

the iafor european conference series 2014

ecah2014 libeuro2014 euromedia2014 eurofilm2014
Official Conference Proceedings ISSN: 2188 9678

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The European Conference on Literature and Librarianship 2014

Brighton, United Kingdom

Official Conference Proceedings

ISSN: 2188-9678

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The International Academic Forum (IAFOR)
Sakae 1-16-26-201
Naka Ward, Nagoya, Aichi
Japan 460-0008
www.iafor.org

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The Influence of National Literatures on Moulding the National Identity

Svetlana Ter-Minasova, Moscow State University, Russia

The European Conference on Literature and Librarianship 2014
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract

An intense interest in national identity is a paradoxical but an utterly human reaction to globalization.

The paper considers the role of national literature in shaping and preserving national identity with Russian classical literature as a source material. The word classical is pivotal here because it implies that a work of literature has been read and acknowledged by many generations of the nation despite changes in their way of living, culture, ideology, world outlook, etc., inevitable in the course of history.

Consequently it is classical literature (among other factors) that moulds a nation, its identity, character and culture. Therefore it may serve as a key to a magic door behind which the nation's enigmatic soul dwells because all differences of national identities are obscure and mysterious to other nations. The reason for this is ethnocentrism, i.e. perception of one's own culture as the only right, acceptable and standard one. It causes hostility, xenophobia and aggression thus threatening humanity.

The best way to ensure a peaceful life on the Earth is to give the right for self-identity to all nations. We should be grateful to that national literature which stops the word and the hand threatening other peoples.

The main questions discussed in the paper are:

To what extent can national classical literature be regarded as a source and a pivot of national identity?

Why do some greatest Russian national classics (like Pushkin, Lermontov) not become international ones (like Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Chekhov)?

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The modern age is known to be characterized by two main features: on the one hand, by unprecedented and unbelievable scientific and technical progress in the sphere of communication and, on the other hand, by speeding up globalization process as an important result of this scientific and technical breakthrough.

Without going into details of this most complicated controversial process, I would like to emphasize only one consequence of globalization that has revealed once again the paradoxical ways of human conscience and behaviour.

The paradox is in the fact that the prospect of global unity of mankind, all people and all countries living peacefully together in one Global Village caused a strange paradoxical reaction, because the idea that the global village needs one global language made all the peoples recall their languages and cultures, their national traditions, tastes and values, which led to the understanding of the importance of national identity preservation.

In other words, the special interest in the problem of national identity is a paradoxical but utterly human reaction to globalization.

That is why the following questions have become topical in the contemporary world: what are national identity and/or national character, how shall we protect them from the global processes levelling everyone and everything, where are their roots and sources?

I will try to investigate the role of national literatures in shaping and preserving national identity.

According to Wikipedia, but with a small correction, national identity is the characteristic trait of the human psyche to express, in a concentrated form, a person's belonging to a certain (in the Wikipedia — different) nation or ethnic group.

The notion of national identity comes close (in some definitions almost coincides) with the notion of national character, which is defined as a set of specific psychological traits attributed to this or that socio-ethnic community (N. Djandil'din¹).

Consequently, national identity is closely connected both with the national character and with a much broader notion of national culture, which includes the results of spiritual and material activity of people representing this nation.

What is the role of classical national literatures in these world processes, cultural conflicts, ethnical confrontations and wars?

The word *classical* should be emphasized here, because literature becomes classical when it withstands the test of time, of a long time at that.

Indeed, a work of art or an author can only be called classical in a particular national

¹ N. Djandil'din. Nature of National Psychology. Alma-Ata, 1971, p. 122.

culture if it remains appealing, widely read and acknowledged by a few generations of people of this nation, despite changes in their way of living, culture, ideology and world outlook, which are inevitable in the course of history.

Thus, it is classical literature, first and foremost, that moulds the nation, its identity, character and culture, especially if we mean a historical dialogue of cultures.

How are national identity, national character and national culture moulded? It is no exaggeration to say that the main tool, instrument and means is **the national language**. It's not the only one, but a major one. The national language not only reflects the national culture, but also preserves it and moulds it. In other words (of commonplace metaphors), it is the national culture's mirror, keeper and tool.

Literature totally rests on the language resources. A writer has only one source at hand, the WORD. By means of the written word the master of literature — the literary artist! — creates the whole world, populates it, i.e. he becomes a Creator of the world determined by his national origin, character and identity.

International jokes, where representatives of different nationalities find themselves in the same situations but react to them differently according to the national characteristics ascribed to them by the nations making these jokes can also be regarded as a source of reflections and moulding national identities or rather stereotypes about them/

Only one example (out of hundreds or thousands, because every nation has its own collection of stereotypes, usually, the most critical and negative ones describe the closest neighbours...) This international joke illustrating stereotypes of European nations is very popular now in the world, especially in Europe. It has become a successful object of commerce and is sold in millions of souvenirs (post cards, plates, towels, etc). Here is its modified variant giving the characteristics of European opposite to the typical ones which produces some comical effect.

“The perfect European should be... controlled as an Italian, humble as a Spaniard, generous as a Dutchman, famous as a Luxembourger, organized as a Greek, driving like the French, cooking like a Brit, sober as the Irish, technical as a Portuguese, patient as an Austrian, flexible as a Swede, humorous as a German, discrete as a Dane, talkative as a Finn”.

However, the stereotypes of international jokes are so far from the objective assessment that the very word “stereotype” has got a negative meaning.

This is one of the opinions from Sankt-Peterburgskiy Vedomosti (a newspaper) published on January 11, 1859: ‘There are general characteristics of nations; the French are called frivolous, the English selfish, the Russians patient and so on, but goodness gracious, how many thoughtful Frenchmen, selfless Englishmen and very impatient Russians each of us has met...’

Indeed, the selfish, stiff and absurdly reserved Englishmen of the jokes have created literature sparkling with humour, irony and sarcasm: the fiction of Swift, Dickens, Thackeray, Shaw, Wilde and even Shakespeare, who created 22 comedies against 5

tragedies. Hardly any culture values humour as high.

And finally, Russians — hooligans and alcoholics of the jokes — have enriched world literature with a precious contribution: the works by Pushkin, Lermontov, Tolstoy, Turgenev, Chekhov and Dostoyevsky. The characters of these works, with their philosophic quests and delicate emotional experience, are members of the intelligentsia among other characters of the world classical literature (no wonder, the word intelligentsia was borrowed by the European languages from Russian).

So where is the Russian national character? In jokes or in Russian classical literature? Who is the typical Russian – a muzhik with a bucket of vodka or Tolstoy's Pierre Bezukhov?

It is well-known that during World War II, fascist Germany was actively collecting information about Russia and the Russians before invading Russia. And Russian literature was not the least of the sources of information. That is how the German leaders made their judgement of Russian who they were going to attack. Russia was regarded as 'a colossus with feet of clay': push and the country will fall apart, for it is inhabited by the meditating 'feeble' members of the intelligentsia — like Bezukhov, Nekhludov, Myshkin, Raskolnikov, Uncle Vanya, Ivanov and other characters of Russian classical literature.

Ivan Solonevich bitterly remarks: "Russian literature gave the main background for all the foreign information about Russia: here you have Oblomov, Manilov, superfluous men, pathetic fellows, idiots and tramps."²

Fairly critical of Russian Literature as the source of information, Solonevich labelled it 'a crooked mirror of people's soul'. He writes: 'Literature is always a distorted reflection of life. But in the Russian instance, the distortion transgresses into some fourth dimension. Russian literature reflected almost none of the Russian reality... Russian literature revealed Russia's many weaknesses but it did not reflect strong points, and the weaknesses were mostly far-fetched. And when the sorrowful years of wars and revolutions wiped the film of literary verbiage off people's lives, then from under the artistic sham of Manilovs, Oblomovs, Bezukhovs, Shchigrovsky District's Hamlets and Muscovites in Harold's cloaks (A. Pushkin's phrase), of superfluous people and tramps, there emerged people with wills of iron, quite unnoticed by Russian Literature.'³

Without getting engaged in the argument, I only want to try to 'rehabilitate' Russian literature which did deceive the enemies. True, there were no Oblomovs and Bezukhovs in the Brest Fortress. But who knows what Bezukhov and Oblomov would have done, had they been in the Brest Fortress. They may also have shown up 'the iron wills of the Russian national character', which, according to Solonevich, Russian literature failed to reflect. It did not reflect the iron and thus deceived the enemy with its distorting mirror.

² I. Solonevich. *The Nation and the Monarchy*. Moscow, 1991, p. 166.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 166.

Without rejecting indignantly all fiction, as Solonevich does, it must be admitted that it is not a crooked, distorting, but rather an incomplete mirror. It is incomplete, for 'one cannot cover the uncoverable', as Russian writer A.K. Tolstoy said through his fictional character Koz'ma Prutkov. Incomplete and subjective, for each work of classical literature has its individual author with his/her subjective, personal view of the world, determined not only by national self-consciousness and national culture, but also by his personal life, artistic imagination and quite specific personal literary talent.

Thus, fiction – especially in the status of classical! – is undoubtedly a source of information on a national character, which reflects and at the same time shapes it.

However, there is one more aspect concerning the part a national literature playing in moulding the national character that must be mentioned. The matter is that talking about a national literature inevitably leads to the concept of international one which is supposed to reflect, satisfy and mould some international, universal characteristics of the mankind. What are the relations between the international literature and national ones? What features of the national literary works may be a pass to the heights of the international status?

There are two main points of view on the subject.

The most popular one states that the international (or more commonly called) world literature is a collection of the best samples of national literature and "the more national an author is the more international is the sphere of his/her international acknowledgement"⁴.

Another point of view is well illustrated by the following dialogue between the two characters from "Kavanagh, A Tale" a novel by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow published in 1849 in the USA. It was the time when the American nation became concerned about creating its own – American! – national literature. The participants of the dialogue are Mr Churchill, a writer, and Mr Hathaway, a publisher establishing a new magazine in order to raise the American literature to the status of a national one.

Here are some extracts of their dialogue on the subject.

"I think, Mr. Churchill," said he, "that we want a national literature commensurate with our mountains and rivers,--commensurate with Niagara, and the Alleghanies, and the Great Lakes!"

"In a word, we want a national literature altogether shaggy and unshorn, that shall shake the earth, like a herd of buffaloes thundering over the prairies!"

"Precisely," interrupted Mr. Churchill; "but excuse me!--are you not confounding things that have no analogy? Great has a very different meaning when applied to a river, and when applied to a literature."

⁴ S. Dovlatov. С. Довлатов. Блеск и нищета русской литературы. СПб, 2010. p. 69.

“But, Mr. Churchill, you do not certainly mean to deny the influence of scenery on the mind?”

“No, only to deny that it can create genius. At best, it can only develop it. Switzerland has produced no extraordinary poet; nor, as far as I know, have the Andes, or the Himalaya mountains, or the Mountains of the Moon in Africa.”

“But, at all events,” urged Mr. Hathaway, “let us have our literature national. If it is not national, it is nothing.”

“On the contrary, it may be a great deal. Nationality is a good thing to a certain extent, but universality is better. All that is best in the great poets of all countries is not what is national in them, but what is universal. Their roots are in their native soil; but their branches wave in the unpatriotic air, that speaks the same language unto all men, and their leaves shine with the illimitable light that pervades all lands. Let us throw all the windows open; let us admit the light and air on all sides; that we may look towards the four corners of the heavens, and not always in the same direction.”

“But you admit nationality to be a good thing?”

“Yes, if not carried too far; still, I confess, it rather limits one's views of truth. I prefer what is natural. Mere nationality is often ridiculous”⁵.

This dialogue shows quite vividly the contradiction of different opinions on the subject of international versus national literature.

Avery talented contemporary Russian writer Sergei Dovlatov (quoted above) who is becoming more and more popular after his recent untimely death refuses to discuss the theory of relations between the world literature and national ones but gives examples that illustrate his “non-theoretical” opinion. His illustrations are Joseph Brodsky and Vladimir Nabokov who represented Russian literature at the international level but there are not so many national feature in their literary works⁶. On the other hand, some absolutely Russian authors such as Leskiv, Kuprin and many others, have not become internationally acknowledged. It seems that the principle working here is opposed to the one given before: the more national the author is the less he/she is internationally acknowledged.

And one more important moment must not be forgotten while discussing the national/international relations of literatures, on the one hand and the actual influence of national literature on moulding the national character and identity.

Problems related to these functions of national literary works are clearly highlighted when **the translation of these works into foreign languages is undertaken**. This major aspect ultimately reveals both acknowledgement of and participation of national literatures in dialogues of cultures and — specifically! — conflicts of

⁵ Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. *Kavanagh. A Tale*. Bason. Ticknor, Reeds and Fields, 1849, pp. 114-115.

⁶ S. Dovlatov., *ibid*, p. 69.

cultures.

The obvious example of such a conflict is non-recognition or, to be more precise, underestimation of Alexander Pushkin by the outer non-Russian world.

A Russian will never understand why Tolstoy, Chekhov, Dostoevsky and Turgenev are more famous in the world than Pushkin. Paying tribute to these great masters of Russian and world literature, every Russian knows that its patriarch, the father of the Russian literary language and Russian literature, its star number one, its sun is Pushkin. There can only be one father and one sun.

Therefore, Pushkin's well-known unpopularity in the outer world and especially in England, which is well-known and attested in detail, is so offensive and blasphemous for the Russians that I have no wish to give distressing evidence of it.

This sweeping incomprehension of Pushkin, which sometimes may be sincere, sometimes deliberate and politically conditioned, is usually accounted for by Russian experts and Western 'advocates' of the great poet with a single reason — the untranslatability of poetry in general and Pushkin's poetry in particular.

Vladimir Nabokov was quite categorical in this issue: 'My translation theory is very simple, in fact. The only thing that matters is the ideal accuracy of translation... In my book about Pushkin... I argued and demonstrated that the rhymed translation of *Onegin* is **impossible** [emphasis mine — S.T.], for one would have to distort the meaning in order to get the necessary number of syllables and find a rhyme, very trite as a rule. Thus, a word-for-word translation with explanations for the text and extensive notes is for ever and ever the only possible tool for me.'⁷

Famous French philosopher Jacques Derrida considered translation resistance to be a characteristic trait of any good poetic work: 'Can a poem be called a poem if it does not resist translation?'⁸

However, it does not at all mean that we should leave any attempts at translating poetry into other languages. On the contrary, the stronger the resistance, the better the poem and the more reasons for us to try and make it available for foreign readers.

Of course, problems and difficulties of translating Pushkin's works into foreign languages are one of the major obstacles preventing him from getting recognition not just due to the 'trust in the Russians',⁹ but as an internationally acclaimed world master. It is 'one of the obstacles', but not the only or most important, the main being his famous Russianness, his soul, national character, national identity, which seem obscure to the non-Russian world.

Pushkin is the soul of the Russian people, and the Russian soul is known to be a

⁷ Talk between Vladimir Nabokov and Pierre Domergue. 'Zvezda', 1996, No. 11, p. 62.

⁸ Talks with Jacques Derrida. Jacques Derrida in Moscow. Moscow, 1993, p. 162.

⁹ 'As far as I know, no Russian ever questions Pushkin's literary reputation. But can we trust Russians?' C.A. Johnson. Pushkin: A Personal View. Contemporary Review. L., 1965, November, vol. 206 (1198).

mystery, an inexplicable secret for the foreigners, actually like all national souls which are mysterious just because they are **different**.

Thus, the main reason for non-recognition and incomprehension of Pushkin as the Russian literary genius number one is the conflict of cultures, mentalities and, ultimately, the conflict of souls. I can foresee the immediate questions: And Dostoevsky? And Tolstoy? And Chekhov? The answer is that they are **more international and less national** than Pushkin. Pushkin is a national writer. I realize that this is a trite phrase and that volumes of scientific surveys of 'folk origins and national spirit' have been published. But Pushkin **is** national. Any Russian grows up with Pushkin and lives all his/her life with him. Fairytales in childhood, then comes the school-reader Pushkin, enriching the vocabulary and suggesting quotations on every occasion ('the encyclopaedia of Russian life'), then anything about him: letters, recollections, relatives, friends, contemporaries, dictionaries, literary criticism...

Together with Pushkin, a great number of people entered the Russian history, his entire personal world, those whom he loved — and we joyously love them too, and those who hated him — and we utterly hate them. Apropos, a belated thought: the notion of the Russian person does not mean an ethnic purity of the nation 'in blood'. A Russian is a person whose native language is Russian and, consequently, whose native culture is also Russian, because language and culture are the main means that mould the personality. And Pushkin, with his African ancestor, proves that best.

Therefore, the point is not in the fact that Pushkin is untranslatable: he was, is being and will be translated. The point is that the non-Russian world does not understand his soul, the point is in the conflict of cultures.

Representatives of different cultures see the world differently: this different vision is imposed on them by their native culture and their native language as the carrier and keeper of culture. Each foreign word is an intersection, a clash of cultures, because between it and the real-world object or phenomenon it denotes there is a notion conditioned by the collective consciousness of the nation united with one culture. That is why each translation and, actually, every lesson of a foreign language is a dialogue of cultures. An alien culture is the most interesting part in this dialogue because the aim of the translation is the acquaintance with it, and the alien is the least translatable.

Let us conclude: Pushkin is untranslatable, but all poets are untranslatable, some more, others less.

Pushkin is obscure to the non-Russian world because of the conflict of cultures. But... Pushkin as part of the culture of his time is getting more and more obscure to the Russians.

Pushkin, for Russians, is the great classic of Russian literature. The test of time is still going on, and everything is changing radically: the way of life, the social structure, the language and — in a broader sense - culture.

Commentaries, which Nabokov ardently stands up for, are necessary, and in growing numbers, not only for Pushkin's foreign language translations, but for the Russian

readers as well.

The study of socio-cultural commentaries on extra-linguistic facts enlightens the conflict of cultures, and it is mostly not only a conflict of one culture with a foreign one, but that of the classical work's past culture with modern one.

Accordingly, the most wide-spread commentary of this kind should be an explanation of the outdated details of everyday life very common to Pushkin's contemporaries, but entirely forgotten by their descendants. These details are vital to show the characters' inner and outer worlds, the author's attitude to them, and the contemporary readers' evaluation. In this case, commentaries serve as a bridge over the gap which divides 'our' and 'their' time, or as a pair of glasses which can help a modern reader discern the details of bygone ages.

In Pushkin's variants of Eugene Onegin there are such lines: 'Get married! — To whom? — To Lidina — What a family! They have nuts served up and they drink beer at the theatre.' The modern reader is puzzled: what negative socio-cultural connotations prevent the marriage to poor Lidina? The meanings of the words nut and beer have nothing to do with the context and do not explain the cultural riddle. The only thing is clear: the social life (social, because nuts are served to the guests and beer is drunk at the theatre) has changed so much that any connection with modern life is lost, and so are the connotations of these words.

What is to be done then? How can Pushkin's riddle be solved? Why does the Russian reader perceive him so enthusiastically, so personally, so unconditionally in spite of the time difference between cultures and unawareness of cultural realities? Why cannot the non-Russian reader, as a rule, appreciate him and, at best, 'trusts Russians'?

There is only one answer: Pushkin is a deeply traditional, national writer, he is a genius and the embodiment of the Russian spirit, of the Russian soul. And these two notions, genius and soul, cannot be described and studied rationally or scientifically, and that is why Pushkin's mystery cannot be solved because neither Russia, nor its people, nor its greatest poet 'cannot be understood with pure intellect alone'. The same can be attributed to all other nations and their national literatures and writers.

To sum up, the role of classical national literatures in a dialogue of cultures, in general, and in a historical dialogue, in particular, cannot be overestimated. Classical national literatures are the essential source of information about the roots of national identity; they are the key to a magic door, or rather to the seven doors behind the seven seals where each nation's secret soul dwells, because all the differences of national identities, characters and cultures are obscure and mysterious to other nations. The reason for it is ethnocentrism i.e. perception of one's own culture as the only right, acceptable and standard one. The only way to save life on the Earth is to give the right for self-identity to all nations, for their own view of the world (world outlook), their own way of life, traditions, customs, to accept this right with the mind if not with the heart, to realize the dangers and threats to humanity and to our planet caused by xenophobia, aggression, intercultural, international conflicts. We should be grateful to those national literatures that stop the hand and the word threatening people. May the writers remember about their great power over the minds and souls

of their readers.

And may they use this power for people's good.



Racial Tensions and Identity Conflicts in Hanif Kureishi's Major Works

Neslihan Günaydın, Süleyman Şah University, Turkey

The European Conference on Literature and Librarianship 2014
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract:

In twentieth century British society, one-sided racist social policy that excluded diasporic people from social life started to change and British society transformed into a racially mixed one by dealing with immigrants from different parts of the world. In this multicultural society language was a means of power and it shaped identity. Debased language white supremacists used about immigrants limited their identity. *The Buddha of Suburbia*, Hanif Kureishi's first novel published in 1990, is a semi-autobiographical book focused on the protagonist, Karim's search for his social and sexual identity in 1970s Britain. His mixed-race as half-English and half-Indian leads him to ambiguity about defining his own identity. Loaded with the issues such as race, class, identity, sexual crisis and failed marriages, *The Buddha of Suburbia* mirrors racial tensions, prejudices and class conflicts between the working class and upper class in the constitution of multi-racial and multi-cultural British society during the 1970s. Published five years after *The Buddha of Suburbia*, *The Black Album* (1995) is Kureishi's second novel which explores some crucial issues such as Islamic radicalism, ecstasy, censorship and Prince in late 80s London, as well as religious and cultural clashes between Britain and its immigrants. On the other hand, *My Ear at His Heart* published in 2004 is a memoir which introduces us to the unpublished manuscript of Kureishi's late father's. In this memoir Kureishi mentions different life experiences and conflicts between himself and his father. Celebrating hybridity and heterogeneity in human nature not restricted by any authority or controlling power, Kureishi's works open the door for individual development and freedom of choice and opinion. The aim of this paper is to demonstrate the racial tensions and identity conflicts in Hanif Kureishi's major works *The Buddha of Suburbia*, *The Black Album* and *My Ear at His Heart*.

Keywords: identity, racism, sexuality, ecstasy, censorship, multicultural, discrimination, fundamentalism, cultural conflicts

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Based on his identity as a British-Asian author, Hanif Kureishi's fiction reflects an ideological perspective on the politics of race and antiracism in contemporary Britain. Dealing with the issues such as "imagined homeland" and "the place of Islam" within British racial politics, Kureishi scrutinizes the moral and emotional aspect of ethnicity in a period of redefining British-ness. Kureishi's works subvert stable racial descriptions by making his characters open to transformation. The boundaries of the categories like class, sexuality or gender become blurred. The migrants to Britain following the Second World War were required to rethink national identity as well as enabling the emergence of a younger generation of black and Asian British authors, including Hanif Kureishi. In the face of these migrations and intellectual voices from the former imperial dominions, the aim of this paper is to demonstrate the racial tensions and identity conflicts in Hanif Kureishi's major works *The Buddha of Suburbia*, *The Black Album* and *My Ear at His Heart*.

The Buddha of Suburbia, Hanif Kureishi's first novel published in 1990, is a semi-autobiographical book focused on the protagonist, Karim's search for his social and sexual identity in 1970s Britain. His mixed-race as half-English and half-Indian leads him to ambiguity about defining his own identity. He is devoid of a sense of belonging, torn between alienated Indian immigrants and white British supremacists. Loaded with the issues such as race, class, identity and sexual crisis and failed marriages, *The Buddha of Suburbia* mirrors racial tensions, prejudices and class conflicts between working class and upper class in the constitution of multi-racial and multi-cultural British society during the 1970s.

Made up of two parts as "In the Suburbs" and "In the City", *The Buddha of Suburbia* reflects how significant the move from suburbs into the city is for the social transformation of characters throughout the novel. As expressed by the editor Susie Thomas in *Hanif Kureishi: A reader's guide to essential criticism*, "it is not just the myth of tolerant England that is blown apart in the novel but the myth of a homogenous Englishness. Instead, the novel shows Englishness as changing and unstable, varying according to class and gender as well as over time" (Thomas 2005: 64). Karim's father, Haroon is the Buddha of the title of the novel, called as God by Karim sarcastically. Unhappy in his job as a civil servant and also in his marriage, Haroon abandons his wife and other son Allie to live with Eva, who is another transforming character as a social-climber. Haroon transforms into a yoga teacher exploiting English people's preconceptions about his Indian identity by imposing Eastern mysticism and spirituality on them, while Eva desires to reach social mobility by attracting artists and intellectuals into her new circle in London through yoga parties she arranges for Haroon. Eva is the primary supporter of Haroon, forcing the social ladder upward as well as better economic conditions.

what was the place of the East in the discourse of the West? Both poverty and wisdom were being used for something. A benign religion such as Buddhism, along with the version of Hinduism people like George Harrison took up—less morally stringent than most Western religions—seemed to sit well with the increasingly frenzied capitalism of the West, creating a calm spiritual space in the midst of social fragmentation and technological progress (Kureishi 1990: 72).

On the other side, Karim gains fame through his roles of Indian identity in the theater world and he elevates from the suburban lower middle class to the metropolitan middle class. When closely examined, it is possible to realize that Karim transforms into a much more conscious and responsible identity for the other members of his family, coming to partial compromise through the end of the novel. While the suburbs are “a leaving place” for immigrants searching for social and economic development, London corrupts them with all its temptations such as sex, alcohol and drugs. Karim and his family are exposed to painful racist treatments in the mainly white suburbs, while they obtain partial freedom from these racial discriminations in the anonymous, multi-racial city, London.

The Buddha of Suburbia starts with Karim’s description of his own identity: “My name is Karim Amir, and I am an Englishman born and bred, almost [...] having emerged from two old histories”(Kureishi 1990: 3). Karim does not have certainty about his identity naturally, since he is originally Indian, but culturally almost English. The sense of belonging wholly to one culture is missing in him. He does not have a good command of both cultures simultaneously. This identity crisis pervades into all immigrant characters in the novel. The God figure, Haroon is called “Harry” by uncle Ted and Jeeta, while his son, Amar, is called only “Allie”, as part of cultural imperialism. It was bad enough his being an Indian in the first place, without having an awkward name too.”(Kureishi 1990: 33) Although Haroon struggles to be more like an Englishman for years, he ironically decides to return to his Indian origin as an Eastern mystic just to appropriate English people. As Karim denotes, “he’d spent years trying to be more of an Englishman, to be less risibly conspicuous, and now he was putting it back spadeloads”(Kureishi 1990: 21). To give another outlook on Haroon, Susie Thomas illustrates: “Haroon starts off as the mimic Englishman and, when this fails, he becomes a mimic Indian”(Thomas 2005: 66).

