An Online Academic Journal of
Interdisciplinary & transcultural topics in Humanities
& social sciences

Designed by Abeer Azmy& Omnia Raafat

TJHSS

BUC Press House

Transcultural Journal for Humanities and Social Sciences (TJHSS) is a journal committed to disseminate a new range of interdisciplinary and transcultural topics in Humanities and social sciences. It is an open access, peer reviewed and refereed journal, published by Badr University in Cairo, BUC, to provide original and updated knowledge platform of international scholars interested in multi-inter disciplinary researches in all languages and from the widest range of world cultures. It's an online academic journal that offers print on demand services.

TJHSS Aims and Objectives:
To promote interdisciplinary studies in the fields of Languages, Humanities and Social Sciences and provide a reliable academically trusted and approved venue of publishing Language and culture research.

Transcultural Journal for Humanities & Social Sciences (TJHSS)

Email:
tamerlokman@gmail
.com

Prof. Hashim Noor

Professor of Applied
Linguistics
Taibah University,
KSA
Email:
prof.noor@live.com

Prof Alaa Alghamdi
Professor of English
Literature
Taibah University,
KSA

Email:
alaaghamdi@yahoo.
com

Table of Contents

BETWEEN WORLDS: NARRATING GLOBALISATION, IDENTITY AND ALIENATION IN LEILA ABOULELA'S SHORT STORIES

Joy Nwiyi
Department of English and Literary Studies Federal University of Lafia, Nasarawa State, Nigeria
Email: joymips@gmail.com

Monica Udoette
Department of English Akwa Ibom State University Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria
Email: msudoette@yahoo.com

Abstract

The possibilities that come with globalisation and the world becoming a global entity are numerous. Some of these raise intense discourse and questions on the subject of cultural and personal identity; alienation and the expectations that these advocate or threaten in contemporary times. Globalisation as a reality of modern times is replete with paradoxes that provide freedom and limitations ultimately for individuals and nations who negotiate these inevitable realities and spaces that come with the prevailing image of a globalised world. The paper argues that the realities of migration, could be contextualised within the complexities and contradictions of globalisation. Two of Leila Aboulela's short stories are studied in this paper as transnational narratives that recreate immigrant characters and voice cultural and personal identity that confront perceived homogeneity associated with globalisation. The narratives reflect immigrants living between worlds, the conflict engendered by difference and the attempts they make to articulate Self or assimilate the Other in very diverse space(s) away from 'home' and familiar realities. The study concludes therefore that, Aboulela's narratives attest to cultural gaps, conflicted identity, imbalance and the yearnings for a distinct identity as critical.

Keywords: globalisation, culture, identity, Self, Other

Introduction: Why Leila Aboulela Writes

In their seminal work, *The Empire Writes Back*, the authors speak extensively on the potency of marginality in the creative process. They propose that marginality can become an "unprecedented source of creative energy" (Bill Ashcroft et al 12). This proposition resonates through the fiction of Leila Aboulela in great measure. Aboulela is a Sudanese immigrant in Britain. She was born in Cairo and spent her early years up until her mid- twenties in Khartoum before she relocated to Aberdeen, Scotland in the United Kingdom in 2012. Aboulela has since then lived outside Sudan. She writes her narratives in English and makes up the growing numbers of modern Anglophone Arab writers who write their works in English. She has authored five novels, numerous short stories and radio plays. Some of her major published works include: *The Translator* (1999)*, Coloured Lights* (2001), *The Minaret* (2005), *Lyric Alley* (2011)*, Kindness of Enemies* (2015)*, Elsewhere, Home* (2018)*, Bird Summons* (2019), and others.

Perhaps for obvious reasons, Aboulela is fixated with migration, alienation, the significance of religio-cultural perceptions and biases that easily thrive between the Self and Others like herself who migrate to world centres and struggle to make sense of their existence, question the difference and mutual misunderstanding of others even in a globalised

world. The inexplicable forces and processes of globalisation seem to appeal to 'local' identities and peoples. These forces also threaten boundaries and commitment to indigenous ways that are particularly significant to communities and individuals and foster the emergence of new worlds and identities that must be grappled. Aboulela's narratives highlight the impact of transnational relations and the impact of globalisation on identities as a significant feature of globalisation in modern metropolis.

Globalisation as a concept is used frequently in the social sciences and probably even more frequently in contemporary times considering its impact and significance. Sasykova Raikhan et al propose that globalisation is quite a popular term and it is used in referring to social processes that influence the social and economic development of the world today. They state that "Globalization describes the acceleration of the integration of nations into the global system" (9). Mauro Guillen argues that when viewed from different perspectives, globalisation is a "contradictory and puzzling process" and it must be approached with open-mindedness considering its consequences (238).

According to Mudasir Habib, conceptualising globalisation is difficult since it "has come to refer to a gamut of variables interlocking and trends so much so that once the term "Globalization' is mentioned it evokes a lot of passion and emotion" (4). Habib states that the concept is also perceived differently depending on which side of the globe an individual occupies or nation. Consequently, in Western Europe and North America globalisation is readily conceptualised as the robust economic prospect available for developing the world and improving the quality of socio-economic life people, usually with the West at the centre of the globalisation process. On the other hand, the Third World perceives globalisation as a deliberate and destructive procedure by the West to enforce its hegemony that fosters diverse forms of inequality of Others (Habib 14). Consequently, "we can say that globalization, integrating and fragmenting the world, uniformity and localization, increased material prosperity and deepening misery and homogenization and hegemony, is a complex process and phenomenon of antinomies and dialectics" (Habib 14).

The paper argues that the realities of migration could be contextualised within the complexities and contradictions of globalisation. We read Leila Aboulela's short stories as transnational narratives that recreate immigrant characters and voice cultural and personal identities that confront perceived homogeneity associated with globalisation. We therefore argue that, Aboulela's narratives attest to cultural gaps, conflicted identity, imbalance and the yearnings for a distinct identity and Self as critical. The narratives reflect immigrants living between worlds, the conflict engendered by difference and the attempts they make to articulate Self or assimilate the Other in very diverse space(s) away from 'home' and familiar realities.

In Aboulela's narratives, religion is employed by her characters as a potent means of navigating, overcoming cultural hierarchies and existing as global citizen while minimising the damage to personal identity. Thus, her characters seem to develop beyond the overwhelming impact of western ways and find succour in incorporating Islamic values with new ways of existence without necessarily replacing home (Idris Saba and Sadia Zulfiqar 234). This position also attests that the devotion to religion is a significant means through which Muslim immigrants like Aboulela's characters ward off the frustration of alienation suffered in foreign metropolis. (Yousef Awad 74). Thus, "Aboulela's fiction depicts the lives of Muslims in Britain and portrays how Islam plays a decisive role in shaping their identities" (Awad 72). She has won numerous awards for her fiction, including the Caine prize for the short story.

"The Ostrich": The Paradox of Belonging

In this story "The Ostrich", Leila Aboulela presents us with an immigrant's experience in London in the United Kingdom. She queries in this narrative the impact of globalisation, the appeal of multiculturalism and the asphyxiating effect of Other cultures and identity; the crises generated by this difference not only places her against British culture and westernisation but intensifies the sense of alienation. A synopsis of "The Ostrich" is necessary as we examine the realities projected in this narrative.

Returning to London from Sudan after a brief holiday, a young wife and Muslim woman, Sumra is taunted by her now acculturated husband. Almost immediately, on her arrival at the Heathrow airport, she seems to long for the home she has left behind in Khartoum where everything seems so natural and real for her. She is reminded of her displacement by her husband who welcomes her and enforces this sense of displacement when he tells her: "You look like something fresh out of the Third World" (Aboulela 2). Although many times she longed not to return to her husband in London, she seems to grapple more with being different than feeling the loss of home as she takes note of her herself and all the things that define her as different and thus out of place in London. She does a quick but personal appraisal of the things that define her as different and concludes:

> And I suddenly felt ashamed not only for myself but for everyone else who arrived with me on that aeroplane. Our shabby luggage, our stammering in front of the immigration officer, our clothes that seemed natural a few hours back, now crumpled and out of place (Aboulela 2).

Sumra not only feels ashamed for herself but every immigrant whose difference remains obvious and consciousness of difference and the significance of same makes homesickness and nostalgia inexorable as Khartoum, Sudan is projected as a safe haven where her personal identity is preserved. She soon shoves away the longing and bond she had with the people on the plane; they shared food, dressing, language and this sense of difference as outsiders in common.

Sumra is married to Majdy, a Sudanese Ph.D student in the United Kingdom. He is hopeful that one day he'll have the "Dr" in front of his name since his fear of failure has abated and what seemed to be a fear of acculturating successfully too has lessened. Majdy embraces modernisation and westernisation, he wants to be like the British and so does what they do. He insists that they must live like them if not they would be described as backward and barbaric. So, he does what is unusual with people in Khartoum;

> He sneers at the Arab women in black *abayas* walking behind …Here they respect women, treat them as equal, we must be the same he says…and must bear the weight of his arm around my shoulder, another gesture he had decided to imitate to prove that though we are Arabs and Africans we can be modern too" (Aboulela 3).

Homi K. Bhabha avers that, "the paranoid threat from the hybrid is finally uncontainable because it breaks down the symmetry and duality of self/other, inside/outside" (116); thus, Majdy comes to terms with being different but seeks something greater: integration into the mainstream of this British society. He trades his identity, religious and cultural loyalties and submits to the processes of acculturation where indigenous identity and loyalties are usually

tampered with or destroyed. Sumra's assessment of the forces and processes of westernising leaves her drained and hateful of even her physical look. Her mother who cannot understand why she detests London, a place where others wish and pray to visit, thinks she's an ingrate. To her, Sumra, her daughter has the privilege of living a good life abroad, outside the lack and inefficiencies that continually bedevil Sudan and other African nations yet she fails to see this. Sumra is typically the envy of many Sudanese and Africans who long for this kind of opportunity to taste "the good life of the West" (Aboulela 3). On the contrary, Sumra is sad. It is tiring for Sumra that the expectations from the West are high yet the contradictions stare her in the face as a reality. She also finds that she is failing in achieving a major reason for which she is married to Majdy. She is to prevent him from marrying a foreign woman, make him return home and "hold him to his roots" (Aboulela 3); yet, Majdy still day dreams, admires the foreign women on TV and has genuine reasons for not wanting to return to Sudan after his studies. He says to her chagrin:

> If I find a way to live here forever, he says, if only I could get a work permit. I can't imagine I could go back, back to the petrol queues, books in the library that are years old, computers that don't have electricity to work on or paper to print on. Teach dimwitted students who memorised their way into university, who never held a calculator in their hands before. And a salary, a monthly salary that is less than what an unemployed person gets here in a week, calculate it if you don't believe me (Aboulela 3).

Majdy has objects, perhaps deep resentment for the 'home' Sumra still holds dear. He has answers to all the her concerns on living, belonging and becoming the like the Other. For instance when she raise questions on the subject of morality, he reminds her easily of the social and political decay that fuels fratricidal wars in Sudan, political avarice, and the lingering conflict between Northern and Southern Sudan.

