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TRANSNATIONAL DIALOGISM AND SYMPTOMS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL COMPLEXITIES: THE RHETORIC OF AUTHORS` SELF-ASSERTION IN POLYPHONIC NOVELS OF WILLIAM FAULKNER'S *THE SOUND AND THE FURY* AND REZA BARAHENI'S *SECRETS OF MY NATIVE LAND*

Asst. Prof. Dr. FIROUZEH AMERI & Dr. SEPEHR DANESHARA*
*Email: sepehr.da89@gmail.com



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Abstract

In this article the polyphonic structures of two novels from two distinct literary traditions are put under parallel syntactic analysis. Both texts are prevalently dominated by both inner and outer dialogisms, but the psychological tempers of their authors have dramatically affected the styles of their narration. In The Sound and the Fury, the inner polyphonies are of a high importance. Quentin- reckoned to be symbol of Faulkner in this article- narrates most of his part through flashbacks and dialogues that occur in his mind. In fact, these inner polyphonies endorse the fact that Faulkner had the same obsessions of Quentin. These repressed complexities have direct relations with Faulkner`s disappointments of his family and life and these internal struggles were still present in 1929 when the book published. Faulkner`s psychological complexities led him to hint them through symbolization of a character who always talks to himself and remember all others' dialogues in his mind. Soliloquies and stream of consciousnesses are the means of expressing the inner repressions.

On the other hand, Reza Baraheni was in a situation that the period before Iran's revolution in 1979 stood as an era of both courtiers and society's corruptions for him. Even in 1987 when he sent all his manuscript for the publication, there existed a loophole of a different and better future for him. His dream of a great nation with respect to all its citizens was alive in his mind. This hope made him write a novel that had in fact more descriptive style rather than a subjective narration. Polyphonies in his writings are predominantly of external ones and the present dialogues of characters in his writing make up the majority of his dialogisms.

The present study correlates the relations of authors' psychological moods with their polyphonic styles. Whereas the author with his discouraging experiences of life brings a text full of inner obsessions and polyphonies, the other writer who has high ambitions expose a text overwhelmed by outer polyphonies. In simple terms, the role of repression and oppression and their psychological effects in formulation of polyphonies and expansion of them to other texts are matters of analysis in this study.

With the rise of Modernism, many novel techniques of narration walked into the world of literature. Dialogism or novels with several narrators, as one of these new literary practices, attracted the attention of several writers from different nations. In his appraisal of Dostoevsky's *Brothers Karamazov*, Mikhail Bakhtin proposed an interesting field of approach to the literary analysis. In this new trend, the emphasis was not only on the narratives with several personas, but also on the concepts such as unfinalizability and carnivalism. These theories and concepts have been applied by many critics to distinct literary pieces. In their analysis, Bakhtin's division of polyphonism into internal and external ones was efficiently applied. External polyphonism according to Bakhtin refers to as the language of "*communication… which everyone is compelled to speak*" through and internal polyphonism or dialogism of a word in narratives can be explained as "*the dialogism that penetrates its entire structure, all its semantic and expressive Layers*… (in which, it was) *almost entirely ignored."*(1984) It is noteworthy that in spite of the critics referring to internal and external polyphonism, the reason behind the use of each of these types still remains untouched. In this paper, William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* and Reza Baraheni's *Secrets of my Native Land* as two polyphonic novels from two distinct literary traditions, American and Persian literature are examined, to which the Bakhtinian theories on polyphonic narratives, and chiefly his views about external and internal polyphonies, are applied. We, in particular, argue how the psychological make-up and social backgrounds of these two authors at the time of the composition of these novels could have affected their styles of polyphonism to the effect that in Faulkner's work the internal polyphonies bear the strength of the narrative while in Baraheni'work, external polyphonies are even more noticeable than the internal ones. In this analysis, we have put our focus on the one narrator or center of consciousness in each novel, who, we believe, the author has the most sympathy with or arguably can be even identified with the author.

