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Combat in “A World not for Us:” Revolutionary Writing in Aimé Césaire and Ghassan Kanafani

By

Amirah Mohammad Silmi

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

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in

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Of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Trinh, T. Minh-ha, Chair.

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Abstract

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Doctor of Philosophy in Rhetoric

University of California, Berkeley

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This dissertation explores how the writings of two colonized writers, Aimé Césaire and Ghassan Kanafani, constitute in themselves acts of freedom by combatting a rationalized knowledge that determines what is to be known and what is to be unknown. The dissertation underlines how an act of freedom, as exemplified by the texts of both writers, entails courage in confronting the cruel in a colonized life, as it entails the bravery of taking the risk of tearing open shields of concealment and denial.

The dissertation is not an investigation of the similarities and/or differences between the two writers. It is rather an “excavation” of their texts for points where there remain fragments hidden in margins or buried in gaps that point to other lives, other modes of being, in which the colonized share more than their colonized being. The dissertation is thus a relating of their writings, it is a linking, beyond classificatory categories, of the spaces where their writings mobilize and evoke each other, a search for spaces where they resonate.

In both writers’ texts, the word (poetic image) is a material object, which carries with it the load of the life that gave birth to it. In its materiality, the word carries a force that allows it to mobilize another. This study is thus not an attempt to extract the reality of the colonized from Kanafani’s and Césaire’s texts, but rather the focus here is on the latter’s creative ability, their moving force, their effects as acts of combat.

The dissertation demonstrates how it is in the realm of passions that both writers’ texts operate to allow for a non-rationalized knowledge. To be colonized is to live a degenerate, stagnant, and dead life. The mobilization of passions become not only a mobilization of other sources and ways of knowing, but more importantly a mobilization of the forces of life. The combat in both writers is not against an external entity, but it takes the form of a series of battles through which the colonized seeks to rid himself of his colonized being, to shed it off, to allow for the possibility of another life. Their texts are, therefore, not revolutionary in the sense that they call for action, but rather in that they do not allow for an anesthetized being.

A free practice does not allow for a confined being, including imprisonment in an identity or within an already defined historical trajectory. The writings of Aimé Césaire and Ghassan Kanafani refuse to position the colonized as the Other, who seeks the position of the Same. Entailed in this refusal, their defiance of existing discourses on the colonized. Their combat is not one of a politics of identity. Their writings dismantle any established identity while blocking the possibility

of establishing one. Moreover, part of their defiance to colonial as well as anti-colonial discourses is their rejection of a historical discourse of the Revolution that leaves the colonized as the Other and past of the colonizer. This refusal takes the form of maintaining that freedom is a practice not an end to be achieved. Acting outside the mode of being of exchange values, the fidai/rebel, in both writers, is not to be asked why he is willing to sacrifice his life for a dignified life. For a free act cannot be confined by questions of utility or return.

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Introduction

A Connection?

In 2010, we were reading Michel Cliff's "No Telephone to Heaven," in a class on World Literature. Different issues from the novel were raised in class discussion, but to the question about the scene in which the slave killed his master (Cliff here replicates the scene from Aimé Césaire's "And the Dogs Were Silent"), there was only silence.

Why the silence? I was expecting a political debate, a discussion for which the class time would not be enough, but there was only silence. Some smiled, why smile? When is it that we are no longer able to speak? What is it that leaves us with nothing to say, how is it that we lose words at certain moments?

This was not the first time I was confronted with this question. During the Israeli invasion of the West Bank in 2002, I was a teacher. Unable to discipline the class into a real lesson, I thought it might be better if I let them discuss the events. They were a very disorderly class, dividing has been a good strategy to rule, so I divided them into three groups: one group was the Palestinians, they needed to present their case, the second played the role of the Israelis, they needed to defend their acts, the third were the "international community," who would judge what and how things should be done. To my surprise but also disappointment, the Palestinian group was defenseless, language betrayed them, they were unable to articulate any logical statement about being colonized, they gave us invectives, revolutionary slogans, screams, they were even more unruly as a group than they were before the division... the group representing the Israelis did very well with language, they very easily wore the mask and played the role, reiterating every statement that had been used to justify the acts of an occupying power. How can this be possible? Michel Foucault would say discourse, that inextricable relation between knowledge, language and power. Yes, but does this mean that the colonized cannot speak, and if they did, is it only the language of their colonizer that they could speak, even when they are fighting that colonizer?

I believed this to be a fact for a long time. Every utterance is an act of representation, every uttered word is a being and a manifestation of a discourse, the different that we might think and know, although existent, cannot find a place in language.

But it was when I read Césaire's play, that my conviction was shaken. He said something, many things, that spoke of what I thought could never be put in words. Césaire knew what it is to be colonized, but more importantly he was able to put it in words. How is it that his words carried that which cannot be communicated in language, how do they make us know without re-presenting that which is known?

How can the Antillean speak to the Palestinian? How can Palestine be related to Martinique? An appendix island, made of the slavery and colonialism of the New World, to a country that connects the three continents of the Old World? What brings a poet like Aimé Césaire, usually associated with surrealism and/or negritude with a writer like Ghassan Kanafani, usually associated with realism and socialism? What brings the political representative with the fighter? what brings a country that is known as that of the fedayeen (or terrorists), with a country that voted for departmentalization? I have been asked these questions so many times, and I would say there is a connection. Nothing that is obvious on the surface of reality or on the surface of the two writer's texts. But maybe this is the point, these are only superficial differences, mere descriptions, classificatory constructions, a layer that covers "a profound being" (to use Césaire's words), a being in which the Antillean and the Palestinian share more than what is directly visible to us.

There is a connection. It had been years since I read Kanafani, and it was when I read Césaire's "And the Dogs Were Silent," that I remembered Kanafani, I remembered Hamid from "All That's Left to you." What is the connection? Was it the power of the image given us? Was it the weight of their words that has the power to break through language itself? Was it the act of violence, its cruelty? Was it its "surreal" being, its irrational inevitability, its power to suspend discourse? Or the infinite space that it opened leading us to no definite point? Is it Césaire's rejection of the narrative of the End of the World, or is it Kanafani's declaration of this world as not for us? Is it their pessimism or their obstinate faith in life? I could never decide, each time the question was raised I would pick one to give as an answer, but the one picked would lead me to the rest.

I do not claim their truth; the connection could be something else. But one truth I am certain of: it was Césaire who reminded me of Kanafani. But this dissertation is not an attempt to establish similarities, it is rather an attempt to reach these points where two words uttered by two different writers, from two different countries, mobilize and evoke each other, a search for the spaces where they resonate.

This dissertation is a study of the writings of Kanafani and Césaire, it is not a study of their lives, their inner thoughts or psychology. Foucault has argued that the author's name plays a classificatory function, it "serves to characterize a certain mode of being of discourse..." (*Aesthetics* 211). It is this function of classification that I want to try to avoid in this dissertation; what I want to underline instead is how their writings defy rules of discourse, expose them, show their truths, I also want to point to those spaces, gaps, and fissures, that their texts open in discourses on the struggles of the colonized, allowing us another way of seeing and knowing.

The Fighter, The Writer, The Poet.

A Palestinian and a martyr were enough for most writings on Kanafani to be confined to the mission of extracting his life and death from his texts. His stories are his story and his story is the story of Palestine. The frame established, the narrative already written by history, the story has just to be fit in that history; what does not fit into that which is established as the history of Palestine is to be discarded.

Faisal Darraj in his writings about Kanafani, moves between his life and his texts. Projecting each on the other, the text is a representation of its author, and the author's life is where the meaning of the text is to be sought. Kanafani is thus the refugee Palestinian who seeks an identity, the defeated who seeks recognition from his enemy. Kanafani is the intellectual of national liberation, the organic intellectual, the committed intellectual.

Positing the novelist as the fighter and committed intellectual, and his literature as his weapon, Barbara Harlow, in her study on "resistance literature," does not hesitate to declare the intention of the enemy behind assassinating Kanafani. Arguing that Kanafani saw in literature a means of resistance as important as armed resistance, "armed resistance is not just the husk, but the very fruit of cultivation forcing its roots deep into the land" (Kanafani qtd. in Harlow 11), she can then project the same position on those who assassinated him. Harlow here is arguing that "cultural resistance" is as threatening to imperialism as armed resistance is, to prove her point she evokes the assassination of both Amilcar Cabral and Kanafani. But how can we know whether they were killed for their writings or because they never let writing be a substitute for another fight, don't we run the risk of reducing their lives to only one aspect of it?

Could it not be that it was the fight that gave their texts the value that now allows the critics to call them resistance or committed literature. Yusuf Idris, in his introduction to the second

volume of Kanafani's *Collected Works*, argues that it was the martyrdom of the writer, he gives the example of both Kanafani and Che Guevara, which turned their words into words made of blood and flesh, that gave them life and truth. For Idris, the immortality that the martyr achieves is also given to his words (23).

If not about his life, then it should be about his people that Kanafani writes. For Ahmad Abu Matar, what Kanafani speaks of in his stories is limited to Palestine. The writer either expresses the social and political movement of the Palestinian people, or he prophetically foresees its movement (205). Kanafani's literature is thus studied as a whole because it followed the movement of the Palestinian people, each of the novels expressing a certain stage in it (229).

Idris too thought of Kanafani's work as a whole organic being, or "a whole work of art that is larger than the sum of its constituent parts, and which in the end makes the "story" of Ghassan Kanafani." Nevertheless, Idris states that to read Kanafani's stories each on its own leads to something else (24).

It is this something else that I seek to explore in Kanafani's stories. To start from Kanafani the fighter and the martyr, to posit the writer before the text, is to not only confine and limit the plural of which it is made as Roland Barthes had it (*S/Z*), it is also to be complicit in a politics that exceeds literary criticism, a politics that sought to confine and define the struggle of the Palestinian *fidai* as it sought to confine the meaning of his writing. It is to turn the writer who sought the being of the rebel (Chapter Five), into a function, an ideological one, that of the author (Foucault, *Aesthetics* 221-222).

Kanafani's "Farther than Borders," rejected the lumping together of all Palestinians into a case, stripping them of their individuality and differences. Celebrating Kanafani's martyrdom at the expense of his stories as well as his life, is keeping the Palestinian, as a case, in his place: a refugee who should keep his place in the refugee camp, submitting to a present of defeat and dreaming of an endlessly deferred return to a Palestine now turned into a paradise.

But nothing is kept in its place in Kanafani's stories, Kanafani rejected the position of the all-knowing subject who tells of Palestine and its people, as he rejected to give it to any singular entity. Kanafani could not be confined to a "Palestinian" identity already defined for him. This rejection is clear in his stories, in which the shifting of positions of the one who tells, the one who listens, and the one being told of, (Chapter Five), challenges our ability to establish an all-knowing subject who owns the story. Moreover, by maintaining that which is plural in it, the individual and the different are also maintained.

Kanafani attempted in his stories an "objective" "he" but his "he" is always shaken by an implicit "I", which often invades the "he," taking its place. Kanafani could never adapt himself to the position of the actor, I would think he was not clever enough, he lacked the necessary skill; but it was the skill of adaptation that the free writer failed to have, for adaptation is the condition of the weak in their inability to confront (Nietzsche, *Gay Science*).

The poet never shied away from his speaking "I." His insistence on that which is particular and different has been either read in the realm of Hegelian dialectical narrative where he is the Other who seeks the position of the Same (Arnold; Nesbitt), or within a surrealist and/or fascist narrative (Davis; Scharfman), in which the unconscious of the speaker, (taken to be the poet), becomes the object of investigation. But, as demonstrated in Chapter Three, the position of the Other who seeks that of the Same could not be maintained, for Césaire's speaking "I" follows the different directions in which life moves.

Jacqueline Leiner has described Césaire as a man with diverse dimensions, who embodies contradictory and complex traits, that only a cubist portrait might be able to embrace the different

aspects of his being, but it would not be completely satisfactory for it would freeze that which is moving whether in the being of the poet or his text (qtd. in Kesteloot, *Césaire* 7).

It has often been said that the text exceeds the writer. Describing the writing of his “Notebook,” the poet had something to say, he wrote “from his heart,” it was possible for him since he *intended* a notebook, not a poem. Intending a notebook allowed him to give that thing that he wanted to say to his pen, it made it possible for him to just let himself write (37). This is not an effacement of the self; it is rather a liberation from the position of the author as a function and as an ideological product.

In Chapters One and Three, I argue that the institutionalization required for ideology to acquire the function attributed to it by Louis Althusser is not present in the mode of being of the colonized; mainly because it is never a single mode of being. Moreover, while ideology is based on processes of inversion and naturalization, these processes are constantly contested by the visible presence of the oppressing power and the contradictions it creates. The fight against colonialism itself creates a condition of instability that does not allow for a complete naturalization of that which is present (Chapter Two). Confrontation and fighting become a mode of being that is incompatible with one that is based on division of labor. Writing thus is not an institutionalized task, but one more act.

To treat them as a poet and a writer entails that their texts are read independently of their lives, for to seek a meaning of the texts from the lives of Césaire and Kanafani lead to the objectification of their lives as well as of the text. It is thus in the text itself, in the plural and different that constitute it that I am interested. Following with Barthes, instead of seeking a true meaning intended by an author, the text is treated here as a plural of signifiers, whose networks and interactions are traced. The act of interpretation here does not follow any linear path, for it does not establish beginnings or ends; “it is reversible; we gain access to it by several entrances, none of which can be authoritatively declared to be the main one.” This is not a liberal act which consists “of magnanimously acknowledging that each one has its share of truth; it is a question, against all in-difference, of asserting the very existence of plurality” (S/Z 5-6).

The Weight of the Word

Writing of his words in a letter, Kanafani sees them as “a meaningless substitution” for a fight that he does not fight but that others do (qtd. in Hammud 225).

It would be true, words are mere substitutions they are representations and the object of their representation, the act, the thought, the feeling, is absented in the very act of representation (Nietzsche, *Gay Science*). If we look in them for that which they represent, then they are empty mirrors. But the function of the poetic word is not to communicate a meaning, it is not to represent; it is not to be studied according to its ability to reflect reality, but rather its effect lies in its creative ability, its moving force.

The poetic word, endowed with force, a materiality, operates in the realm of passions, it works on the level of the body, it does not exclude our consciousness, for it does not presuppose a being split between conscious and unconscious parts. But it requires a suspension of a certain mode of knowing. To grasp the moving force of the poetic image, its creative ability, Gaston Bachelard suggests that we need to “dephilosophize” ourselves (236). We need to rid ourselves of a rationalized knowledge that establishes for us what is to be known and what is to be unknown.

In Chapter Five, I show that poetry’s effect does not lie in a suspension of consciousness, but rather in creating an opening, another space where what we are conscious of is not that which we have done away with, or that which has left us. Consciousness here is not a part of ourselves

objectified to be communicated to others, but something that is ours, that comes from “the heart,” as Césaire put it.

Poetry, for Césaire, is a liberation, not only of a colonized being, but of “mankind.” It allows for breaking from any domesticated subjected being. This has been understood as a search for an original being, a true self, that one would have access to through poetry (Davis; Munro; Ngal). But as I demonstrate in Chapter Three, Césaire was seeking a free being, which defies any form of confinement including that which comes from an identity.

Nevertheless, studies of Césaire’s poetry remained limited by a rationalized discourse, which was unable and unwilling to conceive of the free independently of an already established Truth. Truth and freedom have been intertwined, according to Foucault, in and through acts of confession, transforming man into both the subject and object of knowledge. Confession does give the impression of that which is poetic, “one goes about telling, with the greatest precision, whatever is most difficult to tell.” The confession “is driven from its hiding place in the soul, or extracted from the body” (59). But this truth is “thoroughly imbued with relations of power” (60).

This is not what poetry is in Césaire. In Chapter Five, I show that for Césaire, Poetic imagination does not seek to bring that which is buried deep in the unconscious to consciousness, but it seeks to mobilize the forces of life in that which is buried under a dead layer. As Bachelard describes it, poetic imagination takes place on “the surface that separates the region of the same from the region of the other,” it does not work on the conscious or the unconscious “levels,” it is not a confession. It is a “sensitized surface.” Poetic language opens other spaces on the surface of being. And language bears within itself the dialectics of open and closed. Through meaning it encloses, while through poetic expression, it opens up (222).

The force of Césaire’s poetry, as I explain in Chapters One and Five, lies in that space opened by the poetic image, a space where a being of denial, concealment, unwillingness to confront are confronted as such. In both Césaire and Kanafani, the being of the colonized is affirmed, not as an act of confession, but rather as a confrontation of that which is cruel, painful, and miserable. Affirmation here is not an internalization of what it is to be colonized, as is the case with confession, but rather shedding it off. In Chapter Two, I maintain that a free practice, which is willing to take the risk of confrontation, of doing without denials and detours, conditions that which is true. Practice as the condition and measure of truth does not allow the latter to be reified into an already established Truth that becomes a confinement of one’s being.

For Foucault, the revolutionary writer is the one who would dissociate freedom from truth. For the subject, made out by this truth, is not and cannot be a free being. In Chapter Three, the focus is on how the being of the subject, as one of objectification and domestication, is rejected in Césaire’s and Kanafani’s writings as one that is lacking in life.

Césaire’s poetry was not of Truth nor of Freedom. It was of life. The two main and recurrent images in Césaire’s poetry, that of the volcano and that of the tree, are about the force of life and its ability to regenerate itself. The poetic image erupts like a volcano effecting a destruction, it shakes that which is stabilized, opens cracks, creates gaps and fissures on the surface of things showing it as a surface. The volcano allows that which is there but lying beyond the surface, that which is present but invisible, to rise to the surface. The destructive force of the volcano brings with it the potentiality of another life, for it has a fertilizing effect. It is the violence carried in the word, as the one carried in the act, that has this force of shaking that which is stabilized. Violence, as argued in Chapter Two, is not a negative force, but a positive one; it shatters a colonized, domesticated being by allowing man the responsibility for himself. In both

the word and the act, it is representation, a being based on mediation and abstraction, that is being destroyed. The practice of freedom entailed here comes from and allows for life.

The poetic word as a violent act, and like the violent act, shares the being of a tree in Césaire. It takes root in the depth of being, mobilizes and assimilates forces of life, and gives back life. It is not hatred or revenge, these are conditions of the weak, it is rather an embracement of life.

In Kanafani, a story, an image, or a phrase is given the force of a poetic image, its intensity, and ability to relay an object. The image relaying the object, does not show it as a singular entity, but reveals its relations. It “does not define its being, but its potentialities” (Césaire qtd. in Kesteloot, *Aimé 205*). The power of the story as that of the image is that it is not subject to verification. Not expending itself, it retains its force (Benjamin, *Illuminations*), for there are “more things in a closed, than in an open box” (Bachelard 88).

The poetic word breaks through that which is willed to be unknown, remembered or imagined. Reaching the depth before consciousness, it liberates the past from being imprisoned by a stagnant defeated present. But the power of the word in Kanafani does not lie in his narration of the past or the documentation of the Palestinian history; nor does it lie in a certain form, a certain technique, or style. Its force lies in certain phrases, images or statements, which say many things and nothing. But these very phrases, are the ones whose force allows them life outside the story that is being narrated. Invoked they invoke another space and another time. The word uttered carries with it the load of the life which gave birth to it. This is not an imposition of a past on the present, but the ability of a force of a life to mobilize another.

“Hence poetry is something more philosophic and of graver import than history”

(Aristotle, *Poetics*)

History takes the form of war, of struggle, writes Foucault, rather than that of a language. It can be studied, “in accordance with the intelligibility of struggles, of strategies, and tactics,” but it cannot be studied through dialectics, for the latter avoids the reality of conflict by seeking to resolve contradictions, or by semiotics, for ““semiology” is a way of avoiding its violent, bloody, and lethal character by reducing it to the calm Platonic form of language and dialogue” (*Power 116*).

A revolutionary writing is thus a writing that would show that truth itself is a matter of struggle, a battle, “it’s not a matter of a battle “on behalf” of the truth but of a battle about the status of truth and the economic and political role it plays” (132).

Césaire’s and Kanafani’s texts are battle grounds, their writings are acts of fighting in themselves. They are not substitutions; but in their mode of being, they are rebellious acts. Notwithstanding his longing for another fight, Kanafani’s “Fares Fares” has conceived of art as a form of struggle. Art is necessarily a revolutionary act, the artist for Kanafani cannot be but revolutionary. This is not an insertion of the writer into an established institution to which he adds his signature, as Barthes has described revolutionary writing (*Writing*); on the contrary, it is art in Kanafani that precedes and pre-conditions the revolutionary, which means that without art the revolutionary cannot exist (*Fares*).

But Kanafani’s revolutionary, like that of Césaire’s, is the rebel; Kanafani did not appreciate a Marxism that does away with the individual, sacrificing freedom for equality. For him, Marxism turning the human into an object of investigation turned people into a herd where all are “heads” (the often-used term in Arabic to refer to an individual member in a herd) (*Ma’arij 164*). Neither did he seek a liberal notion of a subject sentenced to freedom! As I mentioned above,

in Kanafani's texts, any form of objectification of man is a site of struggle; for man is a cause, and it was the writer's cause.

It is not a coincidence, that despite the movement of Kanafani's texts between different forms. Multiplicity, the many stories that one story can generate, remains the most consistent feature in his stories. Instead of cutting from reality, his texts allow for a proliferation of stories. In Kanafani, the story of the Palestinians, as his other stories, is not one, it cannot be put in a narrative. Kanafani's texts consist of stories, both individual and plural. They are fragments that cannot be totalized in one metanarrative or a historical document.

Why would Aristotle hold poetry as truer than history? What kind of truth is it that poetry has? Why does art precede the revolutionary, for Kanafani? Why is the poet the one who can achieve a mode of being similar to that of the plant, for Césaire? Is it art's ability to go beyond the categories and classifications through which rationalized knowledge is produced, shattering them, showing the exclusions of which they are made?

In his writings about colonialism, Frantz Fanon argued that it is colonialism that brings the colonized together. What they share is their deprivation of "their right to constitute a people." With this deprivation, a colonized being as it appears in Fanon's text, is one that suffers "stultification, illiteracy, moral asphyxiation, and the endemic undernourishment..." (*Toward* 145).

Nevertheless, as I show in Chapter Three, in both Césaire and Kanafani, the colonized are not posited as the Other, who seek the position of the subject of law, but they rather seek to break from this otherness. A break that entails both the affirmation and the rejection of this position. Linking Césaire with Nietzsche, Donna Jones, has maintained that Césaire never sought recognition or confirmation, for it "can only imply conformation." The aggressiveness of Césaire's poetry has its roots in this indifference to the way he has been seen by others (168).

The uprooted Palestinians are not presented in Kanafani as refugees who beg for pity. As Chapter One demonstrates, affirming a colonized being rather than denying it. Kanafani's stories consist of cruel confrontations, making visible acts of denial and detours. They show the repulsiveness of the weakness and sickness of a colonized being. We find very similar images in Césaire, as we also see in the quote from Fanon, for this has been the image of what colonialism is. There is no denial in Kanafani and Césaire. These images are not negated, but this does not imply a submissive position, what is there is confronted to be transformed. The cruelty of their texts is both a shaming and a stirring of anger, agitating and disturbing that which is stabilized and pacified; ridding oneself of layers under which life is being held prisoner.

The complexities and contradictions of the lives of the Palestinians as they are presented in Kanafani's texts show that there lies behind them a refusal to reduce the being of the Palestinian into a mere victim of colonialism, and a belief, despite a present of defeat, and despite the declaration of this world as not for us, in the existence of a latent force which might not have exploded yet, but is there ('Ashur 55).

It is this belief in life that is the driving force behind fighting for another world in a world that circles upon itself. Césaire's poetry celebrated life, as Jones demonstrates, it affirms existence as perfection. It is not a celebration of suffering, neither a confinement of the being of his people to slavery but rather a stirring of the passion for life (177-178). Césaire affirmed a "fundamental black," but fundamental refers to that which is profound and lies in the depth, not a true and singular origin, but roots. The fundamental black in Césaire "is fundamental in two ways: fundamental in terms of the retrieval of real, living heritage against a false tradition in which social roles are given as things, and fundamentally true to lived experience beneath concepts and reason" (170).

In Chapter Four, I show that both Kanafani and Césaire rejected a “revolutionary” narrative of time, which by defining the future through the End, trapped us endlessly in the present (Kosellek). But they did not seek another world that is created by a reactionary movement to the past. Following with Nietzsche’s formulation of origin as heritage and descent, I argue that something of the past, although hidden and buried under the surface or in the margins of what is present, allows for a space in which the present could be confronted, and through which a horizon for the future could be created.

Chapter one: Shedding off Colonialism

Affirmation as a Practice of Freedom

In the writings of Aimé Césaire and Ghassan Kanafani, the struggle of the colonized is a struggle against being colonized; that is against what makes the colonized: slavery, the humiliation, the suffering, the subjugation, and the submissions. Colonialism here is not posited as something that stands outside a subject who struggles for his liberation, but rather it is a struggle for another life. Both writers' hope lied in life and its ability to overcome that which in it kills the ever present possibility of a new life.

Liberation is a shedding off and a growing out of being colonized through continuous acts of confrontation; which become acts of freedom in the continuous transformation they entail. Confrontation involves breaking through acts of substitution and strategies of denial, as well as blocking detours. It is to shed off that which paralyzes, inhibits and entraps. Denials and delusions as strategies away from confrontation are doomed to failure, for the colonized is always reminded of the oppressive reality of colonialism. But as Césaire has written, with desperation comes hope, and misery brings with it the possibility of revolt. Affirmation of the reality of colonialism becomes a necessary act of liberation. This is a cruel process, it involves inflicting pain, the ability to endure it, and overcome one's colonized being.

According to Lilyan Kesteloot, Césaire's people are crushed under the forces of ancient slavery and modern exploitation in the form of colonialism; fear of hunger, unemployment, sickness, or imprisonment, rendered them "debased, without revolt or ambition, resigned and futile" (Aimé 12). Similarly, Frantz Fanon has focused in his writings on the work of colonialism on the colonized, where the latter is the victim and object of the operations of the former; the colonized native, according to Fanon, is turned into an object through colonial "exploitation, tortures, raids, racism, collective liquidations, rational oppression..." The objectification of the Negro leaves him helpless, "without means of existing, without a *raison d'être*, broken in the very depth of his substance..." (Toward 35).

This dialectic rationalization of colonization, embodied in the split between the colonizer and colonized, the active agent and the object of colonization, is not at work in Césaire and Kanafani. What their texts write and seek to transform is a miserable colonized life. Both writers reject the position of the dependent/object of the colonizer colonized, they write and their writings become a confrontation, an externalization and a shedding off of colonialism.

While both Césaire and Kanafani were affirming life, their way of affirmation is based on remembering, on bringing to the surface, externalizing and confronting the misery of life under colonialism. In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche argues that "knowledge kills action," for to have an "insight into the terrible truth" one can only see "what is terrible or absurd in existence wherever he looks..." For Nietzsche to know the truth of the world is to realize that nothing can be done to change "the eternal essence of things" (41). But for both Kanafani and Césaire, it is by knowing himself as colonized, subjugated and humiliated that the colonized is forced to fight for his freedom.

The recurring sentence throughout the first part of the "Notebook of a Return to the Native Land" (*Collected Poetry*), "at the end of wee hours," tells of the futility of a colonized life, the hopelessness that comes with being colonized. In the "And the Dogs Were Silent" (*Lyric*), the description the Rebel gives to being enslaved is one of a dejected dying life, it is an unending life

of night and misery. The stagnation of such a life comes with a kind of “animal resignation” of an enslaved being unable and unwilling to fight for another (10,14-15). All possibilities for change are aborted; only degeneration grows and lasts. A new day ends before it is born; sources of hope are blocked, Césaire’s speaker describes this being as a being without a reason for being. It is a condition of muteness and inability to act. Even when there is a voice, when there is a movement, they are rather a detour from confrontation, from any cry, or act of protest (*CP* 35; “Notebook”).

His is a town paralyzed by its fear, of disease, of hunger, of poverty, of suffering, past and present. Fear surrounds the town blocking any way out of it, the Martiniquan finds no escape from fear, whatever direction he looks, there is only fear, for whatever he has done was coming out of fear and perpetuating the sense of it, blocking any possibility for movement out of it: “At the end of (the wee hours), this inert town and its beyond of lepers, of consumption, of famines, of fears squatting in the ravines, fears perched in the trees, fears dug in the ground, fears adrift in the sky, piles of fears and their fumaroles of anguish” (37).

The colonized has no voice, “for starvation has quicksanded his voice into the swamp of hunger.” Hunger here does not become a moving force that leads to a revolt, hunger is so overwhelmed with its own horror, that it becomes a paralyzing force, it is “Sluggish flabby hunger, a hunger buried in the depth of the Hunger of this famished morne” (37). To Fear hunger, is to remain trapped in fear, dominated and colonized. Hunger is where the being of the colonized is produced and reproduced in new forms, for to be colonized is to take part in that exchange of cowardliness for “good butter, good milk,” a meal for cowardliness (*Tragedy* 17). Césaire seeks to break this fear and cowardliness, fear cannot be the condition of life of his people, the condition for their satisfaction/dissent. He rejects for his people the position of the subject conditioned by material necessity, who is domesticated/colonized by fear of hunger and other fears. What Césaire fights is the repression that such a fear leads to, a repression that comes with the oppression of a colonized life that is unable and unwilling to protest against itself.

Uprooted and having not only their lands and houses but also their lives confiscated, the Palestinian refugees found themselves forced into an unfamiliar life, in an unfamiliar land with their weapons confiscated at the border. The promise of return was not fulfilled; hunger, need, fear and helplessness became the characteristics of the new life. Betrayed by the bitter truth about return, it became hard to mention Palestine or the happy past in its houses and groves (Kanafani, *Collected Works* II: 373; “The Land of Sad Oranges”). The promise unfulfilled becomes a wound that does not heal, and silence becomes the way in the new life of helplessness. Away from the hand that tended to them the orange trees are said to shrivel and die, the orange they carried with them from the land of oranges hardened and dried and so did their life (374-375). Becoming refugees, losing their home they lost a life, and were now waiting for a new destiny (369).

The life of the Palestinian refugee away from his land, was a life of misery, poverty, and humiliation. Humiliation comes with an inability to act and fight for one’s destiny. In Kanafani, the helplessness, passivity, and submissiveness as the conditions of a colonized life are condemned as characteristic of a dead one. “In Men in the Sun” (*CW* I), the passive submission to being colonized, the inability of the Palestinians to act lead them to the tragedy of the tank (al-Youssef 7). As Youssef al-Youssef points out, it is not only the moment of being negated that is condemned here, but also the submission to such a negation.

According to Faisal Darraj, Kanafani’s Palestinian cannot fight unless he transformed himself. The Palestinian needed to realize his faults and failures in his consciousness and practices, he also needs to realize the reasons of his “flight” from Palestine, and the reasons on which the Zionist built his victory. Kanafani, “employs “shock” to force the Palestinian, if he is rational, to

cast off his traditional answers and questions, and to find new ones” (“al-‘Ar” 55). In Darraj’s reading, fighting in Kanafani takes two forms: “fighting against negative aspects in his character and existence, and the fight against his enemy” (43). But in this reading, the colonized Palestinian remains trapped in his dependency on the colonizer: the Palestinian is liberated from his illusions when he meets the armed Other, the Palestinian imitates the Zionist soldier in seeking “the world of true nationalist values,” this imitation results from the old law of the “charm of the victor” according to which the backward and the weak, the defeated imitates the advanced and the strong. The Palestinian then, according to Darraj’s reading of Kanafani’s “Return to Haifa,” learns honor and fighting from his colonizer: “if Khaled is the potential remaining honor, Dov is the true realized honor, but inverted, because the potential honor that the Palestinian will acquire through the coming fight, the Zionist had already achieved in his old and new battles at the same time” (“Suwar” 27).

Darraj sees Kanafani as following the Socratic rule of “know yourself,” to know oneself is to shed off the old skin of the colonized defeated being and replace it with a new one, for, according to Darraj, “the battle is one of knowledge before being one of courage” (“al-‘Ar” 54). The battle is formulated here within a Hegelian dialectical framework, where the colonized (slave) is opposed to the colonizer (master), struggling with him and seeking to take his position. In Darraj’s reading, therefore, to know oneself is to know the enemy, the liberation that he sees in Kanafani is one that is based on a process of constructing a Self and an Other, where the Self is defined through its Other. However, as I argued above, Kanafani’s and Césaire’s combat did not follow any dialectical framework, for part of their practice of freedom required that they start by rejecting the position of the Other. Moreover, neither writer sought knowledge to construct a Self through a process of negation and denial, but rather through a process of affirmation. As Nietzsche has shown, a noble morality develops from a positive affirmation of itself, this act of affirmation is based on directing one’s view back to oneself instead of outward. The latter is a slave morality, one that defines itself in opposition to an Other, negation is its “creative deed.” It “needs a hostile external world” to exist, for “its action is fundamentally reaction!” (*Genealogy* 36-37).

In Nietzsche, a noble morality “acts and grows spontaneously” (37); and is based on both life and passion. In Kanafani and Césaire, it is through an affirmation of what is present, an acceptance and confrontation, not a submission, that both writers construct a liberated and liberating knowledge; such a process entails courage and cannot be without it. Knowledge thus, as I argue in this chapter, does not precede courage, a knowledge that is liberating and liberated comes with practices of freedom.

The practice of freedom, according to Michel Foucault is an ethical practice, it is based on a kind of asceticism, “not in the sense of a morality of renunciation but as an exercise of the self on the self by which one attempts to develop and transform oneself, and to attain to a certain mode of being” (*Ethics* 282). To know oneself is an ethical practice, it includes “knowledge of a number of rules of acceptable conduct or of principles that are both truths and prescriptions. To take care of the self is to equip oneself with these truths: this is where ethics is linked to the game of truth” (285). The practice of freedom that comes with this ethical knowledge of oneself is based not on mastery or domination over an Other, but on a “certain relationship of domination, of mastery...or power, command” with oneself (286-287). Otherwise one is a slave: he has no ethics and cannot practice freedom.

The servant obeys, according to Enrique Dussel, because he is dominated. Domination works through fear and habit (55), when resisted domination is turned into repression, an introjection of the norms of the dominator takes place. From what Dussel calls an autorepressive

introjection of power, with the weakness of the dominated, resentment arises, but is sublimated “as the virtue of patience, or obedience, or discipline, or fidelity” (56).

Resentment is a symptom of the revenge of the self on itself, when the instinct for freedom is repressed, it can only “discharge and vent itself only on itself: that, and that alone, is what the bad conscience is in its beginnings” (Nietzsche, *Genealogy* 87). Resentment comes with a feeling of guilt, whose source is an unpaid debt, escape and flight instead of confrontation, and denial and negation instead of affirmation. It is this feeling of guilt that is the condition of a subjected being. It comes from a repressed freedom of instincts, from a denial of the self, a refusal to take responsibility for it, and a suppression of the need to rebel. This process necessarily creates a God and a Devil, which are no more than rationalized creations of a bad conscience that needs to sustain itself (92).

Such a process of denial, exclusion, and repression is an integral part of being colonized (McKay 172), in it the colonized Negro learns to loathe himself and glorify what colonizes him. The Martiniquan Negro is proud of his relation to France, the closer the Martiniquan sees himself to France the less Negro he is (171). To be a Creole who speaks good French is another step in the race hierarchy, which distances the Martiniquan from the Negro and brings him closer to the French. The Martiniquan denies any belonging to Africa, he emphasizes this point by not mixing with the Africans. But Africa is present in the white world and it is this presence that the Martiniquan Negro resents, for he is convinced that without this presence “we were liked, we were respected, but now...” (171).

The Martiniquan Negro denies his history, slavery is what Africa is for the Martiniquan, it is that part of his being that he wants to escape, the strategy is denial, repression and projection on another Other that would prove to the Negro that he is not an enslaved Other but a Self.

In this rationalization, or what Nietzsche calls the madness of the will of a repressed subject, a punishment as a payment for a guilt is sought, but no punishment can become equal to this guilt, for it is a guilt that comes from the repression of one’s instincts (*Genealogy* 93). Denial and negation instead of affirmation and confrontation block any way out of this labyrinth of continuous punishment of the self. This cannot be a condition of life, but of death, which usually takes the form of a dead life, in which the main ingredients are helplessness, weakness and cowardice.

To write slavery is to create movements of destruction, breaking, cracking, rupturing, convulsing; movements which would bring out to the surface, shed off, cast out, the enslaved being of the Antillean (*CP* 79; “Notebook”), even if such movements involved the killing of that enslaved being, for it is only in its “spilled blood” that the “nigger scum rediscovers the bitter taste of freedom” (81). The Negro has to go as far as the slave ship, it is by getting the seated slave to stand up, to confront all that comes/came in his way in the three hundred years of the journey of the slave that he might become free.

Césaire fights against submissive positions through a painful and enraging affirmation. Confronting slavery, with its suffering, wounds, defeats, treasons and poverty (65), is an affirmation that entails a provocation of feelings of shame and anger. Instead of denial and covering of wounds, feeling shame and anger turn passive acceptance into rejection and rebellion (67).

Anger is what Césaire writes in his poetry, for with anger comes the ability to confront and fight, with these another life is born, and the being of the slave is cast off. Césaire does not therefore write about the oppression of colonialism, but rather he writes his anger at and rejection of a colonized reality. His is a cry against that which should have been a condition for pain, anger and

revolt but was not. This in Césaire necessitates shedding off that which is dead, and making an opening for that which is still alive. The struggle is against death, the death of life manifested in the desire of preserving it on its expense.

The process of shedding off layers of colonialism, involves opening of wounds and de-anesthetization of pain. Pain is inflicted in tearing oneself apart. Césaire's "beautiful egotism" describes the humiliation, the baseness, and the loss of dignity that comes with submitting to the image of the black as created by Europe (59).

For Césaire as for Kanafani, confrontation instead of escape, affirmation instead of denial necessarily come in acting in rebellion. Seeing the ugly, the sick, and the wounded, not just seeing it but touching and feeling it guards against all colonized temptations towards deceiving themselves. The necessity of confronting that which is there is clear in Césaire's statement: "Presences it is not on your back that I will make peace with the world" (*CP* 75; "Notebook"). The colonized has to realize that he has been humbled, domesticated and suppressed, that his life has been one of mud "Soil of mud, Horizon of mud. Sky of mud." In their rejection of a "realist" bourgeois knowledge, both Césaire and Kanafani give the ultimate value for what is there and what is present, for both writers, no act of freedom can come in blindness, or in escape to what has been or should be. Seeing, a non-censored, non-realistic seeing, and in a certain sense an irrational seeing, is the fighter's condition.

In the "Notebook," we are given a description of the craziness and foolishness of being colonized, the foolishness here refers to attempts to shun away the present reality, to not see. Detours do lead away from that which is avoided but they lead back to it. To escape from something that one ought to confront is to be trapped in it endlessly.

The diseases of a degenerate life bring with them a weakening of the senses, a condition in which pain is not felt, and the ability to see becomes weaker (73). Wounds from the past are still present but denied; martyrs "do not bear witness;" their blood does not flower into a new life; instead it is lost in the empty wind. "An aged silence bursting with tepid pustules" (35) blocks the cries that should come out of the agonies of being colonized. The need to survive the oppression and humiliation of slavery and colonialism, taught the colonized patience, to overlook his wounds, and to put to sleep his anger (55). The lack of feelings of shame and anger here is not a symptom of a peaceful, reconciled life, it is rather a symptom of a life of suppression, one that blocks any path towards another life. To rebel, the Rebel had to see himself as a defeated man, severed, offered and rejected: "I a defeated harvester of tepid flesh" (*Lyric* 25; "And the Dogs").

A Dead Life

Death without dignity was the destiny of the three men in "Men in the Sun" (*CW* I), "The victims weighed down by despair, frustration, and lack of experience are lead to one result: death" (Darraj, "al-Ar" 43). Darraj criticizes Kanafani for his lack of "ethical sympathy" with the three men. According to him, the question asked by the emasculated trafficker, Abu al Khaizuran, "Why didn't they knock on the tank walls?" "is a protest against leaving the homeland not against the silence of the perishing" (44). The Question as Darraj points out, in its violence, hits and shakes the Palestinians to rethink their past, present and future. Nevertheless, Darraj is more concerned with sympathizing with the miserable colonized who he sees as being severely punished by Kanafani for the sin of leaving their homeland. What Kanafani sought and was successful in doing was this severity in inflicting pain, which takes the Palestinian with the last question back to his life, in its present, past and future. Kanafani was not seeking to accumulate sympathy for the Palestinian victim of Zionist colonization, but rather he was seeking to liberate the Palestinian

from his colonized being. For as Fanon has shown, when confronted with oppression, the slave's response has been lamentation, and attempts at soothing oneself through multiple and different mechanisms of self-delusion or distraction. In criticizing the Blues as one such response, Fanon argues that the blues was actually another symptom of the being of the slave, for him "Without oppression and without racism you have no blues. The end of racism would sound the knell of great Negro music..." (*Toward* 37).

The Palestinians were defeated and the price was losing their land. Kanafani, in so many stories, tells the story of resistance, loss and defeat, in which the Palestinian is never a mere victim, a defeated weak being or a fighting hero, but all of these combined together. The defeat, and the loss that came with it, was too enormous to confront, too overwhelming to describe, it was as painful as a knife cutting inside one's body. But although there was no place for words, there was still the horizon behind the gate to look at (*CW II*: 297; "The Horizon Behind the Gate").

In his "Of Men and Guns", Kanafani tells the stories of peasant rebellion and defense of the land. But he also shows that they did not have the military power that would allow them to win the fight, the colonizer had control over the space and the battlefield. The Palestinians could only fight from the ground and from underneath it (*CW II*: 655; "Dr. Qassem..."). Their sense of power came from their knowledge of the land, they knew every stone and every tree, including the history of every tree (677; "Abu al-Hasan"). They did not have the weapons, and, although they did, fighting with bare hands could not liberate Safad. But lack of weapons is not a justification for a defeated being, weakness and helplessness bring with them a feeling of bitterness and shame, enchainment, and anger. It was the lack of weapons, but it was also the dependency of the Palestinian on others to provide these, if one wanted to defend one's life, land, and freedom one cannot do that while being dependent on others. One cannot beg for a weapon; a man gets his weapon (708; "The Child and his Father").

Kanafani did not hold his characters guilty for the defeat, for one cannot do more than carry the weapon and fight. But the Palestinian becomes guilty and is treated as such as long as he is not fighting. The Palestinian cannot demand respect, neither can he maintain his dignity in a position of weakness and dependency, he will have to fight for that which has been taken from him, return it, and when he is in a position of power, he can teach those who humiliate him what hospitality is, something he cannot do when he is not on his own land (338-339; "A paper from Tira").

In Fact, Kanafani did despise the life of the refugee. In his "The Blind and the Deaf" (*CW I*), the Deaf resented that hunger is what he knew, that the only signs he could hear/read were the names of food items on the lips of the people, for it is all what he had been "hearing" (deciphering) for twenty years, handing food parcels to those who lost their lands and became hungry refugees. What he could hear was the humiliation of asking for food, just as the Blind could recognize with his fingers a bread loaf. They resented the reduction of the life of the Palestinian to basic needs. The Palestinian becomes blind, deaf, and mute, for in his life of uprootedness, he should do without most of his senses, and live buried. The Blind in the unfinished novel sells bread, for "the bread is the only thing that one can see with fingers, as he could with eyes" (477). The Deaf also is "well-positioned" where he is, for "no other man could tolerate that flood of paralyzed anger for twenty years... I was the iron gate to the castle of philanthropists, on whose feet, the voice of anger is crushed" (481). For the Deaf, the refugees were helpless without a voice. To live the life of a refugee is to become the object of others' wills and acts, a means through which they reach their goals: "The refugees are a road of twenty-years length, on which everything and everyone walks" (515).

This feeling of shame and humiliation of being a refugee filled much of the violence of the last question in “Men in the Sun,” as Darraj states, but it was not for a past sin that Kanafani was punishing his characters, neither was he holding them responsible for what the Zionists did, rather he was holding them responsible for what they themselves did not do. To be expelled of one’s homeland is a strong source of shame for a man who did not learn to rationalize defeat. But Kanafani’s punishment for the three men was for their passivity, submission, and unwillingness to fight for their lives, which starts with the Nakba, but reaches its absurd extreme in not knocking the walls of the tank. Darraj here gives an insightful description of Kanafani’s punishment of the three men:

The truth is that Ghassan who lived the experience of being a refugee in its most miserable forms, was ashamed of his refugee people, and was very angry with his characters who did not feel the shame, or felt it in a sudden late moment. This is why he sentenced them to death. After he shed a penetrating light on their moral and spiritual poverty, inability to foresee, (*Husband*); they do not protest the insult, they are feeble, broken, with a weak memory, attached to small dreams and big illusions, selfish they know how to run and do not know how to confront, they live in a past that they could not defend, and in a present they did not know how to deal with. They build dreams on paper and see them in a future whose meaning they do not grasp (“al-‘Ar” 44).

While Kanafani’s critics focused on the “tragic” destiny of the three men, death is not the ultimate punishment for defeat and submissiveness; to live wounded, with all efforts at anesthetizing, or deadening the pain of the wound failing, is a crueler punishment.

To live with shame unable to rebel against the disgrace of the present is the destiny of the man who lost his manhood, one who is unable to generate life, and who is unable to see any path for another life. In a case like that of Abu al Khaizuran in “Men in the Sun,” there is no question of acting differently, for he is, as Radwa ‘Ashur describes him, the embodiment of absolute desperation that turns a human into a pathetic rat who eats and is eaten (65).

Shame is a sense that comes with certain values, it is an emotion that the noble man has, as Aristotle had it (*Rhetoric*). Only the brave and the strong can feel shame; a weak man, someone who is crippled by fear does not feel shame, for he is too weak to confront and act upon such a feeling. In such a case, rationalizations that turn sources of shame into virtues like cleverness, tolerance and practicality, or just the desire to preserve life, are employed to turn the feeling of shame into a ridiculous stupidity, an irrational emotion that is characteristic of those who within another value system can be stigmatized as mad. Abu-al Khaizuran’s question by the end of the novel, following his throwing of the three now dead men in the garbage dump, and taking their belongings, comes from the rationality of a preserver of life, the one who survives but on the expense of life.

The concealment of the wound becomes a suppression of any feelings of shame. The mother of a *fidai* and a martyr could imagine the pain and shame of a wound that digs deep in the neck as something crueler than death. For the mother of the martyr, for the woman who lost both her son and the land, the man who did not die but lives with a covered wound would feel the cruelty of shame, he would realize the disgrace of his wound, when what he sold is fought for and won back (*CW II*: 180; “The Man Who Did not Die”).

Values are not transvalued by an assumed “free subject’s choice,” they are not a matter of an objective ability to see, or make a judgment in a certain manner based on fixed truths or principles of rights and wrongs. Values do not exist independently of the practices that produce and sustain them as values. They involve the subversion and displacement of power structures and relations, they simultaneously determine the object of struggle and its methods, and they are

themselves its object. It is not the victor's (colonizer's) values that are embraced, in fact, they are to be combatted; for they are the values of a weak degenerate life.

Money was the ultimate form of valuation in the cases of Abu Al-Khaizuran and the Man Who did not Die, functioning as a substitution for that which is lost, and as a cover for a wound that never heals. The refugee child stuck in an endless struggle for food shows the entrapment in which one falls when money becomes the object of both will and desire.

The life of a refugee child struggling with hunger as the daily burden is "the time of engagement," it is the time of continuous clash with the enemy, in the time of engagement there is no peace, truce, rest, or withdrawal, "in engagement you are always passing between two bullets...that is the time of continuous engagement" (715; "The Child goes to the Camp"). The fights were over food, found and picked, grabbed from a lorry, or from the ground. The enemy could be the other kids, store owners, policemen, but also themselves. In the time of engagement, "the world stands on its head, no one demands virtue...to live in any way and any means is a victory of virtue...when one dies virtue dies too...in the time of engagement the first virtue is to keep yourself alive, everything else comes next, but since the engagement is continuous there is no next, you are never done with first" (717).

The time of engagement is not a time of confrontation, it is not a fight in which a kind of liberation is achieved, it is, on the contrary, a continuous flight, the narrator in the story describes what it is to win a battle in the time of engagement: "I ran without looking behind, I was a soldier running from the battlefield of a war he was forced to participate in," the narrator felt he could do nothing but keep running while the rest of world was in his trace (722). The narrator won money, but winning the money entrapped him in a closed circle, "having the five liras was more important than its use. In my pocket, it looked like a key that I have in my hand and which I can use anytime to open the exit door and leave. But whenever I approached the lock I would smell behind it the time of another engagement. A long term one. As if I would be returning to the beginning of the road again" (726).

But this continuous flight has to be broken at one point. It is when the colonized is confronted with the question of "then what?" a question that comes with the humiliation and shame of being weak and helpless, or to be more precise the shame of submitting to a condition of weakness and helplessness, to a life of continuous flights. It is then that the Palestinian sees himself Othered and trapped, it takes a cruel affirmation of this othering, of what the Palestinian has been made to become: a passive object of someone else's act. The Palestinian colonized is a criminal without a definite crime (281; "Farther than Borders"). He is transformed from a person to a case, The Palestinians are leveled together, dissolved and made to be one thing. They are deprived of their individual characters, there is not even a need to go through complex processes of differentiation and classification that would result in multiple groups.

The Palestinian refugee as an individual is a pig; and as a collectivity is a case with a commercial, touristic and political power value. He is a traitor, coward, laggard, deserter. The Palestinian as a refugee is not the Other of the occupying Zionist, but the Other of the Arab hosts who define themselves as faithful, fighters, heroes, who do not give up and who do not escape... the Palestinian, othered, becomes the exemplary object of punishment, through which the hosting society is disciplined (286).

The Palestinian fugitive confronted this cruel truth when he realized that his bleeding wounds were because of his escape and not because of an attempt to cross the borders back to his homeland. With the confrontation, came the question of "then what?" What he realizes is that "there is not a "then what,"" for his life has been running in a line parallel to that of his cause

(282). The cruel affirmation, which posed the question, creates a break from the straight line that has been the life of the Palestinian refugee. To think that there is “no then” opens another path, hope is found in the limit posed by the answer. It is the subversion of madness, when one asks: “what life is this? ...death is better.” The question is screamed, and screaming is contagious, everyone will be screaming it, and “since people usually do not like death they have to think of something else” (287-288).

It is through the power that comes with affirmation, in the sonority of the cry that affirms the poverty of a colonized life, that a break of this being is created. In Affirming his Otherness, the colonized affirms his being as colonized, as made and defined by the colonizer, no attempts at defending himself are made; indeed, all attempts at defense and denial are rejected, and accusations are accepted: “Dances, Idols. An apostate. I too” (Césaire, *CP* 51; “Notebook”). This affirmation of the crimes of the enslaved Negro, is also a rejection of whatever is sacred and religious in Europe, work, God, morality, “I have assassinated God with my laziness with/ my words with my gestures / with my obscene songs” (53). Affirmation of primitiveness and paganism is not an identification that seeks to create an identity, but is rather a repetition, a kind of parody, that involves an inversion and displacement of positions. Césaire’s colonized speaker here, contrary to Fanon’s argument in his *Wretched of the Earth*, does not become the colonizer, and does not seek to take his position. Neither does he internalize what he is said to be by the colonizer, instead what happens here is a process of externalization, to repeat, to speak out the accusations in affirmation, is to spit them out; a revolutionary positive act as described by Caliban. It is not one that is based on a relationship of negation; but one that seeks to free the colonized from the game of colonizer/colonized, Subject/object. What it subverts here is the barrier between the subject and object, the self and the other, for Césaire’s speaker here takes on both positions, affirming both and rejecting both by this very affirmation: “I have worn parrot plumes musk cat skins/ I have exhausted the missionaries’ patience/ insulted the benefactors of mankind. /Defied Tyre. Defied Sidon/ Worshipped the Zambèze. /The extent of my perversity overwhelms me!” (53)

Anger and Pride: The Return of Life

Césaire’s Rebel while acknowledging the poverty of an enslaved life, displaces the meanings of what it is to be poor, the lack is affirmed and in the act of affirmation, no substitution that leads to delusional satisfaction is allowed. “The strange beggars with millennial faces who sometimes threaten/ sometimes salute the dawn/ they’re me/ every night a hunger awakens them amidst the madrepores/ a hunger for a larger sun and very ancient coins” (Lyric 21; “And the Dogs”).

It is out of pride that the Rebel wants more and wants better. Pride is the moving drive of life for the noble, the healthy and the strong. The proud cannot be disciplined, pride stands as the culprit of the never completed mission of subjugating the African and the Arab. To be proud is to always ask the question of “then what,” to want a larger sun, to never accept a humiliated passive position. Pride comes as the source of both feelings of shame and anger, for pride means to reject victimization, objectification, exploitation and exoticization, it rejects the position of the colonized. To not have them, in the Arabic saying, is to not have blood running in one’s body, or in Césaire’s language to live a dead life.

Kanafani wanted to give the humiliated a lesson in rising up, to free them from the shame of “subjugation without promising them anything” (Darraj, “al-‘Ar” 50), because feeling shame and rebelling against it is the biggest victory. Darraj criticizes Kanafani for his lack of concern with the end result of the act of rebellion; for him “What changed takes place inside the Palestinian

and does not open to what is outside, what is different does not change anything in the Palestinian lived reality.” Indeed, Kanafani does not posit freedom as an end result to be obtained after a struggle with and against an “outside world,” for freedom is a practice and comes in practice. At the same time, the transformation in the colonized and humiliated Palestinian towards feeling shame and rebelling against it is a practice of freedom that cannot take place only in an assumed internal sphere that is opposed and separated from an outside reality. The problem in Darraj’s criticism rises from what he assumed should be the outcome of the act of confrontation, and was not. What was most disturbing for Darraj was that Kanafani’s “All That’s Left to You” ended without giving an end, it ended with a rebellion without a clear, satisfying—even if in illusion—end.

To rationalize an act according to a planned end, to some kind of utility, is in a way contemptible, a symptom of cowardliness and short-sightedness that would only lead to further helplessness and humiliation. To calculate the repercussions of fighting, to succumb to fear and live a life of fear is to lead a petty life; the life of the herd in which one is lead without will and without knowledge. To shut one’s eyes to what is present as an escape from confrontation and fighting, is tragic and laughable for one cannot really calculate the end, knowledge and will are about the present, they are about how one does things, i.e. practice. The only end for Kanafani is man as he becomes through his practices; it is the how rather than a pre-determined end to be realized that is the measure of freedom.

The fidai, is the one who fights for a life, the mode of being of the fidai leaves aside calculations of predetermined ends. While the herd/crowd seek the preservation of life, the fidai/rebel, does not seek to preserve an existent life, but to open the path for another, by confronting, subverting and even destroying that which in the present kills life. In his reading of the figure of Caliban, Roberto Retamar shows that to be independent is to affirm and confront, accepting with honor that which is meant as insult (16). To act in rebellion, to affirm blackness, the Negro is no longer only a descendant of slaves, he is also the descendant of those who rebelled and marooned. Caliban is both a rebel and a slave, but an unconquerable slave, one who remained crude and undisciplinable. Serving Prospero, his slavery, remained only one aspect of what he does, always done in defiance, Prospero never becomes the master for Caliban, even when he obeys his orders. Caliban does not internalize Prospero’s domination, on the contrary, he externalizes it by his continuous acts of rebellion.

In “All That’s Left to You” (CW I), Both Hamid and Maryam acted in rejection of a life of humiliation. In their acts, they did not only cast off helplessness and passivity, but they also just as the runaway Palestinian in “Farther than Borders,” were breaking from the straight line that was going parallel to their cause. The break was achieved when both decided that substitutions are not sufficient, that they wanted more and better. Instead of seeking a definite end, both Hamid and Maryam found the source of their resistance in the proliferation of the question of “what then?”

Hamid felt the humiliation of passivity when realizing that he should not be killed, for he, unlike the fidai who was executed, did not do anything. The should-be-fidai, but who is not, realizes the ridiculousness of being afraid, when in the end he is acquitted and declared innocent for he had not done anything (CW II: 737; “Salman’s Friend”). The humiliation or ridiculousness of both cases lies in an innocence whose other side is guilt; for both were innocent because they were afraid to do what they should have done, but guilty and indebted for the very same reason. The story ends with all those who opted for the role of the spectator being punished for the act of the fidai. But his acquittal was different from theirs, it was the difference between those who did not fulfill their promise and the one who did, between the colonized and the free.

Doubly humiliated by becoming kin with a traitor, Hamid seeks liberation in the retrieval of the lost mother, who became the better future that he dreamt of and was seeking when escaping the cruelty of his present (*CW I*; “All That’s Left”).

In searching for a lost past, a search “that leads only to a bottomless loss” (202), there is some liberation; one that comes from the movement entailed in the search. Some kind of unravelling of an enveloped being takes place when one seeks a lost past. In the movement towards a lost past, one is thrown into the waves, simultaneously feeling the immensity, strength, and solidity of his body but also poor helplessness (162). Kanafani’s Hamid was moving in hopelessness and enagement, with his senses and ability to reflect suspended. But it was this loss of direction that at one point brought him to see the dependent being that he was; searching for an illusion fed and nurtured by his failure and helplessness.

But Hamid’s confrontation with his helplessness, is what Foucault has described as the visibility of the limit (*Aesthetics*), an opening that leads only to the void, in Hamid’s case a void without a horizon, disappears as soon as it appears, and Hamid is pulled back to the oppressive present, trapped between the being of the *fidai* that he should have been but was not and the traitor, the ghost, the dead living, who is now his brother.

It was only when confronted with danger, in complete isolation, where defending one’s life cannot be relegated to another that he felt the desire and strength to fight (204). Facing danger his senses were alive again, and the strength of his body was not accompanied by a feeling of impotence.

It is the passive, the helpless, the domesticated that is condemned in Kanafani’s and Césaire’s writings. The tragedy of the tank (*CW I*; “Men in the Sun”) becomes a mode of life, in which one dies/lives in submission without knocking, crying or protesting. Avoiding danger becomes the new virtue in a dead life. In “The Shore” (*CW II*: 535), A priest finds in religion a consolation for the monotony of his life. His acceptance is not an affirmation of life as much as an expression of the inability to reject, to take the risk and confront the danger of the uncertain as Nietzsche would have it (*The Gay Science*). On the Other hand, we find those who feel the loss and try to compensate for it, but compensations and substitutions are just other detours, that further exacerbate the feeling of lack rather than realize satisfaction. This is the case of the woman trapped in her memories trying to bring back that which has become a past. These two figures are opposed in the story to the cat, the spontaneous, adventurous future-oriented creature which, besieged, opts to jump into danger rather than remain trapped and unable to move (*al-Sa’id* 305). One either takes the risk of breaking through danger or submits to defeat (299). To take the risk of confrontation, to throw oneself into danger in rejection of entrapment, paralysis, and helplessness despite the end result is the practice of freedom.

Maryam acted in defense for a future free of acts of substitution. She did not want to become a passageway on which things that she wanted to be hers pass her by without ever becoming hers (*CW I*: 207; “All That’s Left to You”). Maryam realized that in her relationship with Zakaria, she was entrapped, that she would have to continue her life with her hands on her ears, blocking out an unacceptable reality, and with her teeth biting her lips, suppressing a cry that needed to be screamed (225). What Maryam did was put an end to a life of death, she was liberating an unknown future from dependency on the ghost Zakaria (223).

Dreams, Hopes, Horizons

The man of action in Nietzsche is unhistorical and antihistorical, he is “ungrateful to the past, blind to danger, deaf to warnings,” the man of action is forgetful. He sees what is to be, and

forgets what was, he is without knowledge (*The Use* 11-12). But for Césaire and Kanafani, a process of digging out that which has been and is still there buried somewhere in the being of the colonized is a condition for rebellion. Both writers seek to cast off a certain kind of knowledge, to unlearn a mode of being, but for this forgetting of the being of the colonized to be possible, to not be turned into a repression that comes back in the form of guilt and self-loathing as shown above, it has to be externalized, shed off. In Césaire and Kanafani to see “what is to be” is to confront that which in the past and the present comes in its way, one can and should forget that which is past, one should not be a realist submitting to that which is present; but to do that one has to see, hear, feel, and know that which is there, past and present; it is a process of defamiliarizing that which is familiarized, denaturalizing that which is naturalized, subverting that which has been normalized and standardized as that which should be known and that which should not be.

In his uprootedness, the Palestinian learnt fear, humiliation, lamentation, loss, abandonment, and confusion. But the worst of what he learnt is to consider the circumstances, which translated into an acceptance and submission to a state of weakness rationalized as wisdom. In “Hamid Stops Listening to the Uncle’s Stories” (Kanafani, *CW* II: 753-763), shame was the one truth that the Palestinian could not forget and lamentation all he could hear. But, deafened in combat, he no longer could hear the stories of the lost and fallen, neither the lessons of rationalized wisdom. In Kanafani’s story, humiliation can be forgotten, but there is only one way to rid oneself of it, the sound of combat, “it is the only sound that buries every other sound” (763). Deafness here is not a denial of reality, but a suspension of one way of knowing to allow for another.

In “Men in the Sun,” as Majidah Hammud argues, the destiny of utopian dreams that sought to turn the shack into a paradise was death (81). For these were dreams, which while being a reaction to the present, deny it and escape from confronting it. As ‘Ashur shows, the three men lost their steps in the attempt to escape the hell of reality to the dream of an oasis (59). The dream failed because it was an individualist dream in which the self is in a situation of foreignness to itself (63), and the world around it. A feeling of isolation and loneliness here comes from moving on a foreign land within a foreign rationalized knowledge, the “irrationality” of the dream is merely its inverted side. The Palestinian, rationalizing the humiliation of defeat, becomes a passive subject stripped of his knowledge and will; it is this position of defeat that allowed for the transformation of the Palestinian into a commodity subject to exchange, transportation, and disposal (79).

Abu Qais (*CW* I; “Men in the Sun”), the oldest of the three of the men, wanted to retrieve that which he has lost when he was expelled from Palestine, his olive trees. He had no vision for the future, living in the past, he could only see, smell, and feel what is no longer there. He confused the desert for his lost land, for him the feeling was real for he could feel it in his body, what was flowing in his veins could be his blood or the smell of earth. His senses, his being were living in another world, a past one. Whenever he was brought back by a cruel voice to the real present time and place, when he at certain moments realized that nothing in the desert resembled what he longed for, he felt estrangement and despair; he could only see a road that extended without end as if it were the dark eternity. Abu Qais, with his senses confusing the present for the past, could no longer live according to his own knowledge; what he learnt in an unfamiliar world was that “he should believe others, for they all knew more than he does” (46).