The aesthetic strength of Aboulela's immigrant tales like this one lies in her use of juxtapositions. She juxtaposes London and Khartoum; the expectations, realities and contradictions, the difference in socio-cultural and socio-religious life that fundamentally fosters the crises and conflict Majdy and Sumra grapple with. Majdy and Sumra are married but they are quite different and their reasons for being and belonging in the United Kingdom are very different too. The paper argues that Aboulela creates Sumra as the "perfect" citizen, who is capable of upholding and preserving her identity. She is created to show Majdy how not to lose his identity, his very essence for being. Sumra's assessment of both worlds, their life in the United Kingdom and in Khartoum projects the opportunities and paradoxes that expose the myth of being at "home" in an increasingly globalised world. This reality is also highlighted in her relationship with "The Ostrich", an old school mate.

The title of the text is significant and metaphoric as it seems to communicate the very essence of Aboulela message. "The Ostrich", the nickname of a former undergraduate and classmate lingers in the memory of Sumra as a worthless fellow because of his looks and unique mannerism that have been foisted on him by an accident. Ostrich's weird look, identity, acquaintance and love advances were all scorned at by Sumra in the past. However, when she discovers on her flight from Khartoum to London that he is married, she is ashamed but admits and fights her jealous emotions. Sumra decides to leave thoughts of The Ostrich and Africa behind when her plane takes off. This seems to be Aboulela's way of stating the realities, projecting the complexities and contradictions that characterise the loyalties of

immigrants to identities and worlds they inhabit. Sumra who is married to Madjy and pregnant with his child must negotiate her new reality: the addition of a baby to their young family, the possibilities of assimilating in the United Kingdom with the formation of a new identity; one foisted on her by her present realities. As with her representations of her immigrant characters in fiction, the complexities of this existence are presented perhaps as a potent justification for the changes Sumra would embrace in overcoming cultural hierarchies and existing as global citizen while minimising the damage to personal identity (Saba and Zulfiqar 234).

Articulations of Faith as Identity in "The Boy from the Kebab Shop".

The religious orientation of individuals is linked with prevailing cultural configuration which predetermines attitudes and roles at a given time. This cultural configuration dictates, to a large extent, what is conventional, moral, disdainful or otherwise among members of the community. It is from this perspective that "one cannot rule out the fact that culture plays important roles in the identity construction of individuals and at the same time, the sustainability of culture is possible because of those that uphold it"(Azeez Sesan 454). In view of this, we argue that the articulations of faith, home and difference would naturally postulate cultural configuration as the hinge through which difference and conflict is birthed.

Focusing on its different characters' struggles, "The Boy from The Kebab Shop" presents a broad canvas of issues, multiple forms of narratives, warring cultures set against the backdrop of blurred cultural allegiances. As the narrative begins and there is a Muslim Students Society dinner and call for fund raising, the author sets up the stage for confronting difference. This dichotomy of boundaries is initially represented in the choice of outfits. While many of the female students' population opted for traditional Muslim attires, others like Diana, flagrantly adorned western casual outfits. Thus, "many of the girls were wearing headscarves, some were wearing Shalwar-khamis, others like Dina wore the student outfit of jeans, sweatshirt and outrageous shoes" (Aboulela 57).

Perhaps, Aboulela is deliberately submitting the dinner event as an archetype of the crisis of existence among Muslim immigrants, not only in the numerous strands of cultural outfits, but also in the entire organisational framework of the event. An organisation where everything or something always goes wrong, thereby making the organisers complicit as an angry student calls them out: "'You've run out of Chapattis, you're running out of chicken, what sort of organizing is this. Every single function we have, there's something or the other wrong with the food. You people can never get it right'. He walked away, hungry and angry" (Aboulela 58). This expression of anger and movement away from the place of pain and disillusionment deftly recreates the migrants' dissatisfaction with the failed African neo-colonist society and subsequent journey to a globally diverse space.

However, the story is about two mixed race young adults, Dina and Kassim, and the difference in their behaviour towards their traditions and religion. As a narrative exploration of cultural difference, the story is mostly told through the voice of Dina, who has a Scottish Christian father and a Muslim Egyptian mother, and equally lives more freely with no strong religious convictions. She sees a Muslim boy she fancies stretched out on the floor praying and is shocked and alienated by the sight. Kassim on the other hand, lives a stricter life, was shyer, quiet and reserved with a Moroccan father and a Scottish mum. Kassim's nationality seems to aptly play on his reserved nature. He was mostly comfortable with making Arab friends at school and with Basheer's family. Prior to this, his parentage seemed to complicate his life, belief and practices until he begins to interact consciously at judo lessons with dedicated Muslims who recognised his name and awaken his "dormant Muslim identity":

> Kassim's Scottish mother had no interest in in religion and no
> Muslim friends. She was close to her large Aberdeenshire
> family and Kassim grew up with Christmas and Hogmanay.
> Most times he felt he was just like his cousins, sometimes,
> though, he felt he was conscious of his weird name…sometimes
> an incident would occur or someone would behave in a way that
> would make him stop, stand still and think. (Aboulela 58).

Unlike Dina, in this story whose lifestyle is English, Aboulela portrays Kassim as the more vulnerable and sensitive one, while Dina the major female character is more outgoing and open to new ideas and the change that comes with her mixed identity and social space, one she refuses to lose so easily to religion and faith.

Aboulela's short story examines the ways in which female Muslim characters articulate their notions of faith and home as a liberating practice. Interestingly Dina learns more about her religion after seeing how closely Kassim follows his. Her first lesson explicitly captures an attempt at Islamic greeting: "It was the first time for Dina to say, 'Salamu Alleikum'. The self-consciousness passed when Basheer replied."(Aboulela 69). This follows her earlier withdrawal, embarrassment and self-consciousness when Kassim welcomed her with this specific Muslim greeting, "She did not reply, only smiled and said, 'I was just passing by'" (Aboulela 65). The connection between language and identity could be exemplified thus:

> My insistence is that language fashions a mentality, so it gives its
> users a shared identity, something that binds them in an
> inexplicably appealing way. Embedded in this position is the
> notion that when we speak, people can tell where we come from.
> Language, then, is not only a means of communication, but also a
> medium that communicates our belonging to or not to a group
> (Romanus Aboh 41).

From the above excerpt, Dina's progress and acceptance of the language is a prerequisite for a shared identity and a shared sense of belonging. In contrast, "identity is always a temporary and unstable effect of relations which define identities by marking differences" (Lawrence Grossberg 89). Grossberg's stance therefore places Dina's attempt at a shared identity in a fickle position conditioned by the current effect of her relations with Kassim.

Basically, Aboulela leverages on power dynamics to deftly create an atmosphere where choices are repeatedly questioned. The fact that Shushu, Dina's mother, offhandedly describes and literarily names Kassim, 'the boy from the kebab shop' (Aboulela 68) foregrounds the fluidity in identity construction. Kassim is dispassionately and mockingly alluded to because he chose to work in the shop as a means of supporting himself. Shushu takes a jab at him to further degrade him and as well rid him of all forms of self-esteem. Clearly, Shushu's choice of nameless reference to Kassim, though not justifiable, is understandable. She speaks from a place of anguish, bitterness and yearnings for homeland. Having experienced first-hand the loss her Egyptian family by marrying a Scottish man, she is unwilling to allow her daughter experience a repetition of her own failed trans-cultural marriage. Thus, she warns her daughter Dina, "You'll end up in a horrible council flat with racist graffiti on the wall" (Aboulela 68). In addition to detailing the psychological trauma associated with separation from homeland, the narrative projects Shushu as a Muslim woman whose Islamic faith has lapsed; one who sits, drinks alcohol and watches Egyptian films on cable TV only, in a bid to recover the past. Lindsey Zanchettin observes about Leila

Aboulela's writing that "homesickness pervades her writing, inviting us to consider what constitutes a home and what one will do to return there, even if only through scent and sound" (Zanchettin 40). The text therefore presents a close-up portrait of characters longing for highly personalised and intimately constructed notions of home; where the stories reflect the general path between two cultures, loneliness, love and reaching towards an expression of bridging cultural gaps. In a bid to reflect and refract the historical and socio-economic realities of its environment, African short stories have been able to present those germane issues affecting its contemporary society like migration. Aboulela is writing something more than a Sudanese short story, which transcends the Sudanese worldview, yet seems to fully embody interactions of cross-cultural engagements between African and European borders. This narrative is a reflection on one of the contending issues in Africa- migration. With this story, the author takes the readers on a journey to explore the socio-political and cultural differences of western and Islamic cultures. The kebab shop functions as a site for interrogating contrastive realities of identity, the first being varieties of food choices. While some students are excited about "eating curry and rice off paper plates with plastic spoons" (Aboulela 58), others complain about "lumpy unpopular rice" which they insist, "It's not cooked. Look at it, stuck in lumps…" (Aboulela 58). The narrative criss-crosses these depth of choices in order to set up the conflicted world of African immigrants.

Secondly, Aboulela uses the kebab shop to draw attention to the cultural appropriations involving breastfeeding. According to Majed Aladaylah "transcultural identities are burdened with cultural ambivalences and founded through a process of belonging, dislocation, alienation and assimilation" (Aladaylah 171). From Aladaylah's view point, these cultural contradictions appropriate the manifestation of a conspiracy of shame for breastfeeding, engendering diverse reactions from two women in the text. Samia, a Muslim woman, delays feeding her whining baby until there is no man in sight and quickly quips to Dina, "tell me if anyone comes" (Aboulela 60). Dina, though mixed and acting like the average seventeen year old British girl, is "taken aback, slightly repulsed" (Aboulela 60) seeing Samia breastfeed. Dina is embarrassed by this encounter although she has seen plenty nudity, "she looked away, not wanting this intimacy, shrinking away from what was fleshy and vulnerable" (Aboulela 60). The author highlights these interactions of difference in a way that tries to transform cultural, emotional, spiritual and national differences into assimilation and adaptation. The greatest and perhaps the most phenomenal point of contrast and difference in the narrative is the encounter between Dina and Kassim during his prayer time. The author painstakingly describes Dina's reaction to seeing Kassim stretched on the ground observing his Muslim prayers as shocking and extremely cold. Thus,

> It was then that her heart started beating, her blood turned cold, because he was not within arm's reach, because he was down on the ground, and it was a shock to see him like that, so still and grovelling, not searching for something that had fallen, not answering her. It was fear that she felt. And wanting him to reassure her, and wanting the shock to go away. Why was he like that, his forehead, nose and hands pressed onto the floor, why…? He sat up and did not speak to her, did not acknowledge her presence (Aboulela 70).

Dina goes through a plethora of emotions of shock and disbelief, fear and embarrassment and finally apologises for invading his privacy. The prayer conflict is juxtaposed with the same weight of embarrassing reaction Dina would have offered for accidently pushing the toilet door open and seeing him sitting on the loo. She would have apologized very much in the

same way. As mentioned earlier that religious orientation is consistence with the norms and values of the society, Aboulela's short story situates religion a significant aspect of cultural assimilation, diffusion and interplay in migration discourse. At the end of the narrative, Dina reasons that Kassim:

> Was inviting her to his faith, her faith really, because she had been born into it. He was passing it on silently by osmosis and how painful and slow her awakening would be! If she now waited long enough, he would come looking for her. If she went, he would know that she was not keen on his lifestyle, did not want to change her own. (Aboulela 70).

