Reading of Johnson-Davies' Folktale for Children "The Bowl of Beans" from the Perspective of Macherey and Balibar's "Model of Opposition"

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ملخص

في عام 1993 قام دينيس جونسون ديفيز بنشر كتابه <u>حكايات شعبية مصرية</u> حيث يقدم فيه بعض الحكايات الشعبية المصرية للطفل الغربي، و يبدأ الكتاب بحكاية "سلطانية الفول" و هي احدي الحكايات الشعبية الشهيرة في مصر، و فيها يعيد الكاتب سرد أحداثها البسيطة التي تدور في زمان و مكان غير محددين كما يحدث عادة في الحكايات الشعبية كنوع أدبي، و مما هو جدير بالذكر أن جونسون ديفيز يعلن عن هدفه من تقديمه لهذه الحكايات الشعبية و الذي يتلخص في إحداث حالة من الألفة عند الغرب و تعريفهم بالشرق في تنوعه و عمق ثقافته، و هو في مسعاه هذا كما يرى يكشف القناع عن الشرق المجهول لهم، و ينتقد سوء فهم الغربيين لثقافة الشرق الحقيقية و قيمته الفكرية، و هنا تكمن رسالته ككاتب و مستشرق أجنبي، و في هذا الإطار توحي رسالته الثقافية من خلال تلك الحكايات الشعبية أن حكاياته تبرز بالضرورة الثقافة المصرية التي عاش في كنفها مدة طويلة من حياته و ذلك خلال إقامته في مصر، آخذين في الاعتبار أهمية الحكايات الشعبية في تنشئة الأطفال كي يستوعبوا ثقافة المجتمع و الأيديولوجية المعبرة عن تلك الثقافة، و بناءا على ذلك، تناقش هذه الورقة البحثية كيف أن المحتوى الثقافي و الأيديولوجي لحكاية "سلطانية الفول" -- والتي تتسم أحداثها بزمان و مكان غير محددين-- يطرح عليها نوعا من التحديد الزماني و المكاني، حيث يتم تحديدهما من خلال ارتباط الحكاية بالمجتمع الذي أنتجها، و هي بهذا تتعارض مع إحدى خصائص الحكايات الشعبية فيما يتعلق بعدم معرفة زمان و مكان وقوع أحداثها. و من ثم تتناول هذه الدراسة حكاية "سلطانية الفول" في محاولة لتوضيح اتسامها بخاصيتين متناقضتين ظاهريا و هي أنها تفتقر للسياق التاريخي بمعنى أنها لا تاريخية في بنيتها النصية السطحية، بينما تطرح بنيتها النصية العميقة بعدا تاريخيا يتعلق بالثقافة المصرية و مظاهرها الأيديولوجية في اللحظة التاريخية التي أنتجتها لتقديمها للطفل الغربي كما يفترض جونسون ديفيز في رسالته الثقافية. و السؤال الذي يطرح نفسه طبقا لذلك يتلخص في الآتي: هل استطاع جونسون ديفيز أن يحقق رسالته الثقافية نحو الطفل الغربي من خلال هذه الحكاية أم لا؟ لهذا تتبنى هذه الدراسة "نموذج المعارضة" و هو أحد مناهج التأويل القائمة على الشك و ذلك لتحقيق هدف الدراسة و الإجابة عن أسئلتها.

مما هو جدير بالذكر أن من بين رواد الماركسية الحديثة نجد لويس ألتوسير و الذي استهل تحديث النظرية التقليدية بتركيزه على أيديولوجية النصوص الأدبية، لهذا تبعه كل من بيير ماشيري و اتيان باليبار حيث كان لهما نفس الاهتمامات الأيديولوجية و التي تبلورت في تقديمهما "النموذج المعارضة" الذي يساعد في دراسة تلك الحكاية الشعبية باعتبارها أحد النصوص حيث يتم تطبيق المنهج عليها بعرض التأويل السطحي المباشر لها والذي يعكس بالضرورة الأيديولوجية الإنسانية كنص نشأ في كنف الرأسمالية التي تخفي أيديولوجيته الحقيقية و الذي نقوم بتفكيكه عن طريق الكشف عن نقاط التناقض و الثغرات و ما صمت الكاتب عن قوله و ذلك للتنقيب عن اللاوعي التاريخي للنص و الذي يعبر عن نفسه في أيديولوجيته و التي تكون بالضرورة الأيديولوجية السائدة في المجتمع الذي أنتج النص، و في نفس الوقت يتم إعادة تركيب النص من وجهة النظر الماركسية حيث يتحدد زمان و مكان الحكاية الشعبية موضوع الدراسة مما يجيب على التساؤل الأساسي لها، و من ثم تنقسم هذه الدراسة إلى قسمين: مقدمة نظرية وقسم يتناول تحليل "سلطانية الفول" طبقا لنموذج المعارضة كمرجعية منهجية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الحكايات الشعبية المصرية للأطفال، "سلطانية الفول" لجونسون ديفيز، "نموذج المعارضة" لماتشيري وباليبار.

Abstract

In 1993, Denys Johnson-Davies "retold" some of the Egyptian folktales to western children in Folk Tales of Egypt. "The Bowl of Beans"1 is the first and most famous story in this book in which the author retells a simple story that at its first sight seems timeless and placeless as the standard in folktales. The purpose of the author, as an Orientalist, by retelling the folktales is his announced cultural message of familiarizing the West with the unknown East's cultural diversity and depth. In his endeavor, he tries to correct the westerners' misconception of the East's true culture and intellectual value. Such a message suggests that the Egyptian folktale retold by him articulates necessarily the Egyptian culture as he lived in Egypt for a long period of his life, taking into consideration the importance of folktales in socializing children to a society's culture and its ideology. In this paper, we shall discuss how the cultural and ideological content of "The Bowl of Beans" ascribes certain time and place to the tale. The cultural and ideological content of "The Bowl of Beans" connects it with its society at the time of narration, contradicting the folktale characteristic of undefined time and place. We shall discuss it as historical in its deep structure and ahistorical in its surface text to clarify whether "The Bowl of Beans" represents the Egyptian culture in its ideological manifestations at the time of narration, the historical moment of narration it belongs to, and the ideology represented to the western child. Does the author fulfill his intended cultural message or not? That is why, we shall adopt the "model of opposition" as one of the hermeneutics of suspicions approaches. Among recent Marxists are Louis Althusser

and his followers like Pierre Macherey and Etienne Balibar who are interested in Literature as an ideological form. Their approach is called the "model of opposition". It is suitable for this study because it deals with the ideology of literary texts. The folktale as a text, after showing its surface interpretation associated with Humanism that masks the text's real ideology, will be deconstructed by spotting the points of aporia, contradictions, gaps, and silences to explore the ideology expressive of its historical unconscious which is the dominant ideology, accompanied by reconstructing it from the Marxist point of view so that the main question of the study can be answered. The paper is divided into two parts: theory and an analysis of "The Bowl of Beans".

Key Words: Egyptian Folktales for Children, Johnson-Davies' "The Bowl of Beans", Macherey and Balibar's "Model of Opposition".

Johnson-Davies' "The Bowl of Beans" will be referred to as (BB) in the context of the paper.