More involved in Buddhist rituals and philosophy as a renegade Muslim yoga teacher for his interests, Haroon is criticised by his childhood friend, Anwar as being more indulged in western way of life even though both of them feel like they belong neither to British culture nor to Indian culture exactly. They intend to keep up with English culture when they first come to England. However, the insulting, humiliating manners and racial prejudices they are exposed to decrease their sympathy and willingness to live within this culture and they make up an imaginary Indian world in which they feel more free and independent to satisfy their individual needs in this clash of cultures. Karim’s father defends his friend Anwar who insists on bringing an Indian husband for his daughter Jamila by using his patriarchal authority. He even goes on a hunger strike to persuade Jamila to realize his desire. Ridiculously he claims: “I won’t eat. I will die. If Gandhi could shove out the English from India by not eating, I can get my family to obey me by exactly the same”(Kureishi 1990: 60). As referred by Susie Thomas, “just as the novel has been credited with deconstructing a binarist discourse of black vs. white, it also subverts traditional gender roles”(Thomas 2005: 78), considering Jamila’s adamant manners against her father’s patriarchal control. Ironically enough, Anwar and Karim’s father do not desire to visit their place of origin as European culture seems to be more attractive to them. Yet Anwar forces Jamila to get married with an Indian guy, whom she does not have any emotional or sexual relationship even though they later share the same house under the link of marriage. To justify the conservative, racist behaviour of his oldest friend, Karim’s father reasons: “we old Indians come to like this England less and less and we return

to an imagined India”(Kureishi 1990: 74). To be alive in this repellent culture they struggle to maintain some features of their own culture in their imagination, far away from putting them into practice successfully. On the other hand, Jamila’s final acceptance of this kind of marriage but her refusal of any sexual intercourse between herself and her prospective husband Changez can be regarded as an opposition to the idea of return to origin because she is already indulged in this materialist, corrupt, imperial world in which dances, sex, drinking, and drugs are usual.

maybe there were similarities between what was happening to Dad, with his discovery of Eastern philosophy, and Anwar’s last stand. Perhaps it was the immigrant condition living itself out through them. For years they were both happy to live like Englishmen. Anwar even scoffed pork pies as long as Jeeta wasn’t looking. (my dad never touched the pig, though I was sure this was conditioning rather than religious scruple, just as I wouldn’t eat horse’s scrotum. But once, to test this, when I offered him a smoky Bacon crisp and said, as he crunched greedily into it, ‘I didn’t know you liked smoky bacon,’ he sprinted into the bathroom and washed out his mouth with soap, screaming from his frothing lips that he would burn in hell (Kureishi 1990: 64).

Kureishi makes his characters open to change and transformation rather than just reflecting the fixed characteristic features of his own family members as they are in this semi-autobiographical novel. He expresses: “when I began to write *The Buddha of Suburbia*, I saw early on that it couldn’t be a simple autobiography; I had to open the family to influence and change in order to make the story dramatic and unpredictable”(Kureishi 1990: 147). Likewise, Bart Moore-Gilbert indicates: “Kureishi’s choice of Bildungsroman as a genre is particularly significant, given that it is one which insistently presents identity as a developmental, unstable and shifting *process*, rather than a given and stable *product*”(Moore-Gilbert 2001: 127). Surprisingly an Indian husband brought from India does not satisfy Anwar unlike all expectations. He is disappointed by Changez, as he has an injured arm and that’s why he is incapable of helping Anwar in the shop. Even if Changez are more traditional than even Anwar, who draws a more traditional profile than Karim’s father, he has sexual intercourse with a Japanese woman called Shinko when he cannot find the intimacy he expects from a traditional Indian wife. Changez’s not having children from Jamila frustrates and annoys Anwar, who is seemingly punished for his coercive manners on Jamila. The funniest point in Jamila and Changez’s relationship through the end of the novel is that Changez is willing to live with Jamila and other friends in a communal house where he witnesses the lovemaking of Simon and Jamila as well as the lesbian relationship between Jamila and Joanna. After all, Changez looks after the child of Simon and Jamila in this house without any expectation of reciprocity to his absolute love for Jamila. Jamila also sleeps with Karim. Despite all these deceitful deeds Changez is still forgiving and sacrificing enough to tolerate the sexual intercourse of his own wife with other people. On the other side of the coin, Changez is a source of inspiration for Karim’s theater world. As Bradley Buchanan notes, “Changez is also the catalyst for Karim’s onstage exploitation of his own racial identity; having joined a theatrical group, and prompted by the unprincipled director, Matthew Pyke, Karim invents a character named Tariq who shares many of Changez’ own cartoonish qualities, and who affords Karim the chance to contemplate the

process of constructing an identity—which is Karim’s main task in the novel”(Buchanan 2007: 44).

Just as Kureishi’s father felt when he first came to England, Karim’s father is disappointed by racial discrimination in working life. Karim reveals: “the whites will never promote us, Dad said, ‘not an Indian while there is a white man left on the earth. You don’t have to deal with them—they still think they have an Empire when they don’t have two pennies to rub together’(Kureishi 1990: 27). While coming back from Shinko’s house, Changez is attacked by a gang calling him “Paki”, not being aware that he is Indian. Maybe Gene, Eleanor’s former lover, experiences the most pitiful downfall from the top position in his life and career as a result of racial conflicts between the East and the West.

Gene was a young West Indian actor. He was very talented and sensitive [...].he was better than a lot of people. So he was very angry about a lot of things. The police were always picking him up and giving him a going over. Taxis drove straight past him. People said there were no free tables in empty restaurants. He lived in a bad world in nice old England. One day when he didn’t get into one of the bigger theatre companies, he couldn’t take any more. He just freaked out. He took an overdose. Eleanor was working. She came home and found him dead (Kureishi 1990: 201).

Gene is just a victim of racial discrimination who couldn’t find any chance to survive in this racially oppressive society despite the great potential to realize his ideals in himself. That his career life is subverted by racial discrimination ruins all his hopes in life. However, while this materialist and multi-cultural society brings restrictions for such people like Gene, it may liberate other people like Haroon who skilfully turns his racial background into an advantage. In his view, the solution to the needs of this materialist world is the replacement of materialism with spiritual values. Haroon elucidates the matter of his age as follows:

we live in an age of doubt and uncertainty. The old religions under which people lived for ninety-nine point nine per cent of human history have decayed or are irrelevant. Our problem is secularism. We have replaced our spiritual values and wisdom with materialism. And now everyone is wandering around asking how to live. Sometimes desperate people even turn to me (Kureishi 1990: 76).

Published five years later than *The Buddha of Suburbia*, *The Black Album*(1995) is Kureishi’s second novel which explores some crucial issues such as Islamic radicalism, ecstasy, censorship and Prince in late 80s London, as well as religious and cultural clashes between Britain and its immigrants. The novel originates from the controversies based on the imposition of the fatwa on Salman Rushdie by Ayatullah Khomeini in 1989. As confirmed by Kureishi himself, “every ten years there had been a revolution in the sixties, it was LSD and psychedelic music, in the seventies it was punk and speed and heroin, and in the eighties it was dance music and Ecstasy. So *The Black Album* kind of came out of all that”(126, Kumar and Kureishi). The rise of Islamic radicalism during the Rushdie affair attracts Kureishi’s attention and he puts

this controversial topic in the center of *The Black Album* with the criticism of fascist manners of both racists and anti-racists in multiracial Britain society in late 80s.

As the title of the novel refers, this book is a means to celebrate the multicultural, multiracial British society in the twentieth century. In *Hanif Kureishi*, Bradley Buchanan stresses: “the central features of Kureishi’s depiction of English life are arguably not based on stable racial or ethnic identities but instead on the blurring of class boundaries, the rise of feminism, the emergence of gay and lesbian movements, and the institutionalization and commercialization of youth culture and popular music, as well as an increased awareness of the arbitrariness and contingency of identity (be it racial, religious, or cultural)”(Buchanan 2007: 14). *The Black Album* is the name of the American musician, Prince’s lost album, available only illegally, as its release was cancelled in 1987. The protagonist of the novel, Shahid is a big Prince fan. Thus the illegal sale of this album and being the title of this novel are not a coincidence. The title associates an opposition to censorship and celebrates racial, cultural or sexist hybridity as the way Shahid’s socialist professor, Deedee Osgood describes Prince: “he’s half-black and half-white, half man, half woman, half size, feminine but macho, too.”(Kureishi 1995: 25) In spite of the evolution of a multicultural British society on the one side, racism still keeps its presence strongly on the other side, as understood from Shahid’s own experiences:

Everywhere I went I was the only dark-skinned person. How did this make people see me? I began to be scared of going into certain places. I didn’t know what they were thinking. I was convinced they were full of sneering and disgust and hatred. And if they were pleasant, I imagined they were hypocrites. I became paranoid. I couldn’t go out. I knew I was confused [...] I didn’t know what to do (Kureishi 1995: 19).

Shahid’s psychology is so terribly shattered by racial differentiation that he comes to the point of losing his self-confidence and starts to be suspicious of his own identity as well as opinions of others about himself. Maybe, he experiences double consciousness considering his claim: “I wanted to be a racist”(Kureishi 1995: 19). External conditions force him to be a racist provocatively. His claim denotes the fact that racism is not one-sided. The feeling of being excluded by the host culture triggers mutual hatred and leads to absolute racism. The feeling of isolation and not belonging to either culture, British or Indian, creates cultural conflicts for Shahid. The author refers to Shahid’s in-between position tragi-comically like that:

When he got to be a teenager he saw he had no roots, no connections with Pakistan, couldn’t even speak the language. So he went to Urdu classes. but when he tried asking for the salt in Southall everyone fell about at his accent. In England white people looked at him as if he were going to steal their car or their handbag, particularly as he dressed like a ragamuffin. But in Pakistan they looked at him even more strangely. Why should he be able to fit into a Third World theocracy?(Kureishi 1995: 107)

Shahid is not adopted by either culture absolutely. His accent betrays him helplessly. His presence as a person with a Paki background is not welcomed as it is regarded as

a threat to their living standards. Shahid tells one of his experiences in which he was exposed to racist remarks dramatically: “Paki! Paki! Paki!” she screamed. Her body had become an arched limb of hatred with a livid opening at the tip, spewing curses. ‘You stolen our jobs! Taken our housing! Paki got everything! Give it back and go back home!’ (Kureishi 1995: 139).

Class conflicts constitute another humiliating aspect of the twentieth-century British society for foreigners. When Shahid’s father first came to England, he didn’t lose his hope immediately in the face of racial violence and opposition. However, racial tension has never disappeared and they have never been regarded as equal to English on the contrary to what Shahid’s father supposed. As portrayed by Shahid himself, their situation is more pitiful than even the situation of the white working class: “we’re third-class citizens, even lower than the white working class. Racist violence is getting worse! Papa thought it would stop, that we’d be accepted here as English. We haven’t been! We’re not equal! It’s gonna be like America. However far we go, we’ll always be underneath!” (Kureishi 1990: 209).

The Black Album focuses on book burning and the imposition of the fatwa on Salman Rushdie in 1989 although the name of the book is not mentioned obviously throughout the book. The book is only implied in the words of Shahid and Riaz, the group leader. Shahid checks Riaz’s opinion of Rushdie’s books: “I found it accurate about Bombay. But this time he has gone too far” (Kureishi 1995: 9). “I am telling you that it is not ourselves in general, not the people, but the mind of the author that we are being informed of. That is all. One man.” (Kureishi 1995: 183) This implicit account of *Satanic Verses* indicates its illegal and offensive status in society. *Satanic Verses* was regarded as an offensive book which insulted to Islamic faith, although Rushdie wrote to India’s Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi in October 1988, after India banned the novel, and claimed “that the book isn’t actually about Islam, but about migration, metamorphosis, divided selves, love, death, London and Bombay.” The book was banned in many Muslim and non-Muslim countries through Ayatollah Khomeini’s fatwa and this provocative book and censorship caused many bookshops to be bombed, which is directly related to Islamic fundamentalism and Islamic radicalism.

This event of blasphemy puts a focus on the concept of respect for the belief of others. Maybe as readers we can draw the idea from the novel that authors have to recognize that blasphemies cause offence and distress for religious people, which is undesirable and that justifies prohibiting blasphemies. Exposed to censorship as a consequence of a so-called blasphemy, Salman Rushdie puts forward such a justification:

“This is, for me, the saddest irony of all; that after working for five years to give voice and fictional flesh to the immigrant culture of which I am myself a member, I should see my book burned, largely unread, by the people it’s about[...]I tried to write against stereotypes; the zealot; protests serve to confirm, in the Western mind, all the worst stereotypes of the Muslim world.” –Salman Rushdie, *Observer*, 22 January 1989

The protagonist Shahid remains between his professor Deedee and his Muslim, fundamentalist college friends. He also experiences identity crisis as a young British-

Asian in London, which is one of the indispensable features of postcolonial novels. In a parallelism to the fatwa on Salman Rushdie as the focus of *The Black Album*, the meaning of literature, translation and rewriting are explored topics which has critical importance in the lives of characters in the novel.

When he was young, Kureishi saw that “it was taken for granted that to be black or Asian was to be inferior to the white man.”(Guardian) That was the reality of diasporic people as Kureishi mentions in *My Ear at His Heart*: “my father had been bullied and suffered racism in India and in Britain[...]we came to believe that exclusion and revilement was our permanent fate; nothing would change and no one would make a space for us”(Kureishi 1995: 129) However, this one-sided social policy started to change and British society transformed into a racially mixed one by dealing with immigrants from different parts of the world. In this multicultural society language is a means of power and it shapes the identity. Debased language white supremacists use about immigrants limit their identity. Riaz, the group leader in the novel, writes poems and asks Shahid to translate his writings into English for publication, but Shahid rewrites or changes some parts of them, which annoys Riaz. There’s a criticism of storytelling and rewriting throughout the novel, so translation and transference issue in literary world seems a risky condition, which can lead you even to death because of distorted facts or manipulation of facts in fictional world. Shahid questions the fatwah about Rushdie’s writing implicitly by such questions: “And story-telling. This is the issue! Why we need it. If we need it. what can be said. And –and what can’t be. What mustn’t be said. What is taboo and forbidden and why. What is censored. How censorship benefits us in exile here. How it might protect us, if it can do that.” (Kureishi 1995: 182) Expressing his reaction against the fatwah, Shahid stresses the significance of the freedom of opinion: “A free imagination, Shahid said, ‘ranges over many natures. A free imagination, looking into itself, illuminates others’(Kureishi 1995: 183).

Shahid’s friends are anti-racists, but by thinking they’re in possession of the Truth and it’s their duty to create a new, uncorrupt world, they are playing roles as Islamofascists. They interfere in people’s private lives, especially Shahid’s in the novel. The tension between the East and the West is based on mutual hatred, as confirmed by Riaz and his group members through their extreme acts and manners about book burning and the protection and defense of Islamic faith and values. Sarcastically, Shahid questions the act of book burning and makes such a comment: “What sort of people burn books and read aubergines? I’d heard books were on the way out. I never imagined they’d be replaced by vegetables. Presumably, libraries will be replaced by greengrocers. No, I am giving you an ultimatum.”(Kureishi 1995: 210)

A special emphasis is put on the issue of identity which various social, cultural or religious groups are distinguished through. No ethnic or cultural groups deny their background or avoid exhibiting their distinctive features within this multi-cultural and multi-racial society regardless of the possibility of being excluded as indicated by Shahid: “These days everyone was insisting on their identity, coming out as a man, woman, gay, black, Jew—brandishing whichever features they could claim, as if without a tag they wouldn’t be human. Shahid, too, wanted to belong to his people. But first he had to know them, their past and what they hoped for”(Kureishi 1995: 92). His mixed identity because of his hyphenated background as British-Asian is the

primary reason for his identity crisis incited by Britain's alienating policy that that time.

My Ear at His Heart published in 2004 is a memoir which introduces us the unpublished manuscript of Kureishi's late father'. Thanks to this manuscript entitled *An Indian Adolescence*, Kureishi discovers lots of details about himself and his father. In this memoir Kureishi mentions different life experiences and conflicts between himself and his father. One important point Kureishi emphasizes in the memoir is that his father thought himself as a failure, since most of his novels were rejected by numerous publishers. Even if Kureishi's father was proud of his son who has reached success as a writer more easily, he deeply felt his own failure in writing, which was his ideal occupation throughout his life. In fact, Kureishi is the epitome of his father's unrealized dreams and this situation caused some conflicts between Kureishi and his father.

Through symbolic characters in *An Indian Adolescence*, Kureishi learns about his father's family life and life experiences, which are also the subject of *My Ear at His Heart*. According to what Kureishi finds out from this manuscript, his father was a neglected child, while Omar, his uncle, is Colonel Kureishi's favourite son. Omar is called "Mahmood" and his father is called "Shani" in *An Indian Adolescence*. The unfair treatment by the same father makes Kureishi's father jealous of his brother, Omar. Another book Kureishi's father wrote is *The Redundant Man*. In two novels Kureishi's father focuses on sexual passion and failure in marriages, including that of his parents and his own. In *The Redundant Man* Yusef is made redundant in his job as a humble worker and abruptly transforms into a wealthy businessman. Yusef's wife, Salma is very religious like Bibi and Kureishi's mother. She finds her transformed husband repellent for his worldly, mundane manners, so she strives to save her husband by returning him to Islam, but she cannot succeed. This aloofness between spouses or in mismarriages makes wives more devoted and dedicated to Allah, by distancing themselves from their husbands and children just as Bibi prays to Allah as a devout woman when Colonel Murad dances with other women and drinks. Having a mismatched marriage, Bibi also withdraws into her own shell, just praying to Allah, which restricts her contact and good communication with her children. Kureishi comments on this contrast among neglected women in his family between their inner and outer world: "at least my father was able to see, because of his mother, that excessive devotion to religion is a form of narcissism, a barrier, in fact, between oneself and the world, a convenient way of neglecting the individual and replacing him with God." (Kureishi 2004: 144) by adding "neither my father nor uncle, nor any of the other brothers, as far as I could see, were religious (Kureishi 2004: 143). Having many examples of mismarriages in his family, Kureishi has fears that he himself will live his parents' life and not surprisingly he splits up with his wife in real life.

Kureishi's father grew up without the expected love and affection from a father due to Colonel Murad's extremely authoritative and discouraging manners toward himself and he always felt the need for an affectionate father that would guide him. That's why Kureishi's father has a tendency to be more caring about his children unlike his own father. There are some similarities between Kureishi's life and his father's life. Kureishi's father wants to become a writer to get rid of any doubt in his life and he also induces his son to become a writer, but the main difference between them in

achieving this dream is that Kureishi's father could not advance bravely enough in this profession and remained dull and passive as a civil servant, while Kureishi is much more initiating and brilliant than his father as a prospective writer who tried to live his father's dream with the impression that leading the life of a writer will bring him more success and happiness. Thus a concealed competition between Kureishi and his father led to some conflicts and complexities in their relationship. In an interview between Amitava Kumar, Kureishi indicates:

I think my work shocked him. There was sexuality in it, and gay sexuality, and a certain amount of drug-taking. On the other hand, he grew up on Somerset Maugham—a gay writer if there ever was one. So my work was both a kind of defiance of him and a following of his dream. My father died after I had written *The Buddha of Suburbia* and before I wrote *The Black Album* (Kumar & Kureishi 2001: 120).

Continuously Kureishi questions the tension between his father and himself conceives this tension stems from his father's inability to succeed as a writer subconsciously. He elaborates: "I suppose the main difference between us was that he thought himself to be a failure. He never had the success in his life that he wanted, whereas I'd say success came to me quite difficult. He was pleased for me, but it made him feel worse about himself"(Kumar & Kureishi 2001: 120-1). Both he and his father like cricket in which they are successful, but he expresses: "the idea of being a writer replaced the idea of being a cricketer, for me as for him"(Kureishi 2004: 54). Cricket is interrelated with politics, and ironically Indians are much more successful in cricket than the British, so this sports bears an imperial importance between two sides: the colonizer and the colonized. As Kureishi points out, "for Omar, cricket is political; it is where the British can be eaten at their own game."(Kureishi 2004: 40) He also explains: "according to Omar, the British, ordinary enough in their own country, change as they pass through the Suez Canal. Eastwards of Port Said they became empire-builders. In other words, leaving home enabled them to become different, more powerful people"(Kureishi 2004: 37).

The final part of *The Black Album* is much more optimistic and hopeful than that of *The Buddha of Suburbia*, since it opens the door for individual development and freedom of choice and opinion by celebrating hybridity and heterogeneity in human nature not restricted by any authority or controlling power. Kureishi himself confesses: "I'm also interested in people who liberate other people (Deedee Osgood liberates Shahid) she liberates his sexuality, and she also frees him from fundamentalism, she shows him a way out, a way through this tangle of drugs and religion"(Kumar & Kureishi 2001: 128). Hence Kureishi puts freedom into the basis of his life and works by exalting differences rather than humiliating them. According to him, an individual can find himself when he or she feels free in very sphere of life. The feeling of rebellion against prohibitions within human nature is regarded as a stimulus for creativity, innovation and ingenious ideas. Challenge against authority is celebrated for the sake of a heterogenous identity.

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***A Contrapuntal, Ecocritical Reading of Abysmal
Return in Contemporary Middle Eastern and Native American Fiction.***

Eman Helmy El-Meligi, Damanhur University, Egypt

The European Conference on Literature and Librarianship 2014
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract

This research offers a contrapuntal, ecocritical and comparative reading of contemporary Middle Eastern and Native American Fiction. Nature is emblematic of socio-political, psychological, archetypal and historical issues in David Grossman's novella "Yani on the Mountain", Murid Barghouti's *I Saw Ramallah*, and Louis Erdrich's *Love Medicine*¹. The reading is also informed by Edward Said's contrapuntal approach highlighting absences and omissions as well as the portrayal of the Other. Nature, anthropomorphized and personified, is turned from an element of harmony to that of discord, thanks to man's chaos. Several images, symbols and motifs are recurrent in each work, in addition to the multiplicities of narratives and tenses. The cyclical narrative structure and zig-zag progression of story-telling accentuate the somehow morbid mood and sordid atmosphere. Furthermore, the authors' human dissatisfaction with chaos is crystallized in their statement on past and current affairs as well as the somehow gloomy future prospects. All this is best embodied in the womb-tomb motif prevalent in the three works, where the journey home is, in fact, an engulfment by abysmal return. Mythical as well as Biblical and Quranic allusions paradoxically strip the setting of the expected positive connotations, only to reinforce the apocalyptic quality of these counternarratives. Socio-political and historical subtexts glimmer beneath, reinforcing man's setting loose of evil in Pandora's Box. From Yiddish and Cannanite to Chippewa, the three works spark a journey of aesthetic beauty and involve the reader in an urgent commitment to pressing human needs. All this is beautifully done through abysmal return to Mother Nature.

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In *Literature, Nature and Other Ecofeminist Critiques*, Murphy explains that in Gaia imagery, the partheno/genetic initiator quickly becomes subservient to her son, Uranus” (Murphy 59). Though this attaches “the patriarchal baggage” to nature, it is relevant in this study as regards how abusive and mutually destructive man’s relation to nature has become. Naturally and symbolically, the womb-tomb motif is linked to nature. The problem is that dying and return to a pristine state have drastically changed. Is the earth still principally our kind mother or tomb or have we transgressed against it to turn it to solely the tomb pole? Dying implies that in “a past golden age”, “an androgynous culture and psyche existed”, a return to the original unity (Murphy 68, 69). A paradigm shift is necessitated to deconstruct the intellectual edifice of the old paradigm, in which Gaia imagery is trapped (Murphy 69). In the three works discussed in this study, nature and culture are closely related, with spatialization centre point. In a way, however, this inextricable bond acts like a rewriting or a reinscribing of our relationship with the other: Israelis to Egyptian, Palestinians to Israelis, Native Americans to mainstream Americans. Nature acts like a warning sign that even she will not grant us the postmortuary paradisaic state. There might be some comfort in the voyage itself but the return is definitely apocalyptic in the three works. Murphy calls the notion of return a “re-turn” “towards an ecological spirituality, a new godless pantheism that decenters and untethers us and our thought” (120). This is embodied in the coyote or trickster archetypal figure that acts like a rebel deconstructing our beliefs and actions. The trickster is a mid-wife in Erdrich and both male and female in Grossman and male in Barghouti.

It all aims at decentring the “anthropocentric underpinnings” (Murphy 141) both patriarchy and chauvinism have imposed on the treatment of the other. It works towards a pluralistic, human ideal, through the common final abode of the human race. One of the experiments Murphy cites is the “recognition of immersion in otherness” not otherness, embodied by the identification of the Pacific Mountains with the Chinese mountains, as a human “recognition of interrelationship” (Murphy 101). A case in point is “Yani on the Mountain” of Sinai, where Moses talked to God, a common transcendental symbol and parable in the three religions. No wonder why the mountain is a spatialized, transcendental and ascetic symbol for Rabbis, Monks and Sufis alike. Murphy cites “Pratitya-Samutpada”, meaning “dependent co-origination”, in other words, the womb, with “another mutual participant in interpreting the jeweled net of the world” (Murphy 102). He explains that the transcendental move here is not simply across the mountain but beyond and above (Murphy 98) to share another perspective. This notion is reminiscent of the moral geography of the novel, a notion postulated by Edward Said and applied through his contrapuntal approach. It eventually aims at offering a counternarrative to the hegemonic one, here, in three different but, paradoxically similar, cultures. The three works act as intermediary narratives, revising, from their liminal zone, the hegemonic historic events that led to anarchy and abysmal return, if ever we are even granted this re-turn.

In David Grossman’s “Yani on the Mountain” (1980), nature is usually personified with negative connotations all along. The Biblical ascent of Moses on the mountain and the revelation of the Ten Commandments on the Sinai mountain are always foregrounded but with an opposite apocalyptic undertones, very much like the difficulty of attaining salvation at the hands of Jesus Christ because of the undeserving human beings in Yeats’ “The Second Coming” or Beckett’s *Waiting for*

Godot. The metaphor “The rock is only a massive lump” is reminiscent of a malignant tumour, the bushes are “stubborn” (“YM” 60); even ascent is far from that of Moses or Jesus Christ: “I climb a step in the rock, cling to protuberances with my hands, maneuver acrobatically between the familiar cracks. The ascent has to be accomplished in a certain way” (“YM” 61). The ironic, secular acrobatic maneuvers, together with the hazardous protrudings, fissures and cracks, undermine the current war and post-war state, only to culminate in the eventual bombing of the mountain to erase all traces of military presence.

