

**WEARING THE MASK OF EARNESTNESS: EXPLORING THE
ARTIFICIAL LIFE IN OSCAR WILDE'S *THE IMPORTANCE OF
BEING EARNEST***

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Abstract

*This paper attempts to present how reality and fiction intersect in Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* to challenge, if not subvert, social obligations and perception of identity in Victorian society. In so doing, the paper critically attempts to touch upon the concepts of duality and appearance as they possess the utmost importance for the Victorian sense of morality. The article also strives to show how Wilde undermines the basis of the truthful representation of gender identity instead of the Victorian perception of the term. In the play, as the paper argues, Wilde hints at the idea that there is a difference if we can call it a duality of identity between the appearance and what is hidden beneath. In the case of the fictional characters, they wear fake identities or imagine a view of identity to suit the public's expectations, challenging the perception of stable autonomous identity that the Victorian believed. However, the inner and outer worlds of the characters are pretty different from inside and outside, so that they constantly vacillate in-between these identities. The paper concludes that, as Wilde hints, it is impossible to define a person fully when they display various identities simultaneously as in the modern sense.*

Keywords: Duality, Appearance, Gender, Identity, the Victorian Society

It would probably be not an overstatement when one would claim Oscar Wilde to be one of the most successful and well-known Irish playwrights of nineteenth-century English literature. His exceptionally witty remarks on everyday subjects and striking appearance would dazzle everyone around him, as well as his readers. Having written in different genres, Wilde is mainly known for his plays, such as *A Woman of No Importance* (1893) and *An Ideal Husband* (1899). The last play he penned was *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895),

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with the subtitle “*A Trivial Comedy for Serious People*.” The play was a big success when it was premiered in 1895 and appreciated by Victorian society and the audience. It promoted a good deal of humour and entertainment to get the people out of their boredom and confusion in the late nineteenth century. However, it is also an irony that, at the same time, *The Importance of Being Earnest* brought about Wilde’s downfall in a couple of months. Later, he was sentenced to prison for two years due to his homosexuality that was strictly considered immoral in the relentlessly religious Victorian society. Wilde points out that *The Importance of Being Earnest* is a comedy. Through comedy, he creates many satirical standpoints about the Victorian lifestyle and codes of conduct to mock the trivialities of every life, such as family, marriage, love and the idea of being earnest in the nineteenth-century English society because Victorian people strove to show how important they were, how vital morality was, even though these aspects of life has lost much of their importance in life due to dramatic social, cultural, political, economic and scientific developments in the nineteenth century.

This paper attempts to present how reality and fiction intersect in Wilde’s *The Importance of Being Earnest* as a way to challenge, if not subvert, social obligations and the meaning of identity in Victorian society. First, the paper tries to touch upon the concepts of duality and appearance as they possess the utmost importance for the Victorian sense of morality. Secondly, the article also strives to show how Wilde undermines the truthful stable representation of identity instead of the Victorian perception of identity. As the paper argues in the play, Wilde tries to illuminate the idea that there is a difference if we can call it a duality between the appearance and what is hidden beneath. In the case of the fictional characters, they wear fake identities or imagine a view of identity to suit the public’s expectations, challenging the perception of stable autonomous identity that the Victorian believed. However, characters are quite different inside and outside as they constantly vacillate in-between these identities. Wilde implies that it is impossible to define a person fully when they display various identities simultaneously as in the modern sense.

The Irish playwright, his full name Oscar Fingal O’Flahertie Wills Wilde, was born in 1854 to a wealthy family in Dublin, Ireland. His father was a famous eye surgeon, and his mother was a poet who wrote many nationalistic works under the pseudo-Speranza. Hence, Wilde had many opportunities to be around influential aristocratic people and a social atmosphere (Fenge, 2016). He attended prestigious schools and developed his sense of art and style separate from the established Victorian notion and morality. Wilde lived in the last decades of the Victorian era in Britain. As Gultekin (2016) suggests, it was the era of many contradictions that coexisted with developments and changes such as industrialism, the influx of people from the rural areas to the cities, the growth of metropolitan cities, as well as Sigmund Freud’s “Theory of Unconscious” and Charles Darwin’s *Theory of Evolution* on the one hand and with moral corruption, materialism, and poverty on the other.

Industrialisation had an immense social and economic impact on people’s lives, and it boosted urbanisation by which people travelled from villages to cities in search of jobs and new lives. Owing to the new fields of employment and then trade, the middle-class became more affluent and grew in number, making itself more effective in the social and economic spheres of the Victorian era. Therefore, the rapid and unusual changes in the fields of economy, science, and politics created several new advancements in the society which conceived strict moral codes known as the “Victorian morality” based on the values such as

truthfulness, personal responsibility, duty and solid ethical manners (Erturk, 2010, p. 1). People were searching for money, and the capitalist system made society chase after utilitarianism that lacked human emotion and love for beauty in the world. As opposed to this common belief in Victorian society, a different art style, called “aestheticism”, emerged as a way artistically to mock conventional Victorian moral values and the notion of usefulness in a manner that had no relevance to the age of radical developments and changes.

Aestheticism, in short, can be defined as “the perception or appreciation of beauty” (Purchase, 2006, p. 37). However, Victorian society gave so much importance to its strict moral codes, ethics and observable facts that it ignored the feelings and desires of the people, hence lost the beauty and the essence of humanity in art. Therefore, writers such as Ruskin, Pater and Wilde refused this kind of Victorian ideals and instead elevated the aesthetic movement that promotes the idea of “art for art’s sake” – an artistic movement coined by the French Philosopher Victor Cousin in the early nineteenth century that focuses on the self-expression of an artist who creates a creative literary work. Ruskin, one of the key figures of the aesthetics movement, regarded the beauty of art as an essential point but stressed that art should be moral and benefit society. However, according to Sean Purchase (2006), Pater disagreed with Ruskin and emphasised that art should be free from such obligations as teaching and serving the ideals of “usefulness” and truthfulness in art (p. 38).

Pater’s notion of art profoundly influenced Wilde, and he too refused to impose the Victorian moral codes of conducts on his art. In his Preface to *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890), Wilde declared his idea of art by pointing out “[t]he artist is the creator of beautiful things”, and he also touched upon Pater’s emphasis that art is not a ‘useful’ tool to convey morality and Victorian attitudes, stating that “[t]here is no such thing as a moral or immoral book [...] All art is quite useless” (Greenblatt et al., 2005, p. 1698). Hence, by highlighting art’s functions, such as beauty, Wilde supported the creativity and “aestheticism” in art and challenged Victorian art’s dogmatic and rigid realism. Erturk (2010) draws attention to the fact that Wilde believed in reaching higher ethics through art free from the shallowness, hypocrisy and dullness of Victorian morality, stressing that the human soul should be independent of the pressures of “hypocritical Victorian ethics” that solidified art (p. 16). Therefore, Wilde was writing to free the people’s minds from the shackles of the Victorian way of thinking, even though his works were regarded as immoral and corrupt due to his way of living and artistic creation.

Wilde’s well-known plays known as ‘Society Comedies’, both amusing and criticising the audience at the same time, brought him great fame and success on the London stage in the 1890s (Sammels, 2004, p. 111). According to Barbara Belford (2000), his plays were so thoughtful and well written that “he changed the sound of laughter” and even competed with the works of Shakespeare and Moliere (p. ix). He was acclaimed for his unusual style and witty mind. Still, he was also notorious for his extravagant lifestyle and challenging personality as in the case of his homosexuality that he did not conceal from the public. However, it was an offence during his years. He did pay the price for his unique lifestyle, but he never accepted the Victorian way of thinking and the realism of Victorian art. He rejected the idea that art imitates life because then it would have to display only outward materialistic aspects of life and character while avoiding the sufferings around and aesthetic representation; therefore, Wilde portrayed art as superior to life which maintained the

aesthetic beauty and morality in the world, enabling people to become free and heal their minds and souls (Gultekin, 2016). Hence, Wilde maintained that life imitates art and to attain morality and that art and artists should be free from the social conventions and expectations of a given society. In *The Importance of Being Earnest*, he features these ideals and challenges, if not subverts, Victorian ethics via exposing the puritan realism and artificial lives of his time.

Wilde's last play, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, opens in the house of Algernon Moncrieff, an idle young man from the upper class in England. Later, his friend Earnest visits him and sees his cousin Gwendolen, who he loves and wants to propose to her for marriage. As the events gradually unfold, we learn that Earnest is named Jack, and he creates an imaginary brother called Earnest to come to the city and see Gwendolen. Afterwards, Algernon also admits that he has a fictional friend named Bunbury, who he visits when he wants to avoid specific family gatherings. After a series of events, such as Lady Bracknell's refusal to Earnest's proposal to marry her daughter and Algernon's pretending to be Earnest to meet Cecily, the play gets tangled and reaches a climax. However, everything is eventually resolved when they find out that Jack is Earnest, Algernon's long-lost brother. The story ends happily as both couples are free to marry.

As Sammells (2004) points out, style for Wilde is significant when he is composing his art as he believes it is the "aesthetic choices governing the ways we see the world, the ways we represent it, and the ways we present ourselves to it" (p. 111). This is also clear from his title for his play *The Importance of Being Earnest* as he is using the pun, the wordplay, to give multiple interpretations to the title and the play. Kupske and Sauza (2015) state that appearance and respectability were above everything else in Victorian society. Moreover, the "earnestness" of people to be seen as severe perfectly was the most critical norm in their community because outside factors and society's standards forced them to work in a deterministic way. They further emphasise that if people had other "affairs outside marriage" or maintained "secret" lives, society would condone it as long as they kept a good appearance to the outside world (p. 120). Wilde presents this hypocrisy and artificiality through the words of his characters in the play. Gwendolen is a good representation of this type as she says: "We live, as I hope you know, Mr Worthing, in an age of ideals [...] and my ideal, has always been to love someone of the name of Earnest. There is something in that name that inspires absolute confidence" (Wilde, 1895, p. 83). Here, Gwendolen does not give importance to her future husband's character as long as he appears honest or morally good; she only cares for his appearance as hinted by his name; she is not aware that the appearance does not guarantee one's goodness and seriousness. Through his representation of Gwendolen and her view of a husband, Wilde artistically mocks the superficiality and the triviality of the Victorian ideals of husband and ethics of marriage that entail rigid expectations and perceptions of the ruling class (Cave, 2006). Gwendolen thinks that marrying somebody with the name "Earnest" will provide her with a social ladder and acceptance in society as appearance is the most crucial feature to follow in her community. As in the play, this notion is common both in the city and the country as Cecily, Jack's ward staying in the country, says: "[I]t had always been a girlish dream of mine to love someone whose name was Earnest [...] I pity any poor married woman whose husband is not called Earnest (p. 114). The obsession over the name "Earnest" gives a picture of another shallow and vacuous Victorian values that dull Victorian women's minds and make them believe that what they think and do

is the right way. In the quotation above, Wilde pities the narrow-mindedness of people, mainly women, who only care about the facade of their society. At the same time, they ignore what is important in life – inner beauty, feeling, passion, love and character. The way women think and act in such a way derives from the fact that the morally strict Victorian society constructs a perception of gender identity for women who cannot get rid of what they are taught. But what is strange is that women are ignorant of such silly and trivial behaviours in their life. The Victorian society plays with them without making them notice it.

In the play, Wilde also continues to ridicule the Victorian lifestyle and morality by creating a new term called “Bunburying”, which “means to invent a fictitious character” to avoid certain circumstances or attain a chance to act as one pleases (Reinert, 1956, p. 17). When Jack admits that he creates a brother named Earnest to come to the city whenever he wants, Algernon also confesses by saying: “I have invented an invaluable permanent invalid called Bunbury, so that I may be able to go down into the country whenever I choose (p. 77). The quotation suggests that inventing double identities such as “Bunburying” and keeping diaries all the time can result in trivial life events and become a sign of revolting against the authoritative set of morals that shaped the identity in Victorian England (Flanagan, 2014, p. 123). Moreover, Jack and Algernon also consider these fictional characters as something that can be killed right away on behalf of their sins and immorality as Jesus sacrificed himself for humanity. Hazra (2013) argues that many people led double lives in England during the Victorian period to keep a decent appearance to create a free space for themselves in the public place. For example, Algernon and Jack want to escape the heavy burden of duty and social expectations imposed on them against their wish. Still, they also stay in the safe zone of social respectability by oscillating between one form of identity without being exposed to any restriction. Therefore, this attitude causes a division between the public and private spheres and space to act as freely as possible. This kind of representation demonstrates that Wilde not only conveys this hypocrisy and superficial morality of Victorian society through the views and acts of his characters perceptively in his last and most appreciated play, but he also creates a space for his characters to act therein and move freely between two opposing borders of their lives without being subjugated to the restriction of the Victorian morality.

Moreover, in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Wilde keeps on mocking the Victorian values of marriage, in which young people were not given any chance to voice their views concerning their marriage, but their parents arranged everything. Lady Bracknell may be assumed to be a villain as she disapproves of Jack’s proposal to her daughter and initially comes between Algernon and Cecily as well. When she hears that Jack and Gwendolen are engaged, she initially responds: “Pardon me, you are not engaged to anyone [...] An engagement should come on a young girl as a surprise, pleasant or unpleasant” (p. 85). As Shabir (2020) indicates in his article, the constitutional marriage would often be in parents’ approval in the Victorian period regardless of the young people’s consent. The same can be observed in the play when Gwendolen is not given the privilege to choose the person to marry because her mother must approve of the candidate first. Hence, the pursuit of marriage becomes the mission of the mothers in this society as one of the typical characteristics of a patriarchal society that does not allow young people, particularly girls, to follow up their way of life and their own choice.

Huggins (2000) argues that women during Victorian England, especially mothers, had the control of ruling “the private sphere acting as gatekeepers, regulating family activities” (p. 588), while their husbands were involved in the public realm with outside activities since space was also gendered in nineteenth-century England. Therefore, Lady Bracknell symbolises the Victorian ideals of gender roles, dealing with domestic issues and family matters. For this reason, she undertakes the job of interviewing Jack (Earnest) in an attempt to find out his intentions with her daughter. She first starts by asking whether he smokes or not, and when Jack says yes, she in return gladly says, “[a] man should always have an occupation of some kind. There are far too many idle men in London as it is” (p. 86). Hence, she comically considers smoking as an occupation, concluding that he is not a wanderer if one smokes. Later, when she learns that Jack has lost both her parents, she responds: “That seems like carelessness [...] try and acquire some relations as soon as possible, and to make a definite effort to produce at any rate one parent” (pp. 88-90). This quotation illuminates that the interview details how Lady Bracknell responds to Jack, becoming interested only in his social position and financial background (Bennett, 2015). She does not care so much for Jack’s personality or righteousness but silly demands such as having an occupation and producing a parent from himself. As Raby (1997) acknowledges, marriage is regarded as an economic activity in the Victorian period. It was believed that a woman secures wealth and a good position in society and does not care if the husband is loyal. Hence, it seems that Victorian moral values such as earnestness and ethical norms aim to suit society’s expectations. At the same time, it gives little importance to their existence and character as long as the appearance is well-presented. According to Erturk (2010), by portraying Lady Bracknell in such a way, Wilde belittles Victorian values and criticises social ethics and hypocrisy among Victorian people. They demand high moral manners by cherishing people’s appearance solely. Wilde cleverly mocks the hypocritical Victorian society and its values and emphasises that they do not practice what they preach.

The Importance of Being Earnest may also be considered a playground of contradictions as Wilde scatters conflicting thoughts throughout its narrative. Initially, starting from its subtitle “A Trivial Comedy for Serious People”, he presents implicit messages to his audience. Cave (2006) suggests that the characters who are supposed to be serious, as the title declares, are more seen as silly and do trivial things. This fact reveals that they are unaware of their absurdity, making the play funnier with laughter that would last longer. Hence, we may alter the subtitle and say “a serious comedy for trivial people”, making more sense. Throughout the play, the role of women seems to be superior to men as opposed to the characteristics of the Victorian age in England. Typically, as Mitchell (2009) points, the husband in the house has legal and economic control over his family where the women are secondary in position. However, in the play, Gwendolen appears as an outspoken woman, and thus she demands whatever she wants. For instance, she expects a decent proposal from Jack, and then Gwendolen tells him: “you haven’t proposed to me yet. Nothing has been said at all about marriage” (p. 84). Here, Gwendolen is represented as one who is in complete control of her life and thus directs Jack as she pleases.

Furthermore, when Cecily and Gwendolen meet in the play, Gwendolen mentions his father, Lord Bracknell. She says: “home seems to me to be the proper sphere for the man [...] once a man begins to neglect his domestic duties, he becomes painfully effeminate” (p. 116). By representing female characters in such a way, Wilde disparages the gender identity and roles

that a patriarchal society in general and Victorian community cherished most. The quotation suggests a shift of perception in the society as to the gender identity in which women gain more power to decide their own life. Gwendolen considers home a proper place for the man. She suggests totally against patriarchal norms that strictly gender the home, seen as the woman's 'adequate sphere, whereas the outside area is allocated to the man. Wilde's critical treatment of gender roles in such an artistic and comical way may be read as a reminder to the Victorian society that there is no need to struggle to keep the traditional values intact anymore because the world is not the same as before. Hence, the reversals and paradoxes employed in the play make the audience alert. As Evan Thienpent (2004) mentions, judgements and questions arise in people's minds, and the wit and laughter appear together with a severe conception after watching the play. In this way, Wilde successfully creates a performative and self-representative space, making the Victorian community aware of outworn traditional ideals.

At the end of the play, Wilde claims that "life imitates art", as he also puts forward in his critical dialogue *The Decay of Lying*: "[l]iterature always anticipates life. It does not copy it but moulds it to its purpose" (p. 934). This aspect of art is seen in the representation of Cecily in *The Importance of Being Earnest* as she meets Algernon and becomes engaged in the imaginary world that she creates in her diaries. She says to Algernon: "we have been engaged for the last three months" when they have just met (p. 112). Since she cannot lead her life as she pleases herself, she invents an imaginary world and life as in Maxim Gorky's short story *Her Lover* (1917), in which "Gorky endows his fictional character Teresa with the Romantic energy which enables her to survive her misery and loneliness by inventing an imaginary lover" (Gunes, 2013, p. 102) so that her diaries and the writing form becomes as a way of living that is transformative for Cecily. She then eventually receives her happy ending, just like her fantasy. The play ends when Jack discovers that he is named 'Earnest' and telling the truth all the time. He apologises to Gwendolen: "Gwendolen, it is a terrible thing for a man to find out suddenly that all his life he has been speaking nothing but the truth. Can you forgive me?" (Wilde, 1985, p. 144). Again, Jack's apology for being honest and telling the truth all the time can be read as a way to satirise Victorian formality and duplicity. Furthermore, Wilde ends the play with Jack's famous line: "I've now realised for the first time in my life the vital Importance of Being Earnest" (p. 144). Again, it seems that "life imitate[s] art" as Jack becomes the exact person that he creates; he becomes Earnest and receives a brother just like one in his fiction.

Jack's realisation of the importance of being Earnest is another Wilde's wordplay, and it presents an ambiguous meaning to the reader. According to Flanagan (2014), it is not the invented doubles that die at the end of the play, but it is their true identities as Jack becomes Earnest and Algernon, his foolish brother. And he further claims that they both earn the epithet 'earnest' as they marry into Victorian society. It may be stated that the end of the play carries autobiographical elements, representing Wilde's own life as he once said, "[s]ome said my life was a lie, but I always knew it to be the truth; for like the truth it was rarely pure and never simple" (cited in Holland, 1997, p. 3). Wilde was a witty and successful author mirroring his society from a critical stance and anticipating social transformations that are likely to follow later. His following lines once again declares that art is the way to attain freedom and beauty. By being "earnest," you are true to yourself and accept everything that comes with it.

In conclusion, in his play *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Wilde uses his wit and style beautifully to criticise and mock the codes of conduct of the Victorian society that give importance to people's appearance, ignoring what is beneath – love, passion, and feeling that enables an artist to achieve the aesthetic beauty. He also rejects the notion that art is a tool to teach morality and manipulate people's minds concerning ethics and manners, as in Victorian society. On the contrary, he regards art as superior to life and claims that art must be free from rigid norms and social conventions to have beauty in life. In his time, his radical and critical tone, therefore, earned his works a "fame" to be considered immoral and corrupt as they did not comply with the standard Victorian formation; however, Wilde suggests that if a mirror existed in art, it would reflect its audience and the corrupt people would see the corruption, and the moral would see the beauty (Erturk, 2010). Through his last play and characters, Wilde emphasises that Victorians rarely realised the essence of reality and meaning but just emphasised the triviality and the superficiality of things. Instead of "art imitating life," Wilde maintains that it is indeed the other way around, and this assertion is exactly evident in his personal life when he was found dead in a cheap French hotel, recalling his last and well-loved play, *The Importance of Being Earnest*. As he was earnest about his life and work, he also died as one of the fewest 'Earnest' of his time.

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EXAMINING DOUBLE CONSCIOUSNESS IN AUGUST WILSON'S *FENCES*

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Abstract

August Wilson's Fences is one of the landmarks in the American theater. The play deals with many issues regarding the plights of the African Americans in the racial American Society. The present paper tries to explore August Wilson's play Fences in the light of Du Bois' concept of the double consciousness. Du Bois' theory focuses mainly on the psychological and social struggle of the African Americans against the difficulty of defining their own identity, due to the fact that they are torn between two different cultural and psychological consciousnesses. Despite the fact that the play has extensively been studied and analyzed, especially in terms of themes of racism, the generational clash, and some other ideas, no research has been done on analyzing the play from the perspective of Du Bois' theory. Therefore, this study aims at focusing on the exploration of the psychological and identity crisis of Wilson's characters. They are clearly torn between their African and American consciousnesses. They can never find a compromise, simply speaking because each of these consciousnesses is deeply rooted. Therefore, Wilson tries to depict the characters' struggle with their double consciousness and their endeavors to find a compromise. The characters must surrender to the fact that they can never live with one of the consciousness on the expense of the other. And this is the lesson that the main characters in the play understand at the end of the play.

Keywords: August Wilson, Du Bois, Double Consciousness, *Fences*

1. Introduction

The term *Double Consciousness* is a term coined by the African-American critic and philosopher, W. E. B. Du Bois, to refer to the kind of state African Americans live in. According to him, it refers to the duality of African American lives and the serious dilemma of their lives. Du Bois defines it as follows:

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It is a peculiar sensation, this double consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness,- an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings, two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn a sunder. The history of the American Negro is the history of this strife — this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self. In this merging he wishes neither of the older selves to be lost. He does not wish to Africanize America, for America has too much to teach the world and Africa. He wouldn't bleach his Negro blood in a flood of white Americanism, for he knows that Negro blood has a message for the world. He simply wishes to make it possible for a man to be both a Negro and an American without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without having the doors of opportunity closed roughly in his face (1965: 114-115).

This duality, Du Bois expresses, is present within every black individual. It creates many obstacles and problems for blacks living in the white dominant society. In addition, it hindered them from realizing their dreams and their search for self-identity. Most of the African Americans have an identity crisis. African Americans have been in continuous striving to compromise their two distinctive cultures that make up their identity. They see America as the land where they were forced to live there against their will, and in which their identities are greatly distorted, while they see Africa as their homeland which they belong to. This leads to the view that they must return to their original home which is Africa one day. Due to the plantation, Africans were mixed with other different ethnic groups, and this led to the loss of some of their cultural codes and absorbing some of the other cultures. They were forced to speak English, and thus, their language was gradually forgotten. They were even forced to convert to Christianity and forgot about their own religion, in addition, their most important cultural practices were banned. Thus, a great deal of their identity was distorted and replaced by another culture. With the successions of generations, Africanness was almost assimilated into Americanness, and younger generation started to forget completely about their original identity.

Moreover, African Americans were isolated from full integration into either culture and alienated from the society. Therefore, they were lost in the American society. They felt that they could not adapt and belong. They also felt that their identity and values were at war with the ones the white forced them to accept. They were stripped of their national sense, and now

are denied to live neither life. Du Bois sees the “color line” as the criterion that categorizes people.

According to Du Bois, having the dual consciousness of an African American is not to refuse all other ideas entirely, but to allow the fortification of these ideas with the perceptive spirit of intuitive understanding. He believes that Negro is not supposed to lose either of the two selves, the African and the American. They wish to have both identities at the same time despite the differences in character traits of African Americans and those of Americans. He sees these differences to be “complementary rather than incompatible in nature” (Allen E. Jr: 220). He considers both identities to be equally important.

2. Double Consciousness in Wilson’s *Fences*

The Pulitzer-Prize winning play, *Fences* is regarded as one of the masterpieces of the African American playwright August Wilson. *Fences* is a play about blacks in 1950s. The play is about Troy Maxson and the decisions he makes and the impact of these decisions on his and family’s life. The play paints a picture of an Afro-American person who, because of not having opportunities and because of economic insecurity, faces many problems and suffers from frustration, as he tries to rebel against a society, which is dominated by the white. It is true that the play is about African Americans, but the play concentrates on a private experience rather than a public one. It reveals the psychological aspects of Troy Maxson. A greater emphasis is placed on the inner part of the characters generally. The play also tries to explore the extent to which the cultural clash of the African American character is portrayed. It explores the clash of the two cultures inside the main character.

Unquestionably, the play is about Troy Maxson, other characters such as Bono, Cory, Lyons, and even Rose serve as backdrop to Troy’s massive presence. Much of what they are about in the play is determined by their relationships with Troy. All the characters are either foil characters to Troy or they reflect Troy’s character in one way or another. With the notable exception of Cory, it appears that Troy is the center of each of their universe.

The events of the play take place in the front yard of a house inhabited by an African American family. The time of the play has a significant remark because it refers to an important period in the Civil Rights movement. Troy is one among many immigrants who came from the south to ascertain a secure position for himself and his family in the north, namely in Pittsburgh Hill District. The play involves a war of a garbage collector which is

waged against himself, his coworkers, and his family for missing his dream of playing major league baseball due to racism and cultural difference.

Fences features African presence differently from any other plays. The play explores the white society's attitudes towards the Africans as being slow-witted, backward, lethargic, and irresponsible. Tendencies that Wilson totally refuses by demonstrating Troy Maxson, with all his flaws, as a responsible black man. As Elam observes: "Wilson sought to subvert the dominant culture's representation of African American men as irresponsible fathers". He makes sure to make Troy the opposite model of Wilson's own father by delineating Troy Maxson as "a larger than life figure who feels an overwhelming sense of duty and responsibility that the character of Troy is problematized." (2001:847) In a touching scene in the play, Wilson shows the responsibility of Troy Maxson towards his family and daughter as Troy stands helplessly alone in his own family's front yard while cradling his infant daughter shortly after the death of his mistress and the baby's mother. In an interview with Dennis Watlington, Wilson explains his main purpose behind writing this play as he declares:

For the new play. I wanted to explore our commonalities of culture. What you have in *Fences* is a very specific situation, a black family which the forces of racism have molded and shaped, but you also have husband-wife, father-son. White America looks at black America in this glancing manner. They pass right by the Troy Maxsons of the world and never stop to look at them. They talk about niggers as lazy and shiftless. Well, here is a man with responsibilities as prime to his life. I wanted to examine Troy's life layer by layer and find out why he made the choices he made (1989:110).

The power of *Fences* is in its ability to bring the past to bear the present to provide relevant historical contexts that demonstrate the usefulness of the African American past as a frame of reference for negotiating current situations and looking to the future. The play sketches the lives of three generations of the Maxsons, pinning point of how their lives bear connectedness with each other. Troy's father is dramatized on the stage through Troy's bitter recollections of the past, showing the impact his father had on him as well as on his sons. Troy recalls what happens between him and his father. His shows how angry he was towards him "sometimes I wish I hadn't known my daddy. He ain't cared nothing about no kids. A kid to him wasn't nothing. All he wanted was for you to learn how to walk so he could start you to working. When it comes time for eating... he ate first. If there was anything leftover, that's what you got" (Wilson, 50). Troy tries as hard as possible to be a different father from

what is father used to be, this is why he works very hard to be a loving, caring, responsible and sacrificial father. Similarly, his history serves as motivation for conscious wrongdoing. In his behavior with his surroundings, one can easily see the impact of his painful background on him and what his past has played in shaping his mentality and his consciousness. His relationship with his father, his felonious past, and the most devastating, is when he was not allowed to play major-league baseball due to cultural difference and racism, have all contributed to shaping what he has become.

August Wilson resurrects an Africa in his play that reveals itself by varying degrees and in both implicit and explicit forms. Often these forms cannot be comprehended if Western logic prevails as the sole standard. By examining the play within an African cosmology rather than by relying solely upon western paradigms of analysis, the play yields a much more telling portrayal of how African Americans compromise the ambivalence of their ‘double consciousness’ in America. In this case, African cosmology becomes an essential part of the play’s narrative which contrasts America’s divisive racism with Africa’s capacity to heal, empower and reunite. The play must be measured in accordance with African cultural codes and African world view.

One can note that the cultural practices of the African Americans are drawn through the indirect tension that Wilson dramatizes in *Fences* between African indigenous faith and Christianity. In history, these two cultures have been in a conflict for several reasons. The most important one is the belief that Christianity bore the mark of white oppression and a passive submission to fate, as Pereira noted (1995: 79).

Echoing Wilson’s argument that “God does not hear the prayers of blacks.” (Wilson, qtd in Reed, 1987: 95) Troy Maxson does not look for protection in black church and the grace of Christianity. Instead of seeking help from the Lord at his lowest point, and feeling the need to repent from his sins, Troy assumes the characteristics of his cultural descendants, Eshu. Troy looks ignorant to African American Christian tradition as he reinvented himself out of alternative models from a competing African tradition. But still, Christianity remains as an important part in *Fences* as it is also important in African culture. Wilson asserts that, for various reasons, African Americans relegate African spiritualism to a lower step status while Christianity receives more widespread acceptance among African Americans.

Moreover, Wilson continues to challenge the binaries between Christianity and African spiritualism in *Fences*, as Gabriel, Troy's mentally wounded brother, becomes the purveyor of the preferred order. His actions, gestures and comments draw attention to both the inhumane treatment he and other African American veterans receive after World War II and Africanist cosmology that develops from the play's backdrop to a very influential presence by the end of the play. When Gabriel's horn fails during his brother's funeral to honor his dead brother, who, according to African belief, has not died but moved to another realm, Gabriel substitutes "a dance of atavistic signature and ritual" (Wilson, 101). In performing this dance, "Gabriel invokes a racial memory, an African inheritance. His actions again reinforce the impact of the past on the present as the family's African heritage provides a benediction for their African American present." (Elam, 2001: 848) Gabriel begins healing process that the Maxsons come across. The play makes the audience and readers believe that re-establishing the ties with Africa will play a large role in that process. Troy's final send-off appears offstage. No audible ritualistic that is associated with a Christian burial can be seen: hymns, testimonials, prayers, eulogies, scriptural passages, ... etc. Instead, the play only privileges the scenes that immediately follow Troy's funeral. Christianity seems to be overshadowed by African spiritualism. *Fences* gives a large space for considering an African alternative. For Troy, African culture and Africanism is more important than Christianity and American culture.

