Eve and Her Beings: A Chopin-Brainard Simulation

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Abstract
By principle, Plato was able to carry out the ideals of life through mimesis. In this study, the extent of mimesis being the foundation of literature is put premium. The question as to whether or not time has ultimately changed the traditional mimetic concept is certainly at the fore of the conversation with respect to the 'woman' archetype which in this study undergoes simulation. The word 'simulation' having its weak propensity to mean any other than 'reinvention' bears the record of the enduring strength of time to infinitely regress. A lot of intriguing discussions arise around the concept of 'simulacra' : Eve, Edna, Magdalena along with many others against the boundless perspective of simulation. Eve through Edna in Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* and Magdalena in Cecilia Manguerra-Brainard's *Magdalena* are technically called the 'simeotic objects' as per Charles Sanders Peirce's concept in Merrell's essay (2001) .

They may represent the object of woman but many of their qualities deviate from the original object---'the real object' . On a highly unpredictable note of Girard, mimesis becomes significantly stratified to highlight the different levels that explain how humans imitate or desire. Precisely attacking the unusual phenomenon of imitation as one that does not completely copy(the study's assumption) is *conflictual mimesis*. In the hope of elaborating on the seemingly 'avante-garde' concept of this type of mimesis, this literary investigation looks into some of the texts' elements and other modes of mimesis relative to the process of simulation.

Introduction

Literary pieces are seen as copies of realities. Everything that one reads is basically an imitation of the things that can be perceived with the five senses. According to Plato , it is a copy of reality while Aristotle argues that it is twice removed from reality therefore making it a copy of a copy of reality. For Aristotle "to imitate is not to produce a copy or mirror reflection of some things but involves a complete mediation of reality" (Bachelor and Master). This is so because literature is treated as a perfect representation of reality which is nature itself.

The simplicity of Plato's presentation as opposed to Aristotle's creates ideas that allow one to see the level of sophistication imbedded in the argument of the latter. While it is true that mimesis involves replication Aristotle's on the other hand also involves the same philosophy; however, reality is more observed in the 'mediation' technique. This creates more understanding of the factors that surround the object so that one is drawn to perhaps finally conclude that these factors have inexcusable effects, say radiations, to the object that receives great attention. The principle of mediation is a highly realistic concern that explains the possibility of changes that govern the new form of which other objects built strengths upon. In 'mediation' meaning takes multiple shifts for varying concepts to form. Baudrillard (1994) affirms that "people live by an idealism of meaning" which in turn breeds the "catastrophe of meaning." As it breaks into different ideal interpretations, the meaning intensifies the ironic standpoint. He adds: "Beyond meaning, there is the fascination that results from the neutralization and implosion of meaning"(83).

People throughout history are not without knowledge on ideal codes. Such examples are treated with respect to how milieus construct their ideal meanings. In this study, the value of women is taken to a higher level of speculation. The need to evaluate this concept compels those who believe in the specific role that women play then and now. Eve being the first woman created is a manifestation of God's authority to decide what is best for mankind. The whole of humanity is in dire need of a complimentary force that seemingly equals the one in authority --- man. With this, both are deemed inseparable for the purpose of fulfilling the dual responsibility of inventing and reinventing. Relative to the needs of man comes the position of woman to be carefully assessed. The specific partnership is tremendously accountable for whatever problems are met and the consequences of the responses taken.

In view of the recurring issues about women's fulfillment of specific roles, the essence of juxtaposing the woman and others (Eve ,Edna and Magdalena) cannot at all be avoided for their characteristics become points of reference by which replication may be confirmed.

Within the context of the rationale this paper is conceived of. This study argues that Eve (emanating from the 'real' woman) is reinvented in Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* and Cecilia Manguerra-Brainard's *Magdalena*. It is further assumed that the copies are more than the 'real' as purported by Peter Brooker in *Cultural Theory: A Glossary* (1999).This he logically concludes as more believable as the 'autonomous simulacra' become free from all references to the real (121-122).