While Dina contemplates the possibility of faith as an expression of a new identity, this, Kassim articulates as his identity. It appears therefore that, Aboulela projects the Muslim faith as attractive and worth holding on to in transcultural interactions. Thus, the author projects Dina's dilemma of assimilation at the end of story, "she paused on the pavement, hesitating between the succulent mystic life he promised, and the puckish unfulfilment of her parent's home."(Aboulela 71).

Conclusion

Aboulela's narratives are transnational, recreate immigrant characters and voice the difference in cultures, shifting boundaries for immigrants and realities of oscillating in today's world, and more so, the significance of these realities in the existence of an African and Muslim woman in the West. It projects the representations of immigrants between worlds, the conflict engendered by difference and the attempts they make to articulate or assimilate self in a very diverse space away from home. This discussion has sustained emphasis on the significance of difference as resistance to, and as a challenge to, bridging systemic structures between worlds. The texts advocate a blueprint that seeks the overthrow of cultural difference by advocating and redefining dimensions of identity and relations. The paper therefore concludes that the narratives attest to cultural gaps, conflicted identity, difference and the yearnings for homeland as critical.

Works cited

Aboh, Romanus. "The Lingo-Cultural Construction of Nigerian Identity". *AKSU Journal of English: A Journal of the Department of English*, Akwa Ibom State University, Nigeria.   pp. 35-44, 2017.

Aboulela, Leila. "The Ostrich". Oregon: Intangible Publications, Inc. 1997.

_____ "The Boy from the Kebab Shop". *Coloured Lights.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. 2001.

Aladaylah, Majed. "Negotiating Narrative in Transcultural Spaces in Leila Aboulela's *Minaret*". *IJAES: International Journal of Arabic-English Studies,* vol. 18, 2017, pp.   171–   178.
http://www.ijaes.net/article/FullText/9?volume=18&issue=1.   Accessed   01 March, 2019.

Ashcroft, Bill et al. *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-colonial Literature*. London: Routledge. 1989.

Awad, Yousef. "Fiction in Contest with History? Faith, Resilience and the War on Terror in Aboulela's *The Kindness of Enemies*". IJAES: *International Journal of Arabic English Studies*,   vol.   18,   2018,   pp.   71-90.
http://www.ijaes.net/article/FullText/4?volume=18&issue=1. Accessed 01 March, 2019.

Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge, 1994.

Doosti, Farzaneh and Amir Ali Nojoumian. "Of Hideous 'Half-and-Halfs': Reading the Grotesque in Leila Aboulela's *The Kindness of Enemies*". *Journal of Language Horizons, Alzahra University*, vol. 3, 2019, pp. 113-137.
https://lghor.alzahra.ac.ir/article_4410_79444a98c89985b4424a0e19b46388b2.pdf
Accessed 01 July 2021.

Grossberg, Lawrence. "Identity and Cultural Studies: Is that All There is? " *Questions of Cultural Identity*. Edited by Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay. London: Sage,   1996,   pp. 87–107.

Guillen, Mauro F. "Is Globalization Civilizing, Destructive or Feeble? A critique of Five Key Debates in the Social Science Literature". *Annual Reviews of Sociology*, vol. 27, 2001,   pp.235-60.
http://www.management.wharton.upenn.edu/guillen/files/Globaliz.ARS.2001.pdf
Accessed 01 March, 2019.

Habib, Mudasir. "Globalization and Literature". *Language in India*, vol. 15(9), 2015, pp. 14 21.   http://www.languageinindia.com/sep2015/habibglobalizationliteraturefinal.pdf.
Accessed 01 March, 2019.

Mathur, R. "Turbulence of Globalization in Rising Metropolis- A Case study of Toltz's *A Fraction of the Whole* and Adiga's *The White Tiger*". *IRWELL,* vol. 7(I), 2011, pp. 1-8.

Raikhan, Sasykova. et al. "The Interaction of Globalization and Culture in the Modern World" *Procedia - Social and Behavioural Sciences*, vol.122, 2004, pp. 8 – 12.

Saba, Idris and Sadia Zulfiqar. "Is Islam Replacing Home in Leila Aboulela's Fiction?" *Journal of Research in Humanities*, vol. 6, 2019, pp. 231-244 http://pu.edu.pk/images/journal/english/PDF/14_LVI_Jan_20.pdf Accessed 01 July, 2021.

Sesan, Azeez Akinwunmi. "Sexuality, Morality and Identity Construction in Jude Dibia's *Walking with Shadows". Literary and Linguistic Perspectives on Orality, Literacy and   Gender Studies: A Celebration of Oluwatoyin Jegede @ 60.* Edited by Ayo Osisanwo,

Kazeem Adebiyi-Adelabu, Adebayo Mosobalaje. Ibadan: Kraft Books Limited, 2018, pp. 453–468.

Zanchettin, Lindsey. "Articulations of Home and Muslim Identity in the Short Stories of Leila   Aboulela". *Writing Africa in the Short Story.* Edited by Ernest N. Emenyonu. London: Boydell and Brewer, 2013, pp. 40–51.

Conceptual Metaphors in Climate Change Discourse in the Speeches of African Vs. European Political Leaders: A Cognitive Approach

Mervat Mahmoud Ahmed
Language and Translation Dept.
College of Language and Communication
Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport\
Alexandria, Egypt
Email: mervat.mah@aast.edu

Abstract

This study investigates the conceptual metaphors employed by both African and European political leaders to conceptualize the process of facing climate change and reaching the goal of biodiversity in their speeches during the 26th UN Climate Change Conference, also known as Conference of the Parties (COP 26) that took place at Glasgow in November 2021. For this end, 20 speeches were selected; 10 representing each of the two continents to identify and analyze the conceptual metaphors employed by political leaders in tackling climate change. The ten European countries are the United Kingdom, Italy, Austria, Armenia, the Netherlands, Finland, Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, Montenegro. The African countries are represented by Angola, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The study adopts Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) Conceptual Metaphor Theory. The results reveal European political leaders' tendency to utilize conflict/ war, doomsday and stock market metaphors. African leaders, on the other hand, had an inclination to employ journey metaphors, building metaphors and human metaphors.

key words

1. Introduction

Being an important global issue in recent years, environmental concerns, including the climate change challenge has surfaced at the center-stage of political discourse. The world's excessive use of non-renewable energy sources such as fossil fuels and coal have caused an unprecedented rise in the globe's temperature. All countries have witnessed the negative impacts of climate change such as immense floods, huge forest fires, droughts and food insecurities. With the huge world-wide challenges posed by the new climate change and the threats that accompany it, countries committed themselves to a reduction in greenhouse emissions, building resilience to climate change and raising the necessary funds in an attempt to restore ecosystems and reach the goal of biodiversity.

The UN Climate Change Conference is the world's most significant summit on climate change. It brings together political leaders and decision makers from 197 countries that signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Every year, world leaders and specialists present initiatives and exchange ideas and solutions

in an attempt to control climate change. At the 26th UN Climate Change Conference, also known as Conference of the Parties (COP 26), political leaders have presented ambitious plans to control and reduce the rise in global temperature utilizing various linguistic and persuasive devices to draw the public's attention to the global threat posed by climate change. One effective tool is the manipulation of conceptual metaphors, as a significant persuasion tool, from various life domains to convey their messages.

1.1 Aim of the Study

The aim of this research is to identify, compare and contrast the most prominent conceptual metaphors employed by both European and African political leaders in their opening speeches about climate change at the 26th Conference of the Parties (COP 26) of the UNFCCC that was held at Glasgow on November 2021. The study depicts how the issue of climate change is metaphorically conceptualized by developing vs. developed countries' political leaders in an attempt to find out the recurrent conceptual metaphors used by political leaders in tackling the climate change issue. The study also investigates the metaphors' cross domain mapping and highlights how these metaphors not only represent their underlying themes, but also reflect the African and European socio-cultural and historical views about nature. In an attempt to investigate these issues, the study poses the following research questions.

1. What are the most recurrent conceptual metaphors utilized by African political leaders at the UN COP (26) in their speeches about climate change?

2. What are the most prominent conceptual metaphors employed by European political leaders at the UN COP (26) in their speeches about climate change?

1.2 Significance of the Study

Although metaphors constitute an important part of political discourse in general and political speeches in specific (Charteris-Black, 2004), limited research has examined how the recent challenges of climate change are metaphorically conceptualized in the speeches of political leaders. Therefore, this study provides insight into an under researched area of study which is environmental discourse in political speeches. In addition, the study highlights how environmental challenges and concerns are viewed differently by developed vs. developing countries in two continents, the thing which sheds light on some of the socio-economic and historical aspects that affect the formulation of conceptual metaphors in tackling the same topic.

2. Literature Review

Conceptual metaphors are not just ornamental tools used in language, but are part and parcel of human thought (Gibbs, 2011). Ungerer and Schmid (2006) claim that metaphors are embedded in human thought and language to the extent that some metaphors became part of everyday lexis. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980), metaphors reflect one's experience of the world and affect how viewers behave and react. Metaphors are regarded as significant tools of communication, especially when words fail to express meanings. Bourke (2014) states that "Metaphors are particularly useful when people are attempting to convey experiences most resistant to expression'' (p. 447). Gluckberg, Keysar, and McGlone (1992)

state that the significance of metaphor does not evolve from the information it provides, but rather the way that information is conveyed.

Casasanto (2009) claims that the human mind conceptualizes abstract ideas through concrete domains. Kövecses (2005) defines metaphor as "understanding one conceptual domain in terms of another conceptual domain." (p.3). Goatly (2007) defines metaphor as "thinking of one thing (A) as though it were another thing (B)", where A is the Topic or TARGET and B is the Vehicle or SOURCE" (p. 11). Establishing similarities between the two domains is called mapping. Therefore, metaphor construction is a process of cross-domain mapping in the cognitive system. It turns abstract and complex issues into concrete and tangible ones through linking the target domain to the source domain.

2.1 Metaphors in Political Discourse

Political speeches play a significant role in leading the public's opinions and actions regarding several issues (De Rycker & Don, 2013). They rely heavily on metaphors to persuade the audience of views and decisions. The significant role of metaphor in political discourse has been examined by several scholars (e.g. Charteris-Black, 2004; Chilton, 2004; Goatly, 2007; Musolff, 2004). Studies show that utilizing metaphors in political discourse has a strong impact on swaying the audience's views regarding several issues (Thibodeau & Boroditsky, 2011). Charteris-Black (2004) highlights that metaphors are employed in political discourse in general and political speeches in specific to serve several purposes such as allowing the audience to grasp meanings, arousing the audiences' emotions in an attempt to persuade them of political views and enhancing the Charisma of the speaker.

Several studies examine the conceptual metaphors employed by political leaders in their speeches. However, studies reveal that some conceptual metaphors are more common in political discourse than others. Charteris-Black (2004) demonstrates that war and sports metaphors are among the most commonly used conceptual metaphors in political discourse. In a study of political discourse in the USA, Howe (1988) states that the most common metaphors originate from the domains of sports and war and concludes that this shows politics as a contest or an exercise of power. Daughton (1993) analyzes 'holy war' metaphors in Roosevelt's 1933 inaugural speech. He concludes that the conceptual metaphor was effectively used to review shared values among the audience and unify them.