I. Theory

In the following, I attempt to examine the argument that the folktale is timeless and placeless as the genre suggests, arguing for the folktale's contextual nature as a cultural and historical artifact in its deep structure and ahistorical in its surface structure. In order to support our point of view we shall focus firstly on the generic characteristics of folktales concerning their connection with their time of production and with the native community to which they affiliate. Then, we shall reckon on Dennis Johnson-Davies' announced cultural mission as an Orientalist who takes the responsibility of acquainting the western readers with the cultural richness and sophisticated thought of the East. That is in order to sustain the relationship between his folktale, "The Bowl of Beans," and its community's synchronic culture and that culture's ideology. Dwelling on the main conceptions of the model of opposition, as one of recent Marxist approaches to literature, offers a clear illumination of how literature is produced, foregrounding its historicity as an ideological form, and hence its connection with its very time and context of its production. Appealing to the model of opposition as a reference helps in deciding

practically on the contextual nature of "The Bowl of Beans" to belong to its time and place as one of its society's ideological expressions.

I.i. Folktale as Cultural and Historical Construct

Once scholars have long maintained that folktales are without time or place, they also speak of folktales as embracing a society's culture with its beliefs and ideology, without considering the contradiction between the two cases. Many folktales begin with the usual 'Once upon a time', 'In old times', 'One day' and etc. Such phrases originate the genre's timelessness. At the same time, there is no definite place to be mentioned but a home, a palace or an incident about some kind of characters so that no place is assigned. With place, it means a certain community, a tribe, a country. Such a time and a place's anonymity is a characteristic of folktales. Scholars like Smith and Wiese along with many others assert such a characteristic of folktales, writing, "Recognized as fiction, generally timeless and placeless" (70). Nonetheless, most of the scholars concerned with folktales emphasize the latter's connection with their origin society's culture, beliefs and values, a connection defines a time and a place for any folktale. Barker defines the folktales with reference to their native community, "The word folktale is made up of two words. 'Folk' means people or to do with a particular group of people. 'Tale' means a story" (7). Even Smith and Wiese who maintain its freedom from time and place, they declare such communal link, "Folktales originate from the oral storytelling traditions of their respective cultures" (70). Patai (1998) adds, "that the events related in [the folktale], the actions of its protagonists, and their presuppositions contain significant pointers to the sociocultural patterns of the society in which the tale is at home" (Qtd. in Smith and Wiese 71). Barker speaks about their changeability from time to time when they are told which suggests its belonging to

the time of its production or narration (7). Folktales are also essential for a society where they constitute part of its beliefs and culture (13).

Their relationship with social culture and ideology is twofold as both carriers and transmitters of culture. Malik asserts the dual role of the folktales (165). Their role as carriers of a society's culture and peculiarities is not separated from their role as transmitters of that very culture. They participate in the "transmission of social messages, at the level of both overt content and structure" as carriers for something to transmit on the one hand, and in "its contribution to the many factors that educate an individual with regard to appropriate social relations and codes of conduct" as transmitters on the other hand (165). In addition to their transmission of social messages, they mirror the social order and the desirable codes of behavior associated with social customs, norms and traditions "in a given part of the world at a given time" (165, 177). That is why they have got their cultural peculiarity in a given society, particularly they "offer the familiar from fresh perspectives of language, setting, or illustration" in Freeman, Lehman and Scharer's expression (52).

Folktales play a critical role as transmitters not only of all social messages but of certain messages chosen intentionally or unintentionally by their producers and relate to the latter's ideological project. The results of a research by Malik proves the folktale as a vessel to carry different social messages according to the purpose of its producer, whether a society, a tribe or a person. "The folktale can therefore be instrumental in reasserting and consolidating *existing* social relationships and codes of behavior" (171 emphasis added). Such a case takes place in the process of socialization which the folktales are part of its means, especially when children are concerned (171). J.L. Fischer claims that "If studied carefully, I believe that folktales can be an important index of the ways in which social structure impinges

on and molds individual personalities" (Qtd. in Malik 166). In other words, such a role of folktales is supported thanks to the generic nature of the stories themselves as helpers in the orientation of readers' mind, and construction of their values and attitudes through identification with the characters as fostered by Freeman, Lehman and Scharer with whom Barker concurs. "Stories are a primary mode of human thinking and, according to Hardy (1977), a way of constructing reality for ourselves," and hence are connected with the construction of readers' values (Freeman, Lehman and Scharer 52; Barker 9). Similarly, Colleen Smith shares such opinion about folktales, saying, "folktales were coded by descriptions of characters and objects in order to evaluate how cultural groups define meanings or stereotypes of the object or person in the tale "(5). She affirms their importance to incorporate "cultural values and morals" to preserve the "cultural tradition" (2). Furthermore, children acquire values and thoughts through identification with the characters (Freeman, Lehman and Scharer 58). The process runs the way described by Kelly and Zak "Stories anchor the chaos of events in our own experience, our own beliefs, and our own values" (297-8). Crook adds that they "give children access to deeper meaning and give them opportunity to interpret the stories in light of their own experiences and stage development," owing to the fact that "the children can come to their own conclusion, frame their value structure"(449-50). Moreover, Nilsen declares that there is a bond between adults and children readers where these books reflect our adult thoughts and beliefs, and at the same time influence the formation of early child's, adding to the features of the folktale genre (3). Consequently, folktales articulate their society in a certain place and time. Such point of view finds more clues in the intended cultural message of Johnson-Davies and is given another dimension once the model of opposition is introduced theoretically and in its application to the specified folktale.

I.ii. Denys Johnson-Davies' Cultural Message

His interest in children literature in the form of folktales is a part of the cultural message of Denys Johnson-Davies, the British writer and famous Orientalist who receives admiration of some iconic Arabic figures concerning such a message. He is acclaimed by two prolific Arabic figures, Edward Said and Naguib Mahfouz, besides the appreciation given to him as Sheikh Zaid award winner for writing for children where he is seen as an authorized western writer and a spokesman for the Arabic culture (Grimes 2; Boullata 78). The expected cultural message as an admiring Orientalist who retells "Arabic folktales for English-speaking children" appears evidently in the reasons behind his attainment of "Sheikh Zayed award as the 'Cultural Personality of the Year'" (Al-Halool 43; Qualey 5). The nomination for the prize is based on getting children internationally to become familiar with "the Arabic literary heritage, which reflects the creativity, liveliness and cultural tolerance among nations" (Qualey 5). To put it another way, he aims at introducing the East to the western child reader as "an expression of his desire to effect [sic.] an intercultural dialogue between Arabs and westerners at a time dominated by unfair stereotypes in the West about Arabs" in Al-Halool's opinion (43). This is due to his interest in introducing "a panoramic view of Arab history and culture which, in one way or another, inform much of modern Arabic literature" (43). His interest in the eastern culture identifies a socio-cultural place and time for his literary production for children.