Furthermore, Rose Maxson provides a visible representation of Christianity that has limited impact on this Afro-American family. As she knows about Troy's betrayal and accepts to take care of his child, she finds comfort and stability in the church. As she hangs the day's laundry, in her hymn she asks Jesus to protect her and be a fence around her every day:

Jesus, be a fence all around me every day,

Jesus, I want you to protect me as I travel on my way. (Wilson, 21)

Although the Christian church becomes a refuge for Rose, symbolically the institution is loaded with lingering negative historical baggage. For African American, Christianity marks the white domination over blacks that dates back to slavery, a means that the whites used to control blacks in the society. Church was a systemic tool of mental oppression, a tool which the whites used centuries ago among slave owners as a means of countering rebellion and ensuring passivity. Kim Pereira observes: "By forcing its God on blacks, the white church

could control their spirits. This process attempted, in part, to change the African into an imitation white man, a carbon copy of the European model; it was a process that robbed him of his individuality, dehumanized him and turned him into chattel.” (1995:31) This can justify why Troy Maxson does not pray for forgiveness from the Christian God and why Wilson continues to foreground African spiritualism as the more culturally appropriate response to the world.

A significant product of the Afro-Christian blend in contemporary African American culture is an acceptance of a similar spiritual universe. Much credence is given to supernatural phenomena like ghosts, superstition and magic. Troy brings death to life. As he recalls the imaginary battle he wages with the Grim Reaper, he accords the spirit a degree of respect, knowing that in a matter of time, the spirit will claim victory over him. Gabriel optimizes the African response to ghosts, superstition, and magic in the play. He owns some sensory abilities that make him easily touch his African ancestral spirits. His mental alteration, due to war, allows him an access to the African spiritual realm unguardedly. These instances show the interconnectedness of daily Afro-American lives with the world of spirits and their own culture. It also shows that the spirits have a respectable place in African American culture.

Troy Maxson highlights his divided consciousness as an Afro-American. His attempts to blend the two consciousnesses lead to many problematic issues. W.E.B. Dubois describes Troy’s divided status of “Two-ness, an American, a Negro, two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled striving, two warring ideas in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder” (1965:114-115). Troy is torn between abiding by the American rules which are related to his life and his society, and the African roots which he wants to pass over to his Cory that involves reclaiming the spirit of African warrior. We can also notice that many of the acts and decisions that Troy has made were due to this “two-ness”, to his divided consciousness, and to his uncompromised African and American selves.

Moreover, Troy’s problem is that he has to merge two different traditions. He faces the problem of being African and American at the same time i.e. two identities. Troy undergoes identity crisis as he strives to achieve his dreams. Troy feels that he is alienated from the American society. His sense of double consciousness arises as he is regarded as an American person, but his working condition is not equal to those of whites. He was not given the same opportunity as whites to be a driver until he talked to his boss about that.

Troy used to be a very talented baseball player, but because of his color he was denied to play in major league. He experiences double consciousness in a country where his talent is ignored and wasted because of having a different identity. Although he was an American citizen, he was deprived of the opportunity to achieve success in the sport. In her famous article “Baseball as History and Myth in August Wilson’s *Fences*”, Susan Koprince talks about Troy’s divided consciousness when she sees that he “embodies both the psychological fragmentation of the black American and the dualistic nature of black baseball”. Moreover, Troy’s divided consciousness can be clearly shown as he “driven to see himself (and to measure his success) through the lens of white America.” (353) to use Koprince’s words.

Troy suffered from racial bigotry as he was prevented from becoming a basketball player and play in a well-known tournament like the major league and does not want his son to suffer from the same experience. He does not want his son to feel the same damage that he felt from when he was young. He wants to avoid his son the pain and misery of racism that he felt from, This is why he tells him: “The white man ain’t gonna let him get nowhere with that football” (Wilson, 8). He fears that his son will be subject to racist whims of coaches, team owners and other team players. He also fears that his son will be sidelined and no longer will be useful for the sport. He is worried that his son will finally be leftover like him. Despite being a great basketball player, and he used to play for the Negro baseball leagues but due to the racial mindset of the Americans during Tory’s youth, he was not allowed to ascend to the better leagues and become a professional player. This is why when his son got a scholarship based on football, he tries very hard to stand between his son and his dreams, fearing that the same thing that happened to him may happen to his son. Cory, Tory’s son, who belongs to the new generation of African-Americans, sees his father’s rejection as evidence of jealousy and fear that his son will have a better future than him and that he will surpass him. When he faces his father, he tells him: “Just cause you didn’t have a chance. You just scared I’m gonna be better than you, that’s all” (Wilson, 58) Cory never understand his father’s concerns and he feels that his father’s time and all the racial bigotry his father suffered from cannot be repeated with him. The injustice that fenced him from the white world, should not fence Cory, because Cory is different, this is why he cannot fathom why his father his interfere in making a decision on his son’s behalf, because Tory, according to Cory, should not define his son’s future life.

Troy tries to provide lectures to his son on work ethics, responsibility, and self-sufficiency from white control. He advises his son to “get your book learning so you can work yourself up in the A&P or learn how to fix cars or build houses.” (Wilson, 35) He wants his son to have a good job instead of thinking to play football, but it seems that his advice is futile because Cory has already quit his job at the grocery without his father’s knowledge. This clash to some extent represents the double-consciousness. This double-consciousness is not only seen inside the characters, but we can see it embodied in the clash between Troy, who represents the conservative African culture, and his son, who believes in the American values.

Moreover, this father-son conflict prevails throughout the play and witnesses several stations till it results in physical contact and separates father from son. Wilson tries to ration and justify this tension between Troy and his son by showing that it is a normal American thing. He told David Savran that these misunderstandings and fights are not only normal but good and upbeat. Besides, Wilson also sees Troy’s concern and behaviors with his son as a sin of love and consideration. He states:

Troy is seeing this boy walk around, smelling his piss. Two men cannot live in the same household. Troy would have been tremendously disappointed if Cory had not challenged him. Troy knows that this boy has to go out and do battle with that world: ‘ so I had best prepare him because I know that is a harsh, cruel place out there. But that is going to be easy compared to what he is getting here. Ain’t nobody gonna whip your ass like I am going to whip it’. (Wilson qtd in Savran, 1988:32).

August Wilson believes that it is very important to sustain intergenerational connections among both young and old Africans. This theme manifests a major theme in *Fences*. In an interview in 1987 with Theatre Communications Group, Wilson explains:

First of all, we are like our parents. The things we are taught early in life, how to respond to the world, our sense of morality-everything, we get from them. Now you can take that legacy and do with it anything you want to do. It is in your hands. Cory is Troy’s son. How can he be Troy’s son without sharing Troy’s values? I was trying to get at why Troy made the choices he made, how they have influenced his values and how he attempts to pass those along to his son. Each generation gives the succeeding generation what they think they need. One question in the play is ‘Are the

tools we are given sufficient to compete in a world that is different from the one our parents knew?' I think they are, it is just that we have to do different things with the tools. That's all Troy has to give (ibid., 299).

What Troy fails to see is that his son is a replica of him, his son does also repeat what Troy did with his father. Both Troy and Cory had both verbal and psychological issues with their parents. They are both adamant and see their parents as impediments in front of their career. This double consciousness is seen through both character's struggle to come on good terms with what their parents want and what their society and their career require them to be. Troy's father endured backbreaking labor while employed by his merciless white proprietor, Mr. Lubin, just because he felt responsibility toward his family. He felt that it is his duty to feed his family. Despite his poor relationship with his father, Troy seems to have inherited some of the redeemable features in his character. Most obviously, Troy inherited a strong work ethic and a serious regard for responsibility to his family, which are emblematic of the Africanness in him. Although Troy's father was treating Troy very cruelly as he took away his mother, sexually assaulted Troy's girl, punches him unconscious when confronted and denies food to his children, Troy still boasts that "he felt a responsibility toward us. Maybe he ain't treated us the way I felt he should have...but without that responsibility, he could have walked off and left us... made his own way" (Wilson, 51). Troy feels the same responsibilities. He feels it is his charge to take care of the family, to feed his family and to protect his family and son. He feels it is his duty not to let his son suffer from the same experience he suffered from. These show the decline in the American prevalent Individualism and adherence to African culture which is feeling of responsibility toward the family and others around them.

Despite all the difficulties Troy faces while trying to pass on some of African valuable lessons to his son, the play concludes in a scene of true love, understating and recognition on the part of all characters. Troy succeeds in making his son understand the need and the importance of his African roots though he is so saturated in the Americanness of his consciousness. He makes him grasp the African pride in him, When Troy dies at the end of the play with his mother's compassionate appeal, Cory indicates a change of heart as he urges his younger sister Raynelle to "go on in the house and change them shoes like Mama told you so we can go to Papa's funeral" (Wilson, 100). In one way or another, Cory shows his acceptance of the generational torch passed on to him by Troy. He agrees to do and complete

what his father has left undone for the family. He becomes his father's son and the hope of his family's future.

3. Conclusion

To conclude, Troy cannot compromise the two cultures. He wants to fence himself and those who are culturally close to him while living in different culture and environment. He cannot maintain a good relationship with his surroundings. He lives as a prey to the two cultures, to the double-consciousness. He tries to instill the African values in his son and his family, but he knows that it is not easy. Thus, no matter how enthusiastic Troy toward his African roots, his American consciousness is also dominant. He decides to accept the fact that living on one of the two consciousnesses is not a solution. He must find a medium through which he can reconcile the two conflicting consciousnesses.

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ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORLD AND THE EUROPEAN RENAISSANCE

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Abstract

This article explores the Islamic Civilization's contributions to world history and especially the history of Western Civilization on the threshold of the European Renaissance. Both civilizations had significant achievements in world history ranging from trade, science, medicine, technology, architecture, art, and literature. It is a fact that the development of world history is interconnected. Every civilization and culture, more or less, has an intellectual endowment that foregrounds the transformation of the world. This article aims at two things: to demonstrate the influence of Islamic civilization on the development and process of human culture over centuries and to support the claims that the Islamic world has excellent contributions to the European Renaissance. Islamic Civilization did its endowments to the world in so many fields, but to limit the study, only some of its important achievements are selected here to discuss. These are the fields including science, medicine, architecture, arts, and literature. This study also attempts to discuss how the translation of the Greek and Arab texts contributed to the developments in the European Renaissance.

Keywords: Islamic Civilization, European Renaissance, Culture, Development, Changing

1. Introduction

Islamic Civilization had significant achievements in world history ranging from trade, science, medicine, architecture, art, and literature. It has a vast intellectual endowment that foregrounds the transformation of the world and the European Renaissance. Spreading over great geography from Asia and the Middle East to North Africa and Spain, it has significant influences on the development and progress of human culture over centuries. Therefore, this study aims to discover the contribution of Islamic civilization to the world and the European

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Renaissance. The discussion here is divided into four sub-units: Arabic and Persian Literature, The Sciences and Medicine, The Arts, and The Islamic Impact on European Renaissance. The association between sub-units is that each indicator ensures the Islamic contributions to the world at cultural and intellectual levels.

2. Arabic and Persian Literature

The two most common languages, Arabic and Persian, have dominated Islamic literature and art over centuries. Each language has distinctive features, forms, metaphors, symbols, and motifs that made the Arabic- Islamic world rich and unique. Before Islam, there was a pre-Islamic literary tradition in the region, including various genres such as poetry, tales, and oratory. The tribal themes and stories which combine the authentic and historical images are pervasive. According to the great historian Ibn Khaldun “Al-Faraj’s *Book of Songs* comprises all that [Arabs] had achieved in the past of excellence in every kind of poetry, history, music, et cetera.” (Essa and Ali, 2012, p: 5). Adding to the tradition of poetry, in the Abbasid Era, more prose studies were also started to be written in the Arabic language. The most famous one even today is *A Thousand and One Nights*.

In the following years, with the rise of Islam in the region, Islam has become a significant influencer in Arabic literature and art. For instance, Muslims’ holy book, Quran, is the most critical religious guidance for Muslims” (Essa and Ali, 2012, p:6). After the death of the Prophet Muhammed, “the compilation of Hadith, known as the Sunnah, which means “the way of the Prophet,” also become another crucial religious guidance for the Muslims

Persian literature of Iran has been another vital contributor to Islamic literature and art. Especially in the golden age of Persian literature, the Iranian scholars had given many successful art pieces. The best Persian poet known in history was Rumi. He was the most outstanding representative of Persian literature to the world. He studied the Quran and Islam in his works. He lived according to Islam’s most fabulous essences, so he was regarded as the “Supreme Mystic” and “Sufi of the Celebration” for Muslims. Rumi’s high esteem has continued in both Islamic and non-Islamic civilizations over centuries. Moreover, the world showed the same respect for another Iranian poet, “Firdausi, whose *Shahnama* totals around 60,000 couplets and is considered the most outstanding of Persian epics” (Essa & Ali, 2012, p:6).

Indeed, these two dominant languages, Arabic and Persian, have influenced both the Islamic and non-Islamic regions' language and literature in Asia and the Middle- East. For example, "by the end of the 15th century, the Persian language and literature had spread to India and influenced the language and literature of Muslims living there. This led to the creation of a new Indian language called Urdu, which descended from Indo-Aryan (Sanskrit) (Essa and Ali, 2012, p:9).

On the other hand, for the first time, the Islamic civilization's language, literature, and materiality were reached to another part of the world, Europe, under the discourse, Orientalism with the translation of *Avesta* by Anquetil's in 1759. This was the first distinction between Islamic civilization and European civilization in literature. The most influential qualities associated with the East appeared in Aeschylus's *The Persian*, the earliest Athenian play extant, and in *The Bacchae of Euripides*, the very last one extant" (Said, 2003, p: 56).

When nothing of any natural intellectual history had taken place in this part of the world since the destruction of Alexandria Library hundreds of years before the emergence of Islam, especially during the Abbasid Era, the Islam Civilization hosted the flourishing of literature and wisdom with real intellectual consequences to the world history (Khalili, 2011, p:45,46). All these mean that the Islamic civilization and its literature, with its long history and extraordinary richness, have contributed to other cultures and regions over centuries.

3. The Sciences and Medicine

In the Abbasid period, advances in science and medicine flowered, especially in the city of Baghdad- the city of knowledge. Muslim scholars translated the Greek, Hindu, and Persian manuscripts in the eighth and ninth centuries. In the following centuries, Western and Eastern knowledge melted in one pot and provided new developments for each civilization. Thus, it is claimed that "the translation movement encouraged by Muslim rulers played a significant role, and the Islamic sciences went on to influence the Renaissance" (Essa and Ali, 2012, p:3).

With the emerge of Islam, for example, the old cities such as Jundishapur, Cairo, Damascus, and Haleb became science centers in this part of the world over centuries. The mosques and madrasas were the prominent knowledge places. For instance, the first university was established in Cairo. It was Al Zahra Mosque Al-Azhar University. A lot of scholars such as Ibnul Heysem gave lectures there. Heysham, known as the first philosopher, combined Greek philosophy with experimental philosophy and science. Some other prominent scholars and

their achievements in Islam civilization include the works of the first Arab philosopher Abu Yusuf in chemistry and Ibn Ishak El- Kindi in science. In mathematics, as well, with Muhammad ibn Musa's algorithm and development of algebra, geometric solutions, degree measurements, and trigonometric tables" (Essa and Ali, 2012, p:3), there happened lots of inventions. Besides, in Haleb, Arab-Syrian polymath Ibn-al Nafis's contributions to science, medicine, philosophy, and biology were the milestone in the period. He was also the first founder of pulmonary circulation of the blood. Another famous Andalusian Muslim scholar Ibn Rushed, or Averroes, influenced the West in philosophy, and [he was] excelled as a judge, physician, and author of a comprehensive medical encyclopedia. (Essa and Ali, 2012, p: 4). Al- Farabi, who combined Islam and Greek philosophy in his works, and El-Biruni, who smoothed the path of Hindu astronomy in his studies, were important figures as well. Finally, an astronomer, al-Farghani, with his invention- the Nilometer, a device that measures the water level in the Nile, is among the scholars who destined the European Renaissance (Khalili, 2011, p:102). Khalili states that his legacy captures the interest of Dante, an Italian writer and poet. In his famous work *Divine Comedy*, as Khalili claims, "[Dante] derived most of the astronomical knowledge he included [...] from the writings of al-Farghani (Khalili, 2011, p:102). Similarly, another Italian scientist Christopher Columbus also provided al-Farghani's project Shammasiyya in his well-known voyage (Khalili, 2011, p:102). Khalili claims that al-Farghani's "treatise on the astrolabe still survives and provides the mathematical principles of astrolabe construction" (Khalili, 2011, p:102).

All in all, both Arab and non -Arab Muslims have made considerable contributions in science and medicine with Greek, Hindu, and Persian heritage to world history and its contributions to the European Renaissance.

4. The Arts

Islamic civilization is the most significant contributor to art culture outside the Arab world with magnificent monuments and unique decoration techniques in architecture, rich traditions in handiwork, outstanding examples of calligraphy, and marvelous miniatures in painting. Besides, with having perfect city construction and successful architecture tradition, Islamic civilization has made an indelible impression in the world over centuries. The Muslims started building beautiful monuments such as mosques, madrasahs, domes, palaces, and caravanserais after Islam's emergence. Islam architecture can be seen in regions ranging from Asia and the Middle East to North Africa and Spain.

In the Arab world, Mecca, Medina, Jerusalem, and Kairouan are considered the holiest cities in Islam. Inside each city, there are many old mosques, madrasahs, and domes. In Mecca, there is a mosque Ka'ba. In there, Prophet Muhammed's birthplace is housed around a black stone; millions of Muslims fulfill the pilgrimage: Hajj. The second most spiritual place for Islam is Medina. It is a city that hosts the burial site of the Prophet Muhammed. There are three oldest mosques in the city: Al-Masjid and Nabawi (The Prophet's Mosque), Masjid al-Qiblatain, and the Quba Masjid –with domes and minarets. Al-Masjid and Nabawi is the resting place of the Prophet Muhammed with a large green dome. It is considered the most outstanding example of Islam, with its Arabesque architecture.

Similarly, inside the walled city, Kairouan, one of the oldest mosques in the Islamic world, lies The Mosque of Uqba from the seventh century. There are other great architectural examples outside the region. In Spain, The Great Mosque of Cordoba and Alhambra, in North Africa Tlemcen's Grand Mosque and the Mosque, Madrasa, and Tomb of Abu Madyan, in India: Tac Mahal, Grand Mosque and Jama Masjid, in Turkey the Süleymaniye and Selimiye Mosques and Topkapı Palace. These constructions are architecturally awe-inspiring buildings, and they all have religious meanings. Even though there is no clear rule on constructing the mosques in the Quran, except for the obligation to perform prayers, all mosques represent a kind of Muslim religious institution with their physical and spiritual essence.

Besides, the mosques encompass all forms of Islamic art. These buildings are spiritual, bright, colorful, and magnificent, rich in Arabesque architecture, Islamic calligraphy, and geometric designs. Thus, the architecture in Islam and mostly the architecture of the mosques are the most creative and unique pieces of art. According to Grabar, among them, the hypostyle mosque is ideally suited to the purposes of the new faith and the society (Grabar, 1978, p:125), and they are also the “most dominant form of Ealy Islam” (Grabar, 1978, p:127). In the following centuries, the style has been used by other civilizations in architecture.

In these establishments, there also appeared three essential decoration techniques, as Grabar listed “mosaics, paintings, and sculpture” (Grabar, 1978, p:160). The best monumental sculpture examples are Khirbat al-Mafjar, Qasr al-Hayr West, and Mshatta. Indeed, there is nothing new in the use of mosaics and paintings in the decoration. The standards and the system are nearly the same as in the Mediterranean. However, Grabar highlights the variety of the themes in the decorations. He states:

the decoration is, at first glance, quite overwhelming. Some monuments look like enormous bric-a-bracs of motifs and themes whose actual signifying precision is difficult to determine. [...] (the) original impression is all more striking when the decoration is compared as a whole. [...] the key question is whether this impression is valid and whether the decoration of these places does indeed have an iconographic ambiguity, an ambivalence of meaning [...] that we are simply not yet able to understand the structure of the visual language utilized by early Muslim princes (Grabar, 1978, p:161).

Accordingly, decoration in these establishments would be mainly part of symbolic meaning and its artistic and practical significance. To sum up, such establishments perfectly portray the characteristics of Islam religion and culture.

Similarly, another art form: Islamic miniature painting, has reached its finest with the Persian, Mughal, and Turkish miniatures. Their detail is meticulously and exquisitely rendered. The miniature paintings also feature the other Islamic arts, such as buildings (as seen in the architecture examples above), calligraphy, gardens, carpets, and clothes” (Essa and Ali, 2012, p:9).

The other unique form of art in Islam is writing. The most famous and ordinary decoration as a motif in mosques is the various forms of Arabic texts. These writings are primarily including extracts from the Quran (Grabar, 1978, p:135). Thus, as Grabar asserts, Arabic writing as a way of decoration means something more:

It was a subject matter restricted to the Muslim or Muslim ruled community and thereby expressing concrete meanings belonging to the members of the faith. It can appropriately be considered as an invention inspired by Islam (Grabar, 1978, p:135).

Writing, adding to its aesthetic and religious function in Islam, becomes an essential tool to convey a message and thought. As the Word is sacred for Muslims, a great variety of writing has occurred in Muslim art. That is the art of calligraphy. It is unique with its few artistic techniques. As early copies of the Quran were written in a slanting script. The Quranic script developed in Makkah and Madinah in the first Islamic century” (Essa and Ali,2012, p:9). These copies can be regarded as the first example of calligraphy. Thus, calligraphy should not be considered only as a way of writing. As Grabar states, “it was the most important impulse for the formulation of a whole art of the book with a host of ancillary techniques [and it indicates] the Muslim’s most sacred personal experience” (Grabar, 1978, p:136).

All these show that the architecture in Islam, especially the mosques with the combination of all other art forms ranging from mosaics to calligraphy, encompass the Islamic arts, which are artistically perfect and unique in history.

5. The Islamic Impact on European Renaissance

In the eighteenth century, Europe lived its darkest ages in history with the decline of Rome. In contrast, with the rise of Islam and developments in science, medicine, philosophy, art, and literature, the East lived its golden ages. Thus, it can be stated that European civilization primarily benefited from the developments in literature, art, philosophy, science, and medicine in East and Islam. All those learnings provided the birth of the European Renaissance later. This does not mean that they were the single influencer to the European Renaissance. There were a significant number of other factors, such as the invention of the printing press likewise the paper mill in the Abbasids, which provided rapid changes and very fast transmissions of new knowledge comparing to the earlier times (Al-Khalili, 2011, p.234).

The rich knowledge and wisdom of the Islamic Civilization and the East were transferred to the West through academic centers in Spain and Italy. At this point, Khalili (2011) asks the question of why the Renaissance emerged firstly in Italy, not somewhere different in Europe. He (2011) disagrees with common sense that the Renaissance began in Florence because its giant thinkers such as Leonardo, Michelangelo, and Botticelli were born in Tuscany at about the same time. According to Khalili:

these great men were able to rise to prominence only because of the prevailing cultural conditions, just as ninth-century Baghdad allowed the emergence of a scientific movement led by men such as al-Kindi and al- Khwarizmi (Al-Khalili, 2011, p.234).

Thus, the relation between the Renaissance centers Italy, Spain and their relation to Islamic Civilization has been considered. The transformation from East to West is quite apparent. According to research, East to West's old learnings and progressive ideas permeated two most common ways: one is during the Crusades, the other is the translation of sources by scholars, travelers, and missionaries.

Anquetil's translation of the *Avesta* in 1759 illustrates the fact that "for the first time, the Orient was revealed to Europe in the materiality of its texts, languages, and civilization" (Said, 2003, p: 77). This was the Europeans first realization of Islamic civilization, so it is not wrong to claim that the first most greatly influenced area in the West was Islamic literature and art. In the following years, there appeared many translations from Arabic languages, including the holy book Quran. "Different from other translation methods, George Sale's translation of the Quran, let the emerge of the early phase of the comparative disciplines

(philology, anatomy, jurisprudence, religion), which were to become the boast of the nineteenth-century method “(Said, 2003, p:117). All these improvements paved the way for European Renaissance.

The other significant contribution of Islam to the Western Christian world was the translation of the Arabic and Greek (for some authorities, Europe received Greek philosophy from the Islamic civilization) materials in philosophy. “By the close of the 13th century, Arabic [...] philosophy had been transmitted to Europe. Still, Christian Europe was reluctant to recognize Islamic learning and tended to attribute content origins to the Greeks” (Essa and Ali, 2012, p:9). However, through the medium of Spain, once again, Europe encountered the works and vision of Islam and Greek works. For example, the Islam philosopher Al-Farabi, and his Islamic contribution to Christianity also influenced the scholars, Albertus and Anquetil, so intensely that Al-Farabi’s works were used to reconciling Aristotle and Islamic philosophy with Christianity (Essa and Ali, 2012, p:9) for the first time by Anquetil. The other Islamic philosopher that influenced Anquetil and became the authoritative figure in his works was Ibn-Sina. All other translations made in Spain and transferred to Italy “began to cause considerable intellectual ferment in Europe as a whole. Perhaps the most provocative controversy was the work of Ibn Rushd” (Goddard,200, p:115). It is interesting that Anquetil “argued powerfully against other aspects of both Greek and Islamic philosophy, [but] particularly some aspects of Aristotle’s thoughts [were] mediated by Ibn Rushd (Goddard, 2000, p:116).

Of course, the influence of the Arabic world on the European Renaissance and its giant scholars’ can be encountered in other scientific works and achievements. For example, some of the European scholars who were influenced by Islamic counterparts:

Roger Bacon, whose works on lenses relied heavily on his study of Ibn AL Haytham’s *Optics* and Leonardo of Pisa (Fibonacci), introduced algebra and the Arabic numeral characters after being strongly influenced by the work of al-Khwarizmi. Some historians have even argued that the Great German astronomer Johannes Kepler may have been inspired to develop his groundbreaking work on elliptical orbits after studying the work of twelfth-century Andalusian astronomer al-Bitrüji (Alpetragius), who had tried and failed to modify the Ptolemaic model (Khalili, 2011, p:230).

Besides, other prominent transmissions are: “in the mathematics, and in the vocabulary of many European languages: the numerals which are used today in the West known as Arabic numerals, since they were transmitted to Europe from the world of Islam” (Goddard, 2002,

p:117). Similarly, more than 600 English words, including the vocabularies from military, science, and food items, were taken from the Arabic language.

Moreover, Islamic influence can be seen in the works of art and literature in the following years. As such, the Italian poet Dante, in his masterpiece *Divine Comedy*, the Italian artist Michelangelo, in his painting on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in Rome and the like. Khalili asserts (2011) that many Latin translations of Islam scholars, including Ibn Sīna, Ibn al-Haytham, Ibn Rushd, al-Rāzi, al-Khwārizmi, in European universities. Thus, it is not interesting that they have influenced their counterparts in Europe.

Interest in the translation of Arabic works has also continued well into the eighteenth century (Khalili, 2011, p:230). Indeed, the influence and enthusiasm toward the East and Islam were mostly synonyms with exotic and the mysterious. This imaginary vision has been encountered in the works of Western writers and painters for many years. For some critics, these works result from “Europe’s collective daydream of the Orient” (Said, 2003, p:52). In other words, the European imagination has flourished extensively from this daydream of the Orient. One good example of how” the dramatic form and learned imagery come together in the Orientalist theater is Barthelemy d’Herbelot’s *Bibliothèque Orientale*” (Said, 2003, p. 63). Perhaps, d’Herbelot’s works are the earliest and the most influential ones, but in the following years, there appeared some other Orientalist projects, such as the studies of William Jones.

Interestingly they are nearly the same. According to Edward Said, the collection of Volney and his assessment of the Orient in his works “*Voyage and Considerations* were effective texts to be used by any European wishing to win in the Orient” (Said, 2003, p:81). As Said argues (2003), such works are well-intentioned and often provocative not only for the scholarships and the conquerors but also for the translators. Indeed, the translation of the Oriental texts provides a new form of teaching, the study of Orientalism in European institutions for over centuries. Some writers greatly influenced Eastern Civilization under Orientalist projects such as Hugo, Goethe, Nerval, Flaubert, and Fitzgerald. Edward Said’s asserts:

Renaissance historians judged the Orient inflexibility as an enemy, those of the eighteenth century confronted the Orient’s peculiarities” somehow experience “with some detachment and with some attempt at dealing directly with Oriental source material” there is no doubt that [...] such a technique helped a European to know himself better” (Said, 2003, p:117).

Obviously, “Western civilization has [also] benefited from the achievements of the Islamic civilization, and Islam exerted a large cultural impact on Christendom (Essa and Ali, 2012, p:9). With the translated works of Arab to Latin and other European languages, the enormous learnings of the West were taken from the Islam world, as well as the translated versions of the Ancient Greek sources, both of which had a significant impact on the birth of European Renaissance and the rise of the modern Western civilization

6. Conclusion

All these mean that there are many outstanding achievements and developments in the Islamic world over centuries that ensure that Islam is one of the most influential civilizations in world history. Spanning over a wide area enables a continuum between past to present as if it was a river running from East to West over the centuries. There is no doubt that it also has excellent contributions to the European Renaissance with science, arts, literature, and medical developments. Moreover, Classical resources have come to light with Islamic scholars’ great efforts. Unsurprisingly, the fact is that Islamic civilization, through an objective lens, stands as a forward civilization in world history from the beginning.

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INANIMATE WITNESS OF HISTORY

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Abstract

John Keats is known as an English Romantic poet and his “Ode on a Grecian Urn” reflects the characteristics of romanticism which emerged in the late 18th century. Keats was the representative of both English and European romantic movement. An ancient Grecian Urn is the main focus of the poem which is built on a recognizable plan in three parts. The first stanza represents the introduction, the second, third and fourth stanza forms the main part, and the last stanza covers the conclusion. Keats analyzes pictures on different sides of the urn in detail to find out some clues about the societies living in the past. he reflects his own feelings individually without any outer interferences. The poem reflects the adversity between the permanence of art and transience of human life. The poet also interacts with the urn throughout the whole poem and searches multiple meanings. For this reason, the poem can be regarded as a journey into the mind of Keats, and thus it serves as a bridge between past and present. The purpose of this paper is to shed light on how this literary piece reflects complexities of Keats’ response to life, and he tries to relate a work of art to real life.

Keywords: John Keats, Ode, Romanticism, Urn

1. Introduction

John Keats is known as an English Romantic poet and his “Ode on a Grecian Urn” reflects the characteristics of romanticism which emerged in the late 18th century. According to Douglas Bush, Keats was “not only one of the principal voices of English and European romanticism but – what is more important – a poet whose stature has grown through all vicissitudes of taste and outlook that have marked the past century and a half” (11). This proves that his works address even today. An ancient Grecian Urn is the main focus of the poem, and it serves as a bridge between past and present. Keats analyzes pictures on different sides of the urn in detail to find out some clues about the societies living in the past. He compares various scenes depicted on a vase which is the symbol of the unchanged in his “Ode on a Grecian Urn”. The poem shows

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the complexities of Keats's response to life and he tries to relate a work of art to real life.