Figar (2013) applies the Conceptual Metaphor Theory to investigate the use of conflict and sports metaphors in political discourse in daily newspapers such as and concludes that these conceptual metaphors arouse the emotions of readers. Other prominent metaphors employed in political discourse are game, sports and journey metaphors (Chilton, 2004; Kövecses, 2010; Lakoff and Johnson, 2004)

2.2 Conceptual Metaphors in Climate Change discourse

Even though climate change is currently a global pressing issue, there is not adequate research about political leaders' metaphorical choices when it comes to tackling the environmental issue of climate change. Little research has focused on political leaders' choices of conceptual metaphors when presenting climate change, an issue which has

recently come to the forefront of the world's political agenda. Therefore, this study fills in the gap in the present literature.

Scholars who investigated the use of conceptual metaphors when talking about climate change, basically focused on media discourse. Studies show that western media's use of metaphors when tackling climate change reveal the prevalence of war metaphors to convey the urgency of facing it (Asplund, 2010; Cohen, 2011). Atanasova and Koteyko (2017) apply critical metaphor analysis to examine the use of conceptual metaphors in portraying climate change in the editorials/ opinion-page content of two key British online newspapers; the Guardian online and the Mail online. They conclude that in the Guardian metaphors were mainly taken from the war domain to imply the urgency of a swift action to address the problem, while in the Mail metaphors relied heavily on the domain of religion.

3.   Methodology

3.1 Data

The data selected for this study are twenty speeches given by keynote African and European political leaders at the opening sessions of the UN Climate Change Summit, also known as Conference of the Parties (COP 26), held at Glasgow from the 31st of October to the 12th of November 2021. The speeches are taken from the United Nations for Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC) official website https://unfccc.int/ . On the one hand, ten speeches are given by Presidents or Prime Ministers of African countries and those are: Angola, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Zambia and Zimbabwe. On the other hand, ten speeches are given by European Presidents or Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom, Italy, Austria, Armenia, the Netherlands, Finland, Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, Montenegro. The speeches selected were all given in the English Language. The Study examines African and European speeches for various reasons. First, European countries are mostly industrialized developed countries that are among the highest emitters of carbon dioxide while African countries are mostly rural developing countries that are attached to their nature, but which really suffer from lack of resources to face climate change consequences.

3.2 Procedure

This research applies a qualitative approach to identify and interpret the conceptual metaphors employed by African and European political leaders during their speeches about climate change which is a currently pressing global issue. The study draws upon Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) Conceptual Metaphor Theory. In order to identify the conceptual metaphors employed, source and target domains are detected through the lexical expressions that map source domains through target domains.

3.3 Theoretical Framework

3.3.1 Cognitive Theory of Metaphor (CTM)

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) define metaphor as grasping one meaning with reference to another. Their cognitive theory of metaphor is based on the concept that the human cognitive system is mainly metaphorical, which means that metaphor is not only a stylistic, ornamental tool used in poetry, but a vital component in people's cognition (Deignan, 2005). Being an inherent part of thought, metaphors are used in everyday discourse to convey one meaning through another and to assist in grasping abstract concepts through concrete ones. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) state that "metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, language, thought and action. The human ordinary conceptual system, in terms of thinking and acting, is basically metaphorical in nature" (P.3).

As the human cognitive system is basically metaphorical, metaphorical concepts are understood according to one's experiences of the world (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003). Therefore, conceptual metaphors are also related to one's culture and they reflect cultural views. They also shed light on their users "deeply embedded beliefs" (Quinonez, 2018, p. 24). Therefore, conceptual metaphors are shared by people who share the same knowledge and belief. Deignan (2005) states that "the frequent metaphors of a community must contribute to a collective bias in understanding the world, because they both hide and highlight aspects of reality from members of that community" (p. 24). Although some conceptual metaphors are international as they are understood by several cultures such as "Affection is warmth", others are specific to certain cultures as in "life is a circle" which is a metaphor that is understood by Buddhists as they share the belief that death is not an end, but a stage in the continuous cycle of life.

3.3.2 Metaphorical Mapping

A metaphor occurs when a set of similarities take place across two different domains, known as the source domain and the target domain. Metaphors are structured through mapping experiences from the source domain into the target domain. Lakoff (1993) states "In short, the locus of metaphor is not in language at all, but in the way we conceptualize one mental domain in terms of another" (p. 203). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) provide the example life is a journey" to demonstrate how an abstract concept like (life), which is a target domain, is mapped through a more concrete concept (journey) which is the source domain. A journey, just like life has a beginning and an end and obstacles in between. Once a conceptual metaphor is formed, it allows for other metaphors to be conceptualized. In the "life is a journey" metaphor, for instance, people can be passengers, reaching a goal is reaching a destination, decisions can be crossroads, challenges can be obstacles and important events as mile markers.

Lakoff and Johnson (2003) categorize conceptual metaphors into three groups: Structural, orientational and ontological metaphors. First, structural metaphors are the most commonly used in everyday speech as in TIME IS MONEY so "*time is precious*", one can "*invest time*" or "*should not waste time*". Second, orientational metaphors rely on spatial concepts, like up is more and down is less as in HAVING CONTROL IS UP. Finally, ontological metaphors are a way of viewing emotions and activities as substances, objects and containers as in THE MIND IS A MACHINE.

4. Data Analysis

In this section, identification and analysis of the conceptual metaphors employed by European and African political leaders at the COP (26) while tackling climate change are presented. First, European political leaders demonstrate a tendency to use metaphors from different domains. Three main patterns of conceptualizing climate change were identified in their speeches. They show a tendency to use conceptual metaphors such as CLIMATE CHANGE IS CONFLICT/ WAR, CLIMATE CHANGE IS DOOMSDAY and CLIMATE CHANGE IS A STOCK MARKET. African political leaders, on the other hand, employ different conceptual metaphors as FACING CLIMATE CHANGE IS A JOURNEY, FACING CLIMATE CHANGE IS A BUILDING PROJECT and NAUTURE IS HUMAN.

4.1 Conceptual Metaphors in European Political Leaders' Speeches

First, European political leaders excessively employ war metaphors in their climate change discourse. As shown in table (1), facing climate change is extensively compared to being at war or as being a battle for survival. It is described using a cluster of metaphors that include military expressions from the source domain of war. Climate change is conceptualized as an enemy that united humanity need to "combat". These metaphors are stated in "*Combatting* climate change is one of our weightiest human responsibilities", "The Kingdom of the Netherlands has been *battling* the elements for centuries", "We will *fight* climate change with nature-based solutions", "….to *combat* desertification", "begin the *fightback* against climate change", "There is no *silver bullet* against climate change" and "to *defuse* that *bomb*".

Developing countries fighting climate change are also conceptualized by European countries as an army in short of supplies and in need of funding as in "for the most *vulnerable communities*, adaptation *funds* are often in *short supply*" and "we *jeopardize* the *food supply* for hundreds of millions of people". It is a global battle with no boundaries as in "The impact of climate change has no *national borders*". It is a battle that is conceptualized as a threat that science has warned against as in "science has been *sounding* the *alarm bell*".

Then, there is a call for immediate action as in "There is *no time to lose!* The *time for action is now!*", "we have to *take action*. Timely, firm and concerted *action*". There is also a motto for the battle/ campaign against climate change as in "*climate resilience* must be *our motto*, *climate adaptation our common endeavor*" .There is also a call for allies to assist in this battle against the enemy as in "*Let's join our forces* in *protecting* the environment", "in our *joint efforts* to *fight* climate change" and "*joining global efforts* to *combat* climate change" and talking about the catastrophic results that would affect humanity in case of losing the battle as in "Climate change can *tear us apart*", "if we *lose* the arctic, we *lose* the globe" and "if we *fail* they will not forgive us. They will know that Glasgow was the *historic turning point* when history *failed* to turn".

Facing climate change is also conceptualized as a noble battle for protecting humanity that includes sacrifices as in "let us do enough to *save* our planet and our way of life", "The *protection* of our climate and our planet is one of our generation's most important challenges" and talking about the army's mission "to *protect* our climate" and "The EU has proven that this can be accomplished without *sacrificing* economic growth".

Table (1): CLIMATE CHANGE IS CONFLICT/ WAR

CLIMATE CHANGE IS CONFLICT/ WAR

Combatting climate change is one of our weightiest human responsibilities.	begin the *fightback* against climate change.	The *protection* of our climate and our planet is one of our generation's most important *challenges*.
if we *lose* the arctic, we *lose* the globe	joining global efforts to *combat* climate change.	we *jeopardize* the *food supply* for hundreds of millions of people.
So climate resilience must be our *motto*, climate adaptation our common *endeavour*.	But for the most *vulnerable* communities, adaptation funds are often in *short supply*.	Climate change can *tear* us *apart*.
The Kingdom of the Netherlands has been *battling* the elements for centuries.	we have to take *action*. Timely, firm and concerted *action*.	if we *fail* they will not forgive us. They will know that Glasgow was the historic *turning point* when history *failed* to turn
There is no *silver bullet against* climate change.	…. a *global crisis*	
We will *fight* climate change with nature-based solutions.	science has been *sounding the alarm bell*.	let us do enough to *save* our planet and our way of life
….to *combat* desertification.	to *protect* our climate.	to *defuse* that *bomb*
There is no time to *lose*! The time for *action* is now!	Our world is still in a state of *emergency*.	….. in our *joint efforts* to *fight* climate change.
The impact of climate change has no *national borders*.	our *fight* against climate change	The EU has proven that this can be accomplished without *sacrificing* economic growth.
Let's *join* our *forces* in *protecting* the environment.	the task now is to *work together* to help our friends to decarbonize	

Aside from war metaphors, European political leaders also employ the conceptual metaphor CLIMATE CHANGE IS DOOMSDAY. As shown in table (2), they conceptualize climate change as a "*doomsday device*" or "*doomsday clock*" that is ticking and that will eventually put an end to human life on Earth. Climate change is compared to a "*red digital clock*" that is counting down to a detonation and needs to be deactivated. This doomsday clock is working through the use of non-renewable energy sources as it is "*ticking through the billions of pistons, turbines, furnaces and engines*". Therefore, all efforts exerted to face climate change are compared to building a lifeboat to save humanity.

Table (2): CLIMATE CHANGE IS DOOMSDAY

CLIMATE CHANGE IS DOOMSDAY		
we have brought you to the very place where **the doomsday device** began to **tick**. It's one minute to midnight on that **doomsday clock** and we need to **act** now. We have the technology to **deactivate** that **ticking doomsday device**.	while a **red digital clock ticks down** remorselessly to a **detonation** that will end human life as we know it …. the **clock is ticking** to the furious rhythm of hundreds of billions of pistons and turbines and furnaces and engines	the world has slowly and with great effort and pain, built a **lifeboat** for **humanity**. humanity has long since run down **the clock** on climate change.

As shown in table (3), CLIMATE CHANGE IS STOCK MARKET is another conceptual metaphor employed by European political leaders at the COP (26). Climate change is conceptualized as a stock market where countries have "shares" or stocks of renewable energy sources. If countries do not expand their shares of clean energy sources they run a risk with a high "price". Therefore, "a set of measures" are to be taken to reach the goal of biodiversity.

Table (3): CLIMATE CHANGE IS STOCK MARKET

CLIMATE CHANGE IS STOCK MARKET		
Romania has a solid **share** of renewable energy the longer we fail to act the worse it gets and the higher the **price** when we are eventually forced by catastrophe to act.	A set of interconnected **measures** can help us deliver. We are committed to expand this **share**.	the impact of climate change is already all too evident. Its **price** is also rising fast – especially for poorer nations.