Yani’s death-wish is eventually expressed in relationship to the mountain: “I want to vanish with the mountain; to lean against the green sacks and cease to be” (“YM” **122**). Yani’s identification with the mountain is interpreted by Nimra, the humanitarian activist, and Elisha, the idealist and poet, as part of Yani’s “chidish dreams”, in other words, military service and war as synonyms for nationalism and patriotism are nothing but “childish dreams”. “You’ve lost nine years of your life, wasted them here, can’t you see, this is the moment to do the right thing, Yani, come down from the mountain” (“YM” 79). The request “Yani, come down from the mountain” recurs like a refrain, ironically called: “Cato-esque conclusion” (“YM” 45) by Yani and reiterated by Nimra, the peace-seeker and humanitarian. Significantly enough, in France, the sewage “Watergate of Lyons”, the important journalistic scoop is related to Nimra, who is at one with nature. Indeed, she accentuates man’s transgression against nature, symbolized by the sewage and vomit in the stream “in the labyrinth of the underground city, between the canals of churning filth (“YM” 104). Nimra, disgusted at the human pollution of nature, vomits and “her vomit was borne away on the dark stream” (“YM” 104), further worsening the pollution. Unfortunately, Nimra’s disgust soon leads to her depression. Knowing the glaring difference between her and the transgressors against nature, Yani knows she will never ‘re-turn’ to him or to Elisha. “She had gone to die by herself, in a corner of her forest” (“YM” 105). Nimra’s inherent repugnance at the disgust intrinsic in humanity is foreshadowed right from the very first page of the novella; spitting and urinating contests amongst the soldiers are described in full detail, provoking readers’ revulsion. To make matters worse, the soldiers go and eat immediately afterwards, indicating a numbing of the natural human senses. Spit, piss, secrete saliva, and urinate are few amongst many of the terrible revolting contests of the soldiers, and, consequently, of warring humanity, shocking readers at the outset of the novella (“YM” 37-9).

The incessant allegorical identification of Yani and the mountain explains how the whole novella has been incessantly preparing the reader for the terrible climax, the huge transgression against nature: bombing the mountain to hide traces of the military intelligence base. Yani and his mountain were both abandoned by Nimra in a clear statement on the futility of war; Nimra “detested both cynicism and military obtuseness”, meaning she disagreed with Elisha, the cynic, and Yani, the soldier: “They left the mountain. They left me all by myself. They mocked my dreams (I wanted them both to volunteer for the regular army, like me, and go serving on the mountain); they shattered the foundations I built for myself”, Yani lamented (“YM” 78-9). The final touching apostrophe, where the officer is addressing the mountain in a poignant apologetic tone, reveals how human beings, by going into wars with each other, are no longer at one with nature by disrupting its harmonious rhythms. The personification portrays the mountain as a close friend betrayed by Yani: “Now all

that remains is the slow counting of hours. Only remorse toward the mountain beneath our feet, which trusts us so blindly, oblivious to our treachery, the treachery of the grasshoppers who have been stepping on its surface for all these years” (“YM” 106). The apologetic tone is accentuated by the subsequent medical metaphor, Yani sees himself and his colleagues as causing a malignant tumour in the body of the mountain: “a heavy lump condensing inside it, tearing its guts apart, spraying it in all directions” (“YM” 106). Anagnorisis, coming at the hands of Nimra and Elisha, is also linked to angry nature, mainly because of man’s warring attitude and unnatural behaviour: “People our age all over the world were living full, complete lives during those wonderful years, while we were here in the sand storms, and the thunderstorms, always half-starved, afraid of unseen enemies, eating our lives away” (“YM” 124).

The apocalyptic overtones are expressed in the opening of the abyss (“YM” 106), both literally and metaphorically, out of which “giant lizards, are escaping in all directions, in haste and great confusion, their tails dragging behind them and drawing lines in the sand, and their faces, their grinning monster faces, are grim” (“YM” 107). The dystopia is best expressed in a perfect image of Doomsday, when all creatures are frantically wandering in horror:

Geckos and spiders, beetles and jerboas, a countless multitude of tiny creatures is swarming everywhere today. The sand beneath my feet is full of activity. The birds of prey, the buzzards and the hawks, circle the sky expectantly, gather in their wings and claws, swoop again and again, bringing a swift death to these little denizens of the dark, which some mysterious force has banished from their usual haunts and sent scurrying into the sunlight (“YM” 107).

The earth, therefore, is not still, the abyss is widening, and utter devastation is imminent. This abysmal return to Yani’s homeland was foreshadowed very early in the novella: “I turn away from the edge of the cliff, toward the position set well back from the abyss. These days I’m not sufficiently sure of myself. I feel comfortable sitting on the damp ground between the disintegrating sandbags (“YM” 44). The “gathering darkness of the abyss amid the vegetation sprouting wildly over the camp’s sewage pipe” (“YM” 46) foreshadows the above-mentioned sewage Watergate scoop.

After its bombing, the mountain top will ultimately “tread on corpses”, including “mine”, meaning Yani’s, is another unnatural personification of nature highlighting the ‘tomb’ pole and, in the meantime, the alienation and estrangement of the soldiers. This is spelt out at the end in one of the rare explicit statements on war and peace² (“YM” 116-19). This has been the last in a whole line of antagonized nature personifications and metaphors, due to man’s unnatural behaviour: the very first word of the novella is the “wind” that soon turns out to be a “malevolent wind” (“YM” 37, 66, 73). Similarly, the natural connotations of the sun endowing people with warmth and light are subverted: we have the “pale light of the sick sun” instead (“YM” 73). Our “primal fear” is as frightening as the thickest bush (“YM” 47); the “rapid dancing jet” “cleaved the air like a hissing snake” (“YM” 38) and even the thin, tall friend is as ominous as a raven (“YM” 38). Furthermore, the “thorny branches” are beating down the tangled growth of the tree trunks (“YM” 46). Significantly enough, Nimra, the humanitarian activist and philanthropist, ends up somehow clinically depressed; Elisha, the poet, drowned in cynicism; Yani, the patriot and nationalist, with a death-

wish to die with the bombardment of the mountain; and Mark Nestor, the lecturer in Russian literature at the University of Buenos Aires, tortured and miserably failing too miserably to spread any message of love. It is like a revisionist counternarrative on the part of Grossman, the “Post-Zionist”³, to what is considered patriotism and belonging since all four paths of peace, literature, war, and love have been ruthlessly thwarted in almost all continents of the world mentioned in the novella.

As in Grossman, nature is antagonistic to human beings in Barghouti’s autobiography *I Saw Ramallah* (2000). The Biblical and Quranic parable of Ezekiel and the wasteland or Jerusalem recurs poignantly throughout the novel; unfortunately, however, resurrection seems unattainable this time. At the outset of the novel, water is acting with the enemy to strip the Palestinians of their life: streams and rivers are almost dry, while death by water reminds us of both TS Eliot and Louise Erdrich. “Water without water. As though the water apologized for its presence on this boundary between two histories, two faiths, two tragedies” (*I Saw Ramallah* 11). The Jordan River is narrow, without proper water or sound. Returning to Ramallah, Barghouti was shocked to see how narrow and dry the river has turned: “it had become a river without water. Almost without water. Nature had colluded with Israel in stealing its water. It used to have a voice, now it was a silent river, a river like a parked car” (*ISR* 5). Both the Palestinians and the river have poignantly lost their voice; they no longer have an identity or a say in matters. Their life is being lived for them while critical decisions are being made on their behalf.

Prelapsarian Eden and Eden after the Fall form the very first antithetical image that strikes Barghouti once he steps into his family’s courtyard thirty years later:

I used to tell my Egyptian friends at university that Palestine was green and covered with trees and shrubs and wild flowers. What are these flowers. What are these hills? Bare and chalky. Had I been lying to people, then?

Did I paint for strangers an ideal picture of Palestine because I had lost it? I said to myself, when Tamim comes here he will think I have been describing another country (*ISR* 28).

This is the Biblical and Quranic allusion to Ezekiel’s “pale waste land” (*ISR* 12), Jerusalem of the past, only this time with no hope of resurrection whatsoever. Eden here is the image Barghouti retained of Palestine with its olives, figs and palm trees, only traces of the past now. Barghouti wonders how he is going to explain the discrepancy to his son Tamim, “Had I been describing Deir Ghassanah with its surrounding olive groves, and convincing myself I was describing the whole country?” (*ISR* 29). Ironically enough, even his own place that used to abound in olives and figs is now almost barren: “Instead of the tree I saw a large cement block. The fig had been cut off at the point where its awesome trunk met the earth” (*ISR* 55). Artificiality has encroached upon signs of life; nature is now choked by cement. Similarly, asphalt encroaches upon the beauty of the hills to add another element of artificiality further choking nature; significantly, they are both overlooking the settlements (*ISR* 30). Similarly, steel flowers ironically act like lilac fingerprints (*ISR* 38).

To accentuate the bitter loss of paradise, figs and olives should be contextualized as another Quranic allusion; it is both literal and metaphorical. Intertextuality stresses the loss as linked to abysmal return: “*Does the stranger return to where he was? / Is he himself returning to a place? / Our house!*” (ISR 55). After exile, Barghouti felt as if he sinned to buy olive oil: “From the day we knew anything we knew that olives and oil were there in our houses. Nobody from the village ever bought oil or olives. The village sells oil and olives to Ramallah, Amman, to the Gulf” (ISR 58). Similarly, when Barghouti bought one fig for one dollar in Vienna, he felt apologetic to the fig tree of his childhood that had become like a family member to him. He explains it to his wife and son, both writers like him too, in a personification, similar to Yani’s apology to the mountain: “I said to Radwa and Tamim that I had committed a crime against the fig tree of Dar Ra’d” (ISR 59). Pebbles and rocks (ISR 6, 39, 61) form another Biblical allusion, also reminiscent of William Blake’s poems about the two sides of Jesus Christ. Like Grossman and Erdrich, the negative connotations and inverted symbolic import are all we get in Barghouti. Similarly, the “dust of the land” (ISR 28) is reminiscent of the Biblical “from dust to dust”. Other instances of nature as related to death are: raindrops and flowers, as related to the graveyard, as well as cactus plant in the cemetery (ISR 66). The palm tree is the furthest from the ones in paradise (ISR 65); the spring is obstinate (ISR 36) and the mountains are nothing but bare (ISR 28).

Equally poignant is the poetic, dreamlike quality of Barghouti’s autobiography, triggering off the simulacrum, the copy or the mirage connotations. The antithesis strikes the reader right at the outset of the novel, with a series of interrupted rhetorical questions:

And now I pass from my exile to their... homeland? My homeland? The West Bank and Gaza? The Occupied Territories? The Areas? Judea and Samaria? The Autonomous Government? Israel? Palestine? Is there any other country in the world that so perplexes you with its names? Last time I was clear and things were clear. Now I am ambiguous and vague. Everything is ambiguous and vague (ISR 13).

A contrapuntal reading highlights the hegemony of the Other aspect. Ambiguity and ambivalence strike the resounding note; only one thing is crystal clear and the furthest from vagueness: occupation as a stark overwhelming fact:

The soldier with the yarmulke is not vague. At least his gun is very shiny. His gun is my personal history. It is the history of my estrangement. His gun took us from us the land of the poem and left us with the poem of the land. In his hand he holds earth, and in our hands we hold a mirage (ISR 13).

The mirage image is a Quranic allusion too, accentuating the simulacrum idea. Elsewhere, the reference to Disney works also to stress the same idea. This is enhanced by the intertextuality, specifically with the literary allusion to the romantic writer al-Manfaluti or the linking of Frantz Fanon to the “gloomy skies” (ISR 16):

Can I write with their pens on their snow-white paper the things that come to my mind now that martyrs also are part of reality, and that the

blood of the freedom fighters and the young people of the Intifada is also real. They are not invented by Walt Disney or born of the imagination of al-Manfaluti. Living people grow old but martyrs grow younger (*ISR* 37).

The above quotation triggers off Edward Said's notion of the "gravity of history" that cannot be simply silenced, excluded or textualized, hence the urgent need for contextualizing and historicizing in Barghouti. His liminal position, reminiscent of Said's own *Out of Place*⁴ autobiography, further highlights the motif of return as national; it is the unattainable right of return⁵ for millions of refugees. Harping on "gates of exile" (*ISR* 22), both a Biblical allusion to Exodus and a Classical one to gates of Troy, together with the constant crossing of thresholds (*ISR* 36), underline the liminality. Another clue to the same effect is the academic terminology (*ISR* 12, 14), triggering off poetry and literary criticism as the unifying background of the author, his wife and son. This gives a deeper dimension to Palestine as an image in a text book, with no equivalent in reality, all-present in history books and maps but no longer in geography books and maps. "When Palestine is no longer a chain worn with an evening dress, an ornament or a memory or a golden Qur'an, when we walk on Palestinian dust, and wipe it off our shirt collars and off our shoes" (*ISR* 23).

Similarly, in Erdrich's episodic *Love Medicine* (1987-2009), June, the character most at one with nature, is shockingly the one killed by nature, namely, snow and Chinook wind: "The snow fell deeper that Easter than it had in forty years, but June walked over it like water and came home" (*LM* 6). Like Barghouti, it is related to water and abysmal return. However frail nature is, latent power will be manifested soon in an attempt to stop man's transgression:

With every root I prized up there was return, as if I was kin to its secret lesson. The touch got stronger as I worked through the grassy afternoon. Uncurling from me like a seed out of the blackness where I was lost, the touch spread. The spiked leaves full of bitter mother's milk. A buried root. A nuisance people dig up and throw in the sun to wither. A globe of frail seeds that's indestructible (*LM* 254).

Like Barghouti, spring, in Erdrich, is cruel and Easter is the furthest from signifying resurrection: "After that false spring, when the storm blew in covering the state, all the snow melted off and it was summer. It was almost hot by the week after Easter, when I found out, in Mama's letter, that June was gone, not only dead but suddenly buried, vanished off the land like the sudden snow" (*LM* 7). The womb of the earth turns out to be the tomb and final abode, not really the womb: "I felt smallness, how the earth divided into bits and kept dividing" (*LM* 333). Unfortunately, this fate applies to June too, who is part and parcel of nature: "They weren't expecting her up home on the reservation" (*LM* 3). Right at the outset of the technically unique novel, the word "reservation" strikes the 'ghetto' connotations as related to the history of Native Americans, to be casually tackled in the coming parts of the novel. Though a long time has elapsed, June's steps on her way back home were confident; intuitively, she felt part and parcel of nature. However, the return home, betrayed her trust with the injustice of humanity all set against her: "She had walked far enough to see the dull orange glow, the canopy of low, lit clouds over Williston, when she decided to walk home instead of going back there"; "A Chinook wind, she told herself. She made

a right turn off the road, walked up a drift frozen over a snow fence, and began to pick her way through the swirls of dead grass and icy crust of open ranchland” (*LM* 6). These tragic scenes have to be read in conjunction with an earlier scene, narrated towards the end of the novel, however, that further explains June’s harmony with nature: “June swam without effort, rolled, dived up and down like a fish, took Gordie farther and farther, away from shore, toward the middle of the lake” (*LM* 266). Elsewhere, when Gordie was looking for her, he found her under water: “then all of a sudden she rose before Gordie, reeds drooping off her shoulders, the water streaming down her face and the snaky ends of her hair” (*LM* 266). It is the perfect image of someone incredibly and rhythmically harmonious with nature, only to be betrayed by the ugly side of nature, a kind of statement on the innocent lives lost in this world because others wrongly misunderstand the frontier myth as uprooting nature and those at one with nature in the process of crossing all borders, at the expense of humanity.

In Erdrich’s *Love Medicine*, June, the character at one with nature, has always been seen as typically Native American. Sometime earlier, Chippewa Gods and American Indian water monster Missepeshu as well as Biblical God are brought to bear on a historical incident of ethnic cleansing of Native Americans; again, the problem does not lie in religions but in man’s abuse of religion (*LM* 232). As usual in the novel, the springboard from which all events stem is June. June plays the narrative role of Nimra and, sometimes, Yani, in Grossman and of Barghouti himself in his autobiography; the four form the uniting narrative springboard, from which the nature motif stems. Here, it is the memory of “Aunt June left by a white man to wander off in the snow” (*LM* 232). “How else to explain my touch don’t work, and further back, to the old-time Indians who was swept away in the outright germ warfare and dirty-dog killing of the whites. In those times, us Indians was so much kindlier than now” (*LM* 233). Indeed, this is one of the rare incidents of explicit condemnation of the injustices committed against Native Americans in the past and of the abuse of religions. As in Grossman, in Erdrich, historicizing events and the political context are rarely directly provided but dropped every now and then, like flashes that highlight or interpret certain incidents. This stands in juxtaposition with the hegemony of the Other and the incessant historicizing of events; the reason is clear: exilic consciousness is not merely rhetorical but literal, symbolized by the Identity Card that is denied Palestinians, together with the right of return or even temporary stay. The contested historic nomadic state has been imposed on them; the luxury of being implicit and ambivalent, as in Grossman and Erdrich, cannot be afforded by Barghouti, as representative of refugees and diaspora all around the world.

A Contrapuntal reading, therefore, easily discerns that the Other, both Egyptian and Palestinian (“YM” 67, 90-1), is mostly absent and silent, from the perspective of Yani; the “hostile desert” is linked to the “unseen enemy” (“YM” 56). When it comes to the humanitarian, all-loving Nimra, however, there is her relationship to Arab friends in London (“YM” 73) and giving shelter to Arabs (“YM” 93). There is one mention of the Arab with explosives amidst Israelis (“YM” 122), together with scattered references to Egyptian settings, starting with Sinai and Dahab to Cairo and Luxor (“YM” 53, 47), let alone the centralized implicit of the import of the human reversal of the connotations and echoes of the Biblical revelation of the Ten Commandments on Mount *Tour* in Sinai.

On the other hand, a contrapuntal reading of Barghouti's *I Saw Ramallah* shows that the Other is never absent; in fact, it is sovereign, overwhelmingly present and omnipotent. Like Grossman and Erdrich, what Said calls, "the moral geography of the novel" is revealed to be the furthest from what he calls 'secular'; setting is heavily loaded with ideological filiation and attachment. In Barghouti, however, the novel is an autobiography, with real-life names of the author and his family. Furthermore, the gravity of history is clear in the outspoken condemnation of Zionism, as totally distinct from Judaism, and the constant historicizing of events. Historicizing is also present in casual references in Erdrich but without the clear condemnation by Native Americans of the Other or of early settlers. Crossing borders or frontiers is also more obvious in Barghouti and Erdrich.

Historicizing events and the political context are rarely directly provided by Erdrich but dropped every now and then, like flashes that highlight or interpret certain incidents. The past frontier myth is reiterated in border-crossings, only here with rivers or streams not promising the faintest glimmer of purgation: "It's a dark, thick, twisting river. The bed is deep and narrow. I thought of June. The water played in whorls beneath me or flexed over sunken cars" (*LM* 333). Like Barghouti, the bridge is a recurrent symbol and the great ancient ocean has shrunk to a small river:

I'd heard that this river was the last of an ancient ocean, miles deep, that once had covered the Dakotas and solved all our problems. It was easy to still imagine us beneath them vast unreasonable waves, but the truth is we live on dry land. I got inside. The morning was clear. A good road led on. So there was nothing to do but cross the water and bring her home (*LM* 333).

Like Barghouti, home coming and water crossing are related to the bridge and the borders: "I came to the bridge over the boundary river. I was getting pretty close to home now" (*LM* 333). Earlier, this is related to the borders, either of the reservation or the historic frontier: "We held each other's arms, tight and manly, when we got to the border. A windbreak swallowed him up" (*LM* 333). This frontier myth generally applies to the three works. Metaphorically, the idea of nurturing corruption and discrimination (the Eastern or European side) is thus perceived to take place at the expense of uprooting the Western frontier with all its connotations of primeval innocence and nobility, equality, purity, integrity, freedom, honour, and agrarianism, in brief, nature, as symbolized by Native Americans or "The Last of the Mohicans"⁶. One alternative is the 're-turn'⁷ to the trickster or the coyote figure not literally smuggling immigrants but defying authority and challenging human injustices, induced by ideological, racist or classist notions, thus 'returning' to nature, both physical and inner.

Notes

1. The following abbreviations will be used:

YM: "Yani on the Mountain"

ISR: *I Saw Ramallah*

LM: *Love Medicine*

2. The call for peace and lamenting war are further elaborated on in Grossman's later novel *To the End of the Land*.

3. Grossman is considered one of the Post-Zionist intellectuals and activists. See *Haaretz* article in the **References** section for his petition against the destruction of Palestinian villages; it was signed by world Nobel Laureates and intellectuals.

4. Said's contrapuntal approach is applied in his Ph.D. thesis on Joseph Conrad and his *Culture and Imperialism*. His notions of filiation, affiliation, secular criticism and the gravity of history are all expounded in depth in his *The World, the Text and the Critic*. *Out of Place*, as its title indicates, is an extensive exploration of his personal liminality, an individual postcolonial dimension that turns into national or even international, as related to postcolonial intellectuals in exile. In his Foreword to Barghouti's autobiography, Said comments on Sinai's desert and the right of return (viii), reiterated on both in the text itself (9, 10, 38).

5. The same journey of home return is replayed later on with his son Tamim in Barghouti's *Born There, Born Here*. Another clue to the same effect is the literary allusion to the motif of waiting and intellectual 'hats' symbol in *Waiting for Godot*.

6. Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* has launched the new typically American Western genre, together with the symbolic connotation of the encroaching colonial rule, or Europe, or the East versus the extermination of the typically noble Native American core inside the souls of Americans. See also Turner's *The Significance of the Frontier in American History* for an understanding of both literal and symbolic connotations of the frontier.

7. "Re-turn", according to Murphy's use, is the revolutionary "turn again" (120). The trickster or coyote is a typically Native American and also Jungian archetypal rebel that helps us "build bridges from self to another" and "foster an awareness of anotherness" (Murphy 141).

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*The Interpretation of Literary Images of Feminized
Nature from the Perspective of Ecofeminism*

Fangyuan XI, Tohoku University, Japan

The European Conference on Literature and Librarianship 2014
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract

In this paper, I will compare the gendered landscape or the image of feminized nature in Wordsworth's poem "Nutting" to Whitman's "Pioneers! O Pioneers" and Cather's "O Pioneers!" from the perspective of ecofeminism. Ecofeminism is one of the most important concepts in ecocriticism, which shares the same characteristics as ecocriticism and concerned more with the interrelation between women and nature. By close reading and textual analysis of the description of nature in these works, it can be found, although the three works do not have any relation, nature in these three works is all described and implicated as female. However, there are differences in the image of nature in these three works, for instance, human's behavior is more active or consciously and aggressive in "Nutting" and "Pioneers! O Pioneers", whereas in Cather's "O Pioneers!", the image of nature is more extensive or various and shares more on the power of discourse. What's more, the different ways of dealing with the image of nature between male writers and female writers can be found as well. In addition, by making reference on Carolyn Merchant's *The Death of Nature*, I also concern more about the cultural and symbolic meaning of how the feminized nature is represented in literary works, how the images of feminized nature reflects the cultural connection between women and nature, and how the way we describe the image of nature in novels or poems reflects human's attitude to nature.

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Ecofeminism is an interdisciplinary criticism which shares the same characteristics as ecocriticism, but it concerns more with the interrelation between women and nature. In *Ecofeminism and Globalization*, Heather Eaton and Lois Ann Lorentzen make a brief introduction of ecofeminism: “Ecofeminism encompasses a variety of theoretical, practical, and critical efforts to understand and resist the interrelated dominations of women and nature” (1). According to them, the term was originated in 1974 by French feminist Françoise d’Eaubonne, emphasizing on the interconnections between women’s oppression and the ecological crisis. They summarize three central claims of ecofeminism: the empirical, the conceptual, and the epistemological. The empirical claim believes that the impact of the environmental deterioration is greater on female than that on men: “environmental problems disproportionately affect women in most parts of the world” (2). The second claim is that the relationship between women and nature is conceptually and symbolically articulated in Euro-western worldviews: “According to ecofeminists, Euro-western cultures’ developed ideas about a world divided hierarchically and dualistically. Dualistic conceptual structures identify women with femininity, the body, sexuality, earth or nature and materiality; and men with masculinity, the mind, heaven, the supernatural, and disembodied spirit” (2). The epistemological claim argues that since women suffer more than men on the environmental crisis, women are considered to possess more knowledge on finding solutions to environmental problems: “Some claim women possess more knowledge about Earth systems than men and thus should be ‘epistemologically privileged’ (3).

Apart from Ecofeminism, my interpretation also involved some statements and opinions of environmental history. Environmental historian Carolyn Merchant reveals the historic connection between the domination of nature and women from the environmental historical perspective in *The Death of Nature* published in 1980. As our mind determines our behavior, the way how we consider nature determines the way how we treat nature. Merchant’s remarks that the metaphor of feminized nature affects and regulates human’s attitude to the earth could be applied in literary interpretation.

Although the metaphorically feminized nature is not uncommon or unusual in literature, more attention should be paid to how these images influence characters’ attitude toward nature in literary works. By analyzing the images of feminized nature represented in some of the classical literary works and in Cather’s *O Pioneers!*, we will see how the images of feminized nature reflects the cultural connection between women and nature, and how these images in literature influence on human’s behavior toward nature.

The Image of Feminized Nature in “Nutting”

Drooped with its withered leaves, ungracious sign
 Of devastation; but the hazels rose
 Tall and erect, with tempting clusters hung,
 A virgin scene! — A little while I stood,
 Breathing with such suppression of the heart
 As joy delights in; and, with wise restraint
 Voluptuous, fearless of a rival, eyed
 The banquet; — or beneath the trees I sate

Among the flowers, and with the flowers I played;
 A temper known to those, who, after long
 And weary expectation, have been blest
 With sudden happiness beyond all hope.
 Perhaps it was a bower beneath whose leaves
 The violets of five seasons re-appear
 And fade, unseen by any human eye; (Line 18—32)

According to Wordsworth's own notes, the early blank-verse poem, written around the end of 1789 when he and Dorothy were living in Goslar, derives from the remembrance feelings he had as a boy while attending Hawkshead School. In the above description, phrases such as "unvisited" and "virgin scene" suggest the underlying erotic meaning so that the image of nature as a virgin could be enhanced. The boy is attracted by "A virgin scene"—the tall hazel with tempting clusters, and he realizes that he has come across an "unvisited" corner of the wood. A sense of achievement and a great deal of gratification is generated within his heart, and he delights the scene. The boy's happiness probably reflects male's sexual desire and longing for a virgin. Wordsworth makes a detailed description on his delightful experience with nature, his enjoyment in it and appreciation of it. However, at the end of poem, the boy's abrupt behavior makes the turning point. Right after enjoying the virgin scene, he, all of a sudden, urges himself into merciless ravage and sully of the virgin scene.