I.iii. Model of Opposition
I.iii.i. Main Guidelines

The second half of the twentieth century had witnessed the flourishing of many critical movements that enriched the study of literature and the field of literary criticism. Every critical approach provides a peculiar vision of the literary text and its relationship with reality. Pawlowski refers to recent new insights of Marxist criticism, maintaining, "Rather, Marxist criticism began to concern itself with the ideological function of literary forms and the necessary interconnection between textual specificity and supposedly extratextual matters" (8). Upon the publication of Pierre Machery's *A Theory of Literary Production* (1966; trans. 1978) and co-writing of "Literature as an Ideological Form" (1974; trans. 1981) with Etienne Balibar, they announce such a modification of the traditional Marxist theory of literature (Pawlowski 8). Their version of "model of opposition", as Butler confirms, combines both deconstruction and Marxism, pioneering "this type of interpretation" (114-15). Furthermore, their theory "can best be dubbed *ideological*" because "its theoretical strength lies above all in exploring what might be called the *ideology of form*" as Eagleton explains in his 'Introduction' of *Marxist Literary Theory: A Reader* Part I (13). They are interested in literature, in bourgeois societies, not as a unified entity but as a structure full of contradictions in meaning although it is unified in form. For them, the contradictions in meaning are symptoms of the literary text's distancing itself from its real ideology and, hence, from its historical moment of production. As a result, the literary text presents two opposed ideologies at the same time: it is the bourgeois ideology in its masked version in the 'manifest' text, taking the form of Humanism, and the true face of such an ideology in the subtext. The deficiency from which the text suffers in the shape of contradictions in meaning and silences stands for the ideological resistance to the bourgeois ideology that characterizes the text's historical specificity. In addition, the existence of any other opposed ideologies adopted by

the fictional characters is considered as a kind of ideological resistance to the bourgeoiness. That is why the literary text from this critical point of view is considered as a "*site of struggle*" among ideologies to concur with Bakhtin's viewpoint of text and authorship (Lewis). The aim of this approach is to read against the grain or against the intentions of the author because its ideological nature enables the researcher to probe the depth of the text's ideologies and to settle the meaning in the historical conditions that produce the text. Therefore, the ideological nature of the model of opposition allows it to tackle in the following concepts: the production of the literary text in relation to its historical conditions, literature as an ideological form and how it functions to valorize the capitalist ideology of the bourgeoisie via being a site for ideological conflict. Within this context, the dual ideological nature of literature is indicated in addition to a determination of a critic's role, the author's intentions added to his being a producer of the text rather than a creator.

I.iii.ii. Historical Conditions of Production of Literature

Once Macherey speaks of the "conditions of the possibility" of the literary work, he means the historical conditions that give birth to the work (49). "To know the conditions of a work is to define the real process of its constitution. To show how it is composed from a real diversity of elements which give it substance" (49.) That is to say, history exists in the literary work because it is the work's prerequisite of its production. He says, "This history is not in a simple external relation to the work: it is present in the works, in so far as the emergence of the work required this history, which is its only principle of reality and also supplies its means of expression" (94-5). Macherey confirms that literature is the result of its historical context which determines the literary forms that literature take. Those literary

forms change from time to time, keeping intertextual relations between them. Consequently, any literary work relates to the other works that come to existence before it. He explains:

> One of the essential reasons for this complexity is that the work never 'arrives unaccompanied'; it is always determined by the existence of other works, which belong to different areas of production. There is no first book, independent and absolutely innocent: novelty and originality, in literature as in other fields, are always defined by relationships. (100)

It is evident that he admits of the intertextual relations among the literary works and that a text is not separable from its historical moment of production.

I.iii.iii. Literature as an Ideological Form: Its Production and Function

But how history is found in the work of art needs more explanation. Literature relates to its historical conditions in an indirect way which is connected with its function as an "ideological form" as Macherey and Balibar claim upon developing Louis Althusser's "concept of the relationship between literature and ideology" (Miralles 12). They maintain this relation as follows:

> It is important to 'locate' the production of literary effects historically as part of the ensemble of social practices. For this to be seen dialectically rather than mechanically, it is important to understand that the relationship of 'history' to 'literature' is not like the relationship or 'correspondence' of two 'branches', but concerns the developing forms of an internal contradiction. Literature and history are not each set up externally to each other (not even the history of literature versus social and political history), but are in an intricate and connected relationship,
>
> the historical conditions of existence of anything like literature. Very generally, this internal relationship is what constitutes the definition of literature as an ideological form. (Macherey and Balibar 279)

Then, they give more explanation of how literature as an 'ideological form' serves the interests of the bourgeoisie by reproducing their capitalist ideology which is hegemonic.

> Ideological forms, to be sure, are not straightforward systems of 'ideas' and discourses', but are manifested through the workings and history of determinate practices in determinate social relations, what Althusser calls the Ideological State Apparatuses (ISA). The objectivity of literary production therefore is inseparable from given social practices in a given ISA. . . .
>
> First, then, literature is historically constituted in the bourgeois epoch as an ensemble of language – or rather of specific linguistic practices – inserted in general schooling process so as to provide appropriate fictional effects, thereby reproducing bourgeois ideology as the dominant ideology. (280)

That is, literature helps in the process of the ideological "interpellation", in Althusser's words, of the individuals to be subjects who accept the bourgeois ideology as natural, says Resch (215). In other meaning, it socializes the persons to the dominant ideology in order to take it for granted. That is why literature is "This imaginary solution" which "provokes from the reader an effect of *identification*, which is at the same time a process of ideological interpellation acting on the reader" (14).

This ideological function of literature works in the way explained by Macherey and Balibar. They also demonstrate that literature as a "production of fictions: or better still, the production of fiction-effects" presents an illusionary solutions to the "ideological contradictions" in a society (284-87). Those ideological conflicts are the result of class struggle. Class struggle, in its turn, is a consequence of "the contradictory class position" (284). Macherey gives an emphasis on this point of view, demonstrating the relation of ideology to the economic base in a society.

> For Marx and Engels, the study of an ideological phenomenon – that is to say, a conflict at the level of ideology – cannot be isolated from the movement at the economic level: not

because it is a different form of conflict, but because it is the conflict of this conflict. The composition of an ideology implies the relation of the ideological to the economic. (93)

In other words, there are class distinctions and stratifications which are accompanied by the ideological conflicts between social classes. In order that people accept such distinctions as natural, literature works to solve the matter in a fictive way by presenting other conflicts that can be solved within its fictional context. "That is, they can only appear in a form which provides their imaginary solutions, or better, which displaces them by substituting imaginary contradictions soluble" (Macherey and Balibar 284).

I.iii.iv. Dual Nature of a Literary Text: Unified in Form and Contradicted in Meaning

In order to give the above a solution and to replace the real contradictions among classes with other fictional ones, the text "realizes and masks in a series of compromises the conflict which constitutes it. It is this displacement of contradictions" (Macherey and Balibar 285). Such a literary solution of the real ideological conflicts at any historical moment by the process of masking comes up with an effect on the literary text itself. "The work is not what it appears to be" (Macherey 20). Although it seems as a unified entity in its form, it is not complete in its meaning because it has silences and contradictions.