4.2 Conceptual Metaphors in African Political Leaders' Speeches

Conceptual Metaphors in African Political Leaders' Speeches are FACING CLIMATE CHANGE IS A JOURNEY, FACING CLIMATE CHANGE IS A BUILDING PROJECT and NATURE IS HUMAN. In the first metaphor, countries are conceptualized as travelers who move forward on a "*path*" to meet their climate change "*targets*" or destinations. This path is "*a sustainable course*", therefore it involves numerous "*steps*" that countries should take and are all related to the sustainable development goals to reach their destination. Actually, countries or in this case travelers are conceptualized as having to follow a "*roadmap*" to reach their destination. Along the "*pathway*" there are "*debts*", "*burdens*" and obstacles that they need to overcome. This journey along with its goal are conceptualized as being pivotal as they determine the globe's "*destiny*". It is also a journey where countries are moving forward and where no one is left behind. Therefore, African countries stress their need of the promised funds provided by their journey partners, who are developed countries, to be able to move forward along the journey. The journey is conceptualized as a noble one as it determines the future of Mankind.

Table (4): FACING CLIMATE CHANGE IS A JOURNEY

CLIMATE CHANGE IS JOURNEY		
We urge strong U.S. leadership and commitment in placing the world **on a path** to meeting our climate change **targets.**	fully address the three **goals** of the Paris Agreement.	…hopefully put back our planet on a sustainable **course**.
Developed countries must translate the principle of **leaving no one behind** into action.	Together, we can make a difference as a shared community of global citizens with a common **destiny**.	These actions will **pave the way** for Mauritius to become a climate resilient and low emission country.
Namibia is taking transformative **steps** towards honoring this responsibility.	to **mobilize** large scale private investment for climate action.	we expect our **partners** to do their share.
This critical **step** would provide the bedrock of an international carbon market mechanism.	we call for the $100 billion target for climate finance needs to be surpassed as a **target**, with a clear **roadmap** on how the committed amounts will be delivered.	Nigeria has developed a detailed energy transition plan and **roadmap** based on data and evidence
This is the single most important **step** to keeping the Paris Agreement's 1.5C target alive.		…transitioning our economy **across** sectors and the data.
The estimated investment required to **achieve** this **target** is approximately USD 5.3	to make it possible for emerging economies carrying high **debt**	climate resilient development **pathway** in nigeria

billion. .	***burdens*** to kickstart transformative projects.	We are taking these bold ***steps*** to enhance our energy security

Second, political figures from African countries use metaphors from the domains of architecture and construction to conceptualize facing climate change as a building project. Climate financing is compared to an "*architecture*" that is faulty due to lack of funds, a point which comes at the center stage of nearly all African political leaders' speeches. They talk of "*building a more resilient economy*" that would help them with reaching their goals. This economy is the "*cornerstone*" of their green projects.

Table (5): FACING CLIMATE CHANGE IS A BUILDING PROJECT

FACING CLIMATE CHANGE IS A BUILDING PROJECT		
We are all aware that there is an inherent imbalance in the current ***architecture*** of climate financing.	The green and blue economy, including a green hydrogen industry, are ***cornerstones*** of the Second (HPP-II) launched in March this year.	…***build*** a more resilient economy.

NATURE IS HUMAN is another conceptual metaphor employed by African leaders in their speeches at the COP (26). Nature is compared to humans or human body parts. For instance, climate change can cause the "death" of world oceans. Lack Chad, in Africa, is turning into a shadow of itself as it has suffered from desertification and Chad forests are a major part of the world's lungs which helps Mankind to breath. These metaphors shed light on how the African culture reveres nature in general. For Africans, nature is a source of life.

Table (6): NATURE IS HUMAN

NATURE IS HUMAN		
to protect us all from the impacts from runaway climate change, breakdown of the biosphere and ***the death*** of the world's oceans.	lake chad has gone from a vast expanse of biodiversity to a ***shadow*** of itself	We are a major part of the global ***lungs*** which make it possible for the industrial world to breath. In order to guarantee the wellness of these global ***lungs***.

5. Discussion

Common conceptual metaphors in European political leaders' speeches about climate change such as CLIMATE CHANGE IS CONFLICT/ WAR/ and CLIMATE CHANGE IS DOOMSDAY are employed to give weight and significance to the issue of climate change. They show the listeners that climate change is not a trivial matter that the world can turn a blind eye to, but a matter of survival; a matter of life and death. Therefore, taking an action against climate change is conceptualized as grave as going to war. Employing war and doomsday metaphors also demonstrate a sense of urgency to take action regarding climate change. It stresses on the significance of time as a factor in winning this battle. War and doomsday metaphors are also used to unify their audience. At war, a nation has a common goal that is shared by all its members. Therefore, war metaphors evoke emotions of patriotism and solidarity. Conceptualizing facing climate change as a battle demonstrates that it is a global battle against climate change that unifies humanity. It makes it more of a shared goal that can only be achieved through solidarity. Moreover, it insinuates the excessive amount of struggle and sacrifice needed to achieve this goal.

The conceptual metaphor CLIMATE CHANGE IS STOCK MARKET is also employed to highlight that climate change involves a lot of risks for mankind. Thus, in case of disregarding the new environmental goal of reducing the globe's temperature 1.5 degrees Celsius, the price would be extremely high for all countries as they would risk losing not just their resources, but also their home Earth. It demonstrates that all countries need to invest their future in clean energy sources such as renewable energy. It highlights that countries have a shared duty towards the climate change crisis as they all have stocks and shares in it and therefore they all have a shared responsibility to act in accordance with the UNFCCC guidelines and agreements.

On the other hand, African political leaders employ other conceptual metaphors in their speeches at the COP (26). They employed conceptual metaphors such as FACING CLIMATE CHANGE IS A JOURNEY, FACING CLIMATE CHANGE IS A BUILDING PROJECT and NATURE IS HUMAN. Journey metaphors are used by African political leaders to demonstrate that reaching their goal which is the gradual transition from using coal and fossil fuels to the use of renewable and clean energy sources is like going through a long journey for reaching a desired destination. It highlights that reaching this destination is not easy and would take a long time and effort as the journey is full of obstacles and burdens. Being developing countries, African countries need help with funding to be able to implement the new environmentally-friendly technologies. Therefore, journey metaphors are employed to highlight the significance of patience as new environmental measures would take time to implement and developed countries need to provide the necessary funds to be able to reach their common destination. Moreover, journey metaphors are also used to insinuate the great value of the goal of biodiversity. Charteris-Black (2004) states that "Journey metaphors have a strong positive orientation: even when negative aspects of journeys are highlighted by the metaphor – such as burdens to bear – the effort that is necessary to achieve anything is evaluated as worthwhile." (p. 93). Journey metaphors are also used to invite listeners to join the speakers in their endeavors. Thus, African countries stress their need of developed countries to help with the funding to implement new environmentally-friendly technologies.

Facing climate change is also conceptualized as a building process to express a positive appraisal of the action taken as the end result is extremely valuable. Just like journey metaphors, building metaphors are also positively appreciated as they involve tremendous efforts of getting through numerous stages that extend through a long period of time, but end up with a valuable outcome. They also stress patience as an important factor in reaching a goal. Building metaphors are also used to imply the importance of cooperation as buildings are not built individually, but need the cooperation of a number of people or entities. Building also involves labour and materials that are expensive, thus, African leaders use both points to stress on the important role played by developed countries in reaching their aspired goal through providing them with the necessary funds. Charteris-Black (2004) highlights that "building and travelling are conceptually related, as they are both activities in which progress takes place in stages towards a predetermined goal. In both cases […] achieving goals is inherently good, they imply a positive evaluation of political policy" (p.95).

In African leaders' speeches, nature is also conceptualized as human and vital body parts. Thus forests are compared to lungs and oceans and lakes to human beings who can die if climate change is not faced which highlights not only the significance of the topic for the African countries as they suffer from forest fires, draughts and food insecurities, but also the African culture's attachment to nature as it is viewed as their roots and source of life.

6. Conclusion

This study identifies and examines the use of conceptual metaphors in climate change discourse in the speeches of European and African world leaders at the 26th UNFCCC, also known as COP (26) in 2021. Twenty speeches by ten European leaders and ten African leaders at the opening sessions of the COP (26) are examined. The European countries are represented by the United Kingdom, Italy, Austria, Armenia, the Netherlands, Finland, Romania, Bulgaria, Greece and Montenegro. The African countries comprise Angola, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The study applies Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) cognitive theory of metaphor to investigate the use of conceptual metaphors in climate change discourse by European and African politicians.

On the one hand, the findings show European countries' tendency to use metaphors from the source domain of war, conflict, doomsday and stock market. Conceptual metaphors such as CLIMATE CHANGE IS CONFLICT/ WAR, CLIMATE CHANGE IS DOOMSDAY and CLIMATE CHANGE IS STOCK MARKET are common in their speeches. Conflict, war and doomsday metaphors are employed to show the gravity of the topic, to stress the urgency of taking action, to evoke feelings of unity and solidarity. CLIMATE CHANGE IS STOCK MARKET is also used to highlight the idea that climate change involves many risks and that it is a shared responsibility.

On the other hand, the findings show African countries' tendency to use metaphors from the source domain of journeys, architecture and humans. Conceptual metaphors such as FACING CLIMATE CHANGE IS A JOURNEY, FACING CLIMATE CHANGE IS A BUILDING PROCESS and NATURE IS HUMAN are present in their speeches. Journey and building metaphors are employed to show the amount of hard work needed to achieve the goal of biodiversity as it involves time, numerous stages and a lot of hard work. They are also employed to show that African countries need assistance especially with the necessary funds to make a smooth transition to environmentally-friendly technologies. Nature is also conceptualized as human to show nature's value for Africans.

References

Atanasova, D., & Koteyko, N. (2017). Metaphors in Guardian Online and Mail Online opinion-page content on climate change: War, religion, and politics. *Environmental Communication*, *11*(4), 452-469.

Asplund, M. (2010). Metaphors in climate discourse: An analysis of Swedish farm magazines. *Journal of Science Communication*, *10*(4), 1-8.

Bourke, J. (2014). Pain: metaphor, body, and culture in Anglo-American societies between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries. *Rethinking History*, *18*(4), 475-498.

Casasanto, D. (2009). When is a Linguistic Metaphor a Conceptual Metaphor? *New Directions in Cognitive Linguistics*, 24, 127-146.

Charteris-Black, J. (2004). Metaphor in American Presidential Speeches. In *Corpus Approaches to Critical Metaphor Analysis* (pp. 87-110). Palgrave Macmillan, London.

Chilton, P. (2004). *Analysing political discourse: Theory and practice*. London: Routledge.

Cohen, M. J. (2011). Is the UK preparing for "war"? Military metaphors, personal carbon allowances, and consumption rationing in historical perspective. *Climatic Change*, *104*, 199-222.

Daughton, S. M. (1993). Metaphorical transcendence: Images of the holy war in Franklin Roosevelt's first inaugural. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, *79*(4), 427-446.

