to these conceptions is given by those protagonists who become new individuals of their own world by creating new spaces, new voices and representations formed by construction of the identity and the self.

*Keywords:* identity, narration, self,
Crossing Borders: Narrating Identity and Self in Willow Trees Don’t weep by Fadia Faqir

Many female Arab novelists create new voices and discourses in contemporary literary fiction, gone beyond authorities, broken the rules to present avant-garde impressions, experiences and identifications. These new representations address issues of identity, self, culture, sex, emancipation, and quest for liberation, offering insights into women's subjectivity and challenge or reformulate cultural, familial and societal perspectives. In this light, there has been a stout activity on concepts related to cultural identity and self through creating tremendous formulations in the techniques of narration. Jerome Bruner (1987) holds that "we organize our experience and our memory of human happenings mainly in the form of narrative—stories, excuses myths, reasons for doing and not doing, and so on."(4) It seems that narrative is presented everywhere, in fictional and nonfictional works. Moreover, it organizes our memories, experiences and the experiences of others through narrative discourse. H. Porter Abbott (2002) quotes Roland Barthes's quotation on narrative (1966)

The narratives of the world are numberless. Narrative is first and foremost a prodigious variety of genres, themselves distributed amongst different substances - as though any material were fit to receive man's stories. Able to be carried by articulated language, spoken or written, fixed or moving images, gestures, and the ordered mixture of all these substances; narrative is present in myth, legend, fable, tale, novella, epic, history, tragedy, drama, comedy, mime, painting (think of Carpaccio's Saint Ursula), stained-glass windows, cinema, comics, news items, conversation. Moreover, under this almost infinite diversity of forms, narrative is present in every age, in every place, in every society; it begins with the very history of mankind and there nowhere is nor has been a people without narrative. All classes, all human groups, have their narratives, enjoyment of which is very often shared by men with different, even opposing, cultural backgrounds. Caring nothing for the division between good and bad literature, narrative is international, transhistorical, transcultural: it is simply there, like life itself.(3)

In the context of the above quotation, Barthes widens the interpretation of narrative to include the cosmology of narrative, new perspectives related to identity, self and culture. In Addition, it encompasses internal and external dimensions associated with culture, religion, psychology, and society. These dimensions are treated as literary spaces in literature, spaces created to unveil stereotypes employed in textual genres. Therefore, a representation of literary discourse cannot be separated from other disciplines; it deconstructs the dominant systems of different cultures and societies. Thus, fiction represents the constellation of spaces to (re)produce autonomous identities and selves and to describe narrative voices which have been dislocated and relocated. In this way, narrative voices are analyzed in lieu of home, belonging, sameness, difference, forgiveness, fundamentalism, existentialism and love.

This paper analyzes Fadia Faqir's Willow Trees Don't Weep (2014), a forceful and cogent novel, about belonging, dislocation, love, forgiveness and loss. Michel De Certeau (1988) states that "Every story is a travel story – a spatial practice,“(115) Fadia's novel consists of six parts; the protagonist-narrator is Najawa, keeps on narrating the story in retrospect. In Part One,
Najwa relates the death of her mother; her mother wants to be buried without performing religious rituals. "No Islamic Funeral!"(3) But, her grandmother insists being wrapped in white haj clothes, so she arranges the funeral, and asks the imam to attend to read verses of the Holy Quran."I walked behind the procession, holding my grandmother's hand.... She threw herself over the grave and began scraping up the soil." (4) Najaw begins with her feelings over her mother's death and her father's departure, " my father, Omar Rahman, who walked out on us when I was three, loomed large in the past, a featureless dark shadow, without eyes, lips or voice. I remembered very little: his strong, bushy hair, a scar at the end of his left eyebrow, the warmth of his bony fingers clasping my ribcage before flinging me up in the air.'Why?'(6) Najwa feels of personal crisis after losing her mother and father, she is isolated, confused and fragmented. Her sadness is caused by her sense of existentialism and identity; she undergoes an emptiness of self, disrupted by a kind of otherness. "Being the daughter of an absent father, they saw me as common land, without a fence or border."(15)Here, the narrator-protagonist creates an open space of personal identity, it is avoid of ruptured self. She is without a protection, guardian, assistance and support in a conservative society. The events are narrated from Najwa's point of view, the actions move inward. The aim is to expose Najawa's complexities, especially the multiple factors resulting in any given decision or state of mind. The narrative moves around the protagonist constructing a kind of mental and emotional reflections. The narrator doesn’t know the reason behind her father's disappearance. She fluctuates between mystery and reality, the mystery of her father's absence and the proclamation of her mother's "It's this ugly thing called religion. Allah is more important to him than us' "(11) Moreover, Najawa was not allowed to cover her head. Her mother took off her veil, cut her hair, so they lived a secular life. She wore western clothes without religious deeds and words. The mother was convinced that her husband had left her due to religion; thus, the mother didn't believe in Allah. Furthermore, it is clear that even within this narrative, the absent father relates his story, telling his story in the first person pronoun, so, the voice and focalization is his. He tries to immerge his inner self; he is as present in the narrative discourse as the protagonist-narrator, beginning in Amman on January 1986. He experiences topsy-turvy emotions like a frightened and confused monkey in a cage, wants to escape to create an existential space to achieve stability of identity. Kellner and Stephen (1990) opine that "the body that breaks free from its socially articulated, disciplined, semiotized, and subjectified state... to become disarticulated, dismantled and deterritorialized, and hence able to be reconstituted in new ways."(90)