The main question lying behind this ode is the contrast between eternity and mortal human life. As a matter of fact, the pictures on the urn shed light on the historical events which may have taken place centuries ago since they are permanently painted on it. It represents the major characteristics of Romanticism such as imagination, nature, and emotion. The poem is built on a recognizable plan in three parts. The first stanza represents the introduction, the second, third and fourth stanza forms the main part, and the last stanza covers the conclusion. In the introductory part, there is the urn in its mystery which causes several questions in the poet's mind. Various scenes depicted on the urn produce a tension between the actual world of phenomena and the realm of art in the main part. The last part is about the experience gained from the contemplation of the urn which is related to reality. This urn plays an important role since it carries the traces of the past and inspires Keats to write his poem. In this respect, the purpose of this article is to show in what ways Keats is a representative of Romantic Movement and how he evidently shows his romantic features in his "Ode on Grecian Urn".

2. Romanticism and its Reflection in John Keats' "Ode On a Grecian Urn"

In his poem, the poet addresses and praises the urn since he regards it as the continuation of life. In fact, he appreciates the imperishability of the urn. The events on the urn give information about beautiful things such as love, singing or happiness; however, the poet reminds that these beautiful concepts cannot last forever. They are bound to disappear after the death unlike the urn. The first stanza shows a mysterious situation, and the opening lines of the poem attract the reader's attention immediately. The poet stands in front of the urn and talks to it as if it was animate; "Thou still unravished bride of quietness, / Thou foster child of silence and slow time," (1-2). This means that the urn keeps its mystery in silence. It has been preserved through the passing ages without any destruction. There is something beyond noise and change which is the ideal world of permanence.

In spite of the centuries that passed, the urn still remains the same and that is the reason why Keats regards it "unravished bride" on which the painted figures have been captured. At this point, Keats becomes aware that the beauty of the urn may be not only deathless but also lifeless. This means that art cannot be substitute for the true experience of life with all its mystery, and he explains the everlasting nature of art through the urn. Romantics are attracted by the past, and thus they usually refer to ancient Greek art since it stands for beauty. This is an important factor which leads Keats to write an ode about a Grecian urn.

Romantics give importance to idealism in their works, and this is also the case for Keats since he idealizes the urn itself. Everything is exposed to change except art which is the urn in the poem. Keats thinks that the urn is better story teller than human beings by saying that "Sylvan historian, who canst thus express / A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:" (3-4). While poetry is bound to sequential time to display all the images on the urn, the urn's whole dimension is eternal. This is an example of

admiration which is related to idealism. Moreover, imagination is a key element of romanticism, and it is used as a medium to get away from unpleasant realities by romantic poets. They believed that the individual could find a way to explain truth, virtue, and ideal through imagination. The Romantics thought that it was possible to help people save the world from falsehood, evil, ugliness and open the way to a better reality beyond the unknown familiar one. William Blake expresses his thoughts about imagination as; “[t]he world of imagination is the world of eternity; it is divine bosom into which we shall go after the death of Vegetated body. All things are comprehended in their eternal forms in the divine body of the saviour, the True Vine of Eternity, the human Imagination” (qtd. in Bowra 3).

Keats attempts to escape from the dangers of life by creating a new world in his imagination, and his new imaginary world is away from the grim facts of life. He finds a dream world in his poems to move away from the reality like the other Romantics, that is, he uses his ability to give meanings to ordinary materials to establish his dream world, and he puts the urn in the center of his poem. Peter Westland clarifies the importance that the Romantics paid to trivial materials as;

The great Romantic poets found it [the sense of mystery] not only in the inspiration of the Middle Ages and Greek art, but also in the simplicities of everyday life; an ordinary sunset, a walk over the hills, a cluster of spring flowers, the rain-bearing west wind, the song of the nightingale, a cottage girl, a simple old dales man – such are a few of the subjects that inspired to supreme achievement a Wordsworth, a Coleridge, a Shelley, a Keats (19).

Poetry was the product of the poet’s own mind and imagination. Just like other Romantic poets, Keats also searched for ways to escape from the difficult conditions of life to a realm of beauty and the whole poem is based on his power of imagination. For this reason, “Ode on a Grecian Urn” can be accepted as the victory of human imagination. Additionally, the urn takes Keats from the ordinary world of thought into the extraordinary world of imagination, and he is curious about the figures on each side of the urn. He questions that “In Tempe or the dales of Arcady? / What men or gods are these? What maidens loath? / What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape? / What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?” (7-10). He talks about the efforts he has made to reach the ideal world. Keats begins to search for the meaning beyond the actual figures and several questions come to his mind when he contemplates the motifs on the urn. As the “pipes and timbrels” have brought the idea of music into Keats’s mind, he continues with the contradiction in the second stanza;

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard

Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;

Not to the sensual ear, but, more endeared,

Pipe to the spirit dities of tone.

Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave (11-15).

There is an implicit paradox in these stanzas, that is, the music that cannot be heard is regarded sweeter since it appeals to the spirit rather than the ears. This proves that spirituality is more significant than sensuality for the poet. Keats attempts to express his experience with the notion of silence. He implies that everything transient had to be related to permanent reality, and thus the artist can go beyond the actual through his imagination.

Keats also touches upon the concept of time in this ode. Art passes beyond the time since it fixes sudden moments and creates a quality of permanence. For example, denial of time and change are shown by the trees which are demonstrated on the Grecian Urn and can never “be bare” (16). The scenes represented in the second stanza exemplifies this situation; “Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss, / Though winning near the goal---yet, do not grieve; / She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss / Forever wilt thou love, and she be fair!” (17-20). The lovers on the urn symbolize both eternal youth and hope. Keats contrasts the world of time and change with the world of permanence while thinking the changeless scenes on the urn. The lover in the pursuit of the woman does not need to worry about the time since her beauty will never fade on the urn. Keats mentions the unending happiness in the third stanza and states that;

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unweari-ed,
Forever piping songs forever new;
More happy love! more happy, happy love!
Forever warm and still to be enjoyed,
Forever panting, and forever young; (21-27)

Similarly, there is no notion of time in this stanza, and the flute player will pipe songs forever since it is the ideal melody beyond all existing melodies. The repetition of “happy” underlines the changing continuity of ideal life since the trees will not shed their leaves. He expresses this situation with cheerful excitement as the beauty of the trees is carved on a vase. Furthermore, the repetition of “forever” in this stanza refers to the eternal nature of the figures that exist on the urn. Besides, the poet compares the image of two happy lovers to real ones who have “a burning forehead, and a parching tongue” (30). The lovers carved on the urn can escape from the painful sides of life. The repetition of “happy love” conveys the contrast of ordinary concepts of love with that of the lovers portrayed on the urn. Their love is happier than any mortal being can enjoy as it will be warm forever. Unlike this eternal love, human love may bring sorrow though it may be enjoyed physically.

The idea of beauty has a deep impact on Romanticism. Romantic poets signify the beauty of simple objects to hide negative parts of material world. According to Michael Ferber, “[b]eauty alone makes the whole world happy, and each and every being forgets its limitations while under its spell” (20). Keats thinks that the urn looks beautiful just

like a bride, and it becomes the symbol of reality. This beautiful urn will resist against the eroding effects of time even after the centuries since real beauty is equal to immortality. Its beauty will remain the same, and it will transmit its beauty from one generation to another. According to Karl Krober, Keats's urn "aims to be taken as both a real concrete object and as an ideal; for it is central to the Romantic understanding of Greek art that such art actually produced, at its finest moments, perfect and complete embodiments of a perfect and complete idea of the Beautiful" (447). Keats presents the urn as an ideal object which represents the eternity.

Keats describes a Pagan ritual rather than Christianity in the fourth stanza. He is not a Christian, and he believes that Christianity restricts the thoughts and free will of individuals. He contemplates a complete different religious ceremony to be away from the religious belief of the material world. The mysterious priest preparing an animal for ritual sacrifice reveals Keats's ambiguous state of mind since he suddenly realizes "little town by river or sea shore, / Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel" (35-36). Furthermore, he becomes aware that this little town is deserted, and its streets are forever silent; "And, little town, thy streets for evermore / Will silent be; and not a soul to tell / Why thou art desolate, can e'er return" (38-40). As the poet faces the emptiness and the silence of the town, he thinks that the timeless perfection of art has its own imperfection. Moreover, Keats believes that the urn only gains meaning when the imagination fills it, and he exclaims that;

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity. Cold Pastoral! (41-46)

Keats implies that works of art seduce man from the ordinary life of thought to the extraordinary life of imagination, that is, he attempts to relate the meaning of this timeless enjoyment to the actual world of time. The phrases "Cold Pastoral!" and "silent form" suggest the poet's own surprise, in that, he complains about the coldness of the urn. Moreover, romantics give their messages without criticizing the life itself in their works. The urn breaks its silence by giving a message at the end of the poem; "'Beauty is truth, truth beauty"---that is all / Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know" (49-50). These lines are actually poet's imagination since the urn cannot talk as Cleanth Brooks indicates "we ordinarily do not expect an urn to speak at all" (155). Keats implicitly tells that the true beauty is the one which stands against the truth of time. The poet uses the word "beauty" to describe the truth and dreams about being surrounded with different types of beauty during his life.

It is known that the Romantics are affected by Plato who created two different worlds in his mind. Plato is in the pursuit of the truth, and he thinks that the events people experience in this world are illusionary. Ernest Bernbaum explains that; "[o]ne was the world of ideal truth, goodness, and beauty: this was eternal, infinite, and absolutely real.

The other was the world of appearances, which to common sense was the only world, and which to the idealists was so obviously full of untruth, ignorance, evil and ugliness” (304). Therefore, the last line of the poem can be associated with the Plato’s world of Ideas and world of Appearances. Since the soul comes from the world of Ideas, the perfect world can only be reached via spirituality. It is possible to claim that the word “beauty” refers to the world of Ideas while “truth” is related to the world of Appearances in “Ode on a Grecian Urn”.

Nature is a crucial aspect of Romanticism since it is the tangible manifestation of God’s existence. According to Romantics, nature can guide man to the ideal, and that is why Keats refers to nature throughout his poem. Westland clarifies Keats’s method of using nature in his poems as; “Keats is content to express his nature through the senses; the color, the scent, the touch, the pulsing music – these are the things that stir him to his depths; there is not a mood of Earth he does not love, not a season that will not cheer and inspire him” (140). Keats is affected by the nature, and he associates senses like smell, sight, touch and hearing with the nature in “Ode on a Grecian Urn”. For example, he refers the color “green” to describe the trees since they are frozen on the urn, and they will never shed their leaves. Also, Keats associates the hearing with music which is stated nearly in each stanza. In addition to this, Keats’s word choices such as “flowery, pipes, pastoral, and river” exemplify how he is influenced by the beauty of the nature.

3. Conclusion

Individualism occurred as a result of Romanticism, in that, the spirit of Romanticism was shaped by radical individualism. This individualism means separation from the society, and people are absorbed into the nature to find themselves. Romantics put forward that people feel better in nature and that is why, they leave urban materialistic societies which are in corrupt. Like the other romantic poets, Keats talks about the significance of the nature in his “Ode on a Grecian Urn”, and he reflects his own feelings individually without any outer interferences. As a result, “Ode on a Grecian Urn” reflects the adversity between the permanence of art and transience of human life. Keats interacts with the urn throughout the whole poem and searches multiple meanings. For this reason, the poem can be regarded as a journey into the mind of Keats. His observations of the urn raise some questions about the nature of truth, beauty, power of imagination and the function of art all of which were the main concerns of Romantic poets.

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WINTERSON'S *FRANKISSSTEIN*: POSTMODERNISM BLENDED WITH THE 19TH-CENTURY STYLE PHILOSOPHICAL LOOK

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Abstract

Jeanette Winterson's latest novel Frankissstein (2019) re-animates Shelley's Gothic classic and brings it into a contemporary world of smart-tech and artificial intelligence. The novel mainly focuses on humankind's engagement with hybridity and the troubling ramifications of technological advancements. Beginning with Shelley composing Frankenstein, the novel leaps into the present day to tell the story of Ry Shelley, a trans-gender doctor self-described as "hybrid", meeting Victor Stein, a celebrated professor working on "accelerated evolution" through "self-designing" life. The novel becomes a fragmented meditation on the responsibilities of creation, the possibilities of artificial intelligence and the implications of both transsexuality and transhumanism. The reanimation in the book is supported by historical figures such as Shelley, Byron, Ada Lovelace and Turing. The events and ideas of the past seem very much alive and lending life to the work of present and future. The first part of this paper will concentrate on the postmodernist narrative techniques of the author accompanied with philosophical questions such as "What is reality? What is time? What are the responsibilities of creation? Where are the boundaries between story and real life, between consciousness and an idea? The second part of the paper will deal with the warnings of the postmodernist novel about the inevitable human future and non-biological life forms.

Keywords: Frankissstein, Postmodernism, Philosophical Approach, Human Future

1. Introduction

Jeanette Winterson is one of the most prolific and prominent authors of British Literature whose latest novel *Frankissstein: A Love Story* (2019) amalgamates Mary Shelley's acclaimed Gothic classic *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus* (1818) with a contemporary world of smart-tech and artificial intelligence. The novel mainly deals with humankind's engagement with hybridity and unsettling consequences of technological advancement. Thus, this article focuses on two parts, one of which will concentrate on the postmodernist narrative techniques of the author accompanied with philosophical questions such as "What is reality? What is time? What are the responsibilities of creation? Where are the boundaries between story and real life,

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between consciousness and an idea? The second part of the article will deal with the warnings of a postmodernist novel about the inevitable human future and non-biological life forms. I will argue that Winterson's *Frankissstein* represents an example of "warning for future" novels meshed with playful postmodernist techniques and 19th century style philosophical questions of reality, death, being human and non-human.

2. Main Discussion

The novel is based on two mirrored stories, one of which sets in the Alps in 1816 where the teenage Mary Shelley lives with her husband, the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley, her friend Lord Byron and the others. Inspired by her surroundings, she pens her novel about Victor Frankenstein, a young scientist who succeeds in forming a monstrous creature in a mad experiment. The second story takes place in the time of Brexit, following a transgender medical doctor, Ry Shelley (Ry is short for Mary), who falls in love and works with an innovator in artificial intelligence, Victor Stein, who is implementing some underground experiments of his own. It is revealed that Ry provides human parts for Victor. Ry and Victor come across Ron Lord (a direct attribution to Lord Byron) who produces sex dolls for lonely men.

Although postmodernism as an artistic/literary movement began to lose its traction and appeal right before the beginning of the new millennium, its literary techniques are still employed by authors such as Winterson on a large scale (McHale, 2015, p.5). In the chapter titled "Postmodernism and Literature", Barry Lewis provides some of the dominant techniques of the postmodernist fiction as follows: "temporal disorder, the erosion of the sense of time, pastiche, fragmentation, looseness of association, paranoia, vicious circles, and language disorder" (The Cambridge Introduction to Postmodernism, 2015, p.123). In Winterson's novel, most of these features are covered with several examples.

One of these traits of postmodernist fiction manifests itself in the use of "irony" and "playfulness" throughout the text. This trait can be considered under the category of fragmentation according to Lewis's list. To begin with, the name of the characters convey a playful tone as the contemporary versions are adaptations of Shelley's time. For instance, Mary Shelley is Ry Shelley, Victor Frankenstein becomes Victor Stein, Lord Byron turns into Ron Lord, Polidori becomes Polly D, and Claire Clairmont exists as Claire. The resemblance of the name of the characters not only enables the two stories to be intertwined and create a sense of continuity between Shelley's time of technological infancy and contemporary time of technological advancement, but it also builds a sense of playfulness through similar characters both in names and personalities.

Another example of irony and playfulness is illustrated in the scene where Mary Shelley and her fictitious character Victor Frankenstein meet in the narrator's lodging in Bedlam and have an amusing conversation:

You are Mary Shelly.

I am she.

She was composed. Unafraid.

He turned to me eagerly and said, You have shown her my papers?
All my papers?

She is acquainted with your credentials.

Yes. That is why I am here, she said.

I poured wine. I did not know what else to do. We sat down.

Unmake me, he said.

The lady gazed at him for some while. He appeared very far from mad, but very often the mad have a deep conviction the sane lack.

I am the monster you created, said Victor Frankenstein. I am the thing that cannot die – and I cannot die because I have never lived.

...

Mary Shelley seemed unafraid of his wild claims. She said, Tell me, then, sir, how have you come out of the pages of a book, and into this life?

Victor Frankenstein said, There has been an error. I should have perished on the ice. Instead I find myself here, in this madhouse, and I know that he whom I loathe is loose in the world and seeks my destruction. (Winterson, 2019, p. 144-145)

A similar scene where the owner of the lodging writes a letter to Mary Shelley regarding her fictitious character's escape creates a sense of irony and amusement which fulfills one of the necessities of a postmodern fiction: entertaining the reader: "Dear Mrs Shelley... Further to your visit, the man who calls himself Victor Frankenstein, a character in your excellent novel, has ... VANISHED"(201).

A second postmodernist technique which is widely practiced along the novel is "intertextuality". Ranging from extracts from Shelley's journal and Shakespeare's sonnets to quotes from magazines and popular songs, various examples of intertextuality, which can also be considered under the category of vicious circles by Lewis, appear in the text. One of the most frequent allusions is the Shakespeare sonnet 53 which helps us to question our "material being" and problematise our robotic future: "What is your substance, whereof are you made, That millions of strange shadows on you tend?" (The Complete Sonnets, 2002, p. 487).

The idea that "nothing is original, but all are endless copies of reality" by the cultural theorist Baudrillard (1994, p. 69) and Umberto Eco's claim of "books always speak of other books, and every story tells a story that has already been told" resonate with the intertextual form of the novel (*The Name of the Rose*, 2004, p. 128). Long quotes from *Frankenstein* and Shelley's journal are meshed with Winterson's fiction in order to manifest how human ideas of existence, death, reality and intelligence have changed or not changed over a period of two centuries. The extensive use of

intertextuality also offers the author the chance with a liberating form which helps to overcome the shortcomings of “single, centralized meanings” as Hutcheon argues in her book titled *A Poetics of Postmodernism, History, Theory, Fiction* (1988, p. 127). By making use of this technique, Winterson not only searches for a continuity in the ideas of existence, reality and advancement, she is also able to lay out her opinions in a non-restricting way and problematise them from a philosophical aspect.

A third postmodernist technique which is noticeable in the novel is the use of “pastiche”. Lewis mentions this technique in his list as “creating an anagram, not of letters, but components of a style” (2001, p. 125). Especially historical fiction, science fiction and detective fiction present a wide range of opportunities for authors to capture the complexities of certain themes and to create a postmodernist miscegenation in the hope of mocking or honoring the literary piece it imitates. Winterson in her novel mimics the way Mary Shelley writes her diary with the purpose of honoring the author and creating a vibrant figure in readers’ mind:

My husband adores Byron. Each day they take a boat out on the lake, to talk about poetry and liberty, whilst I avoid Claire, who can talk about nothing ... But then the rain came, and these downpouring days allow for no lake-work. At least the weather allows no staring at us from the farther shore either. In town I heard the rumour that a guest had spied half a dozen petticoats spread out to dry on Byron’s terrace ... That night we sat around the steaming fire talking of the supernatural. Shelley is fascinated by moonlit nights and the sudden side of the ruins. He believes that every building carries an imprint of the past, like a memory, or memories, and these can be released if the time is right... (Winterson, 2019, p. 12)

Another important postmodernist technique is “temporal disorder” which has been commonly practiced by Winterson particularly in novels such as *The Passion* (1987), *Sexing the Cherry* (1989), and *The Stone Gods* (2007). Through incorporating the past and the present, the real and the imagined, Winterson reminds us that we have the technology to redesign ourselves, but in order to handle this technology we need to understand certain things about ourselves, too (Byers, the Guardian).

The novel oscillates between the early 19th century when Mary Shelley was writing her book on a trip with her husband and a circle of close friends and the 21st century world where the level of artificial intelligence poses a threat to turn Frankenstein’s fictitious life into something real and tangible. Between these periods and worlds, and a few in between, Winterson inserts passages from *Frankenstein*, sonnets from Shakespeare, popular song lyrics, and quotes from well-known people from the last three centuries with no sign of introduction or citation. Through reviving figures from the past and attaching them to her characters of her own creation, the author aims to make time seem flat instead of linear.

Last but not least, “metafiction” is employed as a postmodernist technique, which can also be considered under the category of vicious circles according to Lewis’ classification. This technique helps the author to incorporate the act of writing itself into the writing process and it involves the reader as an active participant for this

process. By doing so, the author creates a multi-layered and multi-dimensional universe which reminds the reader that what s/he is reading is imaginary and the reader starts to contemplate about the literary text. “Author’s notes” such as “THIS IS THE MOST PROFOUND THING CLAIRE HAS SAID IN HER LIFE” (93), or sentences such as “I do not know if I am the teller or the tale” (132) are clear indications of the metafiction technique in the novel.

Beneath the surface of amusement and playfulness carried out by postmodernist techniques, *Frankissstein* unfolds a serious, 19th century style philosophical stance at issues such as reality, time, death, future of humanity, responsibilities of creation, boundaries between story and real life, between consciousness and an idea etc. The speculations and lengthy disquisitions through witty dialogues on being human, consciousness, death and spirituality become a major layer of the novel, which indicates a distinction from typical postmodernist fiction. For instance, in the following quotation Victor Stein, the professor and the expert in artificial intelligence and someone interested in “accelerated evolution” via “self-designing life” have some conversations with Ry Shelley who adopts a prudent and philosophical approach towards the future of humanity. These conversations and inquiries focus on questions such as “What is human? What distinguishes us from machines? What is biological life and artificial life?:

We are our bodies, I said.

Every religion disagrees with you. Certainly, since the Enlightenment, science has disagreed with religion – but now we are returning, or arriving, at a deeper insight into what it means to be human – by which I mean it is a stage on the way to being transhuman At present, computers are spectacular at number crunching and data processing. We can code programmes that feel as though computers are interacting with us, that’s fun, but in fact they aren’t interacting in the way we expect a human being to interact. But what will happen when a programme that has self-developed, that has its own version of what we call consciousness – realises, in the human sense of the verb ‘to realise’, exactly what/ who is on the other side of the screen? ... Humans evolved. Humans are evolving. The only difference here is that we are a thinking and designing part of our own evolution. Time – evolutionary time – is speeding up. We’re not waiting for Mother Nature any more... (Winterson, 2019, p. 102-106)

The questions such as “What makes us human?” and “What distinguishes us from machines?” have been central in Winterson’s fiction. Her novel *The Stone Gods* published in 2007 narrates the emotional relationship between a human being and a robot (it is called a Robo-sapien) and explores the nature and limits of being human. The author calls into question whether blood or emotions are enough to make us human. Furthermore, Winterson puts an emphasis on the unstable and fluid nature of human body by saying “Even without any bio-engineering, the human body is in a constantly changing state. What you are today will not be what you are in days, months, years” (2007, p. 44-45). This approach to being human is resonated with Donna Haraway’s ideas on human body. In a similar fashion, Haraway believes that

as humans we are all subject to change due to the relationship between human being and technical power:

By the late twentieth century, our time, a mythic time, we are all chimeras, theorized and fabricated hybrids of machine and organism; in short, we are cyborgs. The cyborg is our ontology; it gives our politics. The cyborg is a condensed image of both imagination and material reality, the two joined centres structuring any possibility of historical transformation. In the traditions of ‘Western’ science and politics [...] the relation between organism and machine has been a border war. (“A Cyborg Manifesto”1991, p. 150)

The capability of evolving and self-repairing of the Robo-Sapient in *The Stone Gods* indicates the transitional state of the intelligent machines as in Haraway’s statement of “the distinction between human and machine no longer makes sense: we have all become cyborgs” (1991, p. 149). The human-machine amalgamation is addressed more overtly and comprehensively in *Frankissstein*. The existence of self-powered and artificially intelligent robots continue to challenge our perception of “what separates us from non-human intelligence”. The novel goes one step further and elaborates on this distinction by putting forward the subject matter of “transference of consciousness into machines”. The dialogue on future humans between Victor Stein and Ry Shelley clarifies the ambiguous and controversial human-machine intimacy and exchange:

Humans will learn how to halt and reverse the ageing process; we will all live healthier and longer lives. We’re still biology but we’re better biology. Alongside that, we can enhance ourselves with smart implants to improve our physical and mental capacities. Alternatively, because biology is limited, we abolish death, at least for some people, by uploading our minds out of their biological beginnings. I interrupted him, But then we’re just a computer programme. He frowned. Why do you say ‘just’? Do you think Stephen Hawking, whose body was useless to him, was ‘just’ a mind? He was a mind, certainly, and the closest thing we have seen to an exceptional and fully conscious human mind trapped in a body. What if we had been able to free his mind? (Winterson, 2019, p. 81)

The end of “humanity” used in the conventional sense is also underlined as part of human-machine interaction. Hayles’s concept of “posthuman” which emerges from historical understandings of technology and culture along with the idea that human intelligence is co-produced with intelligent machines is embodied in the discussions of “accelerated evolution” which allows for existence of non-physical entities replaced with human beings (*How We Became Posthuman*, 1999, p. 2). When asked about the possible extinction of homo sapiens, Victor attributes a new meaning to the word “extinction” and considers it a changing form of existence:

Do you believe that will happen? I said.

Victor shrugged. What do we mean by extinction? If we can upload some human minds to a non-physical platform, then what? Biological extinction perhaps. I don't like the word 'extinction' – it is alarmist.

That's because being wiped out is alarming, I said.

Don't be so tabloid, said Victor. Think of it as accelerated evolution. (Winterson, 2019, p. 135)

The concept of "reality" is another subject matter overwhelming the entire book. Untitled chapters begin with a sentence about "reality" such as "Reality is water-soluble, Reality bends in the heat, What is the temperature of reality?, Hope is our reality?, Reality is ... what?" As postmodernist novels put into question the traditional labels such as certainty, unity, reality, center, continuity etc., Winterson chooses to problematise "reality" not to deny it but rather to interrogate its nature and relation to everyday experience in our modern life. In her book titled *Art Objects: Essays on Ecstasy and Effronter*, she elaborates on the flexibility and unordinary form of "reality" as follows: "The earth is not flat and neither is reality. Reality is continuous, multiple, simultaneous, complex, abundant and partly invisible" (1997, p. 151). The unitary and versatile characteristics of "reality" is also emphasized through Ali/x as a virtual reality of multiple possibilities in the book titled *Gut Symmetries*: "In quantum reality there are millions of possible worlds, unactualised, potential, perhaps bearing in on us, but only reachable by wormholes we can never find (1999, p. 53). Even "space" and "time" which constitute the concept of "reality" becomes fluid, uncertain and inconsistent in Winterson's fiction. In her novel *Weight*, it is argued that there are no definite boundaries between past, present and future: "I realize now that the past does not dissolve like a mirage. I realize that the future, through invisible, has weight. We are in the gravitational pull of past and future" (2005, p. 66). In a similar fashion, "space" is presented as a multi-dimensional, mobile and borderless notion: "What limits? There are none...There are no straight lines. The lines that smooth across the page, deceive. Straightforward is not the geometry of space. In space, nothing tends directly..." (2005, p. 94). In *Frankissstein*, the centuries old question "What is reality?" is dealt with again as in Winterson's most books but this time it is addressed more directly, overtly and in relation to artificial intelligence:

What is reality? I said. To you?

It's not a noun, said Victor. It's not a thing or object. It isn't objective.

I accept that our experience of reality isn't objective. My subjective experience of the desert will be different to yours, but the desert is really there...

Then what is reality? The best minds have asked this question forever, said Victor. I cannot answer it. What I can say is that just as consciousness appears to be an emergent property of brain function – you can't pinpoint consciousness biologically – it is as elusive as the seat of the soul – but we would agree that consciousness exists – and

we would agree that at present machine intelligence isn't conscious. So perhaps reality is also an emergent property – it exists, but it is not the material fact we take it to be. (Winterson, 2019, p. 82)

Winterson's *Frankissstein* does not rest solely on exploring the possible implications of artificial intelligence and limits of biological existence which might pave the way for a better future. At the same time, it brings forward the concerns in relation to the responsibilities of creating new life forms and whether these artificial life forms can replace humans or even rule over them. The cautious attitude and apprehension towards "machines that will learn to think for themselves" can be classified under three categories: increasing human greed, end of humanity, and sexbots.

Rapacity and its destructive reverberations are one of the main concerns of a growing artificial intelligence trend and an implication of this trend will be experienced in space colonisation, according to Winterson. Manipulating technological supremacy for hegemonic goals and aspirations and therefore, claiming mastery over non-human entities on other planets are what Winterson criticise in the novel:

We cannot live indefinitely in human form on this earth, and the only way we can seriously colonise space is by not being in human form. Once out of these bodies we can handle any atmosphere, any temperature, lack of food and water, distances of any kind, providing we have an energy source. (Winterson, 2019, p. 188)

The second concern regarding the superiority of non-human forms over humans is the underlying idea that artificial life forms will have the potential to terminate the human race on Earth. The fact that robots will be independent and eternal entities which will have the capacity to evolve and self-repair themselves can cause various confrontations and many stalemates in terms of human-machine relations. A similar concern about a possible demolishing of humans by machines is raised in *The Written on the Body*: "Luddite? No, I don't want to smash the machines but neither do I want the machines to smash me" (1994, p. 80). *Frankissstein* deepens these controversies with the help of Ry Shelley's well-reasoned questions and the inquiries of the audience in Victor Stein's lecture to the public. Last but not least, sexbots and related products are illustrated and discussed for possible adverse effects on the social, psychological, and sexual sides of human nature.

3. Conclusion

Two notable contemporary British writers – Jeanette Winterson and Ian Mc Ewan – published novels about artificial intelligence and human-machine relations in 2019. In the previous year, two important British writers – James Smythe and Will Eaves – published *I Still Dream* and *Murmur*, respectively. They also deal with issues such as algorithms, consciousness and artificial intelligence. This is an indication that controversies about technological advancement and its challenging ramifications are becoming a pivotal preoccupation of today's British fiction. With this work of fiction, Winterson "manages to pay homage to Shelley's insight and passion while demonstrating her own extraordinary creativity" (Charles, the Washington Post). Moreover, Winterson's *Frankissstein* makes room for itself in an increasingly popular

field by means of engagement with hybridity. In this hybrid example, postmodernist techniques and philosophical inquiries go hand in hand. Furthermore, the novel's plot combines two different stories (one from Mary Shelley, the other from a modern-day character Ry Shelley) in order to manifest the continuity of human's desire for creating life forms for almost two centuries. The main character Ry Shelley's gender (a transsexual) and Victor Stein's experiments/attempts to create a transhuman are also part of the hybridity the novel encapsulates.