> The structure of the work which makes it available to knowledge, is this internal displacement, this caesura, by which it corresponds to a reality that is also incomplete, which it shows without reflecting. The literary work gives the measure of a difference, reveals a determinate absence, resorts to an eloquent silence. (79)

I.iii.iv.i. The Unconscious of a Text

In elucidating this effect of history on the work, Lauer explains, "a literary text, by virtue of its form and its fiction, distances itself from its ideology and also by its silences or gaps in the text, by what is not said. These silences/gaps not only conceal but also expose ideological contradictions" (5). He adds, referring to the texts, "They are suppressions of its own unconscious content" (5). That is why Macherey draws the attention to the 'split' in the work as a result of the presence of history as the work's unconscious. He writes:

> Thus, it is not a question of introducing a historical explanation which is stuck on to the work from the outside. On the contrary, we must show a sort of splitting within the work: this division is *its* unconscious, in so far as it possesses one – the unconscious which is history, the play of history beyond its edges: this is why it is possible to trace the path which leads from the haunted to that which haunts it. (94)

I.iii.iv.ii. Text's Resistance of Its Ideology

The literary text tries to keep itself away from its ideology by having those gaps and inner contradictions in meaning. By this way, it resists its own ideology and keeps relation to it in the text's unconsciousness. Clarke reveals Macherey's opinion, "the literary text resists being entirely incorporated into the flow of ideology, functioning in an almost parodic manner to set into relief . . . the various forms taken by the dominant ideology" (8). This resistance is demonstrated in Macherey and Balibar as follows:

> The effect of the domination realized by literary production presupposes the presence of the dominated ideology within the dominating ideology itself. It implies the constant 'activation' of the contradiction and its attendant ideological risk – it thrives on this very risk which is the source of its power. That is why, dialectically, in bourgeois democratic society, the agent of the reproduction of ideology moves tendentially via the effects of literary 'style' and linguistic forms of compromise. Class struggle is not abolished in the

literary text and the literary effects which it produces. They bring about the reproduction, as dominant, of the ideology of the dominant class. (293)

Accordingly, both the bourgeois ideology and its opponent ideologies are present in the same literary text. Yet, the text, on its surface, appears to reproduce the bourgeois ideology in disguise, in the form of humanistic ideology, by means of its fictional devices that help to mask its bad face. Albeit, the oppositions in the meaning of the text are clues to the presence of an ideological conflict between the surface humanist ideology, and the dominant class ideology that the text tries to escape as explained previously.

I.iii.v. The Critic's Role

Regarding the role of the critic in manipulating the literary work, Macherey confines it in unraveling "the unconscious" of the work which is its "history" (94). He identifies the aim of criticism in finding out the truth. "It might be said that the aim of the criticism is to *speak the truth*, a truth not unrelated to the book, but not as the content of its expression. In the book, then, not everything is said, and for everything to be said we must await the critical 'explicit', which may actually be interminable" (83). Thereby, the critic has to perceive the incompleteness of the literary work and to put in his mind that "The recognition of the area of shadow in or around the work is the initial moment of criticism" (82). This area of shadow is the neglected area in the work that signifies its "incompleteness" and, hence, its history. "Conjecturally, the work has its margins, an area of incompleteness from which we can observe its birth and its production" (90). In detail, Macherey and Balibar define the task of the literary critic as that of the psychological analyst of the dream.

> Freud was the first to follow this procedure in his account of the dream-work and more generally in his method of analyzing the compromise formations of the unconscious; he

> defined what must be understood by the 'text' of the dream. . . . And he posited that the text of the dream was both the object of analysis and explanation simultaneously, through its own contradictions, the means of its own explanation: it is not just the manifest text, the narrative of the dream, but also all the 'free' associations (I.e., as one well knows, the forced associations, imposed by the psychic conflicts of the unconscious), the 'latent thoughts' for which the dream (or symptom) can serve as a pretext and which it arouses. (291)

By adopting Freud's psychological method, Macherey and Balibar give importance to both the surface or 'manifest' text and its unconscious as the target of the literary critic. Therefore, the critic must present an explanation of the surface text in order to differ with it by resorting to its unconscious. That is why Macherey writes that "Thus what we are obliged to call *the reverse of the work* begins to take shape: the conditions of its possibility which enable us to read it against the grain of its intended meaning" (230). Clarke, explaining Macherey, gives an elucidation that the critic must search for the presence of history in the text by revealing the "'un-said' which co-exists with the 'said' of the text. . . . It is in this way, and not through simplistic processes of overt reflection or expression, that history (irreducible to merely literary history) is latently present in the text" (9). Clarke goes on demonstrating this critical task, saying: "Macherey's view is that, given the nature of signification theorized by Saussure, the meaning of a literary text is derived neither from mirroring reality in some simplistic way, nor from emulating ideal literary forms, nor from expressing authorial intention" (8). Hence, the text must be read against the obvious intentions of the author. Thereby, the intended ideological line of the author in the text must be presented firstly. It is what Macherey calls the "ideological project" of the author (194). Then, to uncover the text's ideology the critic must concentrate on the gaps, silences and contradictions that mark the text's masking of its ideology. John Lye explains such a process, appealing to deconstruction, that there is a "signifying force in the gaps, margins,

figures, echoes, digressions, discontinuities, contradictions, and ambiguities of a text" (8). Then he adds the value of unraveling such points of aporia help in excavating the ideology that produces the text.

> Reading these texts in the deconstructive mode is, however, not a matter of 'decoding the message'; it is a matter of entering into the thoughtful play of contradiction, multiple reference, and the ceaseless questioning of conclusions and responses. The less a text deconstructs itself, the more we can and must deconstruct it, that is, show the structures of thought and assumption which ground it and the exclusions which make its meaning possible. (6)

These points of silence or contradiction are the clues that the work "can only be detached artificially from its ideological content . . . but this implies that it can in some manner be distinguished from this content" (Macherey 116). This is because the text keeps itself away from the ideology that constitutes it. But "This split within the work is the symptom of the presence of ideology, as though in an enclosure or cavity" (123). In a more practical way, it is the act of the text's constitutive literary devices that isolates itself from its real ideology. "Ideology has no place in the text except as it is confronted by strictly literary means" (116). What appears in the work is a fake version of that ideology.

I.iii.v. The Author as a Producer not a Creator

Macherey and Balibar decide that the author is not a creator of the literary work but a producer because he is affected by the same historical conditions that determine the production of his text (290). The author cannot control his work entirely, even if he intends to introduce it a certain way. The ideological conditions that surround him influence him and work freely away from his intentions.

> We know that a writer never reflects mechanically or rigorously the ideology which he represents, even if his sole intention is to represent it: perhaps because no ideology is

sufficiently consistent to survive the test of figuration. *And otherwise, his work would not be read*. The writer always reveals or writes from a certain *position* (which is not simply a subjective viewpoint) in relation to the ideological climate: he constructs a specific image of ideology which is not exactly identical with ideology as it is given, whether it betrays it, whether it puts it in question, or whether it modifies it. (Macherey 195 emphasis added)

Accordingly, the role of the critic is defined again in knowing "what the work is made of" (195). That is why the author is no more creative. Both the author and his literary text are productions of the dominant ideology that characterizes their historical context.

. . . is a material agent, an intermediary inserted in a particular place and under conditions he has not created, in submission to contradictions which by definition he cannot control, through a particular social division of labour" which are "characteristic of the ideological superstructure of bourgeois society, which individuates him. (Macherey and Balibar 290)

In short, the author has both apparent intentions that result in the text's production and unconscious motives generated by historical context that cause the gaps and contradictions in the text. Therefore,

the 'intentions' of the author what he expresses whether in the text itself (integrated within the 'surface' narrative) or alongside the text (in his declarations or even in his 'unconscious' motives as sought out by literary psychoanalysis)" are important in deciding on the kinds of technical methods that he uses. (290)

This means that the author makes use of certain technical methods to present his text. He intends to use them to fulfill the requirements of the genre or the form he decided to present. At the same time, his unconscious motives that are determined by the historical conditions of the production of his text provoke him unconsciously to use other techniques that oppose and contradict his intentions. Those textual devices of which he is unaware, help to unravel the unconscious of the text. That is to say, there are contradictions in the content of text.

II. Analysis

To get to the heart of the author, this part of the study examines "The Bowl of Beans" from *Folk Tales of Egypt* (1993), using Macherey and Balibar's model of opposition.