Results and Discussion

Language Strength and Vulnerability : Ancient to Orient
The act of 'mediation' as Aristotle's main concern hinges on the availability of specific codes that govern the existence of an object. The linguistic phenomenon surpassing the stability of rules streamlines the climate where the object (the archetype) takes on a different form and adorns itself several pieces that determine the fashion it now seeks to establish. One can argue that the form may still be nothing different from the object that it copies but the milieu through the timelines may be seen as a shifting construct of reality's representation, a fact strengthened by Bocholtz (1994) who maintains the idea that "language is only one social activity among many and that it takes much of its meaning(…) from the other practices that surround it."

Implosion of meaning explains the weakening of previously established concepts. At the core of mediation (where implosion occurs) lies the undisputable notion that Baudrillard (1994), a postmodernist, reiterates:

> To a system whose argument is oppression and repression,
> the strategic resistance is the liberating claim of subjecthood.
> but this strategy is more reflective of the earlier phase of the
> system and even if we are still confronted with it, it is no
> longer the strategic terrain; the current argument of the system
> is to maximize speech, the maximum production of meaning.
> Thus the strategic resistance is that of the refusal of meaning
> and of the spoken word----or of the hyperconformist
> simulation of the very mechanisms of the system, which is a
> form of refusal and of non-reception (85).

Principles have changed and they are for the benefit of those who acknowledge the inadequacy of one meaning to explain objects in an array of contexts. Production of meaning seems to have taken the strongest position toward the bending of traditional paradigms so that the world builds specific views rather than predetermined generalities. Following the contour of 'non-reception', this study seeks to maintain relativity in the contexts of the Bible, Western society and the Orient.

Before Eve, the Bible is clear about God's desire to create Eve for Adam. The scenario in itself presents the 'desire' which is pure and copied from no other (as there is none other that predates this creation of woman). At the creation of Eve there emerges a copy placed in a context like no other 'paradise'. This first level of representation is basically set by the 'Creator' who Himself decides for the climate within which Eve should operate alongside her partner 'Adam'. One may see this climate very free and pure through which language also could decisively sculpt the form of the woman who eventually falls under grace.

Surprisingly, amidst the perfect environment emerges the ultimate commandment that introduces sin which is first exposed by the commandment given to both of them. Eve's existence is heralded by the bounds of her own environment. Her presence in the paradise is not to be seen as an absolutely free survival. The ideal is obviously represented by a flawed object who in her capacity allows temptation to open her

senses. What happened to Eve after giving in to her lust is explained in simple linguistic codes:

> Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow
> and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children;
> and thy desire shall be to thy husband (Genesis 3:16 KJV).

These are clear justifications of her being 'flawed'---- a characteristic not originally imbedded in the 'real object'. The mediation that now occurs has the inherent processes of punishment and ultimately rejection. The complexity of the event breeds another inherent trait or set of traits that are complex evolutions of prior characteristics compromised by the 'first representation', that is, Eve ("And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living"- Genesis 3:20 KJV) as she is bound to eventually do it since the introduction of the law:

> (16)And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree
> Of the garden thou mayest freely eat:(17) but of the tree of the
> Knowledge of good and evil, thou shall not eat of it: for in the
> Day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die (Genesis 2:16-
> 17 KJV).

It was only after the woman sinned that the name was given. Specific meanings to every name in the Bible are not without significance. Essentially she is called Eve as she is the 'mother' who first bore the first offsprings that populated on earth. Arriving at the moment when Eve has to experience pain concludes the wrath of God upon her and Adam which consequently draws the line between the original and the simulacrum. Deviations from here on are to be observed since they justify the intervention of a necessary understanding as to why the 'representamen' behaves otherwise.