And on the vacant air. Then up I rose,
 And dragged to earth both branch and bough, with crash
 And merciless ravage: and the shady nook
 Of hazels, and the green and mossy bower,
 Deformed and sullied, patiently gave up
 Their quiet being: and, unless I now
 Confound my present feelings with the past;
 Ere from the mutilated bower I turned
 Exulting, rich beyond the wealth of kings, (Line 43—51)

This scene contrasts sharply with the boy's enjoyment of nature, showing the rude masculine domination of the "virgin scene". As the physiological characteristic is determined, men are more competitive and aggressive than women, and have a stronger desire to monopolize and manipulate women; "rich beyond the wealth of kings" implies that to dominate a virgin satisfies man's desire and gives him a sense of fulfilment. In this poem, the boy's ravage of the virgin scene can be metaphorically comprehended as the symbol of man's sexual maturity. At the same time, from the view of the relationship between human and nature, the boy's ravage of the virgin scene represents the conquest and destruction of nature which symbolizes how humans are gradually separated from nature and stand in opposition to it in the end. This poem dramatizes the fact that human's intimacy with nature fades away as they grow up by showing the rude masculine dominance of the virgin and natural scenes. The image of feminized nature, with apparently hidden but distinct enough sexual implication, plays an important role in explicating the lines.

The Image of Feminized Nature in “Pioneers! O Pioneers!”

Come my tan-faced children,
 Follow well in order, get your weapons ready,
 Have you your pistols? have you your sharp-edged axes?
 Pioneers! O pioneers!
 O you youths, Western youths,
 So impatient, full of action, full of manly pride and friendship,
 Plain I see you Western youths, see you tramping with the foremost,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!
 Have the elder races halted?
 Do they droop and end their lesson, wearied over there beyond the seas?
 We take up the task eternal, and the burden and the lesson,
 Pioneers! O pioneers! (Line 1-16)

The weapons, pistols and sharp-edged axes in the first stanza are the instruments used to conquer the wilderness. By intentionally using an imperative and two interrogatives briskly here, Whitman reminds the pioneers to make sure they bring weapons, namely pistols and sharp-edged axes when they go to the wild West. As indispensable tools for people to conquer the wilderness, the weapons are the symbol of the industrial intrusion into nature. The second stanza seems to render the same masculinity as that in “Nutting”. “Western youths”, who are “so impatient”, “full of action”, and “full of manly pride and friendship” show some typical characteristics of masculinity here. The energetic and high-spirited young pioneers described in the poem, by stressing that they are “so impatient, full of action, full of manly pride and friendship”, indicate that they are ready to struggle against nature to achieve their self-realizations. The refrain “Pioneers! O Pioneers!” at the end of each stanza sounds like an encouraging call in the battlefield. The poem in general demonstrates aggressive masculine power, which is what Whitman seems to emphasize most. Then, by contrast, nature should be feminized correspondingly, seen in the following stanzas.

Down the edges, through the passes, up the mountains steep,
 Conquering, holding, daring, venturing as we go the unknown ways,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!
 We primeval forests felling,
 We the rivers stemming, vexing we and piercing deep the mines within,
 We the surface broad surveying, we the virgin soil upheaving,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!
 Colorado men are we,
 From the peaks gigantic, from the great sierras and the high plateaus,
 From the mine and from the gully, from the hunting trail we come,
 Pioneers! O pioneers! (Line 22-28)

Several images of woman as nature among these human activities are described in the poem. For example, the mining mentioned in this stanza represents how the image of mother nature creates an influence on human’s behavior and how the image is being devastated by industrialization. It is well known that mining is a very common human activity in modern society. However, it was restricted or prohibited in traditional society because the mines were previously considered a symbol of a mother’s womb. The behaviour of mining itself is metaphorically related to the physical aggression of

a mother's body, the brutal intrusion to nature, and the desecration of mother nature. The metaphorical connection between nature and mother seems to emphasize and praise the maternal characteristics of the natural environment, laying stress on the bountiful resources of the earth which never seem to be exhausted. This connection between them ironically results in human exploitation and devastation of the natural environment. In order to satisfy the increasing needs, human beings take these graces of nature for granted, and overexploit the natural resources of mother nature. Compared to the image of nurturing mother nature, the image of nature as a virgin is emphasized as well. Nature viewed as a virgin means that it can be conquered by human beings. It might as well stem from men's deep-rooted urge to conquer a virgin. The image of nature as a virgin activates both men's appetite to conquer a virgin and human's desire to control nature. In a word, Wordsworth's "Nutting" and "Pioneers! O Pioneers!" both represent the equivalence between human's conquest of nature and men's conquest of women.

In "Nutting" or in "Pioneers! O Pioneers!", human behavior is more active, more deliberate and aggressive. In these works, nature does not have the positive existence, and seems to be silent. In contrast, in Cather's *O Pioneers!*, the land itself is personified as a protagonist. The land in *O Pioneers!* like a normal human, who has not only physical needs like breathing, and a heart, but also has psychological needs like emotion, desire, mood-swings, even the power to struggle. In addition, the image of nature as female is more complicated and varied than the other two. Nature in "Nutting" and "Pioneers! O Pioneers!" is depicted as a typical virgin, but in *O Pioneers!*, nature is not only depicted as a virgin, but also as a witch. So next, we are going to interpret the image of feminized nature in Cather's *O Pioneers!*

The Image of Feminized Nature in *O Pioneers!*

Willa Cather's place in American literature was established with her first Nebraska novel, *O Pioneers!*, which tells the story of the Bergsons, a family of Swedish immigrants in the farm country near the town of Hanover, Nebraska, at the turn of the 20th century. The protagonist, Alexandra Bergson, a strong-willed and intelligent woman, inherits the family farmland when her father John Bergson dies, and turns the wilderness farmland into a very prosperous one. The novel is divided into five parts, each of which has numerous chapters: "The Wild Land", "Neighboring Fields", "Winter Memories", "The White Mulberry Tree" and "Alexandra". Needless to say, nature has long been feminized linguistically. In the beginning of Part III—"Winter Memory", Cather directly uses "she" to refer to nature:

Winter has settled down over the Divide again; the season in which Nature recuperates, in which she sinks to sleep between the fruitfulness of autumn and the passion of spring. (*O Pioneers!*, 139)

In Part II of the novel, Cather shows us the feminized nature imagery by using the fascinating language and ambiguous and erotic descriptions in the following scene. In Part II, "Neighboring Fields," the heroine Alexandra leads her family, against all odds, and constructs the beautiful garden on the wild prairie. The description of a gratifying landscape of the great harvest presented in chapter 2 runs as follows:

The Divide is now thickly populated. The rich soil yields heavy harvests; the dry, bracing climate and the smoothness of the land make labor easy for men and beasts.

There are few scenes more gratifying than a spring plowing in that country, where the furrows of a single field often lie a mile in length, and the brown earth, with such a strong, clean smell, and such a power of growth and fertility in it, yields itself eagerly to the plow; rolls away from the shear, not even dimming the brightness of the metal, with a soft, deep sigh of happiness. The wheat-cutting sometimes goes on all night as well as all day, and in good seasons there are scarcely men and horses enough to do the harvesting. The grain is so heavy that it bends towards the blade and cuts like velvet. (O Pioneers!, 57-58)

The landscape is a harvest scene which contains several important implications. Firstly, the image of the plow as an instrument appears in this scene. The plow is not just a labor instrument for pioneers; it also becomes a symbol of the invasion of civilization into the wilderness. The plow becomes the tool and instrument which helps human on the one hand to fulfil their dreams and complete self-realization, and on the other hand, transfers the wild land to crop fields. Land or the wilderness is the rival of humans and is opposed to them

Dichotomous Depictions of Feminized Nature

We have seen that the feminized nature derives from men's desire to conquer women as well as nature, and the similarities between them. Another relation between nature and women is based upon the connection between dangerous nature and the woman-as-evil tradition. In the New Testament, Eve is considered as the culprit of human's exile from the Garden of Eden. The ancient Greek story of Pandora, who opens the box and brings all of the dreadful things to the world, also tells us women are easy to be deceived by evil. In fact, many researchers have been concerned with the relationship between the fear of nature with the evil of women. Carolyn Merchant, also uses witches to refer to the disorder of nature in one of her representative works *The Death of Nature*:

The images of both nature and woman were two-sided. The virgin nymph offered peace and serenity, the earth mother nurture and fertility, but nature also brought plagues, famines, and tempests. Similarly, woman was both virgin and witch: the Renaissance courtly lover placed her on a pedestal; the inquisitor burned her at the stake. The witch, symbol of the violence of nature, raised storms, caused illness, destroyed crops, obstructed generation, and killed infants. Disorderly woman, like chaotic nature, needed to be controlled. (Death 127)

The sharp contrast between the two different descriptions of landscape makes the feminized nature more complex and significant in Cather's *O Pioneers!*. In order to make a more comprehensive interpretation of feminized nature in Cather's *O Pioneers!*, it is necessary to compare the descriptions of land in Part 1 to those in those Part 2 in order to make a dialectical analysis on the difference. In Part 1, the Divide is described as a "dark country". If the colour of the landscape in Part 1 is dark and sombre, and the atmosphere is unsettling and horrifying, then compared to this frustrated landscape, the nature is presented as delightful scenery in Part 2:

There is something frank and joyous and young in the open face of the country. It gives itself ungrudgingly to the moods of the season, holding nothing back. Like the plains of Lombardy, it seems to rise a little to meet the sun. The air and the earth are curiously mated and intermingled, as if the one were the breath of the other. You feel

in the atmosphere the same tonic, puissant quality that is in the tilth, the same strength and resoluteness. (58)

In conclusion, from the untamed wilderness to the cultivated nature, nature is established here as a multi-dimensional character in the novel. The novel also expresses the traditional American ecological attitude towards land. On the one hand, for American people land is like a virgin, bearing the pastoral image, on the other hand, wilderness is like a witch or fallen Eve, which is disordered, chaotic, devastating and needs to be tamed and conquered by men. The tamed and improved peaceful productive image of mother nature is the garden which American people desire to establish. The two sides of woman and nature what Merchant has mentioned above is critical for us to understand human's attitude towards nature and the dichotomy of feminized nature. Merchant further explains why the image of witches is associated with the chaotic nature: "Symbolically associated with unruly nature was the dark side of woman" (Death 132). She also points out that even of the image of Virgin Mary is the incarnation of holiness and salvation, the image of woman is always considered as having more sexual passion and is easier to be tempted: "women were also seen as closer to nature than men, subordinate in the social hierarchy to the men of their class, and imbued with a far greater sexual passion" (Death 132). So, just like nature, woman should be controlled: "Like wild chaotic nature, women needed to be subdued and kept in their place" (Death 132).

Conclusion

Nature is depicted with two metaphors—the virgin land and the mother nature in Whitman's "Pioneers! O Pioneers!". The West wilderness viewed as virgin reflects human's desire to conquer and exploit the land. Nature as the benevolent fertile mother leads to human's overexploitation and devastation of it. Both metaphors criticize the destructive consequence brought by commercialism and industrialization. In this way, the image of feminized nature represents human's attitude as well as determines their behavior to nature. As is discussed above, ecocriticism is an interdisciplinary comprehensive criticism involved with the contemporary environmental crisis. The way we describe the image of nature in novels or poems can also reflect human's attitude to nature. Analysing and comparing the image of feminized nature lead us to rethink and reconsider the interrelation between human and nature.

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The Influence of International Art Market on the Art Management Education

Mehmet Emin Kahraman, Yildiz Technical University, Turkey

The European Conference on Literature and Librarianship 2014
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract

Governments have been promoting their culture and art policies with the help of the art events organized by public institutions such as exhibitions, concerts, theatre plays and movies, which can be categorized as national and international events. When private foundations and centers want to support such activities governments are still there in the background giving financial support to the events. A similar situation exists in Turkey, too. Foundations have been established with the aim of supporting and promoting contemporary art. Initiated by these foundations, cultural and art organizations have continued to grow with the encouragement of private institutions. In this study, those foundations and institutions that have pioneered art organizations are analyzed. Besides, the birth and development of current successful organizations are also explored.

Keywords: Art, Art Management, Art Education

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Introduction

Art is a phenomenon that transforms itself along with the society while also reflecting it. With the development of technology, communication facilities and transportation, a new world order has come into being and this has resulted in contemporary art being influenced by other forms of art. New forms of art have come into stage along with the transformation of societies. New ideas and emotions have entered into artistic forms of expressions and these forms have started to appear new markets with the help of technology. Thus, artists have been able to go beyond the borders and get into contact with different cultures. This also meant that artists were able to advertise their own cultures when they went to different artistic atmospheres. In our country, reforms in artistic world started with the declaration of republic in 1923 and gained momentum afterwards. These reforms continued with the support of the state and then some other institutions came into play. Successful results were seen especially after 1980. Those artists who received training after the declaration of the republic started to return to Turkey and they themselves began to train then young and promising artists with the developing technology, who were thus able to communicate with different cultures and nations. This also led to the creation of our own art market, which meant international artists slowly but surely coming to Turkey. Today, Turkish artists are in great demand in all the biennials and art fairs all across Europe.

When the history of art activities were considered, it is clearly seen that the first steps in contemporary art were taken by Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (IKSV). Beyoğlu has been the centerstage in almost all of these activities, which is one of the central districts of Istanbul. Following IKSV, Pera, Sabancı, Vehbi Koç, Suna and İnan Kıraç, Rezzan Has Golden Horn Cultures and İstanbul Foundation for Contemporary Art have all made significant contributions to the creation of new museums and venues of artistic activities.

IKSV has been the leading figure in all types of annual or biannual artistic events. It is possible to categorize the foundations and/or bodies that contribute to the artistic atmosphere in Istanbul into several main sections, as follows.

1- İstanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (IKSV)

Being the first of its kind in Turkey, IKSV has been established with the intention of reflecting the artistic developments that have been taking place in Istanbul. İstanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (IKSV) is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation founded in 1973 by seventeen businessmen and art enthusiasts who gathered under the leadership of Dr. Nejat F. Eczacıbaşı, with the aim of organising an international arts festival in İstanbul. The Foundation's initial goal was to offer the finest examples of art from around the world, while at the same time promoting the national, cultural and artistic assets of Turkey, by using arts to create an international platform of communication.

IKSV organized its first activity right after it was established, which was Istanbul Festival. Classical music was especially emphasized in this event. Later festivals saw film, theatre, jazz, ballet, and exhibitions at historical sites of Istanbul as the core activities of the festival. Various artistic movements and artistic activities were first conceptualized in these festivals. (IKSV, 2014).

For example presented as a separate section under the name "International İstanbul Filmdays" in 1983, the film week transformed into the International İstanbul Film Festival in 1989; 1987 marked the beginning of the International İstanbul Biennial, and in 1989 the International İstanbul Theatre Festival was initiated.

The International İstanbul Jazz Festival was initiated in 1994, the same year that the International İstanbul Festival changed its name to the International İstanbul Music Festival. Thus, İstanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts became an institution that organises five international festivals.

After the succes of its national efforts in Istanbul, IKSŞV embarked on its international endeavour. (IKSV, 2014). IKSŞV is currently organizing events and festivals of film, theatre, music, jazz, design and biennials. Leyla Gencer Contest of Singing as an Art is another event that is taking place with the support of IKSŞV. Below it is possible to find out more about some of the most important art events organized by IKSŞV.

This journey began in 2004 with "Şimdi Now" in Berlin and continued with "Şimdi Stuttgart" in 2005, "Turkey Now" in Amsterdam and Rotterdam in 2007 and 2008, Russia in 2008, and Vienna, Austria in 2009. The "Cultural Season of Turkey in France" activities held between 1 July 2009 and 31 March 2010 were also organised by İKSŞV, in collaboration with Culturesfrance. İKSŞV has been organising the Pavilion of Turkey at the Venice Biennale since 2007 (IKSV, 2014).

a- İstanbul Music Festival

Istanbul Music Festival, the core and flagship of all the events held by IKSŞV, was first organized between 15 June and 15 July 1973, then the Istanbul Festival. Admitted to European Association of Festival in 1977, the Istanbul Festival was later renamed to Istanbul Festival of Music in 1994.

In its 35 years the Istanbul Music Festival hosted honorable conductors such as Zubin Mehta, Sir John Elliot Gardiner, Riccardo Muti, Ton Koopman, William Christie, Howard Griffiths, Valery Gergiev, Christopher Hogwood, Pierre Boulez, Kurt Masur, Mark Minkowski and José Collado. A distinguished line-up of soloists such as Elizabeth Swarzkopf, Kiri Te Kanawa, Kathleen Battle, Cecilia Bartoli, Montserrat Caballé, Itzhak Perlman, Mischa Maisky, Maxim Vengerov, Gidon Kremer, Joshua Bell, Aldo Cicciolini, Daniel Barenboim, Juan Diego Florez , Andre Previn, Anne Sophie Mutte, Shlomo Mintz, Suna Kan, Ayla Erduran, İdil Biret and Hüseyin Sermet were among the guests of the Istanbul Music Festival. Outstanding dance companies such as the Martha Graham Dance Company, Bolshoi Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Nederlands Dans Thetare as well as Les Ballets de Montecarlo were presented to music lovers in previous years (IKSV, 2014).

b- İstanbul Jazz Festival

Celebrating its 21st yeari İstanbul Jazz Festival has been among the first festival organized by IKSŞV. Since July, 1994, this festival has continued with other types of music as well, which include pop, rock and ethnic music from all over the world. (IKSV, 2014).

c- Istanbul Theatre Festival

A three-week event, this festival was first organized in May, 1989 with both national and international theatre communities. Istanbul Theatre Festival also provides a springboard for theatre education and a context for exemplary studies in theatrical studies.

The Istanbul Theatre Festival, together with the Avignon Festival, the Athens & Epidaurus Festival, the Grec Festival, has formed the European Network of Mediterranean Festivals entitled Kadmos. Kadmos continues to carry out its activities as a network supporting not only co-productions but also common educational fields. Moreover, The Kadmos Travel Project continues to provide opportunities for young artists and playwrights from different countries to attend the festivals abroad. Together with Piccolo Teatro di Milano, the Istanbul Theatre Festival also took the first steps to implement another educational project entitled the “Mediterranean Project.” (IKSV, 2014).

d- Istanbul Biennial

After the first two biennials realised under the general coordination of Beral Madra in 1987 and 1989, İKSV decided to adapt a single curator system following the İstanbul Biennial directed by Vasıf Kortun in 1992. The biennial was organised under the curatorship of René Block in 1995, Rosa Martínez in 1997, Paolo Colombo in 1999, Yuko Hasegawa in 2001, Dan Cameron in 2003, Charles Esche and Vasıf Kortun in 2005, Hou Hanru in 2007 and What, How & for Whom / WHW in 2009, Adriano Pedrosa and Jens Hoffmann in 2011 and by Fulya Erdemci in 2013. The 14th Istanbul Biennial to be held in 2015 will be drafted by Carolyn-Christov Bakargiev. It can be clearly seen that Istanbul Biennale deals with internationally debated themes. (IKSV, 2014).

According to the years;

1987 "Contemporary Art in Traditional Spaces", 1989 "Contemporary Art in Traditional Spaces", 1992 "Production of Cultural Difference", 1995 "Orient-ation - The Image of Art in a Paradoxical World", 1997 "On Life, Beauty, Translations and Other Difficulties", 1999 "The Passion and the Wave", 2001 "Egofugal - Fugue from Ego for the Next Emergence", 2003 "Poetic Justice", 2005 "İstanbul", 2007 "Not Only Possible, But Also Necessary: Optimism in the Age of Global War", 2009 "What Keeps Mankind Alive?", 2011 "Untitled" and 2013 "Mom, am i barbarian?" (IKSV, 2014).

e- Turkish Pavillion in Venice Biennial

Turkish Pavillion in Venice Biennale has been one of the organized internationally events by İKSV.

İKSV is participating in the Venice Biennale since 1991. Until 2003, there had been different exhibitions and installations exhibited in different spaces of the Biennale as colateral events.

Since 2007, the Pavilion of Turkey is located in the Artiglierie building of the Arsenale and is organised by Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (IKSV), supported by a main sponsor institution and realised under the auspices of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with the contribution of the Promotion Fund of the Turkish Prime Ministry (IKSV, 2014).

2- Suna and İnan Kır a Foundation

Suna and İnan Kır a Foundation has been an endeavour by the wealthy business people in an effort to support IKSV. Established in 2003, Suna and İnan Kır a Foundation has been very successful in organizing new artistic events in Istanbul.

The aim of the foundation is /

To achieve its goals in the educational sphere, the Foundation supports talented students requiring assistance, as well as educational institutions, by providing individual scholarships and grants for education and research. Since inauguration the Foundation has provided scholarships for more than three hundred disadvantaged students, ranging from primary school level to post-graduate degrees (SIKV, 2014).

Pera Museum has been the central venue of the efforts by Suna and İnan Kır a Foundation. Opened in 2005, Pera Museum housed a great collection of internationally known works of art. With the exhibitions held by Suna and İnan Kır a Foundation, works of “Jean Dubuffet”, “Henri Cartier-Bresson”, “Rembrandt”, “Niko Pirosmeni”, “Josef Koudelka” “Joan Mir ”, “Akira Kurosawa”, “Marc Chagall”, “Pablo Picasso”, “Fernando Botero”, “Frida Kahlo”, “Diego Rivera”, “Goya” have met Turkish art lover. (SIKV, 2014).

3- Ko Foundation

Founded in 1969, Ko Foundation, the range of services of education, science and health to keep limited to the field of culture and social areas, despite the later started to serve. In the field of culture and arts Sadberk Museum opened in 1980, is the first service. Later in 1994, the museum opened and collections that feature the Rahmi M. Ko Museum in Istanbul, the largest area, and a combination of different works on display was opened as a museum (VKV, 2014). Coach services in the field of culture and art of the foundation are:

Sadberk Hanım Museum (1980)

Vehbi Ko Ankara Studies Research Center (VEKAM, 1994)

Suna - İnan Kır a Institute on Mediterranean Civilizations (AKMED, 1996)

Ko University Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations (RCAC, 2005)

TANAS Art Gallery (Berlin, 2008-2013)

ARTER-Space for Art (Istanbul, 2010)

Vehbi Ko Foundation Ford Otosan Cultural and Community Center Started by Ko Foundation, Arter Art Gallery and Yapı Kredi Publishing have paved the way for further development of contemporary art in Istanbul. Moreover, Tanas Art Gallery, which was opened in Berlin in 2008 and remained effective until 2013, has been an exemplary venue of few Turkish international art galleries.

a- “Contemporary Art in Turkey” monograph series at Yapı Kredi Publishing (2007-2011)

The Vehbi Koç Foundation facilitated the publication of a monograph series: “Contemporary Art in Turkey” under the publishing house Yapı Kredi Cultural Activities, Arts and Publishing whose raison d’être is to spread art and culture, to a wider audience. The series is composed of 12 books, bringing together comprehensive monographs of internationally recognized Turkish artists. The editor of the series was René Block, in consultancy of Melih Fereli. The books were published both in Turkish and in English, printed only 1800 editions -150 of them numbered and signed- each were wrapped with the artists’ offset printed work of art (VKV, 2014).

b- ARTER - Space for Art

Conceived as an exhibition space, ARTER was opened in 2010 with an exhibition titled “Starter”, which was composed out of Vehbi Koç Foundation Contemporary Art Collection under the curatorship of René Block including more than 160 art works of 87 turkish and international artists. At the ARTER building located on Istiklal Street in Istanbul, there is an exhibition space of around 900 sqm in total in four floors(VKV, 2014).

ARTER’s programs are created with the aim of encouraging production of contemporary artworks, providing a platform of visibility for artistic practices, producing and presenting exhibitions curated from the VKF Contemporary Art Collection, as well as from private collections and archives. Furthermore, joint productions with international institutions are intended to be included in the program. In terms of funding, exhibiting, promotion and publications, as well as support for educational activities ARTER will offer artists a sustainable infrastructure for producing new works (VKV, 2014).

Providing a space for preparation, research and laboratory for the museum complex planned to be established by Vehbi Koç Foundation in the future, ARTER started a new exhibition series titled “Voice Series” in year 2012 with the aim to introduce the works of the world’s leading contemporary artists to art lovers of Istanbul and support the productions in the field of sound projects (VKV, 2014).

c- TANAS

TANAS was founded in 2008 by Vehbi Koç Foundation in collaboration with Edition Block Berlin as a cultural enterprise in Berlin. In view of the local cultural landscape as well as the social and political implications, Berlin was an ideal location for TANAS. Since 1989 Istanbul and Berlin have also been linked as partner cities, and scholarship programs and cooperation among cultural institutions within that framework have created a complex web of relationships in arts. After operating for five years in downtown Berlin, TANAS completed its mission at following the developments on contemporary Turkish art in Berlin and functioning as an international showcase for Contemporary Turkish Artists. TANAS was a platform for continuing discourse and regular interaction between Turkish artists and curators and the German and international audience (VKV, 2014).

4- Sabancı Foundation

Sabancı Foundation was set up in 1974 with the intention of institutionalizing the charity work of the Sabancı family when the deceased Sıdıka Sabancı donated all her wealth to the foundation. (SV, 2014).

Sabancı Foundation has always been in pursuit of promoting cultural, social and artistic activities both nationally and internationally while ensuring traditional values. Below are some events and organizations held by the Sabancı Foundation.

- Turkish Folk Dance Competition
- State Theatres Sabancı International Theatre Festival in Adana
- Turkish Youth Philharmonic Orchestra
- Mehtap Ar Children's Theatre
- International Ankara Music Festival
- Metropolis Excavations

Akbank, a subsidy of Sabancı Group, has widened the artistic interest of Sabancı family by supporting contemporary art and opened Akbank Art Center in 1993. Established in Beyoğlu, Akbank Art Center has been continuously supportive of contemporary art efforts and exhibitions(SV, 2014).

a- Aksanat

Akbank Sanat has been supporting music, publishing, performance arts and visual arts within its rich framework for art and culture since 1993 (SV, 2014).

“International Curatorship Competition” and “Akbank Award for Contemporary Artists” have been two of the major mediums of support for contemporary art. There are also two festivals organized by Aksanat, Istanbul Jazz Festival in its 24th year and Akbank Short Film Festival in its 10th year.

b- Sabancı University Sakıp Sabancı Museum

Sabancı University Sakıp Sabancı Museum, aka Atlı Köşk, was opened in 2002, with all the collections inside and the addition of an art gallery. Exhibition area, concert and conference halls in the museum make it a unique place and distinguish it from other similar museum.