After publishing *The Powerbook* (2000) and *The Stone Gods*, Winterson has focused on human-machine relations more extensively and profoundly in *Frankissstein*. The romantic relationship between a human and a Robo-sapien and the notion of "self-evolving machines" in *The Stone Gods* is followed by hard science and dreamy romanticism and the same notion of independently thinking and self-repairing machines in *Frankissstein*. On the other hand, Winterson's recent novel allocates more space for the discussions of artificial intelligence and its possible consequences for humanity. The lengthy disquisitions on the moral obstacles of creating non-biological life forms, metaphysical conversations between the Shelleys and Byron, the illustration of how human ideas of existence, intelligence and creativity have changed or have not changed over the course of two hundred years are some of the characteristics which distinguish Winterson's novel from its precursors mentioned above.

Even though *Frankissstein* has its share from postmodernist techniques such as irony, playfulness, intertextuality, pastiche, and metafiction on the surface, it becomes the embodiment of an "awareness-raising" and "warning for future" novel with the help of 19th century style philosophical inquiries and related ethical concerns about the future of humanity. Notions such as "reality", "death", "consciousness", "being human", "non-human" are called into question. The advantages and disadvantages of creating non-biological forms are discussed and ethical concerns are raised. Beneath all the amusement and playfulness created by postmodernist techniques, Winterson calls for the reader to realise the graveness of technological advancement for human race and to contemplate on ourselves and our creations. Readers are expected to question the changing nature of human-machine relations and prepare themselves for its possible consequences. By juxtaposing Shelley's process of creating a monster at the beginning of 19th century with Victor Stein's creating artificial life forms in the 21st century, Winterson reminds the reader the inevitable outcome which is imminent for humanity: the future. As Mary Shelley prophesizes from the 19th century in the novel: "The march of the machines is now and forever. The box has been opened. What we invent we cannot uninvent. The world is changing" (94), non-human life forms will become a part of our lives sooner or later and this inevitable fact will continue to be a part of British fiction.

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SPACE AND ARCHITECTURE IN DAVID GREIG'S *THE ARCHITECT*ⁱ

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Abstract

David Greig, one of the representatives of the British theatre, makes political and social issues background in his plays. He mainly focuses on globalism, immigration, borders, corruption, and people's encounter in different spaces. The Architect, performed in 1996 at Traverse Theatre in Edinburgh, shows Leo Black's decline within the context of spatial and relational issues. Once a prestigious architect hired by the state to construct a significant project years ago, Leo Black faces a petition campaign to demolish his first big project, Eden Court. The tenants of Eden Court are not happy to live there any longer because the area where it was built turned into a socially corrupt place. This study aims to depict the spatial inequalities, the dispersion of families with different social backgrounds to the city, the quality and the design of the space, the importance of architecture, and the formation of relations in public and private places. Greig, processing the plot like a sociologist, touches upon the delicate results of the neoliberal economic model in and around the city in a literary work. He vividly portrays neoliberalism's requirements, such as the division of labour, the utilization of public and private places, the politics of mass housing in the city, and increasing social inequalities. Leo Black tries to prevent his family and his career from destruction despite his terrific loneliness.

Keywords: Space, architecture, neoliberal, inequality

1. Introduction

People adjust places according to their life situations, which are defined by their economic practices. In the late twentieth century and in the early twenty-first century, the definitive economic model in the world is neoliberalism. The concept of housing has the utmost importance for people and the states. The statement 'neoliberalism is radically individualistic'

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shows the twenty-first century's motto in government politics (Ritzer, 2008: 599). Housing and property are the two essential aspects of the rentier economy, and governments increasingly depend on this economy. New construction projects appeal to politicians, and the governments' discourse mainly includes gigantic construction projects ranging from shopping centers to skyscrapers under urban planning. These expensive projects have become the signifiers of a neoliberal economy in the city. In *The Architect*, space usage is a primary problem because people belonging to different social ranks do not have equal rights. Social inequalities in a shared space are the results of a neoliberal government perception. Henri Lefebvre sees this as a result of the city planning with the high industrialization and states 'a programmed *everyday life* in its appropriate *urban setting*' (Lefebvre, 1971: 65). The politics of everyday life has become the politics of modern life in the city. In Great Britain, the Community Architecture movement in the 1990s aimed to meet the needs and wishes of its users. Architects were expected to work in the community for whom they are designing. They also had to cooperate with their clients during the construction process (Christopher, 2002: 196). The social issues in the play refer to the Community Architecture movement in the 1990s. Leo Black, the protagonist of *The Architect*, struggles to build new projects in the city despite his loneliness and despair. His struggle represents different aspects of the neoliberal system in a developed country.

2. The Role of An Architect in A Neoliberal World

The focus of this play is on being an architect in this play. The protagonist, Leo Black, thinks jobs are divided into two groups; the ones that affect the world and those that do not. He is proud of his career, and he suggests that his son Martin choose the same career path. To Leo, being creative can be interesting for a job. However, designing and building make you powerful. Leo can be right because architecture has always been a meaningful sign to show the civilization of a city or a country. He believes that architecture is responsible for the past, the present, and the future:

Leo ... Now, building, construction, engineering, architecture. These have effects. Here you have responsibility. Obviously you can dream, use your imagination, of course but there's a purpose. You put your dreams on paper... blueprints, drawings. The smallest line, the merest gesture of the pencil can be the curve of a motorway flyover, or pull a tower up from the slums, or shape a square from a mess of alleys. That's what we do, Martin, we dream these structures and then (Greig, 2002: 95-96).

There is a hierarchy between jobs in the world. Being practical and responsible put architects in a superior position compared to other employment areas because an architect's imagination can transform a space into a different one. Cities are formed and reformed according to these architectural drawings. Since structures are of great importance, so their designs and architectural plans are. Japanese philosopher Kojin Karatani makes an analogy of architecture since its early ages:

Among Greeks, architecture was considered not merely a skill of craftsmen but an art practiced by those technologies, and who therefore plan projects and lead other craftsmen. In this context, the term *techne* meant not only technology in a narrow sense but also *poiesis* (making) in general. Plato defined it in the following way: "By its original meaning [*poiesis*] means simply creation, and creation, as you know, can take very various forms. Any action which is the cause of a thing emerging from non-existence into existence might be called [*poiesis*], and all the processes in all the crafts are kinds of [*poiesis*], and all those who are engaged in them [creators]" (Karatani, 1995: 5-6).

Leo separates his creativity and genius in architecture from those of other jobs. However, Karatani's perspective gives us an artistic and archaic aspect of the issue. Leo sees architecture as a way of life, and architects are the pioneers of civilization. His perspective is similar to Karatani's depiction of *poiesis* mentioned in the above quote. Architects design space, and they are the *doers* of the culture. Leo tells his ideas about this problem:

Leo Understand? This site's in the middle of no-man's land. Look at it. Devastation. Someone in the planning department told me, this is officially third world status. Which means vandalism, burglars, and Christ knows whatever else. It's a prime example. You dream up ideas, but you have to think, you have to see potential problems. Solve them. Before they happen – understand? I saw the problem – that ... and this is the physical solution (Greig, 2002: 97).

In the quote above, we learn the multi-dimensional part of Leo's work. Eden Court was built in a place where there was nothing then. Leo regards the area as it belongs to no one, so the right to use this place belongs to the government or the contractors hired by the government. Leo points that the term third world refers to a social rank. The clash of these ranks is apparent in the play. Leo belongs to the first world, but Sheena Mackie, a tenant at Eden Court, belongs to the third world because of her social background. Sheena, as a leading figure at Eden Court, does her best for her community, and she resists Leo Black and the other governmental difficulties in the demolition process bravely. She is the one who challenges Leo's works and ideas in the field.

David Harvey stresses that uneven geographical developments result from the geographical disparities in wealth and power, which are the two decisive factors of space production (Harvey, 2000: 189). It is reasonable to say that Eden Court was built to remove the underprivileged groups from the city, not to be a problem for the rich. When Sheena visits Leo in his home, she is fascinated by the spacious atmosphere and the private garden. However, they have to deal with many problems in Eden Court except their houses' uncomfortable features. The geographical differences that Harvey insistently mentions create these two families' social realities. The acute rupture of underprivileged groups from privileged groups generates hierarchical chaos because the city's spatial division bears different problems. As Harvey emphasizes, the city right must be distributed equally to people from different walks of life:

The right to the city is not an exclusive individual right, but a focused collective right. It is inclusive not only of construction workers but also of all those who facilitate the reproduction of daily life: the caregivers and teachers, the sewer and subway repairmen, the plumbers and electricians, the scaffolding erectors and crane operators, the hospital workers and the entertainers, the bank clerks and the city administrators. It seeks a unity from within an incredible diversity of fragmented social spaces and locations within innumerable divisions of labour (Harvey, 2012: 137).

Leo often misses that without the contribution of different positions, he cannot render his mission well. In the city, all jobs unite and create one big reality; that is the city. Leo's explanation about the necessities of building a structure shows two crucial aspects of the work. Although it is theoretically possible to make any type of installation, nature and humans are two unpredictable elements. These two can influence the stability and the practicality of any structure. However, the architects may fail in calculating these two factors. Like Harvey's point above, Leo is also dependent on other superstructures in the city. Therefore, he emphasizes the unpredictability of humans among these structures. Harmony is the most crucial thing in creating, and if you exceed the limits, there may be some hazards. Thus, even the most robust structure may bear some unexpected results:

Leo The base of the building would have to be wide ... to support the height. Lifts are a problem, over a certain number of floors and you need separate lifts ... then there's the human elements ... vertigo. People do get vertigo. I suppose that counts as a nature. Materials, design and nature ... if one of these factors is out of harmony then, when you get beyond a certain point, the structure overbalances, things get dangerous. You can work it out. Theoretically, though, there's no limits (Greig, 2002: 98).

Materials, design, and nature are the three critical factors for a structure to be stable. Without harmony, things can get dangerous.

Leo It's a typical attitude, of course. Blame the architect. People are poor. Blame the architect. Place is a slum, blame the architect. They fill a place with pigs and then complain it's turned into a pigsty (Greig, 2002: 122).

Leo, dissatisfied with the petition campaign to demolish Eden Court, does not feel responsible for the social deterioration. He cannot be the one to blame, but the government because the space that the architect created as a model cannot fight against the social realities created by the authority. Leo indicates that the issue is much bigger than the design of an architect:

If the architects and planners wish to look for initiatives in the process of developing the environment, it is crucial for them to study the role of architecture and architects' potential for influence in the turmoil of both economics and the consumption of signs. Answers to the question of consumer society architecture could be found elsewhere than in individualism and alternative lifestyles. The urban space has transformed into a disconnected spatialized fabric exactly because of individualistic consumption habits (Ahlava, 2000: 40).

Adopting a Baudrillardian perspective in his work, Ahlava sees that architecture has many aesthetic aspects, not separate from economics and consumption. Therefore, Leo is right in his reproach:

Leo It's an exact model, Mrs. Mackie, an exact model of the Eden Court design. I wanted you to see this to make a point.

Sheena The grass. You've made the grass green. Put green felt down.

Leo This is the original design. Six standing towers. Aerial walkways linking each tower, platforms linking each balcony. The whole enclosing a central park.

Sheena It shouldn't be green. That part of the estate's all mud now. It catches the rain. It's like a draining bowl. You want to put down brown before felt for that.

Dorothy The models aren't supposed to be realistic. They're impressions (Greig, 2002:164).

Sheena implies the infrastructural weaknesses of Eden Court in the above quote. Because the roads are muddy yet the model shows them as green. She insists that the model is misleading because it warps the actual conditions of Eden Court. However, Dorothy states that the models do not have to reflect the realities. From a Baudrillardian perspective, the most definitive feature of simulations is the models in *The Architect*, and they replace the entire Eden Court buildings (Baudrillard, 2018: 34). Namely, Leo drew the design and never saw Eden Court

again. In a sense, he is alienated from his work. He is not interested in the infrastructural problems of Eden Court as an architect. Greig refers to another point here. Today the properties are sold by showing the models in an office or advertised on TVs. So the advertised models are the idealized versions of the buildings. They offer lots of green space, vivid colours on the buildings, and happy families with their kids around the model. However, the infrastructural and superstructural realities of the models do not necessarily fit in them.

Leo The original design was, in fact, loosely based on Stonehenge.

Paulina I didn't think anyone lived in Stonehenge.

Leo Standing stones were the inspiration.

Paulina Too draughty I thought.

Sheena Didn't you win an award for this?

Dorothy He did.

Leo I won some recognition at the time.

Sheena It looks good. From this angle. From above (Greig, 2002: 164).

Leo was inspired by Stonehenge when he designed Eden Court. The historical structures of the past are supposed to be built in cities. Leo made his dream real in his work. So his power as an architect appears. Harvey using architecture metaphorically, states:

The architect shapes spaces so as to give them social utility as well as human and aesthetic /symbolic meanings. The architect shapes and preserves long-term social memories and strives to give material form to the longings and desires of individuals and collectivities. The architect struggles to open spaces for new possibilities, for future forms of social life (Harvey, 2000: 200).

It is notable to see that Harvey theoretically emphasizes Dorothy's sayings in the above quote. In that sense, Greig successfully reflected the issue to the characters. Leo, winning recognition thanks to Eden Court, has had a prestigious career. However, the social memories of Eden Court were filled with negativities over time. Leo continues to defend himself:

Leo I was asked to build cheap homes. Cheap housing. High density accommodation. Eden Court is a council estate., Mrs. Mackie, but I built connecting areas, and public spaces, I designed it so everyone's front room gets the sun at certain times of the day. They're not luxury homes, but architecturally, they're well designed. That's the point I'm making. I put as much

imagination, as much thought, as much of my self into these buildings as any – (Greig, 2002: 164-165).

Leo sees that he cannot resist Sheena anymore because he is frustrated with the campaign. He asserts that he did what the council expected from him. Thus, she must focus on other factors except for the architectural defects or the architect's role. Harvey, emphasizing the role of architects in the modern world, states that:

The architect has to imagine spaces, orderings, materials, aesthetic effects, relations to environments, and deal at the same time with the more mundane issues of plumbing, heating, electric cables, lighting, and the like. The architect is not a totally free agent in this. Not only do the quantities and qualities of available materials and the nature of sites constrain choices but educational traditions and learned practices channel thought (Harvey, 2000: 204).

Harvey sociologically summarizes Leo's architectural references in the above quote. So it is unreasonable to accuse Leo of the complications in Eden Court. The council hired his imagination at that time, and he designed Eden Court. He is just a piece in a gear wheel.

Architects are globally influential, yet architects are also contingent upon the country's social and political order. So they cannot be held responsible for the problems such as the safety of the construction site, the quality of the material used in the project, the appropriate conditions of the working staff, or the environmental degradation in the region. Thus, Leo makes a clear-cut division between what can be regarded as his responsibility and what cannot be attributed to him.

Sheena Would you say it was your responsibility?

Leo It was my responsibility. It's not my fault the council turned into a ghetto. I didn't put the people in it.

Sheena Were you there when the flats were built?

Leo I supervised the project.

Sheena Did you actually supervise the work? Watch every bolt go in? See every panel in place?

Leo Of course not (Greig, 2002: 165-166).

In architecture, the external conditions define the scope of the work. Harvey believes in the symbolic power of architecture in our lives:

The architecture of dialectical utopianism must be grounded in contingent matrices of existing and already achieved social relations. These comprise political-economic processes,

assemblages of technological capacities, and the superstructural features of law, knowledge, political beliefs, and the like. It must also acknowledge its embeddedness in a physical and ecological world which is always changing (Harvey, 2000: 230).

The world is continually changing, and some structures need to be demolished, rebuilt, or redesigned. Architects have a role in adapting the buildings according to the new requirements. Otherwise, the nature of the design will be skipped. Eden Court, once an excellent place for its residents, is now a place of deterioration. Thus, it needs to be demolished and rebuilt again. However, it cannot be assured that it will not bring new problems. Because as Leo often states, the human element is the most critical factor in a space. So the utopia that Leo hoped to put into practice cannot be established. The symbolic power of the architect indeed depends on many factors Harvey mentions in the above quote. Sheena also says:

Sheena I don't mean to seem rude, Mr. Black. You're probably a nice man. You've a nice family. You probably meant for it to be a nice place to live. Isn't that what architects are for? I remember the brochures we got. A drawing of the sun shining and kids playing in the park. When they came round looking for tenants I signed like that. I saw the models. But it was all 'vision', wasn't it? Vision's the word you would use. Not houses, but a vision of housing. Cheaply accommodated. Eden Court might look like Stonehenge to you, it might have won an award but it's built like a pack of cards (Greig, 2002: 166-167).

Sheena once comes to the point that the visionary buildings offered friendly people to live, sunlight, and happily playing kids at first. The brochures and the models seduced the people who are going to live there. However, now, Sheena considers that they were all about vision. It is clear that money was the determinant of the project, so high-rise buildings were preferred at that time. It was proper enough for the landscape. The people's happiness was not aimed at, but the project's success was first. Remarkably, the vision of the project was a medium to conceal the other problems. While the word 'house' refers to the buildings solely, 'a vision of housing' indicates a bigger perspective.

Sheena comes to the point that nothing is left when the architect's role is removed from the building. Because life, which Sheena probably means a quality life, is the distinguishing effect on a space. Although Eden Court was supposed to be a nice place to live, life was not as lovely as it was supposed to be. The dialectic objective of architecture has not been achieved in Eden Court:

Sheena Architecture's for the people who pay. Always. All we want to do is take control. It's not about good or bad buildings, it's about who decides. Don't we have the right to not like good buildings? You do (Greig, 2002: 167).

Eden Court residents have lost control of space in time, and it turned into a ghetto. Now, she believes that upon demolishing Eden Court, a new control mechanism can be accomplished there. However, her wish to control the space much better may bring some unexpected results. Because space changes according to the social and political dynamics, the residents cannot be the mere authorities there. Nevertheless, Sheena's struggle to make their place a better one puts her in an important position. Like Harvey's conceptualization, she is an architect for her own life. She is coping with difficulties to design a better life for herself and her community:

Herein lies perhaps the most difficult of all barriers for the insurgent architect to surmount. In facing up to a world of uncertainty and risk, the possibility of being quite undone by the consequences of our own actions weighs heavily upon us, often making us prefer 'those ills we have than flying to others that we know not of' (Harvey, 2000: 254).

Harvey's Marxist side is evident in the above quote. Furthermore, Sheena's hopeful resistance to creating a much better place for them is similar to Harvey's bold statement. When Eden Court was to be demolished, Sheena and Leo meet again. Leo tells how the destruction is done despite being depressive in this situation. Leo states that not only the building but also demolishing requires the correct calculation. Otherwise, it cannot be controlled accordingly, and this may also bring other problems:

Leo It's a complex job destroying buildings as big as this. You can't just watch it topple. It's more clinical than that, more surgical. The taller the building the more you need to control it, or else the whole thing falls sideways, takes other buildings with it, falls into the crowd. It's an interesting operation (Greig, 2002: 197).

The dialogue between Sheena and Leo can be interpreted differently. The building refers to a well-designed society ruled by control mechanisms. Still, it has to be torn down in the end because the problems in society have gone so far that they cannot be solved without demolishing them.

3. Neoliberal City Dynamics

Leo The tower's going to be over there. At the head of the docks. Where the fish market used to be. They're still digging foundations. but you can imagine.

Martin Is this one of yours? The tower? Did you dream it?

Leo A lot of people are involved in the project.

Martin Did you think it up though? Your dream?

Leo I'm part of the design team, obviously ... so in that sense, yes. Everyone has their role, everyone has input (Greig, 2002: 96).

The above quote between Leo and Martin implies constructive changes in the city. Because the previous fish market is no longer needed in the city, instead, a tower is being built in the fish market space. Since cities are similar to living beings that change in time and the buildings also gain new functions at different times. Frederic Jameson seeing modern life as a constant rotation of elements, tell us that all structures are apt to change depending on the conditions (Jameson, 1997: 90).

The new always requires the demolition of the old. Aihwa Ong saying that 'neoliberal governmentality reflects the infiltration of market-driven truths and calculations into the domain of politics' exemplifies the constructive changes in the society (Ong, 2007: 4). When Leo states that many people are involved in the project, he refers to his work's magnitude. Even though he has an undeniable contribution to the building project, he cannot achieve it without a profitable division of labour. Emile Durkheim claims that the division of labour is associated with the advancement of society. A division of labour causes work to be accomplished well, and it refers to society's progress. Therefore, Leo's success as an architect depends on the success of everyone in the project. Although it was his dream to create a new site, cooperation must finalize the project.

In the first act, Leo stands close to the architectural models in the office. Martin often makes Leo angry by muttering and touching the models. He implies that the models do not look real. Instead, they look like artificial buildings. In the below quote, Martin questions this clash:

Martin The model's clean. Is that deliberate? When you make them? They don't look anything like real buildings. There's no dirt. No mess around them. Just white card, patches of green felt and pretend trees. They look like film buildings. They look as though the sun's always shining on them (Greig, 2002: 101-102).

The difference between a model building and a real building is inevitable. In the model, there are not people. The human element, which Leo later mentions, is essential here. However, when social reality does not fit in the model's promises, there arouses another problem because people can be easily manipulated and directed with the models shown initially. The models conceal the realities. They have the power to warp them because they are necessary tools of

advertisement. In *The Architect*, the gap between the model and the social realities is processed well. Martin and Sheena oppose Leo as the models do not associate with the real buildings of Eden Court.

Eden Court was built by government support, and Leo was hired to lead the project. As a cheap way to place lower-class people in the city's specific parts, mass housing has been a severe matter of neoliberalism. Sheena, as the representative of the tenants in Eden Court, is aware of the political weakness. She does not want to lose years in court, so she started a petition and collected many signatures from people, including a political figure, Prince Charles. She tries to deal with Leo, either:

Sheena The council don't want to build a new estate. They say there isn't the money. It's cheaper to slap a bit of paint on and leave the place fall apart. We could take them to court but something like this could take years. The only way we'll get what we want is if embarrass the council. And if you say they need to be rebuilt they'll have to do something. They can hardly argue with the architect, can they (Greig, 2002: 107)?

As a critique of the Thatcher regime, Harvey stresses the long-term negative impacts of social housing in the UK. The loss of affordable housing in central areas led many people to be homeless (Harvey, 2005: 163-164). Leo was disappointed because his project was to be demolished. Although he solely cannot be blamed for the social corruption in Eden Court, he may have disguised something in the process of construction. This is clear in the below quote:

Leo I didn't hire the contractors.

Sheena A few bolts missing here and there. They always over-design these things anyway. If the odd panel doesn't fit, never mind.

Leo I admit there was a lack of supervision but the contractors were under pressure. Time was pressure. You may not remember but it was you people who were demanding houses (Greig, 2002: 166).

According to this dialogue, we see that the constructional problems of Eden Court are inexpensive materials, lack of supervision, too much pressure on the contractors, and timing. People who expect their houses immediately and the company forcing the contractors to rush are two main spheres. Sheena, as a conscious tenant, knows all the construction's weaknesses, so she does not let Leo lay the responsibility on others. In any case, Leo's wife, Paulina, interferes with the situation and reveals Leo's ideas then. We understand that Leo had to rush to finish the project. He professionally tries to conceal the problem. The silhouette of cities has

changed a lot since industrialization. Sheena's quote indicates how a construction project influences the city in the long run:

Sheena ...Watching over the city's front door. And then the front door closed. Containers. You know the containers you put on ships, on lorries ... As soon as they invented containers there was no need for docks in the city centre. No need for dockers. A port and a motorway's all you need. The crane lifts the box out of the ship and onto the back of the truck. Done. So the dockers and sailors lost their jobs and you got yours ... making museums and restaurants out of warehouses and whisky bonds. Even the tarts moved inland. All that got left here was people who were stuck. Stuck in boxes on the dockside waiting to be picked up. Hoping someone's going to stop for us and take us with them (Greig, 2002: 185-186).

Sheena silently observed the commercial traffic on the docks from her house. She witnessed the working cycle of men and saw the flow of import and export goods. The goods that she mentions above represent different types of trade. For example, cars and crates of whisky will be served to upper-class people, loads of coal will be used in factories to produce more industrial products, and bananas may be linked to tropical countries. These products are the signifiers of overseas trade, which is highly promoted in neoliberalism. However, the trade growth brought new consequences, and then the goods were put into enormous containers, which allowed to transport more goods by ships. However, a more professional system was required to provide this capacity. Neoliberalism cannot be thought of without an advanced method of transportation, either. As a result, the city's front door closed because of the excess trade, which led dockers to lose their jobs. Since neoliberalism is a meta-spatial concept, it must first open a free space to grow freely. So, the docks turned into a port, and a motorway was built.

On the one hand, a group of people lost their jobs. On the other hand, a group of people got new jobs according to the changing conditions. The success of neoliberalism in terms of transforming spaces is not a recent phenomenon. On the contrary, the countries closer to the seas, like Britain, efficiently used this geographical advantage. It is once proved that the free market of neoliberalism cannot be restricted to one space. Instead, it is a meta-spatial concept. Harvey emphasizes the importance of transportation in the areas:

The capitalist mode of production promotes the production of cheap and rapid forms of communication and transportation in order that 'the direct product can be realized in distant markets in mass quantities' at the same time as 'new spheres of realization for labour, driven by capital' can be opened up. The reduction in realization and circulation costs helps to create,

therefore, fresh room for capital accumulation. Put the other way around, capital accumulation is bound to be geographically expansionary and to be so by progressive reductions in the costs of communication and transportation (Harvey, 2001: 224).

Sheena's words are like a lament over the unrestrainable change of the city dynamics in time. Once she could see what was brought from overseas countries, she cannot see what the containers include now. Big companies occupy the port, and a closed system runs it. She also mentions the museums, restaurants, and warehouses as the new places in the city. As a white-collar worker, Leo is included in the system because its new façade allows him to perpetuate in the city. However, the residents of Eden Court fell into disuse. Therefore, the spatial crisis is not a simple one but a complicated one. When Sheena refers to the 'tarts' as they moved inland, another scary result reveals. Harvey tells these drastic results as:

The social consequences of neoliberalization are in fact extreme. Accumulation by dispossession typically undermines whatever powers women may have had within household production / marketing systems and within traditional social structures and relocates everything in male-dominated commodity and credit markets. The paths of women's liberation from traditional patriarchal controls in developing countries like either through degrading factory labour or through trading on sexuality which varies from respectable work as hostesses and waitresses to the sex trade (one of the most lucrative of all contemporary industries in which global deal of slavery is involved (Harvey, 2005: 170).

The male-dominated system of neoliberalism creates its unprivileged groups. The 'tarts' Sheena mentions are just another result of the new system. Both Leo and Sheena are aware of the crisis, indeed. However, they are mere subjects in the design and do not have the power to put things alright immediately:

Sheena I'm not stupid. I'm not a silly woman who doesn't like modern buildings. You're right. I know this is 'good design'. 'Good design' isn't the point. The point is control. Who has the power to knock down and who has the power to build it (Greig, 2002: 189)?

Sheena's focus on power to knock down and construct the buildings is indeed a thematic problem in *The Architect*. Sheena's asking who has the power cannot be replied to quickly because it is distributed between the money holders and the country's political governance. So, the control mechanisms are up to change over time. The free-market economy requires a flexible environment in which the flow of money is not interrupted. Neoliberalism is

‘characterised by uncertainty, insecure employment, and hyper-responsibilization’ (Hilgers, 2011: 361). Like Sheena, Leo is also aware of the change in the city. His perspective is as follows:

Leo In the past we built cities on top of cities... in the middle of cities... around them... Haphazard, unplanned... encrustations. Layers of mistakes corrected by more mistakes... Never a clean slate. Never a clear vision. So when they asked me to build something I thought ... Duty required me to ... I thought I had to make ... Because of the future ... A new idea. A better thing. Look. A thousand families ... self-contained flats ... connecting. Walkways ... public galleries and ... space and structure and ... And the stones ... each block represents a stone, a monolith ... Do you see? Timeless. A family in each flat. Each block a community. The whole estate a village. The city encircled by estates, each one connected to the others. And to the centre. Do you see? A design. But it’s the human element, isn’t it? Materials, structure and so on ... But the human element... Eludes you. You can’t design for it (Greig, 2002: 192-193).

Leo despises the old structures in the city because they were wrongly planned and constructed. Thus, he aimed at building a timeless housing project for Eden Court. He calculated every angle of the building, from the walkways to galleries. He also thought of a vital centre for Eden Court. Hence it would be easier to dominate the people. Design is about the millimetric calculations of space, materials can be chosen, and structures can be built with those materials. However, the human element is incalculable. According to Leo, humans are unpredictable, and they may not fit into the design so perfectly. That is why humans elude the design and the designer. In the end, Leo does not make his dream to be timeless because the destruction of Eden Court becomes another new adjustment in the city.

Today cities are divided into different parts, and the conditions of each piece differ from one another. For example, the region where Leo and his family live in the city is cleaner and more spacious than where Eden Court rises. According to Leo, the city’s social splitting is normal, but the human element is unpredictable. The structural schemes of the city are “micro-states” or neighborhoods where social and housing facilities such as electricity, sanitation system of the roads are provided for people according to their economic level (Balbo, 1993: 24).

As saddened by Eden Court’s destruction, Leo turns back to his family and tries to avoid his defeat. He daydreams of going somewhere and starts from scratch:

Leo We'll get out of the city. Paulina. A village somewhere. We'll do up a house or something. I'll work from the attic. Get back to the original us ... all of us ... You, me, Dorothy, Martin (Greig, 2002: 136).

Leo, tired of his job and the city's necessities, holds on to a romantic dream of leaving the city with his family. He thinks that village life would be better for them and have a chance to have a happier life. Even though they have a beautiful house and recognition in the city, he cannot stand the city's inaccuracy. That is why he thinks that they have lost clarity in the city. In a sense, they have consumed themselves in the city. The extended effects of neoliberalism are also seen in many life areas because it created its cultural logic.

The psychological effects are apparent in *The Architect* when we examine the characters. Similar to Sheena, Leo is alienated from his environment and hopes to change it. He also feels stuck in the city, and therefore, he wants to go back to his original, because:

This is a world in which the neoliberal ethic of intense possessive individualism can become the template for human personality socialization. The impact is increasing individualistic isolation, anxiety, and neurosis in the midst of one of the greatest social achievements (at least judging by its enormous scale and all-embracing characters) ever constructed in human history or the realization of our hearts' desire. But the fissures within the system are also all too evident. We increasingly live in divided, fragmented, and conflict-prone cities (Harvey, 2012: 14-15).