Looking at the strong and weak points of the language, it is needless to say that the context is central to how one perceives it to be either powerful or vulnerable. Saussure (1 966) contends that: "Language is a social institution, made up of rules and conventions that have been systematized … ." One may opt to imagine the 'Eve' as a strong character but the common likelihood is that anyone would undeniably downplay these positive ideas because of the prevailing associations with it such as *suffering, pain, agony, curse,* and so on as can be inferred in Genesis 3:16. In the paradise one sees all the ideals----elements of an elusive space ('elusive' if seen from the people of today's perspective). In the paradise one eliminates the negativities that revolve around the sinner's existence. In the paradise where the first commission of sin happened Eve is immortalized throughout history (at least to those who believe in the infallible Book) as the temptress and the weaker vessel. This leads one to finding the degree of digression from the 'real' object.

The extent of pure imitation, therefore, is only possible up to where the linguistic code that confines people in a particular context such as names and not so sophisticated descriptions would start to depart from the already established concepts of 'real' objects. However, the point of departure still merits the value of imitation in a sense that the struggle to conform to what is ideal is absent. This may sound illogical but Girard (www.uk.sagepub.com) reveals a mode of mimesis which he refers mostly as

pacific mimesis. He argues that this mode occurs certainly in situations where the 'model' (known in this study as 'real' object) is far from the 'disciple' (known in this study as 'representamen'). There is clearly no competition between the two considering the sublime position of the one being copied and the contexts where these two exist.

Having thus far elaborated on Eve's becoming, there is already a step made toward discovering the emergence of another simulacrum. In this particular determination of commonalities among the woman, Eve and Edna through simulation, the same process will be employed. First, assessment of Edna's milieu is going to give credit to the common practice during her time as constructed by the author, Chopin:

> The sun was low in the west, and the breeze soft and languorous that came up from the south, charged with the seductive odor of the sea. Children freshly befur belowed, were gathering for their games under the oaks. Their voices were high and penetrating *(www.gutenberg.org)*.

One can almost taste and feel what is meant to be tasted and felt in the narrative. The literary touch of nature overwhelms the entire passage with beauty that one can easily locate the presence of time and place rolled into one distinctive panoramic view in a society cultivated by French inhabitants. Louisiana goes beyond   mere adoption of history as Creole comes alive in the expressions and certain names: "Passez! Adieu! Allezvous-en!; Sapristi! , Pontellier, Lebrun and Ratignolle.

Edna, a character catapulted to the age of industrialization, is set at quite a distance from Eve, an ancient and Biblical figure. Instant observations can be made in the milieus as having shared physical qualities of peace and rejuvenation. Although not using the Old English convention, Chopin is able to create Edna some space for contemplation in a new fashion as in *languorous, soft breeze; seductive odor of the sea' children playing and oak trees*. Having children in the context does not however make it far from the Biblical locale for it retains the elements of the ecosystem.

Regardless of what happened with the children, it is clear that the character, like Eve , experiences a kind of freedom within her own realm. She is blessed with the abundance of sea breeze, shade of the oaks, sound of the playful children and the temperate atmosphere. Nothing could be asked more than the things being offered (at least from the language of Chopin).

The way characters are developed primarily depends on how rich the narrator's imagination is. The same idea possessed Chopin in designing Edna's bearing as one with "strong shapely hands". Women are usually categorized in terms of how their extremities appear especially that during the period of Industrialization , women are not exempt from fulfilling certain roles that only men are expected to do like carrying loads of goods which eventually creates calloused hands.

> "Throughout history, women have been slated to be clean , soft and beautiful. With trimmed cuticles, clean fingernails and pretty clothes. Even through our feminist movements, with figures like Rosie the Riveter and leaders like Alice Walker, we still come back to the perfect images of women portrayed in *Ebony and Glamour*" *(browngirlfarming.com)*.