Conclusion

Art organizations which first started under private foundations have later evolved into forms which go in line with the state policy of art. Following this, both public and private institutions have continued to support artistic events. Although the core of this study has been the festivals and organizations of foundations, private galleries and art centers have also invited artists from abroad and collaborated with institutions in various countries. The development of technology and communications facilities have significantly contributed to this collaboration. Contracts between galleries and art institutions allowing exchange of works of art and artists have also made it easier for artists to work together with their fellow artists abroad. State policies for art have

also been transformed in such such a way to allow for more international collaboration. Concerts held in foreign countries, exhibitions and festivals organized internationally are all examples of this new approach. Contemporary Istanbul and Tuyap Art Fair can be listed as some of the events in which famous artists from all over the world have participated.

That all these festivals and organizations have had international appeal is clear sign of their success. The efforts and achievement of the creators and producers of these events are also worth mentioning in view of their budgets and advertisement opportunities. Yet, they are able to contribute drastically to the development of contemporary art in their countries.



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Contact email: kahramanmehmetemin@gmail.com

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A Proposal for Teaching the Literary Essay through a Rhetorical Analysis

Margarita Esther Sánchez Cuervo, University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain

The European Conference on Literature and Librarianship 2014
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract

The literary essay is a heterogeneous genre that may contain expository, narrative, descriptive and argumentative types of text. Due to its indefinite nature, it is difficult to find critical studies that develop an accurate understanding of the essay that may lead to an objective teaching of this genre. However, as an exemplar of the argumentative discourse, the literary essay can be studied following a rhetorical model of analysis. Rhetoric can be seen as a general model of text production and as an instrument of textual analysis. In this vein, some rhetorical principles related to *inventio*, *dispositio* and *elocutio* can be recognised in the construction of the modern essay. *Inventio* is concerned with the generation of arguments. *Dispositio* is related to the order of the arguments, and contains the *partes orationis*: *exordium*, *narratio/expositio*, *argumentatio* and *conclusio*. By means of *elocutio*, the students recognise the expressive devices that contribute to defining the style of the essay, such as rhetorical figures.

To illustrate my proposal, I use several extracts from Virginia Woolf's short essays. Woolf wrote a large number of literary reviews for the press that can be read following this rhetorical approach and that provide a rich source of arguments and rhetorical figures. In the course of my analysis, I offer undergraduate students of English language and literature some guidelines for the analysis. By using this model, these students can also acquire the training to examine other essays belonging to past and present essayists.

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Introduction

The teaching of literature in many universities is usually restricted to the major literary genres: narrative, poetry and drama. As a result, the essay has often been ignored in contemporary literature teaching programmes. The literary essay has been traditionally considered a hybrid genre that comprises different types of text such as the expository, the descriptive, the narrative and the argumentative. The essay presents an exploratory, experiential and inconclusive form that has restrained the existence of precise models of analysis and, for this reason, the teaching of the essay as a genre is not very common.

In this respect, Saloman (2012, p. 13) states that the absence of the literary essay in the classroom is due to the indifference that many scholars feel towards this genre, and the fact that they aren't able to recognise either its literary value or its significance to modern writers. Furthermore, the openness of this genre has favoured the writers' autonomy and the reader's participation in the essayistic process, which has encouraged the existence of diverse interpretive responses (Saloman 2013, p. 56). Although it is a genre that is difficult to categorise, the argumentative nature of the essayistic act is usually preponderant and the essay can be then approached following a rhetorical model of analysis. Through this model, some principles related to the invention of arguments (*inventio*), their arrangement (*dispositio*) and expressive manifestation (*elocutio*) are useful in the construction of argumentative texts like the modern essay (Arenas, 1997, p. 134).

The following section of this study discusses the essay within a rhetorical context and offers an outline of the rhetorical levels that can be encountered in the essay: *inventio*, *dispositio* and *elocutio*. To illustrate my proposal, I use several extracts from Virginia Woolf's short essays. Woolf wrote a large number of literary reviews for the press that can be read following this rhetorical approach and that provide a rich source of arguments and rhetorical figures.

In the course of my analysis, I offer undergraduate students of English language and literature some guidelines for the analysis. By using this model, these students can also acquire the training to examine other essays belonging to past and present essayists.

Theoretical framework: the essay from a rhetorical perspective

Before conducting the analysis, it is necessary that students have some knowledge about the rhetorical tradition as regards to its historical background and more modern conceptions of this discipline. They have already analysed poetic texts in which they have to recognise, analyse and further interpret the varied array of rhetorical figures that are especially present in the poetic genre, but maybe they ignore the operations of classical rhetoric that are present in the production of rhetorical speech and that will be subsequently identified in the analysis of the essays.

In his *Rhetoric*, Aristotle refers to a semantic and pragmatic conception of *logos* immersed in a construction of the speaker, the spoken content and the hearer (Aristotle, 1909, I.3). In a wide sense, Rhetoric is at the same time a general model for the production of texts and an instrument of textual analysis (Albadalejo, 1989, p.

11; Lausberg, 1983, pp. 83-84). The textual model of Rhetoric thus possesses a semiotic nature that includes the formal construction of the text (syntax) deriving from its referential elements (semantics) and that confers a relevant place to all intervening elements in the communication of the text (pragmatics): addresser, addressee and the contexts of production and reception. In Woolf's essays, the pragmatic dimension is particularly important because of the explicit presence of the essayist wishing to agree with the "common reader" to whom she dedicates her first published volume of essays:

There is a sentence in Dr Johnson's *Life of Gray* which might well be written up in all those rooms, too humble to be called libraries, yet full of books, where the pursuit of reading is carried on by private people. '... I rejoice to concur with the common reader; for by the common sense of readers, uncorrupted by literary prejudices, after all the refinements of subtilty and the dogmatism of learning, must be finally decided all claim to poetical honours' (Woolf, 1984, p. 1).

However, Rhetoric also becomes a theory of argumentation such as that devised by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969), who studied both the rational and linguistic mechanisms present in argumentation and the effects of the text upon the audience. In this line, arguments can be defined as linguistic patterns that transfer acceptability from premises to conclusions. Similarly, rhetorical figures can also serve as arguments because of the ways they are constructed to engage the audience thanks to their effective nature and their capacity for attracting attention (Tindale, 2004, p. 63).

Classical rhetoric recognises five operations or *partes artis* in the production of rhetorical speech: *inventio*, *dispositio*, *elocutio*, *memoria* and *actio* ([Cicero], 1981, I.7; Quintilian, 1920, III.3). In argumentative texts like the essay, the levels of *memoria* and *actio* are usually absent since they have to do with the memorisation of the text and its oral reproduction, respectively.

Through *inventio*, the author selects those elements that comprise the referent of discourse and that allows different types of arguments to be chosen and constructed (Crosswhite, 2011, pp. 200-201). In Woolf's reviews, the central argument is the act/person interaction. By means of this reasoning, the reaction of the act that corresponds to the person's artistic output, judgement, or reaction, is meant to revise our conception of that individual (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969, pp. 297-98). Woolf shows a fondness for focusing on personal facts rather than recognised facets. We thus obtain a different impression of the person under study, and interpret his/her actions against that newly established character (Fahnestock, 2005, pp. 219-20).

For example, in her essay about Jane Austen, she admits at the beginning of her text that "Hence our knowledge of Jane Austen is derived from a little gossip, a few letters, and her books. As for the gossip, gossip which has survived its day is never despicable; with a little arrangement it suits our purpose admirably" (Woolf, 1984, p. 134). In this extract, the author advances that she will use Austen's personal information and also her novels in order to characterise the great novelist.

Another passage from the essay "*Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights*" shows Charlotte Brontë's personal circumstances through her famous novel *Jane Eyre*: "In that

parsonage, and on those moors, unhappy and lonely, in her poverty and her exaltation, she remains for ever. These circumstances, as they affected her character, may have left their traces on her work” (Woolf, 1984, p. 155).

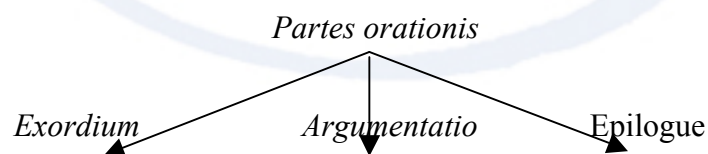
Through *dispositio*, the syntactic and semantic conceptual elements deriving from *inventio* are structured. The *partes orationis* are located in the *dispositio* level, which vertebrates the rhetorical organisation of the essay and its referent. The essay, which is a more spontaneous form than the classical rhetorical speech, can be organised into four *partes orationis* (Barthes, 1982, p. 66):

1. *Exordium* or introduction.
2. *Narratio/expositio* or narration/exposition.
3. *Argumentatio* or argumentation.
4. *Conclusio* or Epilogue.

The second and third categories in particular contribute to the syntactic organisation of the text. There are two main ways in which *the partes orationis* can be ordered: the *ordo naturalis*, which follows the order of the four categories, and the *ordo artificialis*, which does not. Woolf’s essays usually follow an *ordo artificialis* because *narratio* does not fulfil its classical function of illustrating some subsequent reasoning but rather combines with the author’s observations. As a result, *narratio* becomes argumentation proper. For example, in the essay “Leslie Stephen” that is devoted to her father’s figure, the essayist uses a digressive narration that is aimed at reflecting her father’s personality:

He himself was the most abstemious of men. He smoked a pipe perpetually, but never a cigar. He wore his clothes until they were too shabby to be tolerable; and he held old-fashioned and rather puritanical views as to the vice of luxury and the sin of idleness. The relations between parents and children to-day have a freedom that would have been impossible with my father. He expected a certain standard of behaviour, even of ceremony, in family life (Woolf, 1950, p. 71).

The following diagram represents the order of categories in which the student can structure Woolf’s essay (Sánchez-Cuervo, 2004, pp. 265-266; 2010, pp. 269-70):



By means of *elocutio*, the reader recognises possible expressive devices such as rhetorical figures. The essayist, when building this *elocutio* level, activates the aesthetic function using *ornatus*. The component of implicit pleasure in the concept of elocutive *ornatus* is responsible for the reader’s aesthetic experience and it is an important criterion for specifying the literariness of a text. In the literary essay, *ornatus* has a simultaneous double intention: aesthetic, due to a peculiar textual form that may cause literary specificity, and argumentative, since it can lead a reader to reflect on the way he/she thinks (Arenas, 1997, pp. 361-362).

Examples of rhetorical figures may include tropes, which involve transference of meaning, like simile and metaphor; figures of speech or schemes that contain devices of word arrangement and patterning, like figures of repetition. For example: *plöche*, *polyptoton*, *epistrophe*, *parison*, *anaphora*. Finally, rhetorical figures also comprise figures of thought that entail interactional gestures between speaker and hearer, like rhetorical questions, *prosopopeia*, exclamations, *aposiopesis*... All these figures are reflected in the verbal or linguistic representation of the text and can appear in all the *partes orationis*.

Woolf's essays are abundant with literary figures that appear in all *partes orationis*. The following example represents an *anaphora*, which repeats the same word at the beginning of successive clauses or lines (Lanham, 1991, p. 11):

In whatever company I am I always try to know what it is like – being a conductor, being a woman with ten children and thirty-five shillings a week, being a stockbroker, being an admiral, being a bank clerk, being a dressmaker, being a duchess, being a miner, being a cook, being a prostitute. All that lowbrows do is of surpassing interest and wonder to me, because, in so far as I am a highbrow, I cannot do things myself (Woolf, 1942, p.178).

The instance below presents a simile, which describes the extension of Madame de Sévigné's work in a novel way: "Thus the fourteen volumes of her letters enclose a vast open space, like one of her own great woods" (Woolf, 1942, p. 51).

This other instance shows several rhetorical questions, which imply an answer but do not usually offer one (Lanham, 1991, 9. 71). In Woolf's portrait of the great essayist Montaigne, she wonders in the last lines of the essay whether the happy life that he lived is all that matters in the end:

(...) Is pleasure the end of all? Whence this overwhelming interest in the nature of the soul? Why this overmastering desire to communicate with others? Is the beauty of this world enough, or is there, elsewhere, some explanation of the mystery? To this what answer can there be? There is none. There is only one more question: 'Que scais-je?' (Woolf, 1984, pp. 67-68).

Partes orationis

In *exordium*, whose main purpose is to attract the reader's good favour, the reader is expected to find semantic elements like the presentation of an evocative scene, the author's opinions about the topic, the reasons that have led to the writing of the essay, the reference to the title, some quotes from the character that the essayist is going to speak about and also some authority's words that support the topic that is being unfolded. For example, the essay "The Duchess of Newcastle" begins with this character's words as a glimpse of the peculiar woman that the reader is going to discover:

'... All I desire is fame', wrote Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle. And while she lived her wish was granted. Garish in her dress, eccentric in her habits, chaste in her conduct, coarse in her speech, she succeeded during her

lifetime in drawing upon herself the ridicule of the great applause of the learned (Woolf, 1984, p. 69).

In the extract below, Woolf makes reference to the title of the essay “Women and Fiction” in the first lines of the text:

The title of this article can be read in two ways: it may allude to women and the fiction that they write, or to women and the fiction that is written about them. The ambiguity is intentional, for in dealing with women as writers, as much elasticity as possible is desirable; it is necessary to leave oneself room to deal with other things besides their work, so much has that work been influenced by conditions that have nothing whatever to do with art (Woolf, 1958, p. 76).

In *argumentatio*, the essayist looks for the most suitable arguments that may increase the reader’s adherence to the opinions that are developed. It is a dialectic category that tries to promote the discussion and the controversy of the topic. Apart from the act/person interaction, some arguments that the reader might recognise are the argument from the cause and the consequence, the comparison, the example, and the opposition of ideas, among others. The following extract from Woolf’s essay “Professions from Women” represents an argument by the example where the author enumerates several women writers that have instigated women’s literary career:

For the road was cut many years ago – by Fanny Burney, by Aphra Behn, by Harriet Martineau, by Jane Austen, by George Eliot – many famous women, and many more unknown and forgotten, have been before me, making the path smooth, and regulating my steps (Woolf, 1942, p. 235).

Another argument typical of Woolf’s essays is the argument from the consequences by which the reader may appreciate a certain act or event according to the positive or negative consequences derived from it. In the excerpt below, the essayist speculates about Dorothy Osborne’s possible birth dates and her possible literary occupations resulting from each period:

Had she been born in 1827, Dorothy Osborne would have written novels; had she been born in 1527, she would never have written at all. But she was born in 1627, and at that date though writing books was ridiculous for a woman there was nothing unseemly in writing a letter (Woolf, 1992b, p. 127).

In the epilogue there is usually a distinction between those semantic elements that try to persuade the reader of the content of the text and those aspects that involve their emotive persuasion, which are known as *peroration*. Woolf herself, in the finishing pages of her essay *A Room of One’s Own*, about the difficult relations between women and fiction, states that “Here I would stop, but the pressure of convention decrees that every speech must end with a peroration. And a peroration addressed to women should have something, you will agree, particularly exalting and ennobling about it” (Woolf, 1992a, p. 144).

In Woolf’s essays, the reader can find emotive topics like conjectures and hypotheses about the future, as well as the introduction of wishes related to the theme chosen. She

may also present an evocative scene or anecdote, and try the amplification or praise of the character that she has focused on. That is the case in the review of George Meredith's works from the essay "On Rereading Meredith":

His English power of imagination, with its great audacity and fertility, his superb mastery of the great emotions of courage and love, his power of summoning nature into sympathy with man and of merging him in her vastness, his glory in all fine living and thinking – these are the qualities that give his conceptions their size and universality. In these respects we must recognize his true descent from the greatest of English writers and his enjoyment of qualities that are expressed nowhere save in the masterpieces of our literature (Woolf, 1958, p. 52).

The writer may also include some figures like rhetorical questions and *prosopopeia*, which has to do with the speech in character or impersonation (Lanham, 1991, pp. 123-124). For example, in the essay "Modern fiction", Woolf addresses fiction as if it was human in the last lines of the text:

And if we can imagine the art of fiction come alive and standing in our midst, she would undoubtedly bid us break her and bully her, as well as honour and love her, for so her youth is renewed and her sovereignty assured (Woolf, 1984, p. 154).

Discussion and conclusions

Although students could be able to analyse the form of the essay and distinguish at least the *partes orationis*, it is still difficult to know whether they are capable of saying why the text is persuasive, or even emotive. In this respect, defining the style of a literary essay is not simply a matter of word-choice and recognition of rhetorical figures.

Once they have specified all the elements that they have previously identified both in the *partes artis* and *partes orationis*, they can make an attempt to define the style of Woolf's essay and try to explain how the argumentative and the expressive combine. Some questions that they can answer before trying this task are the following:

- Can you identify the *partes artis*?
- Are all the *partes orationis* present?
- Which arguments and/or figures are predominant in each part? Can you write an example of each one?
- Can you find examples of tropes, schemes or figures of repetition and figures of thought?
- Would you say that the essay is expressive? Why?
- Does the author try to praise the character or work that she is reviewing? How can you demonstrate it?

In order to answer this final question, the students should follow several steps:

1. Identify the act/person interaction as main argument generated in the *inventio* level.

2. They should then read several essays by Woolf and check that she usually keeps the same order in the *dispositio* part: she starts the *exordium* by offering an introductory argument that attracts her readers' good favour and presents the character and/or the work that she is talking about. Then she develops the *argumentatio* by means of the act/person interaction, offering quotes from the work that she is reviewing as well and anecdotes and personal details of the character under discussion that can bring him/her to presence. Furthermore, she offers personal observations that help to portray the character's personality. Finally, she concludes in the epilogue with arguments and figures that are also typical of this final section of the text.
3. In the *elocutio* or linguistic representation of the essay, the reader should be able to recognise the rhetorical figures that Woolf includes intertwined in the different *partes orationis* and that contribute to emphasising the expressiveness of the essay.

The encountering of all these elements are first order effects that help to define the style of the essay only if students can detect that the arguments and rhetorical figures follow a specific order that is bound for creating an emotive value. This value is usually associated with a positive image of the character or the work that she has reviewed in the text.

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***Gynos-Synthesis en route from Conflict to Harmony:
A Psycho-spiritual Re-reading of Hermann Hesse's Steppenwolf***

Paul Pragash, St. Joseph's College, India

The European Conference on Literature and Librarianship 2014
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract

That 'Man is born free and everywhere he is in chains' is true of men and women today, greatly owing to the unresolved conflicts, intra-, inter-, and trans-personal in nature. A logical derivation from this truth is that a resolution of the conflicts would regain freedom for Man, and, that the process of conflict-resolution could best start at intra-personal level and flow over to the other levels, eventually becoming a globally-blossomed phenomenon. Working towards such harmony has become a 'fierce urgency' now, not only for the socio-economic-political activists, but for every thinker, particularly in the academic arena. The conference' theme addresses this urgency of the hour. In line with the focal theme of Libreuro 2014, my paper studies Hermann Hesse's *Steppenwolf* a modern classic which records the conflict of a man torn between his individualism and social respectability and his self-affirmation and self-destruction, and attempts to show how the man in conflict, through a psycho-spiritual integration of the feminine, attains intra- and inter- personal harmony and contributes to the social harmony and synergy.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The modern human persons are technologically sound and the scientific achievements are enormous, but in the process of achievement, they seem to have lost contact with peace and serenity of soul, and entered many conflicts, intra- and inter-personal. The current paper touches upon one of the key ways, feminine integration (Gynos-Synthesis), to resolve conflicts in human persons, with an assumption, that conflict-resolution in the individuals would eventually result in conflict-resolution in the society. The 'feminine (Gynos) integration (Synthesis),' in and around which the paper revolves and evolves, is grounded primarily in Jungian Anima-Animus pattern (psychological), and in spiritual roots. The paper, with its psycho-spiritual perspectives and content, is an invitation to its readers to undergo similar integration and experience harmony and further generate the same in the society, contributing to social synergy and cosmic harmony.

2. HERMANN HESSE AND *STEPPENWOLF*

Hermann Hesse, a popular German novelist-poet-painter, born in Calw, Wurttemberg, in 1877, in his early days intended to follow in his father's footsteps as a protestant pastor and missionary, but later rebelled against traditional academic education, worked for sometime as a bookseller, antique dealer and mechanic, and with the successful reception of *Peter Camenzind* in 1904, devoted himself fully to writing. Protesting against German militarism, he moved to Switzerland in 1919 where he lived in self-imposed exile until his death at the age of eighty-five in 1962. His initial novels grapple with the theme of rebellion against traditional education and institutions, while his later novels are heavily influenced by psycho-analytical theories and a preoccupation with the Eastern philosophical thought and a search for a philosophy of life.

Steppenwolf is the story of Harry Haller, a man torn between his individualism and attraction to bourgeois respectability, and his conflict between self-affirmation and self-destruction. It is an account of neurosis, depression, schizophrenia and despair, in which, the protagonist narrowly bypasses a breakdown and resurrects to a new life through a resolution of conflicts and integration, accompanied by other characters in the work. The therapeutic way by which Harry Haller resolves his conflicts, experiences integration, and attains harmony in the feminine company of Hermine, Maria and Pablo, is studied below.

3. GYNOS-SYNTHESIS IN *STEPPENWOLF*

In the novel *Steppenwolf*, integration in the life of the major characters, particularly that of Harry Haller, takes place at various levels, namely, psychological, philosophical, aesthetic and spiritual. Harry who is disgusted with and disillusioned about his present life of despair, crisis and neurosis, yet longing to get out of the rut, gradually and healthily grows, in the company of other characters, particularly Hermine, Pablo and Maria, to integrate several aspects, notably feminine, and experience harmony.

3.1. Anima-Animus Integration: The study of the text reveals that a **Jungian anima – integration** takes place in Harry. A man according to Jung projects his anima onto women in four stages, as biological Eve, aesthetic Helen, virtuous Mary and wise Sophia. Maria comes as Eve and with her “magic touch of Eros,” (Hesse, 1965, p. 165) takes the otherwise frustrated Harry, who lives “in a poor pictureless vacancy” (p. 165), into a world of pleasure and joy. Maria is constantly associated with “images of the pleasure garden and of flowers” (Jillings, 1981, p. 51) and as Jungian Eve, she represents “the fulfilment of sexual desire” (p. 51). Maria who is sent by Hermine to Harry is “unusually gifted in love” (Hesse, 1965, p. 162), and “endowed in the little arts of making love” (p. 165) and she succeeds greatly in teaching Harry “the charming play and delights of the senses” (p. 163). She endows Harry with “new understanding, new insight, new love” (p. 163). Harry integrates the feminine charm, beauty and love, and spontaneously addresses Maria as “my beautiful, beautiful flower” (p. 164). That he has deeply inhaled the feminine is vivid in his elated utterance: “My heart stood still between delight and sorrow to find how rich was the gallery of my life, and how thronged the soul of the wretched Steppenwolf with high eternal stars and constellations” (p. 165). Maria’s “beautiful warm youth” (p. 161) gifts him with a sleep that is “deep and peaceful as a child’s” (p. 161). Such sleep is the fruit of a relished integration of the feminine in Harry. Maria, as a “purely female intercessor” unlike Hermine who is “Harry’s female version” (Ziolkowski, 1973, p. 161) awakens Harry to realize that he is not made up of mortal ruins but “fragments of the divine” (Hesse, 1965, p. 166). With his intimacy with Maria and his integration of the feminine through Maria, Harry’s “eyes are opened” and he sees his fragmented self as a “unity of one picture” (p. 166). Harry surrenders to the feminine as a child would, and nourished by the feminine, enters the world of imagination and immortality and feels that such an experience is the “goal set for the progress of every human life” (p. 167). A long dry frustrated life of Harry becomes one of delight, bliss and harmony with the integration of the feminine, the Jungian Eve, represented by Maria.

The landlady who is utmost cordial with Harry, represents the Jungian Mary, the virtuous feminine. She is found to be “human, friendly, ... auntlike or, rather, motherly relation” (p. 10) to every tenant. She is the same and even more caring to Harry, which he, who prefers oblivion, appreciates. She like a bourgeois lady neither makes fun of his odd movements, nor acknowledges him calling himself a “foreign body” (p. 121). Her values of “order, respectability and cleanliness” (Jillings, 1981, p. 52) are natural contrasts to Harry’s lonely and unorganized life. A love-hate attitude is seen in Harry, throughout the novel, towards the respectable ‘bourgeois’ life-style. The contrast creates in him an ill feeling towards bourgeois society but draws him to individuals like the landlady. She has a natural “empathizing” (Baron-Cohen, 2004, p. 8) feminine brain dominating her character. Her behaviours testify her “intelligent and motherly” (Hesse, 1965, p. 122) nature of congenial virtues which Harry admires and feels at home with. He imbibes her virtue of respecting the silence and temperaments of others, her tenants, and not disturbing others even in utmost painful moments.

That Hermine is Harry’s anima and that she plays the Jungian Sophia to Harry is evident throughout the novel. Harry after a long tedious walk, enters ‘The Black Eagle’ and there encounters a “pale and pretty girl” who makes him room to sit and

gives a “friendly and observant look” (p. 102) which is the beginning of a new chapter in Harry’s life – a welcome respite and comfort from a long dry life. He learns her name to be Hermine and she is able to divine his mind and heart and tell him his feelings, thoughts and dispositions. He tells her in amazement: “There’s nothing you don’t know, Hermine, it’s exactly as you say. And yet you’re so entirely different from me. Why, you’re my opposite. You have all that I lack” (p. 128). Hermine is Harry’s anima – the feminine within and the entire Harry – Hermine encounter is a process by which Harry integrates Hermine, his anima and attains harmony.

While Harry integrates gradually his anima – Hermine, reciprocally Hermine integrates her animus – Harry and even asks him to kill her after falling in love: “I need you as you do me. ... I want you to be in love with me. ... When you are in love with me, I will give you my last command and you will obey it, and it will be the better for both of us. ... You will carry out my command and kill me. There – ask no more” (p. 130-31). Though it happens at the end as per Hermine’s command, the process is one of integration and healing for both, particularly for Harry. Harry finds Hermine “charming” (p. 103), sensitive, intuitive and divining his life every bit. She treats him exactly in the way that is best for him at the moment. The way she convinces him to dance shows her verbal skill, a typical feminine feature. She empathizes with him fully and invites him to learn, besides “the difficult and complicated things,...the simple ones” (p. 106) which add fun to life. She gradually, with her nurturing and therapeutic talks, extricates him from too much intellectualism with which he has made his own life a “song of sufferings” (p. 106). She succeeds in putting herself in his shoes, understands and guides him that he feels; “she is like a mother to me, (though) young and beautiful, ... (with) wisdom, health and assurance” (p. 108 & 131). Her presence becomes space for him to open up his life freely and experience a therapeutic healing. In Hermine’s “beautiful and unearthly” (p. 129) presence, Harry feels that a miracle has happened in his life and he has become light and “the miracle should go on” and he is happy and willing to “surrender (himself) to this magnetic power and follow this star” (p. 125).