II.i. "The Bowl of Beans"

II.i.i. the Surface Structure of the Tale

By "The Bowl of Beans", Johnson-Davies initiates his folktales about Egypt where he introduces a simple story about the conflict between good and evil in which goodness is rewarded by the end. "Folktales look for what makes people 'good' such as kindness and bravery. They also explore what makes people 'bad' " (Barker 11). In this context, Johnson-Davies celebrates the positive attitudes and behaviors as favorable whereas rejects the passive ones by virtue of the happy end for the hero and the sad one for the villain. Apparently, the story, in the surface text, belongs ideologically to the wide movement of Humanism that maintains ethical values. Von Wright defines "humanism" as "denoting an attitude to life which emphasizes the autonomy and dignity of man and the value of 'humane' relationships between men" (5). The story revolves around a happy poor farmer who is a family man. His happiness along with his family evokes jealousy of a very rich man who inhabits a palace beside the farmer's hut by the sea. Thanks to the rich man's bad recommendation, he loses his work in the farm. He tries to find a work but he cannot. After becoming penniless with only a bowl out of its beans, he sits by the shore of the sea. A captain with a boat comes and hires the farmer to help on the boat as one of its crew in return for food. In the open sea, a storm hits the boat and the farmer finds himself on a remote island. He is brought by armed

men to the chief of the island, a situation ends in giving his bowl to the chief for covering his head whereas the chief gives him a great amount of precious gemstones with which he is returned homeland. Upon knowing such news, the rich man asked him about his story concerning the fortune. Imitating the farmer by collecting good food and precious things, the rich man presents these valuable things to the chief of the island after sailing to him. Then, the chief accepts his presents and gives him the bowl. The rich man returns home disappointed and loser. In such a story, the farmer wins a fortune because he is good, satisfied with his life, honest, and forgiving and behaves modestly. Such traits and doings that are compatible with humanistic values and behavior appear in the context of the story. He is a good person who loves his hard life, "He had no land of his own to farm" (BB 2). However, he leads a happy life with his loved family whom he treats well. "Under the stars he would tell his children stories. . . . Sometimes, his children would show him what they had studied at school or the lovely shells that had been thrown up by the sea" (3). He is also content with his simple life so when he buys a bowl of beans for the rest of his money, he depends on God for his life to come; "After that, all we can do is rely upon God to provide for us" (6). Even when he becomes rich, he lives in his same humble hut (11). Although he loses his work because of the rich man's speaking against him to his employer, he forgives the former. "In the end", the rich man "was able to persuade the landowner to dismiss the peasant" (4-5). His forgiveness and honesty is evident when he is back from his forced journey to the island because of the storm; he tells the rich man about his true story without hiding anything even his fortune. Once, the rich man sees the famer happy again, "He paid him a visit, and the peasant, because he was a simple man, told the rich man how he had gone on a boat and had nearly drowned" and how he has got the jewels from the chief (11).

Such good traits are contrasted with the rich man's evil ones; envy, lying and greed. He envies the poor peasant for his happiness. So he intends to impede such happiness by telling the landowner, for whom the farmer works, lies about the latter. "Now it happened that the rich man was a friend of the big landowner who employed the peasant. It was therefore easy for him to make up some stories against the peasant and to show that he was a bad man" (4). As a result, the farmer is fired from his work. The rich man's greed is shown when he asks for more money in spite of his richness. Hence, he makes a voyage to the island, imitating the farmer and waits for the same results of getting jewels as a grant from the chief of the island. Once he hears the story of the farmer, "Of course the rich man's eyes sparkled with greed at the sight of such wealth, and he immediately decided that he too should pay a visit to this island" (11).

II.i.ii. Incompleteness of the Tale and Its Historical Unconscious

The clear-cut simple structure of the folktale may help in hiding the real intentions and ideology of the author behind its artificial naivety. Malik emphasizes such simplicity, "The world of the folktale is a relatively unambiguous one as far as the definition of role-structure is concerned. The characters are one-dimensional, uncompromisingly good or evil, and the action unfolds itself in a totally predictable manner" (169). Following the procedures of the model of opposition, such humanistic analysis of this simple-structured folktale is refuted once deconstruction is applied to it with the company of the Marxist reconstruction of the story. Fissures, gaps, silences, and contradictions in this short tale are symptoms and indicators of the presence of another opposing ideology in the unconscious of the text. Dwelling on the story, many points of aporia or fissures, in Jack Derrida's expression, appear. In the tale, the author narrates, "Once upon a time there lived a peasant and his wife and children in a small hut on the sea shore" (BB 2). Such

exposition of the farmer's settlement by the sea shore contradicts what is known about Egypt as an agricultural country where most of its fields lie alongside the Nile and its two branches. Historically, England has colonized Egypt for its raw materials needed for the factories after the Industrial Revolution in Europe. Foregrounding Egypt as a desert rather than an agricultural land masks the ex-colonizer's past intentions of exploiting Egypt. Mentiply confirms the mutual commercial relations between Egypt as an agricultural country and Britain as an industrial one, saying that Britain's "trade in Egyptian raw materials such as cotton, in exchange for British manufactured goods increased rapidly from the 1850s – no doubt spurred on by Britain's decision to adopt free trade as official economic policy from 1846" (1). The interpretation of this point of contradiction fits with the imperialistic ambition of the capitalist societies and their dreams of invasion and exploitation of the colonized. To add, masking the historical truth includes also a falsification of the reader's consciousness so that western children see Egypt as distorted by being just a bare land, Sahara, keeping their reverence of England.

The second point of contradiction relates to the characterization of the farmer as both penniless and happy in opposition to the sad life of the rich man. This a fallacy. "He had no land of his own to farm so he had to work for a rich man who owned many fields" (BB 2). Although he is very poor, he leads a happy familial life. The rich man who lives in a palace full of servants and luxuries leads a life of anger and quarrels with his wife. "Yet all that could be heard in this palace was the sound of his angry voice calling to the servants or the shouts of him and his wife as they quarreled" (4). Juxtaposition of happiness with poorness on the one hand, and sadness, and richness on the other hand orients the western child to make connections between the two opposing states. Such link concurs with capitalist class societies in their valorization of class differences as natural and it is also a

part of the ruling class strategies to keep the status-quo of class distinction in society. At the time it reflects some Egyptian religious thoughts, values and behaviors about satisfaction with one's place in life, it foregrounds class stratification in Egypt at a time it emerges as a capitalist society since the rule of Sadat, "capitalism in Sadat's reign" (Arif 20). This connection articulates the hidden capitalist ideology of both the British author and of the Egyptian society at the time of the author's stay in Egypt. Capitalism in Egypt as above begins from the seventies up till now. By means of its unconscious ideology, the text reveals a time and a place for the fictional incidents.