Coming from different social realities, both Leo and Sheena want the best for their families. Family is their priority, and they have to achieve this together in the city. At the end of the play, David Greig opens the door to unite Sheena and Leo despite their social differences. However, this can only happen after the explosion of Eden Court. In that sense, Greig offers the destruction of old structures to build new ones. However, the city is always unpredictable. Last, people in the city must adapt to different conditions because they must be fast, flexible, and ready for any unforeseen situations. Douglas Spencer sees the capacity to adjust to other positions as necessary for our existence. He states:

Adaptability and flexibility appear, through the neoliberal lens, as the qualities of conduct, the ethos that the subject must cultivate in order to the truth games of neoliberalism there is no choice for the self, politically or ontologically, but to govern, and to have itself governed, according to these imperatives (Spencer, 2016: 23).

In *The Architect*, we see different forms of neoliberal subjects scattered in and around the city. The city has become a secure place for them because everybody has to cope with many city

problems. Everybody is the rival of each other, and they must make concessions to attach to the city's dynamics successfully.

4. Conclusion

The Architect involves social, economic, and political references that dramatically influence people's lives from different aspects. The play is divided into two acts, and the characters interact with each other in different parts of the city. The space politics of neoliberal governmentality, the architecture, and architects' role within the context of modernism in the last century are at the core of the play. Greig creates the text's social realities depending on those spaces. He mainly shows that the structures in and around the cities are built based on a rentier economy. Once made for immigrants and economically lower classes by the state, Eden Court turns into a corrupt place in time. The purpose of building a mass housing site is associated with biopolitics because the best way to control people from lower classes or marginalized groups is by putting them in one specific space. Namely, the city is shared by marginalized and advantaged groups depending on their social status. On the one hand, there are small and dark flats in tall apartment buildings. On the other hand, there are spacious and bright houses in decent regions. There is an ever-lasting social gap between the realities of the city. Thus, this paper focused on the social and spatial inequalities with sociologists, architects, and economists. The best way to understand space politics in a neoliberal age can only be possible by seeing the disparities between social ranks.

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JOHN LOCKE'S EPISTEMOLOGICAL EMPIRICISM AND ITS IMPACT UPON THE REALISTIC VICTORIAN LITERATURE: DICKENS' *GREAT EXPECTATIONS*

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Abstract

This paper suggests an exclusive study by investigating the impact of Locke's philosophies implemented in his work "An Essay Concerning Human Understanding" on the field of literature and on the Victorian literature in particular. The study will concentrate on Locke's influence on the Victorian realistic literature by applying Lockean notions on Dickens' Great Expectations and its main characters. Dickens has recorded the voyage of the protagonist Pip from his innocent childhood to his experienced adulthood. He solved the enigma of Pip's character and portrayed his inner world by firmly inspiring the base concepts and theories of Locke. Locke's empirical thought has intervened in the work mentioned above highlighting its characters' cognitive development and realisting them. Thereupon, the writing form of Dickens and his contemporaries not only resulted from the tough circumstances of the century, yet from Locke's philosophical contributions as well.

Keywords: John Locke, Empiricism, Charles Dickens, Great Expectations, Realism

1. Introduction

The band between literature and philosophy has always been tightened over time, furthermore, both philosophy and literature demonstrate a parallel image that indicates hardship and struggle in individuals' life. On one hand, philosophy in its function always tackles theories rationally and provides them as a conclusion. On the other hand, literature resorts to this particular conclusion and transposes it into concrete imageries and real emotions. And by that, the personality of the age where these philosophies and literature took place will stand visible. Moreover, behind all the accumulations of philosophy and literature there are individuals who devoted their brilliant intellectuality to it. Just as political history is created by achievements of great men, philosophy and literature similarly formed by great

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men. Philosophers of importance both shape and crystallize the common thought of their age and pave the way for futuristic interpretations. Concerning English philosophy, this paper will feature one of the most remarkable scholars which is John Locke, together with his philosophical impact on the literary canon of the upcoming epochs. Locke did not only reflect the peculiarities of nowadays, but he revealed some quality characteristics about human nature. To project a brief biography, John Locke (1632-1704) was an English philosopher, liberal, and realist, his ideas mainly revolved around the human mind. Locke has a vast influence on his age as he contributed in creating new philosophies. In other words, Locke "comports with and helps codify the movement of his times away from the authority of traditions of medieval, scholastic philosophy" (Greenblatt & Abram, 2006, p. 2151).

Locke is famous for his work *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* that accommodates influential empirical philosophies, as well as theories of knowledge and cognitive development. His philosophies of empiricism and cognitive development of knowledge had a huge impact on the literature of enlightenment. To be familiar with Locke's impact on the literature of his time, it is necessary to examine Varney's (1999) description of Locke's influence on the literary world. Varney elucidates that Locke made literature like "the real world, the world of common experience and cultural recuperation" (preface, vii). In this paper, Locke's philosophies of knowledge and cognitive development will be firstly discussed and elaborated, then highlighted within the realistic literary body of the Victorian age with reference to the protagonist Pip of the novel *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens.

2. Locke's Empirical Theories

Locke as a realist has a transparent attitude against the concept of innate ideas. The innate theory that the rationalist Descartes believed in, claiming that a big part of our knowledge is inspired by the ideas that were already set in our mind the moment we were born. This theory may occur to make sense for some since it investigates the emergence of knowledge. As an empiricist, John Locke aimed to demolish the theory and the doctrine of innatism. Descartes was aiming to provide a strong, elaborative and credible theory, however, Locke interpreted the scheme of innatism as insufficient and resting upon weak assumptions. Hence, Locke has debunked the scheme of innatism with his emphasis that the human mind is empty or similar to a blank paper at birth, Locke, by that, originated the concept of tabula rasa. "Let us suppose the mind to be, as we say, white paper, void of all characters" (Locke, 1690, p.87), therefore, if it is supposed that the human obtained a blank mind that is void of all characteristics and ideas: how the human mind is filled and furnished then? Locke puts the answer to this question by promoting experience, assuring that our blank mind is filled and developed by what we experience in our life while growth. Thus, for Locke, experience plays a significant role in supplying the human mind with ideas and knowledge. Besides, the experience is processed through human sensations in which the ideas we perceive through experience are evaluated by our sensations that are linked to our mind, as Locke states in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*:

For I imagine anyone would easily grant, that it would be impertinent to suppose, the ideas of colors innate in a creature, to whom God had given sight, and a power to receive them by the eyes from external objects: and no less unreasonable would it be to attribute several truths, to the impressions of nature, and innate characters, when we may observe in ourselves faculties, fit to attain as easy and certain knowledge of them, as if they were originally imprinted on the mind. (p.28)

Locke's investigation of idea processing and cognitive development is another important empirical philosophy. For Locke, there is a relation between the real world and our ideas, in which ideas are a representation of what we perceive from the real world, and as consequence, our cognitive system develops. Rubaia asserts regarding Locke's theory of cognitive progress: "it can be said that cognitive process depends on both mind and the external world, and the connection between them is ideas." (Rubaia, 2017, p.135). Locke depends on ideas as a linkage between our knowledge and the real world, moreover, those ideas are the units that supply our minds with knowledge to achieve cognitive development. Rubaia further dwells upon Locke's employment of ideas as "ideas are the "representations" of certain objects we perceive and they prevail in our mind. Through the ideas mind acquires knowledge. Therefore, ideas are the "representatives" of external objects in mind." (p.136). We can inquire that ideas have significant intervention in stimulating the mind to comprehend its surroundings and as Locke puts it:

Since the things that the mind contemplates are none of them, besides the mind itself, present to the understanding, it is necessary that something else, as a sign or representation of the thing it considers, should be present to it; and these signs or representations are ideas. (p.718)

The Lockean viewpoint in which ideas serve as representatives of real-world objects and the mind analyzes these representatives to create knowledge is known as "representative realism." As a result, we can deduce that Lock has a strong tendency toward realism, which qualifies him as a religious realist.

Another important aspect to be considered of the philosophy of ideas by Locke is its effect on the process of cognitive development, as we are going to apply this philosophy on Pip's development in the novel *Great Expectations*. Locke thinks that the human mind has a great ability to compare, relate, compound, and make abstractions. All these processes allow the mind to be active in the long term and eventually obtaining genuine knowledge. The five senses are important for the human mind to gather several sensations then transfer them to knowledge. After the mind receives ideas carried by the senses, it starts processing operation that includes thinking, remembering, perceiving, doubting, comparing, reasoning, naming, and abstracting. Locke believes that our cognitive development does not consist of identical ideas of reality. Rather, the mind customizes the ideas we collect in accord with our persona

through the use of judgment “in perception our sensations are often colored by our judgments so that our perceptions to this extent are not strictly identical with our sensations.” (Rubaia,2017, p.140). Finally, Locke concludes that all the general ideas we preserve in our minds are merely abstractions of the various ideas we acquired previously in our lives.

3. The Impact of Locke’s Empirical Realism on the Victorian Realistic Literature

Locke’s empirical realistic theories have marked him as an outstanding realist, as realism is intensively implemented in his empirical theories. Similarly, realism is one of the main characteristics of the Victorian literature and the Victorian novel in particular. As a dominant feature of the Victorian period, the term “literary realism” first occurred in 1855, a term coined by George Henry to measure the artistic representation in accord with real life. The realism genre is employed to detect the real from the unreal. Ostensibly, realism has mainly gone well with the novel genre during the 19th century. That happened prior to vast developments on many scales from society to politics. Realism stems from real life, which means that to make a literary work realistic is to embody real life. Thus, realism in literature constantly seeks to answer the question of how nature and reality are depicted within the human mind and here where the Lockean impact resides. Realism first started as a literary movement that in its turn endeavored to depart away from the idealistic view of the romantic period, same as Locke’s realistic theory that its purpose was to depart from the concept of innatism. Realism as a Lockean notion focuses on the small details and the recreation of reality that mirrors real events as it is. The implication of Locke’s realistic theories in the Victorian novel resulted in the absence of fine plots, however, authors painstakingly sought to compensate that by adding extra depth to their realistic characters.

As Lockean realism was employed to veer away from the natural idealistic world portrayed by Romanticism, it placed significant emphasis on embodying physical and material characteristics. In addition, this realism provides accurate descriptions of costumes, settings, and characters to picture the harshness of reality. George Elliot asserts that realism is "the doctrine that all truth and beauty are to be attained by a humble and faithful study of nature, and not by substituting vague forms, bred by imagination on the mists of feeling, in place of definite, substantial reality." (Elliot,1856, p.12). We can observe closely from Elliot's definition that the focus on the imagination is an important element in creating a substantial reality supporting Locke’s theory. Substantial reality is achieved in the Victorian period’s writings thanks to the reframing historical events that took place back then. Realism is an investigation into the real, and adjustment for the real-life, it mirrors the human suffering in particular and transfers it in clear interpretation through language as Rosalind Coward and John Ellis claim that realism treats language “as though it stands in for, is identical with, the real world” (qtd. in Levine, 2008, p.189).

The concept of Victorian realism first came to existence during the first half of the nineteenth century after it was adjusted and garnished by Locke's ideas. During this era, a collection of prominent realist writers appeared together with long historical chronologies that adjusted the realistic tendency of the era's literature. From reform bills through the chartist movement to the rise of the middle class and their gain of literacy, all were initiators to the realistic Victorian novel. The harshness of life at the industrial times perhaps was the main motive that pushed writers of the 19th century to confine their works within the frame of reality adopting Locke's concepts. The rise of the middle class has paved the way for authors to gain more fame. Authors also exploited the rise of the middle class and their dreams of upward social mobility through authoring stories of middle-class characters achieving wealth. Thereupon, the social atmosphere in the Victorian era has functioned as an ideal ground to apply Locke's ideas in the literary production of the era.

Some of the nineteenth-century writers were devoted to the implication of Locke's philosophies in his *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* in their literature. Dussinger (1974) detects the impact of Locke's theories on literature, he argues that one of the most endearing and prominent aspects of the century's literature is the "genuine humility to doubt the individual's self-serving fiction in the judgment of daily phenomena" (p.11). He also describes the literature after the intervention of Locke as "fiction that represents the paradox of self as the object caught in the momentary flux of consciousness and as the subject, freed from time, viewing discriminately past experience." (p.21). Watt touches upon the influence of Locke on the realism of literature by confirming that Locke's style is "opposed to that of common usage, to the view held by the scholastic Realists of the Middle Ages that it is universals, classes, or abstractions, and not the particular, concrete objects of sense perception, which are the true realities" (p.12). Watt ensures that Locke's concepts had occupied crucial space in his age, and it will stay distinctive for ages to come.

To better understand how realist writers utilized Locke's theories in literature, we may resort once again to Dussinger. He contends that Locke's influenced the realist writers through enabling them borrow images and materials from local sources, regardless of their source whether from the writers' peculiar imagination or from the surrounding cultural norms. Once more Dussinger seeks to elaborate on the Lockean impact on realist literature by stating that Locke's theories are put "to examine how narrative fiction sets forth the problem of knowledge for narrator, character, and the reader alike" (p.13). Moreover, it is likely that Locke's philosophies not only revealed the mind's way of interpreting the flow of ideas of characters in the narratives, yet, it also exceeded to examine the readers' mind in understanding these narratives. As a result, according to Dussinger Locke by his modern philosophies puts forward the "new species of writing, represents the mind in the act of perceiving and ordering the signs of reality" (p.14).

4. Locke's Realistic Empirical Theories Examined in Dickens' *Great Expectations*

Charles Dickens is regarded as one of the pioneer Victorian writers, he was successful in including realistic characteristics in his novels. In his works, Dickens has professionally utilized the feature of realism, as John Romano argues that the rise of the realism genre and Dickens' fame are quietly related to each other in which Dickens' fame was a triumph of his fine use of realism (Romano, 1978, p.34). Not only in Dickens' realism yet his contemporaries as well, they all also resorted to feature the Victorian capitalism coupled with London setting as the main locus. And this gives a very aesthetical and realistic relish to their writings whenever they intend to present material terms. For Smith, Dickens and other Victorian authors who were influenced by Locke functioned as a camera and supplied their works with reality that gave their work a quality of heightened realism:

Their writing has seemed to many critics to have precisely this dreamlike quality, a heightening and exaggeration of reality which has the effect of making books appear to be more real than reality itself. In other words, the vividness and detail of Dickens' writing can create a response akin to that of leaving the cinema only to find the outside world as flat and colorless. (Smith, 2003, p.63).

We see Smith puts in the new emphasis on Dickens' use of visuals in his writing, he made his writing appeal to have more vividness and detail to become more real than reality itself. Reed (2010) refers that Dickens has an outstanding ability to magically convey the sense of daily life as it is in his novels (p.4). With Locke, we can observe that Dickens in his writing has added several theories that were inspired by Locke, from realism itself to the concept of tabula rasa and cognitive development.

Dickens' *Great Expectations*² can be regarded as the best example of the Victorian realism and that due to its employment of events in a real-like way. The structure of this novel is basic and follows linear and chronological development of events. Locke's empirical theory of void mind at birth is reflected in this novel as it describes the life of Pip from his childhood innocence to his adult disappointing expectations, and finally his abandonment of wealthy life and the succession that takes us back to the beginning. The chronological order that is followed in *G.E* closely portrays Pip's journey in life and his mental development, it reflects his impressions and the emotional turmoil related to the realistic setting pictured around him. Then, we can approve that Locke's theory applies to Pip for that he shows cognitive progress as he obtains his perceptions through experience just as Locke stated in his theory. To elaborate more, examples from the novel are to be examined to put more emphasis on the application of Locke's theory.

The perspective of Dickens in *G.E* grants it more realistic atmosphere, the first-person narration makes Pip's character more credible to the readers. It allows the readers to dive deep into the character of Pip and his desires, as it provides transparency to the readers to closely observe Pip's mind in perceiving and analyzing ideas from the Lockean point of

² The novel will be abbreviated as G.E

view. What is more, the novel provides Pip's evaluations of himself, his development and matured sense, for instance, his experience at Christmas dinner where he had a strong desire to twist Wopsle's nose by "pulling it until he howled." (Dickens, 1861, p.38). The old Pip narrates this incident sympathetically and comically to convey his innocence when he was younger to show his cognitive development. And this conveys Dickens' realistic touches on his characters that are influenced by Locke's concepts. To continue with Pip, in the novel Pip had a quiet, simple, and peaceful childhood, he was simple-minded and regarded as lower class. During his childhood, Pip lived with his sister and her husband Joe. Pip was fond of Joe and he treated him intimately as Pip says "when I sat looking at Joe and thinking about him, I had a new sensation of feeling conscious that I was looking up to Joe in my heart" (p.68). However, after Pip's growth and development to be an upper-classman, just as Locke showed how the experience may change our perceptions and judgment, Pip after being gentlemen changed his perspective completely about Joe in which he treats him with arrogance:

With his hat put down on the floor between us, he caught both my hands and worked them straight up and down, as if I had been the last-patented Pump"... Joe, taking it carefully with both hands, like a bird's-nest with eggs in it, wouldn't hear of parting with that piece of property. (p.309)

In the previous extract, the transmutation and distortion in Pip's character appear to be clear. According to Locke, our perceptions are damaged by our judgments, and this exactly how Pip's relation and perception with Joe got damaged due to Pip's judgments. In another scene, we can see Pip's change when he first came to meet Miss Havisham where his values underwent a significant turn. Pip the innocent and kind suffered a tremendous change in his values after staying with upper-class people, he became vain and a hypocrite. Here we can again refer to Locke's argument about the experience, in which experience forms knowledge and ideas, and that what Pip went through, the experience he had with the upper class changed his ideas.

Locke's theory of objects and their reflection as ideas in the human mind that was discussed before also can be detected in Pip's description of London as "a most dismal place; the skylight eccentrically patched like a broken head, and the distorted adjoining houses looking as if they had twisted themselves to peep down at me through it," (p.229). The previous lines create a strong sensation of reality and realistic description of London as it is foreshadowing of the development of Pip's expectations. Pip in *G.E* transparently reveals the outcome of his experience and his cognitive development sponsored by Locke's concepts, Pip says "within a single year, all this was changed. Now, it was all coarse and common" (p.93). In the extract Pip demonstrates his cognitive development through one year, after gaining enough knowledge from his experience, Pip regrets on some matters he has done previously:

For now, my repugnance to him had all melted away, and in the hunted wounded shackled creature who held my hand in his, I only saw a man who had meant to be my benefactor, and who had felt affectionately, gratefully, and generously, towards me with great constancy through a series of years. (p.395)

To sum up, one of the crucial characteristics that defines realism in *G.E* is the insight that Dickens provides into the inner mind of the characters respectively inspired by Locke. We see Pip's internal struggles reflected, he feels guilt, he feels the need for a better life than what he has. All of his thoughts and expectations are reflected so we can interpret his character through his inner thoughts and notice the application of the empirical theories. The inner thoughts and expectations of Pip do not only define his character, yet they affect his development in the novel and show his life's development "As I had grown accustomed to my expectations, I had insensibly begun to notice their effect upon myself and those around me" (p.15). All that representation and reflexivity of their characters' inner thought enriches the novel with more qualified characteristics of realism and realistic representation of the Lockean doctrine.

Another character to be taken for interpretation in the novel, Miss Havisham the gothic character that unlike Pip, her surroundings reflect her mental state rather than her inner thoughts. And to match with Locke's belief, Miss Havisham's character is interpreted by the readers themselves rather than other characters. In this way, Dickens is permitting the readers themselves to experience the theory of ideas. In which readers will interpret Miss Havisham's decaying house, her old wedding dress, and her clock that stopped at twenty to nine. Moreover, the readers can infer ideas, perceptions and they can activate their minds through interpreting these materialistic elements such as the dress, the clock, and the mental state of Miss Havisham. Miss Havisham's life is done or she is dead the moment her clock stopped yet she is only alive with the help of her memories. Dickens' embodiment of Miss Havisham is unique because he realistically presented gothic characteristics using different ways including Locke's approaches.

Character-wise, *G.E* is an internal novel due to Pip's inner stream of thoughts and the commentary of his surroundings, but also an external novel because of the reflection of other characters' mind state. That through interpreting their surroundings such as Miss Havisham and all that consists an illusion of reality in the readers' mind. Furthermore, on the scale of individual importance, Locke's empirical realism highlights the commonplace and regular daily lives within the lower classes. Through the characterization, employment of Pip coupled with the simplest subjects of Victorian life Dickens views the ideologies of society to reach the social reality in his writing.

Language-wise, Locke in his *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* touches upon very modern thinking of his time regarding utterance. He states that Language is the "sign of ideas" or "internal conceptions" (p.387). In *G.E* Dickens uses this concept of Locke to imply realistic aestheticism, for instance, Magwitch's use of language and how it is conveyed in the book referring to his simple character in reality "Who do you live with – supposing you're kindly let to live, which I haven't made up my mind about?" (p.25). Taking into consideration Locke's concept that language is a sign of ideas, and through Dickens' realistic embodiment of Magwitch's utterance, readers can have an idea that Magwitch is a simple-minded and even lower class character.

5. Conclusion

Locke has a tremendous impact on the literature as a whole through his prominent theories and philosophies. He appealed with his remarkable work *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* that accommodates various empirical philosophies. Locke is specifically famous for his theories of knowledge and cognitive development. The impact of Locke's theories is clearly apparent in the Victorian realistic novels such as Dickens's *G.E.* In *G.E.* the main character Pip resembles a projection of the mechanism by which Locke's theories functions. He narrates the novel from his perspective so we can interpret and observe his flow of ideas and his experience as well as his perceiving of ideas. Shortly, *G.E.* as bildungsroman allows readers to experience the Lockean concepts closely through its realistic atmosphere and its characters' mind. Dickens not only reflects Locke's theories in his novel, yet, he gives a chance to the audience to experience those theories themselves through presenting objects in the novel that defines other characters where readers have to activate their minds and analyze those objects. Dickens has inspired a great sum of Locke's ideas in his writings, and that proves the Lockean vast effect on literature.

Just as Locke, Dickens as a realist has always rejected the ideal. He went far with realism to project the attitudes of the upper class with malice, corruption, and greed such as Miss Havisham. Dickens has recorded the voyage of Pip from his innocent childhood to his experienced adulthood. He solved the enigma of Pip's character and portrayed his inner world by firmly inspiring the base concepts and theories of Locke. Additionally, Dickens presented the social class and emphasized a real-like setting, all in the projection of the life of Pip who is seeking upward mobility, and this what makes *G.E.*, a great realistic novel that has been vastly influenced by John Locke's philosophies.

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REASON IN THE STOIC ‘HORATIO’ IN WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE’S HAMLET AND JALA AL-DIN AL RUMI: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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Abstract

The debates over the individual’s awareness of reason, power and repression of feelings are identified as the image of Stoic philosophy that is depicted by Zeno of Citium around 300 BC. This current of self-management that prevents the turnings of life to depict the traits of one’s personality is known as Stoicism. The core of this study is to investigate how influential is this philosophy on the minor character, Horatio, in William Shakespeare’s Hamlet. The study will also shed the light on another Stoic figure whose spiritual world of ethics, particularly reason, is set in comparison to Horatio; Jelal Al-Din Al Rumi: Rumi. For the aim of establishing a good setting, the article illustrates a summary of Stoicism, its historical background, definition, and practices. In addition, a description about Horatio and Rumi and how they are compared as antique Roman-like Stoics in terms of power over thinking and judgement. The final part of this research will take in consideration the findings and the influence of how this philosophy could be probably part of the individual’s active life in which reason is dominant as ‘eudaimonia’.

Keywords: Reason, Stoicism, Philosophy, Horatio, Comparison, Rumi

1. Introduction

The main source of judgment in the human mind is reason. It is the focus of most research since it controls human behaviors and ethical attitudes. The article discusses reason from a Stoic point of view. The main argument concerns Hamlet’s loyal friend ‘Horatio’, whose reactions and speeches recognized as Stoic. In *Hamlet*, Horatio copes with different incidents that lead to the collapse of the Royal family. He never influences with the chaotic atmosphere of the play. In terms of the effect of reason, Shakespeare frames his characters, as in Horatio, with philosophical notions, and this discussion shows how morals or ethical standards control virtue. According to Aristotle, reason involves certain “morally virtuous activity” (May, 2010, p.2), or activities that are based on logic in terms of being conscious and aware of the surroundings, hence comes the understanding of virtue (May, 2010). In addition, it introduces Horatio, reason, Rumi’s way of dealing with reason, and finally a comparison between Horatio and Rumi.

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People, today, drive by anger and aggression, they act without a second thought. They mostly need to reconsider, thinking of serious issues: activate reason in their views. In the play, Hamlet's reaction to his father's death, his mother's adultery with a haste marriage to his uncle bring a disastrous conclusion. Horatio, on the other hand, keeps his mind focused, balances his reactions and decisions: he is the only righteous survivor.

The article introduces a historical background of Stoicism, Horatio as a sample to apply the philosophy, Rumi's views of reason, and a comparison between the two selected characters to show how important to accustom our lives, at least, to the principals of this philosophy.

2. Historical Background

Stoicism is a school of philosophy finds by Zeno of Citium around 300 BCE in Athens. The name of the school and its contemporary members 'Stoics' derive from a public location where they used to meet on the northern edge of the Agora - a marketplace - under a covered colonnade or Painted Stoa (Sellars, 2006). The widespread of Stoicism includes Rome and several geographical and cultural backgrounds during the first century BC, and its prevailing is not only influential centuries ago, but it also keeps on its effect to date (Sellars, 2006). Sellars identifies Stoicism as: "Stoic philosophy is not merely a series of philosophical claims about the nature of the world or what we can know or what is right or wrong; it is above all an attitude or way of life" (Sellars, 2006, p. 2). In addition, Lawrence C. Becker explains Stoic notion as a virtue which resembles an act of certain activity, a kind of remedy needs to be practiced perfectly (Becker, 1998).

According to the Stoics, virtue can stand alone as an adequate standard to gain happiness. Therefore, any other circumstances will be irrelevant such as emotions that lead to a fallacy of judgment. In addition, this philosophy requires humans to control their natural feelings, not denying them. In other words, it deals with understanding human's responses in terms of experiencing different emotions that are free from any misconception. In his argument of Stoicism as an ancient philosophy, John Sellars states that: "In fact, the emotions are strictly speaking merely the symptoms of a deeper mental disturbance, namely false beliefs that are the product of faulty judgements" (Sellars, 2006, p. 34). He continues that: "the task of philosophy, conceived as this art of medicine for the soul, is to cure us of those false beliefs by teaching us how to avoid making faulty judgements" (Sellars, 2006, p. 34). Therefore, a real image of this doctrine presents the Stoic as an ideal character in terms of being rational, mindfulness, controlling emotions, and indifferent towards aside circumstances. In addition, individuals are encouraged to concern with their own judgments: they are the fruit of the one's interpretation to issues, and such issues are not the main source of false emotions and pain, instead, it is the involved interpretation which brings negativity (May, 2010).

The trend of this philosophy suffers from texts loss and decreases at the beginning of the third century CE. It regains its strength again during the sixteenth century and continues up to date to contribute to the understanding of self-nature and the power of human reason such as in the Western philosophy presented by Michel Foucault's later works 'care of the self' to proof the constant presence of its principles.

Being in harmony with 'Nature' brings happiness, therefore, the Stoic lives in a covenant status with the internal soul of morals and beliefs without depending on the material conditions such as luck or fortune (Stephens, 2007). In this philosophy, deeds and actions are highly appreciated, hence the Stoic requires material facts rather than depending on luck which is unpredictable and cannot be forced. Further, the philosophy is also known as the "art of living" (Stephens, 2007, p.84) which means like any other craft, needs fulfillment of practices and exercise to be attained (Stephens, 2007). Likewise, in his *The Art of Living*, Sellars describes the way of this philosophical developmental concept of wisdom as an art of living which transforms an individual into a sage (Sellars, 2009). Human's source condition, according to the Stoics, classifies as good and vice. For instance, justice, courage, prudent are beneficial, while lack of judgment and injustice produce harm.

Human beings are distinctive with reason. It is the cause of nature, for being rational in accordance with Zeno's visionary. In the path of Stoicism, reason is the source to distinguish the constitutive of happiness and unhappiness. Consequently, reason leads to the correct judgment through discriminating the good, and takes the correct actions depending on the circumstances. Moreover, it represents man's essence in terms of vice or virtue. It has the power to form man's linguistic presentation. On the other hand, Epictetus refers to the term of "prohairesis" (Stephens, 2007, p. 16) which is the container of volition: it is the elevator of distinguishing the good and the vice (Stephens, 2007). The scale of Stoicism is prohairesis which indicates man's true spot and the self: well-being. Stoicism, however, is how to deal with pain silently and coping with the outer circumstance through endurance and acceptance. In this philosophy, virtue finds its place when reason presents, and controls logical judgment (Stephens, 2007).

3. Discussion

Hamlet: "... For thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing;

A man that Fortune's buffets and rewards

Hast ta'en with equal thanks; and blest are those

Whose blood and judgment are so well commingled

That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger

To sound what stop she please. Give me that man

That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him

In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,

As I do thee ..." (III i 1945)

The controversy on William Shakespeare as a writer and the creator of his characters is still on stake in the battlefield of the contemporary criticism of new historicists and cultural materialists. Although he is one of the greatest writers who ever lived, therefore his works, particularly the tragedies remain dominant in the literary arena, and *Hamlet*, is the most studied work to date (Parvini, 2012). Shakespeare deals with universal, independent topics concerning humans, and counting them fills the page with only topics of his works that are of excessive ambition, revenge, treason, deception, corruption, hatred, ...etc.

In this article, the spotlight turns from Hamlet to his loyal, selfless friend, Horatio, who has little to say, but is available whenever needed. Hamlet describes Horatio as a real observer: he speaks few lines, notes the surroundings, and writes down what he sees. While Hamlet, on the contrary, as if he is in a battlefield where all the clashing of the inner and the outside occurs. From the opposite of such impulsive confusion that rocks the drama, Horatio comes in the middle of the actions to practice his role in a wise calmness. Horatio is "As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing" (III ii 1945) resembles the playwright in his stance. He moves forward with the events, catches the thread of every plot, weaving the sufferings, and noted them down as if he prepares for his own story to tell.

The guards, Marcellus and Bernardo, invite the "Scholar" (I i 54) to speak to the Ghost of Hamlet's father, because he can proof what their eyes' saw. Horatio almost believes his eyes. He fears and wonders for the likeness of the ghost: seeing-is-believing (Hamlin, 2005). In a second thoughts, with the prevailing of the rational awareness, Horatio opposes his eyes, prevails over the ghost, and charges him to speak. Horatio informs Hamlet of his visionary describing it as "A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye" (I i 129). The "antique Roman" (V ii 4000) character, whose paradigm emphasis the stability of his mind of such a phenomenon, once happens then it will be out of his "philosophy". He already tells the guards how he would not believe their assumption unless he himself sees with his own eyes "mind's eye" (Williams, 2014)

"Why should the poor be flatter'd?" (III ii 1938). The indications of Horatio's status are not very clear in the play. We do not know exactly who he is except for Hamlet's loyal friend. He is either old because he remembers Old Hamlet's armor when he resists Norway long ago, or a student fellow with Hamlet in Wittenberg, or probably a good young lad as Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. There are no references of his social background for a one involves with the Royal family, but Hamlet's statement of the poor probably presupposes his social level. Hamlet excludes Horatio from his struggle, because the container of his confusions and distractions are completely far from Horatio's philosophy, from his mental capacity (Bourne & Bourne, 2019). Horatio's sanity controls his responses and the dominant of reason prevents him from any reckless reactions:

Hamlet: "Give me that man

That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him

In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,

As I do thee ...” (III ii 1945)

This is a clear statement, rather, a confession of what Hamlet lacks which makes him envies Horatio: a reasonable man. On the other hand, Horatio gives Hamlet the sense of a hero and avoids correcting his morals, because he already recognizes it would be hopeless. Horatio understands that he is unable to protect Hamlet from maniacal responses, because his reason diminishes and deformed, and his rational context still untrusted. Among all events, Horatio still quiet, unreacted towards Hamlet's endeavors.