William Faulkner's novel illustrates the fall of a Southern family in the America. The story encircles around the promiscuity of one of the members of this Southern family, Caddy. Caddy, the only female child in Compson's family is very open to the new changes of the 1900s America. Her sexual relationships and loss of virginity cannot be carried out by other members of the family who are still obsessed with the concepts of family honor and pride. For a typical reader of the novel, the first confrontation with this story might seem extraordinarily bizarre. Firstly because the story does not obey the traditional codes of narration such as the chronological order of events and secondly because the introduction of four different narrators can make it difficult to follow the story lines. The first of these narrators, Benjy, is a retarded character who is incapable of understanding any cause and effect relations of the events. The second narrator of the story is the eldest of Compsons' children, Quentin, who is intelligent, introspective and neurotic. The third section is recounted by the third child of Compsons, Jason, who is highly obsessed with the financial circumstances of life. The last part is narrated through a third person point of view in which the main focus is on the black servant of the family, Dilsey.

A close analysis of *The Sound and the Fury* shows that the second section, Quentin's section, has the main focus of the whole narrative. Quentin is reckoned to be the symbol of William Faulkner himself, not only for his being the eldest of his family like William, but also for his delicate style of language usage, his intelligence as a Harvard student and his being a person in head-breaking moaning of his age. Therefore, this study focuses on the polyphonic variations of this second section of the book. It is important to note about this section that as the current setting of Quentin in the beginning of the section is in Harvard, he only remembers the events through familiar images and internal dialogues.

Quentin's section is abundant in conflicts between Quentin himself and the other characters in the story. Almost all of the dialogues in tensions do occur as internal forms, that is, Quentin is in a give-and-take situation of expressing his ideas with other characters in more subjective manners. His anxious psychology does not let him take the

problems easy. All his encounters and dramatic points in his life come to his consciousness and without any capability of taking the control of the occasion, he gets trapped in all ideological circumstances of life. Although he had the high ambition of being a successful student among his own peers, the external pressures of life had dominated all his being. A good example of this point is in his remembering the dialogue he had with his father;

> "I have committed incest I said Father it was I it was not Dalton Ames And when lie put Dalton Ames. Dalton Ames. Dalton Ames. When lie put the pistol in my hand I didn't. That's why I didn't. He would be there and she would and I would. Dalton Ames. Dalton Ames. Dalton Ames. If we could have just done something so dreadful and Father said That's sad too, people cannot do anything that dreadful they cannot do anything very dreadful at all they cannot even remember tomorrow what seemed dreadful today and I said, You can shirk all things and he said, Ah can you." (1929)

In the above excerpt, Quentin's ultimate sense of shame makes him lie to his father, confessing that he and Caddy had incest, but he is not a normal person, who ,according to his father, can be capable of forgetting his past. William Faulkner's life had almost the same frames as Quentin's. As Thomas L. Mchaney puts it;

> ""Faulkner's own family, he could see clearly, had lived out such a pattern from the days of his self-made great-grandfather Col. William C. Falkner, through his eccentric but generally successful grandfather, his often-defeated father, and on to himself, the ne'er-do-well artist—the sensitive aesthete often seen, in nineteenth-century psychology, as one of the common results in the last phase of a four-generation family cycle… Hand in hand with their economic decline goes a gradual loss of physical stamina and moral fibre." These themes in Faulkner's novel are clear: Quentin's frailty, impotence, and unreadiness for living; Jason's immorality; and even Caddy's promiscuity follow upon their father's economic failure and alcoholism in a South that had changed drastically, first from losing the Civil War and the destruction of the economic system of the Old South,…" (2008)

Actually, it can be claimed that *The Sound and the Fury* is the illumination of Faulkner's life. The internal speeches of Quentin can be explained as psychic displacement of Faulkner's inner complexities. Through the narration of *The Sound and the Fury*, William Faulkner has created an incarnation of his obsessions. In very simple terms, the internal tensions of Quentin's dialogues address the repressed atmosphere of 1920s South America which has undertaken the consciousness and unconscious of the text's author. William Faulkner, as previously mentioned, was in a situation in which there existed no loopholes of hope for his future career as a prominent writer of the age. His failures in his previous novels to become a distinguished writer, financial predicaments and the feeling of having an always-failing father were painting the dull background of his work. He could just spot himself within a world full of decline and fall, which had its roots in both his unsuccessful paternity and the chaotic and gloomy atmosphere of his age.