De Rycker, A., & Don, Z. M. (Eds.). (2013). *Discourse and crisis: Critical perspectives* (Vol. 52). John Benjamins Publishing.

Deignan, A. (2005). *Metaphor and corpus linguistics*. Amsterdam, NL: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Figar, V. (2013). Analysis of Conceptual Metaphors in the Political Discourse of Daily Newspapers: Structure, Function, and Emotional Appeal (Ma Thesis). *Function, and Emotional Appeal (Ma Thesis)(October 4, 2013)*.

Gibbs, R. W., Jr. (2011). Evaluating conceptual metaphor theory. *Discourse Processes*, *48*(8), 529–6562.

Goatly, A. (2007). *Washing the brain - metaphor and hidden ideology*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Gluckberg, S., Keysar, B., & McGlone, M. S. (1992). Metaphor understanding and accessing conceptual schema: Reply to Gibbs. *Psychological Review*, *99*(3), 578–581.

Howe, N. (1988). Metaphor in Contemporary American Political discourse. *Metaphor and Symbolic Activity*, 3(2), 87-104.

Kövecses, Z. (2005). *Metaphor in Culture: Universality and variation*. Cambridge University Press.

Kövecses, Z. (2010). *Metaphor. A practical introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors we live by*: University of Chicago Press. Chicago.

Lakoff, G. (1993). The contemporary theory of metaphor. In *Metaphor and Thought*, ed. By Andrew Ortony, 202-251. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Lakoff G. and Johnson, M. (2003). *Metaphors We Live By*, Chicago, Chicago University Press.

Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (2004). *Metaphors we live by.* Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.

Musolff, A. (2004). Metaphor and conceptual evolution. *metaphorik.de*, *7*, 55-75.

Musolff, A. (2006). Metaphor scenarios in public discourse. *Metaphor and Symbol*, *2*(1), 23-38.

Quinonez, E. S. (2018). welcome to America: a critical discourse analysis of anti-immigrant rhetoric in Trump's speeches and conservative mainstream media.

Thibodeau, P. H., & Boroditsky, L. (2011). Metaphors we think with: The role of metaphor in reasoning. *PLoS ONE*, *6*(2), e16782. http://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0016782

Ungerer, F., & Schmid, H. J. (2006). *An Introduction to Cognitive Linguistics [Elektronisk Resurs]*. Longman.

The Interrelation between the Threatening Violence of Dams Construction and the Atrocities of Indigenous Women and Nature: an Ecofeminist Reading of American Indian and Nubian Literature

Samar M. Maatouq
Department of English
Faculty of Arts
Minia University,
Minia, Egypt
Email: samar.muhamad@mu.edu.eg

"A people is not defeated until the hearts of its woman are on the ground"

– Cheyenne proverb

Abstract

American Indians and Nubians are entirely different cultures with different backgrounds both spatially and timely. Yet, these two indigenous cultures, that apparently had no contact with each other, experienced similar conditions of exile as a result of building dams in their homelands. Both American Indians and Nubians suffered from forced migrations which are extremely related to water. As a result their lives experienced an ultimate and deep anthropological change. Though numerous studies have been conducted on these two cultures' literature, little attention has been paid to comparing the similarities and differences between them. This article aims at explaining how American Indians and Nubians react towards their environment and the atrocities they experienced. In addition, it intends to explore the subject matter of building dams as an aggression to nature and natural elements, especially water, as well as being the reason for many injustices faced by American Indians and Nubians in general and their women in particular.

Keywords: American Indians, Nubians, water, migrations, Ecofeminism.

Introduction

Since the dawn of history, water has always run gracefully and freely. Most ancient civilizations worshipped water and praised it in both love and fear. People respected the life of the rivers as well as that of their inhabitants for thousands of years. Nevertheless, during the course of time people became detached from their connection to the rivers and started to manipulate, abuse, and interfere with them. The worst taming of water ever has been the building of dams under the pretext of the supposed development. Vandana Shiva in her book *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Survival in India* comments on this water management and the "destruction (that) is taking place in the name of 'development' and progress," that "there must be something seriously wrong with a concept of progress that threats survival itself" (xiv).

This article investigates two literally works of two indigenous cultures: Linda Hogan's *Solar Storms* (1995) representing American Indian literature, and Haggag Oddoul's *Nights of Musk: Stories from Old Nubia* (trans. 2005) representing Nubian one. Linda Hogan (1947-) is an internationally recognized Chickasaw public speaker and writer of poetry, fiction, and essays. She is a winner of many prestigious awards. Her lyrical work contains Native

spirituality and indigenous systems in all genres and is considered a work of literary activism. She writes of environmental justice and its effect on her American Indian people. The second writer is Haggag Hassan Oddoul (1944-) a Nubian playwright and fiction writer who handles the concept of the tragedy of the loss of Nubia as a result of the construction of the Aswan High Dam. Though he was young of age, he witnessed the trauma of the Nubian displacement and resettlement. Through his characters' pain and suffering, he tells the story of his lost lands. His *Nights of Musk* was awarded the State Prize for Short Stories in 1990. These two literary works represent diverse environmental injustices and damage that resulted in the forced displacement of the American Indian and Nubian communities. This discussion of environmental justice brings forth the notions of not only nature, but also those of race, gender, and class. In addition, it broadens the readers' perspectives to include humans, animals, land, and water as intertwined elements of nature which form a bond.

Furthermore, this article handles the relationship between women and nature as well as the injustices they both have suffered from within what Karen Warren in her article "Ecological Feminist Philosophies: An Overview of the Issues" calls: "oppressive and patriarchal conceptual frameworks" (xii). In her other essay "Feminist Environmental Philosophy" Warren defines ecofeminism as "an umbrella term for a variety of different philosophical perspectives on interconnections among women of diverse races/ethnicities, socioeconomic statuses, and geographic locations, on the one hand, and nonhuman animals and nature, on the other" (1). Greta Gaard, one of the most celebrated ecofeminists, states that ecofeminism's basic premise is that the same ideology which sanctions oppression based on race, gender, species, etc, is the same ideology which allows the oppression of nature. That's why, according to her, "ecofeminism calls for an end to all oppressions, arguing that no attempt to liberate women (or any other oppressed group) will be successful without an equal attempt to liberate nature" (1).

The Relationship Between Indigenous People, Women, and Water

In his article "The Terrestrial and Aquatic Intelligence of Linda Hogan," Donelle N. Dreese stresses: "Water (is) a recurring image for physical and psychological healing in a contemporary world of sexism, drought, violence, and hunger" (8). The researcher's analysis of oppression and exploitation focuses not only on the mutual oppression of women and elements of nature (here water) but on how one oppressive system is interrelated with all forms of oppression as well, whether these forms are based on gender (women), natural elements (water), race (American Indians), or on ethnicity and cultural minority (Nubians).

To support the notion of the interrelatedness of oppressive systems, the idea that all of the oppressed elements are not treated as such because they are related to each other or because they share some features, but because they all are treated as "the other." In this analysis, women and water suffer from oppressive systems not only because they are related in mutual suffering, but because they are a representation of "the other" as well. Zuleyma Tang Halpin, in "Scientific Objectivity and the Concept of 'The Other'," argues:

> Women have been oppressed, not so much because they have been equated to nature, but rather because both women and nature have been equated to "the Other" [and also that] ... the same dynamic that has resulted in labeling women as inferior and justified society's domination of women and nature, has done the same during most of our history, to Blacks and other people of color, and the poor. (qtd. in O'Loughlin 148)

Having stressed this point of *otherness* and its relation to oppression, a study of the relationship between American Indians and Nubians, especially women, and water, as well as the water image and the role water plays in the cycle of life for them, is of necessity.

The Role of Water

John K. Donaldson gives us some of the "ascribed attributes" of water that can be applicable to how indigenous people feel for water. According to his article "As Long as the Waters Shall Run: The "Obstructed Water" Metaphor in American Indian Fiction," water is a "universal element; mediator between earth and air; ongoing and discernable cyclic process; origin and sustainer of life; (and a) cleansing agent" (73). Water is sacred and always metaphorically linked to cleansing and healing powers. American Indian and Nubian cultures are best described as riparian, and that is why values and beliefs about water according to American Indians and Nubians are examined.

In Linda Hogan's *Solar Storms*, "water becomes a recurring image for physical and psychological healing" (Dreese 2002, 17). This is so much true for Angel, to whom water represents healing the deep psychological wounds inside of her (mainly fear and anger) that resulted from the gaps in her blank memory and from the physical wounds and scars in her face that Hannah, her disturbed mother, has caused.

From the very first paragraph in the opening chapter of *Solar Storms*, the image of water is present, water is the first thing Angel sees when she returns to Adam's Rib, it is described as "the place where water was broken apart by land, land split open by water so that the maps showed places both bound and, if you know the way in, boundless. The elders said it was where land and water had joined together in an ancient pact, now broken" (*S.S.* 21). Angel describes her return to her female ancestors as "water going back to itself. I was water falling into a lake and these women were that lake" (*S.S.* 55). Angel herself realizes that she has a gift with water that she knows no one has, she can see inside water, she states: "I was the only one I knew of who could see inside water. No one else could do this, not even Bush. She approved of my gift. She said I could see to the bottom of things" (85-86).

Angel narrates how Agnes (resembling every woman) gains back her power when acquainted with water, even by the mere sitting silently by the river. "Agnes walked to the place where the Perdition River flowed into Lake Grand. She went alone, to think, she said, and to be silent. Always she returned, refreshed and clear eyed, as if the place where two waters met was a juncture where fatigue yielded to comfort, where a woman renewed herself" (*S.S.* 44).

Speaking of renewal through water, Angel herself experiences a strong moment of sudden revelation and self-enlightenment through water in the shape of rain. She describes a rain fall which "had the force of a sea behind it" (78):

> With the window wide open, I lived inside water. There was no separation between us. I knew in a moment what water was. It was what had been snow. It had passed through old forests, now gone. It was the sweetness of milk and corn and it journeyed through human lives. It was blood spilled on the ground. Some of it was the blood of my ancestors. (78)

Angel is made anew by the falling rain, as if she is baptized, not in the Christian meaning, but in the earth-based one. The water with its healing and cleansing powers relieved her from her pains, and for the first time, she sleeps well, without having to take the sleeping portion that Dora-Rouge made for her. She narrates: "When I slept it was deeply, finally" (78). Dreese in *Ecocriticism: Creating Self and Place in Environmental and American Indian Literatures*

states that "much of the time the water imagery signifies birth, hope, cleansing, unpolluted earth, and healing" (37).

Then Hogan, through Angel, states an aspect of American Indian respect for the powers of water and their consideration of it as a deity, by setting the example of the "Hungry Mouth of Water". In *Ecocriticism*, Dreese argues that American Indians treat the environment "as nothing less than kin and often as the embodiments of Gods or figures of great wisdom" (7). Angel describes Hungry Mouth of Water as: "A circle in the lake where winter ice never froze…. Young people, with their new and shiny beliefs, called this place the Warm Spot… But the older ones, whose gods still lived on earth, called it the Hungry Mouth of Water, because if water wasn't a spirit, if water wasn't a god that ruled their lives, nothing was" (62).