It is Hermine’s feminine “powers ... magic” that endows Harry with what he longs for in despair, “life and resolution, action and reaction, impulse and impetus” (p. 125) to joyfully move on in life. She is his “release and way to freedom” (p. 124). Her presence awakens in him the feminine qualities like, “capacity for love, the sensuous and spiritual” (p. 195). Hermine as the inner feminine power of Harry enlightens him on the purpose to live and die. Hermine’s presence gifts Harry with a peaceful sleep: “I slept greedily, thankfully, and dreamt more lightly and pleasantly than I had for a long while” (p. 111). He realizes that Hermine, the “wonderful girl” has come into his life to “shatter the death” hovering over him with her “good and beautiful and warm hand” (p. 120). His soul that had frozen, he acknowledges, “breathes once more” and experiences “joy and eagerness” leading him to a new life of laughter. Despair and frustration are replaced by “life, hope and happy thoughts” (p. 121). At that state of new vigour and rejuvenated life, he extols Hermine, his feminine self, saying that she knows “more of life than is known to the wisest of the wise. It might be the highest wisdom” (p. 132). Harry feels Hermine as part of his soul as his old self “is banished by a look from Hermine, as this look seemed to come from my (his) own soul” (p. 202). The soul-partnership of Harry and Hermine is made vivid by these instances and exchanges. Obviously, Hermine, as his anima, vitally plays the

Jungian Sophia to Harry and liberates him from a life of despair and misery and guides him into a blissful state. The therapy initiated by Hermine symbolically develops inside Pablo's 'Magic Theatre.'

The 'Magic Theatre' run by Pablo, the musician, who is portrayed in the novel as someone who has integrated the feminine characteristics, has a therapeutic effect upon those who enter the theatre and play the games well. Harry from the beginning of the novel has an inherent longing to enter the "Gothic doorway, ... mysterious, ... beautiful and quiet" (p. 48) which foreshadows his actual entry later into the 'Magic Theatre' wherein he explores his unconscious through many games and comes to a grasp of his life: "the climax of Harry's life is the account of his experiences in the section devoted to the Magic Theatre" (Hatfield, 2003, p. 116). Pablo guides Harry into the magic theatre, telling him, "It is the world of your own soul that you seek. Only within yourself exists that other reality that you long" (Hesse, 1965, p. 204) and he invites Harry to explore his own self and integrate the other part for himself. Pablo conducts the 'mirror therapy' – holds a mirror in front of Harry who sees his own "uneasy, self-tormented, inwardly laboring, and seething being ... the wolf's shape ... and disliked it too sincerely" and guided by the "bright and peculiar laugh" of Pablo, Harry gives way to his "desire to laugh so irresistible" and with that laugh, "the mournful image in the glass gave a final convulsion and vanished" (p. 205-7). The theme of laughter "runs throughout the novel" (Cornils, 2004, p. 178) but has an intensely- healing effect in the mirror therapy, in which Harry is guided to "apprehend the humor of life" (p. 179). Harry feels liberated.

Then Harry is led into the theatre wherein "the strange protagonists are part of his psyche" (Ziolkowski, 1973, p. 161). Inside the theatre, "Haller's pilgrimage resembles that of psycho-analytic education" (p. 161). He plays 'building-up of the personality' and learns to put together the disintegrated pieces of his personality "to build up ever new groups" and realizes that "the game of life" involves "endless multiplicity of moves" (Hesse, 1965, p. 224) and the job of integrating his life is in his hands. It is viewed by critics that "the Jungian aspirations towards wholeness, towards a re-integration of the multi-faceted personality" (Cornils, 2004, p. 179) is achieved by Harry in the magic theatre. In the next game, 'Taming of the Steppenwolf,' he sees his life ruled over by the wolfishness and dashes out the play-field, throwing the wolf out of him, desiring "nothing but to be beyond this wave of disgust" (Hesse, 1965, p. 228).

In the game, 'All Girls are Yours,' Harry relives his youth, "glowing current of fire, ... young and new and genuine" (p. 229). He blissfully relives "the thousand wishes, hopes and adorations" he used to send for the feminine, his girl-friend. Now he handles his passion "all the loves of his life" (p. 233) with maturity and feels "immeasurably happy" (p. 232), drinking from "the cup of passion" purely as "the lover" (p. 234), and giving himself "upto them without defence,... into the rosy twilight of their underworld" (p. 235), the world of the unconscious. He inhales the passionate fragrance of 'Eros' and feels within him that "all (girls) were mine (his), each in her own way" (p. 235). This integration of many girls in his life completes the integration of the feminine, anima, in its various aspects as Eve, Helen, Mary and Sophia. This game of Harry amidst many girls, integrating them all in the context of play, is a natural reminder of Krishna among Gopis. Having long played the games

and purged himself of wolfishness, despair and frustration, Harry rises to life, from “the unending stream of allurements and vice and entanglement” to “calm and silent” (p. 236). He feels free and “ripe for Hermine” and declares, “I belong to her wholly” (p. 236) which is evident of his integration of his anima, Hermine, and as “all was centre in her” he feels “led to fulfillment” (p. 236). In the deep sense of fulfillment in his union with Hermine, he is led, by his own integrated disposition, to kill (as part of the magic theatre) Hermine lying by Pablo, by which Hermine is seen no longer as external to him but already integrated into his own self. By this killing of Hermine, he also fulfills the love-commandment of Hermine that he has to kill her after falling in love with her – integrating her. Harry emerges as a freed person, “freed of all his inhibitions, finds compensation for all his defeats, acts out all his aggressions” (p. 117). Thus, the magic theatre functions as a “carefully worked out psychoanalytic treatment” (Hatfield, 2003, p. 117) for Harry and leaves him in harmony and bliss.

It is evident that Harry attains harmony through Jungian anima-integration, in and through his encounter with Hermine, Pablo, Maria, and the Land Lady, and the therapeutic journey through the magic theatre.

3.4. Spiritual Integration: Harry, who has been caught in the mire of routine and wallows in despair, crises and neurosis, through a therapeutic sojourn with Hermine, Pablo and Maria, who are all healthily reconciled with life through dance, music and acceptance of life in its mysterious and feminine aesthetic dimensions, experiences a ‘spiritual return’ home - to eternal consciousness, the eternal mother – Shakti, the cosmic womb. The intensely feminine companionship of Hermine and Maria infuse in Harry a “sacred sense of beyond, of timelessness” (Hesse, 1965, p. 180). And this sense reminds him of his dream of Goethe in which Harry understood that Goethe’s laughter was “the laughter of the immortals” (p. 181) and that immortal laughter a man experiences after passing through “all the sufferings, vices, mistakes, passions and misunderstandings” (p. 181). That transcendental laughter of the immortals enters the bone and flesh of Harry through dance and he experiences an eternal consciousness tapped within as he realizes at the same moment that ‘eternal consciousness’ involves a “return to innocence” and a “transformation into space” (p. 181). Harry experiences that space within him. He has, through the therapeutic effect of dance, become spiritual – feeling and being free and eternally conscious. This state of consciousness is called the ‘cosmic consciousness’ by saints and seers. Harry attains this state for there has always been a longing for “stillness and loftiness” (blend of yin – stillness and yang – arising) and he had in his heart constructed an “ascetic spiritual life” (Ziolkowski, 1965, p. 178) which all come true when the feminine aesthetic ambience creates in him a space for transcendental experience. In the stillness Harry experiences in an intimate embrace with Hermine, he also experiences the deep “ideal harmony” (Hesse, 1965, p. 76) between body and spirit which has always been a phenomenon in his intellectual awareness. This stillness in union with the feminine – pure integrated state – is very similar to the stillness Siddhartha experiences by the river. For both Harry and Siddhartha, this stillness (an intensely feminine character against action the masculine counter) is redemptive and integrative and establishes harmony in them. Siddhartha, in an integrated state, sees the entire reality as part of him, the river and the cosmos: “All flowed into each other” (Hesse, 1971, p. 134). Harry experiences an elevation of the personalities through suffering till they reach “God, the expansion of the soul” and “embrace the All”

(Hesse, 1965, p. 78) and become cosmic. Harry realizes that “fulfillment of the true selves lies not in living as individuals, but in returning to the spiritual world of the ‘All’” (Jillings, 1981, p. 59). In Harry there is a notable “resolution of crisis” witnessed in the process of a “mystical union” with the feminine, initiated and peaked in and through a dance in which “individuals merge in to a communion that ascends from sense to spirit” (Ziolkowski, 1973, p. 172). Harry experiences this ascending to the spirit in the communion with the feminine. Harry, moving far away from his life of despair, crisis and neurosis, through a gradual and healthy integration of the feminine, attains harmony and peace deep within him and the inner harmony is given a face through his laughter without an object, which is immortal.

4. CONCLUSION

Harry Haller’s integration of the feminine in the psychological, and the spiritual realms at once inspire the readers and the listeners to try out similar integration consciously in and through our relationships with those in whom the feminine qualities are rich and flow forth freely, and if needed through psychotherapies, and methods like active imagination, meditations and exercises like Tai Chi. A regular practice to integrate the feminine qualities such as being passive, pondering, receptive, nurturing and surrendering, is sure to lead the modern human person, lost in high-speed and hyper-activity, into a realm of peace and harmony.

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*The Role of Religion in Markandaya's Nectar in a
Sieve and Farah's Sweet and Sour Milk*

Lutfi Yousef Hamadi, Lebanese University, Lebanon

The European Conference on Literature and Librarianship 2014
Official Conference Proceedings



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This paper is an attempt at exploring the role religion plays in people's lives in colonial India and postcolonial Somalia as depicted in Kamala Markandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve* (1955) and Nuruddin Farah's *Sweet and Sour Milk* (1979). It will trace the endless suffering of the main characters, who, to escape tyranny and repression, resort to their religious beliefs, mostly mixed up with superstitions, as a refuge that would provide them with a little protection and consolation in horrible social, economic, and political conditions, where callous oppression, grinding poverty, worn-out customs, and awful ignorance permeate every aspect of their lives. However, instead of being a source of hope and tranquility, religion, whether it is Hinduism or Islam, adds up to their despair and anguish since those in power, be it family or political authorities, use religion to achieve their personal goals at the expense of the powerless subjects.

The new elites who have reached power in ex-colonies as seen in *Sweet and Sour Milk* are not by any means better than colonialists in humiliating and impoverishing people as revealed in *Nectar in a sieve*. Not unlike Frantz Fanon in *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952), Edward Said, in his *Culture and Imperialism* (1994), emphasizes the continuous process of dispossession practiced by the West against the peoples of ex-colonies, contending that "In our time, direct colonialism has largely ended; imperialism [...] lingers where it has always been, in a kind of general cultural sphere as well as in specific political, ideological, economic, and social practices" (p. 8). Both Markandaya and Farah shed light on this issue in different ways, unraveling the role religion plays during these periods.

In *Nectar in a Sieve*, through Rukmani, the protagonist and the narrator, Markandaya manifests how the tannery, built and run by the wealthy whites, has disastrous repercussions on the rural area and its despondent peasants. Being raised according to social mores and religious beliefs to be an obedient and satisfied wife, Rukmani, married at 12 to a man she has never seen before, though shocked at seeing her new home, a "mud hut, nothing but mud and thatch" (NIS13), never complains. On the contrary, she expresses content and even happiness:

While the sun shines on you and the fields are green and beautiful to the eye, and your husband sees beauty in you which no one has seen before, and you have a good store of grain laid away for hard times, a roof over you and a sweet stirring in your body, what more can a woman ask for (p. 17)?

In her *A Study of Markandaya's Women* (2006), Sudhir Arora confirms that in India, "A traditional woman, being deeply religious, develops stoicism that gives mental potency and protects her from tension and conflict" (p. 36). Throughout her life, Rukmani keeps stuck to such religious beliefs despite all the distressing experiences that afflict her.

When it takes her long to get pregnant again after Ira's birth, her mother resorts to religion for a solution. Rukmani recalls, "My mother, whenever I paid her a visit, would make me accompany her to a temple, and together we would pray before the deity, imploring for help until we were giddy" (NIS, p. 30). When all this devotion to gods goes in vain, Rukmani, does not lose faith. Instead, she finds excuses for gods. "But the Gods have other things to do: they cannot attend to the pleas of every

suppliant who dares to raise his cares to heaven” (p. 30). In what clearly reflects Markandaya’s disapproval of such religious superstitions, when Rukmani’s mother gets too ill to take her to the temple, she places in her hand “a small stone lingam” (p. 31), a symbol of the Hindu deity Shiva and fertility. However, despite her deep faith, literate and relatively open-minded Rukmani decides, without telling her husband, Nathan, whose beliefs do not allow that, to visit Kenny, a British doctor, who works with philanthropic societies and devotedly exerts efforts to alleviate the poor Indians’ suffering, planning to build a hospital in the countryside. With Kenny’s help, Rukmani does get pregnant several times – an implication that modern medicine succeeds where old-fashioned customs and false religious beliefs fail. Rukmani is fated to face a similar ordeal when Ira’s husband brings her back home because she fails to conceive. Rukmani again resorts to Dr. Kenny, who treats Ira, but unfortunately it is too late as her husband has already taken himself another wife.

Rukmani and Nathan, like all other peasants who tile a land which is not theirs, are also victims of the fury of nature. The monsoon would not only destroy their humble dwellings but also deprive them of the crops they have been working hard for all the year so that they can pay landowners and keep what would save them from actual starvation. Another year, the rain fails, so “We stared at the cruel sky, calm, blue, indifferent to our need” (p. 100), Rukmani ruminates in a kind of skepticism and hopelessness of her gods. Nevertheless, her goddess is still her sole, though futile, weapon against famine and mounting miseries; consequently, she continues:

We threw ourselves on the earth and we prayed. I took a pumpkin and a few grains of rice to my Goddess, and I wept at her feet. I thought she looked at me with compassion and I went away comforted, but no rain came (p. 100).

In spite of all misfortunes, Rukmani cannot but be an archetypal traditional Indian woman representing what Lakshmi Sharma in *The Position of Woman in Kamala Markandaya’s Novels* (2001) quotes Shantha Krishnaswamy saying:

Indian woman’s essential commitment to her religion and the institutions and rituals, has enabled her to be portrayed as the guardian of culture and religion. It is difficult to summarize the various images of women in Hinduism and Islam, the two dominant religions, through the ages. The women have been described as the embodiment of purity and spiritual power and respected as godly beings on the one hand, and on the other viewed as being essentially weak creatures constantly requiring the protection of man as their lord and master (pp. 61-62).

Nectar in a Sieve shows that during colonial period, Indians in rural areas suffer from illiteracy, absence of medication, and miserable economic conditions. Instead of finding solutions, ruthless authorities seem to benefit from people’s ignorance and their unswerving belief in fatalism so that they can easily subjugate them. According to Anil Bhatnagar in *Kamala Markandaya: A Thematic Study* (1995), this is the story

of not only Rukmani and her family but that of all the poor, dispossessed peasants “who believe firmly in fate and accept every misery as their lot” (p. 4). He adds:

The Indian people are generally God-fearing having a profound faith in religion and God. The Indian culture is basically rooted in spirituality and an unshakable faith in divine justice. This faith often takes the form of resignation to one's fate (p. 52).

Markandaya's message about the futility of such blind faith is revealed succinctly when, while literally starving, Rukmani's son Raja is brought home a dead body, having been killed by the guards of the tannery on the pretext of having stolen a calf skin. It is provoking how submissively, Rukmani closes his eyes, ties his jaw with a bandage, and washes his body. Officials from the tannery visit the family, not to apologize, but, shockingly enough, to threaten them that it is useless to think of asking for compensation because simply, “it will not work” (NIS, p. 125). After all, they feel safe because the colonial laws are made to protect them, not the wretched Indian peasants. It is aching and highly provoking how, again, without a shudder, Rukmani and her husband submissively accept what they consider God's will.

Still more miseries are to mount. Their five-year-old Kuti suffers the most as his weak body cannot endure lack of food anymore, and his distressing moans and whimpers make his mother wish him fast death. The one who feels utmost pain and compassion towards him is Ira, who has been treating him more like a son than a little brother. To her surprise, Rukmani notices a little improvement in his condition, and she promptly decides that “the Gods were not remote, not unheeding, since they had heard his cries and stilled them as it were a miracle” (p. 130). However, it doesn't take Rukmani long to discover the unpalatable truth: unable to bear watching Kuti suffering that much, Ira has turned to prostitution and has been feeding him secretly for a while. Only then does Rukmani realize that “it was [Ira] who had been responsible for the improvement in Kuti, not I, not my prayers” (134). Still, Ira's money cannot buy more than milk for Kuti, which causes his health to deteriorate again, losing his eyesight for a while and finally dying. What happens with Ira reflects her rebellion against her parents' vain values and beliefs. According to C. K. Naik in “Rural India in Transition” (2002), Ira's divorce “does not break her heart. Rather, she feels liberated from the decreed social norms and exploitative forces” (p. 24). Similarly, Arora sees that Ira's resort to prostitution “is not an immoral act but an act of supreme sacrifice” (p. 76).

Rukmani's talk with Dr. Kenny sheds more light on how religious beliefs are deep-rooted in Indians' lives. When she knows that Kenny's wife has already left him, she is extremely shocked, as all traditional Indian wives would feel in a typically patriarchal society. Rukmani finds it outrageous that his wife cannot accompany him to India, “Cannot?” She wonders, “She must. A woman's place is with her husband” (NIS, p. 147). Lakshmi Sharma confirms this concept saying, “Indian philosophy and religion enjoining ‘a great respect for motherhood through the sanctification and inviolability of marriage’” (p. 52). According to Naik, Rukmani “is an epitome of the archetypal Indian wife who regards her husband as her God and her children as gifts from heaven” (p. 16). In short, as a stubborn follower of tradition, Rukmani essentially commits to her religion, its institutions and rituals.

It is Kenny who highlights the horrible repercussions on people when religious beliefs are blindly internalized so that they silently accept whatever happens as God's will. He blames her and all Indians, screaming painfully and scornfully, "you must cry out if you need help. It is no use whatsoever to suffer in silence" (NIS, p. 153). Realizing what Rukmani and many Hindus believe in, Kenny adds, "Never mind what is said or what you have been told. There's no grandeur in want – or in endurance. [...] Acquiescent imbeciles, do you think spiritual grace comes from being in want, or from suffering" (pp. 53-154)? As expected, religion is what Rukmani refers to to defend submissiveness and compliance, thus saying, "Yet our priests fast, and inflict on themselves severe punishments, and we are taught to bear our sorrows in silence, and all this is so that the soul may be cleansed" (p. 154). This explains why despite all the anguish that follows, fury, if ever there, stays deep inside.

What makes matters even worse is that they are kicked out of the land they have wasted thirty years serving because the powerful white tanners have bought it. Yet, unsurprisingly, Rukmani tells Nathan, "Do not concern yourself. We are in God's hands" (p. 176). They have no choice but to go to the city to stay with their son, Murugan, to get another shock: Out of desolation, Murugan has already left his wife and kids and disappeared. Like hundreds of beggars, they resort to a temple for a meal and shelter where their last possessions are robbed. While there, Rukmani recalls the faces of loved ones in the village, but soon their images fade, and, she says, "I saw in their place the countenance of the God and his Consort, and it seemed to me that they looked on me benignly and I was at length able to pray" (p. 194). At another moment, she stares at the statues of gods and goddesses and thinks, "They seemed almost to live, their stone breasts gently breathing, their limbs lightly moving. [...] Until dawn, when the stars went out one by one, and the grey light changed the sculptured figures back into immobility" (pp. 199-200).

The role religion plays in the lives of the characters of Farah's *Sweet and Sour Milk* is to a large extent similar to that in *Nectar in a Sieve*. In post-colonial Somalia, the new regime has done almost nothing to improve people's lives; on the contrary, "People were kept in their separate compartments of ignorance" (SSM, p. 216). Farah shows how religious beliefs are used and abused, mostly leaving irreparable harm to the weaker members in society, the poor in general and women and children in particular.

Unlike Rukmani, Qumman and Beydan are illiterate, which makes them more blindly involved in religious creeds, clearly mixing them up with false beliefs and superstitions. At the very beginning of the novel, we see Qumman, who "had little faith in the miracles of modern medicines," trying to treat her son, Soyaan, a highly educated politician, with some yogurt including a "dash of herbs the traditionalist savant had administered" (SSM, p. 3). She also asks a sheikh's help because, she believes, "The Koran is all we know that cures without complications" (p. 5). On another occasion, Qumman says while criticizing the poor condition of hospitals in post-colonial Somalia, "I have faith in the Almighty. His word heals. His hand blesses" (p. 144). Like other heavenly religions, Islam, as a matter of fact, encourages faith healing, but at the same time, it encourages scientific knowledge and developments in all fields as long as they are used for the welfare of humankind. She is totally convinced that Soyaan is bewitched by her husband's second wife, Beydan. In this sense, Qumman is closer to Rukmani's mother and other traditional Indian women than to Rukmani herself. Still, Farah shows that Qumman does not always act

as she preaches because she “nevertheless tolerated injections when it really came to making the ultimate choice” (p. 4), which reflects lack of logic and certainty of her beliefs.

Like Rukmani, Qumman loses a son, Soyaan, who dies clearly poisoned by the political regime he has been part of but clandestinely working against their tyrannical policies. She stubbornly refuses a post-mortem, considering it a sacrilegious act. Yet, not unlike Rukmani, her faith helps her to feel relief despite hardships, thus giving some beggars a little food asking them to “Pray for the sick among us, pray for the souls of the dead relative and Muslim anywhere they may be found” (p. 14). Unfortunately, as prayers fail to save Rukmani and her family from starvation, they fail to heal Soyaan. Nevertheless, faith undoubtedly helps Qumman to accept his death patiently. “God gives; He takes that which He only can give” (p. 30).

Beydan is by no means different from Qumman, thus refusing to see a doctor and depending on an aunt and some herbs despite being seriously ill and about to give birth. She, too, strongly believes in witchcraft and is convinced that she will die because Qumman has bewitched her. Not unlike Rukmani’s mother’s belief in the power of stone lingam, Beydan pays all the money that Loyaan, her stepson, has supported her with to a “super-master witch” to unlock the spell. Such superstitions are in several ways similar to those in Markandaya’s India. In her *A Silence of Desire* (1960), for example, Sarojini idolatrously worships a tulasi plant, not recognizing the difference “between the tulasi tree and its Maker” (p. 8). She also rejects modern medicine and visits a Swami to treat a serious growth in the womb.

Like in rural India, in a Somalia ruled by patriarchal despotism, religion is exploited by husbands, the clan, and the political regime, who do not hesitate to distort it in order to attain their own interests and reinforce their authority. In “Nuruddin Farah: Tribalism, Orality, and Postcolonial Ultimate Reality” (2002), John C. Hawley classifies those who call themselves Muslims in Farah’s first trilogy, which includes *Sweet and Sour Milk*, into three categories:

The cynical politicians, the self-enslaved fanatics, and the devout. There are those characters who use the trappings of religion for political ends, [...] those who use their religion to absolve themselves from involvement in the world around them, or who use their interpretation of its precepts to discipline the more creative and the more daring among their family members (p. 75).

Dissimilar to Nathan, who treats Rukmani kindly despite having cheated on her, Keynaan, an ex-policeman, treats his two wives contemptuously and violently. To justify his misogyny, he, every now and then, refers to religion, misinterpreting Islam to suit his ideas and behaviors. He never deters himself from beating Qumman and Beydan if they ever think of disobeying his wishes and orders. His ruthlessness has left serious damage on their bodies and souls. Knowing that his mother is frequently beaten by Keynaan, Loyaan says, “Also today, she had bruises. Her forehead had bled and dried. There was a scar a night old on her arm as well” (SSM, p. 26).

Before Soyaan's funeral, authoritarian Keynaan cannot tolerate the idea that Qumman is in the room with the deceased. In what clearly contradicts Islam, which he pretends to adopt, he tells Loyaan to bring her out of the room, or he will drag her out himself, because he believes that "her presence defiles the room" (p. 33). At another point in the novel and in a clear example of misinterpreting religion, he blames Loyaan for listening to women, saying:

Women are for sleeping with, for giving birth to and bringing up children; they are not good for any other thing. They are not to be trusted with secrets. They can serve the purposes Allah created them for originally, and no more (pp. 89-9).

Loyaan feels sick of how Keynaan never spares an opportunity to refer to Islam and holy Koran to support his unbending points of view. He recalls:

Women are inferior beings, [Keynan] unhesitatingly would declare. 'talk to whom? Listen to whom? Beydan or Qumman? You must be out of your head, son. The Koran said....!' Yes, I know, I know what the Koran said, when and why. 'Please spare me that' (p. 164).

Keynaan also resorts to religion to hide his ignorance. Loyaan sarcastically says, "When you confront him with a question of a universal character, his answer is tailor-made, he will say 'Only Allah knows, only Allah'" (p. 90). However, when it comes to his authority, this needs no proof. At a moment of rage, in defense of himself and the regime, he screams at Loyaan "I am the father. It is my prerogative to give life and death as I find fit. If I decide to cut you into two, I can. The law of this land invests in men of my age the power" (p. 102). However, this tough patriarchal figure, who takes neither his illiterate wives nor his educated sons seriously, suddenly presents himself as a devout Muslim, thus asking Loyaan to read from the Koran after they know of Beydan's death while giving birth. He says:

Read on. Bless us. Bless your mother who has sinned. Bless your brother who died an innocent death. Bless us all. Bless us so that Allah may deliver us from our sins and the sins we harbor inside ourselves. [...] Bless Beydan. Bless the newly arrived, welcome him (p. 262).

The irony is that Keynaan is dating a girl younger than his daughter, Ladan, and he is planning to take her a third wife. This, nevertheless, is not among his sins; as a Muslim male, he uses his right to four wives, but he neglects the restrictive condition that he has to be fair and treat them equally. He, for example, hasn't slept with Qumman for more than two decades, sexually preferring younger Beydan to her.

There is no doubt that like Markandaya, Farah believes that blind faith and total compliance with mores and traditions make subjects like Qumman unable to recognize their real interests, thus becoming self-contradictory and acting against their own rights. Although Qumman is brutally abused by Keynaan, she, not unlike her husband, hates liberated, educated, and independent women like Margaritta, Soyaan's

half-Italian girlfriend, who firmly stands against oppressors like Keynaan and the regime. Margaritta, in fact, “represents the type of woman Qumman’s generation detests” (p. 178). Unable to change their mother, Soyaan and Loyaan educate their younger sister, Ladan, and they “would invest in [her] their hopes, they would trust their future with her” (p. 117). When Loyaan needs to hide Soyaan’s dangerously secret papers, it is Ladan whom he chooses for such a serious task.