Hamlet: “As th'art a man,
Give me the cup. Let go! By heaven, I'll ha't.
O good Horatio, what a wounded name
(Things standing thus unknown) shall live behind me!
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity awhile,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my story” (V ii 4005)

Horatio's character is not as clear as Hamlet's, it is of intensity despite his few valued words, and less actions. He does not take advantage of his steadfast relation with Hamlet, and the trust he gains from the Royal family. Rather, he keeps his nobility with a complete virtue, stands alone from all equally to write their suffering as being part of it:

“Never believe it. I am more an antique Roman than a Dane.
Here's yet some liquor left” (V ii 4000).

He confesses of being a Stoic than any other thing: a typical Roman whose philosophy appears with pain. Along the play, all his actions identify his stoic mode. His attempt to die after the prince in a noble way retreats immediately because of his active reason that controls his false emotions. For Horatio, living is the only way to accomplish his ethical standard and reports Hamlet's story. Unexpectedly, he accomplishes his role despite his tepid responses towards the tragedy.

The selected characters in this article have the priority to describe their Reason. Horatio's actions and speeches present a Stoic figure. Another character compares to Horatio in terms of reason: Rumi. Understanding Rumi is a very challenging process once indulge to his philosophy and concepts, he is an essential participant in the Sufi practice whose essence and nature resembles Stoicism (Kaya, 2016). Rumi's philosophy carries most Stoicism practices in terms of virtue, justice, and reason which is the main concern of the comparison.

4. Comparison

Jalal al-Din Al Rumi (1207-1273) becomes a universal phenomenon and a unity because he is a spiritual guide not only for Muslims, but also to people all over the world. He has the accessibility and knowledge among all the differences and beliefs in terms of psychology of reason, tolerance, and judgment (Arberry, 2000). Few people have a supreme power to control their natural instinctive of mind or feelings. Therefore, understanding Rumi's ideal way of spiritual unity and his perception are seen from different perspective which differs from the prevailed recognition of his works. Unlike Horatio, Rumi echoes his visions and thoughts loudly in his works such as *Mathnawi* and *Fihi Ma Fihi*, and many other works that influencing the world. Most of his concepts are shadowing Stoicism.

In addition, human's attempts of perfection are attained once there is a complete understanding of the real essence of man. Therefore, thoughts and actions require harmony as the truth-measurement. According to the capacity of the human mind in accustom the outer circumstances such as pain or suffering, reason steps in to be the source of the individual's central, because it will be the scale of the relation between man and himself then man and society (Arberry, 2000).

Rumi comprehends the individual and society, he assumes that educating oneself brings self-perception: freeing from prejudice and reducing ambitions which control man's sensualities. Resembling Stoicism, both currents of Horatio's path in life, and Rumi's pursuit of reflection are calling human's natural feelings rather than denying them. In other words, understanding human's responses towards experiencing different emotions which are free from any false beliefs. In his *Discourses of Rumi (Fihi Ma Fihi)*, A. J. Arberry translates Rumi's discourses of reason. He says:

“When someone goes mad and acts crazy, everyone knows that reason has left them, and no longer casts its shadow over them. They are far away from the shadow and shelter of Spirit” (Arberry, 2000, p. 129).

If reason blocked then it would be no reason, hence comes madness. However, reason is constant, never changes or ends in the process of thinking. Therefore, it has its own struggle, its endeavors of understanding, and obtain the quality of judgement:

“In every act you perform, reason guides you and initiates your action, but you cannot see your reason. You see its effect, but you cannot see its essence” (Arberry, 2000, p. 309).

All categories in society inclined to Rumi because he goes far beyond the components of standards in his own visionary, he embraces everyone in his tolerance and virtue. He considers virtue as “a free choice” and distinguishing between good and vice is the true wisdom (Ebadi Jokandan, 2015).

According to Rumi, reason distinguishes humans from lower creatures, it is the true essence of man through which he can qualify his nature and survive (Tekin, 2001). In addition, his

mystic features represent clear resemblance of Stoicism. In his definitions – explanations- of reason and dealing with its concepts, Afzal Iqbal introduces how Rumi identifies the role of human conscious by reason. For him, reason is “the light hearts” (Iqbal, 1991, p. 77), through which one never goes wrong. It is the “discursive knowledge” (Iqbal, 1991, p. 179) of man which produces pain through language when using it but cannot be avoided (Iqbal, 1991). For Rumi, reason is the faculty of man’s greatness: it either indulges man in safety or in danger, a pause to rethink of an action. In terms of high quality of order, reason represents man’s dogma, his utmost point of fact hence comes his reality.

5. Conclusion

Shakespeare's embodiment of Stoicism presents in Horatio whose virtue is too powerful to be defeated. Rumi, on the other hand, brings virtue explicitly, he makes use of language to convey his thoughts rather than using abstract visions to spread his wisdom. Stoicism is a group of different concepts of eudaimonism, it concerns of “what we ought to do or to live well” (Becker, 1998, p. 20). Its aim is to rescue ourselves from living under certain misfortunes and enables us to control sudden changes and circumstances. A Stoic pursuit a certain type of a good life, through which all conflicts are encountered by reason to solve. Otherwise, a Stoic may act as indifferent to the situation. In the agency of Stoicism, virtue has the upper hand in all its concepts. Therefore, living in society with authentic thoughts influences the formation of individuals and society in general. Horatio appears to be the opposite of Hamlet in terms of dealing with circumstances, because reason is the prevailing notion in his actions. On the other hand, Rumi's views of reason identifies that it is the base of virtue, it has the power to protect man's essence in terms of thinking and living. He resembles the thoughtful mind as if a flame burns and never rest. Having ethical integrity brings about a complete satisfaction. Stoicism offers an unconditional relation among individuals as in Horatio’s; thus, it has that mutual belief of free giving with happiness where there is no space for pain.

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A WOMAN OF A NEW ERA: A FEMINIST READING OF CARYL CHURCHILL'S OWNERS

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Abstract

This paper aims to analyse Caryl Churchill's Owners from a feminist point of view. The play is written mostly under the influence of the second wave feminist movement and thus it explores the key points of the movement. Simone de Beauvoir's ideas on women are paid attention while discussing the play as she is one of the most significant feminists of the time. Churchill draws distinctive female characters in the center of the play and approaches male dominance in a variety of ways. The paper deals with a short history of modern feminism along with focusing specifically on second wave feminism and Simone de Beauvoir. It also interrogates the socially determined roles of woman and impact of patriarchy in Churchill's Owners. As a result of this, one can comprehend that the playwright sheds light on the problems of women and display them in the play, along with showing the importance of women's financial and emotional independence that were essential at the era of the play's production.

Keywords: Woman, feminism, patriarchy, Caryl Churchill

1. Introduction

Modern feminism, as a historical movement, has changed its form rather a lot over the last century, that is it started with suffrage and still continues as the third wave feminism. During this long period, the movement began to be used as a theory in

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literature, influenced many writers and became the subject of literary works. Caryl Churchill's *Owners*, which coincides with approximately the mid of last century, is the subject of this paper and feminist theory is applied to it. With the emergence of second wave feminism, the statement "The Personal is Political" became popular among feminists, which means that women's personal actions are determined by their conditions in politics and thus by the patriarchal structures. Simone de Beauvoir, in her influential non-fictional book *The Second Sex* (1949), basically argues that matters that are related to femininity are commonly shaped with the influence of the patriarchal society. Social and cultural norms determine gender roles especially for women who have to deal with the male domination. Also, she deals with motherhood in her book, suggesting that due to the limited contraception and abortion rights of the time, women are constrained to give birth to unwanted babies, resulting in maternal problems as well as troublesome familial issues. Churchill rejects traditional gender roles and emphasizes the difference between biological sex and gender.

2. Owner in the light of Feminism

Caryl Churchill was born in London in 1938 and she was the only child of her middle class parents. (Hiley, 1990, 14). Churchill had a prosperous life during when she was provided an opportunity of decent education by her hardworking parents. She lived with her parents for seven years in Canada and studied at Trafalgar School in Montreal between 1948 and 1955. After graduating, she went back to England and enrolled in Lady Margaret Hall College at Oxford University in 1956. She graduated from Oxford University in 1960 and married David Harter in 1961. This marriage was the triggering point of her way to theatre stages of London and thus she started a carrier as a playwright (Keyssar, 78). Due to her husband's job, Churchill had to leave the center of London for the suburbs and she gave birth to three children. She became almost a housewife there and went through a number of miscarriages (Itzin, 1987, 279).

Churchill did not give up writing and she produced a number of plays for the radio broadcast. While writing these plays, she was worried about "the corrupting power of ownership – of humanbeings as well as of property" (Keyssar, 79). Churchill states that her main concern was not to promote any specific ideology at that time, these plays were written with a motive that was caused by painful personal experiences and rage (Itzin, 279). She was able to start to get over her unpleasant experiences and established a political consciousness in herself, with the influence of which she wrote her first staged play *Owners*. In this play, Churchill deals with the inequality between men and women in mostly economic and political areas, which she also experienced in her personal life (Keyssar, 80). It seems that she was not content with her life until she started her serious professional carrier with the staging of *Owners* at the Royal Court Upstairs in 1972. In an interview with Itzin, she explains how she felt at that time as:

I didn't really feel a part of what was happening in the sixties. During that time I felt isolated. I had small children and was having miscarriages. It was an extremely solitary life. What politicised me was being discontent with my own way of life – of being a barrister's wife and just being at home with small children (279).

Owners centers around an overly ambitious woman character, Marion who is mentally ill and hospitalized for some time as implied in the play. Although she is formerly a housewife, she turns into a dedicated property-developer owing to her successful managing skills. Possessing is the main theme of the play, that is the more Marion possesses properties, the less her husband Clegg, who stands for patriarchy, is able to 'possess' her. Worsely, who is Marion's assistant, helps her with the business and he constantly tries to kill himself by cutting his wrists. Marion and Worsely are interested in buying a specific building where Lisa and her indifferent husband Alec live. They try to persuade them to sell the apartment with a variety of offers. Lisa is a pregnant woman and Marion and Clegg do not have a child, Marion plans to take the baby from her after she gives birth and she succeeds in her plan. Clegg's patriarchal attitude is so dominant and full of hatred that he keeps on making a plan in order to kill Marion, however he is not able to do it. Worsely knows about his plans but he does not warn Marion about taking caution. Marion is so driven by the influence of capitalism that she lacks humanistic approach, unlike Lisa who is naive and not capable enough. Churchill expresses how she was inspired for writing *Owners*:

I was in an old woman's flat when a young man offering her money to move came round – he was my first image of Worsely and one of the starting points of the play. Another was wanting one character with the active, achieving attitude of 'Onward Christian Soldiers', the other the 'sitting quietly, doing nothing' of the Zen poem. The active one had to be a woman, the passive one a man, for their attitudes to show up clearly as what they believed rather than as conventional male and female behaviour. So Marion and Alec developed from that train of thought. I'd read Figs' *Patriarchal Attitudes* not long before, which may have affected the character of Clegg, and had recently reread Orton's *Sloane*, which may have done something to the style (1985, 4).

As the play was written and staged in 1972, the British women's condition and impact of feminist ideas on theatre will be explained in order to take a look at the atmosphere of the time. Women's Liberation Movement gained speed as women factory workers were demanding for equal payment and thus they started a campaign. The first Women's Liberation Conference was held in the early 1970s with the participation of over 600 women. A National Women's Coordinating Committee was constituted in order to claim equal education, employment and payment opportunities for women (Hannam, 140). With the influence of second wave feminism in Western Europe, minimum one million women became activists and the movement gained nearly 12 million supporters by the late 1970s. The movement enabled certain kinds of legislation which help women improve their standards regarding employment, wages,

education and legalization of abortion. One of the developments was that women established independent organizations rather than relying on only political and social ones in order to support their rights. Health centers for women raised consciousness among them about their own bodies and sexuality while rape crisis centers were useful for helping them who were victims. The first refuge was formed in 1972 in order to stand by mistreated women. 1970s were significant in a way that circumstances under which woman as a subject was discussed improved, and developments paved the way for rising their courage for thinking and acting differently (155). Moreover, the employment rate of married women who were under the age of 60 increased dramatically in the UK, from around 50 per cent to 60 per cent by the early 1980s. This was a progressive raise since the end of Second World War as nearly one third of married women were employed before the war broke out (Gomulka & Stern, 1990, 171). The wage of husbands increased around 10 per cent and the household income which refers to the income neither husband nor wife provides, rose over 20 per cent. It can be inferred that both husband and wife's and other sources of income dramatically showed an increase. Rising income of the husband and rising income that is provided by somewhere else do not seem to lower the women's enthusiasm to work, on the contrary studies indicate that women's employment rate gradually rose during the decade (176).

If 1960s and 70s are compared in terms of the number of woman workers in the area of theatre, any comprehensive study can be found, however it is certain that the number of woman workers in male-dominant areas such as directing and writing increased. Also, there were more plays which center around women experiences and which were the products of women's creativity. Young and conscious audience began to be interested in theatre stages, through which they could be a part of fundamental change in theatre area in the 1970s. The radical improvement began with the year 1968 when people experienced changes on cultural level too. During the 1960s, there was a struggle to rule out theatre censorship, however it was not until 1968 that it brought to a successful conclusion. After the censorship had officially been abolished, theatre did not have to obey any longer, that is playwrights felt more independent to write on a variety of subjects and the way of representation was diversified. In this respect, it became easier to react political ideologies and conflicts of the time. With the decision of Lord Chamberlain in the 1960s, erotic heterosexuality scenes, indications to homosexuality, especially for the male, and obscene language were removed from the stage, but towards the beginning of the 1970s, a new feminist-activist ambiance occurred it corresponded to a more liberal and experimental environment for theatre representations (Wandor, 1984, 76).

The year of 1968 had a significant influence on theatre as it changed the ideological background of it. The new wave suggested that art should be for society's sake and accordingly theatre should not only be for middle class, it should take place in the neighbourhoods or workplaces of lay people. However, among socialist people, "this was translated into a mixture of naturalistic telling-it-like-it-is (derived from TV

naturalism) (77). Once the feminist styles of theatre became subjective, the same perception was adopted. In 1970 and 1971, marches were organized in order to protest Miss World contest and thus the consumerist point of view, which was executed to take advantage of femininity was disordered. These marches involved street theatre, making fun of with the exaggerated feminine look and raised questions about the financial aspect of this 'only look' promotion. Also, agitprop plays attracted attention to the struggles of working-class women, sexual discrimination, and male domination in the family. This feminist propaganda mirrored the concerns and excitement caused by the unification of radical feminism and reconsidered Marxist studies. Theatre was reshaped as a rough and enthusiastic area followed by deliberations after the plays were staged.

As a result of these changes, two categories of feminist playwrights emerged: firstly, there was a "new generation (not always young) of women many of whom are either undeveloped in the craft or writing or simply throw off easy television-influenced sitcom type plays, or inadequately structured social realism". The second group consisted of successful playwrights in real terms like Pam Gems and Caryl Churchill, who are more famous, older, internalized, and well-known (86). These women playwrights criticized the way society was governed by a narrow set of patriarchal ideologies.

In *Owners*, Clegg's patriarchal ideas reach the level of misogyny and thus he never gives up the idea of killing Marion throughout the play. His perception of gender roles is very rigid and he believes that a woman can never be superior to a man from any aspect:

WORSELY: You could get another shop better placed. Wouldn't Marion buy you a shop?

CLEGG: I don't let her buy me a drink. I was going to be big myself, you don't seem to realize. That was my intention as a young man (Churchill, 1985, 9).

The two sexes have distinctive biological features which are considered to form their patterns of behaviour and establish specific roles for them. These roles are defined in almost every society, which tends to attribute cultural meaning to both sexes, that is the biological distinctions are not enough for them. Biological differences are usually regarded as interrelated with certain social and psychological features. Therefore, a woman is expected to present feminine characteristics and accordingly a man is expected to behave in a masculine way. To put it in another way, either a man or a woman is supposed to perform certain characteristics which are formed and settled by cultural norms, however these norms differ from each other as each culture's expectations are different. Recent gender studies have indicated that while sex is a biological determinant of a person, gender is not related to physical characteristics, in that it is mostly shaped by social and cultural norms. In other words, the two terms get in a vicious circle as it seems that they can not be separated thoroughly. Once

difference of gender between the two sexes is constituted, it is considered as the presentation of biological distinctions that establish the demand for gender roles. The vicious circle never ends, that is biological differences are used to constitute gender differences which are employed to describe biological differences which, again, need gender differences to be determined. Although gender refers to the physical characteristics and sexual identity of a person, the main factors which establish the gender difference are social and cultural understandings or misunderstandings. For most of the cultural norms of societies, these determined gender roles create plenty of disadvantageous conditions for women (Kochuthara, 2011, 435).

Churchill presents how women are landed with difficult responsibilities particularly for the marriage institution. While Alec is not concerned about the future of their marriage, Lisa worries about the possible problems that she would face in the case that they broke up. The role of 'raising children' is seen as one of the primary roles women and thus they usually have to work and raise their children at the same time even if their husbands are supposed to be also responsible for looking after them. Even though Lisa expresses her concerns and fears, Alec seems to be indifferent about his family:

ALEC: Yes, you must leave me if you want to.

LISA: I always hate it when you say that because what you mean is you want to leave me.

ALEC: No, if I wanted to I would.

LISA: Yes, you would, wouldn't you. You wouldn't worry about us at all. You wouldn't wonder how I'd bring up the kids. I can't go on working with a little baby you know. You'd go away and forget all about us (Churchill, 14).

In the societies where patriarchal ideas and norms are adopted, women are dominated by political, social and economic establishments, which also result in their political, social and economic subordination in their societies. The family union, the primary unity of the society, maintains patriarchy where father is the authority of the house "and controls the productive and reproductive resources, labor force, and capacities on the notions of superiority and inferiority, which is learnt in the gender role socialization." Moreover, he speaks to the women around him in an obviously cunning way. While he acts like a kind and pleasant-spoken shop owner in front of his female customer, the moment the customer leaves, he reveals his true personality:

CLEGG: Lovely day dear. Been sitting in the park in the sun? I know you ladies. Twelfe ounces of mince. And what else? Some nice rump steak dear? You don't keep a man with mince. No? Twenty p, thank you very much. Bye-bye dear, mind how you go.

[She goes.]

Old cow (Churchill, 7).

There is a significant matter which weakens the rigid norms of patriarchy, that is the more women become financially independent, the more they have the authority to produce an effect on social and economic systems. As Beauvoir suggests, economic empowerment of women has been distressing the maintainability of the marriage institution. Modern understanding of marriage refers to getting together of two independent individuals whose responsibilities are personal and also mutual. It is like a contract and having a sexual relationship with anyone else violates the agreement. Both parties have the right to divorce one another under the same circumstances. With these changes in the perception of marriage institution, women's function is not only to give birth anymore, that is the reproductive function has become more optional, rather than women's obligation for their families and societies (415).

Clegg commits adultery and engages in a sexual relationship with Lisa, who is an old friend of Marion and him. Lisa, compared to Marion, is more submissive and ineffective, which gives Clegg the opportunity to take advantage of and dominate her sexually. While they are in bed, Clegg implies that she should be sexually passive as it is how a woman is supposed to be:

CLEGG: I didn't say you could get up. You won't be suitable unless you lie flat, did you know that, very feminine and do just as you're told. On your back and underneath is where I like to see a lady. And a man on top. Right on top of the world. Because I know what you ladies like. You like what I give you. I didn't say you mustn't move at all. But just in response (Churchill, 54).

The position in the society and interrelation with other people determine one's social status in the social structure. Socio-economic status is represented mainly by gender roles. Patriarchy stimulates men's prepotency in the social system, financial opportunities manage and handicap women to reach to acquire an equal or superior socio-economic status. Women's social and economic emancipation is mostly related to making decisions and executing their practices. In the play, Marion is presented as an independent woman who has clawed her way up to a high socio-economic status. It is implied that she earns more than Clegg, which is a serious problem for him. Moreover, when Clegg closes his **butcher** shop and starts to look after Lisa's baby, the only financial provider of the household becomes Marion. According to Clegg, the male should be the financial provider and thus he is very upset because of his desperate situation. On the other hand, Marion is aware of the fact that thanks to her socio-economic position, she is able to exercise her power over Clegg, which can be seen as a revenge for the past. She despises the butcher shop clearly, although a workplace is very significant and even sacred for a male as it is the main source where he gets his 'power'. However, Marion thinks that it must be closed while she talks about her big success which deserves to be honoured:

CLEGG: Congratulations my love.

MARION: We shall celebrate. It stinks in here, Clegg. Does it always? No wonder you've no customers. Throw it all away. Shut the shop. Whatever's that you're clutching, Worsely? Meat? You won't want it, you'll eat out with us. Chuck it in the bin. What about the rest of it, Clegg? Will you pay the dustman to take it away? I think I'm turning into a vegetarian (Churchill, 12).

In this respect, determined gender roles are challenged in *Owners*, as it somehow reverses the gender roles of a married couple. Although Marion is biologically female, she plays the role of head of the household and also a strict decision-maker. Moreover, while Clegg is a typical patriarchal male, he ironically has to perform the established role of a woman. Thus, as Butler argues, gender is not directly related to the biological factors:

Gender is in no way a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts proceed; rather, it is an identity tenuously constituted in time – an identity instituted through a stylized repetition of acts. Further, gender is instituted through the stylization of the body and, hence, must be understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and enactments of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gender (BUTLER, 1988, 519).

Sex roles have been included in the woman sociology by influencing a variety of studies and researches. The male and female behavioral attitudes were analyzed, and some hypothesis were put forward in order to analyze behavioral differences. Conceptions of sex and gender were differentiated from each other and it was concluded that while sex connotes the difference of some parts of male and female bodies, gender refers to the culturally determined identity through which people introduce themselves to their community. Therefore, patriarchy upholds the idea that the male 'possesses' the female, which is one of the main points of *Owners*. Clegg is surprised that Marion does not care about him, as he thinks she belongs to him like a property:

WORSELY: A house the same. Your own. You knock the floor out if you like. That's what it's for. A car the same. You drive how you like. Within a reasonable speed limit. My flesh and blood the same.

CLEGG: A wife the same.

WORSELY: A wife is a person.

CLEGG: First and foremost a wife. One flesh. Marion leaves me (Churchill, 35).

In most of the communities women's status is evaluated by three main canons. The first one is a woman's efficiency of reproductive functions and biological completeness. The second one refers to a woman's participation in and authority on significant issues such as properly paid employment, education, family planning and property. The last canon is women's networks. Researchers work on cross-cultural and historical studies in order to exemplify the kinds of communities by using these

three canons as determinants (Flora, 556). Accordingly, 1970s was a decade when women recently started to be effective and reformist in the areas mentioned above. If Marion is judged by the three criteria, it can be argued that she succeeds in the third and especially the second one. She buys and sells properties to make a living, which irritates Clegg. Also, she has a network through her assistant Worsely and her job in general. She celebrates her success, eats out with Clegg and Worsely and even takes them to a strip club.

She defies the gender role that patriarchy determines for women since she is financially independent and has the power to manipulate and manage the people around her. She can be regarded as a woman of a new era regarding the understanding of marriage institution and familial gender roles of the time. As Beauvoir asserts:

Nevertheless, the epoch in which we are living is still, from the feminist point of view, a period of transition. Only a part of the female population is engaged in production, and even those who are belong to a society in which ancient forms and antique values survive. Modern marriage can be understood only in the light of a past that tends to perpetuate itself (Beauvoir, 415).

When Clegg does not earn money and looks after the baby, Marion becomes the ‘father’ of the household, which can be interpreted as a rejection of traditionally settled gender roles. Also, she makes a living as a result of her own work and struggle, not by depending on her husband and seeing him as the source of livelihood. She does not face with any kind of oppression because of her sex by the state as she has the opportunity to live and work independently without any limitations. As regards to male-on-female violence, she is not exposed to violence by her husband neither physically nor psychologically, and instead, she even tries to dominate him with her determined and self-confident manner. She feels and acts independently in sexual sense, because while she is in the strip club with Clegg and Worsely, she and Worsely kiss. She does not care about Clegg’s presence there and thus she does not hesitate to kiss her assistant although a man is expected to kiss a woman in a strip club from the viewpoint of traditional gender roles. All these actions of her indicate that she defies the cultural norms which determine the patriarchal gender roles. She expresses her ambition and long for cruelty that are mostly attributed to a male:

MARION: [...] Every one of you thinks I will give in. Because I’m a woman, is it? I’m meant to be kind. I’m meant to understand a woman’s feelings wanting her baby back. I don’t. I won’t. I can be as terrible as everyone. Soldiers have stuck swords through innocents. I can massacre too. Into the furnace. Why shouldn’t I be Genghis Khan? Empires only come by killing. I won’t shrink. Not one of you loves me. But he shall grow up to say he does (Churchill, 62).

This power gives courage to defy the patriarchal gender roles, that is she does not perform any of the stereotypical female roles. She exercises her power mostly over

Clegg, she even does not let him oppose her and thus she makes him feel uncomfortable by interrupting the conversation:

MARION: Are you mad, Clegg? Giving him away? Once she's got hands on him he won't be ours any more. You'll lose your little butcher.

CLEGG: I don't want that. We'd have to have a written agreement about his future.

MARION: There are plenty of people to look after babies. He will have a trained nanny.

CLEGG: But Lisa –

MARION: I said he will have a nanny. Are you going against me, Clegg? It was entirely for you I got the baby. I bought him a shop, for you. If you don't like the arrangements you can go. Clear right off. It would be a delight never to see you again (Churchill, 60).

If Marion was a housewife, who spends most of her time at home, looking after the kid and taking care of her husband, she would not probably utter these words so self-confidently. Therefore, considering the time period of the play, Marion's strong personality seems extraordinary to some extent. Her authoritarian and bossy personality pushes her to perform the roles of a male which are regarded to include oppressing, administrating, dominating the situations and people around. She creates her own opportunities and space in order to act, talk, work etc. like a man. She can be counted as a lucky woman since she has the chance to overcome the condition of women in general which has come to a deadlock. As Beauvoir explains:

Hence the paradox of their situation: they belong at one and the same time to the male world and to a sphere in which that world is challenged; shut up in their world, surrounded by the other, they can settle down nowhere in peace. Their docility must always be matched by a refusal, their refusal by an acceptance. In this respect their attitude approaches that of the young girl, but it is more difficult to maintain, because for the adult woman it is not merely a matter of dreaming her life through symbols, but of living it out in actuality (567).

In *Owners*, Churchill shows that stereotyping is one of the primary reasons of providing certain gender roles for the male and female. Generalizing women with negative adjectives such as weak, sensitive, soft etc. causes to establish specific roles for them. This leads to the problem of inequality as less important and/or uncomplicated tasks are assigned to them, which results in being positioned as subordinate. Accordingly, patriarchy imposes that women are not trustworthy:

CLEGG: She's told you, has she? She said she wouldn't. Woman's like that. Deceit is second nature. Due to Eve. But I'm too crafty for them by half. I know their ins and outs. You keep her rather short of it I'd say. Unless it was me that specially appealed

to her. Yelping for more. I expect she told you. Or did she not bring out that side of it? I keep myself a little in reserve. You never know what else may turn up. I wouldn't want to waste myself on something as second rate as your wife. She was quite useful. A handy receptacle. But quite disposable after. Isn't that your attitude to Marion? (Churchill, 55)

As a result, not compromising of the natural gender characteristics with the biological structure causes a major problem particularly for women since they are expected to be submissive and weak because of the stereotypes which restrict them from making decisions, acting, talking, living independently (Fricker, 2007). For the situations when these two conceptions do not match, like Marion, women tend to focus on only their natural gender characteristics and ignore the socio-cultural roles in order to proclaim their individuality freely. She goes against Clegg, and thus patriarchy in general, by ignoring the traditional gender roles that are imposed upon her.

Churchill revolts against this established gender role by giving the responsibility of child rearing to a patriarchal character. Clegg thinks that "even a women can do it" (54). On the other hand, ironically, he ends up staying at home and looking after the baby while Marion becomes the financial provider of the household, a gender role which Clegg considers as suitable for men.

The male and female accomplish their socially determined responsibilities and improve their social involvement fundamentally. However, women's sources and opportunities were limited when compared to men's, which caused to dealing with obstacles in the process of practicing their interests. The unequal sources and opportunities resulted in a change in women's areas of interest and roles. Women were positioned after men in the social hierarchy because of their limited resources. They historically had less resources, inferior socio-economic status, and fewer financial opportunities. Moreover, they had to cope with the cultural restrictions. Therefore, women could not have the chance to enhance their conditions individually by engaging in direct arguments with men. Accordingly, women had to put up with the possible outcomes of a marginal lifestyle by setting up a home with a limited income or enrolling in a denomination in order to keep away from dependency on their husbands, fathers etc. They needed to look for new chances or take part in collective actions in order to accomplish more (Jackson, 1998, 176).

Marion does not have to choose neither setting up a home nor joining a denomination, instead she continues to live with her husband by oppressing him as if she took revenge on patriarchy, which can be seen as a way of reversing patriarchal gender roles. She has the opportunity to start a new household owing to her financial status, but she seems not to prefer it on purpose to dominate the men around more easily. Thus, it can be inferred that Marion deliberately continues to live with him in order to make him psychologically suffer, likewise she used to do formerly. Marion

distresses him by fulfilling 'his role', as he sees, that is why as a conventional male, who fiercely defends the male-dominated system, he cannot stand her rejection of the that can be performed by both sexes.

The contrast between Marion and Lisa indicates that every woman is a unique individual, each one of them has a distinctive identity. On the other hand, if they become united for a specific purpose while accepting their differences, they will be able to revolt against the patriarchal system. Although Marion and Lisa have quite different personalities, the common point between them is that they do not seem to have healthy psychological states. What Churchill presents with the binary portrayals of these women is that no matter how powerful, talented, ambitious or on the contrary, submissive, ineffective she is, a woman has to encounter with the problem of patriarchy as it can be understood by both women's troublesome interactions with Clegg. Also, Churchill points out that the higher socio-economic status a woman holds, the more power she attains in the social hierarchy as it can be seen in the case of Marion.