As a gesture of respecting the powers of water and to "keep the Hungry Mouth of Water content while we (Angel and Husk) passed it, Husk took a bag of tobacco from his pocket and fed it to the water, then he added cornmeal and bread" (63). Husk respects the mystical –and majestic at the same time– spirit of water and he offers it food and tobacco in order to grant them a safe pass through it. He is representing American Indians beliefs that what "is taken is returned through prayer, ritual, and ceremony to maintain the delicate balance upon which all life rests" (Dreese 2002, 7).   Then, Angel comes to the realization "The lake was alive. I was sure of it. Not only when it was large-hipped and moving, but even when it was white, contracted, and solid. The Perdition River flowing beneath moving ice was alive. So was the ice itself" (129). This is the essence of Ecofeminism, that life is an interconnected web, that natural elements are not lifeless entities, and that women are smart enough, quite enough to feel the living nature and hear its speaking voices.

There is even a deal that is made between Dora-Rouge and the water of the angry rivers; the Big Arm River having been diverted into the Se Nay. Interfering with the natural running course of the rivers, because of the building of dams, resulted in the change in the nature of the previously-peaceful rivers. ""It's angry" said Dora-Rouge…. "The rivers are angry. Both of them"" (192). Longo and Miewald state that any "attempt to control nature (water)…was anathema…. Water in particular was an integral part of the shrine and should not be changed" (55).

Being the only way to go, and angry as the rivers were, Dora-Rouge had to work out a deal with the rivers to grant them a safe pass. Angel narrates:

> It was for all these things that Dora-Rouge was going to talk to the churning river, the white and muddy foam of it, the hydrogen and oxygen of it, and convince it to let us pass safely. All this she did while we watched…. Dora-Rouge sat on the bank of the river and spoke. We could only see her lips move. We heard nothing she said. But after a while she nodded at us. "It will let us go," she said loudly….Dora-Rouge said a prayer, opened her hand, and tossed tobacco into it (the river). Her eyes were closed, a high-pitched song coming from deep inside her." (193-194)

After a fierce journey in the angry waters, "something godly brought (them) through. May be it was the words of Dora-Rouge, after all, that saved (them)" (195).

This deal that Dora-Rouge has struck is a crystal-clear evidence of the connection that exists between American Indians and natural elements, especially has water. Dora-Rouge has communicated with the river, spoken with it, and the river answered back in the same language that only they understood. This kind of a connection is what we lost in the midst of the supposed-improvement of patriarchy. We are the ones who are truly ignorant. We are surfeited in information, but, ironically, we are starving for knowledge, the kind of wisdom that the earth-based cultures have had for long centuries to go.

When we turn to the Nubian literature, we will find out that water is, too, a recurring image. Water is a crucial part of the lives and rituals of all Nubians. They have developed a deep love for the river Nile, "Our Nile is sweet and kind…. Our river is sweet…. The river of goodness" (*Nights of Musk* 25, 97). Nile represents life for Nubians. Every beautiful thing is compared to the Nile, even describing the beloved is related to the Nile; a man describes his love saying: "Sweat ran down her face and neck like branches of the Nile" (*NOM* 30). The playground of children has been the river and its bank. "We drew pure air into our chests and counted the colors of the magic Nile…. Naked we dove in and found it clear and pure. Wonderful Nile, mighty as the sea" (*NOM* 31-32). Women usually drop candy bars, sugar, perfume, and even food in the river to please it as well as its inhabitants, whether the amon nutto, the River People, or amon dugur, the River Trolls[1]. Nubians cherish the Nile, "the sacred Nile" they call it. Being sacred as it is, it is, and always has been, the main element in all Nubian life-circle rituals.

As for the relationship between the Nubians and the creatures that they believe to inhabit the River Nile, Fadwa al-Guindi in her article "The Angels in The Nile: A Theme in Nubian Ritual," refers to "a community of supernatural beings existing in the river Nile and associated with goodness and benevolence only. These beings were called *malayket-al-bahr* (river angels)" (105). John G. Kennedy, the editor of *Nubian Ceremonial Life* (2005), comments on this point saying: "It is among Nubian women that beliefs in (the river angels, or The River People) are most clearly conceived and strongly held" (104). These river people are both males and females, and the female ones are said to outnumber the male ones "because the river "favored females"" (105). The Nubians are unified with the natural elements around them especially water and its River People. In *Nights of Musk*, a wedding is described as "draw(ing) the whole village. Even the River People, inhabitants of the cool depth emerge dripping from the water alone and in groups. We can feel them down on the bank of the river sitting in the branches and among the palm fronds…. We call to them. "Welcome amon nutto, welcome People of the River"" (35-36).

In her article, al-Guindi also cites how the rituals concerning the life-cycle of the Nubians are deeply related to the Nile, whether these rituals are performed during incidents of birth, mirage, or death. She explains that the rituals concerning the delivery of a baby begin even before the delivery itself and during pregnancy. She tells us of a woman who "made a dish of *asida* (bread cooked in milk) and took it to the river where she threw it to the river creatures so that they would ensure her an easy and successful delivery" (110). After the birth of the child, the mother carries "a knife" and walks to the river followed by the midwife who carries "the sand on which the blood of delivery had dropped, seven dates, and the afterbirth" (111). And on reaching the river, the woman throws all these things inside it. For the *sebu'* celebration, "seven dishes of food… seven drops of perfume, seven drops of henna, and seven drops of kohl" (111) are thrown into the river. After that, these seven dishes are filled with river water in order to be "taken back to the house and sprayed all over the room where the child slept" (111), so that the River People would bless the baby.

The second ritual of the cycle of life is related to marriage. In the night of the wedding and before going to the wedding party, the groom goes to the river and bathes in it in order to "ensure the groom's ability to procreate children, since fertility was one of the attributes most persistently associated with the river and its creatures" (110). And early on the first morning of their married life the bride and the groom bathe together in the Nile and drink from its

---

[1]According to the Nubians, Amon nutto, the River People, are the good inhabitants of the river bottom, and amon dugur, the River Trolls, are the evil ones.

blessed water. Oddoul describes this scene in his *Nights of Musk*; a scene of water running in their bodies and souls:

> In the darkness before dawn, we jumped into the celestial Nile to perform our ablutions in its pure and holy water. It flows from the springs of Salsabeel in Paradise. The rippling water has its effect. It passes over our bodies and we absorb its silt and fertile mud…. The water of life…. It embraces your sweet body slowly and deliberately and seeps inside it until it rests in the womb. (40)

The third and final life-cycle ritual is that of death. al-Guindi explains that the death ritual that is related to the river take place on two different days; first

> at noon the day of the death and once again on *kobar* day, the day on which women visit the cemetery after a death…. On both days women purposely (go) to the river together and wash their faces. This was said to "cool the body of the deceased." After washing they sat for a few minutes by the river, leaving their faces wet. This allow(s) the corpse to relax in its grave. (110)

Dams as Violence to The River

Vandana Shiva in her book *Staying Alive* provides a profound analysis of the multiple forms of violence done to the rivers as a result of damming their natural course. She argues that the dams are built by patriarchal engineers, experts and technocrats with masculinist minds, who treat water as a passive, linear, and static entity. They never participated in an integrated water cycle as natives, particularly women, did. "Projects of controlling the rivers, of damming and diverting them against their logic and flow to increase water availability and provide 'dependable' water supplies have proven to be self-defeating" (176).

There are many horrific effects of damming and diverting rivers from their natural course: first, missing the point of the cyclical nature of water and that its diversion results in the depletion and drying of groundwater sources and wells, as the river is prevented from recharging them. Second, damming rivers and reusing their waters several times before their disposal into the sea conducts the problems of water-logging and salinity, which cause the third bad side effect, that the reduced inflows of fresh water into the sea, and the notion that the running fresh water into the sea is 'wasted', leads to disturbing the balance between the fresh water and sea water, which by its turn results in the increase of salinity levels, sea erosion, and the marine life (174, 175, 176, 177).

All of these injustices, and many more, are characteristics of projects that work against, rather than with, what Shiva calls "the logic of the river" (177). The irony is that building dams was intended to increase water availability and stability; however, water crisis and scarcity resulted. Indigenous peoples, women particularly, who are deeply related to the rivers and water, resisted the damming of what they hold as sacred rivers, and fought against their dislocation and against the profanation and destruction of their sacred sites. However, their struggle is not only for their immediate purposes, but they speak for the rights of the river itself, expressed in Linda Hogan's words: "No one had asked the water what it wanted" (*S.S.* 279). Linda Vance in her article "Ecofeminism and the Politics of Reality," expresses this Ecofeminist endeavor of identification and empathy: "We… fight for the preservation and protection of wild rivers… because their wildness resonates so deeply with our own, because we know ourselves what a joy it is to follow one's own course" (136).

In Linda Hogan's *Solar Storms*, the violence that the water faced at the hands of the patriarchal western man, even before the building of dams, is highlighted from the beginning of the novel. Hogan tells us of a healing mineral water that was dynamited at the order of a bishop "who wanted to spite the superstitious natives who said, and even worse, believed,

that they'd been healed by those milky waters…. Bubbling waters that came from stone… the bishop maintained that any healing in that place must have come from the devil, who lived under the land" (66). By this act of hatred, rather that love, the American Indians further rejected the western notion of patriarchal Christianity; "Because of the killing of the waters, the Indians who journeyed there for healing let Christianity pass them by; they didn't want a god that made them sick and took away the remedy" (66).

Because of the diversion of the rivers from their natural running course, the waters were "muddy, earthmoving" (102), instead of the soft music of the running water, "the river was a deafening roar" (191), and as a result of forcing two rivers to be combined in one path, water "rushed down, overfull… The water of two rivers, forced into one, was deeper and wider than it should have been" (191-192). A personification of the two "fighting" rivers who "had probably never liked each other in the first place" (195), signifies the aliveness of rivers in the American Indian perspective. Water had to be turned "back to where water wanted and needed to be" (277-278). "Water… had its own needs, its own speaking and desires. No one had asked the water what it wanted" (279).

The angry water will eventually stand up for itself; hopefully, it will bring damage on water-obstructing dams. As Angel states:

> And in time it would be angry land. It would try to put an end to the plans for dams and drowned rivers. An ice jam at the Riel River would break loose and rage over the ground, tearing out dams and bridges, the construction all broken by the blue, cold roaring of ice no one was able to control. Then would come a flood of unplanned proportions that would suddenly rise up as high as the steering wheels of their machines. The Indian people would be happy with the damage, with the fact that water would do what it wanted and in its own way. (*S.S.* 224)

A Biblical allusion to the diluvial story of Noah is given, representing the complete damage that came upon land and animals: "In this flood, there would be no animals escaping two by two, no one to reach out for those who wander gracefully and far on four legs, to take hold of the wading birds with their golden claws at the bottom of water, to carry to safety the yellow-eyed lynx, the swift dark marten" (355). However, this time, unlike Noah's ship, there are no survivors. Angel hopes that the angry water would flood everything and the destruction would be devastating and through, and would leave non of the oppressors alive. Through the acts of men, "the greedy, hungry water…claim(s) everything it once created" (338). Because of the actions of men, the life-giving water would turn into a life-taking unmerciful power that would take back everything it once gave life to. Unfortunately, to Angel and whoever was waiting for water to take its (and their own) revenge, water did not over-flood. It was trying to adapt to the new course, however not so successful. At the end of *Solar Storms*, the face of the earth is altered forever, and water is trying to cope with the change. "Now the river below us was trying to learn its new home, its new journey. It wasn't doing very well. Nor was the dry land that had been under water, now exposed to air, not yet with new grasses sprouting from it" (348).