Reza Baraheni's *Secrets of My Native Land,* a Persian novel, has the same polyphonic structure as William Faulkner's novel. It has been narrated through several perspectives, most of them *Ich-Erzählung* and two third person point of views. The contents of these two novels share some grounds, too. In *Secrets of my Native Land* the main focus is on the corrupt setting of Iran before 1979th revolution. Of different narrators of this novel, Hosein Mirza, who was an interpreter for Iranian and American Colonels, has the most identical mindset to Reza Baraheni's, because he was also tortured and kept in confinement for a period of time in Mohammad Reza Shah's regime. This confinement can be compared to the confinement of Hosein Mirza in prison;

> "When I got out of solitary confinement, I seemed older than now. I looked 80 years. I took sunbath and got younger gradually. Sun makes human younger. Now I am 40 years old, but I look like a 60-year-old man." (1985)

As a matter of fact, his part is wholly dominated by his subjective reporting of the era before 1979. His outstanding dialogues with the characters illuminate the challenges he has with his contemporaries. The following excerpt from the novel is an external speech between Hosein Mirza and the reader, which describes his attitude towards his inner sounds;

> "Sometimes I was loosing my memory. Whatever I was trying to remember were my mom's eye color and her name, it was useless and I failed to remember. Chaos was dominant in my life. The only thing I remembered was where I was, though I couldn't remember at what time I am living. Depth of my head and brain was swelling. The contents of my head were more than my skull bone capacity and I was finding a state in which I assumed my head will be exploded sooner. Grandfather, children, his nephews and twin nieces were changed to useless noise, tumult and chaos." (1985)

This grand illumination represents the crashing down of the ideological and external pressures over the Mirza's brain. Nevertheless, this paper claims that his being highly affected by these pressures does not necessarily mean that the pressures have become internalized complexities;

> "Whenever I sat under the sun, I was feeling that I am a lucky man. Why didn't they kill me? But why they killed Hamidi? When I thought about my feelings about lieutenant Karzali's personality, I recognized that he was compassionate to me. It was so that as if I had shot all bullets of 12 machine guns to lieutenant Karzali's body and head. As if I had killed that brain like corpus." (1985)

In fact, he is unconsciously happy that he was not wholly annihilated by the strangers in his country. This visualization of the chance of survival has come to his mind after emancipation from the prison. This emancipation has come to him only after Iran's revolution. The new age of changes in the society after the upheaval has bred new hopes and aspirations in Mirza's mind. The externalization of dialogues- dialogues between the characters' consciousnesses without pinned traces of psychological complexities- arguably come to show the psychological disposition of Reza Baraheni himself at the times.

Baraheni published the Secrets of my Native Land in 1985, when the atmosphere of the age had been dramatically changed compared to the era before Iran's revolution. Baraheni's overall mood on the time of publication of this book was highly positive towards future changes. Indeed, all his concerns about Mohamad.

Reza Shah's kingdom could have come to an end and arguably he has no other obsessions internalized within his mind. Although either of the novels by William Faulkner and Reza Baraheni are abundant in polyphonic speeches, their structural outsets are completely different. The major character in William Faulkner's The Sound and the Fury, Quentin, is highly obsessed with the corruption and fall of his family. Quentin is not exposed to an environment where all his family's dishonors have get into thin air. He is not even capable of thinking about the situation where this disgracefulness would stand far apart from him. He- or William Faulkner in general- is highly tortured by his age's sudden changes and his inability of adapting himself to these new codes of morality. These inner pressures show themselves in the inner speeches- Vertical Relation of polyphony- of Quentin which he cannot evade their traps.

On the other hand, Hosein Mirza has got out of prison and his mind is now free to express his solicitude on several issues and morality standards of the time. These revelations do appear in outward ways, such as through external dialogues- Horizontal Relation- or through direct addressing toward an addressee. In fact, Baraheni's age can be reckoned as an age of hope for brilliant changes in moral concepts. As this hope has not died away, it can be

claimed that the representation of his concerns has come in a more matter-of-fact and external way.

To sum up, the analysis of these two polyphonic novels can support the argument that the portrayal of the polyphonism in Modernist literary pieces is to a great degree dependent on the psychological moods of the authors. Whereas an author, like William Faulkner, with more repressed desires and hopes, creates a texts abundant in internal polyphonies and dialogues, the other author, Reza Baraheni, who has taken the fulfillment of his hopes for granted and is optimistic about the future creates a text much in the external polyphonic form.

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