Abu Qais, dreaming of retrieving his lost trees, depended on a knowledge, a way of being and doing things, that was not his. His dream is not a poetic space where one leaves the space of rationalized standardized knowledge for that which is other and different (Bachelard); it is rather, in this case, Freud’s dream: a wish fulfillment that can only take place in a dream. His journey did not come out of hope for a better future, but rather his dream came out of despair, a loss of hope.

For him the journey was an escape from a dead life, in which death was both something that could be better than his present life, but also an imminent threat. He dreamt of restoring the lost trees in the lost village, and it was when he believed that he could not restore them that he sought a substitution: money that would allow him to buy ten trees. What is peculiar in Abu Qais's case is that he consciously forced himself into denial, his dream did not involve repression; going into the path of delusion, he is conscious that he is seeking an escape, he feels estrangement; but he still goes with a rationalized flight against his own will, casting off another knowledge that comes from another world and another mode of being. The struggle in Abu Qais's case is a struggle between what one knows, what he should not know, and what he should know, a new rationality in a new world order is what Abu Qais struggles with and succumbs to.

Marwan, the youngest and the least experienced in life, was the one who could dream only of "what is to be," but his "what is to be" was a reaction to what is there from which he was escaping, and by which he was inevitably defeated. Marwan would leap into a feeling of comfort and satisfaction, usually induced by something beautiful: a clear blue sky, or objects that remind one of life, the smell of straw baskets filled with dates, for example. These could carry Marwan into a state of dream, like the one a person lives when watching a film, where all obstacles disappear and life appears big and wide. Marwan preferred a dream of distraction to feeling the humiliation of being slapped on the face by a smuggler. His dream was a revenge on his present reality, a reaction to his disappointment with a way of doing things that seemed inconceivable to him. But Marwan's distraction dream was always interrupted by a sense of the wrong committed by the father and the brother. The cruel truth for Marwan was that his father and brother escaped from their responsibilities (84). The commonness of escaping responsibility, the commonness of egoism, meant that they become a common destiny for all those who choose: "to sink in the pan." For, he too had no choice but to sink "with those who have already sunk," "from here till ever!" (85).

Marwan's hope for a better future came out of disappointment, bowed to treason, insult and humiliation, and was therefore nothing more than a dream that is a way around what is present, an escape from having to think about it or confront it. Dreams based on compensation and substitution allow and justify a being of weakness, in which the responsibility of oneself for oneself is relinquished to someone or something else. These are the dreams of a capitalist mode of being, in which submission and defeat find their justification in money. Money is both practical need and the ultimate embodiment of a dream that comes from a lack and seeks to substitute for it. But a dream that substitutes for a lack could only reproduce it. Deferring itself endlessly, "until there are enough piasters," it turns the dreamer into the means through which the mode of being that gave rise to it is reproduced. For those who took the road of compensation and substitution, there are never enough piasters, and the dreamt of future never comes.

The three men had to chew and swallow humiliation. They succumbed to being helpless. Their helplessness came with having to speak a language and to go with a logic that is not theirs. When money becomes the measure of all valuation, of all deeds, when they were told that they had to learn "that ethics always come after the piaster" (84), they lost the ability to protest. For life itself was flattened into an accumulation of piasters. When the men decided to go into the tank the second time, despite their hesitation to do so, when they did not knock on the walls of the tank, it was because when they embarked on the journey, they had already handed the responsibility for themselves and for their lives to another. Embarking on the journey, they left their world and went into another, one they did not know and was not theirs. Stripped of will, knowledge and ability to fight, *not knocking* on the walls of the tank was the only thing they could do.

The three men submitted their destiny to the car. “Their dreams, families, ambitions, hopes, misery, despair, strength, weakness, past and future” were all hung on the destination towards which the car was moving (129). The destination was not a horizon but a huge door, against which the car appears to be knocking, and on which their gazes were hung. Their dreams did not give them clairvoyance, but rather the blindness of hanging one’s vision on a closed huge door.

Flight to another time, past or future leads to the abortion of the dream of another life. Between the colonized and his dream of paradise there is the “weight of the insult and a hundred years of whip/lashes” (Césaire, *CP* 55; “Notebook”). Dreams can only bring ephemeral joys, ones that as soon as they ascend, quicksand into the swamps of poverty, hunger, and fear of the present reality of colonialism. The ascension itself to begin with was foolish, dreaming of other times, better times, is crazy and foolish as long as it leaves the present intact, it was a defeated attempt to escape the misery of a colonized life that does not confront itself as such. Dream here is to have one’s eyes shut, not to see or foresee a different life, but to create a substitution for the misery that is there. Dream as a substitution, just like all detours around confrontation, is swallowed by the misery that it shuts its eyes on.

Dreams, based on substitution and fetishism, functioning as limits on one’s knowledge and will, are the dreams of weak men who lost the ability to lead their own lives, but were instead running away from them. Nevertheless, neither Césaire nor Kanafani were condemning dreams, but rather weakness, cowardliness, submission and defeat.

Assad in “Men in the Sun,” the progressive colonized was not escaping for a past or a future. Wanted for his political activities and escaping from prison, Assad had the experience of the modern mode of being, he has “rational” knowledge and political experience; but his knowledge did not stop him from submitting to being exploited. In the case of Assad, the knowledge he has appears irrelevant; it should have been the source of consciousness that would have allowed him to resist the objectification to which he was submitting, but it did not. Assad in the novel appears with a flat being, the most conscious, the most rational and the less hesitant in taking the journey; his flight is motivated by a pragmatism that usually accompanies disillusionment which does not lead to rebellion but comes with and is sustained by cynicism.

Assad had the experience of escaping through the desert, and while he was rationalizing it by necessity, he could see the end of his escape: “futile: the desert is everywhere” (59). But at the same time, as with Marwan and Abu Qais, he did not see, for Assad throughout managed to cast aside any foresight or knowledge that would contradict his rationalization for escape, his need for money. He was resolute in taking the path of escape. Assad was the strongest, in his body and in his will; but his will and his strength were exhausted in his flight. The loss of strength he felt walking in the desert, the multiple times that he was deceived by smugglers, were not signals to be seen by Assad.

Neither was the feeling of shame and humiliation, when he borrowed the money from his uncle, enough to make him see what he willed not to see. That he felt that he is being bought “like a bag of muck,” could be overlooked for the money was “the key for the whole future” (62). Any anger he felt at the insult could be suppressed, all it took was to seal his mouth and pull his fingers around the money in his pocket.

Assad a realistic cynic, knows the terms on which to negotiate, he knows that in the life of the desert, bigger rats eat smaller ones and that in finding the way through the desert one should leave the question of honor aside, for in such a context, “things go better when one does not swear by his honor” (100). Pragmatic enough, he is the most experienced in leading the life of escape, and the most qualified to speak on behalf of those who still do not know how to do it. Nevertheless,

his experience did not at any point put him in a stronger position in negotiating with the smuggler, for to be escaping is to accept and submit to weakness. His knowledge put him in a position where he and Abul Khaizuran had a common language, which was beyond the comprehension of Marwan and Abu Qais, (clear in the naiveté of their questions), but talking on the same terms with the smuggler was just another submission. Even when representing the other two men, even when recognized by the smuggler as the most “intelligent and experienced,” and even when he could discern Abul Khaizuran’s lies, his knowledge did not change anything for he too was moving with his gaze fixed on the closed door: so his final answer was “I personally care only about arriving to Kuwait, nothing else concerns me...” (102).

A realist, a disillusioned cynic, or a pragmatic liberal egoist, Assad could have been the revolutionary hero, but he was not, he was too quick to surrender, replacing one insult from the police officer with many from those who had the money or opened the road for money. A bourgeois revolutionary can never become Césaire’s Rebel, or Kanafani’s *fidai*. For neither writer was a realist; where realism dictates a submission to what is present, but neither were they utopians seeking refuge in dreams made impossible by a present that is overlooked and ignored. To rebel is to be able to see more and to want more, through a seeing that is uncensored and undisciplined, and a will that is neither structured nor subjectified. Dreams remain essential in their visions of freedom; but dreams that open horizons not ones that disguise their closure.

Horizons could be opened through imagination and recollection. Imagination is to be in a space that is neither of the Same nor its Other, it is not dictated by the present, nor is it a substitution for that which is lacking in it. Uncontrolled by rationalizations and censoring operations, one is able to remember that which has been willed to be forgotten, things that are in our memory come back in their details and differences and the complexity of their relations becomes visible (Bachelard 26). This sharper recollection takes place, according to Gaston Bachelard, through poetic imagination which opens the space for an uncensored seeing; instead of a blinding imagination, in poetic imagination there is “a pride of seeing,” instead of a rationalized escape, a desire for confrontation arises.

The rebel/fighter in Césaire and Kanafani is associated with the being of the poet. What brings them to together is their willingness and ability to take the risk of confrontation. They do not deny but rather affirm, they are not interested in ordering life but embrace it as it. The rebel/poet could do without the certainty that comes with that which is fixed and stabilized, for he himself joyfully embodies the contradictions of life. The being of a poet/rebel is one that is not flattened, he encompasses what appears in a standardized modern way of knowing contradictory traits: the poet has simultaneously the depth of knowledge, rebelliousness, peacefulness, and pugnacity (*Lyric L*; “Poetry”).

The poets are deceivers, writes Nietzsche, for they portray the impossible as possible, they “elicit a feeling of high-spirited freedom;” which is to be compared only with dancing out of “inner pleasure” (*Human* 206), a condition that is very similar to Kanafani’s Marwan in “Men in the Sun.” Although Nietzsche is not concerned with finding a Truth to be established, or an end point to be reached, he seems to be troubled with the “uncertainty” of the poet’s horizon; poetry leaves open “the road to various other thoughts...” It gives anticipation of finding something of value, but nothing to be grasped (207). The poet tends to exempt himself from the responsibility of his words. When portraying the impossible as possible, instead of clairvoyance, poetry opens the path for delusion, and rather than satisfaction and wholeness, it produces and reproduces a sense of lack.

But the certainty of the horizon is not to bind oneself with that which is fixed and stabilized. Certainty comes from an acceptance and affirmation of that which is there, which for Nietzsche is the different and changing. To have a certainty of horizon is to have clairvoyance rather than the delusion of a dream. Nietzsche, as Césaire, posits the joy of faith as a superior way of being to that which is built on repression and denial. Faith allows for courage and bravery, it is not another escape or delusion, but, because it does not ask questions about causes and end results, it allows us to dream, imagine, and know that which a rationalized way of being and knowing drops.

The Faith of the Blind

To demand certainty, “that something should be firm,” is the instinct of the weak (Nietzsche, *Gay Science* 288). In Nietzsche, faith is a sign of a lack of will, a surrender of one’s sovereignty and strength. It is needed by those who need to be commanded. Dogma and fanaticism are symptoms of the exhausted will of the weak, for fanaticism is “a sort of hypnotism of the whole system of the senses and the intellect for the benefit of an excessive nourishment (hypertrophy) of a single point of view and feeling that henceforth becomes dominant—which the Christian calls his *faith*.” Unlike the believer, the free spirit is “practiced in maintaining himself on insubstantial ropes and possibilities and dancing even near abysses” (290).

Faith as the quote from Nietzsche shows can function as one of the most efficient rationalizations of a submissive weak being; conversely, though, this could be a lack of faith, for the need for certainty comes with a lack thereof, conservatism and fanaticism may very well find their source in extreme cases of skepticism. As Nietzsche himself shows elsewhere, faith could be a source of courage that allows one to do without the need for certainty. Faith here is a Dionysian faith, which is a faith of affirmation, the faith of a free spirit that “stands amid the cosmos with a joyous and trusting fatalism” (“Twilight” 554). Rather than being a surrendering of one’s will and responsibility for one’s life, it becomes a source of courage of taking that responsibility, this form of faith is one that does not glorify weakness, helplessness and cowardliness; it rather demands that man carries his own burden; faith being his source of strength instead of a hanger on which he hangs his responsibilities, fears, desires, or repulsions. The latter form would be the faith of the priests, who, in Nietzsche, “are the most evil of enemies...because they are impotent.” With impotency comes the most poisonous kind of hatred. Their spirit is one of vengefulness, while confrontation is not their way (*Genealogy* 33).

But to have faith is a liberation from the need to have things defined, stabilized and standardized. Unlike ideology, faith could become a liberation from a monotonous life, allowing for different ways of being, by opening the space for what is individual and independent of the life of society, or in Nietzsche’s terms the life of the herd. This is not the condition of another form of religion, Fanaticism. The Fanatic is a fetishist; he lives with a sense of lack continuously reproduced by a series of substitutions. The fanatic could be an atheist as well, since the latter hangs on religion the sources of all ills in life, positing it as the main obstacle in the way of the Revolution.

In “The Blind and the Deaf” (Kanafani, *CWI*), the Blind, driven by weakness and a broken hope, goes to the *Wali*’s tomb, begging the restoration of his vision (477); hope, broken, became a road of humiliation. He sought a miracle, which, as he states, “is the alien child that grows in the womb of despair” (473). The Blind’s longing to get out of darkness was not deep faith in the power of the *Wali*, but a desperate desire. The only “truth” he saw was futility.

The Blind and the Deaf sought to change their destiny through the *Wali*, they were surrendering the responsibility for themselves to an intermediary or to an alien power as Marx had

it (“Jewish Question”). To change their destiny, they knelt in mud, they asked for pity and they “were crying within blind and deaf walls.” Weakness, helplessness and humiliation were the sources of their desires, the means thereof, and consequently the only end they could reach.

Nevertheless, in their blind and deaf being, they were in a position of a certain marginality that allowed them to question the possibility of a miracle created on the basis of their passivity and by the power of an alien being, even when they were seeking it. In a way, the subverted relation both the Deaf and the Blind had with the *Wali* came from their loss of certain senses, for at certain instances a distortion of the senses is needed to subvert an ordered way of knowing, or to put it in another way, a mal-functioning sense could create gaps through which things are seen and heard differently. Sometimes, one needs blindness to have clairvoyance, this was the case of Kanafani’s Blind.

The Blind and the Deaf address the *Wali* in a challenge that expresses disbelief in his powers, while calling back for a belief in the power of life: “I challenge you to create a miracle, to say that the pile of old mud can be worth more than the life beating in my chest and in the veins of my raised hands” (486). Their begging is a bitter sarcasm bordering on the rejection of their own helplessness, of the *Wali*’s power and with it a world they see humiliated, regressive, impotent and spat on.

Unlike others who could see and hear, the Deaf and the Blind were the ones who knew the *Wali* as a mushroom, it was the blind touching the face of the *Wali* who realized and screamed it, his voice sounding as if it were “the voice of thousands of people hiding under stones and behind trees” (492). Seeing the *Wali* as an illusion, the Blind was able to accept his blindness, and accepting his blindness he felt the liberation that someone who sees a truth feels (506). The Blind rejected the *Wali* as a shield, a boat, and a promise (504), he was willing and able to carry the burden of his own life on his shoulders however heavy this burden might be.

The Blind was not an atheist or a communist who saw in the *Wali* the enemy on which to hang all the ills of the world, he did not think that the disappearance of the *Wali* would achieve the miracle that his presence did not achieve. He sought to rid himself from the sacred/ fetishized being on which one can throw his burdens or hang his responsibilities. Destroying the tomb would not have had any effect according to the Blind, but giving the name of the *Wali* to a real poor man, an earthly corporeal being, who walks, touches, and smells (505), would break the sacredness of the *Wali*, and put an end to a life of impotency and dependency, and man becomes responsible for his own destiny.

But Kanafani’s protagonists could not follow in the footsteps of their European colonizers, replacing a dead God with Man. It was a temptation for the Deaf, who was still waiting for some kind of miracle even when discovering the *Wali* as an illusion. Giving up on the hope that the disappearance of the *Wali* will create the miracle that his presence did not; the Deaf was now dreaming of the miracle of the Revolution of the angry masses; fixing his gaze on another closed door: “I imagined that the huge door will be destroyed by the crowd in one moment, and that the refugees will advance line after another like a torrent, and that their angry voices will destroy the gates of silence in my ears... I was fixing my gaze on the closed door, as if it were the door of deafness, the door of death, the door of the undefeatable destiny which will fall in a moment” (530).

For the Deaf, the line separating between fact and dream became blurry, “I saw in the eye of truth what I have seen a hundred times in the eye of dream” (531). It was when he saw the door as a shrine that the deaf realized that he fell again into expecting a miracle. The victory that was the death of the *Wali* became a small victory melting and losing its glow. They now need to hate

him; to bring him back to life through hate to kill him again, “we can only spend from your death, to erase you completely from our life, so we can rise above you” (546).

To kill one *Wali* is not enough, one will have to always watch for other *Awaliya*’ which come from behind one’s back, Abu-Hamdan, the fighter, told the Blind and the Deaf. To get rid of the *Awaliya*’, in all their forms, one will have to pull them from the roots. One can always create a *Wali* and then kill him, to feel liberated for a moment, or one can take responsibility for his own destiny and live without the need for a *Wali* which turns out to be a mushroom tree or a dream Revolution.

In Kanafani’s story, it is not religion that is condemned, but fetishism, which functions as a substitution for a lack that is denied instead of being confronted. Kanafani rejects a defeated being, unable to fight for one’s destiny and carry the burden of one’s life, religion is not the source of such a submissive being, but ideology could be.

According to Kanafani, state or party ideology is incompatible with a revolution; it is rather faith that provides the will for fighting regardless of the end result, i.e. outside a utilitarian calculation. Kanafani argues that Islam has given the Arabs for centuries a strong motivation, it provided powerful explanations that gave the people the courage to happily die for the cause. This power is not limited to Islam in Kanafani, Luther and Ghandi were able to “elaborate a motivation for a fighting generation to have a life” (*Ma’arij* 171). On the other hand, the Soviets’ focus on the principle of trial and error, failed in providing people with the required motivation to sustain the revolution. To mobilize the people, the Soviets needed more than the banal material motivations based on practical needs. To fight Nazism, the Soviets found recourse in crowning the Patriarch Sergius as head of the Orthodox Church in Moscow’s Cathedral; this for Kanafani illustrates that “the main problem remains that people rejected the new Soviet motivations, and they needed to find new or old convictions...” (171). Kanafani here is not saying that a revolution should seek a return to tradition or to the past, in fact, he argues that to be successful, a revolution should be able to give a new motivation that is stronger than a past one, so that a new generation does not feel that their lives is an idiotic repetition of the past, a movement backwards, or a circling in an endless cycle. But the motivation that Kanafani talks about is not based on material practical needs, neither is it achieved through state propaganda, publishing houses or literary unions (173), a revolution needs a motivation that makes it meaningful. Although Kanafani does not explain what he means by motivation, his use of the term shows it to be both a drive and an outside stimulus, something that has its seeds planted inside a person, mobilized it takes root internally and is manifested through practices that are not institutionalized, it is not a coincidence that it was the fighter who was indifferent to the *Wali*, while aware of the many versions it assumes. Faith as I will show, in the next chapter, is a way of knowing and doing that takes place on the level of the body as a whole, it involves the senses, the heart, the flow of blood, and the brain. This mobilization driven by faith is something that ideology cannot effect in an individual; ideology subjectifies as Louis Althusser had it, but faith, allows for the wholeness of being, it is the space from which one can break from processes of subjectification.

While Nietzsche maintains the ambiguity of the term faith, in leftist Western writings, faith appears synonymous with both ideology and religion, which are also conflated. For Althusser, religion is defined as ideology, which makes faith an ideology. Althusser did not distinguish between faith and other fetishized entities, such as Law or Duty, overlooking the possibility that to have a faith in an entity that cannot not be objectified could be a liberation from processes of objectification/ subjectification. What is usually missed in Marxist literature on revolutions is that faith can be a drive and a force of fighting against a submissive being just as can feelings of shame

and anger, while practical need and interest as Marx had already shown creates a subject lacking in “spirit,” and unable to fight against his subjectification.

In his definition of ideology, Althusser criticizes the definition given to ideology in *The German Ideology*, as “the system of the ideas and representations which dominate the mind of a man or a social group” (qtd. in Althusser 158). Insisting on its material existence, Althusser rejects the conception of ideology “as a pure illusion, a pure dream, i.e. as nothingness” (160). Taking Freud’s unconscious as his theoretical reference, he makes an analogy between dream and ideology, arguing that ideology had been given the status of the dream –before Freud- that is imaginary, empty, null and arbitrarily ‘stuck together’ (*bricolé*). For Althusser, ideology as an imaginary representation does not reflect “the conditions of existence of men, i.e. their real world” (164), it does not represent “the system of the real relations which govern the existence of individuals, but the imaginary relation of those individuals to the real relations in which they live” (165). Although ideology is an imaginary distortion according to Althusser but it has a material existence, the “ideas” of a believing subject “exist in his actions, or ought to exist in his actions.” These actions are inserted into practices which in their turn are governed “by the *rituals* in which these practices are inscribed” (168).

Althusser’s starting point on the functioning of ideology adopts Pascal’s inverted formula, in which rituals and practices lead to belief in certain ideas, ““Kneel down, move your lips in prayer, and you will believe”” (168). Practice assumes what appears as a contradictory function in Althusser’s conceptualization of ideology, while taking Pascal’s inversion: we see ideology as manifested in practices, in the same time, he maintains that “there is no practice except by and in an ideology” (170). The apparent contradiction results from the double function that Althusser attributes to ideology, which while closing the way for any causal relation between ideology and subject, establishes the subject/ideology as the origin of any practice: “all ideology has the function of ‘constituting’ concrete individuals as subjects.” It is a double constitution, “ideology being nothing but its functioning in the material forms of existence of that functioning” (171). Although Althusser shows how this relation between ideology and practices work to reproduce the relations of production, there remains in his text the problem of the conscious subject that is produced by ideology. Consciousness as its holder is the production of an ideology, its practices are defined by ideology, the consciousness of the subject, thus cannot exceed the limits set by ideology, he cannot see that which he is ideologically not permitted to see. For Althusser, a person is born a subject through ideology, both are reproduced through the practices of the subject which are the material existence of ideology. This is the same way, according to Althusser, that faith works. Belief works on the level of consciousness, a believing subject acts “in all consciousness according to his belief” (170). Nevertheless, as I argue in the next chapter, consciousness in faith does not imply a being divided into that which is conscious and that which is unconscious, for we believe in our hearts first. This is not the case of the subject of ideology, in whom the division between a conscious and unconscious being, the private and the public, is an essential element of his subject being. This division entails that knowledge moves only in one direction, (except in the case of the mad or the poet (Foucault, *Aesthetics*)), from the conscious to the unconscious, both being the products of social institutions.

Ideology is a blindness and a refusal to see, a naturalization of that which is historical. Faith as I will show below, demands knowledge that cannot be only externally acquired, faith is incompatible with a being reduced to a mere layer, that is made to be its consciousness which is a reflection and an objectification of what it is (Nietzsche, *Gay Science*). A faith that is faith, and not an ideology, works on the different levels of the being of the human, and beyond

institutionalized forms. Ideology assures the reproduction of the relations of production “in the 'consciousness', i.e. in the attitudes of the individual-subjects occupying the posts which the socio-technical division of labour assigns to them in production, exploitation, repression, ideologization, scientific practice, etc.” (Althusser 182). This process entails the passive acceptance of a subjected being that is created through the commandments of the Subject and a non-knowledge of the reality of the reproduction of the relations of production. Ideology thus becomes a “misrecognition/ignorance” (182-183).

Althusser was able to maintain the conflation between faith and ideology, by creating an analogy with the workings of the Christian Church in Europe, this comes from his conflation of the Church as an institution with a religion that might exit and be practiced outside its rule, universalizing one historical moment of one culture on all historical periods (and) of all cultures. Althusser uses Christianity (the Church in the West) to explain how ideology constitutes a subject. According to him, Christianity teaches obedience and submission. To be a believing subject is to be obedient, “to God, to their conscience, to the priest, to de Gaulle, to the boss, to the engineer...” Althusser’s conceptualization of faith (as an ideology) is very similar to Nietzsche’s criticism of Christianity, it teaches a passive acceptance of the “existing state of affairs” (181). The Christian faith, diffused over what Althusser calls ideological apparatuses, works to naturalize the order of things in society, through mottos such as “*So be it,*” and “*love thy neighbor as thyself.*”

Althusser maintains that he discusses ideology without history, and not a certain ideology, Christian or capitalist, refusing to speak of ideologies in their multiplicities, particularities and historical forms. Ideology *in general* for Althusser has no history, in a positive sense (160-161), it is “a non-historical reality, i.e. an *omni-historical* reality, in the sense in which that structure and functioning are immutable, present in the same form throughout what we can call history” (161), history here is the history of class societies, or class struggle which determines ideology in the last instance. Althusser here makes an analogy with Freud’s unconscious, both ideology and the unconscious are eternal. He thus establishes another encompassing and universalized category that is based on two others: class struggle and the subject. His examples, on the other hand, show that it is *an ideology* based on mirroring/ recognition that functions to assure the reproduction of the relations of production, and while the mirroring/ recognition formula comes from Christianity, (a certain version of it), the ideological state apparatuses and the relations of production discussed are those of Western Christian capitalist societies; mainly England and France, (Althusser himself shows in his examples the differences between Protestantism and Catholicism in the mode of being in each society, but that does not lead him to question his universalizing formula).

Marx’s “On the Jewish Question” shows how religion and ideology come to be fused. Both religion and ideology here are synonymous with practical need. Unlike Althusser’s universalized ideology, religion in Marx’s text is Judaism, and Judaism is the religion of capitalism; and its god is money. In Marx’s text, religion is a mode of being, with the multiplicity of its spheres maintained, for practical need is multiple, polythetic to maintain the religious connotation implied in Marx’s usage of the term. Practical need in Marx’s text takes the place given by Althusser to ideology: that is what in the beginning of the text is Judaism becomes in the last part Christianity, if, in its modern form, Christianity turns to a mode of being that revolves around practical need, which is the principle of civil society in modern Western societies (50).

A religion based on practical need, has self-interest, egoism, as its spirit. In Marx, this can never be a revolutionary spirit for it is a passive one: “Judaism could not create a new world. It could only bring the new creations and conditions of the world within its own sphere of activity, because practical need, the spirit of which is self-interest, is always passive cannot expand at will,

but finds itself extended as a result of the continued development of society.” (51) It is here that one can understand the endless cycle of production and reproduction of the relations of production as discussed by Althusser. Contrary to Althusser’s criticism, Marx in fact shows the functioning of religion as a mode of being rather than a superstructure or an empty illusion,

Judaism attains its apogee with the perfection of civil society; but civil society only reaches perfection in the Christian world. Only under the sway of Christianity, which objectifies all national, natural, moral and theoretical relationships, could civil society separate itself completely from the life of the state, sever, all the species bonds of man, establish egoism and selfish needs in their place, and dissolve the human world into a world of atomistic, antagonistic individuals (51).

Religion here appears as constituent of social relations, not just as a mere palliative of oppressive conditions or a justifying representation of the conditions of a life. The quote above shows how religion turned into ideology is constituted by practices which it, in the same time, constitutes, taking us back to Althusser’s double constitution; in Marx, man is objectified in the capitalist production machine (not limited to the factory) just as everything else in a capitalist society. This objectification is what in Althusser is called subjectification and it works through recognition, the Christian mode of recognition. Religion/ideology thus implies a surrendering of one’s responsibility for one self, of his independence and freedom: “Religion is simply the recognition of man in a roundabout fashion; that is, through an intermediary. The state is the intermediary between man and human liberty. Just as Christ is the intermediary to whom man attributes all his own divinity and all his *religious bonds*, so the state is the intermediary to which man confides all his non-divinity and all his *human freedom*” (32).

Marx’s account shows religion turned into an ideology and producing one, that it becomes almost impossible to disentangle them. Nevertheless, they remained in his account linked to a mode of being, to a certain historical moment, to posit their universal fusion, is to posit the history of capitalist Europe as the history of all humanity.

Religion as faith does not teach submission, but religion as ideology does. A defeated and subjected mode of being produces and is reproduced by a subjectifying ideology that contains all within it, including religion. Religion in a capitalist mode of being involves the same processes of abstraction, naturalization and inversion. As ideology, religion consists of processes of isolation of parts, reduction to certain aspects, or one main aspect, an emptying that allows it to be confined to the consciousness of the subject.

Freedom from the Revolution

In their combat against a capitalist ideology/religion, the Marxists fell into establishing their own ideology/religion. The Marxists created their own subject, and sought a representative. They thus became trapped within the same logic they were combatting, at many instances their political agenda was a mere competition within the capitalist race and under its rules.

Marxist ideology, trapped in its being an inverted version of that which functions in capitalist societies, in its focus on the material, in its fetishized form: practical need and money, was incompatible with a struggle in which it was almost impossible to define any utilitarian ends. In his writings on Ireland, Marx shows that colonialism while oppressing the colonized and impoverishing them, exploits their misery to “keep down the working class” in the mother country. Exploiting both, the bourgeoisie was able to divide “the proletariat into two hostile camps... The average English worker hates the Irish worker as a competitor who lowers wages and the standard of life. He feels national and religious antipathies for him” (“Confidential” n.p.).

But the national and religious antipathies that the English worker feels towards the Irish are again practical need sublimated into religion and nationalism, for as Marx shows, under capitalism, there is no place for nationality or national belonging. The organization of labor under industry strips the workers from their nationality, “the nationality of the worker is neither French, nor English, nor German, it is labour, free slavery, self-huckstering. His government is neither French, nor English, nor German, it is capital. His native air is neither French, nor German, nor English, it is factory air. The land belonging to him is neither French, nor English, nor German, it lies a few feet below the ground” (“Draft” n.p.).

Universalist abstractions are false pretenses that seek to hide the baseness of their concrete goals. It is the hypocrisy of such projects that makes them repulsive. In *A Tempest*, the alliance with the “proletariat” of the West, attempted by Caliban was defeated by the hand-me-downs” of the master (Césaire 44). The bases posited by the Marxists as those of a universal struggle, set within the parameters of a capitalist world, whether they were the struggle over political power or material items become the foundation of non-solidarity and non-alliance, of betrayal and disappointment. The Western proletariat are “mistaken for thieves and treated accordingly,” the mistake itself does not really make a difference, when they accept to position themselves within the “juridical” framework, even if they argued “a miscarriage of justice.” For justice would be given to them by the very same powers that treated, framed, them as thieves (59).

The civilized proletariat “are ugly, stupid, unthinking, degraded, full of vicious prejudices, which any demagogue can play upon to turn them into a hell raising mob at any time” (McKay 231). The black man’s revolution is not based on a shared suffering with the proletariat but a rejection of its mode of being. The black in Claude McKay’s *Banjo* opts for the concrete and the non-abstract, the real in its chaos and simple complexity, rather than the simplified, systematized and universalized abstract, it is a rejection of an ideologized mode of life, the black boys have an “unconscious artistic capacity for eliminating the rotten-dead stock words of the proletariat and replacing them with startling new ones. There were no dots and dashes in their conversation, nothing that could not be frankly said and therefore decently, no act or fact of life for which they could not find a simple passable word” (279). It is the struggle towards becoming a bourgeois or a capitalist that McKay sees in the struggle of the proletariat and it is what he rejects.

In *A Tempest*, the figures of Stephano and Trinculo, are stuck doing what they do, reduced to the monotony, to use Marx’s terms, of their work. Anesthetics in the form of alcohol and/or morality are their detour from confronting and breaking the imprisonment of their lives (59).

Césaire’s rejection of the modernist mode of life as incompatible with not only freedom but with life as a whole, was seen as an anti-racist racism; according to Suzanne Frutkin “Césaire’s point of departure is clearly based on his own negative opinion of whites, and for him the world is divided inescapably into white and colored. His angry diatribes against Europe and the entire white world are vivid testimony to what can only be described as anti-white racism...” (19).

The term anti-racist racism comes from Jean-Paul Sartre’s conceptualization of negritude and the struggle of the blacks for liberation. In his dialectical framework, Sartre cannot conceive of a liberation from racial oppression but in terms of negativity, i.e. a separate struggle of the colonized against the white racist/colonizer. The black struggle in Sartre is summed up in negritude, as the establishment of a black identity, one that is (in a Eurocentric formulation), a moment of negativity; for negritude is an antithetical value. Hence, as a negative value in a colonizing knowledge that seeks to contain and incorporate. Negritude is insufficient in itself, it is mere means, a transition towards a society without races (Fanon, *Black Skin*).

This struggle for Sartre precedes a unified combat against all oppression (15). The black with his “ethnic qualities,” being “the most oppressed” and thus having “more than all others the sense of revolt and the love of liberty,” will be pursuing the liberation of all when seeking his liberty (57). Not that his liberation requires the undoing of the order of things of Europe, for Sartre as for many Eurocentric and historicist narratives, colonialism can be ended without ending capitalism. The black in such a narrative is to move the history of Europe one-step further, the blacks or the colonized can then join the European proletariat in their leading role in bringing about the Promised Revolution against all oppression. A domestication of revolts is achieved through the concept of Revolution functioning as Law, it “separated their good forms from their bad, and defined the laws of their unfolding; it set their prior conditions, objectives, and ways of being carried to completion” (Foucault, *Power* 450).

By intellectualizing the “experience of being black,” Sartre extracts from the being of the black and abstracts it. Positing the black as the source of the emotional, of poetry, he in Fanon’s words, was blocking the source. The black subjectified feels himself emptied of himself, his wholeness shattered.

By romanticizing blackness, Sartre destroys the zeal of the black in his own struggle, turning his freedom into a historical necessity. The black is inserted in the Universal March of History even if he is blind to this insertion. The black is thus incorporated into a subjectifying process in which lack and submission of one’s destiny and responsibility for oneself becomes as determinate as the March of History, “And so it is not I who make a meaning for myself, but it is the meaning that was already there, pre-existing, waiting for me. It is not out of my bad nigger’s misery, my bad nigger’s teeth, my bad nigger’s hunger that I will shape a torch with which to burn down the world, but it is the torch that was already there, waiting for that turn of history” (Fanon, *Black Skin* 134).

Fanon emphasizes that “The Negro suffers in his body quite differently from the white man” (138). The White man for the black is the Other and the master, the only relation that can exist between the black and the white is one of transcendence. Nevertheless, it is not the determination of skin color that Fanon privileges over the determination of universal brotherhood; but rather it is the plurality and the wholeness of the being of the Negro, that is being reduced and homogenized, i.e. colonized in Sartre’s act of naming it (137-138). According to Fanon, between the colonized and the working classes in the colonizing country, there can be no “community of interest.” In a colonial situation class differentiation is inadequate, “The colonial situation is first of all a military conquest continued and reinforced by a civil and police administration.” The colonizer maintains the homogeneity and unity of the Self through his relation to the colonized Other which is negated in this establishment of the Self. The French man in Algeria, could not be but that of an oppressor, “Every Frenchman in Algeria oppresses, despises, and dominates” (81). If the colonized sees the colonizer as an undifferentiated whole, it is “not out of simplemindedness or xenophobia but because in reality every Frenchman in Algeria maintains, with reference to the Algerian, relations that are based on force” (*Toward* 82).

Despite claiming a universal struggle, The French Left was unable to detach itself from its being French. What may be disguised as solidarity and comes in the forms of political advice or criticism is “to be explained by the ill-repressed desire to guide, to direct the very liberation movement of the oppressed” (80). Its frenchness becomes clearest when the colonized act differently from the right revolutionary practice as defined by the French. In cases of “excesses” in the acts of the colonized, i.e. their anti-colonial violence, the barbarism of the colonized is invoked, and the French left takes its position as French (79, 80). From this position, “The fight

against colonialism becomes a fight against the nation. The war of reconquest is assumed by the colonialist country as a whole, and anti-colonialist arguments lose their efficacy, become abstract theories and finally disappear from the democratic literature” (78).

Césaire’s rejection of any Universalist project, his insistence on particularity and difference, was for him the guarantee that the act of freedom does not become one of domestication and another form of colonization. Caliban wanted to regain his freedom; by the end of the play, it translates into getting back his island, getting rid of Prospero, which means to spit him and his white magic out (*A Tempest* 60). Getting rid of the master here is not an act of negation, but a rejection that is a “very positive” act (61), what Caliban wants is independence, he refuses to be inserted in a dialectical relationship in which he is always trapped in one form or another as an Other.

Even when Césaire’s Lumumba declares that the fight for the liberation of Africa is the fight for “man,” the emphasis is on Africa and its liberation, on differences, particularities, concrete oppressions and concrete acts of rebellion. The theory of man here as Fanon argues is rooted in man, outside any universalizing or abstracting schemes, “the fact is that the Egyptian fellahs and the Indonesian boys, whom Western writers like to feature in their exotic novels, insist on taking their own destiny into their hands and refuse to play the role of an inert panorama that has been reserved for them” (*Toward* 125).

Césaire’s Caliban discovers that it is idiocy to think that a revolution can be created with “swollen guts and fat faces!” (55) Caliban’s freedom lies in his refusal to be inserted in this ‘universal struggle of the Western Proletariat;’ for he neither seeks the position of a political power, nor does he seek wealth, what he has and needs to maintain is his dignity. A thing usually expropriated under capitalism and undervalued as archaic. Not fitting within the set norms of that which is “revolutionary,” the colonized is condemned for what is seen as his fanatic, pathological violence, but in fact Caliban finds his liberation in his refusal to join in this march of the World History and its fixed templates. Caliban cannot be domesticated, not through a moralist or rationalist Marxist discourse. Césaire’s rebel is too crude to be subjected through the interests of the rational subject of capitalism, and too free to be subjected to an exorcism that might save him from “his evil spirits” (60).

Our struggles, Their Revolution

In its ideological teachings, the Leninist position, as Immanuel Wallerstein has shown, would take as legitimate “an interim alliance between the working class and the ‘others.’” As long as it remains under the ‘hegemony’ of the former and has the same oppressor (enemy), such an alliance would remain tactical (22). The representative with which the Marxists were willing to build an alliance in the Third World was the national liberation movements considered as “the primary mass representative” (27). But these in Lenin are represented by the national bourgeoisie who become the main agent and the representative subject, whose ultimate goal is the establishment of a nation-state.

It is “dogmatic” to consider the peasant struggle as a bourgeois-democratic one, according to Michael Lowy. Lowy speaks of “a peasant struggle,” that can be fitted in the Revolution, “the cultural traditions” of Latin America and the capitalist character of its exploitation,” make the peasants “rural workers,” with “the explosive, revolutionary socialist potential” (Xvi). For Lowy, those rural workers can reach two stages in their development as envisioned in the Marxist historical schema, the Cuban revolution, for example, “demonstrated the objective possibility of a

revolution combining democratic and socialist tasks in an uninterrupted revolutionary process” (xliii).

Nevertheless, according to Samir Amin, in the Third World, or what he terms as the periphery, the revolt can be a “popular national revolution that is anticapitalist;” it can neither be bourgeois nor socialist (115). Writing within the same Marxist progressivist discourse, Amin discusses a “popular national revolution,” as a stage, one that is “sufficiently advanced in the sense that the chances of moving further forward are considerable.” This people’s movement is fitted into the Marxist schema, by emphasizing that such a movement is “the principle determinant of an evolution of the world-system toward a transcending of capitalism.” For Amin, however, it is in their difference that these movements take this function, by “pushing into the background (very gradually) the effects of the world polarization peculiar to capitalism on the one hand, and encouraging (equally not without contradiction) the social forces that aspire to abolish capitalist exploitation on the other” (115). Amin differs from other Marxists, in that he includes the revolutions of the Third World in their difference, instead of trying to assimilate them. But their difference for Amin, as for other Marxists, renders them, incapable of fighting capitalism on their own, without the vanguard Marxist working class party and its ideology.

Benedict Anderson has argued that Marxism with its focus on practical need and its dogmatic positing of the class struggle as a universal struggle, rendered it unpopular in Third World countries struggling for independence. Unlike fighting for one’s country, one would not be willing to die for a commercial item, dying for the revolution “draws its grandeur from the degree to which it is felt to be something fundamentally pure.” Anderson argues that for Marxism to have that “aura of purity and disinterestedness,” it needs to be “felt (rather than intellected) as representations of ineluctable necessity” (*Imagined* 144).

Comparing it to Marxism, Anderson shows that anarchism had a wider audience in colonized societies. Having individuality and plurality as its main principles of freedom: it was open to peasants and agricultural workers, to bourgeois writers and artists. In Anderson’s description, the movement rejected any form of hierarchical (“bureaucratic”) organization, it rather consisted of “a self-generated autonomous *groupuscules*” (*Under* 72), this was a point of strength for the movement, for it was hard to keep track of the little groups and destroy them.

What seems different in anarchism is that it did not establish a subject in the Althusserian sense, the lack of institutionalization, meant that the movement did without an ideology, its appeal was based on that which is felt rather than intellected. According to Anderson, employing a vitriolic rhetoric, and being “more viscerally anticlerical,” rather than positing religion as an ideology to be combatted, allowed revolutionary anarchism to “spread most successfully in still heavily peasant, Catholic post-commune France, Restoration Spain, and post-unification Italy, Cuba –and even Gilded Age immigrant worker America-while prospering much less than mainstream Marxism in largely Protestant industrial, semi democratic northern Europe” (72).

What made anarchism appealing (to expatriate intellectuals) in the Third World countries, was its anti-imperialism and lack of hostility towards “small” and “ahistorical nationalisms” (2). Nevertheless, Anderson’s evaluation of the work of Marxism and anarchism in Third World countries is based on the assumption that the nation-state is the ultimate goal of the struggles in the Third World, a nation-state run by a national bourgeoisie that would establish an institutionalized society, with its own “imagined community,” which leaves him close to both Lenin and Althusser in universalizing the Western mode of life. As for anarchism itself, the movement could not function as an alternative revolution to that of the Marxists, for it, too, is yet another inversion of what is institutionalized under capitalism, it appears as the reactionary politics

of the progressivist bourgeois, in which inversion, a perpetuated and fixed state of chaos and destruction, becomes the new God. The desire for destruction in anarchism as Nietzsche had described it, is not in favor of change and becoming, an “expression of an overflowing of energy that is pregnant with future.” But rather, trapped in their resentment and desire for revenge, as Anderson also shows, working within the same rationality it combats (inverted), the movement is more of an expression of “the hatred of the ill-constituted, disinherited. and underprivileged, who destroy, *must* destroy, because what exists, indeed all existence, all being, outrages and provokes them” (Nietzsche, *Gay Science* 329).

Whether inserted as a stage towards the Revolution, or the Revolution, the revolutions of Third World peoples, are abstracted and universalized, reified (to use a Marxist term) by leftist intellectuals into their dream Revolution. Unlike Jean Genet’s writing on the Palestinians and the Panthers, in which the constant reflections, multiple mirrorings, break any reified representation of the latter, in Mario Vargas Llosa’s *The War of the End of the World*, the Western anarchist revolutionary failing to find his dream of revolution in Europe, goes searching for it in other places, a Third World country where revolutions still happen, but they are not revolutions, and they are not based on faith or religion, they are The Revolution; his Revolution. That the revolution is carried under the banner of religion does not really make it religious, reasons the Western revolutionary. When people speak of God they speak of Freedom, the revolution will free the people from religion just as it will free them of capital. The secular revolutionary does not give up on rationality and scientific truths which are necessarily opposed to religion, an “irrational myth.” The anarchist revolutionary will have to find the rationality behind the use of religion to impel people to rise up against oppression, for religion cannot be a rationality in itself, it can only be a means behind which lies a hidden objective and scientific rationality. The revolutionary is not guided by his faith, he is rather guided by a rationality veiled by the dogma of faith, but his religiosity cannot come in the way of the March of History, for his veiled rationality moves him in that direction despite what he believes his rebellion to be (84).

But he is still willing to reconcile himself to it, for “Religion could be the dream of sick men,” but it also “could serve to rouse the victims of society from their passivity and incite them to revolutionary action” (264). Gall was searching for a revolution that embodies his idea of the Revolution, one that abolishes private property, in which the poor “will succeed in shattering the chains of exploitation and obscurantism only through the use of violence” (14). What is fetishized here is rebellion itself, the capitalist order inverted becomes chaos and God inverted becomes Satan, and it is in the latter that he believed, for to fetishize rebellion, is to fetishize the “first rebel, the true prince of freedom” (16).

While the Western Revolutionary saw the faith of the rebels of Canudos as an acceptance of “whatever life brings them, whether good, bad, or horrendous,” and thus as fatalism (121). He was seen by the reactionary feudalists as being a mad fanatic. His fanaticism is manifest in his beliefs which are stronger than his fear of dying; and in his dream of a materialist paradise which he saw in Canudos. He too is religious, for it can only be religion that makes the pain of torture a reinforcement of convictions rather than an oppressive tool (282). The difference is that while the rebellion of Canudos as lacking in Marxist ideology as it was, consisted of a real practice by real people that did not reduce them to one aspect of their lives, that of the Western revolutionary ended up being ink on paper that was read by no one; for he was sending letters to ghosts (460). The people of Canudos were not working within Althusser’s mirroring/ recognition formula, Gall was.

Gall saw it as his mission to turn the basis of the rebellion from religious to “revolutionary.” He would “help the Counselor, explain to them [the people of Canudos] the machinations of

corrupt bourgeois politicians and military officers of which they were victims” (293). He wanted to fight at the side of the people; he wanted to share their destiny. But this required a universalization of their struggle, which in its turn required a process of abstracting the terms of their struggle; a certain elevation above the concrete details of every day’s reality. The problem was that he could not speak the language spoken by the people of Canudos, and he found himself gesticulating violently to get his point across.

Gall could not communicate with the people, using the body as means of communication did not help him, for his language, even when spoken by the body, is one of an abstraction when separated from the being to which it speaks.

Being the “revolutionary” subject that he was, he could not understand how a man’s honor could lie in little things such as faces or in “women’s cunts,” for him to rape a man’s wife, is a minor problem compared to the suffering of the thousands of innocents that he could have saved if that man’s honor did not get in the way! (292) Rape was not reason enough for a husband to become his enemy. The Western revolutionary did not feel the need to question his values, his superior knowledge helps him understand that a man angry for his violated honor is “a stupid bourgeois,” an “idiot,” and a “madman” (295).

Gall saw himself as a freedom fighter, a revolutionary, he was also a phrenologist, an embodiment of a will to knowledge that necessarily comes with a will to non-knowledge. For Gall could only know what he knew, and what he presumed was true, in his terms, scientific and objective. While the leftist revolutionary was able to see the elements of the same in other peoples’ revolutions, he ignored and misrecognized that which is different, and when confronted with it, he dismissed it by naming it reactionary, incorporating it within the same. People’s faith is dismissed as abstract and only practical need: hunger and income taxes are recognized as the only legitimate motivations for a revolution (47). Although recognizing culture as one of the “rights” that the revolution seeks to achieve, Gall does not question neither the liberal, capitalist ideology embodied in his use of the term, nor does he recognize the way the term culture is abstracted when he dismisses its different values: faith, honor, and dignity. All he could and wanted to see was the violent rebellion (47-48).

Nevertheless, it was the different that would not become same that lead to his dying a “non-revolutionary” death! The Western revolutionary could not see the possibility that such revolutions, that are still happening, find sources in faith, as well as in certain notions of honor and dignity. He was unable to realize that a revolution does not necessarily always and everywhere become a Superior Entity, a sublimation of practical need, as Marx had it, that subjugates and subsumes all other values.

Chapter Two: The Ethics of Fighting

To Act on One's Land

Liberation, in Kanafani and Césaire, lies in acting within one's knowledge and according to one's will. Both will and knowledge find their source in the act of rebellion itself that is made possible by moving on one's land. To move on one's land, to have one's will and knowledge, is to challenge, defy, and rebel against the institutionalization/ rationalization of knowledge. To Rebel is to risk danger, to break certainties; it is the condition of the free spirit who, when what is outside is weakening, digs for sources of power in himself.

It is not an isolation that Kanafani and Césaire sought, or a withdrawal into oneself, as acts of freedom, but a break of/ from that which is socially standardized as rational, clever and practical. For Both writers to act according to one's knowledge and will is to reject a life of calculations, flights and detours. Liberation in both writers does not lie in preserving a weakened colonized life, as argued in the previous chapter, it rather lies in keeping open the possibility for another. Courage and bravery manifested in the ability and willingness to confront and affirm, accept and reject are the conditions of a life of liberation. To take responsibility for one's life, to take the risks of uncertainties and dangers rather than becoming a slave to a life of representations and sublimations, is to practice freedom.

"Being does not see itself...it does not stand out," says Gaston Bachelard, he also says that withdrawing into ourselves, does not necessarily mean that we are closer to ourselves, for, "it is in the heart of being that being is errancy." Being sees itself better when outside itself, but it is hardly so, for it could be closed on the outside (215). For Césaire and Kanafani, an opening is sought, but the opening is not an outside, the opening lies in the ever present possibility of another life. An opening is created by shedding off that which is dead/deadening, allowing for the growth of that which is strengthening. The border between that which comes from the outside and that which comes from the inside are indeterminable, they as Bachelard has shown exchange places. It thus depends on the strength of life and its ability to assimilate that which is strengthening and to externalize, eject and shed off that which is weakening that one leads a dead life of domestication and enslavement or have the strength to fight for another. In this sense, liberation is conditioned with difference, mobility, it involves both knowing oneself and freeing oneself of itself, the measure of liberation for Kanafani and Césaire, is confrontation; liberation here is thus not an act of negation, but rather it is one of affirmation.

Enrique Dussel conceptualizes liberation of the oppressed as a realization of themselves that is achieved by denying what is denied and affirming "what in the oppressed is exteriority," which is the distinct, separate, and outside, that which is anterior and exterior *to the system of oppression* (62). Dussel's conceptualization keeps intact the centrality of the colonizer as the point of reference, in both processes, negation of that which is negated and affirming that which is "outside," the place of the colonized as defined by the colonizer is maintained. In the "Preface to Anti-Oedipus," Michel Foucault calls for taking leave from negation and that which is negative, (law, limit, castration, lack, lacuna), and embracing that which "is positive and multiple, difference over uniformity, flows over unities, mobile arrangements over systems." According to him, "what is productive is not sedentary but nomadic" (*Aesthetics* 109). Dussel, on the other hand, maintains the negativity of the colonized; it is not a coincidence that in Dussel the oppressed/colonized is referred to as the Other who needs to *be listened to, defended and liberated*.

In Dussel's conceptualization the oppressed is partially inserted in the oppressive system, while other parts remain outside. In reality, though, as Bachelard has shown," the dialectics of inside and outside, multiply with countless diversified nuances" (216). We are hardly outside being as "in being, everything is circuitous, roundabout, recurrent, so much talk; a chaplet of sojourning, a refrain with endless verses" (214). To perceive the differences of the colonized within the framework of opposition between the inside and outside, obliterates the mobility and multiplicity of these differences, entrapping them in a relation of opposition, reaction, and inversion of that which is colonizing, and thus maintaining the dependency of the colonized on the colonizer, or to be more precise maintaining the being of the colonized. For Kanafani and Césaire, the othering of the colonized is affirmed to be rejected, it is exteriorized, confronted, and spit out. Affirmation rather than negation, confrontation rather than flight, a movement towards rather than a movement away is the practice of freedom in Kanafani and Césaire.

Foucault warns that in using the term "liberation" "one runs the risk of falling back on the idea that there exists a human nature or base that, as a consequence of certain historical, economic, and social processes, has been concealed, alienated, or imprisoned in and by mechanisms of repression" (*Ethics* 282). What seems most risky in such an idea is that it is based on fixed notions of man's nature and origin; a liberation based on such an idea would mean retrieving this true nature/origin and reconciling man with himself.

Liberation for Foucault is not sufficient to define the practices of freedom, which has to do with "defining admissible and acceptable forms of existences or political society" (282-283). Freedom is the relationship of the self to itself and the relationship to the other. It is the basis of relations of governmentality, which involve attempts at controlling, determining, and limiting the freedom of others by free individuals or groups, and the resistance that arises with such attempts. This entails that power relations remain mobile and reversible (300). For Foucault, wherever there are power relations, there is the possibility of resistance, because "if there were no possibility of resistance (of violence, flight, deception, strategies capable of reversing the situation), there would be no power relations at all." It is only in states of domination that this is not the case (292).

The situation of domination is a situation in which power relations "instead of being mobile, allowing the various participants to adopt strategies modifying them, remain blocked, frozen." Domination means that an individual or a social group is blocking "a field of power relations, immobilizing them and preventing any reversibility of movement by economic, political, or military means." For Foucault, "In such a state, it is certain that practices of freedom do not exist, only unilaterally or are extremely constrained and limited." Liberation, in such cases, becomes "the political or historical condition for a practice of freedom" (283).

The colonized in Foucault are dominated and they need to liberate themselves from their colonizers, but this is not necessarily freedom, or not yet freedom; liberation from colonialism here is a condition of freedom, but not it (282).

On the other hand, domination cannot be a practice of freedom, because dominating others "arises precisely only when one has not taken care of the self and has become the slave of one's desires" (288). The practices of freedom entail caring for oneself which means that one knows who he is and has the ability to master himself, his fears and his hopes, while not fearing death is the ultimate condition of freedom.

For Kanafani and Césaire, this distinction between liberation and freedom, fighting against colonial domination, against an enemy, on the one hand, and practicing freedom, on the other, is not at work. On the question of freedom, both writers are uncompromising, for them one cannot "liberate" oneself from a colonizer, if one does not act in freedom, or to use Foucault's wording,

practice freedom. A whole set of values, of knowledges, and a way of doing things; in short, a certain mode of being, are the conditions of the freedom fighter, but liberal democracy may indeed not be one of them.

The Occupation of Palestine and the expulsion of the Palestinians marked an end of a life, a mode of being and of knowing. The Palestinian expelled from his land was disfigured, almost dead but not completely. In Kanafani's "The Green and Red" (CW II: 351-360), to foresee the occupation of Palestine itself required a mode of knowing and understanding that the Palestinian did not have. For the Palestinian, death cannot come in May. It was May standing between him and the moment of death, he could not have seen it coming (354). In May, life flourishes in his forehead, hands and ribs. His senses overwhelmed with life, he could not smell death. "He was told once that this was a fatal mistake, that life has no value if it did not stand in opposition to death...but he was indifferent.... between him and death is what is between the soil of May and aridity" (353-354).

Nevertheless, unlike, the Palestinians of "The Land of Sad Oranges" (CW II: 361-375), who handed their weapons to the Arab border army, and handed over the defense of Palestine to the others, all what the hero of "The Green and the Red," could think of when seeing death was to fight (354).

But death was stronger, and the Palestinian hero fell. In the hole opened where the forehead hit the ground, a child was born, it was born out of his father's eyes, for "in the eye of each man killed unjustly, a child is born in the moment of death" (357). The child should have died too... but he lived, buried under the sand he managed to avoid being crushed under the feet. No one felt his birth, he was not given a name, and his presence was never visible except to the death that was chasing him (360).

Buried under the ground, distorted into a miniature human, unable to speak or see is the Palestinian born out of death. The Palestinian colonized and uprooted is an invisible dark child moving underground; but he is not completely dead, for between the dark ribs there was a white light, "the only white thing in the tiny body." In the little black one, there was some life, for "he had his dreams, hopes, pains, ambitions, memories just as all humans...the only difference was that he was very little and his eyes were stuck together ...but he breathed, and the piles of soil surrounding and covering him were unable to kill him" (357). In his flight the little one, found his way using the dexterity of the blind and the solidness of the stone (359). Kanafani's colonized Palestinian, the child of the eye of his murdered father does not succumb to the river of blood following him as if it were his destiny, but he is also too little to fight, he still needs to grow into a rival [*Nid*] (360).

Despite the misery of the life of the uprooted Palestinian in this story, Kanafani's disfigured Palestinian is not displayed as a victim that needs sympathy, but neither is he, as in other stories, condemned for his passivity, instead he is reminded of whatever strength he has maintained and gained in his flight from death, the white light that did not stop beating in his ribs, the persistence in escaping death, and by the end of the story speaking out in rejection of death, these for Kanafani were the sources of hope that the uprooted Palestinian would not die without fighting. Here as in the story "Farther than Borders" (CW II: 275-288), hope lies in the power of life; in most of Kanafani's stories there still exists that white light beating with that which would allow for an overcoming of what is dead.

In Césaire, the plant is the epitome of this force of life. The plant finds its sources in the roots of the tree as it finds them in the soil, air, and water that the tree assimilates in generating life. The hope in the power of life which the tree exemplifies has been read as an essentializing

tendency in Césaire's poetry, taken to refer to an original state to which man can return. Martin Munro sees in Césaire's poetry Freud's theory of the collective unconscious and Frobenius's concept of Paideuma, and although Freud's theory focuses on the role of repression, for him "both suggest the existence of a certain imperishable, hereditary essence which is accessible to all groups or races" (62). This means favoring the instinctive and intuitive over logic and reason, and valuing the irrational. Like many of Césaire's critics who make the same judgment of his writing, René Ménénil and Suzanne Césaire's texts are used to make the point about Césaire's irrational Frobenian tendencies.

James Arnold makes a similar argument about Césaire's "the Thoroughbreds." For Arnold, "The thoroughbreds" is the first of Césaire's poems to articulate in a demonstrable fashion both a metaphoric structure deriving from Frobenius and a model of consciousness that one recognizes as a surrealist version of Freud (85). According to him, Césaire finds a source of pride, and strength in the Hamitic principle of civilization, which gives more value to a vital force (84). In Arnold's reading, Césaire finds the power of life in primitive mysticism.

In the "Notebook" (*CP*), returning to "the big black hole," is not an escape to a past as a substitution from what is present. In fact, any glorious history for the enslaved African is negated, what the colonized sees is enslavement, weakness, servility, a life without ambition and without any urge or ability to fight. Endurance under slavery is the only achievement of the black. Césaire's speaker here strips himself of one more refuge, closing the sky that he thought he could open by searching for a lost past in Africa (61). But this very act, while affirming slavery as the history of the colonized Antillean, is not a submission, for in it there is confrontation, of that which is denied, wished to be forgotten, but is not, instead it is repressed and left as a wound that never heals, a source of shame that is covered instead of being avenged. The enslaved black has to see himself as a slave, and to see himself as such means that he needs to dig the slave out of himself. As in the case of Kanafani's uprooted Palestinian, in invoking the images of the cruelty of slavery, Césaire is not affirming the victimhood of the enslaved black, but rather he opens the wound, vomiting that which cannot and should not be assimilated. The slave thus confronts himself imported in the slave ship, put to work in the plantations as animals, and sold in the market as any other cargo.

Kanafani, in an article in the collection of *Fares, Fares*, mocks those who see liberation as lying in a return to a glorious past or in a movement towards a westernized modern way of life. For him both positions rise from a position of defeat, the defeated as described by Kanafani, have two legs: "one that lives in the rottenness of the past and the swamps of its delusions, and the other in the irresponsibility of triteness, masquerades, and bribery, which cheapen the human!" (64). Both legs, according to Kanafani, are of wood. To want a return to the past is to console oneself with fiction and to turn one's back to what needs to be confronted. On the other hand, the call for joining "the clumsy civilization," translates into a libertarianism, based on contempt of ethics, prostitution, and pornography which devalues and abuses the human, while violating both ethics and beauty.

A Power over Power

In the writings of Kanafani and Césaire, instead of establishing submissiveness, passivity, helplessness and cowardliness as modes of being, it was faith manifesting itself in people's revolts, rather than Marxist intellectualizations. Faith works here as a counter force by being resistant to processes of objectification, when it means that one has enough power to not surrender the responsibility for himself, and thus his freedom, to another entity. Faith forces ideology to take a different status and a different function in revolutions outside capitalist societies; ideology does

not become a mode of being, it does not assume what both Althusser and Marx call a spiritual existence, neither does it manifest itself in that omnipresent way described by Althusser.

For the Western leftist intellectual a revolution that does not deny God is, if not a revolution based on a false consciousness, then it is one that is necessarily on its way to renouncing God, or it ends up being a mere fiction or dream. That faith could be a source of power, a drive and force of a revolution is usually not seen as a possibility. As I will show below, for both Kanafani and Césaire, notwithstanding the latter's repulsion from the Church, faith plays a major role in the constitution of a rebel or a *fidai*, but the rebel or the *fidai* can never be a fanatic, for fanaticism is never a condition of freedom.

According to Jean Genet, the revolutionary movements of the Palestinians and the Panthers did not seek to apply "some transcendental ideology" like Marxism; their "main object" is to liberate man. For Genet, the question of can there be a revolutionary movement that is not atheist, was still a question. Although he did not see either movement as non-revolutionary for their lack of atheism, he still hoped that "their more or less secret goal may be to wear God down, slowly flatten Him out until He's so drained of blood and transparent as not to be at all. A long but possibly efficient strategy" (49).

While God in the quote above is a weakening and domesticating power. Religion has in other instances functioned as a counter force to the domesticating and colonizing forces, subverting the work of a colonial civilization. In Latin America, religious belief, functioning within a different mode of being and knowing, becomes a force that counters that of ideology. Religion as it appears in Alejo Carpentier is not an alienating institution based on a splitting or fragmentation of individuals turned into subjects, it is rather based on wholeness and multiplicity, the split between good and evil, virtue and sin is not at work here. Religion did not turn into an institution of power over the people (*Lost* 135).

Religion in Latin America is based on a faith that does not and cannot be founded on a Truth or certainty. It is a mode of being in which stability and constancy are almost non-existent, a faith that is, as described by Vargas-Llosa's Gall, based on the acceptance of whatever life brings, but it is not fatalism as he could only conceive of it, for it is not based on submission, but rather on a willingness to confront whatever comes in one's way. The difference is that faith comes here with a mode of being that does away with calculations and guarantees. Moreover, it is not a world in which the material is abstracted and given a spiritual existence, instead it is a place in which the metaphysical, the mysterious, and the spiritual exist within the concrete and the tangible, as visible/invisible parts of everyday practice. In Latin America, there is never enough time to forget the processes of inversion and mystification which give birth to religion as fetishism, "something like a baleful pollen in the air- a ghost pollen, impalpable rot, enveloping decay- suddenly became active with mysterious design, opening what was closed, closing what was open, upsetting calculations, contradicting specific gravity, making guarantees worthless" (Carpentier, *Explosion* 39). Against the science of civilization, mold, parasites, the spirits released by the mutterings of old Negroes do their work. These are forces that cannot be known, experimented on, calculated, or subjected. What could be seen by Marxists as fatalism is, for Carpentier, a certain complicity between the people and the powers of nature, in this case faith is not an expression of a lack or a need for certainty, a substitution for finitude or a detour around the fear of death, it is rather a positive acceptance of life, in its multiple and diverse forces.