"Seasons of the south, uninterrupted since the dawn of time, beware of the deluge. It will engulf you for an eternity in one final season … the season of grief" (89). This is how Haggag Oddoul begins *The River People*, mentioning the indissoluble loss of the Nubians. Asha laments the status of the river and condemns the evil dam for obstructing the good river. She addresses the dam: "They dumped you into the way of the mighty river. You have blocked the life-flow of water. Behind you it has built up and drowned half our land. The river is good like its people, but the dam confined the water in a huge lake" (96).

Water is angry from this confinement. It used to run unobstructed into the valley of goodness; "The water swelled up like boiling milk" (96). However, instead of disemboguing its fury over the northerners who were violent to it and built the dam to obstruct it for their own benefit, water turns its anger on and submerges the land of those who loved it: "And as it rose it swallowed up half the green valley and destroyed it. It drowned lines of palm trees and polluted the sweet water. It ruined the time of peace and purity" (96).

Asha hopes for the river to stand up for itself and defend its right to be running freely, and get rid of the hideous dam. She demands: "Smash the dam to pieces. Flex your muscles in anger. Bring forth an invincible flood, not around the sides but headlong into the high wall. Smash it down into a thousand and one bricks. Carry away the remnants of its destruction and scatter them far and wide" (105-106). However, the river does not obey Asha's callings, and a final season of grief does engulf them with the death of both Asha and Siyam.

Women and Water: The Fellow-Sufferers

One of the concepts of Ecofeminism is that hierarchy leads to patriarchy. That is why hierarchal social structures allow the domination of one group over the other, and result in what Warren calls the culture/nature, human/nature, man/woman polarizing dichotomies (xii), which sanction the human destruction of nature and oppression of women. Vandana Shiva in *Staying Alive* declares:

> The devaluation and de-recognition of nature's work and productivity has led to the ecological crises; the devaluation and de-recognition of women's work has created sexism and inequality between men and women. The devaluation of subsistence, or rather sustenance economies, based on harmony between nature's work, women's work and man's work has created the various forms of ethnic and cultural crises that plague our world today. (42)

For indigenous women, subjugation is doubled. Lorelei Means states: "We are American Indian women, in that order. We are oppressed, first and foremost, as American Indians, as peoples colonized by the United States of America" (qtd. in Smith 22). While indigenous people suffer in general from being uprooted, forcibly migrated and reterritorialized into unsuitable conditions, women are the worst victims, as "separations from family members, homes, tribal regions, from their ways of life, their languages and identities are just a few of the various forms of human and cultural fractures" faced by women (Dreese 2002, 37).

One of the severest consequences of reterritorialization which harshly affected women is unemployment. Up until the time when patriarchal regimes decided to force "development" upon indigenous peoples, they were able to survive, no matter how harsh the environmental conditions get, they had always been able to get on terms with these conditions. However, when dislocation and appropriation occurred, indigenous people were often relocated in unproductive lands. So, indigenous men had to migrate again in order to make a living, leaving their women and children to loneliness and despair. Donelle Dreese, in *Ecocriticism*, states:

> Families were torn apart because fathers had to move away to find work. The pressures to conform to the dominant economic system and to sacrifice their own way of life were daunting. By being forced to participate in the Western cultural economy, families were broken up and experienced new hardships they did not know how to confront (and from which they did not suffer before). In suffering literal physical removals, either onto reservations or to find work, the Native communities who were devoted to and intrinsically connected to place underwent widespread cultural disintegration. (93)

While their men are obliged to migrate to work and support their families, "women continue to be linked to life and nature through their role as providers to sustenance, food and water" (Shiva 41). This situation of the building of dams and the subsequent destruction of nature and dislocation of indigenous peoples resulted in what Shiva calls "feminisation of poverty" (11), which she explains as "the destruction of ecologically sound traditional technologies, often created and used by women, along with the destruction of their material base is generally believed to be responsible for the 'feminisation' of poverty in societies which have had to bear the costs of resource destruction" (10-11).

The image of the society of reservations/villages that consist only of women, children, and elders is a concurrent one that is found in American Indian and Nubian literature. In spite of their loneliness without their men, these women were, as Linda Hogan describes in *Solar Storms*, "mighty women" (29):

> The first women at Adam's Rib had called themselves the Abandoned Ones…. The first generation of the Abandoned Ones travelled down with French fur trappers who were seeking their fortunes from the land. When the land was worn out, the beaver and wolf gone, mostly dead, the men moved on to what hadn't yet been destroyed, leaving their women and children behind, as if they too were used-up animals. (28)

In Adam's Rib "there were but a few men, and you could count them on the fingers of two hands" (28). However, *the mighty women*, though the poorest among the poor, would not give up. "The women eked out their living in whatever ways they could, fishing or sewing. They brought in their own wood, and with their homely, work-worn hands they patched their own houses to keep sleet, snow, and winds at bay. They were accustomed to hard work and they were familiar with loneliness" (*S.S.* 28). These women did not give up on themselves, and though they were struggling under the weight of life, they did not let go, and they tried their best to support their families, children, and elders.

Very similar to the hardships experienced by American Indian women, Nubian women have experienced unspeakable horrors of being alone without their husbands in barren, alien, and inhospitable surroundings. Nubian women remained in their "new" homes in the villages of Kom Ombo –where they were forced to migrate– to sustain the "old" way of life, customs and traditions, while their men are away to work and bring the supporting money. In some cases, most men either remarried and forgot about their wives-at-home, or left the country altogether and travelled abroad to seek a long-lost freedom.

After their displacement, Nubian women faced multiple hardships. Because of some of the social rules that forbid Nubian women from work, the impact of the feminization of poverty and subordination of women is present in the severest way. Haggag Oddoul in the two short stories of *Nights of Musk*: *Adila, Grandmother* and *The River People*, presents two female protagonists: Awada and Asha, respectively, who endured hard conditions in the resettlement reservation. The grandmother in *Adila, Grandmother* talked to her son in furious, sharp words because one of the family elders, "great-aunt Halima had gone to the Egyptians' market to sell eggs and some chickens she had reared. It was a terrible disgrace" (13). Then the grandmother burst into crying over their Old Nubia, lost to the building of the High Dam, accusing the northerners for their hunger and harsh life conditions, blaming them for the state of estrangement they are living in and for their loneliness as the result of the migration of their children.

Some of these children even married northern women and set for themselves new lives, leaving Nubian women alone in the villages, and the rate of unmarried Nubian women was remarkably high. In *The River People*, Asha curses and blames the High Dam for

separating her from Siyam, her lover, and feels ominous about being born in the same year of its building. "The dam has destroyed my life", says Asha, "I was born the year it was built, and what an evil omen that was. The dam drove Siyam from the village. It has filled me with deep sorrow and made me suffer great loss" (105). She addresses the dam: "Dam piled high, you are the same age as me. You split up lovers…. We could no longer make a living. The men went north to work… They went north to the seaside girls" (96).

After Siyam's drowning, the women who were doubly estranged; first because their men: fathers, sons, and husbands, left them, and second because they were left behind, not in their old homes, but in an exile; lost their self-control. As Asha exclaims:

> The women, who were as stable and solid as a pillar of rock, had lost their stability. They wept for Siyam. They wept at the fate of their husbands and sons in exile. Terrified of an unknown future, they bemoaned their lot, the migration of the men to the north, to the painted white women of the north, and the danger of seduction. They were left with the burning heat of the sun and the parched earth of their drowned land, and their own inevitable destiny. (112)

Based on the previous presentation of the multi-faceted forms of inequities that women faced, it can be inferred that the building of dams, that already had oppression on indigenous cultures in general, oppressed women severely, both physically and psychologically. In addition, the interrelated injustices of dams are extended to include the oppression of water as well.

Conclusion

The answer to all these atrocities that are faced by American Indians and Nubians in general, and their women in particular, as well as the violence against water, all caused by the building of dams, is what Shiva calls: "The recovery of the feminine principle" (50). The base for the recovery of the feminine principle is the inclusion of nature, women, and men: "In nature it implies seeing nature as a live organism. In woman it implies seeing women as productive and active. Finally, in men the recovery of the feminine principle implies a relocation of action and activity to create life-enhancing, not life-reducing and life-threatening societies" (51). "The death of the feminine principle" happens when women and nature are associated with unproductivity and passivity, and the death of it in men happens when "a shift in the concept of activity from creation to destruction and the concept of power form empowerment to domination" takes place (51). Thus the solution is not patriarchal; it lies in respecting our nature, because it is the disregard of nature and the breach of building dams that got humans in these atrocities in the first place. A reunion with land and native cultures, establishing a relationship of inclusion between humans and their environment, and demolishing dualisms of man/nature, culture/nature, male/female, white/colored, are essential commandments that must be followed in order to save the environment and make earth a more habitual place for generations to come.

Works Cited

al-Guindi, Fadwa. "The Angels in The Nile: A Theme in Nubian Ritual." *Nubian Ceremonial Life: Studies in Islamic Syncretism and Cultural Change*. Ed. John G. Kennedy. Cairo and New York: The American University in Cairo Press. 2005.

Donaldson, John K. "As Long as the Waters Shall Run: The "Obstructed Water" Metaphor in American Indian Fiction." *American Studies International*, vol. 40, no. 2, 2002, pp. 73-94.

Dreese, Donelle N. *Ecocriticism: Creating Self and Place in Environmental and American Indian Literatures*. Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 2002.

---. "The Terrestrial and Aquatic Intelligence of Linda Hogan." *Studies in American Indian Literatures*, vol. 11, no. 4, 1999, pp. 6-22.

Gaard, Greta. "Living Interconnections with Animas and Nature." *Ecofeminism: women, animals, nature*, Editor Greta Gaard, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993.

Hogan, Linda. *Solar Storms*. Scribner, 1995.

Kennedy, John G. Ed. "Nubian Ceremonial Life: Studies in Islamic Syncretism and Cultural Change." Cairo and New York: The American University in Cairo Press. 2005.

Oddoul, Haggag Hassan. *Nights of Musk: Stories from Old Nubia*. Translated by Anthony Calderbank, The American University in Cairo Press, 2009.

O'Loughlin, Ellen. "Questioning Sour Grapes: Ecofeminism and the United Farm Workers Grape Boycott." *Ecofeminism: women, animals, nature*, Editor Greta Gaard, Temple University Press, 1993.

Shiva, Vandana. *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Survival in India*. London, Zed Books Ltd., 1988.

Smith, Andy. "Ecofeminism through an Anticolonial Framework." *Ecofeminism: Women, culture, Nature*, Editor Karen J. Warren, Indiana University Press, 1997.

Vance, Linda. "Ecofeminism and the Politics of Reality." *Ecofeminism: women, animals, nature*, Editor Greta Gaard, Temple University Press, 1993.

Warren, Karen J. "Ecological Feminist Philosophies: An Overview of the Issues." *Ecological Feminist Philosophies*, Editor Karren J. Warren, Indiana University Press, 1996.

---. "Feminist Environmental Philosophy." *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Editor Edward N. Zalta, Summer 2015 edition, web, URL: http://Plato.Stanford.edu/entries/feminism-environmental/