As the story develops, Najwa determined to find out the secret of her father's disappearance," I had no option but to find my father. If my father died, I would live alone in that house... Only women of ill repute live on their own without a male guardian."(23) Fadia leads her protagonist into a web of difficulties and mysteries, where Najwa is disrupted by unknown future and existence. Fadia's narrator strives towards the catharsis of her own personal trauma, "people thought that I belonged to everybody because my father was not around to protect me." (26) Najwa dreams about her father, coming through the door, kneeling down and kissing her hair, hands, and cheeks, and asks for forgiveness for abandoning her behind. Najwa strives to have a secure identity instead of a confused and fragmented identity, she sells few pieces of jewelry to find her father, she has no knowledge where he is, and what turns him from a normal father, a secular student nurse and a husband into a vagabond, a mercenary.
Faqir defamiliarizes the narrative technique by juxtaposing first person narratives and parallel narrations. The narration moves away from the daughter to the absent father, then, it fades out and returns to the daughter. This juxtaposition (fragmentation) of narrators reveals fragmented identities; want to achieve coherence and stability. Therefore, the two narrators embark on a fictionalized spatial journey to seek self-identification and understanding themselves. In so doing, both enter and experience exterior spaces different of their convections to attain awareness of existence. Thus, Najwa visits Hani's family-her father's friend-to ask about her father, Hani's father doesn’t know her father's whereabouts, and he says he is a mujahid, one of the soldiers of Islam, and he fights for Allah. Moreover, Hani’s father informs Najwa that "perhaps he is in the caves of Tora Bora with Sheikh Osama."(48)

Consequently, Najwa visits the Identity and passport services in Amman to get a passport in order to travel to Pakistan to find her father. Living in a conservative society, men and women are not supposed to eat in public, the testimony of women is not accepted in court, and women are not permitted to get a passport without male guardian's permission. Fadai negotiates and examines certain attitudes and practices in regards to culture, particularly, in a conservative Islamic society without rejecting and denying Islam and the pillars of Islam. The narrator-protagonist (Najwa) has given money to her grandmother to go to haj in Mecca "I do hope you have a safe journey to Mecca, Grandmother, may Allah accept your pilgrimage and grant you a place in His paradise,"(61) whereas her dead mother wouldn't give her money to go to haj.

In regards to culture, Faqir has interrogates the notion of cultural identity, where she constitutes a space in which interrelations of cultural, social, political and personal issues offer free oases to avoid ideological perspectives. The dislocation and movement of the two narrators emphasize the fragmentation of identity, which results from having a sense of not belonging and no roots that come from multiple dislocations. In this light, Stuart Hall holds that cultural identity “is a matter of ‘becoming’ as well as of ‘being’. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, and have histories. However, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to the continuous ‘play’ of history, culture and power."(1) Thus, Najwa books a ticket to Pakistan to start her journey of crossing borders to construct a sense of self and identity. "On one side lived honorable women, those protected by their fathers or husbands, and on the other loose women like me. I crossed it towards the aeroplane. No going back now. I could see you at the other end, turbaned, bearded and menacing." (69)

In this context, Najwa enters an unlighted, empty, deserted space; she is miles away from her home, searching for her father. Her departure is an escape, carrying her personal problems. Suddenly, Hani's family sent her a letter "if you decide to go to Afghanistan to look for your father, you must go via Peshawar. Go straight to the al-Zahrani mosque and ask for Abu-Bakr." (77) She met Abu-Bakr who gave her a permission to cross for Afghanistan. She wore blue shroud, and there were American soldiers, her journey was dangerous and arduous. Najaw was caught by jumbled spaces at a time, imagining her father kissing her arm. Even though, she searched answers for like " who was I? What family? Who were my uncles?"(113)
and "where was I?"(114) Najwa feels a sense of loss, unbelonging, rootlessness, and experiences of migration. She struggles with her shattered identity and loss of self by her remembered past, current life and imaginative future. She is on a quest to unearth the orbit of her existentialism, obsessed with a sense of alienation; indeed, she has no voice here and there. Moreover, her father joined a fundamentalist Islamic organization; though he was not a religious man" I panicked because I couldn't remember the rituals and I realized that I hadn't prayed since my father took me to the mosque during the Eid celebration."(95) This means that her father's aim is not religion; it is an escape throughout a journey of self-identification and self-recognition. Therefore, Omar chooses Gulnar as his second wife to break free from his sexual repression and frustration. Moreover, he is evidently frustrated by his first marriage, his late wife control and unstable position of sexuality. This is particularly apparent in the love scene with Gulnar- an Afghani girl- he is like a crowned king." I wondered what the hell I was doing in this country. Why did I follow my heart and travel with Hani? What am I fighting for? What am I running away from? A controlling wife?"(116) What seems evident is that Omar has no knowledge of his presence in this country. His life is a maze, and he seeks escape from his present situation. Of course, he knows that he is miserable and isolated, but he lacks understanding of this implosion. He is emotionally and intellectually confused; his world is shattered between reality and illusion. Omar has entered the world of Islamic fundamentalism and Gulnar as embodiment of not-loneliness. Roaming around multiple locations, ongoing search for roots, he opens up a space, it is a space of wandering into abysses of nothingness. He succeeds in possessing Gulnar sexually. When he believes she loves him, he suddenly abandons her.