According to Foucault what prompted in an individual "the desire, the ability, and the possibility for absolute sacrifice," was myth, spirituality, with "the unbearable quality of situations produced by capitalism, colonialism and neocolonialism" (*Power* 280). By spirituality Foucault

means “the subject’s attainment of a certain mode of being and the transformations that the subject must carry out on itself to attain this mode of being” (*Ethics* 294).

Describing the Iranian Revolution, Foucault shows that the colonized, in their revolution, could be seeking a utopia, an ideal, “it is something very old and also very far into the future.” The ideal they are seeking is based on faith that becomes the source for a series of acts and practices that achieve this ideal, this is a non-linear movement and without a deterministic causality, it is a movement “toward a luminous and distant point where it would be possible to renew fidelity rather than maintain obedience” (*Foucault* 206). To be able to seek such an ideal, to reach that luminous point, one, according to Foucault would necessarily be distrustful of law and in the same time have faith. For faith is to take the responsibility to move towards the luminous point, while the law is to relegate that responsibility to an other. To give up one’s freedom and ability to act and speak for oneself, cannot be an act of freedom.

Although Shi’ism is based on waiting the return of the Twelfth Iman, “who will create the reign of the true order of Islam on earth” (201), this waiting for a better world does not allow for passivity and inaction towards misery in the present, waiting here is closer to aspiration. Believing in the coming of the Mahdi, is not to wait for the coming of a leader, a vanguard party, or an ideal hero who would liberate mankind. It does not allow for or justify submission and acceptance to that which is not right. Changing an unacceptable order of things is a duty of each Muslim, a voluntary one, but encouraged, conditioned with ability, courage and strength in the physical sense. When lacking the ability to act or speak against that which is not right, the Muslim is required to reject it in heart, the weakest in the ranks of faith. This emphasis on fighting that which is not right even if in one’s heart, does not allow the believer in Islam to internalize weakness and passivity, the unfulfilled duty, the unpaid debt, cannot be forgotten, repressed or internalized as a lack. A believing Muslim, therefore, cannot become a domesticated subject according to the Nietzschean formula (*Genealogy*). It is in this sense that we can understand Foucault’s assertion that “Shi’ism, in the face of the established powers, arms the faithful with an unremitting restlessness. It breathes into them an ardor wherein the political and the religious lie side by side” (*Foucault* 201).

In the Iranian revolution, Foucault saw many similarities to the notion of government in its bourgeois definition, in terms of the value of work and the fruit of one’s work, public resources, liberties, political responsibilities of the leaders and the people, minority rights. For Foucault to have these definitions of governing is “not too reassuring.” For these are the basic formulas for a democracy to which they did not lead. The answer Foucault was given was that it was in the West, in its industrialization, that they lost their meaning, while “Islam will know how to preserve their value and their efficacy” (206). Moreover, their utopian ideal is not utopian, for “they are thinking about a reality that is very near to them, since they themselves are its active agents” (207).

The Difference in this case is that people are free from state power in the sense that they can plan and live their lives as the ones responsible for it, they can find their own alternatives, defy what is instituted as policy when they need to. In Iran, an alternative way of doing things, or to use Foucault’s words, resistance and political creation were promoted by the religious structures, which allowed the people to act collectively without losing the power to act on behalf of themselves (207). Shi’ism had a historical role in “political awakening, in maintaining political consciousness, in inciting and fomenting political awareness” (186).

This does not apply only to Islam according to Foucault, there existed in Europe “great popular movements against feudal lords, against the first cruel formations of bourgeois society, great protests against the all-powerful control of the state.” But there seems to be, for Foucault, a need for popular movements to “develop” from their religious form into a political one. Although

Foucault is tempted to dismiss the religious aspect of these popular movements as *an appearance* they took, “before they adopted a directly political form” (186), he retracts this last statement by emphasizing the intertwining of religion and politics in the popular movements of the peasants, “underneath the bourgeois and parliamentary revolutions as such, we have a complete series of religious-political struggles. These movements are religious because they are political and political because they are religious” (187).

In Europe, religion as “the opium of the people” was “the product of political choices and joint tactics by the states, or the government bureaucracies, and the church organization during the nineteenth century” (187). Religion now became an acceptance of one’s fate, fate understood as the exploitation and misery of the life of the workers. The function of religion thus becomes the preservation of the status quo, in the name of fate. But for Foucault, it is an “excessive westernness” to consider all religions as based on an immobility; religion does not necessarily find its value as “refuge,” or source of protection from the need to confront and fight oppression (200). Religion could be a leftist revolutionary demand, as the Iranian case showed. Instead of calling for people to accept the regime, the Mullahs in Mosques “called for people to fight against the entire regime in the name of the Quran and of Islam.” They were anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist, the mullahs themselves were fighters, the shallowness of the phrase “Religion is the opium of the people” is exposed when one considers that “Up to the time of the current dynasty, the mullahs preached with a gun at their side in the mosques” (201). The voices coming from the mosques “seemed to evoke neither withdrawal nor a refuge. Nor did they evoke disarray or fear” (201).

The Shi’ite religion is not an ideology “that is so widespread among the people that true revolutionaries are forced for a time to join it” (202). While again Foucault discusses religion as a *form* of political struggle, a form into which the struggles of the “common people” can fit. His conceptualization of it as a form becomes more ambiguous and complicated in explaining its ability to transform “thousands of forms of discontent, hatred, misery, and despair into a force.” This transformation comes from religion, in this case, being “a form of expression, a mode of social relations, a supple and widely accepted elemental organization, a way of being together, a way of speaking and listening, something that allows one to be listened to by others, and to yearn for something with them at the same time as they yearn for it” (202-203).

Describing it thus, religion becomes a democracy in which the collective does not individualize or subjectify, neither does it dominate or coerce. It is Foucault’s dreamt of democracy. In the organization of Shi’ite Islam, “there is an absence of hierarchy in the clergy, a certain independence of the religious leaders from one another, but a dependence (even a financial one) on those who listen to them, and an importance given to purely spiritual authority” (205). What Foucault saw therefore in the Iranian revolution was egalitarianism, plurality, and accountability of those with a certain power to their audience.

What seems to attract Foucault here is that in the Iranian Revolution one is free from a fetishized law and a fetishized Revolution. Nevertheless, although stressing its differences, Foucault was still holding the West as his point of reference, but inverted; it is what the Iranians had and the Western modern societies did not have; this inversion is still based on looking for the same, but this time it is the dreamt of same, from which what is not desired is misrecognized and denied; Shi’ism even when demanding an Islamic government is “less susceptible than some to Pan-Islamism or Pan-Arabism” (205).

Nevertheless, what remains different in Foucault’s writing on the Iranian revolution is that he was able to see the different functions and meanings that religion can have. Religion here functions as a source of power against another power embodied by the state. In their revolt, the

Iranians put their lives on line for it was also a “question of millennial sacrifices and promises.” Their vision was religious and political, which allowed them to confront “the threat from the army (to the extent of paralyzing it), follow the rhythm of religious ceremonies and appeal to a timeless drama in which the secular power is always accused” (*Power* 450). Faith here is both a source of a will and ability to act, instead of being “the opium of the people,” it is rather a space from which another way of knowing and conceiving of things is made possible and with it another set of practices and ways of doing and being. It is this plurality, the presence of difference that allows for a continuous de-naturalization and de-stabilization of any established order, that makes religion as faith a power that contests another. Foucault was right to argue that religion as in Iran was not an ideology, neither was ideology the force behind the revolution, and despite the above last statements about Shi’ism, he was right to argue that it was not only Shi’ism that allows for the being of the fighter.

Foucault himself shows that Marxism in Tunisia was different from the way it functioned in Europe or the Soviet Union, it was not a way of analyzing reality, “it was a kind of moral, a kind of existential act” (*Power* 280). The question of physical involvement was inescapable in the struggle of the Tunisian students. Theoretical reference to Marxism was not essential, although it did include different interpretations of Marxism, but it was not about Marxism, not about its exactness as a theory, it rather “functioned more as an enticement than as a principle of proper correct behavior” (280- 281).

Although Marxist ideology did not attain the status of religion that is based on faith, it, even when functioning as a political ideology in Tunisia, was not a subjectifying power, but rather a source of moral energy.

When Che Guevara talks about strategies to defeat a powerful enemy with superior technical abilities, ideology appears to occupy a secondary and somewhat superfluous position; Guevara was wagering on the familiarity of the colonized fighter with his environment, the harmony between his living habits and the existing reality, the potential contradiction between this last condition and any significance given to ideological motivation is resolved by combining (merging) ideology with the strength of morale as the conditions and sources of the power of the colonized over their colonizers (“Message” 182).

Even when the harmony between the living habits and existing reality which Guevara sees as a source of strength of the colonized, is broken by colonial intervention, the chaos and contradictions created by such an intervention, create a condition of continuous subversion, shaking the foundations of any possible act of institutionalization. As both Marx (“Confidential”; “Outline”) and Fanon (*Toward*) had it, the externality of the colonizer and his institutions keeps the oppressive power visible, acts of repression and internalization are always subject to interruption, de-naturalized and unfamiliarized by being always in conflict with other forces, coming from the different mode of being of the colonized, this means that ideology, any ideology cannot assume the status given to it by Althusser in Western societies. The lack of institutionalization, allowed by the lack of constancy and stability, allows for a space for that which is different and plural. Ideology could not become rooted in the whole being of the colonized, neither could it reduce him into a mere subject with a colonized consciousness.

Right as a Practice of Freedom

In *Discourse on Colonialism*, Césaire argues that knowing that their masters lie to them is the power that the colonized have over their colonizers. Knowing the colonizer’s lies as lies is important to break the sacredness of established truths in Césaire. Although the struggle of the

colonized does not seek to establish another Truth, it is based on a belief in a certain truth. Truth here is linked to right. Right in Kanafani and Césaire is not conceived in the legal sense in which rights are the rights of property and individualism as Marx had it (“Jewish Question”), which they are whenever some capitalist expansion is at work, but in the revolutions of the colonized, right is rather understood in its ethical sense in which the right is the authentic, inalienable, and not wrong, in both senses of wrong, that which harms and that which is not true. Caliban’s fight for the Island, which his mother gave him, the Palestinians’ fight for Palestine could not be defined by law, for their dispossession was instituted by the law.

The rebel’s revolt does not define itself in terms set by Western civilization. The slogans of freedom and brotherhood are not sources of power, but rather weapons of disarmament, of a degenerated and weakened human race. The rebel finds his strength in recognizing these lies as lies, they cannot be the roots for a faith that is the colonized’s source of power. Caliban has his own truths, his own way of knowing and doing, Caliban finds a source of strength and a force of rebelling in believing in his right in the island, a right that he inherits, not from a father, but from his mother, the witch, the earth, which for the Western colonizer is dead, but for the colonized is alive. Caliban states that he knows that his mother is alive because he *knows* that the earth is alive.

Caliban’s knowledge here is another knowledge, it is a faith in the force of life that is the source of resistance against the deadening forces of civilization. Césaire emphasizes the inevitability of growth and change against any institutionalization that perpetuates a dead life, but to emphasize the force of life, is to emphasize the concrete and the earthly, Caliban’s mother, who deadened by Prospero, remains the source of life, power and freedom. The hidden willed to not be seen and buried underground in Western civilization, is there and alive, and in it lies the force of life that enables one to fight that which weakens it.

Right here is known through faith and practice, with “The only yardstick of truth,” as Mao Tse-tung had it, being “the revolutionary practice of millions of people” (“New Democracy” 339-340).

Foucault shows that, in the Iranian Revolution, the right for which the people are called to fight, is not that instituted by law or ideology, rather it is that which is known through the Quran, the reading of which remains open to individuals, despite all attempts at codification and systematized interpretation. The multiplicity of readings and interpretations obstructs all attempts at establishing the law as a Higher Entity, for one can always accept or reject these readings, and when coerced by the law into certain practices, the divine text, acts as a reminder that “It is justice that made law and not law that manufactured justice.” Shi’ism is not based on an absolute Truth, the light of truth comes through the words, acts and practices of imams, the absent-present twelfth Imam, returns with every enlightenment of truth that the people themselves achieve in their practices which illuminates the law, “The latter is made not only to be conserved, but also to release over time the spiritual meaning that it holds” (201).

This notion of right outside the codification of law is not limited to Shi’ism or Islam, but it requires faith and is realized through practices as the quote above shows. It is knowing a truth not as a mental experience but as a material practice, both verbally and in deed. It is similar to the way Foucault describes *parrhesia*, which is based on the coincidence of belief and truth. And it is for this reason that Foucault argues that it is something that “can no longer occur in our modern epistemological framework” (*Fearless* 14).

Parrhesia as truth- having “is guaranteed by the possession of certain *moral* qualities: when someone has certain moral qualities, then that is the proof that he has access to truth and vice versa” (15). But the main measure of *parrhesia* is the courage it requires in facing danger, the

willingness and ability to risk one's life for it (16). It is the power of those who are not in a position of power. Foucault discusses *parrhesia* as mainly a verbal practice, it "is a form of criticism, either towards another or towards oneself, but always in a situation where the speaker or confessor is in a position of inferiority with respect to the interlocutor. The *parrhesiastes* is always less powerful than the One with whom he speaks. *Parrhesia* comes from "below," as it were, and is directed towards "above"" (18). Although a form of criticism that does not challenge the hierarchical positioning per se, but its power lies in it being a practice of freedom, guaranteeing the independence of the individual who has it, while in the same time guaranteeing that this individuality in its freedom does not take the form of individualism or egoism, in both the Nietzschean and Marxist senses.

Parrhesia is based on a harmonic accord between what one says, thinks and does. This harmonic accord means that one does not feel a guilt from a should have that needed to be satisfied and was not, a promise or debt that were not fulfilled, this is how *parrhesia* entails the freedom of the one who has it. And it is here that I see the analogy between *parrhesia*, in the coincidence it entails of belief and truth, in its requirement of both freedom and courage as its necessary and constituent elements, and between confrontation and fighting for Césaire and Kanafani. Nevertheless, I am not drawing an analogy between the asymmetrical relation it involves between a citizen and the majority, between the teacher and the pupil, the father and the son, on the one hand, and the one between the colonized and the colonizer, on the other. The relation of the latter is different from these forms of power relations; the former takes the form of a struggle that finds its source and end in the belief and truth of the wrongness of colonialism, and the belief and truth of the right of the colonized, for which they revolt, fight and risk their lives.

Kanafani's "Return to Haifa" (CWI) posited the questions of right and truth in one of their most complex forms, for while rejecting any legal or moral framing of the question of the Palestinian expelled from his land, Kanafani insisted on a notion of right, carried and achieved by the expelled Palestinian who is the one responsible for that right. Kanafani's rejection of a right and wrong moral evaluation was understood as an adoption of the logic of power at the expense of that which is moral. Faisal Darraj saw Kanafani as positing the Palestinian problem within the open space of history which obeys material struggle instead of memories and wishes, the latter in Kanafani are symptoms of the mode of being of the defeated bourgeois ("al-'Ar" 53).

Indeed, the details of lost objects in the story function as a detour from a "fatal clash," but since this clash was inevitable for Kanafani, the lost objects kept taking the Palestinian back to it. It was the impossibility of dialogue with the occupier, the impossibility for the Palestinians to recognize themselves as guests in their home which dictated the fixation on the details of the old house. The confrontation that Kanafani creates in his text is a confrontation with that impossible and inevitable. Darraj over-stretched his critique of Kanafani's rejection of memory of lost things as the basis of the struggle to encompass that which is right. Darraj follows a bourgeois mode of reasoning in his criticism of right in Kanafani. According to him, Kanafani was rejecting "the givenness of right," the struggle of the Palestinian is a struggle over property, which he, establishes as something that is not inherited but is fought for and won. The lost son, the lost house, the lost feathers, just as naming, are objects to be won in a struggle. In this reading, the "defeated Arab," learns from his enemy that the homeland is not "bits of memory." Darraj thus just as Said S. in the novel, creates an equivalence between Palestine and the lost objects that cannot be retrieved, and through this equivalence he is able to reach his conclusion about Kanafani's text establishing the struggle for Palestine as one over a property that is based on the logic of power, on the expense of notions of right and wrong.

The novel according to Darraj, revolves around the idea “that the land is for that who fights for it, the one who cannot fight for his land has no land, and the child is the right for the one who took care of it, not the one who gave birth to it” (52). What he misses is that the split he creates between fighting and right, is not at work in Kanafani’s text. For Kanafani, as for Foucault, as for Mao, there can be no truth, no right without the willingness and the ability to fight for it. Based on faith, right is both the foundation of fighting and what is realized through it.

Abdul Rahman Munif agrees with Darraj that the notion of right to the homeland in Kanafani is not only based on historical right or on heritage (81). Said’s last sentence to Dov and Meriam in the end of the novel, “you can stay temporarily in our house, this is something that can only be settled in war” (CWI: 413; “Return to Haifa”), shows according to Munif that the passive notion of the homeland as a heritage that should remain and continue is suspended, and another positive notion of the homeland which is a right and the ability to defend this right, is advanced. In this reading, however, it is the persistence in demanding one’s right that is the guarantee that the blind power cannot be the sole force that indefinitely sets the terms of the struggle, for as Kanafani says “history is not always a bad luck event” (qtd. in Munif 82). It is not power that defines right in Kanafani, right is constituted by what one knows is right, by the courage and willingness to fight for it.

For Said S. it was futile to argue the true reasons and causes of defeat and loss, what mattered in the end is the fact of defeat and loss. It is in this sense, that we can understand Said’s statement that Dov is not their son but an orphan child that the Zionists found in Poland or England. Dov lost, raised, and living the life of the Zionist cannot be restored to being their lost Khaldun, for man in Kanafani is a cause, not a commodity that can be owned, fought over or exchanged, man is “not flesh and blood inherited generation after generation as the seller and the client exchange canned meat” (411). It is in this sense that the son is not the right (right here can only mean property of those who gave birth to him), for man is part of life and like life, grows by assimilating that which is in his environment. There is no biological essence that makes the Palestinian or the Zionist in Kanafani, for man is what he is nourished and fed day after day, he is constantly in a situation of becoming through what he does, and Dov is the son of an occupier who fights in an occupying army.

Dov is that which is lost, the defeat, weakness and shame. And it is Dov who confronts Said S. with them, he is the one who gives the Palestinian the list of the should not have and the would have. He uses the colonizer’s discourse to blame the colonized: they are helpless, chained by backwardness and paralysis (406-409). Dov though is not the colonizer who teaches the Palestinian how to be, he is rather the defeat and shame confronted as such.

Said S. does not argue false representations; the dialogue is an impossible one. Dov’s statements were both an attempt by the colonizers to justify the wrongs committed by them, but they are still wrongs. What matters in them is their function as the mistakes of the colonized in the colonizer’s discourse. The only response Kanafani’s text gives is “that the biggest crime a human can commit...is to believe even for a moment that other people’s weaknesses and mistakes make his right to exist on their expense and justify his mistakes and crimes” (410-411). The Colonizer bases his existence on the being of the colonized, for Kanafani it is when the colonized rejects that being that the colonizer has nothing left (411), in Fanon’s terms, the annihilation of the colonizer is in the annihilation of the colonized (*The Wretched*).

Kanafani’s statement does not come from a moralist position, his position is similar to that of Claude McKay and Nietzsche, which sees morality as law to be the weapon of the weak and the impotent. The black cannot be part of a mode of being based on the institutions of law and justice.

Justice is a “prostitute lady who is courted and caressed by every civilized tout...” (McKay 229), and law is a moral institution that has worked to justify and legitimize oppression, it is the morality of the Jew and the Christians. The colored races are “the special victims of biblical morality-Christian morality” (231). But being its victims is not the only bases on which McKay rejects Law and Justice, for him both are used for revenge, they are about indictment, a waste of life for McKay, “life was more wonderful to savor than to indict, leave the indictment to the little moral creatures of civilized justice. They had their little daggers sharpened for the victims who were white, and when they had the good luck to find a black victim, they made a club of him to slay the whole Negro race” (238).

For Césaire as for Kanafani, the dialogue with the colonizer is an impossible one. Prospero cannot see himself as a tyrant (*A Tempest*) and it is, as Fanon argues, a useless endeavor to try to make him see himself as such. Caliban’s rejection to obey Prospero for his freedom, his insistence on acting independently and freely for it, is his way to maintain his freedom. Caliban refuses the politics of engagement, dialogue just as obedience is not his way of freedom. Fanon explains the FLN’s “lack of knowledge” of how to speak to the French colonizer (*Toward* 100), by the fact that the FLN did “not aim at achieving a decolonization of Algeria or a relaxation of the oppressive structure.” What the FLN sought was independence, which meant taking “destiny wholly in hand” (101). To wait for the sympathy of the colonizer, is to be unwilling or incapable of taking on the fight to liberate oneself (100).

Right is not something that is handed down by a more powerful entity, right is won in a battle. When Said S.’s return to Haifa is allowed by the occupier, he feels that the city to which he is returning does not recognize him, the truth for Said S. is “that all doors should open from one side, and if they opened from the other side, they should be considered as still closed... that is the truth.” For the colonizer to open the door for the colonized is “terrifying, absurd and to a large extent insulting..” (CWI 343; “Return”). It is a submissive acceptance of the power of the colonizer and baseness of the colonized (344).

It was wrong to leave Palestine and it was wrong to return the way they returned. This is not an idealized absolutist position in Kanafani’s text. Kanafani tells the story of a Palestinian forced out of Palestine, and tells the story of an occupier forced in. Plurality and individuality of both colonizer and colonized are maintained, the details and specificities of their struggles, two stories of two expulsions are also told, but to colonize is a wrong and to be colonized is another wrong, In Kanafani “wrong plus wrong does not make right” (410).

In Said S.’s story, it appears impossible that he could have not lost. He was defeated and it was wrong, but it was also wrong to return with a permission from the colonizer, a double humiliation and the result of a double defeat (359,360). Said S. was, therefore, necessarily denied by Haifa (385), as he was denied by his son. For there is a crime that has not been paid for. His weakness and inability to fight is not a justification for the colonizer’s crime, but they are neither a justification for a submissive defeated position. To be defeated, to lose one’s right, for Kanafani, is also a crime, a debt, for which a free person has to pay, if he is not to be turned into a guilty slave. Weakness for Kanafani is affirmed and rejected, for it functions as a Trojan horse, a way to avoid punishment by both the colonizer and the colonized in his submission. Fighting for the right becomes the liberation from the enslaved position in which the colonized finds himself. The debt needed to be paid, and it can only be paid through the fight. Dov, the lost son, is the shame of the Palestinian who lost his land, Khaled the fighter for the future is the remaining honor (412).

Lost objects cannot be retrieved, but the right itself, Palestine, can be and should be, not because one has military or political power to win it in war, but rather any power in Kanafani’s

text is the power of the fighter in his fight, a power that as I have been arguing in this chapter necessitates the existence of a certain value system and a certain mode of being.

It is the difference between Caliban and Ariel (Césaire, *A Tempest*) between the one who refuses to separate his freedom from the act for it, and the one who sees his freedom as a thing that can be handed down to him by a benevolent master, an imprisoned/ing freedom. The difference between Caliban and Ariel here is in the question of the how; it reflects a concern with the question of becoming through practice, acting as a servant to the master here, a practice of obedience is not a practice of freedom, Ariel had his freedom defined for him and handed down by the master, what he achieves is the post/neo-colonial (in)dependence.

The Rebel derives his strength from the uncivilized and undomesticated part of himself, “but it is not you who will prepare it with your disarmament; / it is I with my revolt and my poor clenched fists and my bushy head” (*Lyric* 39; “And the Dogs”).

The Freedom of Being Attached

In his writings on Ireland, Marx has shown that the absence of capitalist relations, the dependency on land as the main source of life, allowed for a spirit of fighting, that the English working man was dispossessed of. The transformation of the Irish peasants into cheap labor and the exploitation of the Irish people, did not transform them completely into the condition of labor in capitalist societies. While capitalist processes of subjectification and domestication strip man of his rebellious “spirit,” a revolutionary spirit requires a certain degree of crudeness, something that is not yet civilized and domesticated. “The revolutionary ardor of the Celtic worker does not go well with the solid but slow nature of the Anglo-Saxon worker” (“Confidential” n.p.).

While Marx’s description of the differences between the English and the Irish in terms of nature and spirit appears as a racial differentiation, his discussion remains of material and concrete practices by both groups; nature in Marx’s usage here is close to a mode of being, a way of knowing and doing things; while the worker in the factory is separated not only from his product but also from his labor, the Irish peasant finds the source of his life in the land, his work is one of a constant generation of life, he plants life and is given back life in his work, land thus is life, and the struggle for it becomes a struggle for life.

It is not surprising that most revolutions are by peasants, for in a peasant way of life, no institutional intermediaries are present between the worker and his work or between men and their communities, and most importantly, there is no relegation of power in the mode of life of the peasant. The rule of the state and the law does not and cannot assume the hegemonic power necessary for producing subjects, who surrender all responsibility for themselves to legal and state institutions. Moreover, if Althusser’s thesis about ideology in capitalist societies is true, then it is not surprising that Marx “saw in the “archaic” resistance of the popular masses in countries still not enslaved by capital the possibility of a new beginning” (Chatterjee 170).

Colonial oppression and exploitation remain a visible alien force, this visibility is the condition in which anti-colonial struggle takes place. But more importantly, the incompleteness and distortion of capitalist relations of production in the colonized society, their articulation with other relations, allow for different ways of being. In colonized societies, the modern way of being maintains a certain externality to the lives of the colonized, and thus a certain kind of de-familiarization and denaturalization is always enacted, which does not allow for the repression, or naturalization that Althusser describes, obstructing and cutting through the omnipresence of any ideology. It is something similar to Alejo Carpentier’s guillotine (*Explosion*), which, when moved from France to Cuba, assumes multiple functions that are not necessarily or exclusively repressive.

The modern mode of being in Carpentier is a weakened and degenerate one, in its lack of power, it seeks empowerment through dreams and adventure, the latter taking the form of joining the Revolution, but both remain limited in their functions as substitutions, which can only lead to fanaticism or disillusionment. For they, as acts of substitution, that are not confronted as such, still function within the processes of mirroring and recognition that make ideology in Althusser. The need for the Father, the Subject, in Althusser's terms, for the Western revolutionary to recognize himself as a subject remains at work in the case of Carpentier's Esteban. Without the Father, the Western revolutionary felt that he was "shrinking, diminishing, losing all individuality; he felt that he was being swallowed by Events" (110).

To join the Revolution in this case is to accept the servility of mind demanded by a politics that is based on the ideology of the Revolution. It is the servility of fanaticism, which dictates one mode of thinking and blocks all others, which is also necessarily a way of seeing that is closer to blindness, for it does not see the gaps and contradictions between practices and declared ideals. Weakness and cowardliness become manifested in letting oneself being absorbed in the velocity and momentum of daily work which become a detour from confrontation, while ensuring that no breakthroughs take place in the work of the now "revolutionary" ideology.

The work of ideology is countered, resisted and subverted through the presence of forces and practices that belong to other ways of being and knowing. Roots, that archaic thing, that is alive and sustains life, have the power to pull back from a deadened life, they give the power for growth into different directions. Even when buried by the forces of a modernized mode of life, it takes a little stimulus, a smell from another world, a buried or forgotten one, for other forces to be mobilized, to bring back to the surface another world, another way of being. These are forces that work counter to that which subjectifies, they create a chaos, subvert and shake that which has been stabilized, reduced to an ideological consciousness, that is to the being of a subject. It is in having roots, in being attached even when uprooted that such forces are released.

Writing on Ireland, Marx states that "land is life," it is "the great object of pursuit," ("Outline" n.p.). The relationship to land, in the writings of Kanafani and Césaire, is not one in which land appears as an object to be seized, or a property to be owned, it is life, in the widest sense of the word. Land generates life for Césaire, and for Kanafani it is that which carries and nourishes life. For both writers to be attached to the land is to have the force of life, uninhibited. Attachment to the land thus becomes the condition in which one finds the strength and ability to resist against the artificial forces of civilization and their weakening degenerating effects. It is in being attached to the land that the being of the rebel finds its sustenance, but it is when this attachment is threatened that a rebellion takes place.

Land, as Jean Genet has written, "is the necessary basis of nationhood...It's matter itself..." The Blacks and the Palestinians are without land, neither group has any territory of its own (99). This for Genet meant that the struggle of the Palestinian Fedayeen and the Panther movement was a fiction, a fantasy that sought to protect a dream.

To be displaced from one's land, to be uprooted, is to have a part of oneself severed, to live as if floating, it could be a dream, a fantasy or a nightmare, it is to be in a constant state of yearning. Kanafani's impatience with time, Césaire's emphasis on, but at many times impatience with patience, are reflections of a state of restlessness in which the uprooted finds himself. For uprootedness leaves an open wound in the place of the severed part. With a wound that does not heal one can always repress the pain, and live with repression and its accompanying detours and series of substitutions, but in the case of the refugee, in his state of uprootedness and restlessness, on a land that is not his, this repression of the wound fails, and so do any attempts at naturalizing

a life that is not his. This restlessness, is the condition in which the possibility of the being of the fighter is opened. It is in the presentness of the condition of being severed, when detachment is not yet an accomplished act, but an ongoing situation, in which the pain of severance is not deadened, that the emotions that are present in a state of attachment are shaken but not yet inhibited; these become the forces of rebellion; for that which should have been inhibited and repressed in the being of the uprooted is in a constant state of release, subverting and at times dismantling any acts of institutionalization, stabilization or regulation, keeping the space for that which is other and different open. It is in this sense that for both Kanafani and Césaire to be attached is to be free.

It is in having roots that one can overcome the stagnation of a colonized being. Césaire's insistence on roots is not a reaction to uprootedness, but rather an attempt to generate life, roots do not refer to fixity here but to life, movement and growth. For Césaire, roots are the guarantee that no fixed direction of movement or growth can be imposed, for any growth or movement start from within, in this sense one is not posited as an object made and remade through the work of outside forces, but one is in a constant interaction with such forces which are assimilated instead of being assimilating.

The Land on which the Antillean lives is an unfamiliar one, on it he was a slave, and to work on it is to be doing the work of the slave. Land in the Antilles is not the source of life but rather it has become to represent the deadened life of slavery in its classic and neocolonial forms. The land, the fields, the mountains carry the memory of plantations, slavery and subjugation. In Martinique the land is a marker of slavery (Glissant, *Caribbean* 10).

Edouard Glissant shows that in Martinique people did not come "effectively to terms with the new land," The relationship of the Martiniquan to the land just as to his being is mediated by the colonizer. The Land appears as a strange unfamiliar place, one with a past that is denied and a future that needs to be decolonized (*Ripening* 33). The land in the form of the plantations is a site of enforcement of the being of the colonized. In its neo-colonial form, exploitation works through practices of import and export, which create a dependency on somewhere else and gives political power to an outside entity (*Poetics* 67). In its past and present forms, the work of the Martiniquais on the land is one of coercion, and is done with avarice, unlike that of the peasant which is done with love, it is on this basis that in Glissant's *The Ripening*, Thael's dream of freedom finds its content in the workers becoming peasants (98).

Transplanted, transformed, and dominated by an Other, The African in Martinique, losing his mode of being, loses with it collective faith (*Caribbean* 15). A colonized mode of being is a mode directed outside itself. The middle classes and plantation owners attempted assimilation, that is to make themselves assimilated to the mode of being of the colonizer, in which individual equality is the ideal (7). Marronage was for the uprooted and enslaved African a way out. But from a progressivist perspective, taking flight from a civilized life is to be opposed to the facts of history. Marronage thus becomes a negativity, since it does not seek to establish a nation or a nation-state, seeking only its own way of being. For Glissant, marronage carries no liberating potential, for it is invisible; it lies beneath the surface, it is the shadow and the night. Glissant seems to be concerned here with inserting the Martiniquais in History (even if he does not capitalize the "H"). To reject civilization and its way of doing things should and can only take place, according to Glissant, on the level of the hidden and lying below the surface. Marronage is thus the past that should have been suppressed into an unconscious, the primordial that should have been civilized. The maroons, as seen by Glissant, are the negative of the assimilated colonized, while the latter seek the world of liberty, equality and fraternity, which translate into egoistic liberty, marronage is a dream and a

denial (11), a detour around the reality of uprootedness, an attempt “to exorcise the impossibility of return,” by diversion (18).

Despite Glissant’s modernist framing of marronage as the primordial unconscious. Marronage could be seen as a way to assimilate the new land or to create an alliance with it in defiance of the colonizing and civilizing forces. The Maroons, in Glissant’s own description, become part of the land in its impenetrability, aloofness and remoteness. While this is a negativity for the modernist bourgeois, for the uprooted African unable to return, marronage becomes another way of being that relates them back to Africa. In Marronage, one does not return to an origin, but at the same time, the works of civilizing repressions and inhibitions are not normalized. It is in this way that Africa is invoked in Césaire’s texts, his emphasis on roots is not an attempt to retrieve a lost past, but to keep the African in a condition of attachment.

The peasant striking the ground brings to the surface that which no language can speak, a truth that cannot be articulated, but it is what gives the peasant determination and strength. The peasant’s strike, in Césaire’s “To Africa,” excavates from the ground the burdens of speech and silence, that which has been said and that which cannot be said. It brings back to the surface that which is denied plagues, death, impoverishment and famine. It is an outpouring and accumulation of anger; the peasant’s strike is thus the strike of anger, what is revived are wounds. Rising from the land, the cry of the wound is a condition of return to the land. This is not returning to Africa as a past, but rather bringing Africa to Martinique, it is through Africa that the island stops being the land of slavery, and becomes a place of rebellion, it is Africa that would allow Martinique to bring in a tomorrow that it has been unable to give birth to, the strike of the peasant liberates the colonized from the burdens of his colonized being (*CP* 197).

Trinh Minh-ha has shown that longing for a home and rejecting it are both sources of resistance... ““home” has no fixed territory...it can convey the concept of settlement or unsettlement” (*Elsewhere* 53). Home could mean fixity, compliance and subjectification, or it could mean unfixity and unendedness, the home in the latter sense, becomes that uncertain horizon for which the possibility of fighting remains open, for no domestication of man can be complete in a surrounding where control, social, territorial, and institutional is always subverted by instability. A mode of life of unfixity keeps that externality, the space of the outside, in which the colonized finds his freedom, open.

Longing for the homeland comes with a renunciation of a stabilized life of “comfort.” Not because there is a principal position against “comfort”, but rather, as Kanafani shows, there seems to be both an unwillingness and an inability to come to terms with that which comes with “comfort.” Stability and “comfort” in Kanafani’s text take the form of malaise that cannot express itself in a revolt, and it thus entails leading a weak submissive life. It is in this sense that Gaza becomes a better place to live in than places where “there is green, water, and beauty” (*CW II*: 341; “Paper from Gaza”).

The Writer of the letter in “Paper from Gaza,” describes his life in another land with a modernized way of life, as “sticky, empty like a little oyster.” Unlike those living in refugee camps, the immigrant felt that he was “lost in heavy loneliness,” “putrid routine,” that leaves very little for a vision of a better future (343). This is not a bourgeois romanticization or nostalgia for an old home; for Gaza is described as “wrapped upon itself... This Gaza was more cramped than the breathing of a sleeper in a terrible nightmare, with its narrow alleys and their special odor: the odor of defeat and poverty, and its houses with their projecting balconies.” It is here that the writer raises the question about “these obscure things, unidentified, that attract one to his people, his memories, the way a spring attracts a lost herd of goats” (344-347).

The writer does not know the answer to the question of what it is that attaches one to a place where one smells defeat, and feels the pain of wounds, instead of a place where there could be some form of consolation. But the answer to the question is not important, if one thinks that in the question itself there is a statement of a fact, the attachment to the place; as an attachment to a life.

Kanafani's writer rejected consolation just as all works of substitutions are rejected in his texts. The writer's niece's amputated leg was the mark of a loss that could not be substituted for, beautified or denied. It is not the writer's guilt that is at work here, but rather the amputated leg was a reminder of life, it is from the amputated leg that one learns what life is and the value of existence (350). Sadness comes with loss, but it is not cathected with crying. Sadness is a challenge, even more than a challenge, "it is something like retrieving the amputated leg" (349). The confrontation with loss as loss is a certainty that allows one to do without the need for certainties. A point of extreme darkness is also a point of extreme brightness, as Foucault has stated, extreme darkness means that "we really do not know from which direction light would come. Extreme brightness because we ought to have the courage to begin anew" (*Foucault* 185). The immigrant writer's anxiety about an uncertain future is transformed by the sadness in Gaza into an ability to see beyond; Gaza, consisting mainly of refugee camps, a place in which loss is concentrated, is not a place from which he needs to escape, but a long road that leads home.

Feeling loss is not a path that takes one back to the past, but it opens the path for a future. As we have seen in "Return to Haifa," "The real Palestine... is more than a memory, more than a peacock's feather, more than a son, pencil scribbles on the staircase wall..." to search for these is to search "for something under the dust of memory," where one can find "only more dust!" (411-412). The Sadness that comes with loss is a force that shakes, it does not end with tears over ruins, but becomes a moving force, that is oriented towards the future. Khaled does not know the feather's vase, the picture, the staircase, Halissa, or Khaldoun, and despite this, Palestine is worth carrying arms and dying for. For the uprooted Khaled, the homeland is not only the past, it is the future, and it is for it that the uprooted carries arms, it is in this sense, that feeling the sadness of loss becomes "something like retrieving the lost leg."

A Fighting "Spirit"

Kanafani and Césaire were not seeking an anachronistic primitive way of life; they wrote in defense of life and people as living beings, healthy and strong, undomesticated and unstripped of their instincts. What seems to be most valued in the rebelling colonized for Césaire are those elements without which life is deadened, hence the focus on pride, anger, love and laughter. These are elements that are mostly linked to the flow of blood, the des-anesthetization of the senses. With them, the senses work according to their own rules, indifferent to rules of sociality and normative behavior, they therefore subvert civilized work of domestication and subjectification. It is for this reason that Césaire sees in them the source of power and the force that sustains the colonized against a final defeat. To feel the pain of being colonized, to allow for the anger that comes with such a feeling, the colonized is assailed with strength; their life is no longer deadened by suppressed wounds: it finds air in the affirmation of loss (*CP 77*; "Notebook").

It is not only the history of slavery and the anger that comes with it that is invoked in Césaire, but that which comes with a life of freedom in the Nietzschean sense. When Nietzsche wrote that the man of action "is unhistorical and antihistorical," what was at stake for him in calling for forgetting the past, is to unlearn that which in it is subjectifying, disciplining, weakening and

defeating. To be ungrateful to the past, is to be “blind to danger, deaf to warnings.” If knowledge of the past is paralyzing, then he forgets what was, to see what is to be (*The Use* 11-12).

Free in their fighting, the Fedayeen were impervious to hate, liberated from any guilt and the bad conscious that accompanies it, this also meant that they were impervious to a sick degenerating mode of life. Their act was never one of revenge, for the act itself was liberating, just like Kanafani’s fidai who when completing an attack on an English car forgot that he always wanted to slap an English soldier on the face (*CW II*: 683; “Abu al-Hasan”).

The Fedayeen were “laughing without cynicism, verbally inventive, a bit wild, but as proper as a bunch of seventeen-year-old seminaries.” Undisciplined and indifferent to vague moral condemnation, they challenged the contempt implied in the words of terrorism and terrorist, and were indifferent to being cast as the devil (Genet 190).

Indifference is a form of rebellion, when it takes the form of acting outside the set standards of the dominating power, its values, moral codes, and techniques of subjectification. Immune to rational calculations, it becomes a form of power and freedom. It is when and where the Negro fails to learn the colonial lesson, the civilized capitalist way of being whether that of the bourgeois or of the laborer who desires the position of the bourgeois, that he is most free. The Negro has happy irresponsibility in the face of civilization. The ability of the Negro to endure under all forms of oppression that he faced on the hands of civilization, the uprooting, enchainment, transformation into enslaved labor, without disappearing, without becoming “machine -made, not poor-in-spirit like the regimented creatures of civilization was baffling to civilized understanding.” The Negro was a challenge to civilization in “his careless way with a primitive hoofing and a grin” (McKay 272).

Laughter is a subversion of the white man’s civilized order, an untamed laughter, it brings in chaos. The laughter is a disturbance of the perfection of the colonial system, it is “a flaw in their steel”, “a crack in their wall,” “a heresy in their dogmas.” But it is not mere annoyance, it is the wealth of the black man, his independent, unsubjectable part of himself, and ultimately it is his weapon, which will bring destruction to the masters’ world (Césaire, *Lyric* 56; “And the Dogs”).

Genet describes the Palestinian fighters as distempered, they transformed their past reality into a present fantasy. This transformation was drawn “on the ground on trees and on strips of material” (349). The fight of the Palestinians and the Panthers for Genet was a “sham,” for it could not affect anything in reality. It was a dream or a fiction (172- 173).

Nevertheless, the fighter is a lover, in love he is inspired, to be inspired is to take leave of the real and its pragmatic calculations, not as an escape from confronting it, but rather because at many points affecting the real requires that one withdraws from its dictates. Love allows one to take a risk; the moment of desire is “the moment of insouciance and of authority” (Blanchot, *Space* 175). It is taking the risk that links inspiration to desire; insouciance comes with impatience. But to be able to take the risk is to take leave of the world (182). Taking the risk of one’s ruin frees one from oneself, from the work and the demands of success or even survival. It is to let go of assurance for that which is not and cannot be assured. Bravery and courage are thus the condition of the inspired. In the case of the fighter, bravery is manifested in the physical defiance of death and danger (Genet 190).

In Nietzsche, the best of works are produced in an ecstasy of love, that they are not worth of (*The Use* 12). I understand this to mean that any value lies in the act that comes from such an ecstasy of love, rather than its final product, for freedom itself as we have seen above in Foucault is a practice and not a final end to be achieved. My discussion of attachment and loss in the writings of both Kanafani and Césaire sought to show the power that one has in feeling attached, even when

experiencing loss. Love, as Trinh, has shown can become a source of power that helps one to endure and stand firm in the face of external weakening forces. Love turns patience into a fighting force just like anger does with impatience; for Trinh, “waiting while remaining loyal to the call of one’s heart, is what it takes to “win over” an impossible situation, such waiting is not passive; it has an active, dynamic quality to which Vietnam’s history can easily attest” (*Elsewhere* 22).

We see such patience that comes with love in Um Sa’d who could see in a dry branch a plant, while others could see only defeat, Um Sa’d saw another future, she only needed to plant the branch and give it the necessary care. It is this act of nurturing life that works counter the deadening forces of colonial civilization.

The peasant working the land maintains the flow of life, instead of stability and stagnation, his work is one of an endless movement for it follows the movement of life. The peasant fighter is the lover, for as I have argued above the relationship to the land allows for the presence of uninhibited emotions, where no civilized works of domestication and repression can have a permanent effect. The peasant fighter in his being embodies life with its contradictions, he subverts binaries that order the world in established categories. He embodies both the past, the heritage of peasant resistance and the dreams of the future (Hammud 112).

Um Sa’d, living in the refugee camp, a reminder of defeat and misery, is not defeated, one is defeated when one is unable to fight, unable to take responsibility for her own destiny. Despite all the misery that surrounds her she still can see in what appears to the intellectual as a dry branch, a plant, and while he sees her as an embodiment of a Greek Tragedy, she sees her fidai son as the materialization of the dream of return. Um Sa’d is not blind to reality when declaring her pride that her son has moved from the tent of the camp to the tent of the Fedayeen, she acquires the clairvoyance of those who see in the details that which is beyond what is present.

It is the relation between the peasant woman and the plant that Kanafani saw between the fighter and his weapon, the weapon a means to return to the land, to fight, cannot be a machine. For the fighter to have a relation of love with his weapon, the weapon itself has to become a living being just as the plant. For one cannot fight for life with a dead object. Just as a peasant’s relation to the land, the weapon derives life from that of the fighter, but gives back life in return, whatever care was put in it, it returns.

In his “Of Men and Guns” (*CW II*), the gun gives the Little One “an obscure tranquility,” whenever he felt tired and terrified, as if it were “something mythical” (634; “The Little One Borrows”). But this is not a fetishism that turns a means into a superior entity that has power over those who created it. The gun is a source of tranquility, because it was tended to just as the trees in the field, it is a familiar and dear entity, a dearness that makes it appear larger than a gun, it is a cannon for his uncle who cared for it, its sound as loud as a thunder (636). For the Palestinian who was defeated while fighting with damaged imported weapons, a gun that one takes care of as if it were a tree, is precise in aiming and is faithful, for its bullets come only from one side.

In the “Madfa” (*CW II*), we see a similar relation to the cannon. The Cannon was a great power in the souls of the people of Salama...their lives were attached to it, and as in the case of the Little One, its presence gave the feeling of protection and tranquility (806-807). The Cannon was the man who tended it in the imagination of the people, he became an integral part of it, but this is not Marx’s alienation, where the worker becomes a cog in the machine. The cannon did transform Said but into something more than human, Said was powerful, calm and eruptive like the cannon he operated. For Said, the Cannon was something that he could not continue to exist without, like his heart. When damaged the cannon appears “like a dead child lying on dry branches” (808). It is a relationship of mutuality, the cannon for Said is both the source of his life,

and the son to whom he gives life. This is not a fatherhood love, but one of nourishment and care that comes with motherhood, we are told that Said nourished the gun with his blood, his blood was worth so much because "...it is very good...it is the milk we suckled..." (810). It is in this relation of love that Said risks his life to bring the cannon back to life.

But it is not the gun in itself that creates such a relation. As I have been saying it is a relation of attachment and love that comes from a certain mode of being, a certain way of doing things that allows the gun to become something like a tree or a son. In a deadened life, the gun is a mere object used as a weapon that kills.

In "The Deaf and the Blind" (CWI), the conflict between Hamadan, the Deaf, and Mustafa, is an ethical conflict that encompasses practices and ways of doing things. Not everyone who carries a weapon is a fighter. The word *fidai* refers to someone who takes the risk of sacrificing oneself for that which he loves. Mustafa, on the other hand, is a rapist and a blackmailer, his joining the Fedayeen for the power that comes with being a *fidai*, is an act of opportunism. Mustafa staged himself as a fighter, he was showing off his gun, he bore a metal slogan on his chest and had a bloody map of Palestine hanging behind him on the wall. He gave others lectures about nationalism and sacrifice for the homeland. Mustafa is therefore not a fighter but a sniper, he belonged to the *tuqtuq* people, in Arabic this translates into that which makes a loud noise, but is empty without substance. The Deaf saw his dream appropriated by an opportunist. Hamdan, the deaf, knew he was stronger than Mustafa, his strength was derived from working the land, the mountains and plants. In the life of the field, where one ploughs, carries rocks, the Deaf could talk (560). The difference between Hamdan and Mustafa is the difference between the world of the concrete, the material, the living, and that of abstract sociality with its empty signs.

If Mustafa is the institutionalization of the revolution, this institutionalization loses its grounds in the battlefield. As Nietzsche has shown, war allows for illiberal instincts, it "educates for freedom" ("Twilight" 541), freedom is that one "has the will to assume responsibility for oneself... that one becomes more indifferent to difficulties, hardships, privation, even to life itself" (541-542). Mustafa cannot be the freedom fighter, for he is too immersed in his egoism to be able to sacrifice himself for a cause that he claims is his.

One attains value through danger, "Danger alone acquaints us with our own resources, our virtues, our armor and weapons, our spirit, and forces us to be strong" (542). The free man is a warrior. For it is the warrior who is free of resentment, in combat facing danger, one does not need to regulate their "*unconscious* instincts." The Warrior is a noble man recognized in "bold recklessness, whether in the face of danger or of the enemy, or that enthusiastic impulsiveness in anger, love, reverence, gratitude, and revenge" (*Genealogy* 39).

The Poetics of Combat

His own body, now, was not vibrating any more, but, marvelously supple, was bending and unbending with the blows he was striking, and the mutiny of his body was calmed somewhat with every blow, as every blow restored a little clarity to his benumbed intelligence. Beneath him, the target continued to struggle and pant and was perhaps also striking, but he felt nothing other than the mastery which his body was progressively imposing upon the target, the peace which the blows he was striking were bringing back to his body, the clarity which they were restoring to his mind. Suddenly the target ceased to move, the clarity was complete (Kane 19-20).

James Arnold has argued that Césaire's disbelief in a possible revolution led him to look for a substitution in surrealist poetry, focusing on the individual, "the survival of the mind and

soul,” rather than on the social. In Arnold’s binary conceptualization, poetic violence stands in opposition to social violence. The former’s function is “to sustain the wounded self, which an unjust, oppressive social and racial system has alienated from itself.” Violence here works as a strategy for self-renewal, the individual self which is to be separated from the social, is that of the educated black, who needs to be able “to endure until some real social change is possible” (260).

What Arnold takes to be the hero in Césaire’s “Notebook” and in “The Miraculous Weapons” is not revolutionary in a political sense; but one with a spiritual quest for “self-examination and a metamorphosis before emerging as a leader.” Arnold imposes on Césaire’s text, the Western modernist formula of what is revolutionary, political, social, and individual. In his insistence on putting Césaire within a modernist framework, he compartmentalizes life, while constructing a detached subject, separating the individual from the social, the poet from his text, the inner world from the outer one. Arnold works within a formula in which life is cut into pieces, linked back together in binary relations, where one side opposes the other, until they unite in a universal that appears like the promised paradise in an afterlife. It is not a coincidence that Arnold sees an “apocalyptic discourse” in many of Césaire’s early poems. But Césaire does not wait for the end of the world, his revolution does not follow any modernist linear formulas for its development, nor does it wait for a subject/leader to raise the consciousness of the masses. In Césaire, the world order can be turned upside down, rearranged, turned into chaos, and reinvented in a volcanic eruption. An eruption of a volcano does not make distinctions between what and where to destroy and where to create something that was not there.

Césaire’s revolt, like that of a volcano, is an ascending and explosive movement that comes out as an eruption of an abyssal fire (Kesteloot, *Césaire* 27). An act of rebellion for Césaire comes from a latent force, it piles its lava and fire, for a hundred years, and a new day erupts (28). In the volcano, there is “the notion of buried fire, fire under the ashes, invisible fire, smoldering, alive, this fire communicates in a secret and abrupt way with those who are rebels of their own kind, ambushed on the refusal front, and who wait for the time to come, these “men, dark men who inhabit the will of fire” (59). The Volcano itself, visibly quiet, watching over a dormant people, contains an irrepressible rage, but it remains inside and comes to the surface, according to Kesteloot, only in language, in poetry, which is compared to a volcanic eruption. For Kesteloot, then, as for Arnold, poetic violence in Césaire, is not a revolutionary social violence; it is an individual one that comes from the self of a modernist, Westernized intellectual, who is the poet.

This individualization of poetic violence is a part within a larger tendency to pathologize the violence of the colonized, stripping it from its political and revolutionary force. In this narrative, the colonized looks for a vent for their feelings of hatred and desire for vengeance through acts of violence. Martin Munro looks at the being of the colonized as a state of neurosis; from this perspective, liberation from colonialism lies in psychoanalysis. For Munro, violence in Césaire’s poetry is a way “...to undermine the super-ego by satisfying, on a poetic level at least, the instinct for cannibalism...” (59).

Both Munro and Arnold see in Césaire’s employment of violent imagery a therapeutic process. The volcanic convulsion in Césaire’s poetry is seen here as a vent for “accumulated hostilities” (Arnold 126). Arnold bases his argument on Césaire’s insistence that for the black man to liberate himself, he will have to bring out, to express “all the dreams, all the desires, all the accumulated rancor, all the formless and repressed hopes of a century of colonialist domination” (126). This in Césaire is a violent and bloody process. Nevertheless, where Césaire seeks to inflict pain, Arnold and Munro seek a being reconciled to that which is irreconcilable; poetic liberation for Arnold as for Munro is the coming out of the colonial trauma, rather than a battle that seeks

the end of colonialism. Arnold's reading remained confined to his inability to see Césaire's poetry but within different Western trends in art, mainly surrealism when it comes to violence. Since for Arnold to not disavow violence is to be within the realm of the irrational, violence in Césaire then is an expression of the traumatized colonized who gives vent to his trauma through surrealist poetry. Munro and Arnold deny the possibility that it is Césaire's rejection of the liberal bourgeois disavowal of violence that puts him within what they could only conceive of as surrealism and thus within the pathologized realm of the abnormal.

If Césaire's poetry has the effect of shock as in surrealism, his can only be naturalized as much as volcanic eruption can be. For shock in Césaire is not so much about giving vent to negative, repressed or hostile emotions; it is not therapy in the psychological sense that Césaire seeks, it is liberation, an undoing of the work of colonialism. The volcano is a force of destruction. Convulsion is not a vent, an act of substitution, detour, or a therapy that allows for a kind of reconciliation with what is existent, it is rather the destruction of what is there, and the creation of something else.

Abiola Irele has shown that Fanon's conception of the revolution is the only salvation of the colonized. Violence, in Irele's terms, is the only path through which the colonized can attain the status of the subject of history (154). For Irele, in a colonized context, violence is a moral necessity for the restoration of the black man, the slippery path of the psychological argument which leads to the need of the colonized for psychological therapy is still followed here. The attempt to understand the violence of the colonized as a psychological problem redefines the problem of colonization as the problem of the individualized victimized colonial subject, it is not the individual human seeking liberation from a colonized and domesticated life, it is the "subject" lacking in subjectivity that struggles to reach, or rather, complete, the full status of subjectivity. It is not surprising that Irele employs Sartre's notion of "recuperating the self" to account for the violence of the colonized (155).

To describe the struggle of the colonized as seeking "to attain the status of the subject of history," is to overlook that processes of subjectification are ones of domestication and, for those who insist on using the term, alienation, that contradict any possibility of restoring an original self through becoming a subject! Such formulations, though, still follow the lie of the subject that as Nietzsche has argued are rationalized strategies that strip man of his freedom while declaring him a free subject (*Genealogy*). The focus on the psychology of the violent colonized, similar to other undomesticated people, functions within the same colonial operations of exclusionary inclusion, and just as the colonized had to learn that his difference is a lack, he is to learn that his violence is not a practice of freedom but a sickness.

Even in an account like that of Lamarana Diallo, which sees in the violence of the colonized the only way for liberation, violence is still associated with sickness, and is only seen in a relation that perpetuates the dependency of the colonized on the colonizer. According to Diallo, the armed struggle of the colonized, what he terms "just war" is welcomed in Césaire's theatre as a blessing, which gives the colonized an affirmation of a military superiority over the colonizers (166, 170). Recourse to armed conflict allows for countering the unquestioned division between a master race and a race of slaves. Discussing the figure of Caliban in Césaire's *A Tempest*, Diallo argues that violence for Caliban "detoxifies, rids the colonized of his inferiority complex, of his contemplative or despairing attitudes" (254). Violence is Caliban's way to destroy the source of ills he suffers.

The nurse was pulling him violently, he felt that he was uttering empty words, that he could not control his tongue, a huge black spider centered inside his forehead and started building its tiny hard webs between his eyes.

He did not ask me much, two or three times and then he was occupied writing in his notebook, he said: what did you feel before you shot the bullets? I told him I felt nothing...then he said: what did you feel after you shot the bullets? I told him: I did not feel anything.

[...]

I told him that when I shot the bullets I felt one thing that the bullets belt was quick to finish. [...]

He shook his head with sadness, the spider has completed weaving his home, it then stopped in the middle raising his multiple arms looking for a prey...'

[...]

They stripped him of his military uniform and dressed him strange clothes...

-You killed two.... [...]/ did you mean to? / I thought it was a nervous breakdown. [...]/ The difference is that the one with a nervous breakdown does not mean to.

He suddenly stopped, the spider strings broke and it shook in its hiding, but it quickly started to repair what was torn [...]

-No I did mean it.

-If you say that they will put you in prison, you better hold your tongue..

the spider was now working with madness making noise in his forehead, he felt he was about to fall, he made a circle around himself and then returned to where he was... he fixed his feet on the ground, the nurse pulled him, but he shook his arms violently, the spider strings broke...

-I have that thing that has to do with the nerves because I meant to shoot the bullet...right? [...]

More strings in the spider's web broke and the black insect was moving madly trying to stich the tear.

- They do not have that dangerous sickness because they do not mean to shoot the bullets...right?

He walked calmly, he was beating against the ground with his big feet, shaking his huge body, the spider was shaking in his forehead, while the strings continued to violently break..

He looked closely at the nurse.. the spider was vanishing...suddenly all its interwoven strings were erased and his forehead was as clear as a piece of white marble (Kanafani, CW II: 393-402; "Nothing").

Notwithstanding his above psychological analysis, Diallo argues that only the armed violence of the colonized can end "the institutionalized violence" that he faces. Césaire's Caliban appears as the replica of Malcolm X who is affirmed as the apostle of necessary violence. Malcolm X opted for violence because non-violence does not lead us but to postpone indefinitely the solution for the black problem, under pretexts of avoiding violence. From this violence is born the self-determination of a people which is liberated from the yoke of colonialism (255).

In *A Tempest*, Caliban rejects the capitalist way of doing things when he refuses to kill Prospero, while the latter bares his chest for him, Caliban's revenge has to be a battle. How things are done, how goals are achieved, i.e. the act for freedom, is what matters most in the case of Caliban (Césaire 55). While for Prospero, Caliban's refusal to commit murder is another proof that Caliban is "nothing but an animal," "stupid as a slave." (56) Nevertheless, Caliban's refusal to kill Prospero does not find its explanation in a sought recognition, but rather in the act of refusal, in liberation as a practice in which the how of the act is as important as the act itself; for Caliban whether Prospero defends himself or not, makes the difference whether he is a fighter or murderer. To kill prospero on Prospero's terms is to still be colonized, assimilated, even if in an inverted position. Caliban opted for the being of the fighter, the free rebel, for it was not the position of the colonizer that he sought.

In "All That's Left to You" (Kanafani, CW I), Hamid defended himself against what was a danger, but he did not kill the soldier. Taking over his weapons and threatening him with the knife, the soldier as seen by Hamid is no longer a danger, but a human being, someone whose breathing he could hear and whose emotions he could feel "he looked tired, lost, and confused, but also prepared and waiting for a surprise to rise from between his feet" (208). Hamid was close to

the soldier, in the wilderness where, temporarily at least, no military or legal powers can come between them. In the same time, they could not communicate. Not killing him as a danger, it seemed futile that Hamid should kill the soldier when he felt his presence as a living being. But Hamid knew that at one point he will have to kill him, for the absent powers will come to the soldier's rescue. Hamid did not rationalize killing the soldier by demonizing him or by objectifying him as a dangerous object. This would be a cowardly act, like attacking someone from the back, for aggression here does not declare itself as one. He realizes though that there is a detrimental collision between Hamid's life and the colonizer's death. Hamid would give his enemy the status of an enemy, He thus decided that he will create the soldier, give him a name and a life, it is then that killing him may have any value (209).

It was when he saw fear in the face of his enemy that he knew he would be able to kill him at some point, "this moment will inevitably come..." Hamid saw behind the soldier, "a horizon of sand under a white high sky appearing like a theater, to which, when some bell rings, cars and dogs and men, driving in front of them black machine-guns, with pointed muzzles, will rush. But they will all remain stuck in the back of the theater, in front of the empty background, discovering suddenly that the story is taking place right here, and that they are the spectators" (228).

Hamid's vision is a dream, not of substitution or escape, but the dream that needs to be fulfilled, when the Palestinian is no longer the receiver of someone else's act, but the actor. Hamid imagined his act as a performance to be staged for the gaze of the enemy. Hamid has not become a fighter yet, and while his dream is of being able to act, his is the dream of the colonized not that of the fighter, for it is still dependent on its colonizer.

In his discussion of anarchism in Europe, Benedict Anderson describes what came to be known as "propaganda by the deed," spectacular attentats on reactionary authorities and capitalists, intended to intimidate the former and to encourage the oppressed to re-prepare themselves for revolution" (*Under* 72). The act here takes the form of revenge, it seeks to punish, not through the law, but its other, crime. It carries no values, stems from no beliefs, while taking the side of the oppressed and the poor, the right it sees is derived from the wrong of the others, the oppressors, it legitimizes itself as "reprisals" for the latter's crimes (*Under* 116-117). While Anderson does show that the language of the anarchist here is one that finds its source in a European socialist discourse, which is not shared by the colonized peasant, or those oppressed by the "corrupt system" that the anarchist seeks to punish, he sees the problem in the lack of "plans for the aftermath of his successful vengeance," the anarchists had only "a dream of 'liberty', formless and utopian." He thus casts it as a politics of self-immolation, "From my deed and death something will come which will be better than the unlivable present" (119). What is overlooked in Anderson's critic here is the bourgeois mode of doing things that is trapped within the logic of law and its inversion implied in the notion of vengeance.

The war of slaves, according to Diallo, is not a war of hate and vengefulness, but a war of love, dignity and liberation, even if it necessitates that the slaves kill their slavers to liberate themselves (209). The Rebel's cry "Death to the Whites," is not out of resentment. For the Rebel, although resenting injustice, considers resenting the white as seeking to trade his place for that of the executioner, a partial trade off. For the colonized, as Fanon shows is never completely alienated, there remains in the colonized, parts which the colonizer could not foresee, predict, or dominate. It is from this place of difference that the colonized acts (*Toward* 38). This is clear in the rejection of both the Rebel and Caliban to trade places with the oppressor, in their insistence that their act is an act of freedom, and not a resentful revenge. The Rebel states that it is not out of rancor that he acted, for "to hate is to still be dependent," to still be in a condition of slavery. Hatred

binds the slave, it “sinks its teeth into his throat.” The cry “Death to the Whites” is necessary as a movement out of slavery, as a rejection to submit to the reality of slavery. It is necessary to bring into being a new reality, a new life. To not cry “Death to the Whites” is to accept “the fetid sterility of worn-out soil,” it is to be trapped into a cowardly helpless enslaved being. The act of Césaire’s Rebel, the cry, is like “the chemical in the fertilizer/ whose sole worth is in that dying/ that regenerates a land without pestilence, rich, delectable, smelling not of fertilizer but of ceaselessly fresh grass” (*Lyric* 32; “And the Dogs”). In Césaire, the violent act is a necessity of life and for life, it is not valued in itself but in what it does to bring an end to a sterile rotten life and to allow for the growth of a new, different one.

The Revolution of the blacks needed to uproot plants, if they needed to plant others (Césaire, *CP* 201; “Noon Knives”). The blacks in Haiti, according to C.L.R James, found the power of fighting in their Voodoo ceremonies, they sang and danced and made plans to liberate themselves from slavery. Their acts of destruction sought to exterminate the whites and set fire to the plantations, this would complete the destruction of that which enslaved them (85- 86). The Black slave freed by his white master and made to be a free citizen, i.e. a property owner, needed to destroy his enslaved freedom as well (89). Self-confidence came with defeating the white colonists. “The revolution had awakened them, had given them the possibility of achievement, confidence and pride.” What it achieved was combat “that psychological weakness, that feeling of inferiority, with which the imperialists poison colonial peoples everywhere...” This meant that the black will never submit to a restoration of slavery or the imposition of the will of others, at least not by force (244). But it put the black in white positions, inserted them in white politics, and dressed them in white clothes, and it were these that defeated Toussaint in the end, as they defeated Christophe.