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THE IMPACT OF CULTURAL POLITICS ON WOMEN'S SELF-REFLECTION IN TWO SELECTED PLAYS: IMAN AL-KUBAISI'S *WA'AD EALAA SHAREE'A / INFANTICIDE ACCORDING TO SHAREE'A* AND LILLIAN HELLMAN'S *THE CHILDREN'S HOUR*

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Abstract

*Culture is a dynamic phenomenon related to politics encapsulating collective attitudes, beliefs, and perspectives. It establishes a frame within which individuals measure their value and build their understanding of the self. The present study aims at examining the impact of 'cultural politics' on the female presence in the worlds of two selected plays: *Wa'ad Ealaa Sharee'a / Infanticide according to Sharee'a* (2017) by an Iraqi dramatist, Iman Al-Kubaisi, and *The Children's Hour* (1934) by an American dramatist, Lillian Hellman. In both plays, women are shackled by cultural perspectives that limit their roles and suppress their independence and creativity. They are viewed as subordinates who should live by the rules and avoid uniqueness. Women struggle to find sources of liberation and change within their social milieu. Their struggle leads them to undergo a process of self-reflection and exploration of the harsh realities surrounding them.*

Keywords: cultural politics, feminism, self-reflection

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1. Introduction

What is meant by ‘Cultural Politics’? And how is it manifested in Literature? The first thing that a researcher in literary theory must acknowledge is that the term ‘cultural politics’ does not refer to two separate entities or fields of knowledge, i.e., it does not refer to ‘culture’ separate from ‘politics’, the two are identified together as one entity. To understand the term, one must focus on the way that culture influences the political scene. This is best done through studying people’s attitudes, beliefs and viewpoints that are reflected in art, literary works and media and search for the signs through which a social, political opinion is being shaped. To give an example of what cultural politics might change let us together consider the recent events in Iraq. After 2003, Iraq witnessed a catastrophic change due to the American invasion that happened in 9th, April 2003. A new form of media speech started to spread and have its influence on the cultural scene and consequently on the political and viewpoints of the two powerful sectors in the Iraqi society that used to live peacefully in the past. This fueled sectarianism which started to put a heavy burden on everyday life; hardships varied from the difficulty of having a good night sleep due to absence of electricity and fundamental governmental services to being killed because of one’s beliefs. The same thing is applicable to the AIDS epidemic during the early 1980s when the media and Ronald Reagan’s administration called it the gay plague. The word helped to shape opinions of all sorts and political movements started to respond or reshape its focus accordingly. This cultural change is ruled by the first response to the political scene and vice versa giving rise to economic, legal, and social realities. To further explain the term we might refer to the Rwandan genocide of 1994 that started with a media campaign. The media, in this case *The Radio Television des Milles Collines*, used the sentence to “exterminate the cockroaches” referring to a certain ethnicity to be terminated once and for all. This is the demonstration of ‘cultural politics’ in its most violent ways through labelling a whole sector of the society as ‘cockroaches’ to be terminated, giving a death license to a wide range of people just because they represent the majority and the others are minority, in this case we are referring to the mass slaughter of Tutsi, Twa, and moderate Hutu. The term, then, describes Man’s values, beliefs, attitudes, and viewpoints that in one way or another influences the shape of the social and political realities. Jordon and Weedon (1995) argue that to study cultural politics means that you are mainly concerned with studying how culture is “used to legitimate relations of inequality and to contribute to the struggle to transform it” (p.5). It deals with all kinds of ideas, symbols and realistic revelations that reflect both sides of the equation. The idea that a

term or a vocabulary used by a prominent figure in the society or an ordinary person through a joke or an official speech, a caricaturist sketch or a work of art, or a play would definitely have an impact over the public shaping its politics and responding accordingly.

Modern politics towards man's identity seems to be the contemporary style of launching wars. Man is no longer able to stand and reveal his true identity because he might be threatened by an unknown enemy. Thus to be labeled is to be sentenced a death penalty that might come in different shapes and ways, to be part of an organization, an institution, a group, a secret society, a religion, an orientation, or a gender is to be denominated first and doomed second. Society deals with the individual according to the criteria by which it defines that label. Since the dawn of humanity, man used to live by the rules that control the herd and those who look different or think different will be judged different.

Contemporary theater has dealt with this issue as a disease that will end forever the shape of the living system we are used to live according to and bring new rules that might destroy the sense of humanity. With respect to that, the present study tackles Iman Al-Kubaisi's *Wa'ad Ealaa Sharee'a / Infanticide according to Sharee'a* and Lillian Hellman's *The Children's Hour*. Al-Kubaisi's play deals with the world of Puppetry and Toy Theater. Marionette wishes to be a real human being, and to be freed from the strings that rule her life; she begs the Super Doll to fulfill her wish and change her being, but she faces the refusal of the Marionettist whom she has loved dearly and served all her life thinking that he will be happy to see her turned into a human being. Faced by his brutal attitude she comes to a conclusion to her suffering that she should gain her freedom even at the expense of her life and ties to her society, a choice that shocks everybody. Hellman's play is set in a girl's boarding school which represents Karen Wright and Martha Dobie's life accomplishment. Martha Tilford, a spoiled teenage who hates being obliged to stay in this foundation runs away from the school, plotting a story against the two ladies to avoid being send again to school. She tells her grandmother, Mrs. Tilford, that there is a strange love relationship between the two ladies; an accusation that destroys the women's careers, relationships and lives. The plot depicts the problem of the two women and how they face the accusations of being homosexual, a matter that ruins them because they are rejected by a society that has no solid evidence to treat the rumors as a fact. Both of the female dramatists believed that sectarianism and identity politics are but the new shape of an atomic bomb, and that McCarthyism of the 1950s and ISIS of the dawn of the new Millennium are but manifestations of cultural politics.

2. Iman Al-Kubaisi's *Wa'ad Ealaa Sharee'a / Infanticide according to Sharee'a*

Iman Abdul Sattar Attallah Al Kubaisi is an M.A. holder of Fine Arts- Children's Theatre and a Ph.D. holder and a professor specialized in the philosophy of Artistic Education- Children's Theatre. She wrote plays that deal with contemporary Iraqi political scene, interested in the field of adolescence and children's arts. She wrote her play *Wa'ad Ealaa Sharee'a / Infanticide according to Sharee'a* when Iraqi people were living the turmoil of the influences of the military battle against ISIS and the social battle against the enactment of the two law drafts of *the right of information access and the freedom of expression* in the Iraqi Parliament which had its impact on the individual due to the fact that it expressed tyranny in its most violent phase because ironically this law restricts the right of information access and the freedom of expression.

Against a troubled background of social and political turmoil, Al-Kubaisi has presented her female Marionette. She is a dancing figure dominating the almost empty stage with her vibrant, swift movement. The spotlight follows her show with the male Marionettist. It has showed her glamour till it highlights the dangling strings that shackle her movement to the hands of Marionettist. This is a moment of revelation that accelerates a series of shocking discoveries, resulting from an awareness of bitter realities surrounding her frail presence.

Marionette addresses other three female Dolls: Doll 1, Doll 2, and Doll 3, in an attempt to investigate their mutual situation. Driven by a sense of empathy and unity with them, she plays their roles and allows them to speak through her. She gives power to their broken voices, but got stuffed with their pain. At the moment, she loses her individuality and perceives her belonging to the category of the suppressed woman. This category is decided by various factors that have been highlighted in the play.

The first factor is the religious one that is manifested in the title of the play, *Wa'ad Ealaa Sharee'a*, in reference to the infanticide of female children in the pre-Islamic Arabian society which is condemned and forbidden by *The Holy Quran*. Hence, it is against the rules of Islamic Sharee'a. The play is a post-ISIS work. Thus, the reference to Wa'ad becomes clear to be related to the false values of Islamic extremism. Under the rule of extremists, women are not only killed like other innocent people due to their beliefs and appearance, but also suppressed; they go through a state of death in life. Religious extremism in Iraq is a result of a period of sectarian conflicts caused by political unrest.

Political disturbance creates gloomy social realities. They are expressed through the situations of the three Dolls. Doll 1 is a widow whose husband has been assassinated in acts

of sectarian violence at a cloudy, quiet night when pre-rain peacefulness has been disturbed by harsh knocking at the door followed by her screams of pain. Since then, she has been in a state of spiritual hibernation: "in a deep sleep, I have been, forbidden from dancing, singing, and moving; my dance is disturbing to neighbors whose happiness has not been debarred by the doors. Ah, those who are satisfied cannot realize the pain of those who are deprived." ⁱ (Al Kubaisi, 2017) ⁱⁱ

Doll 2 is a young divorced girl who recalls the moments of her ex-husband's departure. He has got away indifferent to her pleas to stay, leaving her alone in a room with an open door: "since then, my door has not been knocked again for it remains open after it was flung by the black travelling bag that I uselessly chased to catch ...to prevent from moving away." ⁱⁱⁱ Doll 3 is an old virgin who has no hope even for experiencing the agony of love and loss. She gives herself up to despair and says: "it is useless to cry ... let's just silently stand in the queue and wait for our turn." ^{iv} And all the three dolls exclaim: "it's useless, it's useless," ^v thwarting Marionette's attempts to cheer them up. Marionette reflects on her state of being, giving her mind up to a fluctuating train of thoughts of hope and despair:

What if it is time for me to stand in the queue? But I am still young. (*She dances hysterically and laughs.*) I am still a beautiful butterfly, flying everywhere in a paradise; my soft, velvety wings have never been scratched, (*She stops.*) but what if they will be scratched? What? Is it my turn? The first signs showed up in [Marionettist's] reactions when my eyes have realized the truth; his eyes shined affirming my doubts, his hands were cold, lacking warmth of love ... please light, fade away and give space to darkness to be my friend in order not to see the strings of another Marionette. ^{vi}

The utterances of Dolls and Marionette form a symphony of exasperated souls sustained by unifying images: the train, the door, and the queue.

The sound of a train moving fast acts as a background music endowing their words with a sense of futility. It is the train of life announcing that it is too late for any change. The reference to the door occurs in the stories of Doll1 and Doll 2. It is a symbol of protection and privacy that reverses its meaning. In the first story, the door is violated by strangers who destroy the serenity of family home. Eventually, it becomes associated with the criminals. Doll 1 calls it "the damned bitch" ^{vii} as it heralds the catastrophe of death. In the second, the

door is left open stressing the vulnerability of the status of the divorced woman to judgmental views. The knocking at the door acts either as a harbinger of a tragedy (the assassination) or as a desired change (an opportunity for marriage) that has been uselessly waited for. The queue is a strong motif that further unifies the fate of the four females. It is a symbol of waiting for nothing, the end. However, it is challenged by Marionette who does not want to surrender to her fate.

Marionette supplicates Super Doll, a god-like figure, that does not appear onstage. Only her voice can be heard. She is expected to change their fate. Though she claims that she "is able to do everything"^{viii}, she does not help the three Dolls, confirming that "this is their fate. ... That is the way of the world"^{ix}. She reveals herself as an idol created by social norms preaching women resignation and surrender. She imposes her authority under a religious guise. She may stand for the matriarchy controlling the family domain on behalf of men and subduing women to a way of life characterized by blind obedience. Even though she calls Marionettist a betrayer, she does not advise Marionette to liberate herself from the grip of his strings, claiming that this will lead to her destruction. Finally, Super Doll accepts to turn Marionette into a human being; to be human is to be fully aware of her slavery and to struggle to gain liberation and self-determination, which means more pain.

Marionettist, the man, has his strategies to control Marionette. After her discovery of the strings, he showers her with sweet words expressing his admiration for her, claiming her to be the goddess responsible for his happiness and suffering and the sole dancer on his ground. He motivates her firstly to dance and secondly to cook to satisfy his needs. He wants her to remain his little Marionette. But, she does not surrender. She insists that the strings connecting her to him should be of love, not of captivity. She sings male-centered songs: in the first, the male speaker expresses his willingness to see his beloved free even of accessories: "I don't like bracelets shackling your wrists"^x and in the second, the female speaker praises her male lover: "dancing with me, he tells me words the likes of which I had never heard before"^{xi} Suddenly, she retracts saying that nobody will tell her what to hear and with whom to dance anymore. All will be her choice. She denies man's perspective of freedom and love and prefers to establish her own. She defies the patriarchal authority and gets rid of her strings.

Marionettist, who seems to have the upper hand over the dancing ground, is discovered to be shackled with strings like Marionette's. He admits his bondage:

Since my birth, those strings have been with me. They increase in number over the years; the older I am, the more they will be. ... When you were a puppet, all your strings have been controlled by one hand. But now, there will be more hands. Your strings will be, like mine, manifold. They will vary according to the wills of those controlling you.^{xii}

He uses a carrot-stick approach to convince her to adhere to his control. He begs her to forget about her freedom. He admits that he betrays her, but promises to cherish her. Then, he threatens to suppress her with societal and religious restrictions. He faces her resistance with showing more power and authority. This is symbolized by the trial scene when he wears the dress of both the judge and the prosecutor. He admits that her crime is defying laws that are earthly not divine. However, he accuses her of being the cause of expelling humanity from paradise. Marionette keeps resisting and insists on dancing without strings. Marionette gives voice to every woman living in a spot on earth where her freedom is denied. Her resistance is that of

Eve who has been allegedly charged with various accusations since the beginning of creation. Her accusations will extend to an unspecific point of the future. She is accused only because she is a 'woman', which becomes a word descriptive of submission. She is submissive ... because she knows that her birth was unwelcomed by man who is on the alert to prevent her from blemishing his and his tribes' reputation.^{xiii} (Al-Buni, 2018)

Marionettist acts as a social agent imposing norms. He assumes the role of the master, but reveals himself in bondage. He fears Marionette, his inmate, because she is more powerful than him.

The text establishes a substructure rich with symbols showing the dominance of females. Marionette dominates the visible space. She appears more than Marionettist onstage. In the stories of the three Dolls, men are absent and rendered into references to third-person pronouns. It is true that Dolls appear broken and exasperated, but their appearance is necessary to support Marionette's role in investigating their mutual dilemma and exhibiting a sense of female solidarity. The play ends with Marionette in a dynamic stance, dancing and

singing. While dancing, the strings are wrapping around her neck. However, she achieves liberation. She keeps moving despite the strings because she is strong and resilient.

Furthermore, the invisible space is occupied by Super Doll. Although she herself acts as a suppressing factor, she represents a feminine will to let life go on in the face of cultural patterns interrelated to social and political variables. They fetter women's freedom under the guise of religion. Women are denominated subordinates. However, they investigate inner resources of power that enable them to endure hardships and resist unjust cultural classification.

3. Lillian Hellman's *The Children's Hour*

Lillian Florence Hellman (June 20, 1905 – June 30, 1984) was an American playwright who is known for her Communist political activism. She suffered the tyranny of the McCarthy's anti-communist campaign during the 1950s.

In his book, *Dramatic Soundings: Evaluations and Retractions Culled from 30 years of Dramatic Criticism*, John Gassner (1968) says that it needs a "strong mind and will" to present a play that joins both social criticism and artistic, entertaining Drama (391). The strong will of the female character in Hellman's play that is going to be examined in the following pages is admirable. The play has voiced the voiceless and presented issues that were diagnosed as being controversial and considered taboos in certain societies.

Lillian Hellman's style as a playwright is described by R. C. Reynolds (1986) as being innovative and different; she managed to lead a successful career at a time when women playwrights were not easily acknowledged. This is due to her choice of dramatic techniques and her interpretations of social problems (128).

The Children's Hour was Hellman's first play and it granted her a position in Broadway as a well accomplished playwright. The play is based on an 1810 Scottish trial. The play was produced in a hectic era in the modern history of the United States of America; the Great Economic Depression was hitting all America causing problems to everybody. They were difficult days to survive for the American individual who sought an escape from this dilemma. Hellman's play symbolizes the impact of such social environment on the individual who seeks change and prosperity reinforced by freedom of the will. She argues that prejudice which is based on identity and orientation, or gender brings destruction to societies due to the many layers of violence run within its folds.

The play starts in the Wright-Dobie School for girls, soon we realize that a storm is threatening this institution and finally will destroy everything Karen Wright and Martha Dobie are working hard to accomplish. This happens when Mary Tilford, a student in this institution accuses the two headmistresses of having a lesbian affair to escape staying at this school; such an accusation blows everything these two women have worked hard to achieve away.

Martha (*violently*): An insane asylum has been let loose. How do we know what's happened?

Cardin: What was it?

Karen: We didn't know what it was. Nobody would talk to us, nobody would tell us anything.

....

Martha: It was madhouse. People rushing in and out, the children being pushed into cars-

Karen (*quiet now, takes his hand*): Mrs. Rogers finally told us.

Carden: What? What?

Karen: That- that Martha and I have been- have been lovers. Mrs. Tilford told them.

(Hellman, 1953, p.23)^{xiv}

The two ladies are accused of having an affair by an angry student, a spoiled teenage who does not want to stay at school, yet nobody cares for asking for a solid evidence and the whole society reveals its ugly face, everybody decides that they must discard these two ladies and they judge the two before even listening to their side of the story. Social stigma carries within its layers the sentence of rejection and banishment. Karen cries her voice out asking for somebody to listen to her but this seems to be in vain facing a judgmental social milieu.

Karen: What's she talking about, Joe? What's she mean? What is she trying to do to us? What is everybody doing to us?

Martha (*softly, as though to herself*): Pushed around. We're being pushed around by crazy people. (*Shakes herself slightly*) That's an awful thing. And we're standing here-(*Cardin puts his arms around Karen, walks with her to the window. They stand there together.*) We're standing here talking it.

(Suddenly with violence) Didn't you know we'd come here? Were we supposed to lie down and grin while you kicked us around with these lies?

Mrs. Tilford: This can't do any of us any good, Miss Dobie.

Martha *(scornfully imitating her)*: 'This can't do any of us any good.' Listen, listen. Try to understand this: you're not playing with paper dolls. We're human beings, see? It's our lives you're fooling with. *Our* lives. That's serious business for us. Can you understand that?

(pp. 23-24)

Justice comes with torturing obligations; the two ladies start a lawsuit to defend their being and get justice but they failed due to strong rejection from the society. Such feelings of refusal are negatively influencing both women. Karen comes out of this experience another person because she realizes how identity politics builds barriers and encloses her within a pot which she creates for protection against others. Martha's protest to being labeled and judged by her society is reflected in her suicide, she refuses to be under the pressure of rejection in its most vicious and cruel reality. She is blinded by feelings of both eagerness to defend her identity as a human being and being loyal to this identity, thus she is driven towards violence which comes here as part of the options she is facing and she comes with the result that it is the only right choice she might take.

Karen: We're not going to suffer any more. It's too late. Martha is dead.... So you've come here to relieve your conscience? Well, I won't be your confessor. It's chocking you, is it? *(Violently)* you? You've done a wrong and you have to right that wrong or you can't rest your head again. You want to be 'just', don't you, and you want us to help you be just? You've come to the wrong place for help. You want to be a 'good' woman again, don't you? *(Bitterly)* Oh, I know. You told us that night you had to do what you did. Now you 'have' to do this. A public apology and money paid, and you can sleep again and eat again. That done and there'll be peace for you. You're old, and the old are callous. Ten, fifteen years left for you. But what of me? It's a whole life for me. A whole God-damned life. *(Suddenly quiet, points to door Right)* And what of her?

(p.28)

It is torturing for the individual, represented in the play by Karen and Martha, to live in a violent society which uses not a specific type of violence but all types: verbal, physical, cultural and institutional. In the play, investigating reality is blocked by identity politics, and being aware that you are standing against a kind of terrorism that is equipped with an ideology that dominates the cultural and religious layers of the society, makes the individual surrender to his helplessness. The influence of terrorism is crossing the limits of culture, education, citizenship, and concentrates on identity politics.

4. Conclusion

Both Hellman's Karen and Al-Kubaisi's Marionette beg to be recognized as independent human beings having their interests and uniqueness, not only as a subordinate part of a society.

Karen (*goes to her*): I don't want to have anything to do with your mess, do you hear me? It makes me feel dirty and sick to be forced to say this, but here it is: there isn't a single word of truth in anything you've said. We're standing here defending ourselves- and against what? Against a lie. A great, awful lie.

(p.24)

Super Doll : I can do everything...everything.

Marionette: Then why am I doomed to face misery, while you can give me happiness? Why did you have to put these rules and make me a second grade citizen? Why am I doomed to be enslaved by those who are not better than me? Isn't it our duty to obey you and yours to foster us? Or are we created only to obey? Didn't you promise us a prosperous life; here we are obeying your commands... Doing our part of the bargain, where is your part of the contract? Look at (*she points at the other Dolls*) these Infanticide Dolls, What did you do for them? Why did you accept throwing them in graveyards of desperation?

Super Doll: This is their destiny.

....

Marionette: I have become fearless, I doubt everything, I demand that you turn me into a human being, I do not want to stand in a queue any longer... I shall not wait for my destiny.. nor become content with it.^{xv}

They have fought for creating and approving their individuality a part from any presupposed identity; they want others to consider them as equal to anybody else. Pre-supposed viewpoints about a certain sector of the society and misconceptions about other cultures prevent and blind others from seeing the negativity of that attitude. The man in ' *Wa'ad Ala Al Shareea* ' believes that Marionette is a passive character who does not have feelings and goals and who never aspires to reach that point when she demands to be acknowledged as an individual who wants to feel independent. Both women are opposed by the men of their lives.

Cardin: I have nothing to ask. Nothing- (*Quickly*) All right. Is it – was it ever- Karen (*puts her hand over his mouth*). No. Martha and I have never touched each other. (*Pulls his head down on her shoulder.*) That's alright, darling. I'm glad you asked. I'm not mad a bit, really.

(p.26)

Marionette: I know everything, and because they are my strings I shall leave them as a souvenir... when I become human, then maybe I will come back to you by my own will.

Marionettist: No..no..no..I shall not allow it, you do not have the right to do that, I am your only owner, the controller of your destiny, you are mine, and mine alone.

Marionette: I shall be yours only, but with the flavor of freedom and the scent of will.

....

Marionettist: This is nonsense; you shall not be free from my control.^{xvi}

Karen feels betrayed by her man when he asks about the reality of what is said and Marionette is prevented from transforming and admitting her individuality. But, in conclusion, they become stronger and more persistent to live their reality.

Both plays show the influence of 'cultural politics' on the life of the female characters. It reflects the impact of a society moved by a pre-shaped attitude towards certain sectors of the society. Neither Karen nor Marionette is given the chance to explain themselves. They are

deemed wrong according to cultural traditions and should blindly adhere to the rules. Both are judged and the judgment is to terminate their existence and end their influence. However, they refuse to comply and insist to defy any attempts to deny their freedom. Unlike them, the men in their lives conform to false standards, trying to suppress the women, but end as slaves deprived of their will. Whether the attitudes and opinions of the individuals in both societies are wrong or right that is not relevant here, what we are paying attention to is that in both cases it is cultural politics that is moving the scene. It classifies people into categories enfolding collective attitudes, beliefs, and perspectives and generating sometimes unjust rules that force individuals to go through hard experiences. Resistance usually involves journeys of self-reflection that may end with discovering inner resources of power.

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Notes

وأنا في هذا النوم العميق, ممنوعة من الرقص من الغناء من الحركة, لان رقصي يزعج جيرانني ممن لم تنتهي .ⁱ
الأبواب سعادتهم
والشبعان ميدري بالجوعان

ⁱⁱ All quotations from the play are taken from Al-Kubaisi, I. (2017). *Wa'ad Ealaa Sharee'a / Infanticide according to Sharee'a . Theatrical Arts Journal*. Retrieved from https://theaterars.blogspot.com/2017/08/blog-post_36.html#.XhTDetIzZdg

بابي لم يطرق بابي ظل مفتوحا بعد ارتطامه بحقيبة السفر السوداء, ركضت وراءها مترجبة... حاولت التمسك بها ,ⁱⁱⁱ
منعها من مغادرة مخدعي... دون جدوى

لا جدوى بالصراخ... لا جدوى كل واحد يقف في الطابور ... كل حسب دوره.^{iv}

لا جدوى ... لا جدوى^v

ماذا لو حان دوري في الطابور؟ لكني لازلت فتية (ترقص بهستيريا وهي تضحك) لازلت تلك الفراشة المتنقلة بين
ربوع الفردوس, ها هي اجنحتي الناعمة المترفة لم تُخدش (تتوقف) لكن ماذا لو خُدشت؟ ماذا؟ ا حان دوري فعلا؟ لقد
بانت أول تلك العلامات, أبصرتها عيناى, لمعة عينيه تستفز ظنوني, وذلك الجبل الجليدي في اليدين, غيبوبة المشاعر

...

أيها الضوء ارحل ودع لي الظلام صديقا حميما حتى لا أرى خيوطا لراقصة غيري.

المومس اللعينة^{vi}

بإمكاني فعل كل شيء^{viii}

... هذا ديدن الحياة.. هذا قدرهن^{ix}

"لا أُحِبُّ القُيُودَ في معصَمَيْكَ"^{xi}

The above line is from a song written by Elia Abu Madi, a Lebanese poet, (May 15, 1890 – November 23, 1957) and sung by Nathem al-Ghazali, an Iraqi singer (1921 – 23 October 1963).

"يسمعني حين يراقصني كلمات ليست كالكلمات" ^{xi}

The above line is from a song written by Nizar Tawfiq Qabbani, a Syrian poet, (21 March 1923 – 30 April 1998) and sung by Majida Al Roumi, a Lebanese singer (born 13 December 1956).

xii منذ ولادتي وهذه الخيوط معي, كلما كبر سني زاد عدده. ... عندما كنت دمية كانت كل خيوطك في يد لاعب واحد, أما xii الآن فخيوطك مثلي, متشعبة, متفرعة حسب لاعبيها وأهوائهم.

xiii حواء التي يكيل لها المجتمع كل التهم منذ الخليفة الى اليوم والى مستقبل لا نعرف مداه, متهمة لأنها امرأة, وخانعة لهذه الصفة لكونها تعرف كينونتها ... ما رحب به الرجل حين اخرج انثى لا بد من تضيق الخناق عليها قبل ان تتسبب بعار يلحق بسمعته وعشيرته وقبيلته.

xiv All quotations from the play are taken from Hellman, L. (1953). *The Complete Text of The Children's Hour: A Drama in Three Acts*. New York, USA: Theatre Arts.

xv

الدمية العظيمة: بأمكناني فعل كل شيء... كل شيء
الدمية: اذن لماذا قسمت لي الشقاء، وانت قادرة على اسعادي؟ لماذا اوجدت قوانينك التي تجعلني مواطن درجة ثانية؟
لماذا سلبت حريتي؟ لماذا ارضختني لعبودية من هم ليسو بأفضل مني؟ أليس من واجبنا الطاعة مقابل رعايتك لنا؟ أم اننا
خالفنا للطاعة فقط؟ ألم تعدينا بحياة منعمة، ها نحن نطيعك... ونفي بالتزامنا، فأين نصيبك من العقد. انظري الى (تشير
الى الدمى) تلك الدمى المؤودة، اين انت منهن؟ لماذا رضيت رميهن في مقابر اليأس؟
الدمية العظيمة: هذا قدرهن

....

الدمية: بل اتجرد من خوفاي، اشكك في كل شيء، واطلب تحويلي انسانا، لا اريد الوقوف في طابور... لن انتظر
قدري... ولن ارض به.

xvi

الدمية: اعلم كل شيء، ولانها خيوطي سأتركها لك تذكاري... بعد ان اصبح انسية، وعندها ربما اعود اليك لكن
بأرادتي.
اللاعب: لا.. لا.. لا يمكن.. لن اسمح بذلك، ليس لك الحق في هذا، انا مالك الوحيد، المتحكم في مصيرك، انت لي انا
وحدي.
الدمية: سأكون لك وحدك لكن مع قليل من نكهة الحرية وعطر الارادة.

....

اللاعب: هذا كلام فارغ، لن تخرجي عن سيطرتي.

STAGING VIOLENCE AND ITS IMPACT IN WERTENBAKER'S *OUR COUNTRY'S GOOD*

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Abstract

*Postmodern playwrights since World War II have started to deal with themes of violence on different levels. What the war caused has made them think of the indispensability of staging violence and its different types. The present article aims at dealing with the different ways violence is delineated and staged in Timberlake Wertenbaker's *Our Country's Good* (1988). It also aims at showing the different types of violence and the impact they have on the characters in the play. Wertenbaker manages to deal with different types of violence showing that violence has become a fixed sign of human life after the second world war. Wertenbaker aims at stirring people against many of the oppression, violence, and injustice done in this world. She wants people not to remain silent.*

Keywords: Injustice, *Our Country's Good*, Violence, Wertenbaker

1. Introduction

Our Country's Good is a play written in 1988 by the British playwright, Timberlake Wertenbaker¹. The play is set in 1780s Australia where prisoners from the UK were brought to a settler colony as a punishment for their crimes. The play was staged at the Royal Court Theatre in 1988 for the first time, directed by Max Stafford-Clark who suggested to Wertenbaker to write a play based on this novel (Wilson, 23). The play was also staged on

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Broadway one year later which was a huge success for a women dramatist at the time. Critic Enoch Brater thinks that it was a disadvantage to be a woman in this sector. Only after the plays of Fornes, Terry, Childress, and Holder and the rise of feminism, women playwrights and their works gained recognition not only in regional theatres but in the academic community as well. Therefore, women's playwrights were on the rise in the 1970s and 1980s (Brater x). More than that, women brought new perspectives into theatre, and Wertebaker's *Our Country's Good* is a landmark in women's writing in this respect. As for the importance of the play in the history of drama, another influential critic Ann Foster highlights the techniques and aspects that the playwright has brought to the stage when she mentions that other than Brechtian techniques, the play of Wertebaker takes some motifs from Chekhov, combining of laughter and sadness in a Chekhovian manner (454-455).

1. Violence in *Our Country's Good*

Wertebaker's *Our Country's Good* clearly examines the different kinds of violence staged in the play. She includes three main experimental perspectives in contemporary drama to show how violence works in her play. The first of these new perspectives was earthiness, which, according to Brater, is a distinguishing aspect of women's imagination. He suggests that "[w]omen are very funny, coarse, subversive. All good qualities for drama" (4). Thinking of this feature, the earthy language used by the women convicts and other male officers in the play is proof of this new contribution of technique. Most of the characters in the play use indecent and aggressive language to express verbal violence in the play. For instance, in the play, Wisenhammer uses words such as "cunt", "lick", "nooks", "crannies" and "crooks of England" (17) whereas Meg Long and Liz Arden's speeches are full of slang. Moreover, the marines also use earthy language, especially towards women.