Women who belong to the upper class are those who escape from the natural process of discrimination as they have personally assigned attendants to get things done for themselves. Since not much work is done in Eve's period, she might as well be considered 'privileged' (the name rich people are often called). Edna is one of them. Her niche protects her from the outside world , thus, preserving the nature of her outward appearance. This is the idea that drives men to considering women as their priceless possession:

> " 'You are burnt beyond recognition,' he added, looking at his wife as one looks at a valuable piece of personal property which has suffered some damage" *(www.gutenberg.org).*

Edna's husband manifests this great concern for his wife's appearance. Since men's perspectives toward women become so narrow, women suffer the rippling effect of this particular stigma attached to them. The tapered reality causes women therefore to feel inferior and weak. Having been reduced to a mere object of attraction, women knowingly and unknowingly cope with the challenge to meet men's expectations up until they realize they are no longer themselves.

> For five years, Magdalena put up with Victor. She acquired some weapons along the way. She knew she couldn't afford to look like a loser, so she dresses impeccably in expensive designer clothes. Her hair was always perfectly coiffed; her fingernails and toenails were always painted her favorite pallid pink color. Her face wore the powdery perfection of Helena Rubenstein… She had mastered her denial so well…*(Magdalena).*

This however could be a *pacific mimesis* in Eve's context but a *conflictual mimesis* in Magdalena's. Girard explains this as possibly occurring in situations where the model (the woman) is expelled from the equation as rivalry between or among others escalates to a certain degree. Magdalena competes with the inner self as "she knew she couldn't afford to look like a loser". She is motivated by her desire to get even with Victor's 'other woman'. The level of controversy she engages herself compared to that of Eve can be seen to have conflicted at some points. While Eve wants to satisfy her curiosity(Genesis 3:6) Magdalena wants to not just feed her curiosity (as she is determined to know the result of her present actions) but also to consciously create herself a new identity : "she had mastered her denial do well." She maintains the practice along with her inspiration from *Helena Rubenstein* whose outward appearance causes Magdalena's desire to be possessed, thus, *possessive mimesis.*

The mandate of one's intuition to become what one could actually become is so strong that even Eve in the presence of the serpent becomes so lured to the irresistible mysticism of the invitation in Genesis 3:6. At the verge of losing oneself, the force of evil grows to overpower the other side which takes the victim to the abyss of damnation. The very act of falling from grace paints the same characteristic for all three of them: Eve, Edna and Magdalena. Edna's mental, physical and emotional behavior echoes the overall tone of defeat:

> " She walked out. The water was chill, but she walked on. The water was deep, but she lifted her white body and reached out with a long, sweeping

stroke. The touch of the sea is sensuous, enfolding the body in its soft, close embrace. She went on and on. She recalled the terror that seized her at the fear of being unable to regain the shore. She did not look back now… thinking of the blue-grass meadow that she had traversed when a little child, believing that it had no beginning and no end…the shore was far behind her, and her strength was gone. She looked into the distance , and the old terror flamed up for an instant, then sank again *(www.gutenberg.org)*.

The obvious evidences of longing to be with someone else   in the context of marriage complete the trail of human consciousness toward   transgression of the law. Eve's union with Adam is the first marriage recorded in the Scriptures:

> Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and
> shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh (Genesis
> 2:25 KJV).

 Marrige as a sacred act between two souls maintains the level of respect to the One who institutes it upon man. Eve may impossibly be entertained by another man since Adam was the only man created yet she could still defy the sanctity of marriage in a symbolic way. Parmentier (1994)   reiterates Pierce's contention on 'symbolic relation' where the 'simeotic object and the 'representamen' do not depend on the perceivable traits they share to establish their connection but on the ideas or concepts that originate from the interpretant which Merrell understands as 'sign's meaning'(2001) with reference to Charles Peirce's idea. . Baudrillard (1994) likewise supports this manner of understanding a relation. He agrees on this seemingly incomprehensible logic as he himself has noticed "the doubling of language" that distorts the expected association between the language and the image or object shown (especially happening in advertising as he observes).Hence, in this study   the interpretant is the meaning itself drawn between Eve's act of eating the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil"(Genesis 2:17) and infidelity.