The struggle of the colonized to expel the colonizers from their land and their being is necessarily a continuous one, it is “daily action against ourselves and against the enemy, action which changes and grows each day...” (Cabral 65), nothing can be established and stabilized in the struggle of the colonized, “an independent African state must be a liberation movement in power, or it will not be independent” (116).

To be colonized is not to be subjected by a power outside oneself, against which one should fight to become free; the being of the colonized is within himself, and it is this colonized being that he rejects and seeks liberation from. Fanon, writing about French colonialism in Algeria shows that, “It is not the soil that is occupied...French colonialism has settled itself in the very center of the Algerian individual and has undertaken a sustained work of cleanup, of expulsion of self, or rationally pursued mutilation” (*Dying* 65).

The act of violence becomes then a convulsion that brings what is hidden and buried in the depths of being to the surface, but it is also a reverberation that takes root in the heart and then spreads outwards as Bachelard had it. What it does is break through processes of domestication and enslavement, it reaches to the roots “deposited by Africa” in the depths of the Black Rebel’s being, it is there that a fire that destroys works of civilization, and thus of slavery and colonialism, is started.

The Rebel affirms his enslaved and colonized being as a confrontation and act of rebellion, his anger, his humiliation as well as his rebellion are affirmed: “My family name: offended; my given name: humiliated; my profession: rebel; my age: the stone age” (*Lyric* 39; “And the Dogs”). The Rebel’s revolt does not find its source only in the affirmation of his enslaved being, but in the anger over and the rejection of this being that such an affirmation brings with it. The recognition of the Rebel by the master as the slave was an instant of a crisis of the senses. A refusal of what is

seen occurs when the master recognizes him as his slave, and he sees himself as recognized by his master, “It was, it was indeed me, I told him, the good slave, the faithful slave, the slave slave.” But the Rebel rejects to see himself as thus, it is not a denial, but a seeing that refuses what it sees, and acts upon that refusal. The scene of the murder here is an act for life in the sense where life is what is to be protected, not in the Nietzschean sense of preserving what is existent, but rather maintaining the possibility of life, the opening, or starting of a life. Murder of the master here is thus killing of both the master and his recognized slave. When the Rebel says that “it is the only baptism that today I remember” (41), It is because his act of violence against the master, was his ultimate act of shedding off his enslaved being, and opening the possibility of another. The Rebel acts not only in revolt over what is present, but also when the hope for a future that is not a continuation of the present of slavery is threatened, when the master declares the future of the Rebel’s son as one of a slave.

In Césaire, the act is a breakthrough in the movement of history, a rejection of passivity and conformity with the order of things, a creation of chaos, displacement of how things are and should be, a shaking, that may accumulate to become a volcanic convulsion, one that destroys the master’s world and allow for the creation of another. The volcanic destruction is thus the main productive force of a new life. The movement of an enslaved people, massacred, drowned in mud, turned into ashes, can only be an explosive one, for it takes an explosion to rid the black man of all layers of slavery that he was made to bear and become for three centuries (43).

Discussing the Algerian struggle for liberation, Fanon has shown that the colonized reject the values of the occupier, the “ungrateful” colonized tend to “withdraw before any invitation of the conqueror’s.” A kind of “turning back, a regression,” occurs in the rejection by the colonized of the colonizer, his ways of doing things, and his values. The colonized as Fanon shows goes back “to methods of struggles already outmoded” (*A Dying* 63). This does not mean, though that the liberation lies in seeking a past mode of life, it rather means that to become free the colonized needs to act in freedom that is, as I have been arguing, within his own knowledge and way of doing things. In what could be more concrete terms, if the colonized did not have the military machinery that the colonizer has, he still finds his weapons among that which makes his mode of being.

As he tells the stories of flight and expulsion, Kanafani tells the stories of obstinate fighting, a fighting that can be easily called irrational, if calculation of end results is what makes the rational, when machine guns and organized militias with their advanced military equipment are confronted with old guns, axes, knives and sometimes with bare hands. When the guns no longer function, men carried their axes to defend their villages, one could see “the ghost of a kneeling person, raising both his hands above his head, between his palms his heavy ax stiffens, and then the ax falls, a suffocated wide sound rises, the darkness swallows a sigh followed by violent snoring and then everything is silent” (*CW II*: 47; “The Owl”). To say that the battle of axes has started means “that men collided, that many bodies have been lost inside the lines of the enemies while closing their grips obstinately on the ax, resting their noses with an absolute calm on the soil, lying quietly” (47-48). “In the terrifying moments of silence that followed every outpouring of fire, there could be heard the voices of those who were left singing in their way in battles, a singing that sounded as if it came from another world, a world in which a person dies while grabbing the rest of the song, which he continues there in sky” (51). The battles of axes are not dream battles in which the archaic can compete with the technologically advanced, the battle of axes is the battle of those who are losing the battle, but would not submit to defeat. It becomes a battle of persistence and obstinacy. It is poetic in this sense, but only imaginary when the reality reaches that point of excess, where only poetry can tell of what it is.

It is this rejection of a defeated being that was pervasive in Kanafani's text, not the denial of it but its unacceptability. In a defeated being, everything, including the dreams of the future, become pale, even ink ceases to have color, there is nothing to say and nothing to do (CW I: 246; "Um Sa'd"). But losing a battle is not necessarily to be defeated; one is defeated when he accepts that he should act as *awadem*, human, that is passive and docile (253), when he accepts "a slap on the face and is grateful for it." The Palestinian refugee, not defeated, appropriates words, displaces meanings, to be "human" is "to fight, this is how it is" (254). To obstinately state that "this is how it is" is to suspend the work of the juridical system according to Foucault, for to be judged, the criminal needs to tell about himself, confide in his judges, "something like the secret of his own being." But the man who refuses to obey, the one "who rebels is finally inexplicable; it takes a wrenching way that interrupts the flow of history, and its long chains of reasons, for a man to be able, "really," to prefer the risk of death to the certainty of having to obey" (*Power* 449).

From the perspective of 'Um Sa'd it is not her jailed son who is in prison, but those who signed that they would be *awadem*, and allowed themselves to be imprisoned in what makes the Palestinian *adami*, in this sense, the ones imprisoned are those who managed to keep themselves outside of prison (255). "A prisoner who sees himself as outside the law because he's been put where he is, is proud rather than resentful. He may desire freedom, but he likes prison too, because he's managed to fix himself up with freedom there" (Genet 250).

Walter Benjamin has shown that it is revolutionary violence that is "the highest manifestation of unalloyed violence by man." Law bastardizes divine absolute violence into mythical violence. All mythical, lawmaking violence, which we may call executive, is pernicious. Pernicious, too, is the law-preserving, administrative violence that serves it." What it does is confiscate and domesticate the sovereignty of the individual that divine violence grants, by domesticating the latter (*Reflections* 300). The legal is never free from violence, it is always based on the possibility of violence in cases of violations, but also, legality finds its origin in violence, it is what maintains the power of the legal institution (287-288). It is this what makes violence outside the law most threatening to it, and it is what makes "the great criminal" admirable to the public.

One might want to question the conflation between ordinary crime and revolutionary violence here, as a conflation that sought to discredit political revolts, in any form they take that makes them threatening to the established order. But it is to pose the question of the ends sought in the act of violence, it is to ask the question of the usefulness of revolt, its rightness or wrongness, a question that Benjamin thought moves one away from how law bastardizes violence, and Foucault saw as defeating in the sense that it overlooks the fact of revolt, itself. It is never useless to revolt, risking one's life facing a power, the rightness of the question is left open by the fact that people revolt, "behind all the submissions and coercions, beyond the threats, the violence, and the intimidations, there is the possibility of that moment when life can no longer be bought, when the authorities can no longer do anything, and when facing the gallows and the machine guns, people revolt" (*Power* 450). The question is not one of utility, it could be a question of ethics, that has to do with one's mode of being, but it is a question of reality, for "because there are such voices that the time of human beings does not have the form of evolution but that of "history," precisely" (452).

The *fidai* would never quit until what he seeks is achieved. The promise is fulfilled, though, in not quitting, in the rebellion. The rebel/*fidai* seeks a paradise, this paradise functions as the challenge but also the possible impossible that would never allow for compromise, for the acceptance of less. For 'Um Sa'd, the dream of return is a will, she states that she does not want to

die without seeing Palestine, and her fighting son is the realization of her dream. Neither Sa'd nor his mother are symbolic figures in Kanafani, 'Um Sa'd is a woman who carries on her back the weight of humiliation of the life of the poor refugee woman, working in cleaning someone else's dirt, on someone else's land. But it is this life of wounds that are covered under the dust, rust, and dirt of her work that makes return a matter of will, for one either seals the source of mud or is drowned by it. Sa'd would not sweep the mud flooding the camp, if the refugee camp is flooded with mud from a gutter in the sky, then he would go there and seal it, and this is what he did, when he joined the fedayeen (272).

It is when the refugees become fighters that they cease to walk with lowered heads, when they no longer feel themselves stepped on by poverty, state rules, UNRWA cards, social oppression. To fight is to retrieve part of one's soul. And it is then that 'Um Sa'd's dried branch blossoms into a grape tree.

The possible impossible in Kanafani's fight is realized in the will of the fighter. A will that would not accept to have its cause solved for it, would not hand the responsibility for its act to someone else. A will that declares that we would, if we had to, march with our bare hands and clubs, and let the cannons cut through us better than the stillness of waiting... (*Fares* 63).

Chapter Three: “Man is a Cause”

In Kanafani and Césaire, liberation lies not in the recovery of a lost self or identity, neither is it the restoration/ construction of a free willing subject. For to be confined within a definition of a true original self that has preceded the present dominated one cannot be liberation. Illusion and self-deception, and disillusionment necessarily follow. All symptoms of a weakened, helpless life that is unable to confront itself as such. The colonized of Césaire and Kanafani do not, as I will show in this chapter, seek liberation through becoming subjects of history, for they already are in their colonized position. Neither is freedom attained through an inversion of the colonial-slavery-relation, where the colonized slaves become masters and the Western colonizers become the humiliated slaves. The colonized might in fact seek something other than the being of the colonizer. For Césaire, it is life rather than the status of the Western subject that is sought, for Kanafani, it is the free man as non-subject, in his individuality, difference and independence. Both writers had a hope in the force of life to overcome a being subjected as an institutionalized product, for life as life, as becoming and change, is incompatible with that which is defined.

A Being of Equivalence

To be constrained to a position, a role and identity is to have parts of one’s life deadened. In his writings on the deadening forces of capitalism, Marx has shown that wholeness comes with difference, plurality, gaps and interruptions, what is absent in this condition is uniformity. Uniformity which comes within a capitalist mode of being is based on a weakening and degeneration of life. If, in Althusser, the subject is produced and reproduced through ideology, which in its turn is produced through ritualized practices, then it is Marx’s description of the transformation of the craftsman into a worker, of life into a condition of stagnation, that I find most helpful in describing the process of subjectification,

A craftsman who performs the various partial operations in the production of a finished article one after the other must at one time change his place, at another time his tools. The transition from one operation to another interrupts the flow of his labour and creates gaps in his working day, so to speak. These close up when he is tied to the same operation the whole day long; they vanish in the same proportion as the changes in his work diminish. The resulting increase of productivity is due either to an increased expenditure of labour-power in a given time- i.e. increased intensity of labour - or to a decrease in the amount of labour-power un- productively consumed. The extra expenditure of power required by every transition from rest to motion is compensated for by prolonging the duration of the normal speed of work, when once acquired. As against this, however, constant labour of one uniform kind disturbs the intensity and flow of a man's vital forces, which find recreation and delight in the change of activity itself (*Capital* 460; Ch.14).

While the worker in manufacture becomes part of “a living mechanism,” the factory worker is incorporated into “a lifeless mechanism” as its living appendages. The development of skill in the case of the worker in handcraft is different, although his work in a fixed and inherited craft could turn the craft into a guild, but it does not turn the worker into a cog in a machine. Marx compares the skill that the Hindu weaver inherited from generation to generation to that of the spider, it is not one that reduces the body to one part, it becomes something like an instinct, man is thus not reduced to a shallow consciousness, for an instinctual skill comes from where instinct comes and involves those body parts that an instinct involves. Instinctual and physical, it is “very complicated, in comparison with that of the majority of workers under the system of manufacture” (459-460). It is thus only in pathological situations, that one of the instincts, one bodily function, takes over, suppresses and expands on the expense of others.

Basing his observation on Darwin's description of natural selection, Marx shows that it is in being confined to one single act, where there is no place for diversity, that any kind of deviation is either preserved or rejected, the fixity of the purpose here dictates the fixity of the form of the tool that realizes it (461, Ft. 6; Ch. 14).

Specialization creates a one sided being, a fragment and a function, a being that only grows in one narrowly defined direction. It becomes a state of being fixed in a function. When man concentrates all his attention on a single narrowly defined act, he is able to "attain the desired effect with minimum exertion." In such a condition, one has little need for other knowledges, other ways of doing and being are blocked in and by the partiality of being that results from "the conversion of a partial task into the life-long destiny of a man..." (458; Ch.14).

This fragmented mode of being under capitalism is not confined to the economic activity of the worker. Marx remarks that "division of labour seizes upon, not only the economic, but every other sphere of society, and everywhere lays the foundation for that specialization, that development in a man of one single faculty at the expense of all others..." (474; Ch.14).

Man here is depleted, fixed in one function, a determined partial purpose, he occupies the same position as "the lifeless instruments of labour." Indeed, it is a requirement of capital that the worker is impoverished, both physically and intellectually, "Reflection and fancy are subject to err; but a habit of moving the hand or the foot is independent of either" (483; Ch.14). The less man imagines, reflects, the less diverse his activities are, the better he is in functioning as part of a machine, economic or something else.

The extraction and abstraction through which man is subjectified/objectified comes with the reduction of man into that which he produces. The continuous process of objectification through which subjectivity is reproduced finds its Supreme Being in practical need, which becomes the providence that turns man's destiny into that which best serves in realizing it as the Ultimate End:

Under the present system, if a crooked spine, twisted limbs, a one-sided development and strengthening of certain muscles, etc., make you more capable of working (more productive), then your crooked spine, your twisted limbs, your one-sided muscular movement are a productive force. If your intellectual vacuity is more productive than your abundant intellectual activity, then your intellectual vacuity is a productive force, etc., etc. If the monotony of an occupation makes you better suited for that occupation, then monotony is a productive force ("Draft" n.p.).

Capital creates a "free" subject whose predication is "as structurally super-adequate to itself, definitively productive of surplus-labor over necessary labor..." (Spivak, "Scattered" 79). According to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak there are two predications of the subject, the materialist as labor power, and the idealist as consciousness. Predications "are exclusive and thus operate on the metonymic principle of a part standing for the putative whole" (91).

It is through circulation that the materialist predication takes place. The processes of equivalence and standardization necessitated by circulation transform man into a subject. A transformation that correlates with the transformation of use values into exchange values. Through equivalence, things take the form of what is posited as their opposites: use value "becomes the form of appearance of its opposite, value" (Marx, *Capital* 148; Ch.1), and "concrete labour becomes the form of manifestation of its opposite, abstract human labour" (150; Ch.1). Labour becomes an exchangeable commodity when being private and individual is also taking a social form (150- 151; Ch.1). It is impossible to separate the commodity from labor objectified in it, the labor realized in the commodity is "equated with the labour contained in every other commodity in turn," it is in this way that human labour becomes undifferentiated, the commodity becomes the

“visible incarnation...of all human labor.” Marx describes this process as one of abstraction and reduction, abstraction of the concrete differences and properties of the work, and reduction to a common character (159-160; Ch.1). Increase in number and variety of commodities create the need that “different kinds of commodities belonging to different owners are exchanged for, and equated as values with, one single further kind of commodity.” For commercial intercourse to take place, there needs to be a universal equivalent form, money (183; Ch.1).

Money acquires its value through circulation. Circulation, exchange and socialization is what gives a thing its value. Spivak shows that “Marx describes this phenomenon as the “Dasein” of the coin as “value sign”.” Marx’s use of the word Dasein here refers to the use of money, “the work it performs” (Spivak, “Scattered” 81), which is much less puzzling if one remembers that a major part of Marx’s theory of value is about extractions, separations, and reductions, in which utility and function are the measure and form according to which and into which a being is cut down. It is here where Spivak uses the term *invagination*, a turning inside-out of the part-whole relationship, to describe the relationship between use value and exchange value, which entails the possibility of opening up. Use-value is “both outside and inside the system of value-determinations.” Use value is the host “which must be subtracted so that Value can be defined.” Although not completely outside “the circuit of exchange” (80), for it is important for the being of capital itself, it is outside the circuit of exchange in that it cannot be measured. “A thing can be a use-value without being a value” (Marx qtd. in Spivak, “Scattered” 80). This being of use value, according to Spivak, allows us to question value systems as one of incorporation and normalization.

Spivak sees in the link between use value, desire, and the affective the potentiality of a challenge to both the notion of the subject as “labor-power or super-adequation” and the logic of capital. It is when the worker wishes to “consume the (affect of the) work” that such a challenge takes place. It is then affectively necessary labor that would defy capitalist logic (80).

But if as Marx describes the process as one in which use value is subsumed under exchange value, that is absorbed by the latter, then such a quest for establishing the “political subject,” through retrieving use value, is an idealist quest. Spivak is actually seeking that which is unmediated, that which is non-socialized. Spivak argues for the possibility (she actually treats it as a fact) of separating the private individual, the realm of the “natural” and desire, from that of the political and social; i.e. that of use value from that of exchange value, as well as separating the idealist predication of the subject from its materialist predication. Nevertheless, in my reading of Marx, it seems impossible to determine what is form and what is content, opposites are necessary correlates that exchange places in a continuous movement, that one cannot pull the one from the other, something similar to what Michel Foucault has called the *nondissociable* (*Aesthetics*). Labour under capitalism cannot be separated from the commodity, for the private individual is also social. In a capitalist mode of being, there are no longer “direct social relations...but rather...material [dinglich] relations between persons and social relations between things” (Marx, *Capital* 165-166; Ch.1), this is a substitution through which “the products of labour become commodities, sensuous things which are at the same time supra-sensible or social” (165; Ch.1).

I do not read the mode of production in Marx as a base on which a superstructure is built, rather the mode of production in Marx comes with a certain way of doing and being, the abstraction, reduction, standardization and substitution entailed in processes of equivalence necessitated for circulation or commodity exchange are defused and disseminated in all spheres of social relations, including those cast as natural and private, the realms of the family and desire.

This dissemination is shown in Marx's account of the transformation of men into subjects, which entails the same processes as those of what Spivak has called materialist predication:

The sphere of circulation or commodity exchange, within whose boundaries the sale and purchase of labour-power goes on, is in fact a very Eden of the innate rights of man. It is the exclusive realm of Freedom, Equality, Property and Bentham. Freedom, because both buyer and seller of a commodity, let us say of labour-power, are determined only by their own free will. They contract as free persons, who are equal before the law. Their contract is the final result in which their joint will finds a common legal expression. Equality, because each enters into relation with the other, as with a simple owner of commodities, and they exchange equivalent for equivalent. Property, because each disposes only of what is his own. And Bentham, because each looks only to his own advantage. The only force bringing them together, and putting them into relation with each other, is the selfishness, the gain and the private interest of each. Each pays heed to himself only, and no one worries about the others. And precisely for that reason, either in accordance with the pre-established harmony of things, or under the auspices of an omniscient providence, they all work together to their mutual advantage, for the common weal, and in the common interest (*Capital* 280; Ch.6).

The loss of individuality and communal relations were effects of the same process, one in which man becomes an exchangeable object, with the sign subject. Incorporated into capital as autonomous, isolated and anonymous units, men become not irreplaceable but, as undifferentiated labor power, actually interchangeable. Capital, as Marx has shown, sustains itself through the interdependence of workers as individuals, but their interdependence as well as their individualism is formed in the service of capital. Man's lack of independence under capitalism is established and maintained through the division of labor and specialization that leaves the worker dependent on a fragment of his being and on that of others to whom he relates through his and their objectified labor, a relation that is defined by the law that establishes them as subjects (482, ft. 42; Ch.14).

Legality is hence the form of appropriating the independence of those who are made to become dependent through the liberal contract. In Capitalism, liberty translates into the right of property, relations of possession and dispossession, which reduces the bonds between men to "natural necessity, need and private interest, the preservation of their property and their egoistic persons" ("On the Jewish" 43). In this way liberty functions to thwart any possibility for communal relations between men under capitalism. For Marx, the bourgeois subject of law, is a passive object, a result and product of a capitalist society from which communal relations disappear. In this sense, individualization is the obliteration of any individuality.

I am not arguing entrapment in a system that produces itself and is reproduced endlessly, neither am I arguing that capitalism is the inevitable destiny of humanity. Nevertheless, breaking from an established value system entails one of two options either fight for/from another way of being, one that is not based on exchange values that would subsume use values, that is where this system of valuation and the division of labor that brought it into existence are challenged by another and not the Other (here use value), or enter into the idealist search for use values as truths and points of origin, that is find that which is hidden. The latter is the path taken by the different revolutionary movements in the capitalist West in their attempts to combat capitalism, following its logic, they only succeeded in reproducing it.

Spivak opts for this latter path, she thus maintains the separation, (division of labor as well as working within established binary oppositions), through which a capitalist value system is reproduced and with it the subject it predicates. It is not surprising then that in her text, the subject vacillates between the subjectivity (agency) of the "educated" political subject, and that of the subjectified/colonized by subjectification subaltern, (this point will be further explained below), Subjectivity itself is no longer the thing to be questioned in her analysis, but rather it seems to be solidified as a privileged position.

What is missed in an account that privileges subjectivity is that subjectivity is the freedom of the weak; the subject who *knows* and can speak is the one whose being is now based on separating him from his act and the objectification of both (Nietzsche, *Genealogy* 45). The being of the subject cannot be a being of freedom, liberation comes with a being without representations, neither that of the political subject and his state, nor that of the individualized being in his privatized egoist life (Foucault, *Security* 336).

The Supreme Being of Lack

The subjectification/ objectification of individuals under capitalism is manifested in their inability to take responsibility for their deeds; they are instead the “personification of economic categories, the bearers [*Träger*] of particular class-relations and interests.” The individual under capitalism cannot be “responsible for relations whose creature he remains” (Marx, *Capital* 92; “Preface 1st ed.”). But for man to be objectified he has to become a “free willing subject,” which needs to exist as shown in the discussion above, in the form of an abstract category. Capitalism as a mode of being in which products are commodities, i.e. values, and in which the individual is homogenized, needs its “religious cult of man in the abstract,” a religion in which man is objectified as (is its) God (172; Ch.1). Man thus creates a God; in whose image he is made to be. God as spirit, and man as subject/ God becomes, as Nietzsche had it, the “cause” and Truth behind everything. This process of subjectification involves “the breeding of a particular kind of man,” through the domestication and taming of his being defined as an improvement, as an elevation of man to a higher status, that of the gods (“Twilight” 502).

Subjectified in the image of God, man becomes a bearer of truth, a free willing subject. As a subject which exists as a function of equivalence and standardization, he is set to reproduce his mode of being, one in which the same becomes the ultimate measure of what and how things are made. It is in the condition of decline and weakness that the same becomes a necessity of being, the doublings and binaries on which capitalism produces and reproduces itself necessitates also that the differences between “the extremes themselves become blurred to the point of similarity” (540).

In “The Shoulders of Others” (Kanafani, *CW* II: 213-224), the egoist “political subject” is burdened with political commitment towards *others*. He longs for a life without burdens (217), to become one of the herd “like the rest of the people” (215). It is a force beyond him that releases him of any responsibility. The disburdened political subject could feel “the joy of breathing” (215), for “life is only life,” there is no need to dedicate one’s life to a cause, one can rather enjoy the freedom of “window shopping,” the anonymousness and the emptiness of the life of a subject who passes by people and is passed by them pursued by nothing.

But the subject without the act is a mutilated emptied one, it can never be in a condition of satisfaction; it rationalizes itself by its anonymousness, it bases itself on processes of standardization, normalization which necessarily entail processes of othering. In the emptiness of its being, the subject seeks to replicate itself in others, the need for the same and the standardized becomes the condition of its self-preservation, a preservation of which feelings of resentment and acts of revenge are common correlations. This is manifest in the uneasiness with which the narrator listens to Abu Salim who does good and “throws it in the sea” by feeding bread crumbs to the fish. For the narrator it was unconceivable that one might “do the same thing for twenty years .. would he lose anything if he stopped throwing the crumbs to the fish?” (221) Was it the lack of utilitarianism in Abu Salim’s act that made the narrator uneasy, was it that the former felt satisfaction for what he did, or was it Abu Salim’s different way of doing and perceiving of things?

Abu Salim was not a party man, he was not leading a universal liberation struggle, he did not seek to feed all the fish, he wanted to do good, there was not a question of “for what end,” or “of what would be gained or lost for him.” For Abu Salim doing good did not involve what the narrator conceived as the necessary separation between what is desirable and what is good. For the narrator though, they become mutually exclusive, Abu Salim would not understand for it is only the university educated who can create such an opposition. Abu Salim is not a subject, the subject is divided and dislocated, the latter’s desire is split from his interest which is defined in economic terms and is impersonal (Spivak, “Can the Subaltern”).

A Weak being could not tolerate difference, the same is a precondition of its existence, it necessitates the reproduction and dissemination of the similar. Difference and plurality become incompatible with the loss of “the will to be oneself,” the loss of “the strength to withstand tension” (Nietzsche, “Twilight” 540).

Althusser has shown that subjectivity is conditioned on the existence of “a Unique, Absolute, Other Subject, i.e. God” (179). This subject making in the West is based on recognition that works through mirroring and interpellation. One becomes a subject by interpellating the Subject whose image he is made to be. In Althusser, mutual recognition between subject and Subject is the condition of the existence for both.

Subjectivity as the objectification of man as God is established on a lack and a sense of unfulfillment; one is said to be made in the image of God but is not God. The liberated subject, is man who learns to renounce his own will, who knows that any will of one’s own is a bad will (Foucault, *Security* 177). The subject is “the person who obeys, the person who is subject to the order,” he is the one who is at the disposition of someone else and subject to their will. Obedience here is not a practice aiming at achieving a certain objective, obedience is its means and ends, it cannot be suspended or turned around. This is not a suppression of egoism, though, it is the creation of an ego that is based on self-hate and contempt.

To see one self as the image of God, while being stripped of one’s responsibility for oneself and act, is to live with a feeling of incompleteness, with which comes a feeling of guilt for one should have been God but is not, resentment as I have shown in the previous chapter necessarily comes with the feeling of guilt, both become an integral part of the being of the subject.

The subject is man stripped of his will, he is a cog in a machine in Marx, an element in a system of representations, outside of which he does not exist. It is for this reason that Althusser declares that one is never an individual; the individual is an abstract category that one cannot concretely be; people are always-already subjects, what is missed in this declaration is that the category of the subject is neither more nor less abstract than the category of the individual. But it is the rationality and life -preserving instinct of the Western Subject that propels him to project his image on all things, he sees in things “only that which he had put into them” (Nietzsche, “Twilight” 494- 495). Althusser’s declaration is enabled by universalizing the subjectification of Western man under capitalism, going with Freud’s universal unconscious (176), and thus the discontentment of man on earth, as an ahistorical fact of being. For Althusser, it is when man is given a name that he becomes subject. Naming involves constraint, pre-appointment and recognition, it guarantees for the subjects that they are “indeed concrete, individual, distinguishable and (naturally) irreplaceable subjects” (173). Family rituals, rearing and education are the sites where ideology forms, through ritualized and institutionalized practices, its subjects (174).

Nevertheless, in a less-universalized narrative of subjectification one can show that repression, fragmentation, separation and reduction which are integral parts of the making of the

subject are achieved within a certain mode of being in which man is split from his deed through systems of representation, these include the legal and the political as well as the private individual.

Man domesticated is man stripped of his drive as a living creature, he becomes “a caricature of man, like a miscarriage, said to be made in the image of God but not a God, he had become a “sinner,” he was stuck in a cage, imprisoned among all sorts of terrible concepts” (Nietzsche, “Twilight” 502). A God and a sinner, man leads a split being of binary oppositions that are generated from the split of man into Self/Other. He is thus turned into an amputated being that suffers a lack that can never be satisfied; for a being whose instincts are disvalued and suspended, reduced to “consciousness,” the “weakest and most fallible organ!” (*Genealogy* 84) can only treat his feeling of lack with acts of substitution/revenge leading only to what Nietzsche has called bad conscience.

The Impotence of a subject that is made in the image of God, given free will, while stripped of his ability to act comes with “the most abysmal hatred.” It is the hatred of moral subjects celebrating that which kills life in them, weakness, suffering, deprivation and sickness. Their act takes the form of revenge, turned against themselves or others on whom they project a hated self, but in all cases what they hate is that of which they were stripped, the healthy, the happy, and the strong, which are posited as evil (33-34).

In “the Cat” (Kanafani, *CW* II: 247-256), it is materialism and the lack of the materiality of being, that is the symptom of a degenerate dying life. The protagonist finds the truth of his being in the other side of his conscious subjectivity, desire, which becomes “the only definite thing that has a clear beginning and end... the only truth, everything else is a wrap within another wrap, there is no other truth..” (250). But it is the truth of his subject position, a position of which lack is an integral part. The attempts of the narrator to satisfy his desire by substitutions leave him in an exacerbated state of discontentment, repulsion, and resentment (251). It is the condition of a dying being that is unaware of itself as such.

Man stripped of his instincts could no longer have access to the truth of his being, his knowledge of himself is a reflection in a mirror that stands outside of him. It was the dying cat that shattered the mirror image of the all-knowing subject. Unlike the cat in “The Beach”, who opts for taking the risk than being trapped, the cat here is a crippled being, unlike cats, “it was frozen in its place,” with its feet smashed and stuck to the ground (252). One could see a “strange surrender and a waiting” in its eyes (253). Realizing that the crippled cat moved from the street to the alley by the force of death, the protagonist was confronted with the fact that his desire acted as the force of death in the case of the crippled cat, moving it from the street to the alley.

The subject is driven by a force beyond himself while simultaneously feeling that the world revolves around him. Subjectivity entails two meanings, according to Foucault, to be “subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge, both meanings suggest a form of power that subjugates and makes subject to (Foucault, *Security* 331).

As I have already argued above, the “free subject” is constituted in a process of production that follows the same capitalist logic in which everything else under capitalism is produced. Subjectivity as the objectified being of man, finds its determinations as Foucault argues in labour, life, and language, which are revealed to him as exterior to himself while anticipating him. Recognizing himself as a subject, man “unveils himself to his own eyes in the form of a being who is already, in a necessarily subjacent density, in an irreducible anteriority, a living being, an instrument of production, a vehicle for words which exist before him” (*Order* 313).

The transformation from the individual to the individualized subject, one's value, status and identity are no longer granted through communal ties, but rather through the acknowledgement of "his own actions and thoughts" (Foucault, *History* 58-59). Through the discourse of truth of "what one is and what one does, what one recollects and what one has forgotten, what one is thinking and what one thinks he is not thinking..." subjects are constituted (60). While breaking the bonds of discretion or forgetfulness, the secrecy it seeks is obscurely familiar and generally base (62). What it achieves is a continuous draining of man, the constant flattening of the being of the human, the elimination of the pleasures of a profound being. This is what Foucault calls subjectification, a process in which one externalizes his being through producing himself for another just as he produces commodities, socialized even in his relation to himself, he acquires an exchange value.

While the being of the subject is conditioned by its own reflection, the identification with a True Being that is being mirrored, that is a being that exists outside itself, necessarily entails an objectification of one's being. To see one's double is an impossibility, for it is trying to grasp the reflection in the mirror, while losing sight of the mirror, As Trinh Minh-ha shows, "Trying to grasp it amounts to stopping a mirror from mirroring. It is encountering the void. Not a transitory void, but one (the one) that has always been there despite our eternal effort to banish it from conscious sight" (*Woman* 22-23).

For Kanafani, a free being is one that does not seek its truth outside itself, it is neither externalized nor objectified, for it is never identified. Knowing the truth is not a process in which one objectifies his being together with the world around him. As the Islamic Philosopher Ibn Taymiyyah has shown, knowing the truth is an internal force, one is born with it. This knowledge is a latent force, but it is not a drive that is regulated or repressed, it operates through remembrance and exhortation, which are shaped and shape one's relations with the world. There can be no knowledge of the truth without this internal force. Remembrance in this sense functions not as a relation to the past, but as a source of knowledge that goes counter to an external blinding one. It is similar to what Nietzsche has called an esoteric knowledge (*Beyond*). It goes counter forgetting, not in the Nietzschean sense, but in the Freudian sense in which forgetting is inhibition and repression. Remembrance in this case is to know that which is not known and cannot be known otherwise, that is cannot be externalized or objectified, but works as a source that allows one other ways of being and doing, subverting the being of the ideological subject.

For Ibn Taymiyyah, knowing the truth is deeply rooted in the human as his/her love for his/her mother's milk. Here, there are no acts of separation, inhibition, or alienation that bring with them a desire that becomes a source of guilt, resentment and self-loathing, instead there is a feeling of wholeness that comes with a way of knowing the truth that is based on love for that which is good and useful. Trinh has shown that to know oneself as a part of whole, with the part itself being whole and the whole being part, frees one from the fetishism of an absolute fixed I (*Woman*).

To be confined within a fixed identity is to be "infected with the leprosy of egotism," egoists are like lepers, what they "inevitably undergo is a loss of feeling and are consequently apt to injure themselves without realizing it." it is a loss of the sources of life, for "I can let neither light nor air enter me when I close myself and exist as a crystallized I, be this I feminine or masculine, female or male" (28). Life as change, difference, contradiction, ceaseless movement that cannot be regulated in one direction, nor frozen in an abstract universalization: a life of flesh and blood becomes the condition of a wo/man non-subjectified, while that of a universal being is one abstracted from itself, objectified, and lacking in the forces of life; this is the life of the subject.

One can take leave of subjectivity and its constituting ideology through difference and plurality, a space of freedom could be found when identity gives way to difference and self to commonality. One ought to take leave of the illusion of singularity (30), for if it is in being fixed in a role and a name that one is suffocated in and by a subjectivity, that leads to a dead life. A sense of wholeness might be found in a being free of role, with no name. To retain the strength of being no one, of being before naming is to be free from the being of the subject of ideology, to escape relations of objectification, to be “neither possessed nor possessive, neither binding nor detached nor neutral” (38).

Subverting Representation

Kanafani’s stories challenge the processes of abstraction, standardization, reduction and substitutions involved in the creation of the “free subject.” In these stories, Kanafani’s subjects are not free men, for the free man, cannot be the “free subject,” he does not hold the position of the bearer-of-truth. The free man is reflected in multiple and intertwining images, none of which is his true singular image (*Z’urub* 57). The only truth of Kanafani’s heroes is the impossibility of knowing the truth of their lives. An impossibility that is shown in the fragment that is given to us as a fragment, but also in the plural that is given to us as a plural. The plurality of being makes it impossible to confine it to one single entity/story and hence makes it impossible to turn it into a subject. This impossibility is created in the multiplicity of possibilities of what one has been, is, and could be.

A subject is created in “Death of Bed# 12” (*CW* II: 125-152), he is given a name and a life story. He is given memories, desires and secrets. But his name was erased by his position as an occupier of a bed in a hospital. The imagination of the narrator here works as a power that subjectifies that which is subjected; posing a question and a challenge to a subjectifying power that founds itself through a “compulsory extraction of truth” (Foucault, *Security* 184-185), where the inside of people’s minds, their souls, their innermost secrets, and their conscience become objects of knowledge as production (333).

The story itself is the story of the man becoming subject; Mohammad Ali Akbar is given contentment despite his poverty, his was a balanced life. But he was impoverished by being confused for a criminal and losing an object of love. He becomes a subject detached from his communal relations, in search for money in an unfamiliar world. Confused and equated with another, who he was not, Mohammad Ali Akbar insisted that he was to be called by his full name, not a single part missing. The full name functions to fill in the holes in his impoverished and deprived being, but it was, although made of a combination, a single name. Joining the world of money and wealth, his only attachment was to a closed box. In the closed box, a white transparent cloak made of the fantasies of a past that preceded civilization and the dreams of the future, that which was oppressive in the past remains in a corner, giving the dream its value. The closed box as his attachment to his name, was his way of hanging to life while it was leaving him,

time ended... for Mohammad Ali Akbar, everything happened as if he were raised from the ground, his legs were hanging without touching anything, as if he were hanged, it was he who was moving in front of the time portrait, as for the portrait itself, it was frozen as if it were a basalt mountain ... his role as an acting person ended, and now his turn was to be a mere spectator... he felt that he was not attached to anything... that he was remote and that all the things that were moving in front of him were fish in a huge glass ... his opened eyes despite this were of glass as well (143-144).

The subject created by Kanafani’s narrator is undone in his death, when the box to which he was attached is opened. The box did not have what the narrator imagined, it only had a single

earing, no cloak and no money, what remained is one thread of attachment, a gift, the narrator imagined, to a sister, but it was lacking its other half. The narrator's imagination created a fragment of the truth of a life, and it created a subject, which it then dismantled by reflecting on the reflection.

Kanafani liberates his protagonists by a continuous construction/destruction of the multiple frames in which he puts them. The Palestinian refugee child seen as a victim, desperate, poor and embarrassed of being a refugee from Palestine, would not succumb to the position of the subject. The failure of the teacher to extract the story of the child, is the failure to constitute him as a subject. The child could not be constructed as a subject of pity, for he lacked the necessary humility; his arrogance as well as his lies made him unqualified to provide the true story of his suffering that was expected and in exchange for which he would have received pity (CW II: 81-98; "The Cake Vendor").

The child maintained an independent and individual being through the plurality of his stories, a plurality that aborts any processes of objectification. The child does speak of himself, he tells multiple stories, all are plausible, some are lies and others cannot be verified as true. When confronted with one lie, the boy would tell another story. All stories are about poverty, death and madness. Their multiplicity and unverifiability effect both insult and resentment on the part of the charitable character who wants to offer pity. The only meeting point between the narrator and the child is around the former's cheap shoes which the child wipes. A fragment instead of a metanarrative is what we are given, while the multiple possibilities of what one is, can be, and have been are Kanafani's way of refusing to allow his texts to establish a Palestinian subject, further colonizing their lives.

The Other Side of the Mirror?

Césaire has been often seen as advocating a return to a lost self, an origin; usually interpreted to be Africa or the repressed in the unconscious, which also turns out to be Africa. Ronnie Scharfman emphasizes Césaire's rejection of a modern way of being, which she could not read except within a modernist framework. This rejection, seen within psychoanalytic lenses, becomes pathologic; it is the struggle of a desiring subject that seeks a "projected utopian future" (18), one that will be achieved by arriving at a real nocturnal self that transcends the alienated present one. The difference/otherness of the "black subject" lies in this account in a rejection of the separation from the mother, as the Freudian/Lacanian narrative goes, and a struggle to return to a unified existence with the mother. She thus sees in Césaire's *Cahier* an Oedipal triangle: France, that is, the French language, the Symbolic order, represents the paternal pole, and Africa, the Imaginary and desired, the maternal pole (31). Seeking the different, i.e. the rejection of the modernist project, comes from a failure: the failure to separate. Unlike the free rational "unalienated" subject of the West who was able to separate, the failure of the colonized comes from the alienation effected by the encounter with the white man. The absence of a subject in the title of the "Notebook" is read as marking this failure. The possibility that the poem is rejecting the notion of subjectivity, putting the emphasis on the act itself instead of replacing it by an inserted subject is not considered by Scharfman. In this reading a deeper "real self," as the "untapped resource of identity" is the goal to be arrived at. While Scharfman argues that by reaching into the depths of self, one is able to open a path to a future that is of another "domain," such an opening is conditioned in her reading on the existence of a "real self," while the other domain is already defined as Africa. In this way, Césaire's project is posited as a reactionary utopian and impossible one, while the subversiveness of the absence of a teleological subject replaced by the act of "A

return” that functions as a disturbance for a psychoanalytic reading as that of Scharfman is disavowed.

Self-realization, through transcendence, even if this transcendence is achieved through a descent into a “subliminal consciousness,” since it is a “different” subjectivity that is to be achieved, is seen as the sought “end” in the “Notebook” (Davis). A pre-existent self that preceded colonization and slavery is assumed here, it is also assumed that it would be possible to restore such a self through a reconciliation with that which is repressed. The tram scene in the “Notebook” (*CP*), is thus not a confrontation through affirmation, it works rather in Gregson Davis’ reading through a shock effect, that brings to the surface that which is repressed; but such an effect as Walter Benjamin has shown is ephemeral, it does not destroy a world and build another instead (*Illuminations*). But then in Davis’ reading there is nothing to be destroyed and another to be built; but a past to be restored, that which lies in the unconscious.

To seek to reconcile the repressed subject with an original self is to seek the preservation of the subject, a preservation which is based just as that which it seeks to preserve on illusions. With the being of the subject comes that Other, which is born beside man “and at the same time, in an identical newness, in an unavoidable duality.” It is “both exterior to him and indispensable to him: in one sense, the shadow cast by man as he emerged in the field of knowledge; in another, the blind stain by which it is possible to know him.” Understood as “the abyssal region in man’s nature or as a uniquely impregnable fortress in his history.” This double is “the blurred projection” of the truth of man. It is his essence towards which he strives in his search for his truth (Foucault, *Order* 327). Reconciliation and desalienation through the unconscious is still then part of the same process through which man was subjectified/objectified.

Nevertheless, return to nature is made impossible in Césaire’s poem, according to Nick Nesbitt, there is no hope “for a recovered subject-object unity,” it is not an abandonment to the irrational but mastery thereof. The transformational force in Césaire’s poem lies in its “highly articulated contradiction,” invoking “return to nature” while showing its impossibility (89). It is confrontation with a negative reality that Césaire’s poem achieves, while rejecting to present “a resolution of its contradictions that would bypass social untruth” (92).

In Nesbitt’s reading, the poem seeks “to instantiate negritude as an unassimilated moment of difference and nonidentity.” But it is a “utopian autonomy,” which could not be established. For the notions on which such an autonomy is to be established, “country and racial “brotherhood” have “repeatedly motivated a century of genocide and terror” (85), and it is for this reason that they are negated in the poem. Black and human subjectivity would be obliterated by a racist and fascist discourse. Black subjectivity runs the risk of becoming ideological, where freedom is lost in submission to “absolute imperatives” (86).

For Nesbitt, it is not the subject who is ideologically constituted here, but black subjectivity that would compromise its own freedom by becoming ideological. Nesbitt sees in Césaire’s “Notebook,” an alienated subject who passes “from prostration and heteronomy to freedom.” Negritude is perceived in this reading as the struggle against alienation. For Nesbitt, the struggle against colonialism is one of self-affirmation that takes place on the level of and through the consciousness of a subject, one who refuses to accept the process of de-subjectification, the “dehumanization of enslaved and colonized subjects” (24).

Nevertheless, contrary to Nesbitt’s argument, I see the act of affirmation as doing away with any possibility for a subjectivity, in both its representation/substitution, as well as mirror/recognition components. In the tram scene in the “Notebook” (*CP*), the speaker recognizes himself as colonized rather than as a subject, he recognizes himself seeing through the eyes of

colonial domination, it is the mirror thus and not the image that is recognized here. The speaker does not speak on behalf of the poor nigger, he speaks of speaking on behalf, it is the act of representation that is the subject/object in this scene. When the colonized sees himself seeing the “gangly nigger” as “comical and ugly,” he recognizes his colonized being. It is in this confrontation that he sees the ridiculousness of speaking the language of subjects, as holders of rights, or of seeking to represent those who cannot be posited as subjects, “Hail to the three centuries which uphold my civil rights and my minimized blood. /My heroism, what a farce!” (CP 63; “Notebook”). Contrary to Nesbitt’s argument, what follows the recognition of the colonized black is not an attempt to unite both speaker and the ‘nigger,’ as the object of his representation/speech in negritude, but a continuous destruction of any possibility of doing so. For Césaire’s project was not the insertion of a black subjectivity in a colonized world, it is already inserted even if in exclusion, if anything negritude was referring to a being of freedom, and as thus, it could not be another establishment in a capitalist colonial world.

In Nesbitt’s reading, the final moment of freedom in Césaire’s poem is ambiguous, for it produces “negritude’s promise of sovereignty via the seeming dissolution of that subject’s autonomy. This dissolution is represented affirmatively in a “progression from the individual to the collective consciousness.” The ambiguity, as seen by Nesbitt, lies in the “articulation of an autonomous black subjectivity and its immanent critique. What is critiqued is not subjectivity, but its different component, negritude which fails by degenerating into “tyranny and violence amid the utopian aspirations of the newly independent African and Diasporic states” (80). For Nesbitt, an autonomous black subjectivity is what is sought in the Cahier, but it is always threatened by colonialism and fascism (87).

Nesbitt reads Césaire’s text within its “cultural difference,” which is incorporated by the insistence on imposing the project of subject instantiation on it. In this case, blackness is added to what is already established for the colonized to be included in the universal history of the subject. But as in every other project of modernization, the colonized seem to inevitably fail to be incorporated in this universal history of mankind as defined and lead by the West; “Césaire’s poem presents the ascendancy of negritude as a complex historical process where the forces of violence and exploitation weigh in against the author’s utopian project even in its triumph” (78). It is thus a lack and a failure that the colonized is unable to instantiate its other/same subjectivity, but its other subjectivity is also stigmatized as utopian, and as thus is necessarily doomed to failure. For Nesbitt it is not subjectivity itself that has been the utopian illusion through which man was stripped of his freedom, it is the other, the different, which is seen as the utopian that is doomed to fail.

Césaire does talk about being oneself, this self is to be conserved or rediscovered. Slavery and assimilation created impotent passive blacks. The emancipation of the blacks can be achieved through action and creation. For Césaire, to be oneself, is to fight and do away with those parts of the self that were enslaved and assimilated. Passivity, indifference, obscurantism and sentimentality which come with the being of the colonized “must be uprooted,” “cut off at its source” (qtd. in Kesteloot, *Black* 91). But the emphasis here is not on acts of restoration, but rather on casting off, uprooting: shedding off a colonized and enslaved being, as argued in Chapter One. It is thus a growth, it could entail a reversal and an inversion as Nietzsche had it in his conceptualization of history, but it is not an original point, self, that is sought here; what we have instead is a continual process of becoming through the acts which at each instant/ movement in the poem guarantee that the dead shell that is the being of the subject is constantly shed off.

In Césaire's "Notebook," there is no differentiation between a colonized, a national, an assimilated or revolutionary subjectivity, for they all take the position of the subject, which could never be a position of freedom. The contradictions that Nesbitt sees in the last parts of the "Notebook" are, as I see them, multiple rejections of all forms of subjectifications, a rejection of the world of subjects, that can only be achieved by constant and endless movements, where humanist ideology and its free willing omnipotent subjects are constructed and undone in repetitive cycles, each of which produces a different form of the same. But this repetitive movement may create cracks on the surface of the same, from which that which is different may be able to rise. The break through that Césaire's poem seeks and achieves at different points finds its force in the will to start again, in the defiance of any attempt that would keep the black trapped in any of these cycles. This insistence on difference is what may be able to turn a movement in circles into a spiral one.

The "good nigger" has been the one who submits to a destiny over which he believed he has no control, for he believed in his worthlessness, that to be an enslaved subject is his fate, which he does not and should not even be curious to question (*CP* 79; "Notebook"). Nevertheless, this does not mean that the "bad" nigger is the one who wants to be subject made in the image of God. For that would only put him in another submissive position. To become subject, is to become one of the herd, a national or a revolutionary herd. They both require their free willing omnipotent subjects, men whose warrior-blood-beating hearts leave their traces on a wounded earth, which is conquered by those who establish themselves as fathers. For Césaire the ultimate destination of such a process is baseness (77-79).

To be an assimilated colonized is also to want to be a subject, to be made in the image of God, even when you are said to be made in the image of the devil, that is subjected as an Other. Here the colonized "believe that being a nigger is like being a second-class clerk; waiting for a better deal and upward mobility;" These are the ones who compromise even while holding the flag of cultural identity. To want to be a subject is to be imprisoned by and in Europe, to be transformed into a hypocrite weak being, who represses the parts of himself that are of no value in the white world, only to be haunted by them, these are the functionaries, the colonized workers/subjects of colonialism, "... the nigger pimp, the nigger askari, and all the zebras shaking themselves in various ways to get rid of their stripes in a dew of fresh milk" (79).

One is a subject even when becoming a part in a brotherhood based on a purity that embraces mixtures and variations. A brotherhood based on suffering and exploitation entails both the appropriation of the colonized black's "new growth," as it entails surrendering to it the weight of his chained miserable colonized being, that is giving up the responsibility for one's life to someone else and with it his ability to act (83-85).

Césaire indeed does not create any illusions as Nesbitt has argued; but neither is he seeking a free willing subject who he is failing to instantiate because of colonialism and Stalinism. Césaire's speaker is bound to the earth and strangled by the stars, but what he seeks is that invisible movement; for Césaire as for Nietzsche there is only movement; Césaire was not seeking to preserve a colonized, domesticated being, neither was he willing to accept weakness as freedom. The deed as in Nietzsche is driving, willing, effecting (*Genealogy* 46). For

Césaire, in a colonizing/colonized world of subjects, such a movement can only be sought in that which veers motionlessly "in the "great black hole" (*CP* 85; "Notebook"). It is that which lies in the depth of despair that allows one to still hope and act; despite a bound and strangled being. It is thus the act, constant confrontation and not the subject, not even in its failed colonized form, that Césaire's "Notebook" ends/begins with.

Even when declared dead in the West, the position of the subject, as Nesbitt emphasizes, should be the goal towards which the colonized struggle. For while Western philosophy has reached the point where it is able to question the notion of the subject, the colonized in his lagging behind status, has not achieved the status of the subject, and thus is unqualified and unentitled to declare it dead, for the colonized subject has “yet to be instantiated” (23-24). That both Kanafani and Césaire are envisioning another world, another way of being and doing that is not of the modern Western society with its free willing subject can only be conceivable in terms of another autonomous individualized subjectivity that of the nation or that of the race.

The struggle of the colonized could also be “progressivist,” the narrative of fascist nationalism of the colonized is replaced by the optimistic socialist one that defines the struggle of the colonized as a nationalist struggle. In this way, Kanafani’s “Men in the Sun” is seen as a response to a situation of exploitation, deprivation and isolation that victimize certain groups of people with a call for those victimized to become “active agents of history” (Layoun 206). These according to Mary Layoun would be new subjects, who are “neither the bourgeois subject of the West nor the idealized traditional and quasi authentic one of the third world past.” These subjects are not created in the text, but by the text and outside of it (207). Layoun shows Kanafani’s rejection of an individualized subjectivity in her reading of “Men in the Sun;” Kanafani’s men cannot be subjects of history, their individual lives are rather framed by history. In Layoun’s reading, the novel criticizes individual experience as myopic, the subject experiences “history as a fearfully, determining structure, almost impenetrable to change” (199- 200).

The men, according to Layoun, are not subjects of history because they are indubitably engaged in a movement over which they had little control, it is a process “for which they are resolutely peripheralized, of which they are allowed little understanding.” The truck was carrying the four men towards their death, while the men had no knowledge of their destiny neither did they have any control over it (203). It is their ignorance of the historical schema that frames their lives, that condemns them (199- 200). The novel, according to Layoun, denies power to the individual subject while proposing instead national history and power.

It is a national subject that the novel seeks to construct in Layoun’s reading. What Layoun misses is that nationalism is predicated upon the existence of autonomous anonymous subjects who share a past and an envisioned future, while leading their autonomous individualized lives (Anderson, *Imagined*). To seek to construct a national subjectivity is to still seek to construct an individualized subjectivity. For Kanafani there is no binary of singular/ plural, individual/collective at work, instead what is sought and celebrated is a being of wholeness in which no parts are alienated and set in opposition to each other. Whether they were four or one, acting as a nationality or as an autonomous subject they would have still ended in the garbage dump, as long as they had not confronted what they were escaping from/to.

The subject position of the three men is most clear in Layoun’s own description of their condition in the journey for escape: “In an unequivocally damning structural manifestation of isolation and debility, the impossible dreams of each man are separated and framed by virtually the same phrase: “the truck continued on over the scorching earth its motor droning relentlessly...”” (201- 202). The men here as I have shown in Chapter One relegated the responsibility for their life to another entity, they became the subjects of representation, when instead of acting for themselves, they chose escape, an act in which it is not them who move but a motorized machine, while all acts are given to a representative who goes with the decisions that are decided by the one who operates the machine. Layoun is right in showing that no individual subjectivity is proposed in Kanafani’s text, but what she missed is that the condemnation in the

text extends to any entity that acts as a representative and bearer of people's lives. Substitution that comes with a mutilated and weakened life, that of the subject, is rejected for it is founded on helplessness and the inability to act.

To have a state, which brings with it Law and Order, with Europe as its Heaven, is to end a condition of revolt, to subject that outlaw, who, neither a good citizen nor a criminal, is not yet a subject (Genet 428). The colonized acting in freedom do not seek the position of a subject of history, the fighter is usually the people, a term that implies plurality instead of anonymity, individuality instead of individualism, and unity instead of homogeneity.

The anti-colonial struggle is the struggle of the people; the notion of the people, as Amilcar Cabral formulates it, is based on unity; but his is not one that is made of anonymous units, neither is it an entity that consists of homogenous parts. To have a common aim in Cabral, that is to struggle for liberation, does not eliminate differences; there are no acts of reduction involved here to create a single homogenized category, instead a single aim is based on both the plurality and unity of a team. For Cabral, in a team, differences are as significant as the unity of the aim,

Each one can preserve his personality, his ideas, his religion, his personal problems, even a little of his style of play, but they must all obey one thing: they must act together to score goals against any opponent with whom they are playing, that is act around this specific aim of scoring the maximum number of goals against the opponent. They have to form a unity. If they do not do this, there is no football team, there is nothing, that is to show you a clear example of unity (29).

Moreover, this entirety based on achieving a given, and in no way singular absolute aim, refers to a unity that is dynamic, "in motion" (28- 29). A people thus in Cabral's formulation become a people by taking a certain position, and acting in a certain manner, which are always subject to change there are no givens or inherent elements in the making of a people (89), for it is not a nation that seeks to evolve into a nation-state that is sought in an anti-colonial struggle, according to Cabral, but rather the anti-colonial struggle as an ongoing act, a movement that is not stabilized or standardized. In this formulation where no units (nation/ nation-state) are posited as the aim of the struggle, and where movement is the condition of the struggle, the need for a subject to precede the deed is not present, for the emphasis is on the act of struggle itself.

The Diminished Man of Civilization

The modern breed of men as subjects, is the creed of the weak, those who in another culture with another mode of being would be called the "*efulefu*, worthless, empty men." The subject modernized is "a man who sold his machete and wore the sheath to battle." He is here the one who finds his reason of being in weakness and victimization, and look for salvation in a creed that would help them accept their weak being as a virtue. They are "the excrement of the clan" (Achebe 141).

In "Can the Subaltern Speak?" Spivak criticizes Foucault for "the valorization of the oppressed as subject," the idea that "the masses know" (274). Her argument is based on the lack of differentiation on the side of Foucault between acting and speaking, struggle and representation. Spivak's concern seems justified: to posit the subaltern as a conscious subject who knows and can speak what she knows leads to utopian politics that allows for inserting her as (exploitable) subject within the world capitalist economy. Constituting another subject who is "fee willing" in selling her "labor power." A subject constituted through capitalist/imperialist ideology (*A critique* 259).

Nevertheless, her criticism of people knowing and struggling on the basis of their knowledge seems to be focused on positioning the subaltern within another capitalist/developmentalist framework, only to argue her disqualification for the position of the subject.

People's struggle for her is an influence while politics is the practice of representation(s) of the political subject who has conscious interests. Spivak uses Marx's anger at the need of the French peasants to be represented to make her point about both the inability of the subaltern to speak and her need for consciousness, that is the need of the subaltern to be educated on how to represent herself, which as in every developmentalist project could never be realized.

The Consciousness of the subaltern cannot be retrieved according to Spivak, and thus there could be no "utterance," instead there is the insurgency itself. But to account for the insurgency is to enter the field of mediations and representations. To not turn an act of insurgency into an "object of investigation," "the historian must "suspend (as far as possible) the clamor of his or her own consciousness (or consciousness-effect, as operated by disciplinary training)" ("Can the Subaltern" 82). Nevertheless, what an account, or a counter narrative of insurgency does is posit a subject of the insurgency, for any attempt to explain or understand an act within a modernized form of knowledge requires this insertion of the subject before the act.

As I have shown above, Spivak maintains the position of the subject, this means that she also writes within the framework of representations. She criticizes Deleuze and Foucault for conflating representation as "speaking for," (in politics, implies substitution), and re-presentation (as in art and philosophy). Maintaining with this binary another two: that between interest and desire and that between the natural/private and the political/communal (read Public). She argues that to conflate the opposing terms of the binary is to fall into what she calls "a paradoxical subject-privileging" (70).

What she missed here is that in a non-capitalist, or not-yet-capitalist society, where exchange value and its analogy the subject, within the existing World division of labor, undergo constant processes of subversion, these binaries may not be of any significance. But it could be that to write their existence is to inscribe them on a new reality that is sought, it could also be that to deny the position of the subject of the colonized, is to seek to give them one. One could imagine, as in the Enlightenment project, that if we all become subjects, then the world division of labor would no longer be possible, that capitalism and imperialism would no longer be possible. All that is needed is education, to create those modern subjects, the political ones who could represent themselves instead of struggling and influencing. The colonized intellectual committed to her people and aiming at protecting them from exploitation, seeks to insert them in the world of the Enlightenment. Uneducated, undivided, they are not yet subjects. It is culture in the Kantian project that bridges the "gap between the subject as such and the not-yet-subject" (*A Critique* 14).

It is not a coincidence that education has been the main modernizing strategy employed by the capitalist West both in its colonizing as well as developmental (neo-colonizing) projects. Inserting the colonies as colonies required the existence of education, of course a certain kind of education, one that creates subjects, the obedient, standardized (anonymous) subjects. I am not denying that education has also created those who fought against the colonizing power, but they did so only to reproduce its forms of power, now under the banner of the independent nation-state.

Benedict Anderson has shown that nationalism in the colonized countries is the project and achievement of the intelligentsia rather than of a bourgeois class that controlled economic power. The literacy and bilingualism of the intelligentsia, the access to modern Western culture and its State, allowed them to imagine a "community floating in homogeneous, empty time..." a community of national subjects (*Imagined* 116). This community of nationals is not a community based on relations of mutuality, it is rather a community of autonomous private subjects identified through their standardized (rather than ritualized) practices, a community in anonymity (35-36).

According to Amin the intelligentsia are characterized by their openness to universality, its mediating position between the world and the popular classes whose history and cultural expression they share (136). In Amin's definition, the intelligentsia takes a clear anti-capitalist position, unlike that of the petty bourgeoisie, which shifts positions and does not have a "decisive political role" (135).

Nevertheless, whether intelligentsia or intellectuals, Western modern education have been central, as Anderson's quote above shows, in establishing an entity of subjects, liberal or revolutionary, they were modernizers and they sought the nation-state as the end of their struggle. These are the elites of the newly "independent" nation-states of the Third World. I do not argue that they were successful in transforming the people into subjects, I would go with Spivak on this point; not because they should be inserted, but rather with the hope to maintain the freedom of knowing and doing differently that they still have.

The assimilation of the colonized intellectual was central in maintaining the world division of labor. The more universal the intellectual, the more his position in the world is affirmed, the more detached he is from his people, the more probable is the failure/success of his project, depending on which position one takes in the division.

The house slaves who had an easier life than the field slaves, had "a strong attachment to their masters," while despising the other slaves. As C.L.R James has shown, the education that some of the house slaves acquired and the cultural advantages they profited from qualified them to become leaders of the revolution (19). Disciplined and educated by their White master they are indebted, they are already in a relation of obedience, the only end of which would be to take the master's place, or remain his faithful and loyal slave, neither of which changes the order of things.

Sharing the skills and characteristics of their colonizers, they could show how the latter's claim to superiority is false (James), but the superiority of the assimilated intellectual is still the superiority of Europe and could only be acknowledged and recognized by Europe. It is not a coincidence that the colonized intellectuals formulated the struggle of the colonized as a nationalist one, seeking a complete insertion in a world order made of nations and their subjects.

Nevertheless, the nationalism of the educated colonized is incompatible with freedom, it is the institutional work of the White man's civilization. It is there that one learns to be conscious of race and color; nationalism is about men "bartering, competing, exploiting, lying, cheating, battling, suppressing and killing among themselves; possessing too, the faculty to organize their villainous rivalries into a monstrous system for plundering weaker peoples" (McKay 118). Nationalism is based on the instinct of civilization, which is to have property and pay taxes, to become a subject of state and law. The vagabond, the outlaw, is an individual as long as he does not "*know* what this civilization is all about" (249, my italics).

For Kanafani, the world of civilization is one of disappointment, in it one loses what he believes in, belief is replaced by a sense of being deceived, what one knows is replaced by a haunting doubt, what one values seems to be no longer of any value (qtd. in A. Yaghi 36). A world in which the living and the sources of life are worth less than automated machines (CW II; "The Crucified Lambs").

It is not a coincidence that more often than not, Kanafani's stories were condemning of the educated, and their one-dimensional, utilitarian and therefore nihilist way of knowing and doing. A subject knows and follows his interest both the political and the private egoist. His roots are those of the loyal slave, which is his attachment, but he could move left and right, and if other roots come in the way, these which the modernists called irrational desires, they should be denied, suppressed and detoured through substitutions.

The educated feels responsibility, he is rational and makes calculations, he does not take risks for to take a risk is to go into that which is irrational, a negation of his being as intellectual. Responsibility here means to maintain order, to follow the law as long as it is the main power, it means to never act for oneself or take responsibility for oneself but always hand this responsibility to that foreign entity which represents them as perfect subjects. It also means to join the people's insurrection only when overcome by it, this is Césaire's Ariel and James' Toussaint, who sought to *be freed*; for the civilized and the educated, freedom is not about being and doing, it is a thing that is granted.