In Willow Trees Don’t Weep, Najwa moves through inner and exterior spaces to an existential destination in a succession of confrontations scenes. To begin with, she does this as a kind of dream, imagining her father writing letters to her and asking for forgiveness, her mental space is trapped in the loneliness of selfhood. In a meeting with Ashraf, he tells her that Sheikh Omar Rahman" joined the resistance in 1986 and travelled to Afghanistan in 1987. He worked as a medic in Mazar… Seven years after he had arrived here, he got married…. He joined global jihad and travelled West."(148-149) Through the narration of the story, the narrator-protagonist strives to find her father, her last destination is Britain. "I had dreamt of visiting London and there it was before me with its churches, cafes and shops…. 'Oh! Lovely country! King went to Sandhurst…. I'd never seen so much brightness at night. Electric bulbs lit up pavements, doorways, shop windows, double-decker buses and restaurants. My mission was to melt into this city like a grain of sugar in hot tea." (174-5-6) Najwa creates a spatial image of the descent into London, enters into human participation out of the long journey, where she wants to melt into this culture like a grain of sugar in hot tea. She is depressed by her father, who is supposed to provide her with protection, warmth and love. Her grief is caused by his departure; he is the culprit of her agonies. "In the faint light, she looked like a creature from outer space who had just landed on planet earth and was trying to learn its language." (183) Najwa leads an existential as well as emotional journey of transference as a victim of her father, culture and labyrinths of life. In London, she experiences a sense of peace, she feels some psychological relief, enters into an intimate relationship with a different culture, she creates a cultural space, that is a Western space of humanity.
In spite of Najwa's tragic situation, she thinks of the interior space, the relief of the self can be accomplished by means of a human action in her interior space. Thus, she expresses a sense of excitement and grows despite the labyrinths of her life. She insists on accomplishing her mission in finding her absent father. Omar is indulged into negative spaces and distorted images. At one moment he is a secular man, at the next he is a religious man, at another time he is a terrorist. In this sense, Omar says "Brainwashing young men used to be my job…. My job was to isolate, convert, radicalize." (239) After a long journey of travelling, the narrator-protagonist meets her father in Frankland prison, Durham, June 2011; she blames him for abandoning her, for the death of her mother, and the death of her half-sister. But, he justifies all his deeds and motives for the power of divine and for the fate and destiny," our life is mapped out. Our characters are, therefore, our fate." (268) Omar gives Najwa his diary; it is his legacy, a gift to her to unearth the secret of his disappearance. He also refutes his disappearance for saving the life of his friend Hani. Becoming a devout individual is a transitional moment and an answer for the instability, uncertainty and shattering that result from his status qui, family, and national identity. In this way, he realizes that his mental space is brainwashed, exploited, and duped by the imams. Omar generates a mutation and transformation away from the dominant conventions and perceptions into existential, humanistic and realistic religious individual. Consequently, Omar emerges from this dark, empty, inner space a different free man of his own identity. So, narration is considered as an intrinsic pillar for the representation of identity and self, whether they are personal or collective. In this view, the narrator-protagonist finally accomplishes her fictional journey in meeting her father, but she is not satisfied by his excuses and justifications for his disappearance, Najwa says "there is nothing left for me here, except you. But you're in prison." (273) A corollary of this, Omar in his last reunion with his daughter asks for forgiveness "one day you will forgive me for leaving you. Perhaps when I am dead."(273) she wants to create a new life founded on lessons she learned and the riddles she solved. She decides to go back to Jordan, to live the rest of her life without her father but with her new identity and self. It is a new beginning, a creation of a new space for her. She feels as if she finds herself reborn. In addition, the representation of these identities is through crossing borders, these borders that construct a sense of having roots, belonging and integration of identity that drove from multiple dislocations.

References