In spite of the generic nature of the folktale as timeless as Smith and Wiese indicate, this tale specifies its time by means of many plot devices like the "hut" where the farmer lives, his children's "school" as presented in the tale, the boat of the captain who hires the farmer, and the "pretty pieces of coloured glass" given to the farmer by the chief of the island (Smith and Wiese 70; BB 1, 2, 7, 11). The anachronism of such items where there is a contradiction about the historical period when farmers live in humble huts, not houses, when a captain is in charge of a boat and not a ship, and, when children are joined for schools in formal education in addition to the "glass". All these element do not belong to the same period of time. Huts and boats are old-fashioned whereas a captain, glass, and a school connote to a more modern period. To interpret such a temporal contradiction and disjuncture, vocabularies of "school" "captain" and "glass" signify the British and Egyptian modern reality and the split of the tale from the Egyptian folkloric vocabularies of "Once upon a time" as it means in the remote unidentified past besides its separation from its place where the tale includes only the word "there" to denote to an indefinite place. At the same time, it signifies Egypt in the second half of the twentieth century as a modern country that is distorted by the author to be old-

fashioned and backward country where people live in huts and sail in boats. Perhaps the author uses modern terms known for western children in their own societies and then, denies such modernism for Egypt. This is another falsification of consciousness included as a part of the mechanisms of socialization of children to the bourgeois or capitalist ideology.

Another point of aporia lies in the spatial juxtaposition of the humble hut of the farmer and the palace of the rich man. Johnson-Davies writes, "Along the sea shore on which the peasant had built his simple hut there was a great palace that a rich man had built" (BB 4). The rich man can hear and see what happens in the farmer's hut and his life style. "From one of the many windows of his palace the rich man was able to look across at the simple home of the peasant and his wife. He would see how happy his *neighbors* were" (4 emphasis added). Their neighborhood does not make sense and is illogical, particularly that the rich live near each other not near the poor. They are neighbors, breaking with the demographical distribution of population in Egypt or even in Britain as a target community of readership. The place of the tale is located not though affirmation of neighborhood but by means of denial of it in the point of contradiction. The surface structure of the tale decreases and camouflages the stark differences of life styles and settlements of both the rich and the poor so that class hierarchies are leveled to enhance acceptance of one's place in life and society under capitalism. Notably, within the frame of feudalism supposed by the tale, the feudal lord, who is responsible for his farmers, their huts scatter around his mansion, but once the farmer is dismissed from the service of the feudalist, he is excluded from his hut as discussed by Gary Day (139-140). This does not occur to the farmer who keeps his hut which indicates that he is out of the feudal period and belongs to capitalism.

Once the rich man says bad things about the farmer, the landowner fires him (BB 4-5). Although the farmer is a "good worker and will always find a job" in his wife's words to him, he has doubts of finding a work; "'I hope you are right,' said the peasant sadly, but deep in his heart he knew how difficult it would be" (5). In the course of the tale, what the man expects comes true. The discrepancy between the farmer's and his wife's expectations associate with the rich man's intrusion in this matter where he persuades "the landowner to dismiss the peasant" (5). Being a good worker is to be a guarantee for keeping his first work and even finding another work, but he has suspicions because deep in his heart he knows that the rich man with his status controls the ideological apparatuses along with his class members. The bourgeois control of media or press appears also in the farmer's search for another work for two weeks (See Althusser 12) . "The peasant spent the next two weeks going round to all the farmers in the area offering to work for them" (BB 6). However, his pursuits are in vain because of the rumors spread about his dismissal. "As he feared, there was no work anywhere, especially after people learned that the big landowner had dismissed him" (6). Shortly, the influence of the capitalist class deprives him of having a work chance as a result of their use of media as one of the ISA in Althusser's terms (12). Because the text reveals Egypt's agricultural nature in its recurrent words of 'lands', 'farmers', and 'landowner', capitalism is expressed in the form of feudalism though in the latter the relationship between the feudalist and his peasants differs from the one represented in the tale that relates more to a capitalist system. One notices that the author makes use of the 'landowner' instead of 'landlord'; 'owner' relates to capitalism where 'lord' belongs to feudalism. Differing from "Folktales that originated during the period of feudalism contain figure as a tsar, tsarevich, knight, and king" the tales' characters affiliate to capitalism where capital defines the connections between them, Pomerantseva

indicates (4). "During the period of capitalism, the folk narrators turned increasingly to the themes of money and trade. Folktales expressed the contrast between wealth and poverty and to a greater extent, contained motifs of class antagonism" (4). Day differentiates between the position of the person in feudalism and capitalism, referring that with the "economic individualism" and dehumanization of the other in a capitalist society, the individual who was "integrated" in the feudalist system becomes "isolated" in the capitalist one (140). That is, the feudal lord is responsible for his farmers unlike the capitalist's behavior towards his workers. Hence, the term "man" is better be used in such society than the term gentleman of feudalism (140). That why, the gentleman "relates" the person to himself while the capitalist describes the person in relation to the others and to the interest (139-140). In many folktales, the hero is outcast from those around him because of social status, poverty, or "deformity" such as that of the animal husband, Kimball demonstrates (561). The farmer's sense of being isolated and outcast without money or work crystallizes capitalism. Yet, there is a point that deserves mentioning; rejection of a good working farmer and firing him from work besides the rich man's promotion of the tales towards his attainment of a good fortune may reveal that he is a probable capitalist rival for both the rich man and the big landowner.

The exchange that occurs between the farmer and the chief of the island is illogical in terms of the value disparity between the bowl and the jewels. The matter is not of mutual presents or gifts between two generous peoples. It has to do with commercial deal or exchange. The conversation between both of them runs so

> "And what is that thing you have on your head?" asked the Chief.
> "It is nothing but a wooden bowl," said t he peasant.
> "And why do you wear it on your head?" asked the Chief.

The peasant thought quickly, then said: "O Chief, I wear it all the time: it protects me from the heat of the sun when it is hot and also protects me from the rain," and the peasant took the bowl and passed it to the Chief.

It seems that the people of the tribe had never seen a wooden bowl before. The Chief held it in his hand and looked at it admiringly.

"It is yours," said the peasant, for he was by nature a generous man.

The Chief smiled at him and said: "And I, in my turn, must give you a present." (BB 8-10)

In the quotation, the farmer lies to the chief about the function of the bowl. He says to him the bowl keeps him away from the heat of the Sun and from the rain. Why does the farmer lie? It does not cause him any harm if the farmer says the truth about the bowl of beans. Significantly, what he presents to the chief is not the bowl of beans, but is factually an invention that is valuable for the chief and suitable for use in his environment. It signifies the manufacture of raw materials to be a protective hat. The bowl becomes a commodity that has a value estimated according to its importance in the process of offer and demand. The exchange takes place not because the farmer is "generous" but for being a clever merchant who is by means of his invention he moves from a lower class worker up to a bourgeois merchant. The chief accepts the invention "And I, in my turn, must give you a present" (10). The present is valuable jewels that the chief has a lot of them in his island. Those jewels are his capital which is given in return for the farmer's bowl. "'Take some of these pretty pieces of coloured glass for your children to play with,' said the chief" (11). The author makes an exposition of the "coloured glass" by narrating that the farmer is enchanted by the beautiful jewels which he knows well and is able to name them in addition to his knowledge of their market, as are to be sold for kings and princes. "The peasant *of course* had never seen such magnificent jewels but he knew they were rubies and emeralds – jewels for the kings and princes" (10). He is an expert in jewelry. Such a commercial exchange is reinforced

by the interpretation of the next point of contradiction that dwells on his journey to and from the island.