To be represented by another entity is not to be free; for it is to be *freed* through an intermediary, that is to only recognize oneself through "an *intermediary*." Here the state is the intermediary between man and human liberty. Just as Christ is the intermediary to whom man attributes all his own divinity and all his *religious bonds*, so the state is the intermediary to which man confides all his non-divinity and all his *human freedom*" (Marx "On the Jewish" 32). For Marx liberation is the real concrete being of man which "absorbs" the abstract political subject, and in which man "no longer separates his social power from himself as political power" (46).

"It was hell to be a man of color, educated and naturally human in the white world." The black man's color here, defined and seen through a white man's eyes, becomes an imprisonment (McKay 142). This is not the case for those who are indifferent to or ignorant of the knowledge of the white man, those could act "instinctively." But the Negro with an intellect stands "watch over his native instincts to take his own way in this white man's civilization." In his case, the intellectual Negro will have to bring intellect to the aid of instinct to not allow civilization to "take the love of color, joy, beauty, vitality and nobility out of his life and make him like one poor mass of its pale creatures" (142). But this is a resolution that involves a struggle with oneself. For educated negroes are "ashamed of their race's intuitive love for color, wrapping themselves up in respectable gray, ashamed of Congo-sounding laughter, ashamed of their complexion (bleaching out), ashamed of their strong appetites" (143). The educated Negro will have to overcome his education, "let intellect go to hell," rather than lose his soul.

Neither Kanafani nor Césaire were condemning education, but what they condemned was the standardized production on a world scale of Third World intellectuals loyal to their colonizing masters. One should be in harmony with the nature of his society and its character, he should be in accord with his cultural and real roots (Kanafani *Ma'arij* 142).

The educated could be a rebel, but this would mean unlearning that through which he had been disciplined and subjected. Césaire's Lumumba needs be a poet, for it is the poet who can transform the rules of language, of knowledge and of practice (*Season* 16). Lumumba finds strength in the materiality of being of flesh and blood; his power is not one that puts him in the ranks of a god, or even a redeemer as a "messiah" or a "Mahdi." It is out of the materiality of suffering under colonialism that Césaire's Lumumba fights, his is neither a spiritual nor an idealist struggle, he is not "a redresser of wrongs, not a miracle worker." Nevertheless, not being God, does not make him a subject who calculates the utility, efficiency or usefulness of any act. Instead he creates his own measure of things, where all becomes material. The suffering he lives, confronted and affirmed, becomes the source of his ability to fight.

One cannot rebel within an institutional framework; one cannot rebel in abstraction. The rebel is undisciplined, he may even be unable to sign his name, but he excels in military genius, he "ha[s] shrewdness, cunning and ruthless determination" (James 257). The rebels are not subjects; they are the insurgents to borrow from Spivak. They do not act out of ideology, their knowledge as I have argued in the previous chapter is whole and finds its source in their being as

a whole, they do not calculate, they see what is there and now, they do not subject the present to an envisioned future. They do not seek applause or recognition, their only loyalty is to their people, the separation between themselves and their people is not at work, for they do not occupy that universal position of the intellectual. In their case, the distinction between themselves and the people, between what the people did and what they did, becomes almost impossible for they do not act from leadership or hierarchical positions, their acts are not ones of abstraction or substitution, and may be this is what makes them un-representable.

The Nihilism of a Weak Being

A subject reacting against his subjectivity becomes either a detached cynic, unwilling to will or act, or a nihilist claiming the will that was appropriated from him while naming him a free willing subject. The subject, made in the image of a Subject that he could not be, could only see his way out in undoing/outdoing that Subject. This is the case of a domesticated free willing subject who wills his will. As in the quote from Trinh above, the subject here loses sight of the mirror, seeking the reflection, the “true” position of the Subject, God or Satan, he ends up with the void, nihilism is what he achieves.

His will defeated in his life, death becomes the embodiment of his will and freedom, the ultimate realization but also annihilation of his subjectivity. This is Kirillov’s self-will reaching its extreme form of freedom/bondage, its only manifestation is the annihilation of being (Dostoevsky). Kirillov is not rejecting his subjectivity, he is rather claiming it, in its perfection; the irony in the case of Kirillov is that in seeking death he did not gain a glimpse of the limit (Foucault, *Aesthetics*), instead blinded by the fanaticism of the will, he is doubly subjected, for his death is as much a result of a blinded self-will, as it is the realization of the will of another, a weak cowardly being who could achieve his goals only through the fanaticism of others. Kirillov thus fails to transgress his subject position. Seeking recognition as the free autonomous individual he is imprisoned in his individualized egoist being with its condition of impotency even in choosing his death, for “The freedom of death is the freedom of boredom and slavery” (Kanafani, *CW III*: 103; “al-Bab”). A subject, his engagement is based on concepts of consciousness and interests of the political subject, a category constructed as external to his being, seeking an abstraction, representation remains his mode of being and doing.

The subject, as a reflection of God, is no longer able to believe; knowledge is replaced by a will to knowledge which comes as part of a will to power of a weakened subject. Weakness here is reflected in the fear of that which cannot be known, seen, or verified. Weakness and fear create a state of dependency on a god, who needs to be constantly defied and killed and then brought back to life to be killed again, for his existence, as his murder, becomes the condition for the preservation of a weakened subjectivity that is rebelling against its own weakness but unable to combat it, since it has projected it, inverted, on another. The subject is entrapped in and by the nondissociable, the undistinguishable; what appears as “the great antagonism,” could only be “the insinuation of the Double,” for a contest in a mirror unfolds in a mirror space (Foucault, *Aesthetics* 123-124).

The nihilist subject seeks to defy god by appropriating his deeds, he seeks that which lies beyond, which he wants to turn into that which is present, a product of human creation. His act is directed towards that Other Being, and for that he inevitably ends where he started, at the throne of god. The paradise he builds becomes an object of repulsion and the death he sought becomes the punishment of an eternal life where there is “no time,” (Kanafani, *CW III*: 73; “al-Bab”) and

“no place” (78). His existence, dead, becomes an ending repetition of the same without horizons or ends.

Faisal Darraj argues that in “the Blind and the Deaf,” Kanafani creates his own free willing subject. In a humanist reading, Darraj argues that the slave is the one who creates his own chains and is the one to break them, breaking the sacred branch, sacredness is restored to the human. For Darraj then, it is consciousness that uproots the deceptive miracle (*Bo's* 127).

But it is not god's position that is sought in “The Blind and Deaf” (*CW I*), the combat is not against a god but a fight for life (‘Ashur 154). The Blind and the Deaf did not seek a divine position; they were not claiming a strength that they lacked. Their cause was about life, their struggle was not determined by an end, not even the end of their colonized refugee being, for they would struggle even if that end is not achieved (170). Challenging a religious power that perpetuates their subjugation is inevitable and cannot be escaped, but the challenge here is not a metaphysical quest, it is rather a challenge to any metaphysics that posits man as a weakened impotent being. A challenge to those who posit themselves as masters by claiming the position of God. The Blind seeing the *wali* as a mushroom, is not a miracle, but it is an emphasis on the necessity of acting which requires shattering the mirror that reflects an Ideal Subject while effecting helplessness and impotency. As I have argued in the previous chapters, illusory roads are blocked in Kanafani's texts, one could either rebel against that which weighs him down or submit to the flat life of the subject of societal rules (*Z'urub* 32).

The predicament of the nihilist subject is the predicament of a subject unable to reconcile himself to a world of substitutions, at the same time he is unable to confront that which subjects him. Following the same logic of a world that posits man as god, while stripping him of will and the ability to act, he acts within his subject position, only to reproduce that which reproduces him as subject. In Kanafani's play it is in positing life and death as opposites, when one is unable to conceive of living as also dying, that a fetishism of himself and his god becomes a necessity (93; “al-Bab”). This way of conceiving of life and death, as we have seen above and as I will show below, comes with a mode of life in which what one does is valued through return and exchange, a world based on compensations and substitutions in which what is present, the deed itself, is missed (92). The absurdity of such a mode of life becomes perceptible when one hits a ball against a wall only to have it bounce back to him. In Kanafani, it is the anticipation of a return for the deed, of a reaction to it, which traps the subject in that endless repetition of the same (94). The only exit of this muddy circle, of futility, is to believe that one should only give without expecting a return, ... to live one's life by exerting oneself is the only return [...] life without such a belief would be something utterly intolerable...” (qtd. in Hammud 12).

Kanafani's call to give up the need of return is his way of releasing man of the torture of Sisyphus, of the ever-repeated, in which “the burden of toil, like the rock, is ever falling back upon the worn- out drudge” (Marx, *Capital* 548; Ch. 15), the torture of “futile and hopeless labor” (Camus 119).

Nevertheless, Sisyphus could be seen not as the enslaved subject of capitalism, but rather the one who subverts one of its main pillars. Sisyphus hated death but he also scorned the gods, it was his “passion for life,” that “won him that unspeakable penalty in which the whole being is exerted toward accomplishing nothing” (Camus 120). It could be the preservation of life in the Nietzschean sense that is manifested here, but Camus' Sisyphus is not trapped in a world of representations from which he attempts to break only to fall back into it. His scorn for the gods as his putting Death in chains, is a suspension of that world of substitutions, in which finitude is the absent present, the liberation that lies in such an act of suspension, lies in the non-expectation of

what Kanafani above called return (a suspension of relations of exchange?), it is indifference to end results and questions of utility sought beyond life and what is present, only to be on the expense of the latter.

In the pose between one finished act and its repetition, in the interruption, the deadened subject is brought to life again, for Camus, this moment is “like a breathing space which returns as surely as is suffering, that is the hour of consciousness.” It is then in cessation and starting again, that man is superior to his fate, not in the sense that he escapes it, but rather in his ability to carry its burden, in the repetitive confrontation with it, without denials or detours. Sisyphus is both powerless and rebellious, his rebelliousness comes from consciousness of his condition, “The lucidity that was to constitute his torture at the same time crowns his victory” (121).

For Camus, confronting the absurd in life, one may find true hope instead of a consoling one (134). A sense of liberation can be found in going with the certain, what is assured, even if it took the form of the certainty of faith as long as it functions as an “uplifting power” (135), instead of a subjectifying one. When one is not paralyzed by fear of that which lies beyond, over which he has no control and of which he cannot be responsible, one is able to act in freedom (56-57). Man here is freed “of the weight of his own life” (136). It is indifference, “that unbelievable disinterestedness with regard to everything except for the pure flame of life,” such an affirmative indifference allows man to confront the world in its limits, a world “in which nothing is possible but everything is given, and beyond which all is collapse and nothingness” (60).

Affirmative indifference guards against denials and detours, the one who affirms knows that there is night as “there is no sun without shadow,” he is master over what he does and can do, which is his “personal fate” (123). This for Camus is an attitude that rejects what “was an invitation to death,” transforming it into a “rule of life,” following with Nietzsche’s dictum that there is always “something for which it is worth the trouble of living on this earth ...something that transfigures, something delicate, mad or divine” (qtd. in Camus 64).

Nevertheless, although scorn to that which one cannot control might be freeing, but to seek to surmount one’s fate may still lead us into nihilism. I would argue that it is indifference that renders the question of fate irrelevant, such an indifference comes with a being that is able to confront and face that which comes in his way; in such a way of being one is immune against nihilism. We may find ourselves trapped again in a world of substitutions and denials when we think that we are taking mastery over our “personal fate.” What one sees as ways to endure and maintain a dignity (93) could easily slip into acts of substitution like Kanafani’s party man in his absurd revolt, or the subject of desire in “the Cat.” Moreover, while play-acting could liberate one from being trapped in a single identity it does not necessarily form a moment of consciousness or lucidity, it may only allow for a world of continuous performance, producing a being of adaptation (Nietzsche, *Gay Science*) rather than confrontation.

To intellectualize, imagine and contemplate different ideas of what could or should be when one is confronted with a situation in which he should act is the difference between the actor who performs and the *fidai*; the latter’s knowledge finds its manifestation in the physical act of his body, which takes the form of a spontaneous movement in the moment of confrontation. In “Salman’s Friend Learns many things in one night” (Kanafani, *CW II*: 737-751), to shut one’s eyes to what is present, even when confronted with an immediate threat, to find recourse in distraction as an escape from confrontation and fighting, is tragic and laughable. He could be Camus’ absurd man, but here the distracted subject does not act freely. It is not a coincidence that in both situations in which he should have acted, God becomes the justification of his failure.

Fanon describing the *fidaiyah* (woman fighter) lists strength of character and high moral as integral elements of what makes her a fighter. The women fighters in Fanon are not autonomous individuals, they are rather parts that join in an already existing and moving machine (*A Dying* 48). But this is a living machine, whose parts, elements, do not work by skill but rather by instinct, the movement of the machine does not create fragmented subjects, but liberated people. The woman fighter learns “her role as “a woman alone in the street” and her revolutionary mission instinctively.” There is no “apprenticeship” involved. Neither is she moving between the subject roles of actor/ spectator (50).

It is a paralysis of will that we see in the case of the three men in “Men in the Sun,” who unable to confront what they needed to, turned it into a question of destiny over which they have no control and thus needed to be relegated to another, not God, but an emasculated man, it is absurdity in its cruelest forms that Kanafani writes to unwrite any attempt at the colonized’s part to accept a being paralyzed by the weight of humiliation, impoverishment and shame of defeat and expulsion (39).

A subject of desire, where desire is lack, is created in such a condition; unable to fight for what he loves, he finds substitutions, creating and perpetuating a condition of discontentment that Freud considered as universal and ahistorical as the subject and his unconscious are.

In a weakened condition of sickness, one could only see life as “a giant block of desperation” (*CW II*: 106; “In My Funeral”). It is the desperation of the one for whom courage would be to accept submissively his sick condition, his being reduced to the position of the spectator of his own life (106). Desperation and the lack of hope here no longer relieve man of the burden of his life, allowing him to act freely, but rather a collapse of all internal defenses takes place when one is confronted with a miserable present whose horizon is “agonizing deprivation,” and whose beginnings are “torturing anxieties” (104-105). When hope is no longer possible, one realizes the cruelty of a futile life, which appears as an empty coincidence without a meaning. While hope could find its place in extreme cases of desperation (Blanchot, *The Work*), it could also be lost for a being of weakness. When the sick subject attempts to be a hero by confronting his destiny as a power that stands outside of himself, he is trapped in the work of imagination, his attempt is not courageous but arrogant, for his ability to be brave as his humanity is drained by sickness.

Kanafani hated sickness for sickness is to preserve life on its expense, “it is costly for one to buy his daily life with pain...disgust and joke...to buy one’s daily life with daily death...” (qtd. in Hammud 1). The only way out for Kanafani was to act despite sickness, in indifference to it. sickness could only interfere once that is in death. Death is not sought here, instead it is accepted as part of life, this is Kanafani’s way of disarming that which is weakening, not death itself, but that which threatens with it.

If the subject is the creation of a larger design that is beyond him, the free man is the one who manages to escape becoming the subject of this design, this is not Oedipus falling into his pre-determined destiny while trying to escape it, such an escape is inevitably falling into that from which one is escaping. It is instead as I have been arguing in the previous chapters a position that comes with the ability to affirm and confront, instead of turning one’s back to that which haunts him.

The ability to accept contradictions as the conditions of life allows for liberating acts of rebellion. The Rebel knows the limitations of what he can do, but he would not use them as a pretext for not acting, the act therefore becomes liberating to the extent that it blocks the way for detours, pretexts to justify submissions, and avoidance of confrontation (Césaire, *Lyric* 35; “And

the Dogs”). The liberation here lies in the act of confrontation, going through difficulties, and transcending obstacles. What appears contradictory is the condition of strength of the Rebel, to be a rebel is to both have solidity and fluidity, he has to be as solid as a stone, unyielding and unmovable; being less solid than a stone makes one more susceptible to outside stimuli, less resistant to the movement of the wind, more rational. On the other hand, to lack that moving fluid inside, is to be dead, to be weak in feeling pain, anger and shame, and thus to lack the force to fight. To reject the being of a colonized, one thus has to be both an unmovable stone and an ever moving blood.

It is the being of the tree that is Césaire’s epitome for a contented existence. It involves the joyousness of surrendering to life, the resilience that comes with attachment, the fixity and stability that is resistance to the shattering forces that leave man a fragmented subject. What Césaire sees as superior in the tree is that it affirms, it consents instead of evading, the tree “is rootedness and deepening over mankind who is agitation and malfeasance.” The tree blossoms for it embraces life while men are doomed to dry up if life is something they have to struggle against (*Lyric* xlviii; “Poetry”). In this sense, it is life with all that comes with it that the strong free man fights for.

Césaire’s Lumumba chose the dream of the fighter and the liberating blindness over a submissive life and the prison of a censored seeing. This way of knowing and living reality could be madness in certain bourgeois conceptions of rationality. But for the colonized seeking liberation, blindness to realist dictates of submission and passivity becomes the force that enables the colonized to survive “a destructive destiny.” The colonized is besieged from all directions, “Africa is like a man who gets himself up at midday, and finds himself assaulted from the four corners of the horizon!” (*Season* 120). This acknowledgement of reality does not alter the fact that he should fight to move towards his horizon even when it is a clouded one. In such cases, the ability to fight itself requires this kind of madness, rational calculation of end results would necessarily mean submission; in this sense, his fight was not a futile one. Failure has multiple meanings, to designate an act as a failure is to conceptualize things within a certain liberal framework in which a certain conception of utility is the only measure. Nevertheless, such a measure is designed for a certain world, which is not what Lumumba was concerned to preserve.

There is an optimism in the writings of both Kanafani and Césaire, an optimism that comes from a miserable and desperate reality as it comes from the urge to combat such a miserable being. The Firmness in Césaire’s rebel comes with an assurance that finds its source and end in the rebel, to be more precise in the act of rebellion itself. This is not the optimism of Camus or Nietzsche, it is neither consolation nor denial; optimism here does not lie in being assured about the future, but because when one acts indifferently to any weakening forces, when one fights to take responsibility for his life, then one could die without regretting anything, and without having the need to apologize for anything in one’s life (Kanafani qtd. in Hammud 15).

This last stance of Kanafani, is based, as Hammud argues, on the concept of *Jihad* - fighting- in the Arab Islamic heritage. It entails acceptance of hardship when it comes one’s way and the ability to endure until one is able to overcome that which is weakening, mainly when one is fighting against that which appears to be too powerful to defeat. This is patience which is usually associated with both accepting and fighting. Those who are patient have God with them, patience thus becomes a source of power, a power that frees one from asking questions of causality and utility that lie behind what comes his way. Patience is not submission it is rather accepting and taking the challenge. God here is not posited as responsible for the deeds of man, man remains responsible for his life and is the one who acts in it (Hammud 120). With the belief that God would not burden man with that which he cannot tolerate. Man could always ask for forgiveness for his

mistakes, he is not posited as the image of God, but neither is he a sinner whose weakness is accepted as what he is. The patient man as the *mujahed* can overcome that which weakens him. From this perspective, the question of destiny, its absurdity or futility, becomes irrelevant, for one lives with dignity or achieves a higher status in the afterlife (118).

What is at stake for both Kanafani and Césaire is that a discourse of futility perpetuates a certain order of things, it runs the risk of accepting one's weak being and helplessness and thus his colonized being as one's destiny. Rendering one's fate irrelevant in his acts and life is to accept that one is not God, but when such an acceptance comes with accepting the least of what one can do as the most, then we are still trapped in the being of a subject to be defined and recognized by the Subject, a being that can only find comfort in a situation of trance, in which the only lucidity he achieves is that of a "transitory death" (Vargas- Llosa 479). One should not blind oneself to the bars of the cage, but neither can one submit to their presence, familiarizing his imprisoned being; for it is when he gives up trying to find a way out that he is dying (Kanafani, *CW II*: 420, 421; "Judran min Hadid"). One cannot escape his destiny, but when punishment, execution and even death can be the destiny of those who fight and those who do not, then the measure of freedom is *how* one arrives at his destiny (749; "Salman's Friend").

Against Death, for Life

Kanafani found his way out of a life of sickness, defeat and fear in bringing back death into the scene of life; instead of treating death as an end, death should become the starting point. When death is no longer the end, one does not have to lead a life of escape and a repressed fear. To live a life of which death is an integral part, becomes the liberation of being imprisoned in a life deadened by closing all horizons, a closure achieved by defining all possible horizons for man, as well as by eliminating them. If in Kanafani death is something that needs to be accepted as part of life, for Césaire, this fact of life is necessary if one is not to be trapped in a deadened life of stagnation. Césaire did not call for death, but neither did he seek escaping it, he sought an end of being entrapped in a condition of sickness and degeneration, for Césaire whatever had the potential for generation, that is whatever had the potentiality of life, including death, was his source of hope and optimism in a miserable reality closed upon itself.

As the quote above from Kanafani shows, one could choose to die proudly when it is no longer possible to live proudly. Death is not chosen for the sake of choosing, to prove that one is free, but rather death is chosen in a condition of degeneration when the preservation of life becomes a weakening of it. Death in such a case is a rejection of cowardliness in favor of a strong life. Death, freely chosen, at the right time, is an overcoming of an egoistic privatized self. It is no longer the most private invisible individual experience, it becomes something "brightly and cheerfully accomplished amid children and witnesses" (Nietzsche, "Twilight" 536- 537). One takes leave of the world without regrets, without a bad conscience, free of resentment for when one takes the risk of death, when one is no longer concerned to preserve a life of weakness, there would be no promises unfulfilled, no debts unpaid, no responsibilities relegated to another entity, it is the ultimate form of taking responsibility for oneself and one's destiny. Choosing death is not suicide but willingness to pay as much as it takes to lead a proud and strong life of dignity. One does not choose death out of a nihilist position; for to declare that "Nothing is worth anything, life is not worth anything," is a symptom of the disintegration of the instincts, a decomposition that poisons life, leaving it in an inert decaying condition (536).

For Kanafani and Césaire, as for Nietzsche, one chooses death out of love for life, such a death would be "free, conscious, without accident, without ambush" (537). This is different from

a coward's death, in which one perishes under "contemptible conditions," which comes from a submissive being with an unhealing wound that preserves itself by preserving a sick life (*Genealogy* 121). A "passive death," is an annihilation; it is the death that comes from the lack of movement, from helplessness and weakness, the escape of the three men in "Men in the Sun" was death, that they did not knock on the walls of the tank to save their lives, was because they were already dead (Abu Matar 235).

Life becomes absurd in a condition of detachment, when one is "deprived of the memory of a lost home or the hope of a promised land" (Camus 6). Self-annihilation appears in such a condition as a solution to the absurdity of life. For Camus, some people die because "they judge that life is not worth living," while others die while fighting for "ideas or illusions that give them a reason for living," in this case, the reason for living "is also an excellent reason for dying." One might contemplate death out of anxiety and fear (24), but others might find in death the realization of a sought harmony with themselves.

But although Césaire's Rebel dies for an idea, death is not the realization of it, but it is the deed, the act of rebellion which entails the risk of death, that is its realization. The Rebel seeks a world in which he is part of life, of nature, its forces and materiality, he does not seek immortality or the position of a god, his is not an anticipation of that which he fears and runs from, his act risking death is not motivated by either fear or illusion. Sentenced to death, he conceives of himself, not as leaving life, but as departing from an imprisoned world, in which he occupies the position of the excluded, victimized, and criminalized.

Acting in revolt is not suicide, but rather a way out of a nihilist position, revolt in this case would be a defense of life, a rejection of its futility, and a rejection of renunciation and repudiation (Camus 55). One does not revolt seeking a victorious cause, for to revolt is to have "an uncontaminated soul, equal to its defeat as to its temporary victories" (86).

Facing death, denial is no longer possible, one is confronted with all that is to be forgotten, that which has been internalized and buried. The Rebel opts for that which is crushing in its certainty rather than that which is consoling in the illusions/ nihilism it creates, refusing the dark being of an octopus which escapes death through "night and ink" (Césaire, *Lyric* 51; "And the Dogs").

The absurd man, as Camus shows, does not negate the eternal, but he does nothing for it. He lives through courage and reasoning which allow him to acknowledge that his life is temporal and his freedom is limited, there is no aspiration for a future here, but a getting along with what one has, "A greater life cannot mean for him another life," this focus on what is present and given is not resignation, it is rather a refusal of reconciliation with what is there, and an insistence on fighting without posing the question of the worth of it (66). Nevertheless, When Césaire's Rebel acts, although his is an isolated act, its isolation does not mean that it would be completely lost for there would be other volcanic stones on which other refusals would be carved (*Lyric* 34; "And the Dogs"), it accumulates, it destroys and lay scattered stones for something else. It creates ruptures, lays fragments of a new being, these are not complete grounds for another institutionalized being, they do not envision a universal future. The act finds its sources in some kind of certainty, not that of an already defined end, but the certainty of the new, of the future, lies in the certainty of life, which is incompatible with monotony and stagnation (6).

Faisal Darraj has noted that Kanafani rejects establishment as an imprisonment of life. A single reference is a prison, whatever inhibits movement is death. Whatever besieges thought is death, whatever institutionalizes desire is death ("Al Huriyah" 292). Such a stance, according to Darraj, makes life no more than an adventure to Kanafani (291). Whether life was an adventure or

not, in Kanafani's texts, as I have been arguing, an institutionalized being means to be stuck in a glass box, to defer living, and seek satisfaction in substitutions and detours, it is to submit to a dead life while waiting passively for another that is just another substitution for the present, and being thus, it is never realized, for its path was one of death.

Darraj is right in arguing that death is inevitable for Kanafani, "death falls on the Palestinian, in Ghassan's novel, whether he fights and maintains his honor, or escapes with his shame" ("al-Ar" 44-45). But Darraj sees death as a punishment, an annihilation of being that one should and could avoid. Nevertheless, this is not the case for Kanafani, death is not a punishment, neither is it an unjust destiny. Kanafani was not a moralist, he was not concerned with questions of justice, as much as with freedom. His measure for the meanings of life and death, finds its bases in what one does, men's destiny is one, the difference for Kanafani lies in the path through which one reaches his destiny. In this sense, destiny itself is no longer the main question, but it is rather the question of freedom: how one lives a free life, or dies a free death, without these two parts being posited in a mutually exclusive relationship.

For Darraj, it is a "fighting nihilism," to separate heroism from victory, heroic action from its end. Darraj overlooks the emphasis on the act of fighting itself, which entails the risk of death, and focuses his analysis on the meaning of the human, what he wants and what he achieves. This separation for Darraj runs parallel another separation "between a fruitful death that nourishes life and a sterile life that celebrates death" (46-47). But this appears to me as an imprecise parallel, for Kanafani's texts do not seem concerned with wants neither with achievements; the emphasis is on how fighting transforms one from a chained, humiliated and weakened being into a being of freedom whose only realization is the act of fighting itself. Darraj is right here, for the act is not a means to an established end; and for this reason, for his lack of concern with any end, Kanafani was not celebrating death, but he was rather celebrating an act that defies death by risking it.

In another place, Darraj shows that Kanafani writes in defense of life against the appropriation of the title of living by the dead, "any act that does not defend freedom, dignity, beauty, decency, and responsibility is an act allied with death," in this case, death defeats death ("Al Huriyah" 290). Kanafani did not seek to domesticate life by domesticating death, but rather to liberate life from becoming a stagnant deadened way of being, by accepting all that which comes with life, including death.

Death in Kanafani does not become the end to be achieved, but rather it is a starting point, in the sense that all elements of a free being necessitates the confrontation, the necessary visible presence of death. In "Death of Bed#12" (CW II: 125-152), death is an annihilation, a horrible event that needed to be resisted, a stealing of life (129). It is a death without a life story, the dying person, anonymous, reduced to a number, is to die "without rituals or ceremonies, without a gravestone that carries the identity of a person who was known in some place" (al-Sa'afin 87). This death without rituals, gravestone, and ceremonies is the death that comes at the end of a deadened life, the life of an anonymous subject, living an unfamiliar life in an unfamiliar land.

For Kanafani, death is the problem of the living, those who watch death and wait "their turn to become a little lesson to the living eyes..." it is the problem of an end, "of ceasing to exist," but it could also be the problem of "immortality" (CW II: 149; "Death of Bed#12"). Death, as an existential question, is the sign of a futile and vain life, a condition of terror and paralysis which should be overcome, and it is overcome when it is posited as something of life. Kanafani's narrator proposes, thus, that we should start from death so as to leave off the question of the meaning of life as defined by a destination to be reached, and learn how to live.

Life is futile and death becomes its beginning and its end, when the present is sacrificed for a dream of future that is deferred endlessly and with it living. The only future that could be achieved for Kanafani through such a sacrifice is that of death, for a dead life cannot bear but death. Death here puts an end to a futile quest, but it also shows its futility.

This is a death that is part of a life that denies it. The life of those who struggle against “the kingdom of shadows” who “transmute death into a fact that is both ignoble and unspeakable.” This, according to Lamarana Diallo, is different from another death that is the culmination of human existence, a part of what makes the human. A life prolonged by denying death is an artificial life (367).

Death was disqualified, as Foucault shows, when the focus became on fostering life, transforming it into the dominion of power, while death becomes the latter’s limit. “Death becomes the most secret aspect of existence, the most private,” this is clear in the waning of the rituals that accompanied it. Death is evaded because it signifies the end of something and the beginning of another. It endlessly poses a challenge to a power that finds its bases in preserving, administering and regulating life, while using death as its limit and arm against those who transgress (*History* 144). Death itself becomes a transgression, it is not a negativity, it affirms the limit, opens the zone of limitlessness, it shows the existence of difference (*Aesthetics* 74).

To not fear the nothingness associated with death, challenging the power that grants life and dismisses death from the norm, is to subvert one’s subject position (19). Using the example of suicide, Foucault argues that the determination to die, the inability to explain or account for such a determination, is a usurpation of the power of the sovereign (*History* 139).

But it is not suicide that is the liberation of man from subjugation, nihilism, as I have shown above, is the condition of a subject willing his subjectivity in its extreme form. In Suicide, death is the inversion of a life administered and regulated, a reaction and an attempt at escape, but death as an escape is death, not a liberation of life. Neither Kanafani nor Césaire were seeking death to put an end to a miserable life, they rather sought to liberate life from being deadened by fear of death. For Kanafani, one takes the risk of death for a life of freedom, to seek death is a detour around confronting that which needed to be confronted in one’s present reality, it does not open the space of the limitless as difference, for it is incapable of surviving without a defined end, only those who confront and fight indifferent to any determined end, are able to declare in freedom: “let it be as it may be” (‘Ashur 73), they act without tied hands, they take the risk of death for life, a free one. It thus becomes a question of acting and not acting, not one of living or dying, for they are not opposed (Coffin 111).

There are two kinds of death in Kanafani’s text, according to Ibrahim Sa’afin, physical death which is not a result of fighting for a cause, and death “for a message as martyr or for a life that flows in others” (81-82). The struggle thus becomes one of death and for death, “the Palestinian is not one except in the presence of death,” according to Abdul Rahman Yaghi, in scattering his dismembered body Kanafani became whole. Dying for the homeland, he achieved the ultimate identification with it. Yaghi projects the being of the subject in the world of signs on the fighting Palestinian, Palestine cannot be returned to but in death, the return here posited as one that seeks a point of origin is seen as a circular one and fighting for the land finds its ultimate form in death. Death becomes the only liberation from the world of signs and metaphors (17).

While to die as a martyr in fighting is better than dying a natural death for both Kanafani and Césaire, this does not mean a rejection of life, but the rejection of a dead life, risking death in this sense is part of a struggle for life. In Diallo’s reading, Césaire’s rebels hold to values that are superior to the mere preservation of life, it is from such a position that they look with contempt to

a life of compromise, while becoming willing to obliterate themselves “for the sole end of defending the values which for them are that significant. Rebels against injustice, oppression and tyranny, they’d give up life rather than renounce their ideas” (240).

The rebel is ready to die for his freedom, but this readiness to risk death comes with a proud being that “rejects compromise, resignation and fatalism” (69). To declare that the death of the master is necessary for the existence of the rebel, and the death of the Rebel, his spilled blood, is necessary to wash the violence of slavery, seems itself to be fatalist. In this formulation, blood which is the symbol of unnamable martyred slaves, is a blood that destroys and purifies. What this celebration of death and blood overlooks is that life is not necessarily artificial, even if one believed in a better world in the Beyond, and that to not fear death, to act, confront and fight, risking death does not necessarily mean death, but maintaining a free life. In “The Miraculous Weapons,” (Césaire, *CP* 117-119) blood is a source of pleasure, blood is associated with a violent death but it also refers to the flow of life; in this sense blood breaks any separation between life and death, it has its own reason and could be the only basis of a universal language.

The religion of the revolutionaries as Foucault thought was “profoundly fascinated with death- more focused, perhaps, on martyrdom than on victory.” But Foucault also thought that it could be the Westerners’ preoccupation with death, their detachment from life and their inability to fight that gives rise to the previous thought. For the fighter, the dead attached the living to life while keeping them linked “to the permanent obligation of justice.” It is the dead who are the reminders “of the right and of the struggle that is necessary for right to triumph” (Foucault 201).

Death is not universally something that is combatted, driven away and disavowed, it is not something that alienates man from his existence. Death could be closer to man, one can be on more familiar terms, more intimate, with it. “His existence acquires from it something like an aftermath of authenticity,” instead of evoking “only a dried-up sentiment, an abstract eventuality” (Kane 149).

Death could be solid, beautiful with a sweet scent. It is fertile, it has the ability to nurture a life (Césaire, *CP* 125; “Conquest of Dawn”). The scene of the death of Toussaint in the “Notebook,” shows the white world as one of death and sterility. While the death of Toussaint, becomes generative of another life, death in this latter case is associated with life, it is a living death that creates potentialities and possibilities, it is not an end (*CP* 47). Death, in the case of Toussaint brings shine and is soft, it itself becomes alive in the presence of Toussaint, ultimately in a white world, death expires, but the splendor of Toussaint’s blood carries the possibility of bursting open (49).

Death is not an end, after death another life starts, the power of life lies in seeds and roots, and there still remains the possibility for another life to be generated from death. Like the death of a plant which leaves seeds that might grow somewhere else at another time (*CP* 219; “Different Horizon”).

From such a perspective, one is no longer able to speak of ends or beginnings, for how can we speak of beginnings when “a disappearance re-appears?” How can we locate the end, if the end is the beginning, “Dying is an eternal end that begins?” (Trinh, *Elsewhere* 116). The unfolding of life becomes the point. Not its end neither its beginning. One might actually need the end to begin as in the case of Kanafani’s story of Bed# 12, but death is not an end it is a beginning that moves again towards an end, another end, for what is repeated through the act of rebellion, is never the same. The opening for life created by the Rebel’s act, is an effect of breaking through the condition of siege and death. His act is awkward, hybrid, violent and transgressive. It comes from that which

is certain and that which is not, it finds sources in that which is there, was there in the heritage of the rebel, and that which could come of it (*Lyric* 37; “And the Dogs”).

The rebel/fedai is usually posited as a redeemer of his people. His act is seen as the blood sacrifice through which a nation is born (Arnold; Diallo; Singolo). The rebel/fidai is thus transformed into a mythical figure, a dead entity on which another is built. Rebels risk death and die leaving a heritage of struggle (Ngal 195), but to leave a heritage of struggle is different from being turned into a myth; the first is a condition of life, the other of a deadened one.

Benedict Anderson has shown that death lies at the cultural roots of nationalism (*Imagined* 10). Within a utilitarian approach in a mode of being based on exchange, the question of ‘in return for what,’ leads us back to the being of the subject with the ever-present potentiality of the nihilism that accompanies the question of the meaning of life (death). Under rationalist secularism, “with the ebbing of religious belief” and “the disintegration of paradise,” fatality, according to Anderson becomes arbitrary. To not fall into absurdity, fatality needed to be turned again into a continuity but in a secular form, the nation thus becomes the eternal destiny, nations “always loom out of an immemorial past, and, still more important, glide into limitless future” (11-12).

Although Anderson argues that nationalism does not supersede religion (12), it is not aligned with it, but rather reformulates it to allow for the being of the subject of the nation, that is to allow for the creation of the individualized subject, a being that necessitates cutting one from communal relations in life as in death. In bourgeois society, as Walter Benjamin has shown, “the thought of death has declined in omnipresence and vividness.” Dying was no longer “a public process in the life of the individual and a most exemplary one.” The privatization and individualization of death was part of the bringing to an end the life of community in which experiences are shared and narrated (*Illuminations* 93).

To turn the rebel or fidai into redeemers, is to appropriate their acts of freedom by abstracting and fetishizing them. It is to deaden life, to turn it into a cenotaph that becomes the witness of a modern nation born through the death of a Hero (Anderson, *Imagined*), who is transformed into the subject/Subject. He is then posited as the representative of the now modern subjects, who fight and act in representation. Death in a bourgeois society becomes a displacement and a projection, death is a stranger’s fate, it is not part of a memory or a shared experience, there is nothing exemplary in it (Benjamin, *Illuminations* 101). It is not the fate of a person, it is not made visible or confronted, but rather further denied and further made invisible by casting it into the fate of a fictional character, that is other in many senses.

When the act of the fidai who becomes a martyr is seen as a mixture of death and freedom, then the martyr who is posed as a symbol of the nation’s struggle for independence becomes a source of disappointment and disillusionment when the struggle is no longer there. For those seeking the return for an act, resentment is what an image of a martyr evokes; rather than being the memory of a struggle, it becomes a reminder of death, the death that is the character of a life in which man no longer fights but through symbols, while the struggle itself is turned into ideas and dreams (Darraj, *Bo’s* 8).

It is in defeat that the rebel is turned into a monumental mythical hero, this fetishistic transformation of the rebel is accompanied by substituting the rebel as victim/hero for his act. Chained and sentenced to death, he is made to become a sacrificial subject, stripped of both his earthly and heavenly powers, he is stripped from the power of imagination and the power of generation (Césaire, *Lyric* 26; “And the Dogs”).

Darraj projects the disillusionment of the living and their subjectified aspirations on the dead. For him, the martyr goes nowhere in a double meaning: he does not reach the end he thought

he was reaching, nor does he settle in a library that knows his name and his deeds. What Darraj misses is that a rationalized forgetting of the struggle of the martyr does not make it of less value except in a certain system of valuing which can only conceive of things in their exchange value, a position that the *fidai*, the fighting rebel has already liberated himself from. It just remains for the preservers of life to find their way out of their subjectified being.

The death of Christophe, in *The Tragedy of King Christophe*, is not the same as the death of Metellus, Metellus refused to give up fighting, replacing it with another slavery, that of the modernized bourgeois. Christophe dies with “disillusionment, disarray, solitude and voluntary death” (Davis 150), while Metellus dies without giving up his freedom, that is his being of rebellion, in exchange for a being of citadels. Metellus was following his dream, he found a source of strength and courage, an ability to endure hunger, fear and flight in the dream; his dream was not one of substitution or escape, but of a liberated being that would not rationalize defeat. The dreamt of independence is disfigured and distorted by politics (31), not by the act of rebellion. To hold an act of rebellion as a futile endeavor based on a result that was brought about by a politics of defeat has been the bourgeois way of undervaluing and de-rationalizing revolts.

In Jean Genet’s account, the *fidayeen* “thirsted for justice and wanted a fairer life,” but stronger than those hopes were the imperatives of a love of fighting and physical confrontation, together with an underlying desire for self-slaughter,” glorious death is the victory of those who cannot yet achieve the victory of establishing “a juster social order” (313). The *fidai* in Genet’s narration “had a lightness of being because he knew he had no future,” it is the imminence of death, but also because “The aims of the revolution were so distant that only its present moments were worth living” (427).

Genet himself questioned his own positing of an end to the struggle of the Palestinians by multiplying it; he sees the *Fedayeen*’s fighting as a game; it is “a fight to death,” to lose is to lose one’s life; the *Fedayeen* fight for the land, but one cannot really answer the question, whether they fight to win the land, or to gain victory (190). Ultimately, one does not ask a fighter why he fights. Neither can they be asked why they are willing to die, there can be no universally applicable formula for why people at certain moments risk their lives, the only fact remains that death does not act as an impediment to the fighter, for although death in such a struggle is visible, its visibility does not become a source of fear, if anything it becomes the condition in which the *fidayeen* fight.

A fighter starts with the principle that “death is the conclusion of life,” (Kanafani, *CW II*: 841; “Decision for a Cause”), in fighting he finds another “it is not important that one dies... the important thing is to find for himself a noble idea before he dies” (842), but this noble idea reveals itself when people die in fighting as something that “does not most of the time need understanding, it needs feeling!” Winning, one declares that “courage is the measure of truthfulness..,” (845) tortured and imprisoned, he finds yet another principle, “to betray is to die a contemptible death,” and dying he declares, “it is not important that one of us dies... the important thing is that you continue...” (847).

Death as a collective experience is like “A ladder extending downward to the interior of the earth and disappearing into the clouds” (Benjamin, *Illuminations* 102). It reconnects man with the earth and the sky, in a sense, it reconnects him back to life, to other lives. The martyr occupies a permanent presence in the deepest levels of consciousness and memory. He becomes the force that prompts them to struggle, his blood is the torch that gives light to those stumbling in the dark abysses of exiles and humiliation (Al-Mas’udi 26). The life to which the martyr gives rise is thus that of the revolution (27).

Martyrs “do not bear witness,” Césaire writes in the “Notebook” (CP 35). The death of the Rebel is not a feast, for its effect is not seen, the power of the act is invisible, but the act will reverberate, it will take seed in the depths of the sea and the sky. Its effect lies in the potentiality it creates, the creation of an inner movement that, although invisible, creates a possibility for a change, it leaves traces on the surface, something like the tears of a woman, which tell of an internal movement without determining or defining it (*Lyric 3*; “And the Dogs”). Telling the story of a fighter, who would rather die than surrender, creates small lights in the darkness of the night, lights that may eventually turn into flames (CP 333; “Memorial for Louis Delgrès”).

When Kanafani’s hero declares “how beautiful it is to choose the destiny one wants” (CW II: 809; “al-Madfa”), it is not death that he is celebrating, neither is it a will of a free subject, for death does not mean annihilation, for part of him, or something of which he was part, lives despite his death, it is the continuation of the struggle and not its end.

Al-‘Asheq (The Lover)

One could die voluntarily out of hate of life, but for Kanafani, the *fidai* dies for the love of life. Sacrificing oneself in a revolution is an expression of a deep understanding of life. Struggle is important to give the human existence the value it deserves. To love one’s people, to reject to lead a life of misery, is to love life. To risk death for life is the ultimate expression of the extent to which one is attached to life (qtd. in Habib 25).

That the fighter for independence suspends what is defined as rational calculation, that Djamila Bouhired in Algeria, is willing to risk life for independence, is, as Fanon argues “neither sterile bravado nor unconsciousness” (*Toward 73*), it is the determinacy and dignity of the fighter. Her ability to face death with a smile (75) is an expression of a deep love for a free life.

Love for life, as love for one’s people, cannot tolerate a submissive being, the being of weakness, the being of a domesticated subject, that of the crowd. Heroism for Césaire designates the virtue of placing certain values above life; the hero is someone who would rather refuse life than lose the very reasons for life. Heroism is disinterestedness, the approaching of death for values, for an idea that transcends life, the readiness to fight and struggle for it (« Le message » 253).

In Kanafani’s “Dead in Mosul,” the rebel’s act is one of confrontation, while that of the crowd is one of revenge, it comes from the resentment of a weak subject being, which attacks from underneath and from the back. The rebel’s being is of air and sun and the crowd’s being comes from underground. In the world of subjects, the victory of the crowd kills life, while the death of the rebel is one of a free life, in his fall “his body would not line with the other bodies,” bent, resting on his knees and forehead, he is not defeated but rather “praying” (Kanafani, CW II: 390).

The rebel is an individual, he remains outside circulation, He is not contained within a single story, for to tell the story of the rebel, as is imprisoning him with a number replacing his name, is to absent him in multiple forms (CW I: 428; “al-‘Asheq”). The rebel, *al-‘Asheq* in Kanafani, is an obscure man, known and unknown, for he does not talk much. His acts are as obscure as he is. He is solid, unyielding, no suppressive measures are able to subject him, he is always able to find for himself a way other than that planned for him as the standard subject, the criminal subject, or even the hero subject. The rebel is associated with arms and resistance; he is dexterous in shooting as he is known for his songs for love, land and the sky (CW II: 698; “The Child, His Father”). He would wear the uniform of an English lieutenant while ploughing the land. While rebellious and wretched, he is polite, shy and generous.

Kanafani's rebel is a lover who endures pain for his love. But to endure pain is not to be incapable of feeling it. Kanafani's *Asheq* is not "a miraculous being," (CWI 423; "al-Asheq"), a mad man, or a prophet, he only has the appearance of a mad man or a prophet for those who are incapable of enduring pain, of loving without telling of it, of feeling without externalizing and objectifying their feelings, as well as themselves, in telling.

The rebel/ the lover does not suffer from a lack, what he loves is not a fetishized object. His destiny is shared with a horse. Breaking from a domesticated life, they both find their freedom in wilderness and in the mountains at night (461). Their space is not that of society and its norms but that of the earth, the sky, the wind and the trees. Outside circulation, the rebel and his partner in flight have no use for exchange values which are as valuable as a gun without bullets.

Chapter Four: “A World Not for Us”

Writing the time of the colonized, Césaire and Kanafani do not refer it to a specific date, but rather it is always given as a number of years, a duration, or a lifetime, the emphasis is on the unendedness of an event. Their stories do not tell of the “was” and the “is”, but that which “has been,” not merely in reference to the weight of the past on the present, but also the weight of the present on the past and the future. The time they tell of is the time of colonization and the combat for liberation, this is not a linear narrative, but one of ascensions, risings and fallings, of victories and defeats, cruelties and sufferings, heroisms and betrayals. To write time here, is to write a battle. It is in this story of the battle that a horizon for the future is opened.

A Deadened Present

In *Capital*, Marx has shown that circularity is the core and essence of a capitalist mode of being. Capitalism allows for no other horizons, for other worlds past or future, except those that would account for its existence and movement, that is, it allows only for a past and a future whose functions are to justify its “movement in a never-ending circle” (873; Ch.26).

All revolts that sought an end of capitalism, or even that sought another way of being that is non-capitalist have been defined as reactionary, archaic peasant revolts, or civil wars, while Revolution is that which leads into and perpetuates the time of capitalism. When the world and its history refer only to those of capitalism, the colonized seeking the end of colonization, their dream of another world with another mode of being, could only be seen as seeking the end of history and/or the end of the world.

Reaction has been the necessary double that allows the time of capitalism to sustain itself through a circular movement that it projects on the rebelling colonized. The Colonized are incorporated within the time of Western modernity as its past; when they rebel seeking a break with it, they are said to be reactionaries seeking a mythical time on the expense of history.

In Modernity, as Michel Foucault shows, being moves towards “the ever-to-be-accomplished unveiling of the Same.” Such a movement necessitated the appearance of the Double, and all the doublings that derive from it. The movement of time is oriented towards an origin, or return to the Same. The Same returning to itself required the creation of a distance between the Same and itself, in which there is only vacuum (*Order* 339-340). The promise to be fulfilled, the sought return, is the end of time. It is “the utopia of causal systems of thought.” Man’s truth would spring forth in the end of History; for man’s finitude is now posited in time, which also becomes finite (263).

But this end of time is deferred, time thus becomes static, it moves, but in a cyclical repetition. In this way, the future could be made of the past, which is made of the present. This is what Reinhart Kosellek calls “static mobility” (22), in which the promised future is a futureless future, for the endlessness of the struggle for an end-state in the future becomes an entrapment in Hegel’s “not yet” (23). Trapped in its reaction to Christianity, the West’s focus on progress meant losing sight of what is present, to skip it for that which is thought to be better and projected unto the future. The present thus is not to be experienced as present but would be repeated in the future unapprehended (22).

Kosellek shows that the concept of Revolution itself was bound within an ancient cyclical metaphor. Although the concept of Revolution became detached from any natural forces by the time of Enlightenment, it maintained a circular movement that repeated the present through its focus on a “yearned-for future.” The Future conceived as constantly threatened by reaction left the

present stripped of its materiality and actuality. In this way, the future could only repeat the present; for the Revolution that is supposed to bring in this future, trapped within its constant anticipation and struggle against reaction, could only reproduce it (23).

The meaning of Revolution in the sixteenth century was tied with the movement of the stars, implying a circular movement that is independent of men “while at the same time influencing or even determining their lives.” Revolution as something that takes place “above the heads of their participants,” had its resonance during the seventeenth century, still tied with the naturalistic metaphor, political revolution “lived on the assumption that historical time was itself of a uniform quality, contained within itself, and repeatable” (46). In this way, the present, the different, the particular was lost in the concept of political revolution as cyclical. While the concept of Revolution still carried that part of it which signifies a process of change that “brought nothing new under the sun” (45).

In the eighteenth century, Revolution was employed to refer to “sudden political events, to ‘upheavals,’” it connoted repeatability and predetermination. But by the time of Enlightenment, Revolution as upheaval was applied to all aspects of the life of society, it “covered morals, law, religion, economy, countries, states, and portions of the earth—indeed, the entire globe.” The movement implied in Revolution now “abandoned its naturalistic background” and came to refer to that which is of the making of man (48). This meant that, in the aftermath of the French Revolution, the concept no longer referred to “given conditions or possibilities,” but it led into an “unknown future.” An obscure future becomes then that which needs to be known and mastered by politics (49).

Notwithstanding the obscurity of the future to which it is to lead, in the nineteenth century, the concept of Revolution was tied with that of evolution, both now denoting industrialization and the social emancipation that is driven by it (51). The absence of a possible or predetermined end to be reached in the future, its obscurity, meant closing off all possible horizons by the open-endedness of the movement of Revolution. The present of capitalism thus becomes that which is promised by the Revolution, produced and reproduced in its now disavowed circular movement.

The Revolution while holding men as the makers of their own history, stripped them of the ability to act to change the present. Revolutions were not people revolting, protesting, or rebelling. Uprisings, insurrections, revolts and rebellions were the terms used to describe people’s acts already formulated as both illegal, and non-revolutionary. People’s revolts and rebellions were now classified within that other and past of the Revolution, “civil war,” characterized as “fanatical and religious” (47).

The revolution of the present, stripped of any violent ruinous struggle was to be a “benign” one (48), while people’s rebellions, projected as the past of the Revolution, were made to carry the meaning of “a senseless circling” (49). Revolution became “congealed into a collective singular which appeared to unite within itself the course of all individual revolutions.” Thus abstracted, it “assumes a transcendental significance; it becomes a regulative principle of knowledge, as well as of the actions of all those drawn into revolution” (50). While formulating the social revolution as that which “must write off the past and create its substance out of the future,” all that is accomplished is maintaining the Revolution, justified and sustained by a promised and anticipated future that could never be realized when revolutions become the Revolution (54).

Through the correlation of the circular conception of time with the notion of evolution, capitalism and colonialism as the present of Europe are perpetuated, while the colonized are inserted as the Other and past of this present. For the colonized to remain the past of Europe, their history had to be formulated as one that circles upon itself and, in the same time, one that is

evolving towards the present of Europe, but never reaching it, for the present of Europe needs its past as it needs its endlessly deferred future. The struggles of the colonized to liberate themselves from capitalism and colonialism, that is from the Revolution and evolution, are seen as seeking the Return of the Same, as following a circular movement, that is, they are to be inserted as the Other of the Revolution, in which all rebellions and revolts that do not follow the path of the Revolution are to be contained.

From the perspective of those who are already in battles with that which is present, who have more at stake in transforming it, the “end of history” as that postulated by the Revolution of the West needs to be rejected and with it the implicit deferment of the future, for history continues beyond any set end. As Amilcar Cabral has said, people should not expect that they would cease to exist when they achieve the goals of their struggle. Cabral would not settle for Eternity as that for which people struggle, for “man will outlive classes and will continue to produce and to make history, since he can never free himself from the burden of his needs, of hand and brain” (125).

A history that is made out of struggles and battles, is not one that is circular, it does not follow the cycles of natural time, consisting of births and decays, it is rather one of making and unmaking (Grosz 114); a movement that involves inversions and reversals, withdrawals, confrontations, and clashes.

Rejecting the world of Europe and seeking another, Césaire is seen as seeking the rebirth of that which is past, a rebirth that is made possible by the Nietzschean idea of the “eternal return of the same” (Arnold 53). In James Arnold’s formulation rebirth is possible through a “historical cycle of culture.” Nevertheless, for Césaire as for Nietzsche, the idea of the eternal return, is not one that is based on the return of the Same, it does not leave the present intact. Nietzsche’s conceptualization of the eternal return does not “close down the future;” but rather the future becomes “the culmination and reiteration of the present, as synthetic overcoming of the present.” The future does not become more predictable, for despite any causal relation that connects the present to the future, this relation remains part of a battle in which “other relations (iteration, coalescence, retrospection) also emerge without predictability to link the future and the past, to the present” (Grosz 146).

The eternal return does not mean that time is cyclical, or a closed circle, where the end is a return to the beginning. What is repeated is not time, “but the forms and configurations of matter that transform themselves, that are capable of repetition, and inevitably must, in the long run, repeat themselves as time’s relentlessness pushes forward, flows into the future” (150).

While Césaire could be sharing Nietzsche’s idea of the eternal return, but this does not mean that what he seeks is a rebirth that comes passively through a cyclical movement of time. What seems to be missed in an argument about cyclical “rebirth,” is that Césaire’s image of the aborted new day, an aborted new life in the “Notebook” (*CP*) is at the heart of his protest against a life that lacks life, one that fails to give one. A protest that necessarily leads as I will show below to a rejection of a history that its only fulfilled promise is to never fulfill its promises.

Césaire’s “Notebook” has been read as consisting of three movements/ acts, these are not linear and separate, but redundant and nested in each other. Nevertheless, even when acknowledged as defying linearity, the movements of the “Notebook” are not seen as ones of multiple battles, but are cut out into stages and phases in which the colonized move towards the present of Europe. Despite the redundancy and nestedness, the “Notebook” is said to move, as *should* the history of the colonized, from a miserable present and the desire to escape it, to the conscious combat against escaping, and finally it is given the happy ending of an achieved

reconciliation between the colonized speaker and himself, on the one hand, and his country, on the other (Owusu-Sarpog; Singolo).

According to this narrative, time in Césaire is the time lived and the time to be lived, the former to the latter is what the past is to the future, desperation to hope. It is a time that measures the direct and indirect experience of Césaire and his people, it is thus the lived history. But this lived history is fitted into the universal history whose movements and stages it is to follow. The struggle of the colonized is thus regulated by being cut and fitted into three movements: the time of slavery and colonialism, the time of revolt, of decolonizing struggle and that of emancipation, of universal humanism (Owusu-Sarpog 256).

The movement here is fitted within the Hegelian schema; one in “which the accumulated tensions of the process of contradiction are themselves overcome in a new synthesis.” The Synthesis that Arnold sees in the end of the poem marks a reconciliation of the spirit with its own consciousness, realizing a being of fullness, “something like the Hegelian Idea in a contemporary African nation” (165). Moving Césaire from Nietzsche to Hegel, is allowed in Arnold’s reading by that which he constructs as a common dominator, the idea of *rebirth* (265), which when reformulated in Hegelian terms becomes that of reconciliation of the self with its self by its return to its original being.

Nevertheless, the movement of history for Césaire is never a reconciliatory, benign one, it is rather one of violent struggles and repeated defeats, acts of suppression and revolts, stagnations and eruptions. It is a spiral movement, in which the colonized rise from an abyss of flames that pulls them down. Pushed down, chained with the rancor and resentment of a colonized life, they are carried up again by the force of life, which although weakened is still in them (*CP* 269; “Spirals”).

A life of struggle is life for Kanafani and Césaire, what is not is a life that would not struggle for itself. Life is growth which necessarily entails change and transformation. These do not have to be pre-determined, for as we have seen setting an end to be fulfilled has functioned as a preservation of the present. Neither do they have to be major battles or volcanic eruptions, but they do have that transformative effect; they do not allow for the piling up of dead layers of the same over that which is living, even if only by opening gaps through which air could reach that which is still living in a dead present.

In Kanafani’s stories, the time of modernity is the time of monotony, detachment and paralysis. Kanafani’s protagonists in the collection “A World not for Us” are most-often conscious of their situation, they make promises to change it, but what they change does not go beyond mere replacements, substitutions, where the same is replaced by the same, one coffee shop by another, one way of an empty life by another (*CW* II: 439; “Kafr al-Manjam”).

An anticipation of the strange and the sudden is the only break in such a monotonous life. the sudden and strange in a world of impotency, could only take the form of the return of something of the past (439-440), that which was declared dead. Nevertheless, the return of the dead, in a dead present, does not shake that which is stagnant, it is absorbed and normalized (440-441). For a life in which nothing changes by the return of the dead, the return itself did not take place.

That which returned was living in the present. Unlike the narrator who is conscious of the malaise of his life, but incapable of acting. The dead returning, is neither dead nor living, a failure and disappointment in the past, he is the epitome of the time of the present, he is the one who could make it in the world of glittering gold (442). A world accessible only to those who are resolute enough in their search for gold and indifference to life that they are capable of suspending

reflection, as well as life itself. They are the ones able to normalize a stretch of an empty humiliated life, despite the wailing sound of its dying.

Reflection though does not do much in Kanafani's stories, it allows for the intellectualization of things of the present, but such intellectualization familiarizes and normalizes, it does not challenge or question, not to say reject, that which is there. In the time of modernity, deferring things becomes a mode of being, the "should be" is known as that which is not to be realized. An impotent being rationalizes its impotency and helplessness by pointing to a presumed futility of any act of protest, any attempt at changing an oppressive situation is dismissed as incapable of changing anything, one does not need to act, since one's act would not "mend the world" (463; "Only Ten meters"). To intellectualize the imbalance of things *means nothing*, for nothing means anything when it becomes familiarized. In such a being the smell of sweat and sex are the only indicators of life, and thus the only thing of significance! (463)

In a world in which needs and desires are only allowed through distraction and substitution, gambling and sex, man lives within an unbridgeable distance between him and himself (464). An old man's staff on his shoulder would not alter anything in a helpless impotent being (467). The only conscience that man can have here is one that relentlessly attempts to fill a hole in his being that could never be filled, for substitution follows the same circular movement of the mode of being of which it is a part.

In Kanafani's stories, the world of capitalism, is a world not for us, if it is the present, then it is the present that needs to be rejected, not by taking refuge in another non-existent past world, but by combatting that which is present.

Modern life is one of isolation, that does not show itself as such, it is one that provides for needs and desires, but is never capable of giving a feeling of satisfaction, instead it becomes the constant and necessary anesthetizing strategy through which any feelings including those of lack, shame, humiliation are deadened. It is a life of stupor, in which all is empty, even when filled, it is a glass box (481; "Glass Box"). One has to move downwards, to the lower floors to realize that such a world is as base as that of Faust. A pregnant prostitute who no longer could be one, or a workers' sign protesting their confusion with prostitutes scandalize the baseness of a world in which flesh, love, and satisfaction are being sold.

A base world that beautifies itself with abstractions, one that disguises the flattening of life (Césaire, *CP*; "Batouque"), could never be the world that Césaire and Kanafani believed the colonized would fight for. Their struggle is for life, and this is a world in which life is no longer generated (147). The present of capitalism is one of a reified life, of people turned into both exploiters and exploited. It is a world of silence, resignation, and sickness, one that cannot be assimilated by the colonized, for whom taking marronage from such a world becomes a necessity of life.

The present in "All That's Left to You," was imprisoned in the past of defeat. In such a present the only thing that moves is the clock, its movement is not one of life, though, but rather its absence. The clock is a reflection of a stagnant being, a stagnation that started with the Nakba ('Ashur). The clock is then a coffin as long as no other movement is present. The sound of the clock in the novel is the sound of waiting and silence; bringing with it a feeling of estrangement, desolation, and anxiety about the unknown. The sound of its movement is the sound of an endless repetition of a dead life and its helplessness (Kanafani, *CW I*: 222; "All That's Left to You").

In a world extending infinitely into darkness, the clock becomes an iron chain that emits terror and anxiety (190). Confronted with the void, just as being trapped in a tunnel whose both ends are closed, Hamid is allowed no detour around the present. Ridding himself of the clock, he

froze in his place, feeling that time has come to a stop, but it is then that he is left with no other option but to confront that which is there, he is forced to be “man enough to be able to blast open the continuum of history” (Benjamin, *Illuminations* 262).

Hamid’s movement replaced the movement of the clock; liberated from it, he was also liberated from a wound that only left a trace that refers to nothing specific. In the confrontation, it becomes a matter of distance and not as much one of time. Time stops having any significance when there is no longer any distance separating one from completing a deed (Kanafani, *CWI*: 209-210; “All That’s Left”). The movement in the novel breaks through the time of deferment (Khuri 53). It is not a coincidence that Kanafani left the question of how it ends open, for the only end that he sought was the end of a stagnant present, just as the past that is now a trace of nothing particular, the future is left without identification, for to identify a point to be reached in the future, is to reconcile us to a present that leads only to itself.

Time is a deception, a lie; for one moment could be longer than another, one moment could carry the weight of illusions, facts, feelings of fear, hope and despair, while for others the same moment would be the same as the one that preceded it and the one that would follow it (Kanafani, *CWI*: 443; “al- ‘Asheq”). The time of the clock is not history; people’s lives and struggles, their political and social action are what makes historical time (Kosellek 2). When the being of passivity and loss is given up, when people rise, time is no longer an imprisoning clock on which man is hanged, paralyzed into the position of a spectator, or moving passively with its movement.

The Weight of the Present on the Past:

Kanafani and Césaire appear to be facing the past, their gaze is never directed toward a future that is on the opposite side of the past. On the contrary, any seeds or horizons for the future seem to be found in the past. Although looking at the past, both write from the present, as in the case of many other peoples, looking at history is done from the present, but in the case of Césaire and Kanafani it is not done for it, but against it, in an open and positive confrontation with it; a confrontation that does not allow for escapes into pasts or futures, for both writers show that without such a confrontation with the present, both the past and the future are deadened.

The Past is usually put in the service of the present; in the time of colonialism and capitalism, the past cannot be in the service of the present, it could only be seen in the service of the future. It is not surprising then, that most of what has been written on anti-colonial struggles has been depicting them as ante-colonial. Whether this has been the case in some of them or not, the fact remains that, in Césaire and Kanafani’s texts, there is no reachable past that is ante-colonial, but there could be a world in which colonialism no longer exists.

For the colonized, as soothing and consoling it has been to see in that which was there an alternative to that which is not yet, there has never been a return to that which was. All attempts of return are doomed to failure, or to that which is less than a dead life. For those seeking liberation, nothing that has died could be born again.