In addition, Religion is used by many clergymen and politicians to ensure themselves certain privileges and power. On the seventh day of Soyaan’s death, and before saying their prayers, the sheikhs are the first to eat and are served the best meat, together with other important guests, mostly politicians and tribal chiefs. Other men follow them, and later, women, who work hard to prepare the feast, eat “the intestines, the plain and the honeycomb tripe [...]. What the women wouldn’t eat went to the beggars” (p. 243), something merely traditional and not religious at all.

The family patriarchal system according to the novel is just a symbol of the oppressive political patriarchy, using it to ensure unquestionable supremacy. In an epigraph to part two of the novel, Farah asserts this relationship, quoting psychoanalyst Wilhelm Reich, “In the figure of the father the authoritarian state has its representative in every family, so that the family becomes its most important instrument of power” (p. 103). Peter J. Schraeder, in turn, confirms in “The Sociopolitical Evolution of a Somali Writer” (2002) that “Keynaan epitomizes the patriarch who rules his family with an iron hand and has become a willing instrument of the clannish policies of the [General’s] regime” (p. 204). The dictator is the grand patriarch, who claims a new type of rule supposedly based on Islam and Marxism, but actually using the tribe and its values to dominate every single aspect of life in post-colonial Somalia. The regime arrests opponents, including women, throws them in jail, and executes them in the name of Islam, which seems sarcastic knowing that “Orientation Centers” have been built and “it was to them that people went, not to mosques anymore” (SSM, p. 95). In “Nuruddin Farah: A Combining of Gifts” (1989), an interview with Maya Jaggi, Farah says “For a Muslim believer, it is God who decides the destiny of all people; for a mortal to have a whip in his hand and to judge and determine the fate of someone in the name of the Lord is profoundly unIslamic” (p. 181).

Dr. Ahmad-Willie, a friend of Soyaan’s, tells Loyaan that many are shot and buried in “unnumbered tombs. No member of their immediate family is allowed to see their dead bodies;” otherwise, people “garland them with flowery secrets [and] call on these tombs as you would on martyrs” (SSM, p. 44). He adds that he was called by the police the other night to treat a woman lest she would die under torture. In a clear example of what Kate Millet calls sexual politics, Beydan herself was forced to marry Keynaan after he caused her ex-husband’s death during a violent interrogation.

Although Islam is incompatible with the socialist rule the General claims to adopt, in “Opposing Dictatorship” (2002), Barbara Turfan writes:

[He] has been able to distort his subjects’ interpretation of Islam, bribing or coercing the sheikhs to support his rule and to lead their followers in singing his praises and comparing him, grotesquely, with the Prophet or even

with Allah. [...] The provision of an Islamic legitimacy for a dictatorial, Marxist-Leninist regime is something the General obviously finds of extreme importance in securing at least the passivity and at best the full support of the populace (p. 270).

After he gets rid of his opponents by imprisonment, exile, or bribe, the General, to use Soyaan's words, presents himself as "The father of the nation. The carrier of wisdom. The provider of comforts. A demi-god." (SSM, p. 11). In a direct reference to Allah's ninety-nine names in the Koran, Soyaan says that assemblies of more than five persons are against the law unless they are "there to chant the chorus of the General's ninety-nine good names" (p. 95). Individuals like Keynaan who prove blind obedience and participate in praising the general are provided official jobs although they are humiliated by their superiors every now and then. Keynaan, the supposedly religious person fabricates lies about his son's last words in a desperate attempt to regain his job, which he lost as a kind of penalty for not proving professionalism during interrogation, thus leading to Beydan's husband's death. Without the slightest pang of remorse, he claims that before his death, Soyaan said, "labor is honour and there is no general but our General" (p. 107), in reference to the Islamic belief in the oneness of God. This same Keynaan never utters a word when the General executes ten Muslim sheikhs who, ridiculously enough, are accused of using religion for the purpose of weakening the nation. In *The Novels of Nuruddin Farah* (1994), Derek Wright succinctly depicts the similarity between Keynaan and the dictator concerning religion, saying:

Like the General, [Keynaan], takes refuge in religious obscurantism and he misuses the Koran to deny equality to men and to marginalize women as 'inferior beings,' [...] to cow them into submission (the General's execution of the rebel sheikhs and Keynaan's inheritance, against her will, of the widow of a deceased kinsman are, in fact, both *unKoranic* (p. 49).

One more example of the abuse of religion by authorities is their carelessness about the dire poverty which, like in *Nectar in a Sieve*, pervades the country. Similar to Markandaya's India, the streets of Mogadicio overflow with fatherless children and beggars and all the regime does is collecting them and putting them in jail whenever a foreign diplomat visits the country. Farah sheds light on the fact that while a lot of people can barely find something to eat, the general and his ministers live in outrageous luxury. Farah's narrator makes it clear that the general cares the least about Islam and justice; what he really cares about is power. He writes:

That is what the Koran promised men of equal birth. But the General himself, disbelieving in the teachings of the Koran, denied men equal to himself the right to have their sales beat untampered with in the openness of God's air. Think of the general as another infidel, quoting and misquoting Linen in order to remain in power [...] To rule, the general hoists the mast of his

flagpost which he feels is secure more with the KGB than with the Koran (SSM, p. 165).

Soyaan has been courageous enough to confront the general with all these cruelties, thus telling him, “It is unconstitutional to pass laws, sign decrees, run a martial-law government and then sentence these sheikhs to death. It is against the teaching of the Koran on which they base their arguments” (p. 251).

At this point, the General gets furious and screams, “I am the constitution. Now you know who I am, and I want you out of here before I set those dogs of mine on you and you are torn to pieces. Out” (p. 251). It is worth mentioning that Farah does not introduce Soyaan, who pays his life as a result of being true, as a devout Muslim. On the contrary, he drinks alcohol and has a child out of wedlock, while many other supposedly pious individuals not only keep silent towards all the cruelties and brutalities but also participate in praising the General, despite all the verses in the Koran and the Prophet’s Hadith that urge believers to speak truth to power.

In a nutshell, in both novels, blind religious faith never provides a solution for people suffering from different kinds of oppression and cruelty. Rukmani’s religious practices do not make her crops grow and save her family and other peasants from famine and degradation; nor do they give Qumman, Beydan, and other poor Somalis the means to get rid of domestic, social, or political dictatorship. Religious faith is definitely a source of relief on the short term, but if it is not accompanied by education, open-mindedness, and willpower to act, it will be another means of repression and persecution and a symbol of speechlessness and powerlessness. Hope, though, seems to lie in the new generation represented for Markandaya by rebellious, determined Ira and her brother Selvam, who has learned a lot from Dr. Kenny, and for Farah by strong-willed, educated, and independent Ladan who, unlike Rukmani, Qumman, and Beydan, refuses to surrender to prevailing beliefs and values. Such individuals can be both religious and knowledgeable, rejecting superstitions and embracing the essence of religion, be it Hinduism or Islam, which stimulates believers to work hard for righteousness, equality, goodness, and justice.

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*Literature as Content vs Literature as Container:
The Case of Sherlock Holmes*

Amy Lee Wai Sum, Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong

The European Conference on Literature and Librarianship 2014
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract

The presenter teaches literature in English in a city where English is not the first language. In the processes of course design, material search, assignment setting, assessment strategy and the actual classroom interaction with students, the presenter has been made aware of the constant decisions and adjustments necessary as students respond to the materials and activities. This presentation is some reflections about the choice of materials, teaching and learning activities used in the classroom, and how they work or fail to provide an interesting interdisciplinary learning experience for students whose first language is not English. This presentation aims to use the Sherlock Holmes stories as an example to demonstrate and explore how Literature from another culture can be taught in the university classroom in an engaging manner. The presentation reports how this set of materials has been used in the Humanities classroom in the teaching of literature, not only literature as the subject content, but also literature as a container of other skills most useful to university students, including critical thinking, creative communication, emotional literacy. The presentation is arguing that using literature as a container may rejuvenate literature to the contemporary university students, and make the teaching and learning experience a more dynamic and engaging one to both teachers and students.

Keywords: teaching Sherlock Holmes, Humanities in university, Emotional Literacy, Critical Thinking, Creative Communication

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Higher Education in Hong Kong

Hong Kong is an international city in many different ways, and the competitiveness of its universities, in terms of disciplines offered, human resources, research standards, hardware and software in infrastructure, student admission quality, etc. is well known. One of the strong features of local higher education is the adoption of English as the default language of instruction across different disciplines. In Hong Kong Baptist University, where I teach, the language policy is the same, English by default, although exemption from this policy can be granted if there are sound academic reasons. My home department is Humanities and Creative Writing, and we offer three different undergraduate programmes to students: Humanities, Creative and Professional Writing, and Liberal and Cultural Studies. In our programme course menus, there are some courses which deal specifically with aspects of local Hong Kong culture, such as Hong Kong Studies, or Popular Music and Society; and courses which discuss Chinese culture in the modern era, such as Modernity and China, which would make better academic sense if taught in the local language. Exemption can be granted in these cases if the department makes a strong case to justify.

While the academic content of courses certainly has a determining effect on deciding which language is the best for delivery, in the fields of Humanities, and Creative Writing, and Liberal and Cultural Studies, more than the academic content is at stake. Most of the courses within programmes of this nature are not dealing with factual information only, for the ultimate goal of learning is not the repetition of the facts, but the ability to employ certain skills in trying to understand different situations which might or might not have occurred historically. In other words, it is the abilities to apply one's critical thinking skills, creative communication skills, as well as acquiring and exercising emotional literacy (to start with) which are the ultimate goals of an academic training in the fields such as those covered by our department. It sounds really vague, and I am sure educators from all over the world have encountered the same questions from students and parents asking what is the practical, or utilitarian value of doing a degree in the Humanities, or the Arts. Partly as an attempt to address this seeming "vagueness" in the learning goals, various frameworks of measurements have been adopted by different educators to demonstrate the practicality of the field of Humanities.

Hong Kong Baptist University has chosen to adopt the Outcome-Based Teaching and Learning (OBTL) approach officially across all disciplines starting from AY 2012-2013. To facilitate this education approach, the course documents of all courses offered have to list clearly 3 to 5 course intended learning outcomes (CILOs), around which the teaching material, teaching activities, and assessment items will be designed. The focus of this approach is measurability. The CILOs stated for each course can be decided by the programme, but they have to be measurable through the suggested assessment items, be they in-class debate exercise, written term paper, or the written final examination. Against courses whose main academic content is literature (of a particular period, or genre), or creative writing, or film studies, I have used the CILOs to draw attention to the "practical" nature of this kind of training, by stating critical thinking, creative communication, and emotional literacy as the CILOs. In this paper, I am proposing that literature as container can be a useful approach to adopt in a city like Hong Kong, where the default language of higher education is English, but at the same time there is a strong tendency to view the

arts/humanities as less practical disciplines in terms of their value in our ultra-utilitarian society.

How does one demonstrate the desirability of teaching literature in English in a place such as Hong Kong?

I taught an elective course entitled “The Art of Creating Stories: Writing and Appreciation” in the previous semester in English to a class of 34 students. There were a few international exchange students (who did not understand Cantonese, Hong Kong’s main language of spoken communication) in that class which was composed of students from varied disciplines. Apart from two students from the English Department, the rest had no background in English literature, and most of the students were taking the course to learn about story-telling. English had to be the medium of instruction, as the content of the course was geared toward a western repertoire of written literature, as well as western films and art work. To make the learning experience a meaningful one for students from such varied background, I used the teaching and learning materials not only to demonstrate the various approaches of story-telling, but to make these issues relevant to the students’ own lives by designing the teaching and learning activities to achieve the CILOs stated above.

In the 13-week semester, a number of issues about story-telling were covered, and early on in the semester, an issue examined was the various reincarnations of some stories, how they change (or not change) in each reincarnation, and what these new versions convey to the readers/audience. Popular culture is full of rewritings/new versions of fairy tales and myths, telling us what has changed or not changed in the human world, expressed in different ways as the material conditions of our world change. I had chosen to use Arthur Conan Doyle’s iconic creation, Sherlock Holmes, the detective consultant, as the object of discussion, as there were quite a number of sharp and distinctive reworkings, which were very popular among the student body, despite the fact that the adventures of Sherlock Holmes started more than 100 years ago in Victorian Britain. I called the section “The birth of a legend – Sherlock”, and looked at “The Adventures of the Speckled Band” (1892), “A Scandal in Bohemia” (1891), The Granada TV production of The Adventures of the Speckled Band (1984-85), The BBC production of Sherlock, season 2, episode 1, “A Scandal in Belgravia” (2011), and The CBS production of Elementary, season 1, episode 1, “Pilot” (2012).

The Many Lives of Sherlock Holmes

To many of the students in that class, Holmes and Watson were Benedict Cumberbatch and Martin Freeman, the two British actors playing Sherlock Holmes and John Watson in BBC’s production. I wanted to draw their attention back to the original detective and his side-kick as described in Conan Doyle’s words. So the first task I set for them was to ask them to write a description of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson based purely on the two samples of Doyle’s stories: “The Adventures of the Speckled Band” and “A Scandal in Bohemia”. I got some pretty interesting feedback from the students, as it was quite obvious that a lot of them were still describing Cumberbatch and Freeman’s personification of the pair rather than the partners in the written version. Some other students referred more closely to the written stories, and in the course of the interaction, a comparison between the 19th century and the 21st century partners emerged. Slowly, as students voiced their impressions of the

partners' age, their appearance, personalities as reflected in their behaviour and their language, as well as their world views, it was becoming apparent to all that there was a history of these two characters not only in the context of the crimes they encountered and solved, but also outside of the detective fiction genre, as Sherlock and Watson come with us to the 21st century.

This sense of a history of the texts and the characters, a development not only within the stories, but also external to the stories, in the real life (if I may), was something that I would like to highlight in class. As mentioned, lots of legends, myths and fairy tales had been revisited and rewritten over time. While these rewritten versions are interesting texts for comparison to know about human thoughts and feelings over different cultures and times, detective stories are uniquely interesting examples for discussion because of their close connection to the social and cultural settings from which they were born. On the one hand, it is true that as a literary genre, the detective fiction follows a more-or-less standard formula in its setting, characterization, plot development, and even closure. On the other hand, the main action of this genre is to trace the reasons and processes of human action which is very often the cause of the entire story, the detective fiction is potentially a site for revealing the human world's current values, way of thinking, life practices, and material conditions. Although very much aware that the detective story (in its written or TV form) is an artistic construction and not the reality, I still paired up examples of different Sherlock Holmes (and Watsons) and differently constructed Sherlock Holmes stories to encourage comparisons, hoping that the students would reflect on story-telling and our life through an examination of this foreign text and genre.

Critical Thinking 1

The first pair of examples for comparison was the 1892 short story "The Adventure of the Speckled Band" and the 1984 Granada TV production of that same story. Obviously it would be important for the students to go back to the original stories to see the birth of these two iconic characters before they could comment meaningfully on the later evolutions. Also the birth of detective fiction, at least the British tradition of the detective fiction, was closely tied to the Victorian era, in its reflection of the social and cultural conditions. So for students in our time, knowing Conan Doyle's written representation of that society, its practices and people's behavior is not for the purpose of being able to say how much we have advanced from that "primitive" age, it is actually to establish this natal link between the fiction and the society. After all, the Sherlock Holmes stories were published in the aftermath of the infamous Whitechapel Murders, when a serial killer who called himself "Jack the Ripper" committed numerous murders in the poor Whitechapel Area in East London.

The 1984 Granada TV production of "The Adventures of the Speckled Band" was a good text for discussion in relation to our focus because it was a visualization of the characters of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. John Watson, and the 41-episode series was considered a competent rendition of the adventures. Besides, Jeremy Brett was regarded by many as the best Sherlock Holmes of his generation – the hawk-liked features of his face, his build, and the way he personified the eccentric but efficient detective consultant were all considered faithful renditions of the written stories. Although David Burke's Watson was not as distinct and memorable, his rendition of the down-to-earth Watson worked quite well as a partner to the flamboyant Holmes.

Asking the students to comment on this 1984 TV visualization, I got very interesting feedback which revealed to me the gap between the production of this TV drama and the society we are living in now.

A lot of what they said related to the “feel” of the drama. Students all commented that it was not exciting enough. There was no misunderstanding about the plot designed by Dr. Roylott, the stepfather who killed off the about-to-marry stepdaughters in order to keep his share of the inheritance from his rich wife. Sherlock’s discussion of the various clues, and how they finally led to his conclusion about how the murder was committed were also understood clearly. However, it was not considered exciting enough by our young students, because of the setting/costume, the manners and behavior of the characters, and also the filming. While the students appreciated the carefully constructed Victorian atmosphere, such as the elegant domestic setting, the costumes, the gentle manner in which the characters spoke (except for Dr. Roylott and Holmes), they could not associate that to murderous excitement. It was to them costume drama, and bore nothing about the excitement of murder in their mind which was so used to fast-paced life.

To put their comments in perspective, I asked them to make a list of what could be done to “improve” the visual narrative to make it a more exciting detective drama for them. Suggestions covered several aspects: a) not surprisingly, the main cast – they would prefer younger Sherlock and John, because they associated youthfulness with knowledge, specifically knowledge in technology, and police work also meant agility and action, all much better performed by young bodies. b) the pace of the narrative – they found this TV drama too slow, too much was said. They would prefer action action, moreover, the editing of the film should enhance the quickness of action. c) ironically, what they called the Victorian mood – the seeming calmness of the setting, the subtlety of emotional and linguistic expression, and the overall repression which was manifested in the lack of blood, physical violence, and explicitly outrageous behavior. The students would rather have things visibly and directly presented, and characters not so polite.

These are very interesting revelations of what young people (19, 20 years old) considered exciting detective drama today. I considered this discussion comparing the Victorian short story the 1980s TV dramatization of “The Adventure of the Speckled Band” a useful one not only because I got to understand how some young people were trained by their experience (from popular culture today) to view this particular genre of fiction, but also to get them to think critically about popular cultural productions of different times. The genteel Granada TV episode of Sherlock Holmes maybe portraying one face of the Victorian culture, but even if they only conduct very brief research into the Whitechapel murders, they would come face to face with a very different picture of the same historical period. The victims of the murders belonged to the poorest classes who lived in London, and very often possessed nothing other than what they had on their body. The police force was not well equipped, and forensic science was very rudimentary (finger printing for investigation was set up at the beginning of the 20th century). This other side of the Victorian culture may not overthrow the generally genteel image normally associated to the Victorian culture, but it lends another dimension to the students’ understanding of the highly polite, even repressive Victorian genteelness.

Critical Thinking 2

From the portrait of repressed desires in the conventional Victorian era, we moved on to another comparison, between the 1891 short story “A Scandal in Bohemia” and the 2012 BBC production of “A Scandal in Belgravia”, which was based on the same story but had great extensions added to it. This was where Irene Adler, whom Sherlock Holmes called The Woman, out of respect and admiration, appeared. The 1891 story and the 2012 TV drama made a very interesting comparison because of the changes that had been made to the story to cater to the appetites of the 2012 audience. The 1891 story was pretty straight-forward, the King of Bohemia sought Sherlock’s help hoping to get back a compromising photo of him and Miss Adler, an opera singer, but also a great artist of disguise. Sherlock lost in this battle of wit with Irene Adler, as she escaped with the compromising photo, which she promised would not be used for blackmailing, just for protection. Finally Sherlock asked the King for a photo of Irene Adler for a souvenir, and even Watson was very surprised that Sherlock the “thinking machine” showed a more human side in wanting to keep a photo of the woman.

Students were all very excited about the BBC production of “A Scandal in Belgravia” because it had been transformed into a very sexy episode. There was Irene Adler, preferring to be called the dominatrix, whose “war dress” (to face Sherlock the great opponent) was her naked body, and the combination to unlock her safe was her body measurements, etc. The compromising photos (yes, no longer singular, but plural) featured her with a female member of the British royal family (thus suggesting a homoerotic relationship of some kind), and her battle with Sherlock was suggestive of a prolonged sexual play. Although Irene commented that “brain is the new sexy”, referring to Sherlock, who incidentally was nicknamed “the virgin”, sexuality was very visible in one way or the other in this supposed drama of detection, moreover detection by Sherlock Holmes the “thinking machine”. Thus students were very surprised to find that the inspiration for the BBC sexy episode came from the straight-forward and completely unsexy “A Scandal in Bohemia”.

A comparison between the two versions, represented in different media and created at different times, gave us something to think about concerning story-telling. The tolerance for explicit representation of sexuality had definitely increased (although BBC received 102 complaints within the first few days since its screening on 1 January 2012), but that did not necessarily mean that the overall attitude towards women and their role in our society had moved forward. (In fact, some feminists were not too happy about the 2012 Irene Adler.) A comparison between the 19th century detective story and a 21st reworking of that same story can be useful in showing not just how technological advancement has changed our understanding of what detection involves, the characteristics of people who engage in it, but also the values people embraced at the time. The detective story may follow an almost standard pattern, but what makes people kill, how they kill, how they avoid to be found out, etc. would make different stories at different periods.

Critical Thinking 3

In the comparison between the Victorian Sherlock and the 21st century Sherlock, a lot of students commented on the “advancement” in science and technology, and used

that as one of the reasons to give merit to the recent TV productions. While it was not particularly important that the students preferred the quick-paced TV drama produced recently, it was a good opportunity to get the students to learn more about the historical and cultural situations of the Victorian age, so that their explanations for supporting either version would be an informed one. It is true that in Conan Doyle's stories, there was no detailed description of any electronic gadgets employed by the police or even Sherlock Holmes for investigation, but the absence of these gadgets might not automatically mean "backward". What was policing like in Victorian England? Was there any training for policemen? How was Sherlock Holmes different from the official police body? How did the law look upon murders in those days? What was the East London demographic condition like? What other official bodies were involved when a murder happened? These questions could help students with a better understanding of the social situation then, and would give a better background to them for making any critical comments about comparing the policing situation now and then.

Creative Communication 1

In Conan Doyle's stories, the first person narrator was Dr. Watson, who was Sherlock Holmes' "partner" in solving the crimes, and also the unofficial chronicler of the adventures. Since most of the adventures they had together were documented (and commented) by Dr. Watson, his descriptions played an important role in how the adventures were perceived, and how the image of Sherlock Holmes was constructed. Very frequently, before Watson the narrator actually told the story of the adventure, he would "rate" the adventure personally, referring sometimes to how unexpected the outcome was, or how puzzling it was at the very beginning. Even before the readers know of the facts of the case, an impression was already formed by the way Watson introduced the story. Also, in the description of the adventure, besides the factual details, he would also give personal comments to how Sherlock Holmes reacted in the various unpredictable or dangerous situations. To a certain extent, readers' impression of the character Sherlock Holmes was not only formed by seeing his actions or manners, but also influenced by Watson's comments.

However, in the BBC production, because the adventures were unfolded visually in front of the audience, the "narration" was somehow more directly constructed by the characters' actions themselves. Depending on what an episode revealed to the audience, basically the characters "spoke" for themselves because the audience could witness their actions and language. Dr. Watson's role as the chronicler, and his influence over the description of the actions and the other characters had been reduced. This was very much felt by the students in the in-class discussion, when we started comparing the two different ways of story-telling. Almost as if to compensate for the loss in influence, and to update the 19th century narrative to match contemporary life, BBC had arranged John Watson to keep a blog, noting Sherlock's adventures and at the same time serving as a kind of publicity.

The interesting thing about Dr. John H. Watson's blog was that not only was it featured in the BBC TV drama, it was also a "real" existence in the world outside the TV drama, a part of the BBC publicity for this creation. This is an interesting example of how a comparison of the two renditions of the same Sherlock Holmes stories could result in observations and insights into not just the literary identity of the

text, but also how the literary text could also be used for demonstrating other useful skills and knowledge. In the BBC webpage publicizing Sherlock, John's blog contained responses from (fictional) readers and some were really trivial and completely out of the way. This is of course something not found in the original Conan Doyle stories, but the modernization of the stories by adding the blog, and the deliberate creation of these irrelevant responses changed the tone of the stories and even the image of the characters, thus creating a new identity which perhaps would be more welcome by the contemporary audience. Judging from the reception of the TV drama, this perhaps was one of the reasons for its popularity – audience identification. Discussion of such differences between the two versions of the stories had shown the students how creative communication, i.e. the different methods of “telling the story” actually changed the identity and the meaning of the stories.

Creative Communication 2

Another pair of examples discussed in class was that between the BBC production of Sherlock and the CBS production of Elementary, which featured a Sherlock Holmes who used to be a drug user and who went over to New York to engage in detective work as part of his rehabilitation. So there are a number of interesting “translations” – from the 19th century to the 21st century, from London to New York, from being private to working closely with the NYPD (although Sherlock had no official status). Sherlock Holmes still worked with extraordinary concentration and power of deduction, but his anti-social personality and his vulnerability (which caused him to use drugs in the first place) was enhanced, which changed somewhat his relationship with his working partner, Dr. Watson. And to make matters more complicated, Dr. Joan Watson was an ex-surgeon who wanted to bury a piece of her past and started a new career as a sober companion, hired by Sherlock's father to monitor his son's progress.

Although both TV dramas were set in the 21st century, these changes in the location, the personal qualities of the two main characters, and the gender of Dr. Watson, make Elementary a completely different story from the BBC Sherlock. I showed about 30 minutes of the first episode of Elementary “Pilot” to my class, and got some very interesting feedback. First of all, not as many students were aware of this TV series, and they were not as overwhelmingly attracted by the drama. I tried to get them to explain what they liked and didn't like about the two series, and it was interesting to see that although both were detective drama, the students' comments had nothing to do with the plot, the method of detection, the complexity of the crime, etc. They were all to do with the creation of the characters, the relationship between Holmes and Watson, and the way the visual narratives unfolded. To put it very simply, they had no comments about the methods by which these two Sherlock Holmes came to their conclusion, but they liked the BBC Sherlock and the way he worked with John Watson (taking advantage of John, and sometimes even making a fool of him) and then claimed that Sherlock in Cumberbatch's rendition was a cleverer detective. They also felt that the 90-minute episodes of BBC Sherlock much more intense and fast-paced than the 60-minute episodes of CBS Elementary. Mostly they liked the visual effects created by the very short and fragmented cuts in the BBC Sherlock. In other words, the creative communication method adopted by the BBC Sherlock had almost changed the identity of the story so much that the audience was no longer looking upon it as a detective drama.