Secondly, the play underpins the possibility of change in human nature due to the harsh and austere circumstances that the characters have lived under. The visible change in women and in the society throughout contemporary theatre is another contribution of the contemporary women dramatists (Brater, 17). Suffering and violence can have a great impact on the individuals' lives and may lead to changes on many levels. For instance, the play within the play that the convicts and some officers organized together is an active expression that there can be change both in the victims and the society itself. Above All, the characters Captain Arthur Phillip and Ralph Clark provide evidence of this idea. For instance, Captain tells

Ralph that they can transform and change not only the victims but the society itself (40-41). Ann Wilson explains this aspect of the play in her article with specific references to colonization and its impact:

This focus on theatre and community marks a shift from Keneally's novel which is concerned with colony and, by extension, with relations of power which buttress the colonial enterprise. This radical shift occurs because Wertenbaker's adaptation simplifies many of the characters, most notably Ralph Clark and Arthur Phillip, the Governor-in-Chief of the colony of New South Wales. In *The Playmaker*, Clark's and Phillip's personal relationships with the colonized – the convicts and the aboriginals – are extensions of their public roles as officers who are the agents of colonization; in *Our Country's Good*, both are represented as essentially good men under whose benevolent aegis the convicts produce the play, create a community and recover their humanity which gives them true freedom. (23)

Despite the belief in the change of the good direction, on the other hand, Verna Foster claims that what underlies the mentality of Captain is the true ideas of the colonization and exploitation at the time (419). Foster also claims that Captain Phillip's name and ideas represent the cultural hegemony of the British monarchs (421). Nevertheless, she sees the play as an "instrument of reform and social cohesion than a ritual reaffirmation of British ideals and customs" (419). Therefore, among the functions of theatre a force for the social upheaval and education can be included.

Thirdly, Wertenbaker's emphasis on the importance of women taking part as actors and writers in the theatre is strongly evident in the production and performances of the play. The inclusion and dominance of women characters add diversity and various points of view to the matters about colonization and violence. Wertenbaker is a writer and theatre manager, so women gradually started to take part in the business in the 80s and 90s, and that brought the chance to listen to the women writers and their troubles and concerns especially on the issue of colonization and post-colonial studies. This play was a step in that issue.

Another contribution that Wertenbaker made to the literary canon is that she uses language functionally inside the play structure and dialogues. Susan Carlson thinks that the language and its richness in *Our Country's Good* has an important place in Wertenbaker's career, in the sense that the characters have sensitivity to the language signalling hidden messages and acts of plot-twisting: For instance, in the play convict John Wischhammer is in love with the dictionary, Liz Morden speaks elaborately, and for some of the characters, language is a tool for dominance and local power struggle against the colonizer. In that sense language and its

function as a way of oppression and violence “was crucial to the domination of the mental universe of the colonised” (135). The main idea scrutinized by Wertebaker in the play is that verbal violence causes tremendous psychological damage to an individual person’s identity than torture or any other forms of physical violence. Wertebaker emphasizes in the following quotes the function of verbal violence: “If you silence a people, if a culture loses its language, it loses its tenderness. You lose your countryside, your parent, and because culture is essentially verbal, you lose your history. I have a fear of enforced silence. Silence leads to violence” (Wertebaker qtd. in Mackenzie). As observed in the extract, the worst form of violence is the linguistic one that tarnishes the psyche and mentality of an individual. The oppression and exploitation by language is the most dangerous one as it turns the victim into a cultureless and coarse monster. Society loses its history and words thus remains silent and the only way to unleash its feelings is action in the form of violence. The characters in the play as analysed further in the text are all fitting examples of such phenomenon.

Theatre is important because more than creativity it emphasizes the social background of the era and the message of the play. The background is important in *Our Country’s Good* as well, because the characters in the play are “based on people who sailed with the First Fleet” that were sent as settlers to Australia (Gibson 1). The First Fleet comprised of 11 ships which set from England in 1787 to establish a penal colony. The fleet carried more than 1,000 convicts and marines, therefore some of the names in the First Fleet and the play are similar (1). Susan Carlson thinks that although the play is set in 1780s Australia, the world is much like the 1980s Great Britain. The resemblances are that the conservative government is the point of discussion, the country’s manufacturing is destroyed, and the trade unions are disempowered (137). While reading the play these should be considered: The kind of crimes for which hanging was the normal punishment at this time, crimes are considered punishable by transportation? Another matter is the conditions in English prisons of the time: The people who were penalized to be transported died because of bad conditions on ships. And another factor that led to a need for transportation was the need of the empire to send men abroad and build colonies and control them by their citizens who will also colonize the state culturally and economically.

The playwright delineates different types of violence to convey a picture of what was going on in Australia during that time, and also to go with the mainstream of the theatre of that time, which depicts violence in all its types. One type of violence that is depicted clearly in

the play is physical violence. Punishment is used as an oppressing force in the play by the government officials against the settlers, especially through verbal assaults. The main criticism of Wertebaker is that these people are hanged and transported to Australia for minor crimes like assaults or stealing a piece of food from stores or someone. For this reason, the opening part of the play is important for the discussion. Wertebaker calls this part (prologue) segment “Identity” where two speeches by the convicts' John Arscott and John Wisenhammer are delivered. Another aspect of violence seen in the play is to starve the prisoners as a kind of punishment. Prisoners are not given enough food or water as a kind of punishment practiced by the authorities. Most of those prisoners are convicted because they had to steal to eat. John Arscott analyses the feeling of hunger and its effects on the human psyche and body, thus gives us a message that it is a basic need for humans to be fed and these convicts are hanged or transported because they basically try to have something to eat and satisfy this instinct of hunger. Arscott tells how hunger affects the body and his long times of hunger in the transportation ship and also in Australia:

Hunger. Funny. Doesn't start in the stomach, but in the mind. A picture fits in and out of a corner. Something you've eaten years ago. Then the picture gets bigger. Full plates. Hunger moves down to the tongue. The tongue feels like a balloon. Then further down. A burn at the back of the chest. After that the pains begin. Streaks in the stomach. (17)

John Wisenhammer, likewise, talks about the pain he feels being away from his own country. This psychological damage he feels is another type of violence depicted in the play. He speaks of how he feels homesick and talks about the hardships of the voyage and his feelings for England. He thinks they are thrown to this end of the world and forgotten here:

At night? The sea cracks against the ship. Fear whispers, screams, falls silent, hushed. Spewed from our country, forgotten, bound to the dark edge of the earth, at night what is there to do but seek English cunt, warm, moist, soft [...] Alone, frightened, nameless in this stinking hole of hell [...] we'll remember England together. (17)

Later in the play, Wisenhammer talks about justice saying that words within at the beginning is dangerous: for him “Injustice” is the ugliest word in the English language (33).

Critic Yi-shin Shih points to the “discourse of civilized other” and the “discourse of savagery” in the interpretation of the play and especially the theme of punishment and exploitation (3). Captain Philip is considered as someone using the discourse of the civilized other, while most of the convicts use the discourse of savagery. These discourses are

important because they give us different definitions and evaluations of the terms - punishment and justice. For him as a civilized person, a crime must be punished properly while the other discourse showed that crime can survive in the life struggle. In the play, scene three of act one is called “Punishment” pointing to its centrality in the play’s total message. In this part, the characters Captain Watkin Trench Governor Arthur Phillip, Judge David Collins, and Harry Brewer argue about the punishments of hanging and transportation. While Phillip and Harry think that the punishment is too excessive for such crimes, Trench and Collins think the opposite. They see such punishments as a warning and a tool for justice and order in the colonies and at home regardless of their psychological results. Phillip objects to this idea stating that “Could we not be more humane?” (17). But Trench opposes telling that “justice and humaneness never have gone hand in hand. The law is not a sentimental comedy” (17). It is very interesting to notice how the authorities twist some general concepts to serve their purpose. For example, justice is used as a tool to inflict pain and violence against the convicts, even when those authorities know that people steal because they have no option in this battle of survival.

Phillip highlights how violence is practiced in the name of justice. He somehow thinks that there should be order too but he objects to the horrid spectacle of the hangings. He thinks that it does not change anything, but the convicts continue doing what they do all the time. Furthermore, Collins talks about the impact of violence in domesticating the convicts and making them submissive to the authorities. He brings the issue of the “mortar of fear” which psychologically threatens the convicts not to go out of their words (17). He shows how a simple act of stealing is sometimes punished ruthlessly. He says that Arscott was sentenced to 150 lashes for an assault and how similar sentences happened for stealing from the public stores. Collins and Trench are depicted as cruel men who practice all types of violence against the convicts. They want the convicts to suffer. Trench’s depiction of how lashes violate the skin is a visual depiction of that punishment that was too cruel (17-8). More than that, Trench thinks that hangings are the convicts’ favourite form of entertainment (18). During the talk, Phillip suggests educating the convicts so that they will be more sensible, but Trench and Collins object to this idea (18).

Sarah Freeman says that tragedy was central to the Western tradition for centuries, and it can have the potential of changing the social upheaval towards a better civilization (201). Because of that, in *Our Country’s Good*, Wertebaker presents us a story like Dickens’s

social realist ones and raises the questions of colonialism, violence and social injustice. Freeman also argues that Wertenbaker writes in a mood that captures the main characteristics of postmodernism and post-colonialism (208). Moreover, the punishment inflicted on the three people in the play is proof of the violent acts practiced in the name of justice. Violence is clearly seen in the excessive punishment of the system. Harry Brewer lists these three people: Thomas Barrett, 17 years old and transported for seven years for stealing a sheep, James Freeman is Irish and transported for assaulting an 82-year-old woman, and lastly Dorothy Handland stole a biscuit from someone and she hanged herself (18). These examples show that the authorities are not after violence and terrorizing the convicts and not after justice. However, these examples of excessive punishment do not seem to change Collins's mind because he wants the hangings to continue (18).

Part of the psychological violence can also be seen in the people of the authority themselves. Harry Brewer, for example, feels the injustice in the system and remembers the people he hanged in a mood of remorse and psychological disturbance. He is haunted by Handy Baker's ghost. The violence he practiced gnaws his conscience and his soul, and finally led to his death in darkness because could not manage the heavy burden of his guilt. In the play, Harry talks to Ralph often and tells him about all types of violence he and his other people practiced against the convicts. Even when Ralph tries to persuade him that he is not guilty and responsible for executions, Harry is haunted by the ghosts of the people he had hanged until that day (19-20). Ironically, even if he feels guilty and sensible, during the play Harry is shown as a sexist and sees women as material and property. He has obscene language always toward women. Wertenbaker "kills" him in pain and disillusionment which he may deserve. For instance, in a scene where he forces Duckling to have sex with him, he says "sell yourself to a convict for a biscuit. Leave if you want to. You're filthy, filthy, opening your legs to the first marine. You whore" (27). Under these circumstances of violence and oppression of both men, and the harsh system rules Ducklings says that "I wish I was dead. At least when you are dead you are free" (28). This is just one of the samples of verbal violence and its horrific psychological effect on the individual.

However, Wertenbaker's depiction of how the convicts try to refuse all kinds of violence practiced in the name of justice makes them a symbol of humans' endeavours to stop injustice. Foster thinks that the play convicts take part in the story allows them "in small ways to undermine the authority and give the actors a sense of self-worth and hope for the

future” breaching the psychological burdens (1997 417). However, in the play, other than Tench and Collins there are some other characters who believe that violence is a perfect way to bring justice. One of them is Ross who says that “this is a convict colony, the prisoners are here to be punished and we’re here to make sure that they get punished” (23). Phillip resists the fact that they can be reformed, and they are already punished by a long exile to an unknown land where they will live for a long time (23). Collins’s harsh views change somehow at the end of the play. For example, when Ross is determined to hang Liz Modern and shouts “She’s guilty. Hang her”, Collins does not want to hang an innocent woman (49). However, in a materialistic inhumane calculation, Ross thinks that there are 800 “thieves, perjurers, forgers, murders, liars, escapist, rapists, whores [...]” on the island and the number should be decreased for a better society (49).

Justice is a lost concept for the punishers and authority on the fleets and in the settler colonies. They are harsh and inhuman towards the convicts, most of whom are sentenced to death for trivial felonies. The convicts and some sane officials call for justice in the story and they organize a play inside the play to entertain the people. However, the word justice has lost its meaning to such an extent that even rational people do not believe it. Inside the play when Wisenhammer claims to write a play about justice, Sideway utters these words about justice and the possible benefits of the play they will perform for the journey:

Wisenhammer: I will write you a play about justice,

Sideway: Only comedies, my boy, only comedies. (*Our Country’s Good* 52)

The innateness of human violence could be regarded as a reason for the desire for harsher punishment urges of cruel characters in the play. This idea is verbalized by Tench in the play. He says that people with such urges have the habit of vice and crime in their nature, that is, habits are difficult to break, and the innate tendency is nature (24). Tench urges that these people are not criminals for their stomach and hunger but born criminals and will never get reformed. They should be punished, and this is justice for Tench. For instance, Liz Morden’s words on her experience of a crime present us with this view (36, 38). Wertenbaker does not forget to mention the things that Liz went through. She was raised cruelly in a strict environment and after this transportation, she became a wild animal for the officers in the colony. With this character and her life story, Wertenbaker conveys that violence brings violence and silence is the sign of violence.

Sinister dogmatic views on punishment and justice are given by the talks of Reverend Johnson and Captain Phillip. Johnson says that people can be reformed but especially women should be reformed because they are sinners with compassion (24). Johnson represents the scholastic church thought on vices and has a sexist view obviously. Phillip thinks at this point that “the theatre will remind them that there is more to life than crime, punishment” (25). Another figure in the play who comments on punishment and justice is Ketch Freeman, the hangman. Similarly, he has religious reasons for punishment and justice, he fears the wrath of God and women (32). He is a sexist too who is on the extremity to state that God forgives all but women (32). However, he makes his way for compensating for his cruelty during execution when he says he was told “to be hanged or hang” (44). These are some examples of the feminist agenda of Wertebaker to point out that the punishment not only hurts the colonized but also the oppressor.

2. Conclusion

In conclusion, *Our Country's Good* describes the journey of the First Fleet which transports convicts from England to build a colony there. It presents different types of violence, psychological, verbal, and sexual. These different types have an impact on the characters in the play. The play includes the questioning of the system and inhumane actions of the empire and its higher-ranked people. The punishments are excessive, and justice is a matter of personal discussions out of reasoning and affection. Wertebaker summarizes the conditions of these convicts and the people who had to work in such places. It is indeed plausible why Wertebaker's study concentrates extensively on speech and its political impact, given that she grew up in a region where the native tongue had been largely destroyed. As a result, this play is quite private to Wertebaker who has witnessed directly the consequences of a silent society and is deeply moved by it.

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ⁱ Timberlake Wertebaker is a British playwright who also produced screenplays and worked as a translator. She grew up in Spain's Basque Country and educated in France (Bush 3). Wertebaker was the resident writer for the Royal Court Theatre from 1984-85 and worked in the Executive Council of The English Stage Company from 1992 to 1997 (Aston 149). She worked as a distinguished professor of Theatre at Georgetown University, Washington D.C. in the academic year 2005-2006. In 1988, she won Evening Standard Award for Most Promising Playwright for her play *Our Country's Good*. For the same play she won Drama Critics' Circle Award for Best New Foreign Play (New York) in 1990. As a result of the successive accomplishments in media and literature, Wertebaker was made a fellow of The Royal Society of Literature in 2006. Her other famous plays include *The Love of the Nightingale* which is an adaptation of the Ancient Greek legend of the rape of Philomela by her brother-in-law Tereus, and revenge undertaken by Philomela and Procne written from a feminist outlook. Another play is *Three Birds Alighting on a Field* (1992) which is set in the 1980s and tells the story of various characters in a failing art gallery and their attempts to improve their prestige.

REPRODUCING FEMINIST WRITING: *CONTEMPORARY FEMINIST LIFE-WRITING*

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Contemporary Feminist Life-Writing, written by Jennifer Cooke, was published by Cambridge University Press in 2020 as the first phase of a long-running project. The book, which approaches the gender issue from a different perspective in its biographical works and examines all this problem from a “feminist” perspective, offers readers a special study on different topics prepared with an up-to-date methodology and contains important clues about the future of biographical writing.

Jennifer Cooke’s work first comes to the fore with its involvement with many different authors and its discussion ground on new ideas. In this sense, parallel to Cooke, the book contains the statements of many feminist writers, poets and intellectuals, as well as many victims who have been harassed and raped; and refused to remain silent and seek their rights to the end. In this sense, the book, which has a very solid foundation on which it is based, offers the reader an in-depth approach to contemporary feminist ideas.

Contemporary Feminist Life-Writing actually begins with Jennifer Cooke’s explanation of the concept of “new audacity”, which she has built in her book. Cooke, who explains her basic thought on this subject in the “Introduction” part of the work, defines “new audacity” as “many feminist people act rather than remain silent in the face of harassment, insult and shameful behavior”. According to this, the victims, who are no longer silent, seek their rights, resist the attacks against them and never stop fighting so that the criminals can receive the

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punishments they deserve, constitute the basis of this power and this concept. These people, who do not accept to remain silent in any way, take on a stimulating role for many “victims” with their courage and perform an important job in order to encourage the masses. In addition, all these people come to the fore with their struggle against the social structure acting on male-dominated, heterosexual and class codes. This war of the victims, who embark on a struggle more difficult than anyone has ever done in order to use the right to determine their own future to the full, becomes concrete with the concept of “new audacity”. Cooke revisits the concept of “feminism” within the scope of the book, while reforming this definition, she also touches on the main pillars on which it is based. In this way, the author, who created a certain road map at the beginning of her work, also makes references to the problems she will continue to tackle in the future. The author, who goes to a new definition in the context of “history of experimental feminist life-writing”, thus performs a different job with the approach Cooke brings to the world of concepts. Stating that parallel to all these concepts, her own way is different from “French autofiction”, the author adds that there is a new understanding of sincerity in this new “narrative”. *“This book identifies what I am labelling a ‘new audacity’ evident in the contemporary life-writing produced by a number of feminists, many of whom are young, towards the beginning of their publishing careers, and all of whom experiment by testing the boundaries of autobiographical conventions.”* (Cooke, 2020: 2).

Stating that she has read the texts mentioned in the book closely, Cooke explains that the “emotional encounters” these studies contain show different types of issues that are also extremely important. Every experience we go through is personal and its results are subjective and Cooke wants to make it visible. *“I closely read these texts to analyse how they create and curate affective encounters in order to unsettle assumptions about sexuality, desire, sex work, the eroticism of female submission, trans lives, mental illness, rape, and feminism itself.”* (Cooke, 2020: 3) Cooke, on the other hand, does not neglect to introduce the authors to whom she applied for their works within the scope of the book, through the main issues and approaches they will address:

“Preciado, Leo, and Jacques adopt an alternating structure so that primarily factual and theoretical chapters are interspersed with chapters about their lives. For others – including Nelson, Angel, Zambreno, Kraus, and Despentés – life events both quotidian and disruptive propel reflection, a process that repeatedly tracks from individual, personal

experiences to thinking through their collective and political implications.” (Cooke, 2020: 3-4)

The first part of the book, “Autobiography as Feminist Praxis: New Audacity in the Writing of Rape”, basically uses three authors and three texts. Books titled Tracey Emin’s *Strangeland* (2005), Jana Leo’s *Rape New York* (2009), and Virginie Despentes’s *King Kong Theory* (2006) are subjected to a “close reading” by the author in this sense. Cooke, who first set out in this process with her book Emin’s *Strangeland*, offers different views on her approach to the rapist with a “feminist practice” and then touches on the interesting points in the texts of other authors. The article, which focuses on cases such as abuse and rape, then examines the social importance of rape through the books of Leo and Despentes, and makes visible the political messages behind this problem. At this point, Cooke develops a new concept called “affective audacity” and expresses it with the following words: “*This is what I am calling the text’s affective audacity: the fact that the reading encounter with the rape is so impactful that it carries over and lends affective force to the related arguments the book makes about rape, poverty, and property development.*” (Cooke, 2020: 49) This concept basically undertakes the idea of alerting the reader to wider arguments about their actions.

Another special concept for Cooke in this section is “body-essay”. Cooke describes this with the following words: “Her body-essay starts from the position of having the ‘wrong’ body and the ‘wrong’ attributes to attract the ‘right’ heterosexually desiring look.” (Cooke, 2020: 61) Cooke, on the other hand, mainly acts on this concept through Despentes’ *King Kong Theory*. Despentes uses the following statements on this subject in her book: “*I am writing as a woman who is always too much of everything – too aggressive, too noisy, too fat, too rough, too hairy, always too masculine, I am told.*” (Despentes, 2006: 9) The section, in which the dynamics of society and the traumas caused by sexual assaults are also evaluated, emphasizes the importance of their struggle against the attacks that all three authors have been victims of. In this sense, “body-essay”, which is defined by Cooke, becomes concrete through Emin, Leno and Despentes. Thus, a special ground is prepared for the rhetorical and formal side of the subject.

The second chapter of the book, “Ugly Audacities in Auto/biography” takes the focus of modern authors and their relationship with their environment. Jennifer Cooke, in this sense, primarily Alison Bechdel’s *Are You My Mother?* (2012), Sheila Heti’s *How Should a Person Be?* (2012), and Kate Zambreno’s *Heroines* (2012) and states that the works are distinguished by their characteristics.

The three books that are the subject of this chapter are not actually directly autobiographical/biographical texts, but show characteristics of this genre in many ways. First of all, Bechdel's book carries different autobiographical values as a "graphic memoir". Moreover, this book draws attention with the fact that it goes beyond the style we are used to and presents a narrative woven with graphics in its content. Bechdel brings up her relationship with her mother throughout her book, and this makes it easier for Cooke to do "psychotherapeutic unraveling" of her character. In another book, Heti talks about her relationship with her close friend and artist Margaux, and deals with problems such as how a person should be, what are expected of her. On the other hand, although Heti's work is in the form of a novel, it also contains many personal aspects about the author/artist. Kate Zambreno, on the other hand, evaluates three female writers of modern literature in her book, which deals with half-moment, half-trial style: Virginia Woolf, Vivien(e) Eliot, and Zelda Fitzgerald. According to Zambreno, these 3 women writers who are "mad wives of modernism" are also extremely important in the context of feminist literature. Based on these three distinct writers and text, Cooke reveals how successful the "female genius" is in creating. Moreover, this production, carried out in different forms, reveals that a genre such as autobiography/ biography cannot be reduced to a single form. *"What does it mean to be a writer of the self? This question is asked by the authors to whom I now turn, and answered through an audacious revelation of their own ugly behaviours and desires."* (Cooke, 2020: 64) The self is always at the forefront in this context. On the other hand, the author states that "ugliness" is also an important issue for her at this point, and evaluates that this issue can yield seminal results in terms of aesthetics: "the ugliness of the self and its secrets, the ugliness of writer's block, the ugliness of betrayal, and the ugly terrain of genius."

"Nobody, it is probably safe to say, wishes to be deemed ugly, yet in revealing the ugly facets of themselves that emerge when they write, Sheila Heti, Kate Zambreno, and Alison Bechdel risk precisely such a judgement." (Cooke, 2020: 64)

"Stripping Off for the First Time" deals with the concepts of "desire" and "sexuality", which are still heavily discussed today. At this point, one of the main points that come to the fore for Cooke is the position of "heterosexual women" in feminist discourse. Because women, who are oppressed and kept under pressure in different ways in such environments, constitute an important part of the discourse. At this point, the three books that shape the chapter are: Katherine Angel's *Unmastered: A Book on Desire, Most Difficult to Tell* (2012), Chris

Kraus's *I Love Dick* (1997), and Marie Calloway's *What Purpose Did I Serve in Your Life* (2013).

“In these books, the authors place themselves sexually and emotionally into the hands of the men they desire. The writing and publication of these desires and intimacies further exposes them, and, in an additional layer to the metaphors of stripping off, for each woman it is her first book. Whilst not without precedent, sexual autobiography is still an audacious genre, especially for a woman as she embarks on a writing career, a fact reflected in the provocative titles of these.” (Cooke, 2020: 93-94)

Not conservative about sex and desire, this section focuses on the subject of “vulnerability's association” that heterosexual women want and experience with their own will. Evaluating this issue in the context of feminist discourse, the section clearly reveals what kind of consequences, relationships and bonds of voluntary commitment to a man can be established. On the other hand, the authors who brought up an issue that was so complicated to articulate in their first books clearly show how brave they are within the scope of “new audacity”.

“Breaking the Binaries” is a section that mainly acts on “trans people” and the boundaries of this concept are opened to discussion. In recent years, the boundaries of the LGBT+Q movement have been expanded by adding new concepts such as gay, lesbian, crossdressing, and trans etc. In this context, each individual who became a part of this large group contributed to the progress of the field and the enlargement of the area with the problems he/she raised in parallel with his/her own problematic. Therefore, this section, in which gender identity is discussed from different angles, is a text that asks how trans people establish a dialogue with capitalist institutions and organizations, how the boundaries of this interaction are determined and what are the basic dynamics for communication, and contains answers within itself.

Jennifer Cooke focuses on books written by people who are all trans, within the scope of this section: Juliet Jacques's *Trans: A Memoir* (2015) and *Weekend in Brighton* (2015), Maggie Nelson's *The Argonauts* (2015), and Paul Preciado's *Testo Junkie: Sex, Drugs, and Biopolitics in the Pharmacopornographic Era* (2013).

Jacques, Nelson, and Preciado do something different from transgender people before them within the scope of their books and abandon the “dramatic structure” often used during gender reassignment. Especially, these authors, who open to discussion how the term “trans”

differentiates semantically over time, bring new possibilities to the subject through their own personal experiences. At this point, Nelson and Preciado especially emphasize the “pregnant woman body”. In these discourses, the word “trans” gains a completely natural value and a “daring” move is made. Jacques focuses on the “new gender identities” of the 21st century in her book. Jacques, who writes in a “dedramitized” way and makes events less dramatizing, touches on the importance of social behavior and social organizations in the context of feminism. For Cooke, all these authors express a special value in terms of approaching the subject from a different perspective with the trans values and identities they directly carry. This highly daring perspective offered by them is also encouraging for transgender people who will come after them.

Stating that the 3 texts in question entered the dialogue with different names, Cooke then made the following statements:

“*Testo Junkie, Trans, and The Argonauts* all engage with feminism. Nelson weaves quotes from feminist theorists such as Judith Butler and Sara Ahmed throughout the book. As a lesbian, she notes that ‘whatever sameness I’ve noted in my relationships with women is not the sameness of Woman, and certainly not the sameness of parts. Rather, it is the shared, crushing understanding of what it means to live in a patriarchy.’²” (Cooke, 2020: 136)

In the continuation of Cooke’s words, she points out some of the ongoing discussions and differences on this issue:

“Trans people share this knowledge and there should be a natural alliance between trans and feminist politics as a result. Sadly, this has not always been the case. Trans-exclusionary radical feminists, whose commitment to an essentialist view of sex and gender means they refuse to accept trans women as women, have been exceptionally vocal and divisive in their attempts to discredit trans women’s rights and to discount and disparage their identities.³” (Cooke, 2020: 136)

² Cooke’s note: A. B. Silvera, ‘BORED_TRAN_21st_CENTURY.EXE’, *Radical Transfeminism* (Leith: Sociopathic Distro, 2017), pp. 6–10, at p. 7.

³ Cooke’s note: M. Nelson, *The Argonauts* (Minneapolis, MN: Graywolf Press, 2015), p. 25.

All these different views bring about new problems and divisions that still push many people to take a different front today.

“The Dangers of Audacity” puts a very interesting personality, Vanessa Place, who is also a lawyer and artist, at its center. Preparing a three-volume publication titled *Place’s Tragodia* on its plot from 2010 to 2011, Place is known for her advocacy about poor sex workers (vis-à-vis the sex workers) and pedophilia victims in many hearings. In this sense, comparing the court minutes published by Place with the texts/works published by Place as an artist, Cooke creates an extremely interesting argument. In this context, the author, who puts *The Guilt Project* in the foreground, argues that Place’s behavior actually complicates feminism. Cooke stated that Place, who developed a special system of her own conceptually, made the situation worse for the sex workers and pedophilia victims represented by her, adding that this situation works against feminism at some points.

“Vanessa Place is an audacious poet who courts controversy. She posts rape jokes as status updates on Facebook and has recently published a book using the same material, *You Had to Be There: Rape Jokes*⁴ (2018).¹ She has turned her name into a company, VanessaPlaceInc, with the tagline ‘It’s not the point, it’s the platform.’⁵ One of the objects the company put up for sale was a book of bound \$1 bills entitled \$20 and priced at \$50.⁶ In 2015, her regular tweeting of *Gone with the Wind* and adoption of ‘Mammy’ from the film as her avatar for doing so provoked such a furore that the subsequent debates hit the international press: she was accused of being a racist for performing in

⁴ Cooke’s note: For example, on 28 July 2017 she posted a picture of one of her tweets as a Facebook status. It read: ‘What’s black and blue and doesn’t like sex? I’ll let you know tomorrow. #gags’. She first published a collection of such jokes as an article, later a book, *You Had to Be There: Rape Jokes* (London: Penguin Random House, 2018). For the former, see V. Place, ‘Rape Jokes’, *Studies in Gender and Sexuality* 18:4 (2017), pp. 260–8. This issue of the journal features nine different essays on rape jokes, including Place’s.

⁵ Cooke’s note: VanessaPlaceInc’s tagline is from the Twitter feed description: twitter.com/VanessaPlaceInc. The account has been dormant since early 2014. It appears the ‘company’ has closed or the project been abandoned.

⁶ Cooke’s note: V. Place, ‘Interview with Vanessa Place’, interviewed by J. Bromberg, *The White Review* (October 2014).

blackface and for reproducing the text's racism⁷. Does repurposing problematic material repeat the offence or highlight and thus critique the original offensiveness?" (Cooke, 2020: 170)

Place has made a serious progress in her own writing journey through the courts and hearings she has taken up, while also violating many ethical issues. Therefore, this "audacity" that he exhibits individually brings along serious losses for some people. The writer, who is involved in all these events with a feminist point of view, assumes the role of the preparator of a process that will eventually have traumatic consequences. Considering both Place and other feminist writers and artists, this problem causes various risks, confusion and steels for other individuals at some point. This causes more problems for people who are already facing many problems.

Jennifer Cooke makes important suggestions on how feminist discourse can be reshaped in the 21st century in her book, *Contemporary Feminist Life-Writing*, which constructs many new concepts and views within feminist discourse. Stating that there is no uniform discourse and progress, Cooke evaluates the authors, academics and artists she deals with in this sense from different perspectives and brings up the issues that draw attention to them. The author, who takes a very critical attitude in this sense, also states that the transformation is necessary and promising. In this sense, the concept of "new audacity" contains a potential power within itself.

"We will need the audacious voices of the present to continue to speak out and to speak up. *Contemporary Feminist Life-Writing: The New Audacity* has argued for the importance of such work within feminist and literary studies, within life-writing scholarship, and for those researching the contemporary. New audacity authors show us that writing lives is urgently necessary to the project of energising adical twenty-first-century change." (Cooke, 2020: 205).

⁷ Cooke's note: S. Martelle, 'Vanessa Place's Gone with the Wind Tweets: Artistic Expression or Racism?', *LA Times* (19 May 2015); E. Helmore, 'Gone with the Wind Tweeter Says She Is Being Shunned by Art Institutions', *The Guardian* (25 June 2015).

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