Nothing of the past can return, but certain effects do, these effects have been put to use in the capitalist West to maintain a certain social, political and economic order. The case has to be necessarily different for the colonized, for to perpetuate the present, is to perpetuate a colonized life. The past thus can only be sought in service of the future, for it is always another time that the colonized seek, but since this other time is always blocked by a colonized present, then it has to be confronted and combatted for there to be another time. The past may provide us with horizons for a future, may allow one to see the present as the present does not wish to be seen, it may show the possibility of another life, but for the past to operate in this way it has to be freed from the

present. For that of the past which would challenge the order of things in the present is oppressed and buried. The present allows only that return to the past which preserves it; a preservation that entails a deadening of life, since life necessarily involves ends as it involves beginnings. A dead present could only summon that which is dead, it comes back in the form of a mutilated being, a dead object or a ghost.

Marx has already written that what is repeated from the past is repeated as a caricature of that which has been, this is because life, as life entails, change. That which does not change is thus lacking in life, a dead object, not that which existed in the past, but a copy and an imitation thereof (*The Eighteenth* 9, 12-13). What takes place, in this case, is not a glorification of the present, but a degradation of the past.

The problem according to Marx lies in the deployment of the past, that which is dead, but still weighs “like a nightmare on the brain of the living” (9), but it is not the past in itself that is being condemned here, but its conjured ghosts. The summoning of the ghosts of the past is a symptom of a revolutionary crisis, it entails borrowing from the past to disguise the present (10), instead of confronting that which is there. The unheroic bourgeois would need to appropriate “heroism, sacrifice, terror, civil war and the battles of nations,” to disguise their limitations. These limitations are the necessary characteristics of a being “wholly absorbed in the production of wealth and in the peaceful struggle of competition.” When the present is petty and base it seeks greatness in a past reified to give greatness to that which is not (11). When stagnation blocks any ability for movement and change, it is death that is sought from the past and given the disguise of life; the past here is not an opening of a horizon for something else, but a justification for the deadness of the present.

The past in Marx cannot be used to “drug” oneself against that which is present. He thus criticizes the use of the past as the poetics of a revolution; instead the poetry of revolution should be drawn from the future, while “the dead should bury the dead” (13). Nevertheless, Marx shows that the movement of the revolution of 1848 “in a descending line,” a retrogressive motion, was not because it made use of the past, but, rather, because the “revolutionaries” handed their fights, and thus responsibility for themselves to others, who shook them off. It was never a battle, nothing was confronted, the past was a disguise for that which is, but it is that which is that used it as such.

As I have argued in Chapter One, without confrontation, that which is oppressive in the present could not be shed off, but is rather further internalized. It is turned into an oppressive and inhibiting force that could only develop into the impotency of those who are unable to take responsibility for themselves. When what was covers for what is, when we are resigned for what is because we once were, in short, when the past is reified as a substitution for the present, then we are in a condition of regression; we do not return to the past, but rather as both Nietzsche and Césaire had it, regression here is a symptom of a weakened impotent life that is unable to generate another. A perpetuation of a sick life that neither dies nor is able to give birth to a new life is what the preservation of the present could achieve.

History could become a weapon to combat a condition of surrender and passive acceptance of the way things are. For Nietzsche, what may lead to a perpetuation of a sick life could lead to the creation of a strong new one. It depends on the strength and force of life in a being. In Fact, for Nietzsche one may and can fight change drawing an analogy from great men and great battles of the past; but it depends which change is being fought, for if change refers to decay, then the measure of the fighter, the great man, is his ability to fight such a change through the creation of another life, a creation without which posterity cannot do (*The Use* 19). This, for Nietzsche, is monumental history, that which consists of great deeds and great battles, that remain great and

living for men throughout history although the moments in which they took place have vanished (17).

Monumental history, as Nietzsche has shown, is not concerned with events, but is a collection of “effects,” as such it could only function by eliminating many of the differences, forcing the particularities of the past into a general formula to make it correspond to the present. It brings “together things that are incompatible and generalise them into compatibility” (19-20). This means that in the hands of the weak egoists, monumental history, “lives by false analogy, it entices the brave to rashness, and the enthusiastic to fanaticism by its tempting comparisons” (20-21). In these cases, the deed would be directed by effects without a purpose or a cause that serves life; it thus serves as a concealment and an agent of preservation of the baseness of the present. It becomes a celebration of death on the expense of life.

This is most clear, when people, enslaved, oppressed, exploited, starved and murdered under capitalism can find a way to reconcile themselves to a weakened being by blocking the colonized present, fixing their gaze on an ante-colonial past. At the same time, the colonized do need the past, for they need to be reminded that that which is present is not of the nature of things, that there can be something other than that which is present, this entails both seeing that which is there but also defamiliarizing it, and since the future has already been colonized by the present, by the very insertion of the colonized in the time of the colonizer, (I will come back to this point below), the past remains the place from which the colonized are able to de-familiarize that which is there, and draw analogies for that which is and which can be. It is the different, that which is concealed and buried by the present that the colonized finds in his search for the past. It could only be in this sense that the colonized’s history counters that of the colonizer, a move always threatened with slipping into an act of reification, instead of allowing for life.

The colonized in reaction to the colonization of his history, as a colonized who is unable to liberate himself from his colonized being, creates “his own” ancestral heroes, a necessary creation to situate him in history. Overlooking the problem inherent of a standardized and naturalized notion of history here, Aliko Singolo, sees in myth a universal necessity as a point of reference and internal cohesion (145). Césaire’s poetry, according to a similar narrative, seeks to abolish history, and create an eschatological time, a mythical time, which is an eternal present in which the hero ancestors of all the blacks in the world stand as the perfect model (Ngal 207). In this way, any reference by the colonized to the past, could only be read in analogy with the acts of those who “cannot represent themselves,” who “must be represented,” sent “rain and sunshine from above” (Marx, *The Eighteenth* 126), below, or beyond but nothing that is theirs, and of themselves. This is very accurate in the case of those who would resign themselves to a colonized present convincing themselves that at the end of the day, with myth, they have that which they lack.

Bernadette Cailler argues that myth in Césaire’s poetry is creative in that it blends the poetic act and black awakening; it is thus an imaginative consciousness. But that which is imaginary could serve as a source of power as it could serve as the hide of the weak, effecting the preservation of that which is decaying. A mythical time entails sacrificing history for myth by seeking “to liberate the psyche of Martinicans so that they might then live and know the spiritual existence of a culture not their own” (Arnold 95); what it leads to is a “false consciousness,” including “the interiorized racist view of oneself” (159).

The search for myth, as Martin Munro argues, is sought as a way out of a disempowerment that comes from “the profound cultural and historical indeterminacy” (5) of the Antillean. It is being fixed in instability, with a self-divided between different continents, belonging to none, that

would be ended through an Africa of the past, mythified and non-colonized (9). In this way, an imagined lost past becomes the future, “a future anterior” (16). An argument already advanced by Arnold in his reading of Césaire’s poetry, in which as the title of his book suggests, Césaire’s poetry is fitted in different modernist theories and frameworks, including those of European conceptualization of culture and civilization, as well as history. Since the scholar has put Césaire’s poetry within a modernist frame, he could only understand history in Césaire “as metaphors of the circular nature of history...[which] manifestly connect his poetry to European modernism in its preference for an undifferentiated mythic experience” (54).

In this narrative, Césaire sought to create a myth that is “a dynamic plan, a catalyst for the aspirations of a people, and a prefiguration of the future, precisely because it is capable of mobilizing the emotional energy of the collectivity.” This plan is, however, a romantic irrationalism that appeals to emotion (281).

What is missed in these accounts, is that Césaire’s poetry created myths only to declare their failure. In the “Notebook” (*CP*), where the speaker declares “what is his,” the black history that is affirmed is all that makes him. For he swore that nothing would be left out, his history then includes myths of glorious Africa, their affirmation as well as their denial, slavery, colonial exploitation, poverty and degradation, defeat and cowardliness as well as rebellion and resistance. This is the case in most of the poems in which Africa and its heritage is evoked. Myth is not what is created in Césaire’s poetry it is what is abolished. Another detour from the present that needed to be blocked if one is to confront that which is there. In a diseased present, recalling elements of the past, is not a repetition of that which was, but rather a mobilization of the different, the tension that it brings to the present, “which can move us to a future in which the present can no longer recognize itself” (Grosz 117).

Searching for another sky, in another time, a past one, an African one, Césaire’s speaker’s movement is constantly blocked by what is present. This is not a complete blockade, for in the search for Africa, in looking for a past that did not give birth to the present of colonialism, the colonized is confronted with colonialism, instead of an ideal past life, he finds himself face to face with slavery. His movement towards the past, mobilizes his memory, but his memory is not of an Africa as paradise, but what the excavation of memory does is give rise to images of uprootedness, oppression, murder, objectification, animalization and exoticization. Colonialism is all what the colonized is able to find in his memory. What the attempt to escape the present to the past does is bring back the colonized to the present.

Singolo does show that the search for the mythical past fails, “it fails in and by the stagnation of the Antilles.” The paths that lead to an imaginary paradise in the past are blocked by the immediate past which merges with the lived present of colonialism (37). Nevertheless, the narrative itself is not changed, Africa could be replaced with the Antilles as long as it provides an entity that could fit in the universal History, which necessarily entails a state of reconciliation, instead of one of struggles and combats. This entity, that requires a state of reconciliation is reached by the descent of the poet “in the hell of his and his people’s history” (56). A descent to the abyss, to that which is repressed and should be brought up to the surface. The narrative now moves the colonized from a developmentalist narrative into a psychological one.

In the psychological narrative, another linearity in which the past of the uprooted, enslaved and colonized Antillean is fitted. Here the life of the Antillean is cut into other stages, those of traumatic shock, repression, latency and reactivation. The past is the unconscious that is unexplorable but could be (Glissant, *Caribbean* 66).

In this formulation of the past as that which is repressive and repressed, history is no longer acting and creating, it is not confrontation and rebellion, but it becomes an impossible return (82). What the psychological narrative achieves for the colonized intellectual is, just as myth, the insertion of the history of the colonized within a universal narrative, even if this insertion meant that the colonized will maintain the already established position for them in it as the past, the primitive, the unconscious of that which is present (European). Glissant's replacing myth with tale (85) does no more than insert the latter in an established present.

Most of what the colonized finds in the past is that which blocks the path towards a better life, and it is in this confrontation with the limit, that the colonized can no longer use the past as his hide from what is there. In Césaire's poetry, the past, the movement towards the past, is an opening of a space of struggle, a battlefield, or many battlefields, in which the colonized is repeatedly defeated and repeatedly rising to fight again, the search for the past, as in Kanafani's "Return to Haifa," is not a retrieval of that which is lost in the past, but a struggle against the limits that define the past for us and force us to accept what is there as that which could only be.

Nothing that have died can live again, but one may try turning one's back to the present for a moment, and may be, for a moment, the present can become that which is backward, that which is dead or dying and thus needs to be changed. The colonized have more than one stake in such a turning.

Turning one's back to what is present here does not mean making it invisible, but to make that in it which is made invisible visible. One has to take leave from what is established as present, to see the different, to see the established as established and not as an act of nature. It is in taking leave of it, that we could see that a world of screams and despair is unqualified for its pride.

It is thus not surprising that Césaire calls remembering an act of madness, for screams and despair do not make a happy life. From the perspective of a present that seeks to preserve itself, to remember that which is to be forgotten, to know that which is not to be known, is madness. For Nietzsche, forgetting is a "positive faculty of repression," it blocks the consciousness from receiving things from the outside until they are digested. Active forgetfulness preserves the psychic order, without it "there could be no happiness, no cheerfulness, no hope, no pride, no *present*." For Nietzsche, the one who is unable to digest certain things, unable to forget them is "a dyspeptic—he cannot "have done" with anything" (*Genealogy* 58). This is positive repression that involves a healthy process of digestion, it requires a being in whom the force of life is strong. This cannot apply to those who unable to digest that which is not good, instead of ridding themselves of it through a remembrance that confronts, keep it concealed inside, what happens in such cases, if not indigestion, is a fermentation that poisons the body. It is not surprising that stagnation and rotteness are what we encounter frequently in Césaire's texts.

The failure of forgetfulness here, is the failure of the present to grow out of itself, it is the present here that drags the past behind it, for it is too weak to break the chains that it tied around itself. For Nietzsche, Man is never able to be in the present, his being is "merely a continual "has been."" Lacking the ability to forget, and carrying his past as a chain that weighs him down, he dissimulates, conceals and denies in resistance to the past without being able to break free from it, except in death (*The Use* 6-7). But when the past becomes "the gravedigger of the present," it is because the present is too weak to break free of it. It entails a lot of strength to grow out of one's self, to have one's wounds heal, instead of being covered with "deceptive eschars" (Césaire, *CP*; "Notebook"). Growth is an overcoming, it is not a progress toward a goal but "a succession of more or less profound, more or less mutually independent processes of subduing, plus the

resistances they encounter, the attempts at transforming for the purposes of defense and reaction, and the results of successful counteractions” (Grosz 107).

It is the failure and defeat of the present that leads to the defeat of both the past and the future. The wound has not healed, instead it acquired a dominating presence. In this condition, the only recognized past is an imaginary one, and hence unable to give the strength that a past can give to allow for the confrontation of the present. Running from the present towards a past, one is trapped in the past, for his only perceived way out is a fetishized past. Seeking the past as a refuge and an escape from confrontation and acting, one does not find in the past the strength to fight in the present, but a way to submit to his own weakness.

Leaving the world of Europe defamiliarizes it. But although seeking another world achieves such de-familiarization it is threatened with another, its own blindness, its own operations of concealment. That which is seen as beautiful in another world, could be, when confronted in the present, no more than “repugnant ugliness” (Césaire, *CP*; “Notebook”), what starts as a source of strength could turn into a source of weakness and defeat. To not allow for another concealment that would preserve that which needs to be ended, the colonized has to confront his defeat. The speaker declares the failure of his search for magic in a world without demons as without gods, his failure to find a dreamt world of marvels in a base world. This affirmation of defeat is a rejection, it could only be a contentment for those who seek to preserve a decaying humiliated life, those who would enjoy stench and mud (61).

To confront the past and present, is lose the “feeble defenses,” of the colonized, those that tempt him to find escape in a mythical past, or to envision a future that is that of the world of Europe (65). Without his defenses he is confronted with his being as one disvalued and degraded by Europe, made to be its irrational, emotional, and cannibalistic Other. This affirmation is not an embracement of a politics of inversion, a reactionary politics, but a continuous movement wherever there could be opened a path for life. Its potentiality lies, however, in refusing to stop at any point where it is confronted with a blockade.

Leaving the world of myths and entering “the wasteland of the everyday,” involves a confrontation with a world of suffering and misery (Glissant, *The Ripening* 60), a present of silence, without a will and without the ability to act. But this is not a condition of death, for there is a feeling of dissatisfaction, that is not a repressed lack. It is a condition of restlessness in which the colonized inhabits different places, different ways of being unable to feel at peace in any (Césaire, *CP* 383; “Lagoonal Calendar”). The rebelling colonized is trapped in centuries of slavery and colonialism, but he also inhabits a tide of lava that has the force to destroy that which is established.

When a glorious past is negated, and a defeated cowardly being is affirmed, the present of past slaves is affirmed, as well as the glory of enduring slavery. It is this last affirmation, that allows Césaire to still fight for life, for what is there is a being with a strong force of life. To be able to endure something like slavery depends on the strength and depth of “the roots of a man’s inner nature” (Nietzsche, *The Use* 9-10). In the strong man, past misfortunes are assimilated and digested; they are turned into a strength rather than a source of weakness. But the black man although strong enough to endure slavery, is left weakened and depleted, that which is a source of life inside him is now buried under the layers of sufferings, wounds, and repeated defeats that lasted for a long time. To reach these roots, the piled layers of a defeated being need to be forgotten, shed off, but they had to be remembered first. Both operations, for Césaire as for Nietzsche, depend on the strength of life in a person, for it is a strong life that knows when to forget and when to remember; this is an instinctive knowledge, that is a knowledge that is in the service of life. That

which is “inner nature” has then to be nurtured to allow the colonized to grow out of his being. Rebellion becomes worthwhile because it stirs that which is stagnant and buried, I will come to this point in the final section of this chapter. Although a long process, but it is both remembrance and forgetting that open a path for the liberation of this life force.

To affirm the history of slavery, is to affirm the history of Western imperialism and to reject both (Césaire, *CP* 61; “Notebook”). The affirmation brings in a source of light, it opens into another world, one that does not partake in the industrialization/ colonization of the world. But whose presence is what keeps the earth, earth. A presence of a beneficent gibbosity “where that which is earthiest about earth ferments and ripens” (67).

A Quest for the Sources of Life

According to Lilyan Kesteloot, Césaire sought an Africa in his unconsciousness that he could not find, what he found was “a French and Antillean metissage.” Slavery, cultural assimilation and the life on the island itself, came between the Antillean black and Africa (*Aimé* 98).

But Césaire’s Africa is not the repressed that needs but cannot return. It is in Africa that Césaire saw such a presence, not a past mythical Africa, but Africa, which is (although not only) an “original family,” and a “place of security” (202); but these are not the same thing as a point of origin to which he sought to return. Césaire in an interview describes Africa as representing a return to sources, the land of the parents, there is a sense of nostalgia in relation to Africa, but Africa is also a source of self-realization as “an essential dimension” of himself, which he discovered through the Africans (*Césaire* 17).

The presence of the African in the life of the uprooted in the Americas and the Caribbean, allowed them to see difference as not the mark of the inferiority of the black as descendants of slaves, it opened a history that does not start and end at slavery. It showed other parts of the being of the African that do not stop at the limit of an enslaved colonized one. The African gave the uprooted “a positive feeling of wholesome contact with racial roots...[it] made him feel that he was not merely an unfortunate accident of birth, but that he belonged definitely to a race weighed, tested and poised in the universal scheme” (McKay 278). For Claude McKay, one can find among the Africans as “among the rugged poor and socially backward blacks,” the simple and natural warmth, something of the black non-colonized and undomesticated. These are elements of the being of the black, which although buried at the bottom of the present, are still present. Marginalization, for those in whom the force of life is strong enough, protects against the enfeeblement and self-effacement that accompanies a condition of long-deracination.

Nevertheless, neither Césaire nor McKay were seeking a proof of a continuity of life. They do not seek to preserve “what survives from ancient days.” Or to anchor themselves in a past from which they have been already uprooted. There is no search here for a “timeless and essential secret,” but for that which appears to be without history, “sentiments, love, conscience, instincts” (Foucault, *Aesthetics* 139-140). The presence of Africa and the Africans give the uprooted blacks a feeling of assurance and strength, it gave them the confidence and the happiness that the tree attached to its roots has, “the happiness of knowing one’s growth to be one not merely arbitrary and fortuitous, but the inheritance, the fruit and blossom of a past, that does not merely justify but crown the present” (Nietzsche, *The Use* 26).

What Abiola Irele describes as the discontinuity between the precolonial past and the present African life under colonial domination has made the Africans strangers in their own world, severed from their roots, and lead into a life determined by an alien culture (166). Irele rejects the

organic conceptualization of culture as a tree, as confusing the real and metaphorical. He sees growth and vitality as a static conception of people's lives, which lays the foundations for conservative thought (167).

Nevertheless, the tree for the uprooted becomes that which should be but is not, Césaire's fascination with the being of the plant, comes from his awareness of the failure of the human to achieve such a being, it is that which remains unrealized. The plant becomes the measure against which the present is judged, the standard according to which things of the present are to be rejected or accepted. It is that element of nature, the epitome of the force of life, that would not allow for any naturalization of that which is present but is dead. In the "Notebook," The black becomes a tree, but his becoming a tree come from "staring too long at trees." From the perspective of the tree, he sees hatred and murder, he sees Europe rising in and through colonialism, he identifies with slavery, and smells the putridity of corpses (*CP* 51).

Nietzsche has shown that reverence of the past could become a way of mummifying life rather than leading to a further and higher one, in this case it is not only the present that is dead but also the past; when the tree dies from top downwards, ultimately the roots themselves wither. The past in this case is transformed from a source of life, into a fetishized entity. In the end, it is those who are unable to generate life in the present who become victims of insatiable desire for things of the past (27).

For Césaire, it is the present that needs to be judged, interrogated or condemned depending on its service for life. It is a battle, not between the past and the present, but between the different parts which intersect in us, which are difficult to unravel, but are sorted out in the battle. The battle is between that which allows for life and that which deadens it in favor of preserving a dead present. If for Nietzsche the past that crushes life should be destroyed and with it part of our "innate inherited nature" (*The Use*: 28-30), for Césaire, it is the present that needs to be combatted, not to restore that which has been past, but to destroy that which in it kills life; that which inhibits the growth of beings that it has chased and buried underground, like Caliban's mother, like Kanafani's little one in "The Red and the Green." The battle is an opening of the path for life.

For Césaire, it is in that which is African in the Antillean that the force of life lies, and it is this part of himself that needs to be liberated. Africa here is not the identical and singular origin of the Antillean, but his kin, the family from which he descends, and with which he shares certain elements, just as he does with certain European ones, also those in which life is not deadened (Césaire in Melsan int.).

Césaire insisted that his "version" of negritude, unlike that of Senghor, was not biologically grounded, but historical. Negritude has a ground, black culture, which is historical. According to Arnold this contradicts a statement Césaire made earlier in 1942, emphasizing a biological link for solidarity between blacks: "there flows in our veins a blood that requires of us a unique attitude toward life...we must respond ...to the special dynamics of our complex biological reality" (38). Arnold links this statement to Césaire's interpretation of surrealism as an instrument to make contact with one's heritage, which is both biological and is preserved in the collective unconscious. For Arnold, Césaire's statement continues to show Africa as one of the Martiniquan "lines of force," Césaire here celebrates African art (poetry and Sculpture) and its "disdain for clever industrial brigandage" (95).

What Arnold sees as a contradiction, is one only in a mode of knowing that separates that which is biological from that which is historical. It is the same framework that would posit nature, myth, and biology on one side and in opposition to history, a dichotomy that is a version of many others, but one that relates mostly to that of the colonized/colonizer. Nevertheless, this is not the

framework through which Césaire sees the history of the Antilles. It is one of heritage, as Arnold describes it, but we inherit in our bodies as we inherit in other parts of our being. Descent a non-unified, non-identical origin is found through atavisms and heredities (Foucault, *Aesthetics* 143). It is inscribed in the body, in the functioning or malfunctioning of our bodies, in the imprints that history has left on them, “The body manifests the stigmata of past experience” (147). But as we might inherit weakness from our ancestors, we might inherit strength. Descent does not show an unbroken continuity, it “does not resemble the evolution of a species and does not map the destiny of a people.” It actually maintains the dispersion of passing events, it identifies accidents, deviations, and reversals “that gave birth to those things that continue to exist and have value for us” (146).

For the uprooted Antillean, restoring and defending African values is unachievable (qtd. in Kesteloot, *Césaire* 66). His negritude will have to be something other than the establishment of an identity, that risks becoming “a reactionary myth,” co-opted by neo-colonial discourse, into “the black way of being white” (Adotevi 207).

Negritude is “a certain affective attitude in regard to the world,” writes Jean-Paul Sartre, affection is the Negro’s way of being in the world and comprehending it, it is now the assigned position for the African in the universal relations of production, his contribution to the world, or the task he is given in the world factory. The wage he receives for it and from which the surplus value is already extracted is an assumed ability to surpass “the brute given facts of experience...” (41).

This surpassing though is not a challenge to the world order, it could not be, since what it seeks, a return to the past, the retrieval of that which is lost, is impossible, “orphanic,” in Sartre’s words. But black Orpheus should be content with the “untiring descent” into himself (21).

Sartre romanticizes (the African seen as the past of Europe) and at points fetishizes negritude (that which Europe lacks). Differences between its writers as well as between the blacks are overlooked, he thus could not see the difference between a blackness celebrating its suffering, and a blackness that affirms it to reject it, for all what he could see was “the multiple aspects of the black soul.” For Sartre the black soul becomes an all-encompassing and homogenized category based, despite its multiple aspects, on emotion (51). Sartre in fact does grant the colonized African an identity and a place in the world History, reification is the other name for this operation.

Negritude is transformed into a metaphysics based on essentialisms. This transformation came as a part of a being too weak to fight and confront, it thus became something reconciliatory “that is perfectly inoffensive to a system that strips men and women of their identity” (Depestre 251). Negritude thus becomes an abstract “worldview” which, isolated from the materiality of the lives of the blacks, functions as an ideology that reproduces the existing relations (in the case of the blacks) of oppression.

Negritude, according to Georges Ngal, evokes rootedness. It is a quest for a homeland and a new identity that gives the Negro rootedness in nature and the universe (272). The plant rooted in the soil became for Césaire a symbol signifying another reality, that is an expression of a nostalgia for a paradise (187). In this account, Césaire sought a negro washed of all impurities (101); he had a desire for return which could be found in the realm of the imaginary, in Senghor, and in ethnology.

Négritude, formulated as a sought return, seeks a re-birth, not of Africa itself here, but of its child, “black god misbegotten of his thunder” (Davis 104). Nevertheless, as I have been arguing, nothing which was can return, but life itself has the ability to regenerate itself, it is thus not a dead figure or culture that Césaire’s negritude seeks to bring back to life. But rather he searches for

those parts which could regenerate life in a dying present. In most of his poems, these are hidden and invisible but are there and need to be mobilized.

The movement entailed in negritude is thus a continuous, multi-directional movement, not one that repeats the same, but one that constantly generates life as long as it is living. It could only be in this sense that negritude is a tree. As in the being of a tree, certain elements are killers of life, and they need to be shed off, while others are sources of life and these need to be nourished. Nietzsche has written that it takes a very strong tree to be uprooted and transplanted somewhere else. Nietzsche in the *Birth of Tragedy* was making an analogy between the tree and myth. For him, myth is important for the way we conceive of the present, it both protects against deifying it as well as turning away from it. A world without myths, is a world that suffers from a lack, but also like a tree, to be transplanted to a place to which it is foreign is to cause an irreparable damage.

It takes a very strong and healthy tree “to reject a foreign element after a terrible struggle,” what happens usually is that the tree becomes sickly and withers away. That is myth in a foreign land, becomes a reified dead object (111).

To not become a reified thing, whose only glory is a name that it borrows from the past, Césaire’s negritude, as the being of the tree, needs a lot of strength to fight a defeated present. Césaire was not seeking a stone monument of the past under which the present could be buried (*CP 67*; “Notebook”). It thus needs those elements which make a living being, it needs blood. Blood fertilizes the soil; it allows seeds to grow into roots. Blood here refers to both that fluid element without which there is no life, and which signifies the flow of life, as well as the blood spilled in the combat for life. Negritude as a tree does not only find its sources of life in the materiality of the earth, but also in the sky, for the tree grows upwards, it seeks its nourishment from the sun as it seeks it from the soil. In this image, negritude finds its force of life in both the past and future. It is thus through the mobilization of these forces of life that negritude is able to both endure the misery of the present and to fight to transform it (67, 69).

Negritude is not a movement towards an original black self, or being, but a battle, and as a battle it would involve acts of reversal and inversion, confrontation with obstacles and breaking through them. It opens other spaces, digging for sources where there is still a potentiality for life.

Césaire’s black is not “a prisoner to a facial angle, to a type of hair, to a well-flattened nose, to a clearly Melanian coloring...” It is rather all that has come together in the making of the black, his past and his present. One just have to peel off that which is on the surface, to find those other layers of the enslaved and colonized black. What Césaire’s rebel seeks here is not the retrieval of an original identity, nor a past that restores the black back to Africa. The Negro that is affirmed and accepted is not an ideal black man, who is imagined for the future and projected on the present, neither is he an ideal from the past to be replicated in the present, for whatever was the black man in the past, he is “more spilled out of himself,” everyday under colonialism, he is base, cowardly, sterile, separated and alienated from himself (77).

The Affirmation of the being of the black is the scream which brings out that which has been buried underneath to the surface; confronting it brings anger, rejection and revolt; this would be the history that Césaire’s rebel sought, one that would give roots to a present that no longer stands on fragile grounds. Negritude in Césaire is thus “measured by the compass of suffering.” But this is not a celebration of victimhood it is rather creating bases for solidarity between those who would need to find another world with another mode of being if they wished to rise from being buried underground. It is not surprising then that negritude was elaborated by “an accumulating tide of rejections or shoving-asides,” which are not part of a process of negations, but a rejection of a certain way of being. With the end of the tide of rejection, negritude is not

established in a positive definition, but instead, the pronoun replacing the term, the action is emphasized on the expense of any designation of the term (Edwards 6).

Negritude was an affirmation, a reclamation and revalorization of black heritage, of Africa. It is an affirmation of a willingness to remain loyal to this heritage and to develop it. It is also an affirmation of solidarity through time and through the world. This solidarity is based on the idea that all blacks, in their differences, and with the differences in their historical conditions, have something in common, what it affirms is “that we are not indifferent to what happens in Congo, not indifferent to what happens in Haiti, and not indifferent to what happens in the United States of America” (Césaire qtd. in Kesteloot, *Césaire* 65). No black soul is to be restored or unified here, “negritude is situated in history, and is conditioned by history” (66).

The negritude family of Césaire’s Rebel is one that shares suffering and fighting. Resistance and rebellion in their visible and invisible forms are the ties that pull together the members of this family. It includes the maroons, rebels imprisoned and killed, the ones who had fallen, who were crushed, assassinated, and diseased. Resistance and slavery make the family of negritude, but they do also share a mother, the mother earth, the mother the sorceress, Africa, not as glorious past, but as a weakened and wounded life, who although limping of its wounds, is still fighting (*Lyric* 67; “And the Dogs”).

Césaire thought of a Negro-African civilization as a family consisting of multiple African cultures. A civilization whose field extends to the Americas and the Caribbean as a result of Colonialism and slavery (“Culture” 128). If colonialism leads to a horizontal solidarity based on the suffering of the present, there is another solidarity based on descent, it is a solidarity “which comes from the fact that out of an initial unity, the unity of African civilization, there has been differentiated a whole series of cultures that all owe something to that civilization (129- 130).

Culture cannot be posed without confronting the present of colonialism (127). As long as the colonized are fighting they are free, and if they are free then their civilization cannot be moved by obscurantist forces, neither can it be based on medieval ways of life and thought. For a culture of a fighting people is a living one, and part of its being alive is that it has the power to go beyond itself.

As Cabral has shown, a free culture is one that “is nourished by the living reality of its environment, and which negates both harmful influences and any kind of subjection to foreign culture.” Cabral is not calling for a denial of history here, nor for an essentialized notion of culture, for he also states that one should not underestimate the “positive accretions from the oppressor and other cultures” (143), a consideration that while rejecting any cultural essentialism, rejects any inferiority complexes of the colonized.

The relation between national culture and other cultures, as described by Mao Tse-tong, is one of assimilation, here it is not the Chinese who is being assimilated, but rather those things in other cultures which are useful. Culture should be assimilated in the same way as food is assimilated, nourishment is the measure, in the sense that nutriment is absorbed and waste matter is discarded. Absorbing what is nutritious involves also that it is no longer foreign to the body, assimilating here means that it is merged, fused with the body that it becomes an organic part of it (“New Democracy” 380). This conception of culture can only exist for a people in a freedom struggle. The struggle enables them to maintain the fertilization of the soil, which is necessary for a healthy strong being able to assimilate rather than being assimilated.

Césaire’s negritude demonstrated “heroic creativity, in order to painfully reprocess new ways of feeling, thinking, and acting” (Depestre 258). It was a poetic force of an illuminated passion (Césaire qtd. in Leiner 55). It showed the assimilated black his assimilated colonized being

by opening a gap from which the scream barking underneath the white layer could be heard (*Lyric* 21; “And the Dogs”), while at the same allowing us to think of that which has been unthinkable, as Audre Lorde had it (*Sister Outsider*). Of the past, or of the present, negritude is the fight for a life for those whose lives have been suspended, mutilated and sickened by colonialism, the battle is not for a position in a universal history, but for life.

Interrupting an Endless Deferment

Césaire’s Rebel acted when he saw that his child will inherit his enslaved being, Kanafani’s Maryam acted when a dead present threatened the potentiality of life in her womb with death. What is most cruel in the present is its killing of a future possibility, a potentiality of life that has not grown yet. While losing something of the past is a source of sadness, one can always feel that part of that which was in the past is there in the present and could be there in the future. This is not the case with the future, for to kill its seed, its beginning in the present, is to kill that which could be. It is to be confronted with a present that generates death instead of life.

It is for the future that the colonized fight, but they fight for it from the present, facing that which is there, they cannot let themselves be blinded by a promised paradise in the future. When the Hero in “al-Bab” (*CW* III) declares that his paradise will be planted on earth, what is revolutionary here is its rejection of deferment. Man is not a God, man does not control time, but man does make history, even if he does not choose the circumstances under which it is made, and even if it is not as he dreamt it (Marx, *The Eighteenth*). Transformative events do not just erupt, they start as dreams, but become actual in the womb of the present, for it is in and from the present that they are born into existence (Kanafani, *CW* I: 473; “The Blind and Deaf”). Men cannot wait for a superior entity, time or history, or a god (the State in modernity), to take on their struggle.

In “The Blind and the Deaf,” the *Wali* should have been a protection against the aggressions of time; but such a protection moves existence outside of time, it renders it isolated on its shores. In Kanafani’s story, in a naked being without the protection of the *wali*, one is forced to get into the battle of time, slamming against the unknown (546).

The Colonized rebel is neither a fanatic, following an unrealizable dream, neither is he a realist who submits to the dictates of that which is present. Césaire’s Lumumba rejects any rationality that would dictate a submission to what is present. Instead, uncensoring his senses, he is moved by the force of potentialities of life that are there in the present, things that are “like a traveling brushfire, like the pollen moving from wind to wind, like the root in a blind compost” (*Season* 144). The tangible effects of these forces cannot be seen in the present; their effects would become visible in the future, but they are of the present.

Lumumba’s vision has the materiality of roots that come from another mode of being, that of Africa, his vision acquires the materiality of the seed that is derived from a concrete struggle (144). Lumumba did not only defy the deferment of the future and thus the return of the Same to itself, but also the doublings that such a promised return established. In the being of the fighter, the distinction between the idea and the concrete, the spiritual and the material is abolished. Lumumba was both seed and root, he embodied life, and was killed by that which kills life in a present of death.

Neither Césaire nor Kanafani believed in miracles, they did not believe that it takes one fighter and one battle to transform the present. But they believed in the necessity of the battle. Overlooking the present through “a passive glorification of the future” (Marx, *The Eighteenth* 21) is a demonstration of the incompetence of those who want to appear as heroes without going through the fight, without taking the risk that would qualify them for heroism. Nothing in the

present can be changed when one is not willing to take a risk, to work within the limits of the present, even when it is done in the name of the future, is to only reproduce the present in the future, Lumumba took the risk, his death could be a reversal, but also a seed, that could rise to the surface of another present, it could become a root from which another present emerges.

It is of the nature of the bourgeoisie to call that which seeks to change the present “Utopian nonsense,” but it was this “Utopian nonsense” that led to the June Insurrection (Marx, *The Eighteenth* 19). That the Paris proletariat did not have sufficient power to turn time into their time, a time in which their demands would be transformed from utopian nonsense to facts, is not an indicator of the futility of confronting and protesting that which is present. One cannot rationalize defeat and impotency by a “not yet” dictated by a historical metanarrative. For the measure of life as the measure of freedom is to act in freedom and to fight for life when it is being deadened.

Marx shows that for the proletariat to confine their demands to their “limited conditions of existence,” necessarily means suffering “shipwreck,” to bow your head to circumstances, is to be subject to the will of another entity. It was not a coincidence that the proletariat were unable “either to rediscover revolutionary greatness in itself or to gain renewed energy from recently formed alliance” (19). Such a limited perception of what one can realize leads to a prostration of forces that might have had the potential of transforming that which is there. Nevertheless, those who carried the June insurrection were not defeated, for they succumbed “with the honours of the great.” What they did left a trace of greatness, rather than the pettiness of a life that is incapable of fighting for itself. It was in allowing themselves to be of service to the latter, the bourgeoisie, that the battle of the proletariat was transformed from a battle against that which is, into one that sustains it; realizing the “fondest hopes,” of an entity that oppresses it (24). For Marx the gain of the bourgeoisie here was one of knowledge (in the regulating and self-reproducing sense that we saw in Kosellek and Foucault above) rather than of life.

Bourgeois revolutions according to Marx are short-lived, they are carried out in ecstasy, and thus are followed by “long crapulent depression.” The problem, according to Marx, lies in the lack of sobriety in such revolutions which means that society is unable to assimilate their effects, which never become deeply rooted (14). Just as everything else in bourgeois society, what is achieved is the reproduction of its mode of production, even when it produces something new, it is quickly inserted within the circularity and the repetition that are the main constituent elements of a bourgeois mode of being.

A proletariat revolution should follow a path that is made of interruptions, revisions, constant dismantling and remaking that would ultimately create a situation “which makes all turning back impossible” (14). For at one point in such a movement it would no longer be possible for the bourgeois to disguise its cowardliness with other people’s and other times’ heroism, neither would it be able to preserve its mode of being.

Pushed down beneath the present of the bourgeoisie, made to be its other and past, the colonized cannot claim a place in this present. Their repeated and continuous attempts to rise to the surface of that which is present are doomed to failure, for the present maintains itself by pushing them beneath and behind. To be able to rise to the surface the colonized will have to bring down the present that they are carrying on their shoulders. This is not a deterministic position. In his plays, Césaire shows that the colonized seeking to follow in the footsteps of the colonizer, will only reproduce the oppression of which they were to liberate themselves, an oppression that is still directed against the colonized since it is through their deadened lives that the present of capitalism has been sustaining itself.

In the *Tragedy of King Christophe*, the revolutionary leader cannot wait for time to change, he refuses to defer the future, but what he misses is that he needed to combat the present for the future to come, for it is the present that stands between him and his sought future. Overlooking the present, the future in the case of Christophe is defined as that which should compensate for what was lost in the past (25). The past was not here a source of hope, or a horizon for another life, but one seen from and dictated by the present, and thus the future it could lead to is only the present. Christophe removed one layer of the present of colonialism, but left the rest intact, for he could not see beyond that which is present. The price was the oppression of his people that was reproduced in the form of a post-colonial or neo-colonial state.

Christophe was not only sacrificing the living for the artificial, he was sacrificing the present and with it the future for an image that is made to be the future (41, 42). Christophe stands for that cruelty that justifies itself with the cruelty of the past and the present, a cruelty of a being that lacks faith in life and could only see its own future in the present of those who dominate and colonize its present, past, and future (42). Christophe's envisioned future is defined by what is present in the world of Europe, he wanted to skip time, but on the expense of life, he opted for a ready-made tree, an invented one, instead of planting one and allowing it to develop its own life.

The *Tragedy of King Christophe* lies not in his rejection of the developmentalist narrative of the not yet. The Colonized cannot believe in successions, for it entails becoming slave to the power of history, to lead a passive life in which oppression is accepted passively, and it is to remain imprisoned in a deadened life. To posit history as a power beyond man's control, "To take everything objectively, to be angry at nothing, to love nothing, to understand everything —makes one gentle and pliable" (Nietzsche, *The Use* 71-73). The Problem in Christophe's case was that he was unable to see beyond the present.

The historical narrative in which history starts with that of Europe, and thus that of the colonized with colonialism needs to be rejected. It is to maintain that people, uncolonized, live outside history, and colonized, they live and could only always be in the past of Europe (Cabral 124). For Cabral the colonized cannot "return to history" but through "the destruction of the imperialist domination to which they were subjected" (130).

Cabral here challenges, although in a soviet language, the modernized project to incorporate the colonized into the present of capitalism, which was mainly the Soviets' mission. The struggles of the colonized are divided into phases and what is to be achieved in each is defined. Liberation is defined as one that seeks political emancipation, to "upgrade" the colonized to the present of capitalism. The mission of the colonized becomes then to further develop capitalism, to create the necessary conditions for that which is endlessly deferred, the Revolution; "The dialectics of history are such that small nations, powerless as an *independent* factor in the struggle against imperialism, play a part as one of the ferments, one of the bacilli, which help the *real* anti-imperialist force, the socialist proletariat, to make its appearance on the scene" (Lenin 162).

Nevertheless, Mao has maintained that a Third World country cannot be established as a capitalist society, for the world division of labor would not allow it. Capitalism in a colonized country is already developed by the colonizer, who is also the bourgeoisie that politically as well as economically dominates the colonized. Imperialism as the last stage of capitalism, survives by reliance on the colonies. Economic and political crisis of the colonizing capitalist country, its approaching death necessitate its invasion of Third World countries, robbing them of their future potentialities, (in Mao these are of capitalist development) to maintain the survival of its capitalist present ("New Democracy" 354-355).

The logical conclusion then would be that there can be no socialism without fighting imperialism and feudalism. But one, in Mao's rationalization, cannot be utopian, evading the confrontation of that which is actual and present. Nevertheless, Mao's confrontation was unable to reach the limit where it is the present itself that is challenged, but he rather sought for the colonized a position that takes them a step further towards that present. Mao thus takes us back to the narrative of stages, to history as power over man, with the future deferred to an unforeseen time (358).

While rejecting the status of the past of Europe, Mao's "New Democracy" does not reject the foundations of European History (341-342). It thus treats its own present as the different within the same, the semi-same, while stressing that it joins and becomes part of what is present and its envisioned future (344-345). Mao proposes a third form of state that is neither that of the industrial capitalist countries nor that of the Soviet Union. This third state though is to be inserted within the "world historical process" as a phase in between these two (350), maintaining the "not yet" status of the Third World and putting it back into a past position, but a new one.

Mao's "not yet" is not a confrontational affirmative "not yet," that would not escape the present to the future, but rather a "not yet" that functions as a justification for the continuation of the present of capitalism, with the promise of putting an end to it, when it is no longer 'not yet.'

Mao's formulation does not break with the Leninist narrative of the "Political Revolution," in which the particular and concrete revolts of different peoples are to provide "wide scope and depth to the general movement." In the Leninist narrative, these revolts are individual, sporadic, and thus unsuccessful, but they give "the masses" the needed experience, knowledge, and strength not to fight for themselves but to "get to know their real leaders, the socialist proletarians, and in this way prepare for the general onslaught..." (162).

The Class solidarity envisioned by Lenin as the main force that will lead to the revolution, requires detached workers, ones who belong nowhere and who are attached to no one. In the Leninist language, anything that would weaken the international solidarity of the workers is termed as bourgeois nationalism. Lenin was calling for the workers of the first world to support "the right to self-determination or to secession" of the colonized people (74). Nevertheless, the colonized, leading a less abstracted mechanized life, failed to speak in an abstract universalized language; their focus on the particular and the concrete in their lives, their struggles that aim at deriving life from deep rootedness are always conceived, from a progressivist point of view, as the outcome of their inclination towards bourgeois nationalism, fascism and/or fundamentalism. The colonized thus never depart from their status of the Other, the past of Europe. That which needs to be destroyed to allow the Same to reach its own limits.

Marx himself has shown that the socialist revolution cannot come in a being of attachment, but rather of abstraction and universalization which subsumes all that which is concrete, particular and different. But the socialist/ bourgeois narrative cannot function without its Other. The present of abstraction and universalization does not allow for "a revolutionary passion," this has to be acquired, or to use a more Marxist term, appropriated, as everything else in capitalist societies from those who are "not yet" capitalists. Just as capitalism could not have been without colonialism, socialism could not be without the revolutions of the colonized ("Confidential"). As I have shown in Chapter Two, in the colonized country, the struggle is not a detached one, it remains tied to the land, it never acquires the abstract and universalized character of the being and way of doing of the colonialist country. That the Irish people "are more revolutionary and more embittered," is something that comes from a mode of being that is non capitalist, their "social

revolution” would be as Marx calls it “outmoded,” but it is only so from a perspective in which history follows a linear path and in which the colonized are the past of Europe.

Overwhelmed by the circularity of capital and its endless capacity to reproduce itself, Marx declares capitalism as the destiny of all nations; the less developed are to see the image of their future in the more developed (*Capital* 91). The only way out of that which is Same thus becomes to reach its limits, the excess, a state of destruction and chaos. It is then that a reversal of history is possible, and man is restored to his original being, that of communism. But this entails first the destruction of the different and other, which is seen as functioning as a buffer that absorbs the contradictions created by capitalism and thus delays the promised Revolution: the colonized.

Kanafani and Césaire refuse Marx’s historical prophecy, to tell the future is to promote a being of impotency, writes Kosellek. For Kanafani and Césaire, utopian or not, it is life and its force that brings a future. The force of life is mobilized only through movement. Césaire’s horse competing with time is the wild movement of that which is to be tamed (*CP*; “Horse”). For both writers, the only freedom possible is persistence in struggling against the present even when all ways out of it are blocked, even when the effects of the struggle are of death and blood. For the movement itself would create a break into that which is stagnant, it allows for anger, it brings life to that which is deadened. Césaire’s horse could never reach a future that is defined by the World of Europe; the colonized could only reach the extreme limits of such a world; but it is the new life carried in this movement that will be able to go beyond these limits, bring in another life, putting an end to one that feeds on life (209).

The Future cannot come but through a confrontation with the present. Patching and repairing do not alter the present, they maintain it. To be progressive, to be revolutionary is to destroy that which is stagnant and dead. It could be the defeat of the past that lead to the stagnation of the present, but the past cannot work as a justification for impotency. To justify the present by the past is to be a reactionary movement, this is Zionism for Kanafani, while to be a historically progressive movement, is to confront that which is there, and reactionary, to bring in something else which is not a repetition of that which was or is (qtd. in Hammud 16).

Walter Benjamin criticizes historical progress as “progression through a homogenous, empty time” (*Illuminations* 261), a time in which progress only refers to man’s technological advances that allow him mastery over nature. What is upsetting, for Benjamin, is that the working class becomes invested in the development of capitalism as progress, that it becomes unable to question man’s need to master nature, or even the subjugation that such a mastery brings over humans as beings of that nature. The problem with the proletariat as with those defending Western modernism is that they lacked another place from which they could see their present and its values (258-259). Progress in Benjamin’s description appears to be blocking all other horizons. Just as its predecessors, promising redemption, it allows for that which dominates the present to both sustain itself, and put both the future and the past in its service (254). For Benjamin, as long as mankind is not yet redeemed, then it would not be able to cite its past in all its moments. Every moment of the past is cited as a validation of the order of the day, and its reproduction in the future. Given the role of redeemers of future generations, focused on a future that is promised by a present that is left intact, the working class forgets “both its hatred and its spirit of sacrifice” (260).

In his weak and wretched condition, the colonized finds in the dream of a better future the source and the force of obstinacy that comes with such a dream, he finds a moving force which allows him to imagine it and struggle for it (Césaire, *CP* 71; “Notebook”). But just as flying into another world in the past is a detour, this obsession with the future on the expense of the present is another denial, an overlooking of what is there. In the case of the colonized, however, the future

is not allowed to become a distraction from past and present suffering, the thought of the future is constantly blocked by the struggles of the present and the sufferings of the past (*Lyric* 35; “And the Dogs”).

In *Season in the Congo*, the fighting leader does not promise a well-defined future. But neither would he wait to see what comes “gently and softly,” what he wants is a confrontation (Césaire 144). For history is made in and through struggles. It is the future that becomes the source of discomfort to the present, not by promising it, but by stressing the lack of any assurance about it; Lumumba confronts the past with the future, instead of promising an End that would be inevitably reached. Confronting the past with the future reminds us that history does not move in a linear line, it involves inversions, reversals, victories and defeats, ascensions and descents, as it involves reiterations. What is stressed here is the plurality of battles, one battle and one victory may give the colonized a historical monument, but it takes more than one fight and more than one planted seed for the roots of another life to grow.

Arnold reads the lack of a realized future in Césaire’s poetry as a rejection on the poet’s side of political revolution in favor of poetry (279). Césaire, as I have been arguing, did reject political Revolution and its endlessly deferred promises. Against the return of the same, Césaire posits life and its ability to generate itself. There is no escape or denial in Césaire’s poetry, nothing to be concealed, defeat is affirmed as defeat, for it is only through this affirmation that the end of one battle leads to another; it is in “the glance of disorder,” that that which is present is absorbed and assimilated to produce another life. The act of rebellion is the breakthrough of the cycle in which slavery is the past, the present, and the future (*Lyric* 39; “And the Dogs”). It is thus for the future that one has to confront that which is there, to wait for a better future that is promised without questioning the present would only defer the future endlessly; instead of the narrative of the Revolution, there is the belief that “the map of spring is always to be drawn again” (*CP* 67; “Notebook”).

Memory, A World Beyond

Kanafani has written that the only way out of a being that defers endlessly its end, and thus becomes trapped in a futile cyclical life is to start from death. Since all is to die, the only measure of life is life itself, its happenings, struggles and passions, experiences, memories and dreams. Starting from the end is not a reversal, but a neutralization of that which confines the life of man within a pre-determined path, it is a de-regulation of life, a liberation of life from the uniformity that is necessitated by an end that is to be fulfilled. To move from the end, the unknitting of the threads of a life does not lead to a state of purity but it liberates that which is particular, concrete and different. To start from the end, from death, is to start from that point in which time appears to have stood still. It is to open the door for the flood of memory, to stand in confrontation with a life that has been.

The Time lived in Césaire is one of baseness, alienation, cowardliness, shallowness and sterility (*CP* 77; “Notebook”). The present here robs the colonized of history, the black of the present is without a name, the only history that the black of the present knows is that of theft (*A Tempest* 20).

It is the act of rebellion for Césaire that brings back life to the past as it does to the present, in the sense that it liberates the past from being reified by the present. The past becomes a source of life and hope, when the place from which we look at it in the present is one of resistance instead of one of submission. The act of rebellion is a mobilization of that which is of life, “an anger, a desire, a sadness, an impatience, finally a scorn, a violence...” (*Lyric* 49; “And the Dogs”).

In Kanafani's "All That's Left to You," a past as one of nostalgia is a reflection of helplessness that is to be shed off, as is a present of bitterness and disappointment. What remains is Hamid's movement on the land, which never becomes past, for it is the body enveloped in a time rooted in his deepest parts, one that becomes accessible through his steps which dig deep in the heart of the land (al-Said 257).

Hamid's search for his lost mother was a movement that he started when he was confronted with another loss and another defeat in the present. Nevertheless, Hamid's movement in the desert was conscious of the misery of the present which he sought to erase by restoring that which was lost in the past. A movement in the wrong direction? Could be, but it was in this movement that he was forced to confront that which is present.

Our consciousness functioning to protect us from that which threatens us with pain, blocks the event, the true details of how it happened in the past (Benjamin, *Illuminations*). Even, in Kanafani, our ability to identify it. What it cannot block though, for it stays out of its realm of operation, is the return of the effects; haunted by the effects of a past misery from which we are still escaping, we find ourselves feeling again that we are in that position where we have to choose between dying and escaping (Kanafani, *CW II*: 45; "The Owl").

It was at midnight, in a dim light, that an image was haunting him, it was ugly and sharp, an owl with an angry expression, in its the gaze there was a mixture of desperate fear and heroic excitement, that of someone who suddenly found himself having to choose between dying or escaping. It was a reminder of a past encounter (44).

The owl was the witness and the memory of heroism and death. What remains of a painful past event is turned into an invisible burden that weighs on us in isolation as long as it is not confronted. Benjamin's angel of history would want to turn back to that moment, "awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed." But one cannot return to the past, for nothing that has been dead could be awakened; at the same time, turning one's back to the past and facing the future, is not liberation from the burdens of the past, but rather having it with its misery and suffering pile up to reach the sky, that is pile up both in the present and the future (*Illuminations* 257- 258).

Facing the past in this case, would be to bring back that feeling of being confronted with danger, where it becomes a matter of defending life itself that we need to act. In this sense, memory of a cruel past allows for the confrontation and struggle against a miserable present. Remembrance here is an act of externalization, a shedding off, we remember to rid ourselves of that which chains us, we remember so we can do away with that which is sickening us. The Memory of the colonized does not bring a glorious past, the images it brings are those of defeat and humiliation. The image that comes with memory is of a life surrounded with mud; a present of mud remembers a past of mud and foresees a future of mud. Memory becomes a place from which the traces of the wounds of the past on the bodies of the colonized are visible, their being is a chained being, a fragmented unformed being, a non-being (Césaire, *CP* 75; "Notebook").

What we remember of the past, is that which we re-encounter in the present, it does not come back to us "the way it was." It comes in a rousing of a sensation or a feeling, evoked by an object or a fragment of the past, it comes in a flash of memory. If we have repressed it in the past for the threat it posed on our "psychic order," rising to the surface, it has already created enough chaos around it that we would have to do much more to end its presence, we either confront it and memory thus becomes a way of doing away with that which is "harmful," rather than just merely hiding it from sight, or we could try hiding it again, but this time the effort would be greater and the achievement of the escape much more limited and thus much more sickening, for when it rose

to the surface it has already torn and broken through much of the walls inside us in which it has been imprisoned.

It is for this reason that Césaire's Rebel could not see a future but by descending to that which has been piling up from past. As long as that which is piled up from the past is not confronted and shed off, we will always be threatened to collapse at any moment. When in the present, "everything fades, everything crumbles," all that remains are "recollected skies" (62). Recollection here creates an opening for that which is of the past but also of the present, what is recollected here is slavery (14-15). The opening for the past becomes an opening for life in the present and the future. This is not defining the future by the past, for the rebel did not want a future of slavery, but a future liberated from the slavery of the past, which could not be achieved but by facing the past, instead of becoming blinded by what Benjamin has called the storm of progress (*Illuminations*). For Césaire, hesitation between and confusion of the past and the future is necessary, for "the shortest route to the future is always one that involves the deepened understanding of the past" ("Culture" 130).

Memory is not a narration of the past, the past is confused with the present and the future. A war and a defeat take us back from the time of confrontation, to the time of the Nakba (Hammud 59). The fight for the future can only take place in the present, facing that which inhibits any movement even if it came from the past. It is this fight that acts as a fertilizer of the soil, providing that which is present but weak, with the nurturing necessary for it to move into the future; the process is one of cutting and breaking through the present.

Confronting the past for Kanafani and Césaire is to turn it from an inhibition of life, into a heritage and a seed that grows in the present and gives its fruits in the future. The search for the past sheds light on the present, and creates possibilities for the future; it is an illumination.

Nevertheless, the more defeated the present, the more painful the event of the past, the crueler the coming back of memory. For the one for whom the possibility for a new life in the future has been deadened, the force of memory is blinding and burning. It is destructive, for to allow for another life, it would have to kill that which is dead while living. The memory of the wound that has emasculated him was too bright for Abu al Khaizuran that he no longer could see, he only could feel the same pain in the place of the wound (Kanafani, *CWI*; "Men in the Sun"). For that which happened in the past and threatens to destroy the life that was preserved despite the destructive event, cannot be known on the level of consciousness, as Benjamin has shown, consciousness does not receive memory traces for its function is that of a "protective shield" that blocks destructive effects that come from the external world, these will have to be known somewhere else in the body (*Illuminations* 160-161).

The Past that leaves its traces and wounds on our bodies, becomes something that inhabits us as we inhabit it, it is our dark place, our source of strength, the endless spring for our ability to fight for life. Or blocked and repressed, it becomes that which inhibits life (Lorde, *Sister Outsider*). For Abu al- Khaizuran memory could not change anything in his present, it is blocked by a sense of the futility of life which is imprinted on his body. Accepting the life of a half-man as better than death, he is already dead that no life can be brought out of him with memory (Kanafani, *CWI* 109; "Men in the Sun"). When the present is one of a mutilated colonized being, memory cannot bring a life that is not there; what it does is shed light on the present, it does not erase it, but shows its darkness (Césaire, *CP* 365; "Ethiopia").

It is not the past that leads to the absence of the present. It is the absence of the present that leads to the absence of the past. To remember an event, is to remember that things exist and end, while that which has no present cannot confront this fact of life and thus cannot have memories,

instead it says: “it never happened, never for a first time,” what it does is get trapped in an infinite repetition of the same. “It is without end, without beginning. It is without a future” (Blanchot, *The Space* 30).

Memory does not repeat the event, but it stops it from turning it into a source of imprisonment through denial. In this sense, memory is a witness to the active force of the present, a space of freedom. In “Mid-May” (Kanafani, *CW II*: 69-79), the failures of the past and the shame that accompanies failure, denied, are turned into sources of guilt, that perpetuate in the present not the past but failure. Memory keeps the failure and the shame associated with it from becoming an internalized guilt of an unpaid debt and unfulfilled promise. Césaire and Kanafani, as I have shown in the first chapter, mean to inflict pain, for it is that which never ceases to hurt that stays in memory, it is in terror and pain, in conditions of solemnity that the past is remembered (Nietzsche, *Genealogy* 61). As cruel as remembering in such a case would be, it is necessary if one is not to be trapped in a sick being of defeat. Remembering the cruelty of a past event, the suffering of the past, becomes a necessary force for fighting to liberate the present from a condition of defeat and a denied suffering. The weak search for what was lost in the past, for life, in tombs, but those in whom the power of life is strong turn the wound of the past into a source of force that combats a defeated present (Kanafani, *CW II*: 57- 68; “Something that does not go Away”).

Memory here works as a counter knowledge, it brings images from the past and the present of that which should be forgotten for an institutionalized colonial being to be reproduced. Memory is mobilized through acting in rebellion, what it does then is become another driving force that feeds into that rebellion, for it supplies those knowledges which should not be known, a consciousness that is other than that of the subject, an “unbaptized unrescripted” one. It is not “falsified” substitutional consciousness of glory to make up for the baseness of the present, but rather one that stems from but in rebellion against this baseness, for it is the act of rebellion that can find glory in the mud (Césaire, *CP* 129; “Investiture”). Remembering here is a violent act, it is to commit murder (173; “Mississippi”).

The memory of the past becomes a source of strength and courage, a horizon not to be reached, but it shows the other and different, reminding us that there has been and could be another world. The memory of “fighters against history,” allows for the possibility of fighting “the blind power of the actual,” of not being overcome by the “thus it is.” This is not a blindness to what is present and actual, for a “must have been” or “must be;” but rather a joyful and proud confrontation of the actual and the present for another, it is not suicide, but an opening of a path for a new life (Nietzsche, *The Use* 74-75).

Nietzsche has shown that those who died as fighters for a cause, those who risked their lives in fighting, succeed “in projecting an image around themselves and into the future.” The projected image is not one to be imitated, for imitation will create, as we saw with both Marx and Nietzsche, a caricature of what was, or as Jean Genet had it, a monster. The projected image of those who died is exemplary “as a starting point for actions which, though they’ll be thought to be through and for it, will in fact be against it.” For the thing of the past that has a resonance for us is that which relates to the present, which can be sympathized with and assimilated in the present (302).

In “al-Asheq” (Kanafani, *CW I*), the fighter is a figure of both the past and the present. Kanafani does not give us a definite historical moment, written after another defeat and another loss, it is read as being of a past moment. The presence of the absent hero in memory, is an evocation of a bright moment of the past, that does not stand only in opposition to the present, does not merely condemn it, but it offers an alternative to it, one that does not come from nowhere, but

from roots that find their extensions in the history of the people, their consciousness, and memory (Wadi 65).

Memory “creates the chain of tradition which passes a happening on from generation to generation.” It is a web that is made with many stories woven together (Benjamin, *Illuminations* 98). The Memory that we see in both Kanafani and Césaire is not one that establishes a singular monumental entity; but rather the short-lived reminiscences that tell of diffuse occurrences. “Al-‘Asheq,” read by Ilyas Khuri as a “popular epic,” weaves itself around a popular hero who has many names, and who moves in a circle that brings together the diverse memories of the people uniting them in the time of hero. It thus, in Khuri’s reading, creates a mythical time that renders the normal time irrelevant. The novel, as Khuri sees it, is an inquest of a collective memory, and a longing for a future that emerges from the horizons of memory. Nevertheless, the “popular epic,” unfinished, remains in the form of fragments, pieces in a weaving that has not been completed, on the level of the text as on the level of history. Its writer martyred before finishing it, makes the question of how it continues the ever recurring question whenever it is read.

It would be revolutionary to “awaken the dead,” when it serves “the purpose of glorifying the new struggles, not of parodying the old; of magnifying the given task in the imagination, not of fleeing from its solution in reality; of finding the spirit of revolution once more, not of making its ghost walk about again” (Marx, *The Eighteenth* 11).

This may be the case in Kanafani’s “Of Men and Guns,” although his heroes can never be established as mythical glorious figures, for they were all peasants, carrying inadequate weapons lacking in power, and never achieving victory, their only power as well as their only achievement is their courage. Their heroic deeds are the sources of the strength for the fighter in the present and the future (Hammud 56).

Kanafani’s “The Bride,” the last in the collection of “A World not for Us” (CW II: 589-606), tells of a man who have not died, who fought but also missed many fights; neither winning nor martyred, the man, as is Palestine, is the wound from the past that remains open in the present.

The old fighter from the past has an obscure force, that uproots one from the rational but defeated present and sets him in what appears as an irrational search for that which is lost (593-594). But this power is conditioned by its resonances in the present. It is the power that the image of an old fighter has over those who are no longer able to be fighters, but unreconciled to their present (591). The story of the fighter who missed his battle because he waited for his gun, the story of time becoming an enemy and an ally, is the story of the present as it is the story of the past. And it is this which gives it its power.

The Past in this story does not come back as it was; other things of the past were lost: the courage of those who fought for the village, won it back and lost it repeatedly until none of them was left, the bride who was sold for the gun, and the father who sold her. It was only the story of an unaccepted defeat that resonated in the present, uncovering a wound that did not heal.

The past in Kanafani’s stories is not a ghost that overweighs on the shoulders of the living. It is that which still has its material existence in the present; it is the materiality of a force that vibrates and resonates, it may not be grasped, but it stirs and moves. In the case of the fighter, the brave man, the wound does not become a permanent weakness leading to a sickly dying life, the wound open and visible becomes the source of strength for another battle, instead of a guilt that chains us, it allows for an anger that is a positive revolutionary force. The new day comes from the flames and blood of the dying past (Walker 188).

That of the past that comes back in the present is that which is not dead, it is the key hanging on the wall of a room in a refugee camp. The key here is an object that opens into a part of ourselves

which is of another life and another way of being. It is not an origin neither does it refer to an origin, but it brings with it the wind of the village from where the holder of the key was uprooted. The key connects home and land (*CW II*: 730, 731; “The Child Discovers the Key”). Separated from the home it was made to open, and the land that used to be plowed with the ax that it resembled, the key becomes just a key hanging on the wall; it no longer refers to another life from which its owner is now detached. Nevertheless, if the narrator in his naturalized present could not recognize another life in the key. It was the child who, seeing the key moving, saw in it the ax that plows a land.