There is no information about how the farmer knows his way back to his homeland though he is drifted in the open water and is supposed not to know where he is or how to get back, and so does the rich man in his voyage to the same place. The farmer must be disoriented within such context "When the boat was out in the open sea a sudden storm broke out. Several of the crew were swept into the sea and drowned but the peasant was lucky enough to find a plank of wood and eventually arrived at a small island" (8). His arrival at the island seems logical. But once he is brought to the chief, he is seen as a threat; "And who are you?" asked the Chief in a not very friendly voice" (8). He has doubts about the intentions and purposes of the farmer who is "surrounded by some men carrying spears" (8). The chief is afraid of the outer invasion represented in the farmer's advent. So he looks at him in an unfriendly way. After the processing of their commercial deal, the farmer is sent back to his homeland. Logically, he is not drifted by the storm lest he cannot recognize his way back. "The Chief then ordered his men to take the peasant back to the mainland in one of their canoes" (11). The men of the island maybe know also where his homeland is because they also are capable to get back to their island. Apparently, they are not isolated from his place so that some kind of commercial relationships already exist.

There is a confusion regarding the farmer's knowledge of the jewels' names and values. The author admits of the farmer's expertise about the jewels and estimates their values as suitable for kings and princes. "The peasant of course had never seen such magnificent jewels but he *knew* they were rubies and emeralds – jewels for kings and princes" (10 emphasis added). This refers to his knowledge of the jewels unlike his later situation when he gets back home. "When he reached home, went

immediately to a merchant, who told him that these red and green jewels were valuable rubies and emeralds" (11). This excerpt implies his ignorance of the jewels' names. The text masks the truth of his knowledge so that hiding his true identity as a clever merchant who can recognize and identifies the value of the jewels.

Moreover, two points of contradiction are connected. After he is back home, he dwells in his same hut without buying a great house or a palace. This is to put an assertion on a man's satisfaction with his place in the social ladder in a capitalist society. In particular, clinging to his simple hut is accompanied by happiness with which the folktale begins. The rich man "saw the peasant and his wife once again happy" (11). This is linked with another inconsistency where the farmer answers all the curious questions of the rich man about the former's journey to get his fortune. At the same time as previously referred to, the rich man has talked dirty about him in order to make the farmer lose his work for the landowner. "He paid him a visit, and the peasant, because he was a simple man, told the rich man" about all his journey and its good consequences on his life (11). The one who distorts the farmer beforehand is supposed to be able now for the same reasons to harm him again even to imprison him for having such jewels. However, he imitates him step by step in his journey to the island. Such situation can be explained in that the farmer who seems forgiving and simple is in fact a merchant who gets wealth out of merchandizing. He aims at showing the rich man his capital power. Preston refers to the bourgeois interest in collecting money which determines his place in the social pyramid; "So, the bourgeois seeks both accumulation of wealth and high social station" (27). That is why the farmer seems self-confident and feels secure from the harm of the rich man. As a result of the rich man's inquiry, he makes a journey for exploring other markets for goods. "Of course the rich man's eyes

sparkled with greed at the sight of such wealth and he immediately decides that he too should pay a visit to this island" (BB 11). Once he meets the chief, the latter admires the delicious food that he brings for him. "'And now,' said the Chief, 'I must give you something *in return* for your generous gifts. To you I shall make a present of the *thing I value most*" (11 emphasis added). Such a thing is the bowl. This signifies that the bowl deserves to be exchanged with the food he brings to the chief. The transfer of the bowl between the farmer, the chief, and the rich man marks the circulation of the capital and commodity.

II.i.iii. Historical Truth of the Folktale as Determinant of Time and Place

After unfolding the ideology of the tale through its points of contradiction, capitalism is proved not to be imposed on the text's interpretation, but on the contrary, it finds justifications to reconstruct a more commonsensical meaning of the tale that relates to reality. "Folktales about everyday life often have a strong social orientation; the hero is usually a poor peasant, worker, or soldier, and the setting is one familiar to the narrator. . . .This however does not deprive folktale of a link with reality" (Pomerantseva 4). Away from the surface story with its humanist ideology, capital relations govern the relationships between the characters in the tale. Capitalism marks each incident throughout the story. The tale presents the story of two peoples who belong to different social classes: the capitalist class which is the bourgeoisie, and that of the lower people in the social hierarchy. Those two peoples, the rich man and the farmer, are in continuous conflict each for his own interests. According to Marx "There are, then, essentially two classes in all societies: the owners of the means of production and the workers" in (qtd. in Marger 193). There is nothing told about the properties or the field of work about the rich man. But his class is determined by his relationship with the landowner to whom the farmer works. In the tale, "Now it happened that the rich

man was a friend of the big landowner who employed the peasant….In the end he was able to persuade the landowner to dismiss the peasant" (BB 4-5). The rich man seems to own the fields, as a capitalist not as a feudal lord as explained beforehand, or to have any other business as the context of the story suggests. The farmer is a working class person versus the capitalist, the rich man. In his commentary on Marx's demonstration of social class, Marger mentions that this binary classification is applicable to all societies along the history where there is always ". . . two opposing classes, whether masters and slaves in slave societies or lords and serfs in feudal societies" (194). He adds: "In capitalist societies, these two classes are the bourgeoisie, or the capitalist class, and the proletariat, or industrial working class." Besides such general stratification, the bourgeoisie is internally divided into ". . . a number of different elements: merchants, traders, businessmen, shopkeepers and professional groups such as lawyers, doctors and teachers" (95-96). Hence, the kind of business that the rich man owns is certainly one of these businesses. The conflict between the rich man and the farmer is masked in the surface text's characterization of the rich man as jealous of the farmer. The subtext with its clues suggests that the reverse is the most reasonable. That is the poor envies the rich for his possessions and properties. Fearing of revolt against him, the rich man causes the farmer to lose his work and hence to lose his power as represented in the tale. "And so one evening the peasant arrived back home to his supper and told his wife that he was no longer working for the landowner" (BB 5). The tale in its deep text presents two business voyages to explore new markets and goods. Upon changing his work, the farmer moves from the working class to the bourgeoisie where he works in the crew of a ship, not a boat as above explained, whose captain hires him. In his new job, he has a journey where he is back from with a wealth. His wealth of jewels protects him from the harm of the rich man.

That is why, he reveals to the latter all the secrets of his business journey where he adds to his skills by being an inventor of the new use of the bowl (8). His deal with the chief of the island provokes the business interest of the rich man has a business journey to the same island. Another deal occurs between the rich man and the chief of the island.

The subtext foregrounds also the formal education of the farmer's children in addition to the social class interests between the individuals of the same class and the use of mass media as one of the ideological state apparatuses. The children of the farmer go to school. The author narrates, "Sometimes his children would show him what they had studied at school" (3). Notably, the farmer's children "show him" their lessons and homework which suggest that the farmer is educated. Education which starts in Egypt since the rule of Mohamed Ali, takes a formal shape under the rule of Khedive Isma'il, refers Yousef (109). Moreover, "Historians, in turn, have depicted the educational transformations of the late 19th century as the center of a host of social and political changes, most notably the creation of 'the first intelligentsia of modern Egypt'" (109). This new class represents the "'new elite,' the educated strata who then populated the narratives of history as burgeoning middle class" that includes "academics, stalwarts of domesticity, nationalists, and the supporters of revolution" (109). Farmers do not belong to the middle class or the bourgeoisie. Furthermore, the middle class educated "effendis" appear in the Egyptian scene "by late 1920s" (Arif 14). As a result the time of the tale is defined to be in modern Egypt, taking into consideration the cultural purpose of Johnson-Davies to represent in his tale Egyptian culture and its constituents.