Rationalizing this decision takes into account the value wasted on both ends----trust. Eve's lack of trust in God's warning led her to misery. In Edna's situation, trust might have come second to her priority but in the end it was still trust that she abandoned. Drowning herself is less of an escape than a punishment to herself   once she realized that the man she pursued at the expense of the family she once built never looked back at her. The deception of her observation that she is never given the affection she deserves from her husband still boils down to how much trust she has put up in the relationship that is capable of preserving the marriage. After all it is only her assumption   that the problem could no longer be fixed.

Eve, Edna and Magdalena reflect the tone of innocence coupled with ignorance and vulnerability ---- the strength the register carries pertaining to these characters created in different timelines. These three women   magnify the ethereal presence of language itself in the creative process of simulation as in Magdalena's characterization:

> "She was the faded photograph of a cautious-looking woman with a wistful
> smile, good-looking, yes, but with a strain around her eyes and lips. She was
> the bundle of letters, photographs, and journals that my grandmother kept at the

bottom of her armoire. She was the bits and fragments of words and paper and cellulose---ethereal, a ghost I could not pin down" *(Magdalena)*.

Until now, Eve is perceived to be the ethereal being who is the first mother of humanity. The memory of her as the first woman in travail lingers in every historical account, even the Bible is clear about this. This repetition of experience is much explained in the repetition as well of a form, say, a woman's form which in this study is treated with respect to both language and milieu as in Brainard's way of creating a harmonizing effect in her story set in Ubec (Cebu) that corresponds to words or expressions of local color ; ideas that vivify the sentimentality of Cebuanos in general (that sort of attitude that sounds harsh but poignant to the ears); ideas that penetrate the senses ; and thoughts that evoke sensibility—all combined to create the perfect reality of life in the Orient:

> "The land was rocky but riddled with coconut trees, hibiscus, birds of paradise and a colorful profusion of tropical bushes. It curved around a cove with calm blue sea and sugary white sand; and even the people of Ubec who were not fond of swimming … or sunbathing, acknowledged that it was a prime piece of property" *(Magdalena)*.

The setup is a lot like the grandeur that Eden provides to its first inhabitants. There is the presence of the sweet aroma of oriental plants and the fresh look of the environment that seems to build anew its beauty each time one looks at it.

Cecilia maintains the gravity of intent her ideas in the story display.. At the onset, the voice of a woman echoes her questions about her true identity:

> "Soon after I found out I was pregnant, I decided to write my mother's story. I never actually knew her although all my life I'd heard about her…. But I knew early on that I wasn't just my mother's daughter, that someone else's blood coursed through my veins. I could see it in my pale skin and the hazel sparks of my eyes…" *(Magdalena)*.

Like Eve, this longing to know her true identity is unmasked   when she spent time listening to the serpent as well as Edna who oftentimes visited another character who deliberately gives her the advice to solve her problem. Eventually, Brainard chooses to end with justifications of the travails of these women.

Conclusion

In a world without sense, all choices are possible, a situation which Sartre viewed as human beings central dilemma: "Man [woman] is condemned to be free." Edna and Magdalena reflect the perception implied in Eve's action in the garden of Eden. The moment Eve gives in to temptation becomes a defining moment for not just one person but for all who falls into the same trap. It outlines the weakness of women whose traces can be clearly observed due to the light from the back that seemingly creates the silhouette   of the one put to condemnation.

Understanding the proclivities of   women in the world infested with varying degrees of caprice. Inverse proportionality is understood to be the rational relationship   that

actually takes place in a society where the level of morality is at its lowest and individual's level of anxiety is at its peak. Society could have never been much chaotic if inhabitants themselves devalue the sense of order. However, since the decay has nibbled its way already to the top, the mode of existence has also succumbed to the inevitable force from down there.