In Kanafani’s story, the key is not a symbol of the homeland, neither is it a symbol of something lost and cannot be retrieved. But it is that object which carries within a life, one that has been buried but not dead, even if it appears to be so. It becomes that which Toni Morrison has called the site of memory (“Site”). That the key reminds the little one of the ax, means that even in the present of the refugee camp, the life of the village is still there somewhere inside, ready to flow back to the surface whenever it is invoked. The home, as Trinh Minh-ha has written, takes root in the body, it could be seen in the light of sky, smelled, tasted in the water, or heard in the silence or the native language (*Elsewhere* 12). In Kanafani’s story, a dead present can no longer recognize the life that inhabits the key, but the future, the potentiality of another life can. It is the force of life within us that determines whether the reverberations of the past take roots inside us or die away.

Objects that invoke a past life, could not become substitutes that allow for a dead life in the present, the picture of the martyr on the wall cannot be uprooted from its place and rooted somewhere else. It leaves a gap in the place from which it has been uprooted but fills nothing to where it has been transplanted (Kanafani, *CW I*; “Return to Haifa”). The past cannot make up for the present. It can only be a reminder of what one can do now. To seek the past in dead objects, while escaping any confrontation in the present, is to extend the emptiness of the present to the past.

The obsession with that which was lost in the past reflects the emptiness and fragility of the present, which could collapse if it were not for a few mythified objects of the past (Munif 78). Memories invoke the homeland, but the homeland is more than a memory, it is more than the past and its objects (78-79). The homeland is a continuous relation, an attachment that one could not sever, this implies that it is not only an inheritance; but a part of one’s life, inseparable from one’s blood and sweat, a continuous unceasing relation just as that between one and his life (80). The homeland in this sense, is something worth risking one’s life for (Wadi 61).

To Submit to the dominance of another culture that confines him to the margins, the colonized becomes a defeated and a weakened being. The native soil becomes thus liberating to the extent that it provides one with another mode of being in which he is not marginalized. In the case of the uprooted black, return to a physical native soil could be impossible (Kane 150); but in Cheikh Hamidou Kane’s story, what endures from the past is “nothing corporeal,” but the love of “Old Rella,” the word of the teacher which is printed with fire inside his disciples (63).

Time threatens with detachment; it separates the Palestinian from his land. Memory here works against illusion and not with it, for in illusions the Palestinian moves further from his land, a movement that leads to betrayal, impotency and death. Remembrance is a rejection of any situation of concealment or denial (Sweidan 65). In Kanafani’s “Men in the Sun,” the evocation of memory indicts a present of denial while allowing for a future that is not a continuation of this present (Layoun 191).

Memory is reimagination, says Gaston Bachelard, we cannot remember things without the light of imagination, the values we give to them are given to them from the present (175). The Fedayeen according to Genet were seeking that which is out of reach and which may never have existed. What they have of Palestine are distorted vestiges from old people's memories. Memory could make things appear smaller than they are but it also lights them up and makes them larger than life (125). For the rationalist and the realist, the Palestinian fighting for the past and that which is absent is "quixotic, fragile, brave, heroic, romantic, serious, wily, smart" (236), it could not be conceived otherwise in a rationalized life under capitalism.

Nevertheless, it was the failure of memory that decides the fate of the four men in Kanafani's text (Layoun 190). Abu Qais, the oldest of the three men (*CW I* "Men in the Sun"), blocked his memory, and opened the space of a dream that is a detour, just as the truck that carried him and the others to their death. It was only when his head was touching the earth that his memory was at work, but already weakened by the present of defeat and escape it functioned as a substitution for that which is lost.

The Failure of the three men is the failure of memory to set another horizon for the present, to unearth that which is denied and concealed (Layoun 204). In the movement between the past and the present of denial, the present of denial won, but it is this winning that meant the death of the three men.

In "Return to Haifa" (*CW I*), Said and Safia were in the place, they recognized it, it was part of their flesh and bones. Being in the place from which they were uprooted, memory heaped over them, and the past erupted like a volcano (344). But as the past and the present for the colonized merge and become confused, the same confusion takes place in the familiarity of the place, they know the place, but they felt it did not recognize them. For Kanafani memory tells of that which was lost, but it cannot retrieve it, it tells of a defeat in a battle, it also tells of the necessity of another battle.

Memory creates a horizon for another world, it does not promise as much as it disturbs and shakes a stagnant defeated present. Images from the past function as a bridge, but they are bridges that tell of gaps and losses, they tell of a familiarity in an unfamiliar present, they create a community in a condition of isolation and besiegement, they are reminders of and openings on another life. The image of the martyr for those uprooted but on their own land, is the reminder of those who are no longer there. But it can only be retrieved by those who left, and given up by those who stayed in a place, which is no longer the place, when the land from which they were uprooted is fought for and won in a battle, when there is no longer a need for a bridge to the place in which they live.

A "Different Horizon"

A living thing can only be healthy, strong and productive within a certain horizon, according to Nietzsche, this horizon though needs be drawn by each man or nation around themselves by themselves, losing one's "own view in another's," leads to "an untimely end" (Nietzsche, *The Use* 9-10).

The colonizer's is not the horizon for the colonized in Kanafani and Césaire. In "The Time of Freedom" (*CP*), Césaire rejects the marginal position of Africa in history. Africa rising, no longer asleep, it does not need History to tell its story, it will rather tell its own story. What appeared to be calm, asleep and passive, was piling up "the knotted black fire," it is through its anger and revolt that it tears through the darkness of its hide. Africa will not insert itself in the history of Europe following in the footsteps of the latter, Africa fights with its bare fists, its source

of knowledge lies in its “ancient wisdom” and in “its quite new reason.” Its history would not be part of that “of the perishable bankers” (321).

Césaire, while rejecting the attempt to define a uniquely African world-view, honors an ante-European past, and looks to a post-European future (Parry 46). He defends the “old Negro civilizations,” for “they were courteous civilizations” (*Discourse* 51). But this does not mean that he sought their return; For him, there could be no return of any kind.

For Césaire, Europe is responsible through its industrial capitalism for “the great historical tragedy of Africa.” In its relation of enslavement and colonization to Africa, it is the one responsible “for the highest heap of corpses in history” (45). Césaire’s stance here is not very far from that of Marx. In his discussion of primitive accumulation, Marx attacks the one-sidedness of bourgeois historians for whom the movement towards capitalism is “emancipation from serfdom and from the fetters of the guilds.” What is not said in this history, is that men were freed to sell themselves in the labour market, left with no other means of subsistence. The history of freedom in capitalist societies is thus a history of “expropriation... written in the annals of mankind in letters of blood and fire.” The blood and fire here does not refer to warrior men fighting for their freedom, it rather refers to the extinction of “the knights of the sword” and their replacement with those who could rise only by base means (*Capital* 875; Ch.26).

Primitive accumulation thus is the history of war and colonization in which the colonized are the ones on whose shoulders skyscrapers are built, as Césaire had it (*CP*; “Notebook”). “The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the indigenous population of that continent, the beginnings of the conquest and plunder of India, and the conversion of Africa into a preserve for the commercial hunting of blackskins, are all things which characterize the dawn of the era of capitalist production” (Marx, *Capital* 915; Ch.31).

And since this is what the bourgeois does not want to include in his history, the history of the colonized is absented, they have to become a people without history; the chronological time of the colonized is suspended, its history is made synchronological, a synchronization that is rooted in European colonial domination over the colonized (Foucault, *Order* 377).

Nevertheless, from the perspective of those colonized, the present of the capitalist world moves “on the luminous surface of ... [a] round disc.” It denies the abyss, in which those enslaved, colonized and exploited by it exist as shadows who are denied as well. It is in this sense, that any future in which those denied are no longer denied, entails the end of the world of Europe, a world that is inadequate and not good enough for those who cannot settle for the being of the shadow (Kane 80).

It is not a coincidence that Césaire’s focus in his poetry is on that which is not written in bourgeois history, it is a rejection to bypass that part in which the colonized became colonized. A mythical Africa and a European future are blocked by the movement of Césaire’s rebels, which persists in its confrontation with that which is denied. It is for this reason that the speaker of the “Notebook” jumps again and again in the black hole. The continuum of history could be broken through, according to Benjamin, when the present is no longer seen as a transition, when one is confronted with time standing still, when redemption is no longer promised (*Illuminations* 262). Stopping at the “time of the now,” we are able to arrest configurations pregnant with tensions, and turn them through shock into a monad, what he calls crystallization (262- 263). In this way, one is no longer able to escape or find detours around that which is oppressive in the present, whether it came from the past or the present, as long as it is still there then it is there that one has to stop.

Focusing on that point where the colonized became colonized, Césaire’s conceptualization of the history does not follow the binary opposition of tradition/progress, where the first is the

authentic, and the latter is the European, imposed and assimilated. And just as his rebellion is against colonial Europe, he also attacks “the local feudal lords” who agreed to serve European colonialism while artificially prolonging “the survival of local pasts in their most pernicious aspects.” For these too remain part of colonialism which “has grafted modern abuse onto ancient injustice, hateful racism onto old inequality” (*Discourse* 45). The present of colonialism cannot be the future that the colonized struggle for, since it is “the most putrid carrion that ever rotted under the sun.” but it is also “a utopian and sterile attempt to repeat the past” (51-52); one will have to go beyond it. Nothing dead can be revived.

In “Births,” Césaire shows the impossibility of restoring that which has been deadened. Reflected in a mirror of stagnation, a being of isolation and alienation could only bring aborted births. In a stagnant mirror, the future is born from a dead past, a birth that would necessarily fail. What is to be born again is rhythm and passion, those declared as the essence of African culture by Senghor, in Césaire though they are not “the secret,” it would take magic to bring life back to an uprooted tree, but the tree would be in this case a “nontree tree,” for it would be lacking in life (*CP* 253).

The force of life is not present in a single original entity, and it cannot be turned into a fetishized abstraction; the forces of life are carried in the concrete and the substantial, and it is in this being of concreteness that they are subversive to a dominating world of empty signs and faded glass, they keep alive the potentiality of another world (*CP* 97; “Thoroughbreds”). While the poem recognizes the impossibility of retrieving an original state; to find that basic element of life, where there is no longer any depth, obscurity or memory, it still insists on a struggle for ‘a shinier sun and purer stars’ (97), for the sign of a healthy life lies in its will for that which is better. What is wished for here is an end that brings in a new beginning, a pure new life, one that is not an extension of the past, but free of it. It is a life without guilts, distortions or victimization. It is an awakening of the forces of nature that would come with a new beginning which would be in the future (101, 103). This circular being is one of joy, in which there is no place for antagonisms, no place for cruelties, for it is not a world agonized about a promised tomorrow that is never fulfilled, but one that is assured about its tomorrow through what is present.

The cyclical movement of nature, as Trinh shows, does not bring in the same, it could bring in difference, it involves continuation and rupture, “*There has been many tomorrows.*” The end of the day brings with it both anguish and ecstasy, fear and hope, for the end implies also a beginning, another beginning (*Elsewhere* 63).

Césaire finds a horizon not in a dream of a return to the past, neither of a deferred future, but in that which is there and has been there, there is no assumption of an unbreakable continuity here, what is there and has been there and will be there for Césaire is the force of life; life’s ability to generate life. When Caliban declares that his mother Sycorax is alive, he is declaring the earth alive, and not the past, Sycorax, Caliban’s mother earth, is not a myth, a fetishized nature, but is found in that which is present, the serpent, the rain, the lightening, even in that which appears stagnant, or that which is underground but will grow deeper in the ground and higher in the sky. Life is found in that which is blinded to what is blinding in the present, but is therefore able to see that which is something else (Césaire, *A Tempest* 18).

That capitalism declared the earth a dead object to be exploited, should not necessarily be accepted by the colonized African as a fact. Caliban, however, cannot be content in knowing that there is life in that which capitalism deadens, Caliban would have to fight for this life (18). For it is the fight, rebellion that would break through a stagnant mirror, shattering its ability to bring back the same; and instead of a failed birth of a nontree tree, there act of rebellion would plant a seed

that would grow roots, which would grow into a tree with life. It is then that Sycorax would be visible again.

In Kane's *Ambiguous Adventure*, while the father, leading another mode of life with another knowledge that is not that of Europe, is seen by the Westerner as past, "a figure of stone," with "the air of a knight of the Middle Ages" (75). The father, from a different position and with a different horizon, sees an objective rational West that is deadened by its own scientific rationalism. For the father, anguish over that which is dying is a reflection of the presence of life that is being suppressed by the deadening forces of rational evidence and objectivity (77-78). The father's sense of superiority comes from a being of profundity that stands in the face of one that is of the surface and the external, a weak and fallible being when measured by the life that inhabits it.

Nevertheless, the colonized to qualify for "political independence," (but not necessarily achieve it), need to be seeking that which is modern, while casting off that which is "traditional" (defined by that which is not modern). Barbara Harlow, sees the time of resistance in Kanafani's texts as the time of modernity, the time in which the "traditional, orthodox associations based on the pieties of "filiation"" are transformed into "an organization having its foundations in the political bonds and analytical allegiances of "affiliation"" (51). In Harlow's reading, it is this transformation, as a historical necessity, that determined in "Men in the Sun," the death of both Marwan and Abu Qais, who fail to become modern subjects. Harlow sees the novel as teaching the necessity of giving away that which is "old" and "traditional" (62), that which comes from what she sees as the world of the past. The novel is seen as advocating a secular world, teaching the traditional and the old "lessons of secularism" (65).

Harlow's observation about Kanafani's refusal to give an end to his novel, as her observation about the critical reinterpretation of the past, did not allow her to question her positing modernity, the time of resistance and secularism, as that which is sought and advocated in the novel. While focusing on the failure of Abu Qais as a declaration of the end of his time, she overlooks the fact that Assad, the modernized political actor, the one without any horizons, and the "ideal" detached being, did not hesitate in succumbing to a life of escape and thus death.

Modernization led to a break in the movement of time and in the lives of the colonized. The Third World man finds himself living in two parallel worlds, that of modernity and that of the past of which he is not a continuation. The failure to repeat a past tradition of which one is proud, becomes a source of a double guilt, what it leads to is a weakness that leaves one unable to assimilate that which is changing, but instead be assimilated by it. In Kanafani's terms, modernization here is a viper that sucks life from that which is living, replacing it with that which although moving is dead. It is the disappearance of the communal, the joy expressed through and in living bodies, which are now trapped into automated creatures (*CW II*: 505; "Vipers Thirst").

Kanafani's stories show the colonized as incapable of being at ease with modernization, it is its suffocation of life that makes them unable to assimilate it. From where the colonized stand, a modernized life takes the appearance of empty signs and dead objects, based on standardization, it is incapable of tolerating that which is different; the different here, would be the living, which as a being of life has the infinite possibilities for change, it is unpredictable and incalculable. For a civilization that is founded on calculating and regulating everything including people's emotions, the living (that which cannot become calculable, regulated, uniform) needs to be done away with.

For Kanafani, modern history cannot account for the harm that was brought about by modernity, for the questions it asks seek to insert that which descends from another life into its

systems of regulation and standardization, and are thus incapable of accounting for it. It is here that that which is of another life is silenced, pushed beneath the surface, and made a dead past.

But in the lives of the colonized there remains traces of another life, a place from which there still comes air in a modernized present of darkness and injustice (574; “the Head of the Stone Lion”). Life is stirred with the wind moving against the walls that inhabited lives which belonged to another time and another mode of life. The movement in the house is the movement of the heart beating and blood flowing in the body (587).

The old house is not a past, it is present, but not part of the main street, it is an interior world, with different lives and different relations, without which it would not be what it is. To move from this space of intimacy to the outside, is to move from the world of the details, of people in communal relations, and of unclosed doors, to the main (public)street, the supermarket, the debts, the editor, the noble friend and an amount of money the narrator has never seen before (579). But this world seen from the window of the big old house, in whose face it stands, is a small one (587). The old big house is not a past, for the sun still recognizes it with every rise... the jasmine tree still rains the yard with its scent... the birds still live next to the orange tree. And as long as it is not inhabited with ghosts of people, it still stands alive (587-588).

The invisibility of the second half of the moon, never means that it is not there (Césaire, *CP* 255; “Lay of Errantry”). What is underground is a potentiality, just as that carried by bulbs or rhizomes (383; “Lagoonal Calendar”). What is buried under the surface is not always that which is dead; at many times, the living are buried underground, or sunk in the swamps, or taking roots in the depths of oceans. Although invisible among that which is present, they are present, and they maintain the possibility of rising to the surface (173; “Mississippi”).

That which is buried but growing under the surface would come back, it could come back in the form of an eruption with a volcanic force, or buried in the depth of the sea, it could rise with the force of a flood (117; “The Miraculous Weapons”), it “will blossom through the paths of flesh,” paths opened in and through the struggle, through the joyfulness of a body in flames (113; “Survival”).

The role of the colonized, within the world division of labor, has been that of intermediaries between capitalism and nature, without them it could no longer maintain its efficient functionings, it is for this reason that Caliban opts for the side of nature. For under capitalist exploitation, although or may be because nature and the colonized share a common ground, they are set apart and in opposition to each other. Prospero did not only use Caliban to exploit his island, but also used the powers of nature to subject Caliban. Caliban’s attempted rebellion was defeated by modernist forces as well as by the subjected elements of nature. Nevertheless, what Caliban could do was to be no longer in the service of Prospero, with the hope in the power of nature to overcome that of man, Caliban sings his freedom song, not as a false celebration of that which has not been achieved, nor is it a passive waiting for an “inevitable” and natural transformation; Caliban does not wait for the end of the world, he rebels against a certain world, that of Prospero (*A Tempest* 66). The rebel identifies himself with nature in his strike against a white civilization that exploits both (*CP* 153; “Batouque”).

It is in the struggle for life, against degeneration and in confrontation that something else emerges, it takes the form of an eruption, for it is “the leap from the wings to center stage” (Foucault, *Aesthetics* 150). The liberation of that which is different and marginal (153), is not an establishment of another sovereignty, a freedom struggle is the struggle of a rising sun and a living earth, of those whose toiling and wounded hands are the basis of their solidarity (Césaire, *CP* 353; “A Salute”).

The movement of time does not make history but people in their revolts and rebellion for something else make history even if that something else is not what is achieved. This is the distinction Césaire makes between Africa and Martinique, his movement here is not from a defeated present to a glorified mythical past, but from a country that is “half asleep” to another that is battling colonialism. Africa here is not a single entity, that is mythified, but a present that fights for a free life. Africa moves from the margins of history when its marginality accumulates into an upheaval (*CP* 353; “A Salute”).

Césaire in more than one poem has declared that the world of the colonized will come when the world of disguise, betrayal, deception and slavery has become past. This is not a passive waiting for the end of the world, but rather an affirmation of the impossibility of creating a better world within a world whose foundations are those of exploitation and enslavement, a positive rejection of that which is and should not be, it is a statement of the impossibility of resigning oneself to that which is there (Césaire, *Lyric* 23; “And the Dogs”).

This is a world not for us, but there is the potentiality for another, in the child of his murdered father escaping death underground, in a pollen carried by the wind, or a seed taking root in the depth of the ocean ... it is in that which cannot be grasped or incorporated in the time of Europe, that the seed of life is planted, where it takes root and grows into another new life.

Chapter Five: “Spear-Pointed Words”

A Liberation Discourse?

In the preface to “Of Men and Guns” (CW II: 613), attempting to tell the story of being a refugee, Kanafani seems to be stumbling he starts with fragments of pictures of what it is to be a refugee, but whatever he starts with, is quickly dismissed as irrelevant. It is not only the difficulty of telling what it is to be a refugee, in the end there is always a discourse, a humanitarian charitable one, or a political national one. But Kanafani’s stumbling in the preface appears as a resistance to join the discourse, to be incorporated in that which is established. For there, a position is already established for the refugee, as one of mud, dust, poverty and pity, which is not what is sought by the writer. The repeated “but this is all irrelevant” points to something else in the being of the refugee, which is disavowed by the discourse. It does not name that something else here, it first needs to confront the limits that block any access to it. It is a battle between different modes of knowing with their own mode of being. The stumbling is a search for different paths, each time the writer takes one he is confronted with a limit; whenever he tries again to tell of something else, that which is not “irrelevant,” what is said is just another irrelevancy. His movement thus becomes one that involves advances, confrontations, and withdrawals. But in each telling a layer of that which constructs and establishes the being of the refugee is removed, and a path is opened. To repeat that which is said here is to cast it off, to open a space for something else. Ultimately, the introduction closes to lead us into the stories of men and guns.

To tell of men and guns, to resist incorporation in a discourse on the colonized, requires that one has that space from which he is able to stand outside and resist. Such a space, as I have argued in Chapter One, does not really exist, for the boundaries of what is an inside and what is an outside cannot be drawn with clear lines. The discourse just as the colonialism of which it is a part, needs to be confronted and battled. What is written then is not a truth, but the battle, through which breakthroughs in the structure of discourse are enabled. The movement in resistance creates gaps, fissures, and ruptures and may be at one point could bring the destruction of that which is established. It is there in those opened spaces as fragmentary as they are that the colonized finds his place of resistance and the space from which he could tell of something else.

Benita Parry argued that there could be a counter discourse that displaces “the system of knowledge installed by colonialism and imperialism.” Such a discourse, however, requires a position of externality to colonial domination. A position allowed in Parry’s analysis through anti-colonial struggle. For Parry the ‘epistemic violence’ of colonialist knowledge needs to be linked to material aggression (36).

In Parry’s argument, the colonized can find a place of resistance in the “differentiated and incommensurable subjectivities” which are “the effect of many determinants, numerous interpellations various social practices.” The multiple positions, which the colonized native occupies, allow for acts of annulment and transgression of that which is colonizing. It is not a restoration of that which is original and true, that is accomplished in these counter discourses, but the inscription of the history of insubordination “produced by anti-colonial movements, deciphered from cryptic cultural forms and redevise from vestiges perpetuated through constant transmutation in popular memory and oral traditions.” Although they could be found in official archives as well as in informal texts; they maintain the status of traces that cannot give a complete historical narrative. These are traces of popular disobedience which rejected to be inserted in a colonized subjectivity and its inversion the nationalist. “Anarchic and nihilistic” they “violated notions of rational protest” (38).

Violating the rational, which defines what is said, what is known by its service to the bourgeois social order, they were excluded/included as its Other. Nationalist thought, as Partha Chatterjee shows, functions within the same mode of being of the Enlightenment. Seeking the position of the Self, it creates its Other, given to those who in their different mode of being, in their defiance for incorporation (never complete), are the ever present reminder that the bourgeois mode of being is only one mode of being, that there has been and could be another.

In Third World nationalism, as in that of Europe from which it is derived, it was the peasant who stood as the constant threat of nationalism in its strive towards “the Universal Ideal.” That mode of being from the “past,” which for centuries in Europe had been the source of revolts and rebellions, never moving in a clear direction, working for the Revolution and against it, being its main force but also the force that can reverse it, needed to be controlled and regulated (148). The problem with the peasants was the problem of the unknown and the unpredictable; the peasants were seen as “ignorant, unthinking, and subject to unreasonable excitements,” and thus need to be taught their true and rational interests. Knowledge, just as the agrarian programs in the new nation-states, becomes part of this regulation and control of the being of the peasant (150).

To incorporate in a discourse, to make an object of knowledge, is an act of regulation. Although Parry states that she does not seek that which is rationalized, to include it in a discourse, even a counter-discourse, is to keep what is known and the way it is known within the limits of a discourse which requires its authors and establishes its subjects.

That which is counter is not less “rational” or less “objective” (Foucault, *Order* 378). In his discussion of ethnology, psychoanalysis and linguistics, Michel Foucault shows that these are counter-sciences because they flow in the opposite direction of the human sciences, leading “them back to their epistemological basis,” a movement that ceaselessly leads to the unmaking of man as the object of the ‘human sciences’ (379), but which is accompanied by man recreating himself as that object. Nevertheless, they stand as a threat to “the very thing that made it possible for man to be known” because they expose the origins and basis not of man, but the knowledge of man (381). What is given a voice in a counter discourse are the limits and rules of a knowledge in which man is objectified. Instead of representing men, it shows the norms and rules that merge behind these representations, defining people’s lives. A counter discourse does not show that which is hidden or buried, but the “the historical a priori” of knowledge. Counter discourses do not liberate, neither are they able, as discourses, to retrieve that which has been objectified in knowledge or absented in words. They transgress, but they do not subvert or dismantle the frames in which those given a voice are inserted when they are given a voice.

Parry’s counter discourse is another discourse, one that seeks to give the Other the position of the Self: here the excluded Other is established as a “unified black self.” Although Parry defends her argument about a unified black self by emphasizing the materiality of the moment of insurgency and her refusal to abstract it, a discourse that seeks to construct a “unified black self,” is incompatible in its seeking to establish a definition, with the multiplicities of being, the continuous movements, the endless transformations of Césaire’s Rebel or Kanafani’s *Asheq*.

Parry writes against Gayatri Chacravorty Spivak’s questioning of the subaltern’s ability to speak. For Spivak, the consciousness of those “Outside (though not completely so) the circuit of the international division of labor,” is irretrievable. To represent them as a homogeneous Other refers “only to our own place in the seat of the Same or the Self” (84). Despite her rejection of Spivak’s criticism, Parry still works within an integrationist politics; what is produced in texts written by authors of liberation are insurgent and resisting subjects, and as such they are institutional products. This is not an integration of yet another part of themselves into the discourse,

but an addition to the product of scholarship, and as such, that which is in the final product of the act of representation is the scholar herself objectified. To reformulate the act of writing here as that of an author of liberation, who seeks to construct “a unified black self” (43), posits a subject who requires its own object, in this case both the writing and the people, (self), produced in this writing become this object.

As in any discourse, in its construction of its object/other, it is the Self, that is made visible and given a voice; for the deep buried truth that we seek from a discourse, is the truth that we know; it is the truth that escaped us, but we are the ones to make its truth (Foucault, *History* 68-69). Liberation added to discourse, could only be a brand name through which another discourse integrates the “counter” and the “different” in an ideological product. Discourse cannot be a space in which the colonized finds his freedom, neither can it be the space of a free writer; but the work of a systematic blindness, which entails that we refuse to understand and see the very thing we seek to know; truth is sought and evaded, established while masked and blocked (55), an author, as I will show below, qualifies for the task, but not the free writer.

To allow the people to speak for themselves, to give them a voice, presupposes a colonized without a voice; to give them a voice, then is another act of colonization, for what it establishes is that the only voice the colonized could have is that which can be understood and thus conforms to a dominant discourse. In this case, the writer/author who writes about the people takes the role of a benefactor who admits and incorporates those who are voiceless without him (Trinh, *When the Moon* 61). In this sense, Kanafani starting his “Of Men and Guns” with scenes of refugees made objects of the charity of the “better-off,” dismissing them as irrelevant, is the refugee-writer’s ingratitude towards that which is charitable.

It is not surprising that a rebel writer rejects the role of the giver of voice to the colonized, Jean Genet would not write about the reality of the colonized Palestinians under occupation; the only reality of the Palestinian revolution was in that which is not part of the play between occupier and occupied. It “lay in involvement, fertile in hate and love, in people’s daily lives; in silence, like translucency, punctuated by words and phrases” (6).

“Giving voice to the people,” involves a disavowal of the workings of a colonizing discourse which as any other discourse has its necessary silences. Silence is not its other side but rather “an element that functions alongside the things said, with them and in relation to them within over-all strategies.” Silences too follow the rules of discourse which determine the ways in which things are not said and the ones who are not able to say certain things (Foucault, *History* 27); giving voice in this case does not liberate those who are “imprisoned” in silence, but rather obscures their imprisonment. Silence could be a failure, but it also could be the mark of the presence of that other world made inferior by the question ““what’s the use.”” In this sense, silence speaks marking a betrayal of language. “If speaking is to replace a presence with an absence and to pursue more and more sufficient absence through more and more fragile presences. Silence has so much dignity only because it is the highest degree of this absence that is the whole virtue of speaking” (Blanchot, *The Work* 34).

Speech can have “the privilege of silence,” when it too functions as a transgression and betrayal of language, when it shows its limit, when it too becomes the mark of an absence that is no longer concealed, when one speaks without giving us the meaning that we seek, when what is spoken is not a reflection of anything other than a rejection to be inserted within a frame. Bartleby’s “I would prefer not to,” shows that “To be quiet is not always the best way of being quiet” (62). Transgression here takes the form of rejecting to say anything. It is not a negation, but a pointing

to the limitations of language, as well as a reminder that there exists a being outside what is known and said.

As I have shown in Chapter Three, Kanafani's refugee child, speaks only to invent stories, multiple lies, he is poor and miserable but arrogant and obscure, he cannot be constructed as a subject of pity, for, as Radwa 'Ashur has shown, he does not qualify for the position of a subject of charity. He keeps his independency by taking responsibility for himself; satisfying his material needs through work, and his more sublimated ones through the *stories* he invents of himself and his life. Neither can he be constructed as a unified Palestinian self, for he does not allow access to his private world in exchange for compassion and pity; "every student in the school of the displaced insisted on preserving his private tragedy, aggressively embracing it, as if there were some kind of common agreement that this was a necessary duty" (Kanafani qtd. in 'Ashur 44). The child's refusal to communicate but by telling illusory stories, is a form of dignity and self-respect; for to communicate ourselves entails a vulgarization and contempt of ourselves by inserting them within the perspective of the herd (Nietzsche, *Gay Science* 299).

In Kanafani's and Césaire's texts, the "silent common people" are not redeemed by an author who gives them a voice. The texts of both writers are not an exhibition in which the lives of the colonized, the poor, the others, are packaged and displayed.

Lilyan Kesteloot argues that the role of the black writer was to make known to the West the aspirations of the colonized people and to liberate the minds of the black people, "to make them understand what liberation would be" (*Négritude* 14). She divides the role of the writer into three categories: as educator, "contributing to the development and progress of black peoples;" or representative and spokesman, "truly expressing the reality of his people" (*Black* 328); or the writer as "an inventor of souls," which is the case of Césaire (315).

It was through poetry that Césaire sought to convince his people of the necessity to revolt. But Césaire, according to Kesteloot did not sacrifice his literary skill for the sake of clarity. Césaire, in her reading is not one of his people, but someone who stands in between his people and the colonial power, as an intermediary who passes the problems of his people to the colonizing power in return for recognition (*Négritude* 16).

Kesteloot is not alone in attributing this role of the speaker on behalf of his people to Césaire, Georges Ngala also argued that Césaire assumed the role of the leader of his people, identifying with Lumumba and Christophe, what they shared is their solitude and isolation in their struggles (207). But, as Hedy Kalikoff shows, the speaker of the *Cahier* fails in taking the position of "a representative for and of his people." This is shown in mocking his heroism, it is also clear in the passage in which he declares himself as spokesman of his people. "It is written in the conditional mood and, more importantly, it is placed within quotation marks... it seems in retrospect to be a naive hope or intention, deflated upon actual arrival in the "pays natal"" (494).

Returning to his country, Césaire's speaker is already in a position of externality (not complete) to his native land, this position is manifest in his declaration that he is made of its soil, that he is inseparable from it; his words here are not an externalization, not an absencing, but an attempt at interiorization, an embracing of a part of his being, from which he departed, and to which he seeks a return. The act of embracing his native land, that part of himself, lies in the affirmation of all that which is hideous and ugly in its being (*CP* 45; "Notebook"). But such an embracing does not lead to a reconciled state; for one cannot be reconciled to that which is hideous and ugly even when affirming it as part of himself. It is a return after departure, a standing before instead of turning one's back to. The continuously shifting positions of the speaker turn him into a fragment of a plural whole of which he cannot be abstracted into the position of a subject.

What speaks in Césaire's texts, is most of the time an "I" that defies any claims to an objectifying objective representation. Even when the "I" is replaced with a "we," neither pronoun allows for an establishment of a definite positive being, for they are constantly undone through the contradictory and conflicting definitions that are attributed to them.

The speaker here is making a step toward his country, a step that follows coming back from the land of the colonizer, where he has discovered himself as an Other. It is in this position, or rather movement from the position of the Other of the colonizer back to his native land, that Césaire's speaker declares that he would speak for his land, that he lends his mouth to its calamities. This is accompanied by a refusal for the position of a spectator, a life of sterility. Césaire's speaker does not give himself the position of an author or the position of a subject in relation to his people who should become the object of his subjectivity; he is rather struggling against a detached being, against a position of isolation that is an escape rather than a willingness to confront the miserable in life. While declaring his voice as the voice of its calamities, he also declares it as "the freedom of those who break down the prison holes of despair," Césaire here is not a grantor of voice and freedom to his people but rather he finds the sources of his ability to speak in their struggles for freedom (45).

This movement towards his land and people consists of shifting positions, but without any identification that would subsume the writer and his people in an objectified subject/object positions. No totalizing unity is established or sought, the writer is not the people neither are they the writer, but he is one of them, and they are part of him, a relation in which the part retains that which is individual and different.

Trinh Minh-ha has described what she terms "A writing for the people, by the people, and from the people," as "a multipolar reflecting reflection that remains free from the conditions of subjectivity and objectivity and yet reveals them both. I write to show myself showing people who show me my own showing." The redoubling of images here does not allow for the establishment of a "primary core of irradiation," the plurality does not allow for any hierarchical existence (*Woman* 23). It is a relation of reciprocity, in which the writer gives the people access to their history and have it returned back through the people's stories of past and present struggles (Thiong'o 45).

The writer who is of the people shares their mode of being. In Claude McKay's *Banjo*, the writer too is a panhandler; not a bohemian whose art is an art for art's sake, for he cannot afford, out of material necessity, such a mode of life; he is rather a vagabond (110). The difference between a vagabond writer and a bohemian, is the difference between the acting, role-playing and concrete practice. Between the surrealist who saw in drinking and hashish his way of acting against a bourgeois order and the colonized, the black, the vagabond, whose life is seen as surreal only from a bourgeois perspective.

To love "the common black drifters" is neither a class nor a national solidarity, but rather it is the "poetical enthusiasm of the vagabond black that he himself was." The writer here lived "the rough and tumble laboring life" (174), his text is not about the vagabond blacks but one of vagabondage. But McKay's Ray is not the free-spirited Banjo, for he is at many points limited by those parts of himself that are educated, and at other parts pulled back from a vagabond life by the requirements of writing, by that urging need for isolation.

For Césaire, the man of culture has a material and concrete role in the liberation struggle, it is one of creation, for the word in Césaire is creation. The man of culture converts popular national sentiments into consciousness, "that is to say into blazing sun." The sentiments themselves do exist "in the most immediate and most evident manner, and at the height of colonial

oppression;” but they need to “be made authentic, propagated and purified.” The man of culture “*by creation* expresses and gives form.” Expression here means “bringing to light,” in which he “creates and recreates” the sentiment from which it emanates (“The Man” 126).

For Césaire “all creation, because it is creative, is participation in a combat for liberation.” The word for Césaire is not a substitution that covers for the absence of acting in revolt. But the word is part of the combat, it has a “fertilizing power.” Creating, just as acting, rejects the foundations of a colonial order, in which “there is not merely a hierarchy of *master and servant*. There is also, implicit, a hierarchy of *creator and consumer*.” The creator here is the colonizer, and the consumer is the colonized. To create according to Césaire, is not to seek to imitate the colonizer, but to reject the position of the consumer/colonized; it is for this reason that creation, “precisely because it is creation, disturbs” (127).

Césaire’s man of culture though is the poet/rebel, not the colonized Other of Europe who seeks the position of the Same, creation by the latter could only take the form of imitation. A colonized creation that seeks insertion in the “Universal” dismisses the different, which escapes institutionalization. That which is rooted in the being of the colonized is dismissed as fragmentary, for it is a constantly present and visible reminder of the colonial relations, and the entrapment of the colonized in his inferiority complex.

We can see an example of this urging need to create an institutionalized totality to be inserted in an even larger one in the case of Edouard Glissant. The writer sees in the oral expression of the Plantation an act of survival. These are tales, proverbs, sayings, songs, but they do not relate to “daily facts and deeds; what one does find, on the other hand, is a symbolic evocation of situations, working to say without saying” (*Poetics* 68). They are thus, for Glissant, just as is marronage, a detour, since they do not qualify for the establishment of a nation-state, with literature perceived as one necessary institution. For Glissant, the non-totalized “numerous forms of expression” of which consisted creative marronage were “exotic appendages of a French, Spanish, or English literary corpus;” but turned into a continuity, they now have the force of a tradition, that can be included in what is considered culture, or, in a post-modern language, “relations of culture” (71). The inferiority complex related to the creator/consumer hierarchy persists at deeper levels in the case of the colonized intellectuals, whose sense of being othered has been multiplied by a closer contact with the colonizer, unless of course he has in him enough strength to assimilate it instead of being assimilated by it.

Ngugi Wa Thiong’o argues that the problem lies in the colonized knowledge that the African writer has. Western education as well as language has blocked access to African knowledge and languages. While many works by African writers shed light on the struggles of the colonized against colonialism, but “Their work belongs to an Afro-European literary tradition.” For Thiong’o’s these works are not liberating, since they themselves are produced within a neocolonial setting (27). Thiong’o conditions a liberating literature with that which is written in African languages, that is when it is linked to those who are not interested in preserving the present order; but also those who have access to other knowledges. Calling for decolonizing the mind, Thiong’o shows that the writer gains access to history through the links he maintains with the peasants, those who have access to knowledges that the educated colonized no longer have access to. The writer then would have committed “a subversive or treasonable offence;” his is a rebellious practice, for which he risks “the possibilities of prison, exile, or even death.” What is dangerous in writing in the language of the people, according to Thiong’o, is that the people are being positioned as the ones who should shape their own lives, through their own knowledge (30). Thiong’o repeats Césaire’s call to return to the native land, “to the roots, return to the sources of

their being,” a return for Thiong’o that includes “the rhythms of life and speech and languages of the Kenyan masses” (73).

Thiong’o may have in fact overestimated the freedom that writing in an African language allows, one has only to think of the missionaries, travelers and colonial officials who were fluent in native languages, as part of their civilizing colonizing mission. Language here was a point of access, the implied familiarity in the use of the native language was a tool for incorporation and subjection, rather than a space of flight. The current rush to *recognize* and *know* African languages in the Western academia, could be as much a part of the neo/classic colonial relation between the West and Africa, in which Africa is not only the consumer, but also the provider of that which is lacking in the West. Specialists in area studies, language experts and anthropologists have been diligently carrying their mission of knowing all that need to be known about Africa as about the “aborigines” in the Americas, New Zealand, and Australia. It could be a will to knowledge, and /or a search for a life lost from the West, but in both cases, an integral part of a colonial relation.

Césaire remarks that it is possible for the creations of the colonized to be appropriated by the colonizer, it did happen, “But for the colonizer, at bottom, all indigenous creation is *unaccustomed* and therefore dangerous.” Creations by the colonized create a scandal, their danger to the colonizer, as well as the assurance they give to the colonized come from counterbalancing the inferiority complex instilled in the colonized (“The Man” 127). Césaire is right. All the prizes and prestigious posts that have been given to the educated and intellectual colonized have been, at least partially, and possibly in an unconscious rationality, to use Foucault’s term, used as a means for the appropriation, (in the Marxist sense of the world), the creation of the colonized.

As Roberto Retamar has shown, the native intellectual, Ariel, can either serve the colonizing master, and thus maintain his position as a slave, or he can ally himself with the colonized struggling for freedom which is attained through the struggle rather than granted by the master. The intellectuals who often enough come from the exploiting classes could be at the service of the exploited when they “have broken radically” with their classes of origin (39); they will also have to “sever the nexus of *dependence* upon the metropolitan culture from which it has learned, nonetheless, a language as well as a conceptual and technical apparatus.” Even when the language is “of profit...in cursing Prospero” (40).

For Kanafani, it is not the place for the poet who looks down at his people from above, to give lectures about ethics to those who died while seeking life, who melted looking for means of living (*Collected Works II*: 156; “Pearls on the Road”). The intellectual has nothing to teach the people if he is not one of them, that is if he does not step down from his high balcony to the street. Although the one in the balcony or because of that, Kanafani’s intellectual-narrators, are usually given a passive role (Darraj, *Bo’s*; al-Naqib).

In the relation with the people, the intellectual is the beneficiary, the receiver, the one who is being educated. Although ‘Ashur criticizes this ascribed passivity of the intellectual as unjustified; she suggests that it could be explained by the fact that the intellectuals lagged behind the revolutionary movement of the people. What is certain, according to her, is that Kanafani believed that the movement of the people was a source for an inexhaustible knowledge. Nevertheless ‘Ashur is unwilling as many others of Kanafani’s critics to accept that Kanafani did not give art the role of educating the masses (137).

To be bourgeois in education, is to be incorporated into the means of production and class privilege and thus in solidarity with the bourgeoisie. The revolutionary intellectual will have to be a betrayer of his class of origin, as Benjamin has argued. The material form of this betrayal is when the writer in his practice is no longer a supplier of the productive apparatus, but an engineer who

works on transforming this apparatus “to the purposes of the proletarian revolution” (*Reflections* 237-238). The writer cannot be a revolutionary writer by giving himself the position of the revolutionary proletariat without being one, as I have noted above, he needs to participate in their mode of being. To posit himself as their leader, teacher or liberator, is to reproduce class divisions (Trinh, *Woman*), and as such it is counterrevolutionary (Benjamin, *Reflections* 226). For Benjamin, “the place of the intellectual in the class struggle can be identified, or, better, chosen, only on the basis of his position in the process of production” (228). It is not enough that the revolutionary writer writes about revolutionary themes, while abstaining from alienating the productive apparatus from the ruling class, what is achieved here is only a reproduction of the bourgeois mode of production which now assimilates these revolutionary themes (229).

Writing for Kanafani can be revolutionary, but it is not a substitution for the revolution, which is led by the people not the intellectuals. Kanafani quotes Mao on learning from the masses and teaching them; but to reject it. For Kanafani, “we have not graduated yet from the school of the masses, the real permanent teacher, the one in whose pure vision the revolution could never be separated from bread and water, nor from laboring hands and beatings hearts” (*CW I*: 241; “Um Sa’d”).

In “Um S’ad,” we see the narrator shrinking before “the brave, crushed and poor class thrown in the camps of misery.” Although a refugee, the being of the writer outside the refugee camp, not paying the price of defeat that the refugees in the camp are paying (242), puts him in an inferior status in relation to them. The sense of inferiority here comes from a feeling of shame, not guilt, it would only be the latter when denied; it is the shame of the intellectual who does not fight, but also the intellectual who never knows enough.

The figure of the intellectual or educated who does not know is repeated in most of Kanafani’s stories. The intellectuals can reference books, but most of the time fail in any knowledge of life, including the one they are living. We see them in the “Slave Fortress” trying to make out the story, the truth of the life of an old man who sold oysters. The fisherman old and wretched makes, in their imagination, a very good object of a story. From where they stood, what they saw was a projection of a wasted monotonous life without meaning, without use, “walking on the same path... in the same direction... same sides... same horizon... the same everything” (*CW II*: 229).

The fisherman speaks in Kanafani’s story, but not to tell his truth, we do not know his story, but we are told that he enjoyed watching the disappointment on the faces of those who would open hundreds of oysters looking for a pearl that was not existent. Trapped in that systematic blindness, that is the knowledge of the educated, what the fisherman said leaves no traces on the way they perceive things or themselves. The educated failed to question their search for non-existent pearls; instead, the man who preferred to sell oysters for bread to searching for pearls, was the one who is either a victim beggar, or a mad man; for the rational subject is the one who would seek the pearls but never find them (232). Someone of another mode of life, with another value system is inconceivable for modernized intellectuals, they can only recognize his existence in analogy with something they know of through their modern education, a ghost from classical Greece would have a more conceivable presence in their lives than a Bedouin asking for water for his sheep in the desert (*CW II*: 263; “Crucified Sheep”). For the intellectual, the tragedy of the scene is an adventure to be narrated; reality not literature becomes a source of ‘entertainment.’

The Prison that is Writing about the Revolution

Ilyas Khuri criticizes what he sees as a simplification of people's life in the refugee camp in "Um Sa'd." This simplification is manifest, for Khuri, in the focus on resistance, overlooking the complexities of the lives of the refugees and relations. The transgression in the story, that is designated as simplification or mythification, or both, by Khuri, is that Um Sa'd was given the role that should have been the role of the intellectual. In Khuri's reading of the story, the intellectual loses his voice in the sea of masses, the masses make their own values. They draw a clear, harmonic line leading towards the logical result (55). But as I have been arguing throughout the dissertation, there was no logical result reached or to be reached in Kanafani's stories, not even the most optimistic of them, "Um Sa'd." The text, is given to us in the form of pictures, which do not necessarily follow from each other, neither do they combine to form "an organic" structure. They do not move in any clear linear path, for they tell of battles and struggles. As pictures, they show what a picture shows, a segment of reality, fragmented events of defeat, instances of hope, acts of resistance, imprisonment, the flood of the camp, the use of Palestinians to exploit the poor in the host country...etc.,

But Kanafani's "Um Sa'd" transgressed the work of representation involved in what Barthes has called a tableau (*Image* 69), by the multiplicity of the stories it told, the lack of unity of a subject of action, its defiance to classification within a definite form. And while it involved instruction, the shifting of positions of instructor/instructed does not allow us to simply dismiss it as a bourgeois art that incorporates revolutionary themes.

The stories told by Um Sa'd, and listened to by the narrator, were not myths. Um Sa'd's stories were not part of a discourse, which consists in depicting that which is in the writer's mind (Barthes, *Image* 71-72), but a refusal to submit to defeat as a fact, a rejection of a discourse. A position the narrator who, overwhelmed by the defeat, could not take.

The truths of the colonizer, as Fanon had shown in the Algerian battle for liberation, were countered by the native's "increasingly overshadowed inner conviction." Presented with the "facts" of defeats in battles, the colonized, unwilling to be defeated, "could fight off despair only by an act of faith, by an obstinate belief" (*A Dying* 76). The Colonized do not enter into a battle of truth with the colonizer, instead of questioning "the communication" they received, they simply refused it; a refusal that indicates a shutting out of the colonizer's knowledge. The optimism in the novel/stories of "Um Sa'd," although shared with the socialist novel, is not one that is imposed on the reality or conceals it, but comes from the active forces of the present, it is an optimism that comes from facing the present not as an isolated instant, but as part of a historical movement that has its roots in the past, and a movement that is oriented towards the future. The movement itself is in the present ('Ashur 135).

Fanon's description of how stories of the battles are appropriated and transmitted by the people shows that these stories do not constitute a revolutionary propaganda, but rather official statements by the Revolutionary Command are transformed by the individual and multiple acts of telling the story(ies). These are not rationalized acts, but acts of a battle that is "refought with the deep aspirations and the unshakeable faith of the group" (*A Dying* 86). As part of the battle, narrating the events of the struggle are transformed from information and facts into stories with multiple tellers; these are never complete stories with clear ends, for as part of the struggle, they are still enacted, told and retold. By their very lack of an institutionalized form, they function as a counter narrative to that of the enemy press. The stories of the battle are made from the points of silence, those parts in the flow of information which are "imperfectly heard, obscured by incessant jamming," they move as a fragmented discontinuous narration from "one village to the next, from

one shack to the next,” becoming something new each time. Telling of “more and more glorious battles,” they also foresee “the collapse of the occupying power” (86).

It is during the struggle for decolonization that the people become the main source of knowledge. Thiong'o shows that decolonizing literature “drew its stamina and even form from the peasantry: their proverbs, fables, stories, riddles, and wise sayings.” Even after the disillusionment of a political independence, the betrayal of hope led to a literature that found its audience in “the peasantry and the working class or what was generally conceived as the people.” The literature adopted a more direct tone and a “direct call for action” (21).

It was in theater that the writer could be in direct contact with the people. Thiongo's saw in theater both a different source and way of education that would counter the one imported from the colonizer, as such it would be “a process of demystifying knowledge and hence reality.” The theater was not fiction given to the people as part of a developmental package. For “the real language of African theatre could only be found among the people- the peasantry in particular – in their life, history and struggles” (41). The divisions between actor and spectator, writer and audience, were obliterated (57). Drama was not an establishment isolated from the daily lives of the people, but it was part and parcel of the rhythm of daily and seasonal life of the community. It was an activity among other activities, often drawing its energy from those other activities. It was also entertainment in the sense of involved enjoyment: it was moral instruction; and it was also a strict matter of life and death and communal survival.

Theater as instructive art and a call to action follows with Bertolt Brecht's notion of epic theater. Thiong'o shows that a theater that is on the side of the people is the one that instead of concealing shows that which needs to be changed, it “gives people courage and urges them to higher resolves in their struggle for total liberation” (43).

In Brecht, epic theater should “impair illusion of the audience and paralyze its readiness for empathy” through the intervals that would prompt the audience's critical reaction (153). It appalls the spectator, de-familiarizing what is seen, it shows contradictions (71). This is the Alienation-effect which involves the recognition of the subject while de-familiarizing it. De-naturalizing things challenges their stability, strips them of the permanence given to them, and puts them in their historicity. It shows their difference and particularity (190).

Nevertheless, Brecht's conceptualization of the A-effect remains operating within a Western mode of knowing, it instructs its audience on what needs to be grasped, the way it should be grasped and how they should react to it. There is no shifting of positions involved here. The people are restored to their position as the objects of instruction, who are told what to grasp and how to grasp; and the theater is returned to representation (Barthes, *Image* 69).

Nietzsche has described an art for the masses that excludes the individual as an art for the herd (Nietzsche, *Gay Science* 325-326). Trinh questions the construction of the category of masses itself, showing that the notion of an art for the masses, presupposes “an aggregate of average persons condemned by their lack of personality or by their dim individualities to stay with the herd, to be docile and anonymous.” The Author for the masses, the “revolutionary” artist finds his *raison d'être* thus in this massification of the people, it is not surprising then that what is reproduced in this notion of art for the masses is the opposition and hierarchy between the elite and masses (13).

And since the masses are posited as those who need to be instructed and educated, the writer is required to write clearly, for the audience of masses to be able to “grasp” that which is presented to them. Clarity thus is “a means of subjection, a quality of official, taught language and of correct writing.” What is subjected here is not only the writer and the writing but also the

anticipated reader. To write “clearly,” one must incessantly prune, eliminate, forbid, purge, purify” (17). What is sought through the notion of clarity is conformity and discipline; not only in writing, but also in what is known as well as in life. Committed literature becomes “univocal;” it is based on standardization, a setting of norms and rules of what is to be written and how (Barthes, *Writing* 23).

The writer in Marxist writing is transformed into a scribe, “halfway between the party member and the writer,” he is the committed man whose act is to write. Marxist Writing is dominated by “a professional language,” which becomes “a sign of commitment.” Writing is no longer a practice, but it rather “here resembles the signature one affixes at the foot of a collective proclamation one has not written oneself.” The writer does not write, he does not choose, in fact does nothing but join an already existing institution (26-27).

Politicizing literature requires that one not only conceals that which does not fit within the order of things, but it also entails the concealment, suppression of an essential part of the being of the writer. In his poem to Depestre, Césaire questions whether the marronage poet could “mistrust the forest,” could one be a maroon without being one. For to follow the rules of committed art is to become a prisoner of writing as an institution with closed doors and clear boundaries that cannot be crossed; to be committed in this sense, is incompatible with marronage (*CP* 369; “The Verb Marroner”). It is submission to slavery that Césaire rejects here, for when poetry is treated as a sugar mill or a factory production line, he opts for the being of the maroon, instead of that of the submissive slave. Césaire challenges Depestre’s communist position by referring to blood, an element without which there can be no life, “Blood/ is truly powerful vodun” (369). To associate marronage and its rituals with blood is to state that they are parts inseparable of the being of the uprooted African, and to associate poetry with marronage which is associated with blood is to reject institutionalization in favor of a freedom that is as inherent as blood is in his being. The evocation of blood, is therefore, a gesture of an absolute rejection for a mode of being/writing that requires man to be an abstraction, a dead layer of a being stripped of life. The Revolution here becomes “fat cockroaches cockchafing the spring” (371), a parasite that obstructs the growth of any new life.

Genet questions whether seeking to “to make the struggle known” by putting it in words made it seem unreal; and thus justified that one did not have to do more than utter words, or make verses about the struggle. Poetry becomes not only a symptom of impotency in the case of the poets who did not join in the struggle about which they write, but also a justification thereof, that “you didn’t have to travel to the battlefield, you didn’t get wounded or killed, you proved to yourself and to others how good you were with words.” Poetry about the struggle becomes then an alibi for impotency and inaction, while maintaining that function of language that absents instead of bringing into being (359).

Commitment in literature to political and social action becomes “one more disengagement,” in which the political becomes literary (Blanchot, *The Work* 26). If committed literature is one that presents a revolution or a freedom that is non-existent concealing their absence, then it is no longer a committed literature but a bourgeois one. For Blanchot, an uncommitted literature that does not claim a non-existent freedom is more committed in the sense that it accepts the responsibility of societal constraints (96-97). Art can be counter to a politics of adaptation and survival, not when it exposes a hidden truth, but when it shows “its own prostitution” (Barthes, *Image* 176). In free art, representation is shattered by showing the discontinuity of codes, the pauses and gaps in the act of representation. Instead of any claims for

authenticity, the multiplicities of voices and fragments of codes make any such claims for a Truth impossible.

For Césaire, the movement from poetry to theater was part of the struggle of the colonized for liberation. It was not presenting what was absent, but what was there. The role of the theater as formulated by Césaire was to make visible “donner à voir.” It follows with the role Césaire had given to the man of culture as we have seen above, it is an expression of that which is already there but concentrated. The theatre given to the black people is one of their own being and their own history (qtd. in Leiner 45). The theater in Césaire is thus that of the colonized, of Africa, of black Americans.” Although for the oppressed, the humiliated and offended, it is not for the herd; it is universal but its universality does not negate the singular, singularity is its condition, which represents its deepening. It is political but not politicized, in fact its dialogue shifts between poetry and sarcasm; one rarely finds instructive statements in his plays, instead of telling us how to feel, it makes us feel. And instead of telling us how and what to grasp, it “nourishes reflection on the political order” (48).

Although the political theater often aimed at preparing for “better tomorrows,” Césaire’s plays were inspired and derived from present events, their focus was on rethinking the past for the present, shedding light on the constraints that cut along the path of building the future (Owusu-Sarpong 22).

The theater is art rooted and engaged with the material concrete struggles of reality. For Césaire it is an instrument of provocation and solicitation of action. It effects transformation in the spectators by transforming their relationship to the world, it becomes a revolt against the established order by questioning that which is of the daily reality of people’s lives, it faces the future by showing the unachieved and unaccomplished.

Nevertheless, Césaire does not employ a realist language, his theater remained poetic, for poetry says more, it could be obscure, it could be rare, but it is fundamental because it comes from the depths (Maximin et Césaire 8). Coming from the depth, it did not follow the rules of discourse, it is not based on any systematic blindness. And more importantly it is committed to Césaire’s insistence on a tomorrow that is not the End of the World,

for it is not true that the work of man is done
that we have no business being on earth
that we parasite the world
that it is enough for us to heel to the world
whereas the work has only begun
and man still must overcome all the interdictions wedged in the recesses of his fervor and no race
has a monopoly on beauty, on intelligence, on strength (*CP 77*; “Notebook”).

For literature to express the other side of a life imprisoned in a declared end of the world, “that asymmetrical fervor of risk, of unlikely chance, of impatient unreason,” is to assume the status of another discourse, a fictional one, that shows the absent as present rather than showing the presence of absence, it becomes “re-creation based on the uniform discourse of science” (Foucault, *Aesthetics*143). When no other world is willed, both imagination and reality become imprisoned in the established order, one is no longer able to see or foresee, not even in imagination.

Discussing the modern novel, Foucault shows that the trajectory taken in novels followed that linear path that traces the rise of the West and the End of History there, it moves “from east to West, from desire to knowledge, from imagination to truth, from the oldest longings to the finding of modern science” (116). Coming from a mode of being in which the modern subject is produced

and reproduced, the novel's function becomes, as all production under capitalism, to reproduce that which is there, closing any space of outside, whether it leads to a reality unwilling to be seen or an imagination that sees differently.

The novel is of an isolated individual, "who is no longer able to express himself by giving examples of his most important concerns, is himself uncounseled, and cannot counsel others." The novel lacks in council and wisdom, it cannot instruct, instead "By integrating the social process with the development of a person, it bestows the most frangible justification on the order determining it" (Benjamin, *Illuminations* 88).

Nevertheless, Mary Layoun, studying the travel of the novel from the West to Third World countries, shows that although the novel was implicated in the ideology of an imperial "civilizing mission," that would bring rational culture and true faith to the colonized, it became "the site of opposition to Western hegemony;" the oppositional here moves beyond the mere opposition of that which is Western. Layoun shows how in the novels of Haztisi, Kanafani, and Oe, "the very notions of "tradition," the "peasantry," "the individual," "modernization," "the intellectual," and the "worker" are crucially reexamined and redefined" (250).

These novels do not follow the trajectory of Western development, instead they "gesture toward the possibilities of a not-yet-spoken or seen future." They do not seek to preserve that which is there or repeat that which has been already said, they keep open the struggle for another world even if by pointing at (un)real or (im)possible solutions (250). The novels of Haztisi, Kanafani, and Oe, in their difference, gesture towards the deformation of colonial narratives; and in "their problematic narrative closure," they "attempt more overtly to violate narrative self - containment" (257).

Abdul-Rahman Munif, a novelist usually associated with realism, sees in the novel, as the work of an individual, a space of freedom. The Novel does not need funding, and thus it is not directly subject to power or capital. The novel works in a wider space, it shows that which is silenced, and that which is forbidden. The novel has a cunning way of saying things, it derives from history and popular legends a material for its work. It gives the illusion of writing of the past, while looking towards the present and the future (Munif 199- 200). The novelist, according to Munif, looks for the cruel and the profane; he uncovers, shedding light on problems and defects; for knowing them is the first step towards solving them (200). The novel unlike poetry is not oriented only towards emotions but speaks to all faculties (199). From this perspective, Munif, sees Kanafani's "Return to Haifa" as showing things without falsification, confronting facts with courage, dealing with reality without illusions or complicity. It does not allow us to see reality as we wish it to be, but as it is (76).

But Kanafani's realism, as described by Ihsan Abbas in the introduction to the collected novels, has reached a point where it is not possible to separate the historical reality from the artistic one, and thus we cannot consider his art as documentary, for he was not satisfied by arranging the elements of reality in an historical ascending or totalizing narrative, but "he re-arranged these elements, re-orienting and condensing them, exploiting the images, comparisons, and contradictions, that they become a new creation, which is of reality but not in it" (12).

Confrontation of reality in itself is not enough, the feeling aroused by this confrontation is as important (15). The courage of confrontation cannot be attributed to the novel as a genre; the novel, born as the modern form of art par excellence, is the most disciplined and most rationalized. This does not mean that its limits have not been transgressed, they have, as the examples above show and as I will show further below. But for the novel to speak to all faculties of man, to challenge its rationalized mode of being, it would have to transgress its own limits. It would have

to open in its spaces that are ruptures in its formal structure. It has, just as is the case with Césaire's theater, to become poetic to be able to overcome its own limitations.

A writer needs to be indifferent to the audience to free the audience from the position of the herd. He needs to free himself from the systematic blindness, which is a constituent element of both bourgeois and politicized art. "If I am a real story-teller, I won't worry about the differences in complexion of those who listen and those who don't, I just identify myself with those who are really listening and tell my story." The writer cannot try to beautify reality fearing that, "the crackers will use what you write against the race" (McKay 98). To change one's language to fit within a dominant value system, to not say Negro or black, opting for 'race men' or 'race women,' is to have one's knowledge of oneself just as one's mode of being determined by the colonizer.

McKay's writer, proud of his race, free of guilt towards the black people, confident of his willing and ability to fight for it, enjoys the freedom of writing the story for the love of it. This is not an art for art's sake stance, but a position allowed by a strong sense of belonging that no feelings of shame or guilt determine what is told in the story. The freedom of telling comes not from a free willing subject, who precedes his deed, or the author preceding his text, but from that "joyous surrender" to life and what comes in it, without any will to knowledge that would regulate that which is to be known in its attempt to regulate life, and without any need for concealment, "a good story, in spite of those who tell it and those who hear it, is like good ore that you might find in any soil in Europe, Asia, Africa, or America. The world wants the ore and gets it by a thousand men scrambling and fighting, digging and dying for it. The world gets its story the same way" (98). "A lot of dirt," may be brought up in this way of writing, but, "Many fine things come out of dirt-steel and gold, pearls and all the rare stones..." (99). For McKay, it is upper class Negroes, those leading a bourgeois mode of life, who require a knowledge, as their mode of being, based on abstention and concealment. The writer freed from the bourgeois mode of being, writes for the people "who can stand a real story no matter where it comes from" (100).

Kanafani had a similar stance to that of McKay, he wanted a real story, but one that is not a repetition of that which is there (al-Naqib 27). Kanafani was a collector of stories, as I mentioned above, not one who writes within a frame. For Kanafani, commitment and bias, search for the revolution, and solidarity with its men, are fatal chains for the writer, but what saves writing in this case is commitment to art (*Fares* 32). For Kanafani, the genius of the writer lies in his ability to present to us a whole cause in the simplicity of the man who lived it; the problem does not lie in a committed or non-committed art, committed art could be beautiful. To write of the people, one needs talent but also needs to have lived the life of the people, feel their pains, share their happiness, their concerns and needs (33).

One does not write from the books, but neither is it enough for one to see or listen to know, one has to have lived the life of which he writes. And since most writers have not, Kanafani's narrator usually does not know enough, or invents a story which he tells us is an invention of his imagination. Rejecting any possibility for a closed story, a complete knowledge that establishes an absolute Truth, Kanafani left most of his stories open. Hilary Kilpatrick described Kanafani's stories as puzzles, instead of closing them Kanafani leaves them open to the readers to propose the ends or as in "Al-batal fi al-ZinZana," challenges the critic to finish an unfinished story (63). This position is not only one of respect for those whose stories he tells, but in respect for the reader; for Kanafani, the short story is a work whose half is written by the writer and the other half is left to the reader to finish; the writer should only provide the reader with keys through which he could write the story through his own imagination. For the writer to give the reader a story where

everything is resolved is to consider the reader as “an idiot who needs to have understanding nailed into his head” (Kanafani qtd. in Dakroub 201).

Insisting on liberating his characters and the events of their lives from being trapped in an already made frame, the writer is maintaining his own freedom. To impose a story on someone’s life is a reflection of the imprisoned being of the writer himself:

how trapped are we in our bodies and minds...we attribute to others our traits and look at them through the narrowness of our perspectives and thoughts; we want to make them “us” as much as we can... we want to squeeze them into our skin, to give them our eyes to see with, and to dress them our past and our ways in facing life... we put them in frames drawn by our present conception of time and space (*CW II*: 150; “The Death of Bed #12”).