Social class interests appear between the rich man and the landowner as members of the bourgeoisie and their blockages against the working class and their use of mass media for their good. Once the rich man talks bad to the latter against the

farmer, the landowner dismisses him. Class interests govern the links between people. Owing to the firing of the farmer, the news spreads among other landowners so that no one may hire the farmer, a case representing the work of mass media. In this connection, Althusser explains class conflicts and the capitalist's power lobbies against "the proletariat" or the working class.

> The State Apparatus, which defines the State as a force of repressive execution and intervention 'in the interests of the ruling classes in the class struggle conducted by the bourgeoisie and its allies against the proletariat, is quite certainly the State, and quite certainly defines its basic 'function'. (10)

"The Bowl of Beans" in its cultural and ideological content specifies a time and a place for the tale as its historical unconscious though it appears timeless and placeless in its surface structure. In the tale, time is not specified where the writer begins with "Once upon a time" (BB 2). Similarly, the place where the incidents occur is undefined when the once upon a time is followed by "there lived a peasant and his wife and children in a small hut on the sea shore" (2). Although the description of the scene is presented, there is no mention of the country or certain people to identify a certain place. It is just a "hut", "sea shore", "a palace" and an unknown island. The tale expresses no time nor place in its direct or surface structure. To differ with such a case, as above indicated, the masked ideology articulated in the tale expresses modern culture with its capitalist ideology. Thanks to the fact that folktales have common characteristics "owing to similar cultural and historical conditions," they also have differences associate with each nation; "they possess national characteristics and reflect the way of life of a giving people, its work, everyday life, and natural surroundings" (Pomerantseva 4). All what they reflect occur under the umbrella of a culture's ideology. Capitalism in Egypt is initiated under the rule of Sadat as referred beforehand (Arif 20). This signifies that the tale belongs to the time since the reign of Sadat and beyond within the era of

modern Egypt. Significantly, in England, the native country of the Johnson-Davies, the bourgeoisie dominated the whole British scene with its capitalism to mark the culture and ideology of the English people in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as stated in an essay entitled "Dominant Ideology" (2). Capitalism as the culture's ideology in England since the eighteenth century ascribes time to the tale where Johnson-Davies, the British Orientalist, is a twentieth century writer (Ahram online 1). Both Egypt and England are capitalist societies dominated by the same ideology foregrounded in the tale though the writer's text shows some aspect of feudalism concerning the landowners and peasants which connote to Egypt in the first half of the twentieth century. Accordingly, the tale suggests to belong to Egypt more than to England, defining a place for "The Bowl of Beans" especially that the writer lives in Egypt for a very long period of his life. On these grounds, the tale tends to belong to Egypt in the last thirty years of the twentieth century which is the place and time of its production though it concurs with the British culture's capitalist ideology in the modern age. To put it another way, the tale carries the capitalist ideology as an Egyptian cultural marker to be presented to the western children, realizing the cultural message of the writer and concurring with the western culture's capitalism so as to consolidate the cultural context or the historical conditions of the tale's production. What Kimball calls for as "an interesting further study to determine how much folktale collections for children have imposed a Eurocentric viewpoint when telling the tales of other cultures" finds part of its answer in our present study (560).

Conclusion

This paper aims at unraveling the historical unconscious of "The Bowl of Beans" by Johnson-Davies, so that to determine the time and place of narration of the tale

by appealing to the historical moment of its production. It seeks to decide on the historical context of the tale whether it is Egyptian where the writer lives for a long time or it associates with his native society's culture. This is a reaction to the generic nature of folktales as timeless and placeless in addition to the writer's intended cultural message of introducing the rich culture of the East to the West to know more about that unknown part of the world, using the folktale as a folkloric genre oriented mainly to the children. The writer announces that he targets the western children to know more about the easterners. Both the folktale generic timelessness and placelessness, and Johnson-Davies' message provoke the researcher to investigate the nature of that tale as a text, using the model of opposition that deals with literature as an ideological form. This helps to achieve the aims of the study by unraveling the ideological content of the tale in order to affiliate it to its historical contextual culture.

The theoretical section presents a survey of the generic nature of folktale in general concerning two of its characteristics: the tale's estrangement from time and place which emphasizes its textuality or ahistoricism , and its role in a society as both carrier and transmitter of its culture which asserts the tale's contextual nature and historicism. It is noticeable that scholars speak about those characteristics as compatible without any contradiction. Yet, folktale's role in the process of socialization of children to a society's culture is undisputable, confirming its contextuality. This concurs with the intended cultural message of Johnson-Davies, the writer, as an Orientalist who admires the East's culture and sophisticated thought so that he wants to transmit to the western child. The last part of the theoretical section is devoted to introduce the main conceptions of the model of opposition, defining the nature of literary texts, their ideologies, and relation to the historical context that produce them. The role of both the author as a producer and

the critic as an excavator of the paradoxical ideologies within the one text are explained.

The analytical study aims at applying the model of opposition to "The Bowl of Beans" in order to realize the aims of the study. The approach proceeds in three steps: the first one lies in presenting the story at its face value where it deals with the Humanistic conflict between the good and the evil as its main theme. Then, such humanistic apparent interpretation is deconstructed by means of exploring the points of aporia or opposition within the text of the tale. At these points, the Humanistic interpretation is proved faulty. At the same time of deconstructing the tale, a Marxist reconstruction projects itself to be more logical and realistic for it relates the tale to its historical context. Accordingly, the tale appears as a site for ideological struggle which in turn resolves the mystery of contradictory nature of the folktale concerning its time and place. "The Bowl of Beans" seems at its surface face as a representation of the conflict between the good embodied in the farmer and the evil incorporated with the rich man. The incidents of the tale appear at its most part as a justification of such conflict though they are wrecked at some points that the Humanistic interpretation cannot meet. Such points of contradiction open the text to an unlimited number of interpretations, one of them is the Marxist where it answers the questions evoked by the contradictions. The good-evil connection between the farmer and the rich man in the Humanist or surface interpretation of the tale is rather a relation of conflict between two individuals who belong to different social classes and are involved in a struggle for money and commercial interests. At first the farmer stands for the working class and the rich man represents the bourgeoisie. Through class struggle and social mobilization, the farmer becomes a bourgeois and a capitalist just as the latter. Capital and interest relations and commodity govern their relationship. Such disparity between the Humanistic

and the Marxist interpretations have to do with the nature of the folktale as both ahistorical and historical at a time. Time and place, which are unidentified by the use of "Once upon a time" and "there was", are situated in the tale by its affiliation to a certain society at a definite time of its history. The tale is proved to articulate in its deep structure the capitalist ideology that marks the dominant ideology of both the Egyptian and the British societies in modern times though it seems to belong more to the Egyptian's rather than the latter. The initiation of capitalism to Egypt takes place upon the Rule of Sadat in second half of the twentieth century, the time when the writer lives in Egypt and when the above tale is retold in 1993. However, the writer is a conformist with capitalism as belonging to a country that witnessed the rise of the bourgeoisie long time ago, a case that paves the way for Egyptian capitalism to appear naturally in the tale, as similar to that of the writer. That is, there is no conflict between the writer's ideology and that of the Egyptian society, both are the same. What the tale presents is the capitalist ideology within the frame of an Egyptian folktale. As a result, time and place are defined in the second half of the twentieth century Egypt rather than eighteenth and twentieth century England. At any case, it appears that the cultural message of the writer comes true by presenting the Egyptian culture's capitalist ideology to western children who are socialized to their society's capitalist culture.

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