With the sin that Eve committed, everything else is damaged. She, together with Adam, leaves the paradise that is supposedly meant to nourish their beings with extraordinary sustenance that no country even in the modern world could oppose. Man is dragged to suffering the same consequences. Same is true of Magdalena in the story. After the commission of infidelity, as a response to her husband's illicit affair, she got off the *streetcar named Desire(T. Williams)* with too much burden on her back. Instead of staying composed amidst struggles, she did the same form of bestial act that completed the cycle.

The reality can be seen in the contexts of these women --- the cycle of betrayal, forgiveness and reconciliation. Eve betrayed Adam. This is mirrored in Magdalena's act of betraying Victor and Edna's act of betraying her husband so she could consummate the lust with Robert who unfortunately left her after he came to terms with reality.

Consent is a matter of great importance. Eve, in her attempt to free herself from being deprived of her own will, succumbs to define herself by , making her own decision in the absence of Adam. Even with Victor's glaring mistake, Magdalena should have retained her composure by not engaging herself in another affair where she could easily fall short of God's grace and Edna, despite her feeling of being be lost, could have at least waited for her husband , at least, to iron things out so she could taste the answer of her need for affection and importance.

Men fail at times to do their obligation , so women start to clamor for it. Eve, Magdalena and Edna reverberate the musings of an abandoned party. The question as to whether or not it was Eve's fault is never a contested idea for the Bible is clear regarding who is to blame --- and that is Adam : "as by one man sin entered into the world… (Romans 5:12 KJV)."

Eve finds an opportunity to wander because a leeway is provided. When women fail in relationships, men's responsibility is called to question:

> "Husbands understand that just as sex is a high priority… non-sexual affection is equally as important to her. If a woman does not feel emotionally connected, she may not want to connect physically---and for most men , not connecting physically is a problem (*The Relationship Manager).*"

Both Magdalena and Edna feel the lack of affection; bothof their husbands have become mechanical in their tasks , thus , forgetting the task at home to care for equally important individuals:

> "Mr. Pontellier was up in a good time to take the rockway which was to convey him to the steamer at the wharf. He was returning to the city to his business , and

they would not see him again at the Island till the coming Saturday."
(www.gutenberg.org)

Sometimes, it is not business haunting men but their lack of contentment:

"Later, when there were other incidents with women, far more flagrant, Magdalena continued to believe Victor. There was a time when Victor would recklessly date his women in clubs and restaurants. They were always young and pretty…" *(Magdalena).*

Neither passages for discontentment nor business anxieties can be traced in the Bible which Adam might have experienced , but certainly , reasons are possible to support the condition of inadequacy on the part of Adam that led to Eve's betrayal of Adam's trust.

Women, in their desire to wield power, continually succeed in disintegrating themselves from their own consciousness. Negatively, this creates the culture of undeniable subjection of women to men's authority .Eve , Magdalena and Edna are classic examples of women who, in their vain attempt to establish themselves above the higher authority, shed light on the fundamental concept of liberation that is always possible to happen at every woman's expense.

These three women may have varying degrees of experience but they stand on a common ground, that is, the proclivities of their senses that recur throughout the history of man. Simulating certain qualities, if not all, would already give appreciation to the constant yet evolving nature of women (evolving due to the changing contexts along with time). Valuing women is tantamount to significantly promoting the essence of the linguistic phenomenon that through time has never missed any event that concerns beyond what a simple mimetic principle can do. The new product stands the new truth in a new context   inasmuch as this has already been influenced by many factors. Bakhtin (1981) himself detaches from the concept of 'determinacy' of meaning by way of acknowledging that:

> The boundary lines between someone else's speech and one's
> own speech were flexible , ambiguous, often deliberately
> distorted and confused (69).

Simulation, in a larger sense, disintegrates the conventions into specific idealisms of diverse cultures. Certainly one speaks of them as women but the   extent by which they have copied the attributes of God's 'real' woman simply resides in the non-existent realm of the linguistic phenomenon. The power each simulation brings may at some point refer to the 'real' but may not at all represent the copied object by virtue of the different modes of mimesis that are essential components of the postmodern process of simulation.

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