The most problematic issue for Kanafani was that of artificiality in art. How can one decide what is artificial? If it lies in the ability to tell of an event as it happened, then it is the writer’s failure. But what if the event as it did happen lacked in that which is defined as probable and spontaneous? What if reality had “thick lines of that “artificiality?” For the writer to add elements and drop others to “naturalize” the story; to lie in order to give the appearance of truthfulness, is lying (*CW II*: 828; “The Hero in the Prison Cell”). “Why do we deny the truth and look in our minds for an event that would be considered by the critics as plausible, isn’t there in that which has really happened a plausibility?” (836). Kanafani was concerned to write the story as it is, in respect to the hero and the event as it happened without adding or subtracting. He did not believe he was entitled to change the events to make them fit into that which makes a story “complete in its artistic structure,” or that which we consider of value. The writer should be more concerned to be at the level of the cause for which the hero suffered (828).

What is demanded of the story, what makes its reality not good enough according to the critics, is that it does not please, it leaves its readers unreconciled, they want an end in which the wronged receives justice, and in which the villain is either punished or has her conscience awakened (836-837). From the critics’ already established frames, it is not plausible that a woman be a traitor, what is more conceivable, what is willed to be the truth is that the woman was acting out of her emotions and sexual desires; for this is only what is plausible for a woman to be (838). Just as it was not plausible, “aesthetically,” that Um Sa’d was a positive heroic character compared to Abu Sa’d or the narrator, the passive men in the story.

Nevertheless, to tell what is seen or heard, as it happened, runs the risk of empiricism, one cannot stop at perceptual knowledge, as Mao Tse-tung shows, repeating the error of empiricism which fails to see that our perception of the real things of the world “are merely one-sided and superficial, reflecting things incompletely and not reflecting their essence.” One needs thought to reflect the essence of a thing, or to reflect it in its totality and its inherent laws. What is perceived needs to be reconstructed into rational knowledge. For Mao, this is a leap, which is constituted of the inclusion of that which is true, and discarding that which is false (*On Practice* 60). Truth and falsity should be determined by the subsequent step, which involves the possibility that the constructed knowledge (rational) knowledge allows for transforming the world. A theory that cannot be put into practice “is of no significance.” Practice thus is the source of knowledge and the end to which theoretical knowledge returns, for Mao “the active function of knowledge ... must manifest itself in the leap from rational knowledge to revolutionary practice” (61). A revolutionary knowledge is one that allows for the transformation of the established order. A rationalized knowledge that shows unity and stability is one that seeks to preserve the established order, while that which shows “becoming, passing away, and change” does not lie (Nietzsche, “Twilight” 480).

Knowledge, in this sense, is not comforting, human beings according to Nietzsche “desire the pleasant, life-preserving consequences of truth;” while “they are actually hostile towards truths which may be harmful and destructive” (“Truth” 143). Society thus determines what is true and false according to its function in preserving that which is established. The problem for Nietzsche is that people arrive at a feeling of truth through forgetting that the lie was a lie, a forgetting that comes with habit. Freeing the truth from the lie, would entail a battle, one that would show the lie as lie. The truth here would not be only rooted in practice as Mao has shown, but also in the willingness of the free fighter/writer to take the risk for it.

The Conscious and its Other

Césaire’s writing sought a liberation from a colonizing knowledge that entailed the search for another way of being and knowing which lies deep in his being. This quest for that which is denied or buried deep inside resonated with much of what surrealism presented. The Surrealists sought a non-rationalized knowledge, “that completely takes hold of things,” that allows for belief in words, which can do without antinomies. Their strength was in that it “affirms more than it denies,” and in its violent refusal to conform (Blanchot, *The Work* 86).

The surrealists found a space of freedom from a rationalized knowledge in the suspension of rational thought, a suspension that would release them from a subjectified being and the society that establishes it, while giving them access to a deeper knowledge of themselves and the world. The movement was thus an attempt at liberation from a conscious knowledge that is rationalized and regulated, and which as Nietzsche describes it, “involves a great and thorough corruption, falsification. reduction to superficialities. and generalization” (*Gay Science* 300).

Writing against any privileging of the consciousness as the site of knowledge, Nietzsche shows that consciousness is a mirror that shows us ourselves as we will it to be known by ourselves, developed under the pressure of the need for communication with others, it entails an othering of ourselves. It is in a state of dependency on others, that we seek our reflection; knowing ourselves in this case is an objectification that is necessitated by a mode of being that does not seek that which is individual, but rather that which is average. Our individuality, as our thinking, feelings, wills, and acts exist somewhere else, we have them even if we are not conscious of them, in a way to be conscious of them is to have them externalized and separated, “whatever we have words for we have already gone beyond” (“Twilight” 531). Words are thus the most superficial part of ourselves, or ourselves objectified as a reflection in words.

The writer himself disappears into a position and a function, that of the author, which is subject to a purpose that needs to be realized. The author as a function cannot enjoy the work, for the act of writing itself is preceded and subjected by the consciousness of the author. It is not the will of the writer that is at work here, but the will of the author whose physical and mental powers are subjected to the purpose of his *labour* which “determines the mode of his activity with the rigidity of a law.” The author’s position is not very far from Marx’s description of the worker bound by the purpose of his work on the expense of enjoying the work itself (*Capital* 284; Ch.7). This means that both the word and the one who utters/writes it need to be liberated from that superficial part in which man is objectified. For the surrealists, this liberation can be achieved by removing that outer layer that is consciousness, by freeing both writing and language from any mediation. Seeking a language whose proper reality is reality itself, they sought “the absolute” (Blanchot, *The Work* 86).

Sharing their scorn for Western rationalized knowledge, Césaire has been associated with the surrealists. But for Césaire, the surrealists were companions; he shared with them certain

elements, mainly their “forefathers, Lautréamont and Rimbaud” (qtd. in Tomich 368). Andre Breton was neither his instructor nor his source of inspiration, for he had already been the poet that he was before meeting Breton. He is thus neither indebted to them, nor committed to their project.

Arnold arguing Césaire’s indebtedness to the surrealists for their “poetic mode, intensely subjective and rooted in desire” (75), shows that “Césaire embraces subversive excess, in the manner of Lautréamont, for the purposes of challenging entrenched positions, both literary and political.” Later in his book, Arnold states that “The fact that parts of the poem [the “Notebook”] can be read literally or historically indicates that Césaire’s surrealism is not to be considered merely as an extension of the European movement” (150). This is not an affirmation of difference, but rather a cutting of the being of the poet into the different schools of Western, modernist, aesthetics.

This disfigurement of Césaire’s poetry, comes from the inability of the scholar to account for the difference of the colonized. A will to non-knowledge when rational knowledge is confronted with that which shakes its foundations; here its assumed superiority; but also its failure to establish the identity of things, the poet in the case of Césaire.

Surrealism, according to Kesteloot, was used by the black poets in their revolt against a civilization that has enslaved and colonized them. Unlike the surrealists, though, they were not fighting “their own mental structures or their own society;” but those of a foreign power. In Kesteloot as in Arnold, though, surrealism is seen as “an instrument for the reconquest of their original personality” (*Black* 45). Surrealism, in Kesteloot’s account was a temporary instrument used by Césaire to achieve certain ends; those that relate to the unconscious and that which is (presumed to be) repressed: wounds that could heal, and wounds that could not; monsters he could fight and ones he could not get rid of. Unlike Arnold, though, Kesteloot emphasizes that Césaire has found his own language; his own poetry with his own imprints (*Aimé* 63).

Césaire saw in surrealism the ability to break through Western modern knowledge, that such a breaking through may allow for an access to another part of his being, “the fundamental African.” Césaire like the surrealists sought a new epistemology, but his would come from another world with another mode of being. This new epistemology would not easily fit into categories like “irrationalist metaphysics,” (as Arnold is inclined to describe it), as that which is the Other and the opposite of the Western rational knowledge; it would rather have freed itself from the place of the Other. The Colonized would have opened for himself another place which is neither that of the Same nor that of the Other, to break free from both. In the end, as Foucault shows, the Same is never without its Other, neither could the Other be without the Same, both are a simulacrum; that which is of the realm of the rational, of reason, of the truthful is the Same/Other of that which is of the realm of desire (*Aesthetics* 131). Seeking the irrational, that which is opposite, is to seek the Same, and one ends up trapped within the same colonized mode of being and knowing.

Surrealism for Césaire, as Donna Jones has argued, was not a revelation as much as a confirmation; “it was a weapon that exploded the French language. It shook up absolutely everything.” It was this shaking of the order of things, breaking through language that Césaire needed for other parts of his being to rise to the surface. Césaire was not seeking an original being; his Nietzschean radicalism, as Jones terms it, does not allow him to be imprisoned within a singular mask that becomes his identity, his insistence on the plurality of the being of the black does not allow for a fundamentalist notion of blackness (164).

Césaire rebelled in writing, rejecting regularity or uniformity. Gregson Davis Described Césaire’s writing in the “Notebook” as volcanic: “In its disjointed style and apocalyptic tone, Césaire’s first poem seems to erupt onto the page with all the violence of a volcano, as layers of

images are superimposed like so many successive flows of lava.” Nevertheless, Davis argues that Césaire’s outpouring of poetic images lacked the spontaneity of the volcanic outpouring; the poet thus does not fit within the surrealist notion of “automatic writing,” pure spontaneity as Davis states is a “neo-Romantic myth” (19).

Davis does not appear very sympathetic with the surrealists, listing the surrealist “shibboleths”: “the vogue of the so-called “automatic writing” (realized more in the breach than the observance), the obsession with shocking images that juxtapose objects from disparate spheres of life, the alleged subversion of Cartesian logic, the worship of magic and mystic revelation, the idealization of woman as embodiment of Nature” (69), Davis seems to imply their inclination to become some kind of a fundamentalist system of belief.

Davis is not alone in this regard. Breton, according to Blanchot, could only find “an exact replica of Cartesian experience.” For he sought that which is unmediated, “I have the feeling of thinking, of suffering, this feeling is real, it is immediately linked to what I think, to what I suffer, it is an “absolute.”” Breton’s main illusion was “that this feeling could become an immediate language, become language without any sort of words intervening between him and his feeling.” The words do not intervene because his consciousness become the words themselves. What is suspended here is reflection, which would allow the “immediate consciousness to burst into language” (Blanchot *The Work* 87).

But suspension of reflection does not necessarily alter the social order, neither does it bring another epistemology, it may in fact further fortify the division between knowing and doing. Benjamin describes the work of art of the Dadaists, (here film), as “an instrument of ballistics. It hit the spectator like a bullet, it happened to him, thus acquiring a tactile quality.” Thought is suspended, and is replaced by moving images, which through their constant, sudden change interrupt the spectator’s process of association. It is the shock effect of the image that is at work here, freed from the presence of mind (*Illuminations* 238).

For Benjamin, the way we know things, cannot be solved by “optical means” which can be easily controlled through habit. Distraction is what has been effected by such an art, it becomes a “covert control of the extent to which new tasks have become soluble by apperception...Reception in a state of distraction” (240-241). Reflection remains suspended, but what is achieved is not a state of freedom; but rather a state of absent-mindedness.

The idea of doing away with the mind is both laughable and impossible for Kanafani; another illusion, and a detour from confrontation. One cannot rid himself of his mind, “to be free of it is like dropping one’s head to rid oneself of the conflict!” for Kanafani, those who considered unconscious hallucinations as art, have knocked their heads against the wall until they died.” His sarcasm aside, Kanafani shows that to seek to write automatically, the idea of spontaneity that excludes the mind *intentionally* is an artifice that involves the interference of the mind to extreme limits, despite the claim that unconscious art cannot be intended, or planned beforehand (*Fares* 47).

For Kanafani, it is possible, (Picasso is his example), to paint that which “one knows rather than what one sees.” But how can one write what he knows, rather than what he sees, and be spontaneous? Language itself is consciousness, for it involves meaning; without meaning it is no longer language, but words which would acquire the function of music. What Kanafani appears to be rejecting here is the notion that reflection, consciousness, and language as communication need to be suspended or deprived of their functions, that the being of the writer, (and by implication) the reader, is inverted into that of the unconscious, understood as the realm of psychology and

positively rejected by Kanafani, and with it that association in modern Western Culture between madness and art (Foucault, *Order* 50).

Kanafani described automatic writing that requires the suspension of the mind, as an attempt to escape conflict; for him, unlike the way it has been seen by the surrealists, in using language, as any other act, one should be responsible for oneself and one's act; a responsibility that most often would entail some kind of confrontation. The difference for Kanafani is that one does not have to be unconscious to write; again his understanding of the unconsciousness links it to the realm of madness, a realm of irresponsibility, it would not be heroic for one to act in violence only in a state of madness. Writing is a battle, confrontation is its most heroic form, even if that confrontation requires spilling one's own blood, whether one writes with one's blood to think that "blood is mind," or one writes with one's mind to think that one is bleeding, what is common to both cases, is their willingness to take the risk that good writing entails (Blanchot, *The Work* 15).

Taking the risk is something that the strong and the healthy can do. Those who have an "over-fullness of life," are able to face that which is tragic in life, they do not seek escapes and do not need to lie or conceal within the frame of a rational knowledge or its other. While those "who suffer from the *impoverishment of life*," seek an escape, "redemption from themselves through art and knowledge, or intoxication, convulsions, anesthesia, and madness." The ability "to stand the sight of the terrible and questionable," to be able to face "destruction, decomposition, and negation," the affirmation of "what is evil, absurd, and ugly," comes from the strength of life, not from a state of induced hallucinations (Nietzsche, *Gay Science* 328).

It is ironic, or it could be a mark of a space of freedom, that Kanafani seems oblivious to the fact that violent confrontation that entailed risks, whatever its source, whatever its effect, would always within a certain mode of knowing and being be considered, as I have shown in Chapter Two, the work of irrationality, the release of drives that should have been repressed in the Oedipal stage but were not, a failure of the rational, that most colonized people suffer from! But then Kanafani was not seeking recognition, neither as Self or Other.

Kanafani's rejection comes, to a large extent, from a mode of being in which knowledge has not been subjected by a rationalized function. Language does not signify absence for Kanafani, this is not a conservative or naïve position on the part of the writer who would not allow writing to become a process of objectification. Kanafani's position is rather that of the fighter, of another mode of being in which the split between what is said and what is done, between what we know and what we are conscious of is not presupposed. Not out of some kind of romanticism; but out of a different value system, in which a lie is and could only be a lie, even in how a story is told.

Césaire himself is not very far from this position. To always say the truth, as brutal as it might be, is heroism. Truth in the heroic sense is a passion. Quoting Péguy, Césaire shows that when we have the force of the truth we can confront all with it. Without the truth we lead a shamed, unjustified being, one of denial ("Le message" 254).

In a mode of being in which the word does not signify absence but the mobilization and materialization of a series of forces that affect all aspects of life, lying cannot be normalized. A. Hampata Ba shows that "most traditional oral societies consider lying as an actual moral leprosy. In traditional Africa, the man who breaks his word kills his civil, religious and occult person. He cuts himself off from himself and from society" (172). The word, endowed with a sacred character associated with its divine origin, cannot be treated lightly (167).

Davis does show, in fact, that Césaire did not seek an unconscious in the psychological sense of the word. Davis conceived of the unconscious in Césaire in cultural-specific terms; giving Africa the place of the unconscious, it was "the fountainhead from which his own repertory of

surreal images was ultimately derived” (72). Africa was a source for what appears as “surreal images,” but it was not the only one, Césaire’s images derived from his being, and since he swore to leave nothing out (*CP*; “Notebook”), they were also derived from the colonized past and present, as well as from dreams for another future. For Césaire, Poetry is the coming out of “all the dreams, all the desires, all the accumulated rancor, all the formless and repressed hopes of a century of colonialist domination,” this is a violent bloody movement, that carries along “without distinction the conscious and the unconscious, lived experience and prophecy, that is called poetry” (qtd. in Arnold 126). Frenchness is only superficial, it is only one layer, the outer one; the opening of cracks, the breakthroughs that poetry creates on the surface, allows one to plunge into the depths where Africa lies; “beneath the social being would be found a profound being, over whom all sorts of ancestral layers and alluviums had been deposited” (Césaire “An Interview” 84).

Césaire may have found an analogy for his poetry in the work of the unconscious as in surrealism, but the movement of the speaker in the “Notebook” (*CP*) as that of the Rebel in “And the Dogs were silent” (*Lyric*) was not in any way a privileging of the unconscious, neither was it an unconscious one. Césaire did not seek to become a surrealist, but he sought a free life, which cannot be sought through a practice that is not free. He rejected a disciplined, crushed writing, which necessarily entailed a being split between consciousness and unconsciousness; and it was in a poetry of affirmation and confrontation that he found his free practice.

The poet, for Nietzsche, is an imposter, for he “feigns” to know that which he does not know, relying on the ignorance of his audience. But succeeding, he is lead into “the delusion that he really knows as much as the individual experts and creators.” He comes to believe in his sincerity, that he has the “higher” truth. His success as his truthfulness come out of people’s weariness of reality. With this benefit of escaping reality, “the visions of the dream,” acquire more value, and thus become more real. The poets thus disparage and distort reality into “the uncertain, the illusory, the spurious, the impure, the sinful, sorrowful, and deceitful.” Their poetry becomes a darkening force, spreading uncertainty over what is known, they are able to justify their own existence as “the path to “true truth” and “real reality”” (*Human* 27- 28).

Nietzsche’s criticism is very close to the condemnation of poets we see in the Qur’an; but this condemnation is not absolute, the condemnation is directed towards those who say that which they do not do, who mislead people. These poets are described as roaming in every direction; roaming, *Haam*, in Arabic, refers to the one who loses control, to roam is to be uncertain, to not know one’s path, and to suffer from a lack that becomes the main moving force which leads one to lose control and, in the same time, lure people into that which is not right. Nevertheless, as I said this applied to those on whom the description above applied, and not to all poets. Among the Arabs, before and after Islam, the poet has been regarded as the one who has a higher knowledge, his knowledge comes from the power of feeling which characterizes the poet- the word for poet in Arabic is *Sha’er*, literally the one who feels; this power of feeling gives him a higher knowledge. Poetry is thus considered a source for wisdom and knowledge, it can also have the effect of a spear, now, we say words are bullets.

The power of Poetry, as we have seen in Kanafani’s position above, lies in its truthfulness, that it does not attribute to people or things that which is not of them, whether good or bad. One does not say what one does not know, to do so is as much a lie. As long as the poet says what he knows to be true then he is not one of those who roam and lure others. The measure of poetic writing, is the measure of truth, it lies in the risk one is willing to take for its sake, his ability to confront, disturb and shake the order of things, his willingness to fight for his writing, even if this entailed his death, this would be the condition of both a free writer and a free word.

“Joyous Surrender”

To the question can there be knowledge without power, Trinh gives two opposite answers, no, because power relations “are rooted deep in the social nexus- not merely added to society nor easily locatable so that we can just radically do away with them.” And yes, a knowledge without power exists “in the cracks and interstices that keep on being suppressed because they tend to render more visible the failures operating in every system” (*Woman* 41). This also means that language itself has to be broken through, it has to be ruptured and fissured to allow for another knowledge that comes from another being. That which is absented in language, the acts, the feelings, the thoughts, can rise to the surface of language, when the word carries within it that which it was not meant to carry, that which exceeds the limits of the rationalized knowledge of the herd.

It is in the realm of excess, as Trinh shows, where the abstract and the concrete, the personal and political meet, in writing “one’s life with one’s blood,” that ruptures are created; for institutionalized knowledge could no longer contain such an excess (44). It is in the being of the poet, that such contradictions meet, the poet gives the physical and the tactile, which cannot be rationalized or explained, to the word, the latter given back to life is no longer an abstraction (Césaire, *Lyric* xlix; “Poetry”).

The word, in Césaire, the poetic image, as Jones has argued, is closer to truth because it shows change and becoming; it is of life and mobilizes life, which in “its movements, interdependencies, and metamorphoses bring discursive knowledge to silence by its own law of noncontradiction and the stable entities on which it depends” (155). The poet’s role “would help widen and deepen the intuitive, experiential mode,” which is marginalized by the dominant mode of being, that of Europe. The poet’s knowledge is not received in isolation from his people, but from those parts of themselves which survived colonization because they remained outside that which is institutionalized; as Jones shows, the living oral tradition functions as a main source for another knowledge that comes from another mode of being. Seeking those parts is not a reaction or escape through illusions, but part of the lives of the Africans, inherited, even if in traces by the uprooted and colonized Martiniquans and thus it does exist somewhere in their being, the poet thus is “the initiator of a communal task that revives group memory of their authentic ontology and instigates the invention of a new collectivity” (156).

As I have shown in the previous chapter what is inherited from African ancestry and gives hope for the future is that which relates to the force of life, and its ability to regenerate itself. Césaire, as other black writers, found in a poetry that is made of blood, love of life and dream of death, as that of Langston Hughes and Claude McKay, a language that is made of dynamism and life (Léro 58). The black poets were aware that they do not have a pure Negro- African sensibility, but the rhythm of the heart of the Negro carried in their words comes from these gaps and fissures in language that their mothers’ songs, the songs of somewhere else, created (Cailler 19).

Embracing life instead of seeking detours, the poet’s knowledge brings us closer to truths, for it does not involve a will to non-knowledge; its knowledge is one of life non-objectified, a knowledge that is not confined to and by that which is reflected in consciousness, it is made of emotion, fear, love and rapture, non-sublimated, abstracted or detoured (xliii). This for Césaire, is “a joyous surrender,” which poetry as an adventure entails. It is in this surrender that the poet attains clairvoyance and knowledge (xliv).

The poets, look in dark places, those not reached by enlightened knowledge; what they know is thus different from what is to be known. Poetry as a surrender is a subversion of a

stabilized and rationalized world; it involves the ability to confront a being without certitude, the ability to take responsibility for oneself, to take the risk of living. This is not “a joyous surrender,” according to Blanchot; for it refers to giving up fleeing, a suspension of the will to ignorance that “makes life easier and tasks more feasible;” to stand face to face with that which is cast into the shadow, willed to be unknown and made invisible although there (*Space* 170). It is a confrontation with a detached, uprooted being; a being without a horizon, a future or hope; it is to encounter death.

The movement here is not an inversion or an opposition that seeks the other that affirms the same (167); but being in another domain, indifferent to the rules and restrictions of that which is there. The Poet, for Blanchot, is Orpheus, who seeks to bring that which lies in the depth “to the light of day, and give it form, shape, reality in the day light of the day.” But to do that he will have to turn away from it as he needs to forget “the work that he is to achieve,” surrendering here is surrendering to the movement, a suspension of the being of a conscious subject to allow for the movement itself (171). Giving up the will to know, Eurydice is sought “in her nocturnal obscurity, in her distance, with her closed body and sealed face... not when she is visible but when she is invisible” (172). “Showing the extent to which the invisibility of the visible is invisible,” is what constitutes the work of fiction (Foucault, *Thought* 23-24). Poetry as descent into the abyss, into the night, creates a space where invisibility becomes visible, it shows that which is disavowed; what it achieves is a transgression of the limits of the bourgeois mode of life (169).

This is not exclusively the condition of the poet, neither does it describe the condition of all poets. But it is the condition of the inspired; the one who is able to move beyond the limits of knowledge, to that other space.

The being of the poet as in Blanchot, is divided between two hands, one that writes lacking in mastery, and the other one, subject to society, is characterized by mastery and intervenes to interrupt writing, restoring the writer back to the present world and its demands (*The Space* 25). To write, the writer has to take leave of the day, from the demands of action and time, it is a detachment of language from the day (26), which also entails a detachment from the self. The existence of the poet, which is only in the poem and not before it, is conditioned with “the permanent leave of absence granted to the self, to every subjective certainty and to the world’s truth” (227).

In the disappearance of the writing subject, writing becomes a constant transgression of its own limits and rules (Foucault, *Aesthetics* 206). Transgression, as Foucault describes it, “has its entire space in the line it crosses.” It is an incessant movement of crossing and recrossing; which lasts only for a short duration and “thus it is made to return once more right to the horizon of the uncrossable.” Transgression cannot exist without a limit, and the limit cannot be a limit “if it were absolutely uncrossable” (73). Transgression does not upset “the solidity of foundations,” it is neither violent nor revolutionary. “Its role is to measure the excessive distance that it opens at the heart of the limit and to trace the flashing line that causes the limit to arise.” What transgression affirms is the limitlessness of the limit (74).

Death as the ultimate limit is made visible in a movement that puts it in contact with the origin; language in literature shows the oscillation of both the origin and death by bringing them to “a momentary contact in a boundless space.” Showing their oscillation and simultaneity, it shows the origin taking on “the transparency of the endless;” and death opening “interminably onto the repetition of the beginning” (*Thought* 57). In this movement, Language promises the disappearance and future appearance of every existence (58).

Encountering death is a liberation for the subject from his one-sided being. When one no longer believes in God, when death is no longer part of life, one is left with one eye. In a compartmentalized and systematized world, one has no need for the other side (Kanafani *CW II*: 527; “Half the World”). This is the condition of the one-sided man, who is unable to see things in their relations and adjacencies. The one-sided man sees things in binary relations, things are always split in two halves, but since he only has one eye, he could see the half as the total. Seeing life thus excludes death, and happiness excludes sadness. His world is an ordered world, the existence of one thing, means that other things at that point do not exist, to speak means the silence of others, and to be present means their absence (531). Nevertheless, to be unable to see that other side of things, to not see that death exists with life, that happiness comes with sadness, that when one speaks, moves and exists, other beings do as well, is to lose one’s life as well (533).

We speak to defer death, says Foucault (*Aesthetics*), and we develop a will to knowledge that seeks to regulate life, to regulate that which in it we cannot regulate and thus dismiss into the other side of life (*History*). Hidden from everyday life, made invisible, it stands there as the limit of being from which we escape only to find ourselves failing in deferring it as we fail in living, what we succeed in doing is to chain ourselves in our escape. Just as with Oedipus, who, having the knowledge that came from the prophecy, failed to know, falling into the destiny from which he was escaping. The prophecy in Kanafani, is the limit and failure of the will to knowledge, it is the failure of regulating that which cannot be regulated, a confrontation with the limit of being and knowing.

The prophecy in “If You Were a Horse” (*CW II*: 509- 522), did not help the father avoid that which was destined. One knows that which he could not have known by a mark on the body, by the utterances of a witch. The prophecy turned death into a problem of knowledge, not knowing becomes a guilt that is transferred to another. This other becomes the constant threat that the mistake (of not knowing) will be repeated again. It is in this way that not knowing becomes a source of both fear and hate; knowing becomes an obsessive imperative that seeks to control that which cannot be controlled, death. But one cannot know that which cannot be known, for it is to live one’s life haunted by the terror that the prophecy would be realized again. In the struggle to escape that which one fears, one has lost from the very beginning, for to escape it is to live under its power imprisoned by it, it is to move in a straight line towards it (521). The paralysis and impotency that comes with fear, the attempt to avoid that which is said to be one’s destiny is the mistake that will inevitably repeat endlessly the first mistake that has been turned into one’s destiny (522).

This is where Césaire’s “Joyous surrender” to the forces of life becomes a source of liberation. Instead of concealment, agitation, and one-sidedness, confrontation with the limitations of life allows for the opening of those other spaces that have been willed to be unknown, and it is in this opening that life itself is liberated, the willingness to confront is an embracement of that which comes in life, including death. In Kanafani, freedom lies in indifference to death, as to any other limit, one fights for a cause in which he believes; that it entails risks is part of what life is. One dies only once when he lives life free of fear, but dies every day when fearing death, for fearing death necessarily entails fearing life.

The Marroon, The Vagabond, The *Su’luk*

For Kanafani, the ultimate form of freedom the writer could have is that of the vagabond, who is happily a rebel and a writer, with no parts of his being in conflict with each other. The

figure of the *Su'luk* is the epitome of this being. In his satire of existentialism as in Sartre's philosophy, Kanafani posits the latter against the *Su'luk*, to show the impotency of the modern philosopher. The Existentialism of the *Sa'alik*, was not escapist, coward and self-conciliatory as that of "Mr. Sartre." These men rebelled against the tribe, although the tribe was the Law. It is very curious whether the historical inaccuracy, or the confusion of two different historical periods with two different modes of being was meant in Kanafani's satire; referring to rebellion as being against the Law, as his formulation of it as one that is carried on basis of class, race or economic structures, seems to be a gesture back to where Kanafani started. i.e. Sartre's existentialism. But as in his usual way of sarcasm, Kanafani could be saying that this is what the *Sa'alik* were, or not exactly what they were, but this is not the main point, the main point is what the modern philosopher is not. The *Sa'alik* chose to fight for their beliefs, expressing them by force rather than give them up in return for tribal security. Undermining the authority of the tribe, they were expelled, "they left to the desert each with a horse, a sword and a position, and sometimes only with a sword and a position." Behind each of these men, there was cause, it was their commitment to the cause that gave them the power to fight even if the whole tribal world was against them, even when their rebellion leads them into a heroic isolated death. The *Sa'alik* were then existential philosophers, they were warriors and rebels, but they were also "first rank poets!" (*Fares* 125).

Kanafani sough that being of the rebel writer, taking leave from any institutionalized form of being, including informal writer's circles. He did not isolate himself from the people, from the writers and intellectuals, or from party men and politics, belonging to all and to none at the same time, for he alone set the rules for how he does things, taking the risks and paying the price entailed in such a mode of being.

Kanafani always failed to belong to the world of the intellectuals, "We were readers; he was a writer" (al-Naqib 17). He lived instinctively, celebrating life at each moment, everyday life was an important event for him (19). Kanafani, in fact, has managed to "alienate," many Palestinian intellectuals, Faisal Darraj and Fadl al-Naqib among others, in his contempt to the educated and intellectuals, who we see in his texts suffering ennui, detachment, and passivity. In Fadl al-Naqib's description of Kanafani, the latter was arrogant, he never undervalued his work, never felt he needed to apologize for it, he was always ready to defend his texts (14). But what is more upsetting for al-Naqib is that Kanafani had no appreciation for literary and intellectual circles, he did not feel he needed to be reconciled with doubts he (did not) had about his work. He instead insisted on public forums in which he could read his work to the people. He wanted to dismantle the private house (of intellectuals), and "put us all with our anxieties and doubts in the street" (15).

Kanafani's rejection to identify with artists, his "arrogance," could be seen as part of a fight for individuality, for as Nietzsche had expressed it, exceptionality lies in rejection of the demand of "propriety, reserve, character, steadfastness of purpose, comprehensiveness, perspicuity, good deportment in gait and feature" (Nietzsche, *Human* 62). Only when standing before people like Um Sa'd, those who melt while struggling for life, that Kanafani is a humble writer (*CW* I: 235; "Preface to Um Sa'd"), not that he suffers doubts and suspicions, but the certainty that he has is that writing could never tell all, that there always remains more to be known, more to be written, and more to be done.

In Kanafani's stories, the constant reflections, the multiplicities of stories, the representation of the act of representation do not allow for the incorporation of people's lives in any discourse. What is shown in these stories are the silences themselves as silences, a de-familiarization of that which has been overfamiliarized; to show that which cannot be seen but

from “a certain position, attitude or viewpoint” (Foucault, *Archeology* 86) means that the one who sees/ knows should shift positions, move into others.

The freest writer, for Nietzsche, is the one who breaks definite forms, thrusting them to the realm of the indefinite, there is no singular or exact meaning to be extracted from his text. He is right and wrong at the same time, able to interweave profundity and farce. He changes parts with his readers, “his book being like a play within a play, a theatre audience before another theatre audience” (*Human* 62).

The shifting in Kanafani’s stories between an I that speaks and a “he,” that is spoken of does not point to the one speaking or spoken of as much as show the mirror. At the same time, the story, is often shown to exceed any knowledge that the narrator has of it. We are constantly reminded that there is something to be added, that there may be a continuation, that certain parts of the lives being told about remain untold. What is constantly declared in Kanafani’s texts, is a disownment of the story by the narrator.

In Kanafani’s writing, it is the act of representation itself, the mirror, that is represented. In “Six Eagles and a Child,” (*CW II*: 235-236). The multiplicities of stories about the same scene, shows the act of seeing itself, it reflects on the construction of the story. It shows us the way we reflect ourselves in the mirror. Each of the story-tellers in the story sees in the scene that which is of his own experience, what he knows rather than what is there, the story-tellers themselves are represented in the story by the narrator, who shifts his position to become another represented story-teller who represents the scene. The representation of the act of representation, the multiplicity of voices that speak pointing to their being as representation dissociates, as Foucault has described Magritte’s painting, resemblance from affirmation, “disrupting their bonds, establishing their inequality,” showing “the indefinite continuation of the similar” (*Aesthetics* 199). Language here does not fold back upon itself, “it unveils its own being,” it reveals gaps, a dispersion of signs (*Thought* 12).

Nevertheless, while the six stories do not tell us what is resembled, the child, as the title of the story indicates, stands outside these acts of representation, the child does not see an eagle, he knows that what is seen as an Eagle is a tree, he knows because he eats from that tree, his relation to the tree unmediated, he does not mythify the tree (Barthes, *Mythologies*). The child sees the tree die by the end of each summer and grow back each spring, the child’s knowledge showing change, becoming, life and death, is one of life rather than one of society.

In Kanafani’s stories, even in those that consist of multiple stories, there is a truth, some kind of truth, it is not an established absolute truth, for it never takes one definite form, the stories say something, they point at it, but never name it. It can never be established as one definite meaning that an author intended, for Kanafani, himself has said that his stories exceeded what he thought he had in his mind (qtd. in A. Yaghi 42). In “The Slope” (*CW II*: 469-477), we never know whether the father is dead or alive, he is present as an absence, all the stories told by the child are about his absence. The child did try an optimistic story about his poor father who made it in a capitalist world. But the story is rejected by the audience of students, the child is thus to keep giving different stories to explain the absence of the father. All stories repeat one truth: the invisibility of the father, he could be buried under the waste of the rich, or under their piles of shoes that he needed to mend; but he is not there.

In this story as in others, the narrator is a teacher who has nothing to teach refugee children, he thus shifts positions, teaching thus becomes a process of telling stories, where no one is the teacher. Confronted by the limits imposed by an authority that declares the madness of the child, the teacher opts for the side of madness, and tells another story that explains the absence of the

father, this time the story is of the worker who worked too much that he ended up being trapped in the tools he used, his hand stuck between the nail and anvil. In Kanafani's story, while the worker/author is trapped in the tools of his work, the child never believed that his father is dead, against his absence, he believes that when the summer comes, the piles under which he is buried will dry and he will be able to rise to the surface.

al-Thawra

In Arabic the word for the eruption of the volcano is *thawra*, which is the same word used for people rising to overthrow an established order. The volcano implies something that appears dormant, it implies a piling up, boiling, and an eruption that appears sudden while it is not. It is not surprising then that Césaire's imagery included the volcano or one of its associated traits, as it is not surprising that it is its act that is the word for people rising to overthrow that which oppresses them.

Bernadette Cailler shows that the movement in the "Notebook," as the movement of the colonized in their struggles are condensed in two main images in Césaire's poetry: that of the volcano, the scream of anger, of rebellion, of revolt, and that of the plant, the growing of roots, the generation of life. Césaire sought a similar way of doing and a similar effect as that of the volcano, the eruption of that which appears quiet and pacified; the destruction that it could bring to a colonized being; the clearing and fertilization that it creates for a new life.

Césaire's volcano is his revolution that does not imply a thing turning around itself, ending at the point where it started. Césaire words for the revolution are ones that connote rising, plunging, ascensions and descents, piercing and breaking through. These are movements that do not revolve, they create openings, they leave effects, ones of destruction and/or ones of generation of life. Poetry is revolutionary, for Césaire, "because it is the world turned upside down, ploughed up, transmuted" (Césaire in Melsan int. 3).

It is ironic, says Davis in his reading of Césaire's plays, that the poet "does not, empirically any more than in the play's action, succeed in changing the world through incantation, but is defeated by the inertia of neo-colonialism with its crushing combination of internecine strife and cynical capitalism" (155). Another critic would respond that the poetic word does not change anything in life, "the great black" has not "shaken the foundations of the world," because the poetic text cannot but remain at "the lived borders of dream and reality." The poetic, Cailler stresses, should be read within its own imperatives and limits; it is because poetry is both in the world and outside it that it serves life (85).

Nevertheless, the poetic word has a material reality in Césaire, but its materiality does not exclude or replace another act. The word is a raving spasm, it takes place on the level of the body, within it, it is something that the poet gives to himself, something tangible that he holds in his hands, and holding it, he finds both courage and strength to fight (*CP* 229; "Word"). The word does have the materiality of an act, its materiality lies in its sonority, as that of a tiger's roar, or ringing bullets. There are words that could be "spear-pointed" words (*CP* 49; "Notebook"), and words that have the power to shake "the world's foundations" (*Lyric* 47; "And the Dogs").

Césaire's Rebel has faith in words, for words have that vibrating power that may shake an oppressive colonizing world. Words do not conceal, any word that is not a confrontation, not a "cry of hunger, of poverty, of revolt, of hatred" is a mute cry, for it does nothing. The word is action and creation it has "the power of fire," it illuminates, it burns and destroys that which is dead. Césaire's word is not an abstraction, not a shallow layer of his being, for it is his being "barbaric naked black sagacious and brown" (27). A physical concrete language, referred "back to

the cry, to the tortured body, to the materiality of thought, to the flesh” (Foucault, *Order* 384), has the power to dismantle the existing order; “It releases conflicts, disengages powers, liberates possibilities” (Artaud 31).

In the beginning of the “Notebook” (*CP*), Césaire dismisses order as an annihilation of life and thus hope. What is dismissed is any ordered, regulated or censored writing; and with it any morality that promotes its deadening effects. Césaire turns from an ordered being towards another, that which is ever present in his depth, a being that is constantly evoked through “a never exhausted thought,” it is in this movement that he reaches parts that “guard against the putrefying force of crepuscular surroundings, surveyed night and day by a cursed venereal sun.” These are real and present parts of him, but are “paradises lost” to the “flunkies of order,” whose reproduced life is a sick one, at its sources (*CP* 35). They are not equally accessible to anyone, they require a certain position, a certain way of doing and being, that is not compatible with an ordered one closed upon itself.

What has been perceived as Césaire’s rejection of reason is a rejection of the established order which gave birth to slavery. Césaire does away with a value system based on order, for it belongs to a culture in which beauty is seen in that which lacks in life as it lacks in truth. His rejection takes the form of an inversion and an affirmation of the position of the other of civilized Europe. This is not a complete inversion in which the Same and the Other would refer back to each other, for the affirmation here is of kinship not of an identity. The other with whom kinship is claimed is not given any content, the “dementia praecox,” “the flaming madness” (49), are the traits of a cannibalism that cannot be known or understood by Western knowledge. While the first refers to a being that departs from itself, in which the faculties of remembering and forgetting work outside what is instituted as rational, the madness that is associated with it, is not a sick one that need or could be treated, but one with a destructive force, which in Césaire, necessarily implies a generative force as well. The madness here is one that remembers what reason would dictate forgetting; it is a speech that cannot be confined to its proper space, for it cries; it also entails a seeing of that which should not be seen, a breaking free from the regulation of reason.

This breaking free entails not only unknowing what Europe has taught the colonized, but also the subversion of language as a tool for communication, through which we know what we know, when Césaire writes: “That 2 and 2 are 5/ that the forest miaows/ that the tree plucks the maroons from the fire/that the sky strokes its beard/etc., etc. ...” (51), What Césaire in this part of the poem does is show rational language as representation. For Foucault, referring the signs (numbers are signs and acts of representation) to other indeterminate meanings opens the space of language, it transgresses its limits and points to that which is different (*Aesthetics* 74). In Césaire, it does more, Césaire here is breaking European ordering of things. By showing the arbitrariness of processes of making equivalent, he is breaking open categories in which the colonized black, among other beings, has been imprisoned. Equivalence as Nietzsche has shown entails “dropping individual differences arbitrarily, by forgetting those features which differentiate one thing from another.” It entails subsuming “numerous individualized and hence non-equivalent actions which we equate by omitting what is unlike” (“Truth” 145). Césaire’s use of the non-equivalent formula becomes a reversal, for here he adds rather than subtract, pointing to that which has been dropped. The subversion of the operations of language as representation here, is a subversion of knowledge (Foucault, *Order* 86-87) enabling a subversion of a certain mode of being.

Césaire sought to create disorder and chaos. The climate of poetry for Césaire is a “climate of flame and fury,” it is one of confusion. In this climate, civilized institutions no longer function, conventions wear out and laws give up their virtues (*Lyric* L; “Poetry”). It is the revolutionary

image that brings in this chaos, “it overthrows all laws of thought,” allowing us to break down the barrier. The barrier is between the word as sign and its signified, for Césaire, the identity between the image and the thing it reflects does not exist, “In the image A is no longer A,” (li), but neither is this relation one of negativity, in which the word is the absence of the thing it signifies (lii), instead “the image maintains the possibility of the happy medium” (lii). The image surpasses that which is perceived (liii), it has the power of creating another way of knowing, allowing for another language, and opening the potentiality for another being.

The words of the poet bring back life to that which has dried up, no longer able to blossom. Césaire’s poetic word moves man back from the abstracted being of the subject to “the cosmic thrust” (xlvi); this is not a regression, the primordial is achieved not by a backwards movement, but by the power of the word to break through that which is a dead layer, to move that which is stagnant. The power of the poetic image lies in the realm of passions; a power that detaches one from his life, even if for a brief instant, turning him into “an imagining being” (Bachelard 168).

In Bachelard, the poetic image places us “at the origin of the speaking being.” It touches “the depths before it stirs the surface;” taking root in us, it becomes our own, “it becomes a new being in our language, expressing us by making us what it expresses; in other words, it is at once a becoming of expression, and a becoming of our being. Here expression creates being” (Xxiii).

When Césaire states that he “would rediscover the secret of great communications and great combustions.” He recreates the words, frees them from their history, restores them back to their beginning, relates them back to life and its forces. This is a violent act in which words in their constant “mad movement” cannot become objects enclosed upon themselves, neither can they be appropriated or subjected to exploitation. His words are ones of anger, they are a cry, they do not communicate a meaning, their power lies in their presence, in their sound, in their being part of a living being not reduced to or chained by consciousness, they are to be understood in the same way we understand “the roaring of a tiger” (CP 45; “Notebook”).

Words mobilize the forces of life. Speech in the African tradition, as Hampate Ba has shown, is “regarded as the materialization or externalization of the vibrations of forces.” Chanted in rhythm, “man’s speech animates, sets into motion and rouses the forces that are static in things” (171). Rhythm is not imposed externally but rises from the depth, it comes from the tempo of life, from our deep interior vibrations, it is the summoning of emotion, it precedes speech, it calls the word, shapes, seduces and necessitates it (qtd. in Kesteloot, *Aimé* 205).

Words thus are a creation of life and they carry its forces, they are made of “fresh blood,” they move and have the ability to make move, they are diseases, lava, fires and “blazes of flesh/ and blazes of cities...” (CP 57; “Notebook”). Césaire’s texts sought to create a frenzy of desire, of extreme movement, of cruelty, of destruction. Frenzy, as described by Nietzsche, comes with “an overcharged and swollen will,” it gives a feeling of “increased strength and fullness” (“Twilight” 518). A mobilization of feelings and will, it is a condition that does not allow for a passive stagnant being.

Telling of Something Else

Césaire sought “a sacred literature,” “a sacred art,” which would link the colonized to history, “elevating them to a plane which is precisely that of “becoming,” and therefore the opposite of stagnation.” This “sacred literature,” is the literature with the force which could plunge deep enough to those emotional forces that have not been exploited or appropriated by colonialism, such forces are necessary to give back to the colonized “the power of resistance and will to strive” (“The Man” 131).

For Césaire a real decolonization that does not end in a neo-colonial entity cannot be achieved without creating another man. This is the mission of the black writers as “the *propagators of the soul*, the multipliers of the soul, and, in the last resort, the *inventors of the soul*.” For as I have shown in the first chapter, one cannot be free of colonialism by achieving political secession, one needs to rid himself of his whole colonized being. If another, non-colonized soul, does not exist then it is to be invented (127- 128).

The process of shedding off a colonized being, entails both affirmation and confrontation, this process of confronting the ugly, the hard, the questionable in life is one of courage and freedom. It entails a heroism, for it entails a being used to suffering, one that seeks it instead of turning its back to it, turning away from life. Cruelty in this sense is sweet (Nietzsche, “Twilight” 530).

Hashem Yaghi commenting on Kanafani’s writing in the collection “A World Not for Us,” criticizes Kanafani’s title as well as his commitment to it as a theme in the stories of the collection. Not realizing that this theme was an ever present one in Kanafani’s works including the more optimistic ones like “Um Sa’d” and “Of Men and Guns.” What is different here is that the stories confront us with that which is ugly and cruel, and at many points repulsive in a capitalist world. Here the problems of the heroes, the cruelties of their lives cannot be dismissed by the readers as those suffered by the Palestinians, which only pertain to the “Palestinian Question,” what he wrote of here was man diminished and sickened in a modernized world.

Nevertheless, Yaghi shows that Kanafani succeeded in this collection in writing stories that are to be read by readers who are receptive for that which is of higher and deeper thought (230). What is implied here is not a class hierarchy as much as what Nietzsche called “the proper reader,” the one who is willing to be confronted with the ugly, hard and problematic, without denials and detours. Notwithstanding his praise of Kanafani’s skill in the collection, Yaghi is unable to digest, what could be the cruelest of the stories, “His Arm, Hand and Fingers” (Kanafani, *CW II*: 447-458), Yaghi protests that there is no “reasonable justification,” for the behavior of the old man: could not the old man find a way other than revenge? Disappointed in his son, why “should he take revenge on a little cat?” (332)

In the story, the old man, driven by a bitter anger, disappointment and humiliation, made a decision that “if you wanted to get something, take it with your arms, hands, and fingers” (449), but for an old helpless man, this translates into the revenge of the weak. To be wronged and not be able to fight for oneself is to be unable to rid oneself of the wrong, to live with it eating away at his being, to feel the blood sucked out of him. In this condition, all he could do is try to satisfy his need for revenge by naturalizing the wrong that was done to him, the little cat sucking blood from the older cat, becomes how things should be, something that we should not and cannot do anything about. Starving the little cat by depriving it of its mother, leaving it without food, and then leaving it to suck the life out of the older cat, is justified as the nature of life; so are passive bitter anger, isolation, disappointment, and deprivation, they are the way life is, a life that sucks life out of itself.

There is no justification as Yaghi protests, but there is not either for slavery, colonialism, and a life of exploitation under capitalism. But one may as the romantics do, prefer to escape what man has done to life by escaping to the innocence of nature, only to destroy what remains of it. Yaghi’s protest is directed at the writer; for what is said, in declaring a world as not for us, is that no nation-state, political-secession, or self-rule would make this world ours, that the Palestinian fighting on his land for his freedom is more free than the free willing subject of a modernized

world leading an isolated life in a glass box that is only one unit in a bigger glass box, which is this world.

The inability of most of Kanafani's critics to digest the ending of "Men of the Sun," except for Radwa' Ashur and Majida Hammud, (interestingly both are women writers), is related to this denial we see here of a collection of stories that rejects the present. The cruelty in "Men in the Sun" manifests itself in the cry of the emasculated smuggler, hearing his cry, we do not know whether we should laugh at some intended irony here, or be angry at a reality exposed by the cry itself. I am not referring to the death of the three men, but the fact that the so much sought cry, "of why did this happen," of realism, has been given by Kanafani to the emasculated figure who after uttering the cry, did not hesitate to take their belongings, a gesture that renders the word, the cry, void.

Kanafani meant to hurt, he blocked all paths for escape or denial, we needed to be angry, we could be angry at him or what he has written, but as long as this is not what is cruel in reality, then we will never be able to have done with this anger. Kanafani does not tell us that we need to act, he just shakes any stabilized grounds on which we stand. But also he believed that in the deepest parts of our being, there is an obscure thing that lights the darkest corners of our lives. It is an immense power that embraces man's suffering and turns it into solid feet that keep marching in the thorny and terrifying paths of life... (*Fares* 139). Mobilizing pain could be a mobilization of that obscure thing. That thing that does not go away, shared by the poet and the fighter, that passion that allows us to dream of making a deal with destiny to dismantle a monotonous world, to little pieces, to rebuild it anew, as our hearts wish it to be (*CW II*: 58; "Something that Does Not Go Away").

The clairvoyant, whether a poet or the storyteller as described by Trinh, "is an oracle and a bringer of joy," she is "a personage of power;" her power is one of life, it does not only bring an illumination, it also extinguishes, it wounds as it soothes (*Woman* 126). In the story as in the poem, the opposition between the factual and the fictional, story and history, truth and lie is annulled. Freed from any claim to Truth the clairvoyant enjoys the freedom of telling, for what is told is not bound by any promises it does not or cannot fulfill, with the limits of what is to be and can be known always shown, it has no reasons for manipulations, deception or detours, and as such, it is not turned into a confinement of life, but rather an affirmation of it.

The storyteller does not only tell of what is and what was, she also tells of what might be, it is a creation; not an imagination or an invention, but rather, a composition, made of "our remembering, understanding and creating" a bringing out of that which is forgotten, lying in and between stones, weaved with that which is of the present and the future (125). It involves a making and remaking of the events of our lives (120).

Nevertheless, the difference between storytelling and writing that is based on information, is the difference of two modes of being which appear in Benjamin's description as incompatible. The incompatibility of two modes of being, and thus of knowing, is present also in his description of a crisis of perception that accompanied the technical reproduction of images. In the time of mechanical reproduction, one can no longer find beauty in that which was perceived and remembered as beautiful, the image, which comes from *memoire volontaire*, appears bare and lacking in depth, "as vapid as an exhibition of photographs." What Benjamin shows here is that photography, a certain way of doing that is associated with a certain way of being becomes implicated in the "decline of the aura" of that which comes from another mode of life. It is the incompatibility of two modes of being in which one leads to the decline of the other (*Illuminations* 187).

But the story retains the power which lies in that “it does not expend itself. It preserves and concentrates its strength and is capable of releasing it even after a long time.” Offering no explanations, the story retains its capability of “arousing astonishment and thoughtfulness.” Benjamin describes the power of the story as “the seeds of grain which have lain for centuries in the chambers of the pyramids shut up airtight and have retained their germinative power to this day” (90), a description that invokes the generative power that Césaire has given to the word.

When the struggle for liberation failed, both when it achieved “political” independence, and when it lost it in the form of neo-colonialism, or occupation in the name of global war on terror, the words that came out of that struggle, may lose their “resonance,” at a certain historical point, for certain people, with a certain mode of life. But words do not disappear, they cannot be taken back, they remain and persist, even when they lose their perceived function. In a mode of being in which the poetic operates on the level of dream and reality, in an overwhelmingly colonized world, the effect of the cry of the colonized may not be visible; This does not mean it is not there, even if in the form of a seed buried in the depth of the ocean, it retains the possibility of rising to the surface, of growing into another life. Words start a path that they do not close; they maintain their own life and their power to generate another. They can always be invoked again at another time and another place, where they resonate, and are able to create a movement and stir a life, where it still exists.

Conclusion

“Something that Does Not Go Away”

In this dissertation, I have tried to argue that the writings of Aimé Césaire and Ghassan Kanafani are acts of freedom. They entail what an act of freedom entails, courage in confronting that which is cruel, the bravery entailed in taking the risk of tearing open shields of concealment and denial. Their acts are not acts directed at another, but at their own being, for it is their colonized being that they sought to shed off.

Confrontation in Kanafani and Césaire entailed breaking through acts of substitution and strategies of denial. Blocking all detours, reaching a point where one is finally forced to confront his being as a colonized one. It is a battle; not one but many, they involve defeats and victories, advances and withdrawals, but in all cases they create a ceaseless movement, where nothing could any longer be stabilized or naturalized.

Kanafani and Césaire, do not deny the wretched being, to borrow from Frantz Fanon, that is the colonized, they affirm the sicknesses, the fears, and the weaknesses of such a being but they do not accept them. Neither do they give the position of the victim to the colonized, to be a victim is to be the other, to remain imprisoned and trapped in the position of the other, it is to remain the object of somebody else's act. What they sought was a breaking free from this position. Both writers affirm this otherness to shed it off. In their texts, it comes in the form of Caliban's act, a spitting out, instead of repression, and affirming and shedding off instead of negation. These are positive acts that liberate life from a sick degenerate being. To spit out the colonized is to rid oneself of the colonizer as well, for the latter cannot exist without the former.

Both writers had hope in a life that is buried underneath layers of a colonized being. Confrontation is a creation of a movement, a shaking of that which is stagnant, a mobilization of the force of life, allowing it to grow by shedding off the dead layers under which it is buried. The act of ridding oneself of a colonized being is a violent act, it takes the force of a volcanic eruption. Writing as a volcanic act destroys, breaks through that which is stagnant, it creates convulsions, rupturing and cracking; movements which would bring out to the surface the enslaved being of the colonized.

In a condition in which the colonized wills to not know his colonized being, Kanafani and Césaire found in cruelty, in the power of their words to inflict pain, a means to block all escapes from the confrontation of the colonized with his colonized being. The infliction of pain is a piercing through, an attempt to reach beyond layers of concealment and denial. The writers' words sought to reach beyond that part of us where the guilt that necessarily comes with an impotency turns us into weak resentful beings who are only able to take revenge on ourselves. They stirred feelings of shame, anger and pride, they opened unhealed but concealed wounds allowing for a pain that cannot be anesthetized. To act in freedom, to liberate oneself from the dead layers of a colonized being, one needs to stir life, one needs to feel without anesthetization and without regulation through definitions, explanations, or substitutions.

Targeting the realm of passions in Kanafani and Césaire, that which lies in our depths, is not seeking that which has been designated as the unconscious. But it is a breaking through, an opening of a space beyond a subjected conscious being. Consciousness has become the realm of ideology, a surface that separates us from ourselves, an objectified space of externality through which we are inserted as subjects, domesticated and weakened by being turned into representations of ourselves. The Unconscious is its Other, it is the realm of desire as defined by the limits of the

rational, but neither the rational nor desire can, as Foucault has shown, exist without each other (*Aesthetics*).

Passions are forces that could break through that dead layer that separates our conscious being from ourselves. Freeing ourselves from an objectified consciousness does not mean that we lose ourselves in unconscious desires and drives, for these are acts of substitution that necessarily reproduce the Same. Neither is it achieved by a return of that which is repressed, for it invokes that which repressed it. Passions here do not exclude knowledge but breaking through the barrier, the dead layer, they allow for more knowledges, other knowledges, they allow for that which is different and unregulated, something of ourselves that an objectified consciousness cannot allow.

Passions are the realm of the poet, the source of his knowledge. The poet whose being is not one of agitation but rather of joyous surrender is the one who embraces life as it is; as I have shown in Chapter Five, passions are the sources of a knowledge liberated from any will to knowledge. And just as passions are usually linked with the heart, so is the knowledge they allow, the heart is not an origin but that which in its movement allows for the flow of life, a knowledge that reaches the heart and comes from the heart is then one that could never be detached from life, set against it, or made to regulate it, at many instances it goes counter to that which is consciously and rationally known, this does not make it irrational, but rather it allows it to show the limits of the former.

It is for their bravery and courage that Kanafani declared the Sa'lik as the freest of people; not only because they have broken free from the rules of society, not merely because they maintained their individuality, but because they were first and foremost poets. As I have shown in the dissertation, the poet, the one who feels, who does not inhibit, regulate or anesthetize feelings finds a higher knowledge, more wisdom, and is able to give words the force of bullets, a force that is given them by the force of his passions.

The cruelty of Kanafani's and Césaire's words sought life by stirring feelings of shame and anger. But these are not the only passions that allow for a being free of concealed or denied wounds, their force requires a sense of pride which would not allow one to accept the position of an object of someone else's act. It is pride that is incompatible with a colonized or domesticated being; for the proud, Nietzsche's noble man, would not allow the responsibility of himself to be handed to another. The being of the proud man cannot be but in confrontation with a being of representations. His freedom lies in his individuality, in his refusal to be another cog in a machine, or another "head" in a herd.

While the different has been seen as a threat of annihilation to Western modernity, and thus needed to be incorporated into the Same either as it or its Other, for Kanafani and Césaire, it is the different and the individual that not only transgresses the limits of the capitalist mode of being, but de-naturalizes it by pointing to the possibility of another mode of being.

The fighter in Kanafani and Césaire is a being without a denied past, without a guilt. In his fight, he breaks free from a being of representation, he takes responsibility for himself, he pays his debts and keeps his promises. He is neither God nor subject, but free in taking the risk of life. To be free is to be without fear, to have courage, to not be chained by rationalized calculations, which inhibit life in attempts to preserve it. For Kanafani and Césaire, one never asks the fighter why he fights, the rebel why he is willing to sacrifice his life for a dignified life. There is no end to be posited for the struggle, but there is only a life of freedom that consists in acting in freedom, which cannot be confined by questions of utility or return; it is a life outside the mode of being of exchange values. Against a futile monotony of a being of circulation, life is given back its value by freeing it from an anticipated return (purpose, end to be achieved); it becomes one of endless

acts of giving. As I have shown in the dissertation to fight for a cause, to be willing to take risks for it, to reject a humiliated, entrapped, paralyzed being is the condition of a free being.

Faith allows for this obstinate and persistence struggle for another world, for a different mode of knowing and being. With faith one is liberated from the need to regulate life, to have things defined, stabilized and standardized. Faith, as I have shown in Chapters One and Two, is not an ideology, a product of institutionalized practices. It is not based on a subject made as an abstraction of his being. Faith liberates man from a dependent being, from being confined to the life of the herd, for one can always find in belief in another power a strength that allows for individuality and difference. Faith allows for a being of joyous surrender; for with faith, one can do without certainties without falling into the trap of futility, one can live indifferently to societal norms without being detached.

To be able to give without expecting returns, to joyfully embrace life, is to be in a condition of extreme love. The lover is the other name Kanafani has given to his rebel without a definite name. The individuality of Kanafani's *Asheq* is not a state of detachment but rather one of attachment. To be attached is to be free, to live life without repressions, inhibitions, substitutions and detours, without needs for concealment and denial, without guilt. It is to do without exchange values, to love unconditionally. This is the condition of the lover whose love is not an expression of an inhibited desire that comes from an objectified being, which could only objectify what it loves. Love in Kanafani is one of nurturing, it is the love of 'Um Sa'd who nurtures life in that which appears dead, of the fighter whose attachment to his weapon as to his horse is one of blood, kinship and comradeship. The fighter gives life to his weapon and it is life, just as in the case of the plant, that the weapon gives back. Love here is a generation of life, rather than a compensation for a sterile life.

Kanafani and Césaire sought another mode of being, they looked for a life buried deep in the being of the colonized. This was not an escape into the past, but a confrontation and a rejection of the present. The Present is a world not for us, for it is built and sustained by enslavement and colonialism. It is one that preserves itself on the expense of life. Both writers, on the other hand, opted for fighting for another, finding strength in the belief in the power of life to generate itself. One has to uncover the gaps, to remove the outer layers under which that which is of another life is present. Every act of confrontation, every battle with the colonizer, every opening of wounds is a removal of these layers.

Kanafani and Césaire did not seek an anachronistic way of life, but they sought to break out of a present whose only movement is a circular one that reproduces it with the future deferred endlessly and the past othered, mythified or denied. In a linear narrative of history, we become the past and struggle endlessly to become a present that cannot be without us being past. But Kanafani and Césaire had a different conceptualization of history, since they did not seek the present, instead they sought those parts of us, although or may be because, buried underground and invisible, they carry life in them. Uprooted and severed they sought their roots, for it is in them that life is to be found. If the tree is Césaire's epitome of the force of life, then roots are where this force lies, roots is the ability to endure, to stand one's ground despite external stimuli. The tree cannot be without roots. Man lives without roots, but in this case, his life is one that does not blossom, it fails to generate life; it becomes a dead one. The being of the tree is unmediated, it is not a dependent being, it assimilates and while it is the source of life for other creatures, what it gives is never an objectification of its being.

Kanafani and Césaire did not seek to return to the past or to regenerate that which is dead, but they sought in that which is of the past but present a horizon for the future. The fidai, the rebel,

fighters for the future, it is when the present is seen as blocking the possibility of another life, the possibility of a future that does not repeat the oppressions of the present that the present is to be combatted and broken through. In both writers, memory, the memory of slavery, colonialism, uprootedness, of resistance and rebellion become the site from which the narrative of Europe's History as the history of mankind is shattered. Memory de-familiarizes the present, it allows for other spaces from which one is positioned differently and is able to see and know differently.

The movement allowed by memory breaks through the present by uncovering the gaps and fissures in the continuum of the time of the present. The past allows us to see the present as it does not wish to be seen, it brings back that which we have not done away with, the pain of the wound that did not heal, but is repressed and covered. Memory allows for the possibility of fighting, by confronting us with that which needs to be fought.

The past in Kanafani and Césaire is that which has a material existence in the present, its materiality lies in its force, in its effect on the present, to stir that which is stagnant in it; to shake its foundations. When memory refuses to let go of a wound of a colonized being which is still there in the present, this is not a sign of a weakened being, unable to forget; but rather it is a sign of strength manifested in the ability to confront suffering and pain instead of internalizing them into a sickly resentful life, that could only be one of degeneration.

Memory thus is space of freedom, a source of knowledge that defies a will to knowledge that has as its other side that which is willed not to be known. To move inside that black hole that is the colonized being, to dig out one's colonized being, layer after layer is what Césaire's poetry sought to do.

Césaire loaded his words with the weight of a cruel and ugly colonized life. They were given the suffering and the anger of the colonized confronted with his colonized being, and it is this cruelty, this pain and suffering that they transmit. The words of the poet were weapons that brought destruction, they were lava that could set in flames a colonized being. The images of the writer were as sharp in their cruel sarcasm as blades, but their force as those of the poet, come from the force of the passion from which they were born. That the colonized are not free, that that other time did not come yet, is not a defeat of their words, it is rather the defeat of the present which their words show.

Kanafani's and Césaire's words do not communicate meanings, they are endowed with the materiality of a life, which they retain while mobilizing another. Spear-headed or bullets they take root inside us, they leave their traces in our bodies, they may reach our consciousness or they may not. They mobilize that which is still living in us, their realm is the realm of passions, they stir feelings, they allow us to imagine that which is different and other. In a being in whom life is already dead, these words do not leave any traces. But for those in whom Césaire and Kanafani saw the potentiality of another life, their words become a seed that grows into a life. They become something that does not go away.

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