Emotional Literacy

Emotional literacy is a relatively new term in the field of education. “To be emotionally literate is to be able to handle emotions in a way that improves your personal power and improves the quality of life around you. Emotional literacy improves relationships, creates loving possibilities between people, makes cooperative work possible, and facilitates the feeling of community” (Brian Matthews, 69). Although this is not a psychology class, to be emotionally literate is such an essential human ability that there is really no reason why it is exclusively taught in specific disciplinary courses. The humanities, with its historical background, and the nature of its content, is actually an ideal site to introduce emotional literacy into its participants. Even in the case of detective fiction such as the Sherlock Holmes stories, one can find ways of highlighting the different emotions, their causes, their visible manifestations, and how they influence our lives and our well-being.

Sherlock Holmes, in his many reincarnations, proved to be an ideal example for comparison and analysis in relation to discussing emotional literacy. In Conan Doyle’s story, Watson referred to Holmes as the “thinking machine” (that’s why he was so surprised by Holmes’ request to keep Irene Adler’s photo after being defeated by her), who was also a martial arts master, a violinist, a drug user, and someone prone to melancholy, among other things. This profile gave us a sense of the character, and allowed us to interpret and understand his responses to many of the situations in the adventures. On top of everything else, Sherlock Holmes was also an excellent character reader – his knowledge in human psychology helped him understand the motive, and the methods used by the criminals. So very often in reading the adventures, readers are not only “knowing” Sherlock through his actions and Watson’s personal comments about him. Readers are also taking a lesson on emotional literacy when Sherlock explained how he came to certain conclusions about the thoughts and feelings of the criminals.

BBC’s Sherlock had taken the basic character of Sherlock Holmes from Conan Doyle’s stories, but it had also selectively enhanced certain features to satisfy a more modern society and audience. Sherlock’s ability to use highly advanced technology was not only a feature of his talents, but also an indirectly enhancement of the “anti-social” aspect of this character, making him even more of a loner because he was surrounded by electronic gadgets. It was a useful and enlightening exercise to ask students to analyze Sherlock’s interpersonal relationships to reveal more the human inside. Of particular interest in this TV series was his relationship with John Watson, his own brother Mycroft (who featured much more than in the 19th century stories), the landlady Mrs. Hudson, Molly the coroner, Inspector Lestrade, and his arch-enemy Moriarty. Why did Sherlock maintain or fail to maintain a relationship with these characters? What were the feelings and thoughts behind his decisions about the way to interact with these characters? As Sherlock was visual drama, analysis of facial expressions, body language, and the verbal language could very easily be done.

When we came to review CBS’s Elementary, we saw some significant changes made to the basic setting and composition of the Holmes stories. Besides Sherlock being relocated to New York, there were changes in Sherlock’s most fundamental relationships. His partner was now a female doctor, an ex-surgeon who had a history of her own, and even his arch-enemy Moriarty was now a female character.

Sherlock's relationship with those who were closest to him thus acquired an additional dimension, that of ambiguity, because of the subtle manifestations of sexuality in all these encounters. The sexual intervention actually changed Sherlock's relationship with his own brother Mycroft in this CBS production. And his love and hate struggles with Moriarty made his involvement with this highly intelligent but ruthless criminal mastermind extremely complicated and tangled. Among all these complicated and intricate personal relationships, Sherlock Holmes the central character was previously a drug user, and was constantly reminded that the old habit could attack him when he was vulnerable. The creator of Sherlock Holmes might not like these changes to his genius, but in terms of character construction, this newly created vulnerable human being provides plenty of opportunities for us to illustrate different emotions and how they have play a part in our most basic daily encounters with others and with ourselves.

Conclusion

The literature classroom in Hong Kong can be very interactive and interesting even when the default language (medium of instruction) is not the students' mother tongue. One method to enhance learning is to carefully work on the choice of material and teaching and learning activities. This paper has suggested that an icon in popular culture can be creatively used in the literature classroom to teach not just the literature itself, but also be used to teach other essential and transferable skills to university students. I had used Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories and several popular adaptations of the stories as raw materials for students to explore not only the content of the written story, but to use these stories as stepping stones to move into other area such as critical thinking, creative communication, and emotional literacy. Finally, let me conclude by saying that literature is not only just the content, but also the container, which carries interesting and rich possibilities for educators to enhance student learning in many different ways.

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Reflection of Fate in Epic -Mythological Heroes: Beowulf and Rustam

Azadeh Mehpouyan, Bharati Viyapeeth University, India
Seyedeh Samereh Abbasnezhad Banehmir,
Islamic Azad University Central Tehran Branch, Iran

The European Conference on Literature and Librarianship 2014
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract

This paper examines the effect of fate on epic-mythological heroes in the west and east societies. This research also investigates to determine the archetypal form and function of two epic works from two different literatures and societies that the texts meaning are shaped by cultural and psychological myths. The mythological basic forms of epic heroes made concrete by recurring images, symbols, and patterns of "fate" aspect which may include motifs such as the 'quest' in the recognizable characters and their conflicts as individual symbols which can be extendable to old and modern society.

The discussion of proposed materials and hypothesis are outlined through Hero-Archetype Method then the fate and its effective factors are highlighted finally death justified and detailed. A universal form is recognized in the traits of epic-mythological heroes in the selected epic characters e.g. Beowulf (British Literature) and Rustam (Persian Literature). Death is the end of fate and destiny. In conclusion, the results confirm no escape exists from the fate and its involved characters even epic-mythological ones.

Keywords: Myth, Epic, Fate, Hero, Society, Beowulf, Rustam

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1. Introduction

Fate is the development of events outside a person's control, regarded as predetermined by a supernatural power. (Oxford Dictionary, 2013) Fate in term means sentence and the eternal judgment which arises directly from the will of God and no authority rises from man side.

According to Greek mythology, the Fates have the subtle but awesome power of deciding a man's destiny. They assign a man to good or evil. Their most obvious choice is choosing how long a man lives. There are three Fates. Clotho, the spinner, who spins the thread of life. Lachesis, the measurer, who chooses the lot in life one will have and measures off how long it is to be. Atropos, she who cannot be turned, who at death with her shears cuts the thread of life. The Fates are old and predate the gods. It is not entirely clear how far their power extends. It is possible that they determine the fate of the gods as well. In any case, not even the most powerful is willing to trifle with them.

The belief in fate existed among Aryans¹ and they referred the fate to supernatural forces. Such this belief can be found in the variety of religions and God e.g. Zurvanism, Mazdyasna(after Zoroastrian) , Mithraism (Razi,2005) The existence of a God can be observed in most ancient cultures and literature which pose a connection with death and time. Whether in west or east, time is considered as super power². (Gozashti et al., 2009) e.g. Zurvan³ appeared as the God of infinite (Zaehner, 1955) time in Iran on the other hand Chronos is the god of time in Greece. Zurvan is also the god of destiny, light and darkness in Indo-Iranian and Greco-Roman religion of Mithraism. The Middle Persian name derives from Avestan zurvan-, "time" or "old age"(Zaehner,2008) In fact, Zurvan emerged as a God which creates good and evil forces in the universe.(Akbari Mafakher,2008)

An epic hero is a main character in an epic whose legendary or heroic actions are central to his/her culture, race, or nation. (21st century Lexicon, 2014)

The main character in an epic poem--typically one who embodies the values of his or her culture. For instance, Odysseus is the epic hero in the Greek epic called The Odyssey--in which he embodies the cleverness and fast-thinking Greek culture admired. Aeneas is the epic hero in the Roman epic The Aeneid--in which he embodies the pietas, patriotism, and the four cardinal virtues the Romans admired. If we stretch the term epic more broadly beyond the strict confines of the Greco-Roman tradition, we might read Beowulf as loosely as an epic hero of Beowulf and Moses as the epic hero of Exodus e.g. Rostam as a great epic-hero in shahnameh, Persian epic.(Literary Terms and Definitions,2014)

¹ The term "Aryan" has been replaced in most cases by the terms "Indo-Iranian" and "Indo-European", and "Aryan" is now mostly limited to its appearance in the term "Indo-Aryan" for Indic languages and their speakers (Encyclopædia Britannica,2014)

² .Note: It can be claimed the first selected Godness was the God of Time by people.

³ Note: The history of believing in Zurvan refers to Achaemenian Dynasty but its roots arise from religious concepts before Zarathustra.

The principal objective is to investigate the effect of fate on epic-mythic heroes in the west and east literature. This study also attempts to evaluate the archetypal form and function of two ancient literature with a focus on the texts meaning which shaped by cultural and psychological myths. Fate is examined as cultural belief in literature. A proposed hypothesis is no escape from fate and density in epic.

Beowulf and Rustam are selected as mythic-epic heroes in present study. Both heroes belong to ancient literature from west (Britain) and east (Persia) respectively. Further, their epic expression and fame continues up to today world then they became symbolic characters in cultural and literary values. The role of fate in epic works is considerable because the fate tied with people's culture in the society. Thus, the frequency of fate usage in the literary works increased during medieval era particularly in epic genre.

This paper is organized as follows. First, epic heroes are studied in details. The characteristics of these epic-mythic heroes are evaluated. The effect of the fate on these heroes then justified and the detailed methodology described. The results are discussed next, followed by the literary, cultural, and psychological mythology are highlighted. The limitations of this research are outlined and future research directions are provided in conclusion.

2. Discussion

Beowulf is a legendary Geatish hero and kills monsters and dragons (Figure.1) and later turned king in the epic poem named after him, one of the oldest surviving pieces of literature in the English language. Beowulf is the conventional title (Robinson,2001) of an Old English epic poem consisting of 3182 alliterative long lines, set in Scandinavia, commonly cited as one of the most important works of Anglo-Saxon literature to the fact that it is the oldest surviving epic poem of Old English and also the earliest vernacular English literature⁴. (2014)

The full poem survives in the manuscript known as the Nowell Codex, located in the British Library. Written in England, its composition by an anonymous Anglo-Saxon poet[a] is dated between the 8th (Tolkien, 1958; Heatt, 1983) and the early 11th century. (Chase,1997)In 1731, the manuscript was badly damaged by a fire that swept through Ashburnham House in London that had a collection of medieval manuscripts assembled by Sir Robert Bruce Cotton. The poem's existence for its first seven centuries or so made no impression on writers and scholars, and besides a brief mention in a 1705 catalogue by Humfrey Wanley it was not studied until the end of the 18th century, and not published in its entirety until Johan Bülow funded the 1815 Latin translation, prepared by the Icelandic-Danish scholar Grímur Jónsson Thorkelin. (Mitchell and Robinson, 2001) After a heated debate with Thorkelin, Bülow offered to support a new translation by N.F.S. Grundtvig — this time into Danish. The result, *Bjovulfs Drape* (1820), was the first modern language translation of Beowulf. In the poem, Beowulf, a hero of the Geats in Scandinavia, comes to the aid of Hroðgar, the king of the Danes, whose mead hall (in Heorot) has been under attack by a monster known as Grendel. After Beowulf slays him, Grendel's mother attacks the hall and is

⁴ <http://historymedren.about.com/od/beowulf/p/beowulf.htm> Retrieved 15 July 2014

then also defeated. Victorious, Beowulf goes home to Geatland in Sweden and later becomes king of the Geats. After a period of fifty years has passed, Beowulf defeats a dragon, but is fatally wounded in the battle. After his death, his attendants bury him in a tumulus, a burial mound, in Geatland.



Fig.1. Beowulf is killing a dragon

Rustam is the epic hero of the story who fights evils, monsters, and dragons (Figure.2), Rustam is a part of the Persian epic of Shahnameh in Persian mythology, and son of Zal and Rudaba. In some ways, the position of Rustam in the historical tradition is parallel to that of Surena (Bivar, 1983), the hero of the Battle of Carrhae. Rustam was always represented as the mightiest of Iranian paladins (warriors), and the atmosphere of the episodes in which he features is strongly reminiscent of the Arsacid period. He was immortalized by the 10th-century poet Ferdowsi of Tus in the Shahnameh or Epic of Kings, which contain pre-Islamic folklore and history. In Persian mythology, Rustam is an epic hero in Persian epic of Shahnameh. He received the chance to be appeared as great Iranian paladin in shahnameh and became immortal in the mythological world.

Rustam is an Iranian free hero who fights to save glorious ideals such as freedom, honesty, chivalry, justice, patriotism. He is a complete hero in an epic and possesses an ideal human although he suffers from human flaws. (Bivar, 1983)



Fig.2. Rustam Slaying The Dragon by Adel Adili

2.1. Characteristics of Epic Hero

There are certain characteristics of epic hero⁵. An epic hero:

- a. excels in skill, strength, and courage
- b. succeeds in war and adventure
- c. Values honor and glory
- d. Usually has a guide
- e. Battles demons or monsters
- f. Is generous to his followers but ruthless to enemies
- g. Is a man of action
- h. Accepts challenges and sometimes invites problems
- i. Sometimes make rash decisions and takes unnecessary risks
- j. Meets monsters and temptations
- k. Encounters women who tempt him
- l. Descends into darkness (often the underworld)
- m. Achieves his goal

2.2. Effects of the fate on epic-mythic heroes: Beowulf and Rustam

Beowulf and Rustam live successfully and proudly but they also undergo their bitter destiny, unhappy fate like common people.

The story of Rustam and Esfandiar

Esfandiar is an Iranian hero and an invulnerable prince. He is the son of Goshtasb, the Kiani king. Goshtasb promises to leave him the crown if he wins the battle. After that Goshtasb promises him the throne if Esfandiar spreads Zoroastrianism in the world and brings infidels into this religion. Esfandiar spreads Zoroastrianism all over the world, but again Goshtasb fails to carry out his promise. He not only does not bestow the crown upon him but also orders to jail him in Gunbadan fortress because a person called "Gorazm" speaks ill about Esfandiar. Arjasp attacks Iran. Goshtasb is unable to confront him, therefore, he asks Esfandiar, who is imprisoned, to stand against Turanians, and he accepts. After defeating them, Esfandiar goes to Royin fortress according to the Kayanian king's wish. He rescues his sisters who had been imprisoned there. He takes a lot of risks to save them and passes the Seven Trials, but once again the king reneges on his promise and resorts to another trick. Goshtasb asks Esfandiar to go to Zabol and bring Rustam bound. Esfandiar rejects at first but accepts after discussing it with his father and prepares himself to go to Zabolestan.

Rustam warned him repeatedly not to fight in Zabolestan, but he refrains and finally war breaks out between them. Rustam becomes wounded and helpless. Zal, Rustam's father, asks Simurgh to help him and Simurgh shows Rustam how to kill Esfandiar, and teaches him how to make an arrow to hit the eyes of Esfandiar, his weak spot but suggest not to do that and tries to make him cancel the battle. If these words do not work, you can continue the flight. On the other hand, Zal (Rustam's father) and

⁵ <http://quizlet.com/12321584/13-characteristics-of-an-epic-hero-flash-cards/> Accessed: 12 July, 2014

Simurgh (benevolent and mythical flying creature) both warned Rustam if he kills Esfandiar, he will be destroyed after that. (Fig.3)



Fig.3. Simurgh is advising Rustam about his battle with Esfandiar

Although, Rustam received this warn and he knew his fate and destiny in the end but he could not admit the shame of dragging captivity and saved his dignity. However, Esfandiar is killed by Rustam. (Fig.4)



Fig.4. Battle of Rustam and Esfandiar

Below lines remark how the Simurgh succored Rustam in his battle with Esfandiar:

This fosterling of bane. Aim at his eyes,
 Straight, with both hands as one that worshipping
 The tamarisk, and Destiny will bear
 The arrow thither straight. He will be blinded,
 And fortune rage at him."
 Then the Simurgh,
 Embracing Zal as woof embraceth warp

In bidding him farewell, took flight content,
 While Rustam, when he saw her in the air,
 Took order to prepare a goodly fire,
 And straightened out thereby the tamarisk wood.
 He fitted arrow-heads upon the shaft,
 And fixed the feathers to the finished haft

The fate which was warned by Simurgh to Rustam happened to him; eventually, Rustam was killed by Shaghad (his step-brother) after killing Esfandiar.

3. Findings and Results

Fate in epic stories possesses an important role in Shahnameh and Beowulf. The epic heroes endeavor to encounter their imminent fate or escape this fate in spite of their awareness and authority on their own fate. However, their attempts lead to other incidents which have already been marked. Despite of epic stories and Greek tragedies, Gods sometimes come in the middle of battle and human lives to reach their own wants but the fate goes forward through the story elements and heroes' works in Shahnameh. Perdition and foreseeing by astrologists enter the stories in the best way in Shahnameh and the spirit of the stories can be shaped along with fate. Fate covers the realistic eyes of epic heroes then the heroes steps into altar and trap into the tragedy thus, inability of human being versus fate picture effectively. (Mehraki and Bahrami Rahnama, 2010)

Rustam and Beowulf have all features of idealist heroes; however, they are not free from human weaknesses. Their victory in the battles is indebted wisdom, power, glory and divine quality (Far (r)). Farr equals fate. (Fakhre eslam and Arabiani,2010) Whoever gains Farr, will obtain glory and kingship.

The remarkable elements of glory, courage, fame, kingship, fate and God are observed in Beowulf even in Rustam. Beowulf was from Anglo-Saxons who lived in and ruled England from the fifth century AD until the Norman Conquest. They were a people who valued courage and leadership. They lived under kings who were "keepers of gold" and were guarded by their loyal thanes (knights). They were a Pagan culture until the Normandy conquistadors came. They believed in fate and believed the only way to live forever was if a man had fame. In the Anglo-Saxon book, Beowulf, there was a combination of many different people. The characters in Beowulf are defined by their status. Their status was in form of their fame and accomplishments. Beowulf was a very famous warrior, who sails to the Danes to kill a monster who is murdering their people. Beowulf kills Grendel, Grendel's mother and a dragon throughout the entirety of the story.

The dragon (Fig.5) is the poem's most potent symbol, embodying the idea of wyrd, or fate which imbues the story with an atmosphere of doom and death. Whereas Beowulf is essentially invulnerable to Grendel and his mother, he is in danger from the beginning against the dragon.



Fig.5.Dragon in Beowulf

As Beowulf feels his own death approaching, the dragon emerges from the earth, creating the feeling that the inevitable clash will result in Beowulf's death. The poet emphasizes Beowulf's reluctance to meet death, to "give ground like that and go / unwillingly to inhabit another home / in a place beyond" (Beowulf, 2588–2590). This poetic evocation of death as constituting movement from one realm to another—from the earthly realm to the spiritual one—reveals the influence of Christian ideology on the generally pagan Beowulf. It is also poignant from the perspective of the warrior ethos, in which leaving one's homeland, the anchor of one's entire identity, is a very serious and significant undertaking. On the other side, Simurgh (Fig.6) in shahanameh is symbol of fate because she is only way to let Rustam know about his final destiny. In the battle of Rustam and Esfandiar, Simurgh told Rustam as follows:

Said the Simurgh to him: "I will declare
 In love to thee the secret of the sky
 Whoe'er shall shed that hero's blood will be
 Himself pursued by fortune. Furthermore
 Throughout his life he will abide in travail,
 Find no escape therefrom, and lose his treasures,
 Be luckless in this world and afterward
 In pain and anguish. If thou art content
 With this, and present triumph o'er thy foe,
 I will reveal to thee this night a wonder,
 And bar for thee the lip from evil words."
 "I am content," he said to her, "and now
 Say what thou wilt. We leave the world behind
 As our memorial and pass away,
 And there is nothing left of any man,
 Save the report of him. If I shall die
 With fair fame all is well with me, but fame
 I must have for the body is for death."



Fig.6.Simurgh

In fact, fate is a principal element in epic, Heroes and great characters play important roles hence a supernatural force should be used for tightening epic heroes. Then, fate is the most powerful force in epic. All epic heroes defeat fate. (Mehrahi and Bahrami Rahnama, 2010)

Every time Beowulf receives more fame and more glory by killing dragon. Beowulf became a king. He was a great king who received honor and loyalty from his men. Although, during the fight with the dragon Beowulf's men run away and as a result Beowulf dies. The original book of Beowulf claims that Beowulf had fate against him in his last battle against the dragon, but also says that Beowulf had Christian morals. By having two conflicting religions (paganism and Christianity) it makes the story more interesting. This book is composed of four main characteristics: fame, kingship, fate, and God, which play essential roles throughout the book.

In Beowulf, the Anglo-Saxons longed for fame. To them fame meant immortality. For example, the narrator says, "But Beowulf longing only for fame, leaped into battle" (Raffel 1529). To Beowulf the only reason to risk his life in a battle, is so he can have his moments of fame, hence immortality. Even if a character gains fame, they will always be fighting to receive more. After Beowulf becomes king one of his servants says, "Beloved Beowulf, remember how a man boasted, once, that nothing in the world would ever destroy the fame: you fight to keep in now, be strong and brave, my noble king, protecting life and fame together" (Beowulf, 2586). So even though Beowulf had fame, he had to keep fighting and being successful in order to protect and keep his fame. Once an Anglo-Saxon had enough fame his name was known throughout the world. The narrator explains this by saying, "Now the Lord of all life, Ruler of glory, blessed them with a prince, Beowulf, whose power and fame soon spread throughout the world" (Beowulf,16). Beowulf had accumulated so much fame that throughout the world people knew of him and his accomplishments. Fame was so very important to the Anglo-Saxon's that they would give up their lives and the lives of others if only to receive it for a minute. All human's fate end to death, the only

thing keeps a man immortal is fame. Heroes can be immortal through their fame for fighting against evil.

The Anglo-Saxon's beliefs were Pagan. They didn't believe in a god, they thought when a man die he/she is just dead. They believe that they cannot control their own fate. In Beowulf, they say, "Fate will unwind as it must" (Beowulf,455). Fate will go however it wants, if it is the fate to be eaten by a monster, then nothing a man can do will change that. They believe that fate saves lives. Ongetho had been stabbed in the head, but "fate let him recover, live on" (Beowulf, 2975-2977). Ongetho should have died right then, but fate had other plans for him. In this story the scop speaks of fate as a person or a thing. "Fate has swept our race away, taken warriors in their strength and led them to death that was waiting" (Beowulf,2184-2816). He spoke of fate as a noun, he says that fate is responsible for death.

The time that this story was originally told was of the Anglo-Saxons, who didn't believe in God. However the original author of this book was Christian and lent many of his Christian thoughts to this book. For example the book says about Grendal, "By God punished forever for crime for Abel's death" (Beowulf, 107). The author is referring to a part in the Christian's bible where Cain had killed his brother Abel. Even Beowulf, who was supposed to be a pagan, had Christian morals. The scop says, "Beowulf's sorrow beat at his heart; he accused himself of breaking God's law" (Beowulf, 2327-2329). Beowulf was an Anglo-Saxon pagan, so why would it matter to him what "God's laws" were? This book has conflicting beliefs, at one point they say fate is in control of everything and in another, God is in control. When they were pagan and then they converted to Christianity in both periods, they were submissive to fate. In pagan status, they believe the end of all density is death and no one can do anything against it. As they became Christian, they believe their fate is under the control of God and they are unable to do versus their fate.

The story of Beowulf and Rustam are composed of four main character traits: fame, kingship, fate and God. The characters are based on their ratio of these four traits. Fame was highly desired for the need of the epic heroes' want to live forever. For Beowulf, kingship was the bases of the community; if they had a terrible king they will have terrible living conditions. For Rustam, Kingship is not the matter, nation and their freedom is his final end. Fate played a role in everything the Anglo-Saxons ever did, be it a battle or what they were going to have for dinner.

Zurvanism is one of the ancient religions in Iran which affect Persian literature particularly Epic genre. Zurvanism is a religion based on absolute power of fate. In Zurvanian ideology, fate is an absolute ruler. Life begins with God's want and Zuravan has full control on the destiny. (Dolatabadi,2000) In such this world, human wishes destroy and the wisdom of such this world has to admit everything by nature and forget wishing any change.(Khalili,2005) However, time and fate deities are personifications of time, often in the sense of human lifetime and human fate, in polytheistic religions. In monotheism, Time can still be personified, as in Father Time in European folklore or Zurvan in Persian (Zoroastrian) tradition. In the book of Ecclesiastes in the Hebrew Bible, the terms `iddan "time" vs. zēman "season" expresses a contrast similar to that of Greek Chronos vs. Kairos.

Although the protagonist, Rustam in shahnameh, received warn and was aware of his fate after killing Esfandiar, he could not change his fate. Fate belief in Zurvan is highlighted specially in the battle of Rustam and Esfandiar. Rustam admitted his destiny intentionally and steered to the death. This is the painful epic which a man sacrifices himself wisely for immortality. (Meskob, 1963)

The same trend appears in the battle of Beowulf and Grendel. Beowulf received a warn of failed destiny via old king but he could not take old king's advice and he had to admit his known fate, death.(Fig.7) Death emerges in any fate even for epic-mythic heroes' such as Beowulf and Rustam in Greek mythology and Persian mythology.



Fig.7. Death sence of Beowulf after killing dragon

In Persian mythology, believing in Death is also one of the many beliefs of Zurvan. Zurvan, as the ultimate source of the fate of the world, has ordained the law and order of all matters and there is no way of escaping those general principles. There is a beginning and ending for every phenomenon and should be passed through the specified path and reach the final destination. Such orders are also applicable to human beings.

Death is the end point of every life. The manifestation of death in Shahnameh is quite synonymous with those evidenced in Zurvan doctrine to the extent that the invalidity of the world and carpe diem has been discussed in Shahnameh.

Christianity was what the characters in this story based their morals on, even though the original story had nothing to do with God. The society today still lives on most of these same characteristics. In the society today fame is the highest of goals, we as a society put fame and being known above decency and morals. The king (president) is usually looked upon to give out rewards and orders as the kings in the time of the Anglo-Saxons. A country is also divided up between atheist (modern day pagans) and Christians. We have become a country whose heroes are no longer the people who are courageous or even a decent person. The heroes have become the people who have achieved fame and even fortune. The heroes no longer have to make a difference in the world. The heroes only have to act in a few movies or play a good game of football or baseball. To Rustam in Persian epic, kingship is not the goal but humanism and patriotism are the ends; however, fame is still a core both epic-mythic heroes: Rustam and Beowulf. As a result, all features and function of selected epic

heroes are extraordinary and supernatural. The peculiarity of national epic requires such these qualities for a hero. The researcher recommended examining “Mono-myth in Epic Genre” in the future study.

4. Conclusion

Fate is the general traditions and infrangible laws which rule over people. The impact of these traditions is final and infrangible on people’s happiness and misery. The results of present paper confirm no escape exists from the fate and its involved characters even for epic-mythological ones. These heroes know that they cannot change their fate which leads to death but they attempt to be immortal by their fame of glory, courage, and kingship. Some ways exist to become aware of their fate including warning from a wise character, dreaming, foreseeing, etc.

An important point should be noted: In spite of people are aware of their own fate or they have been aware of it, e.g. Simorgh’s warn to Rostam and King Hrothgar’s warn to Beowulf, they can’t fight against their destiny.

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