

## The Illusion of a Truth and the Effective Collective Myth of Transformation in Nawal El Saadawi's *A Daughter of Isis*.

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### Abstract

The reality of ideas that sustain the intellectual approach of Nawal El Saadawi, inspires a feminine psycho-sociological renaissance. The harmonious and different arrangement of her Islamic feminism introduces within the Muslim patriarchal affective and representative perception, the notion of profaning the sacred and the traditional enclosures. Through this first person narrative, *A Daughter of Isis* embodies an effective realm of knowledge that goes beyond the sphere of metaphor; in fact, it becomes that feminine voice that establishes the real power and positive to define her being a human. The purpose of this paper remains an attempt to display the implied practical mode of communication, which appears different from the apparent reality of the patriarchal mode, and the manner El Saadawi creates a discourse of reconstruction and a scientific observation of the real. In this method, the deconstructionist approach involved in this discourse introduces an intellection based on a balance of power. Therefore, the result of this article is expected to underline the material possibilities to ensure a socio-cultural revalorization.

**Keywords:** Renaissance, Islamic Feminism, Knowledge, Patriarchal affective, Reconstruction, Deconstruction.

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### INTRODUCTION

The long lasting patriarchal effect of reality becomes a realm within the feminine being develop a notion and a power of abstraction to the object of reality within is interwoven their quality and actuality. Therefore, the feminine intellectual sensitivities and the abstractive subtleties, which go beyond the appearing possibilities of their own nature, detach themselves from passive impression toward a creative and a resultant imagination. Indeed, within the respect of an immense psychosomatic variation, the collective and individual imagination of the feminine new order of interpreting their lives begets a successive functional transformation. Within this respect, through a variety of propositions the feminine primitive forces of intellection emphasis on the individual-collective symbol par rapport the impersonation of cultural mutation. The imperceptible organism of the Muslim cultures and its impulsive basis, physically outline the feminine interior must to make intelligible the thorough conversion of subjectivity and its reality.

In this run, the mutation processes of the Muslim *Umma* that fills with a burning passion generally regarded as the constituent of a new genre, enlightens the feminine intellectual avowal. The

withdrawal and isolation of their developing context displays that the otherness of the feminine being becomes a reflective dissoluteness. Through this prospect of transformation between the real and the Muslim symbolic order, Nawal El Saadawi within her *A Daughter of Isis* details the social, historical and political highly nervous state erected against women.

Succinctly, the main traits of this creative dynamism unveil the irreconcilable organisms of phallogocentric Muslim worth and modernism materially, stamped by the vehemence of colonialism. Correspondingly, within a scheme of imagination El Saadawi involves this text in the exposition of a socio-political inference. It is in this respect, the main purpose of this article stresses on the object exposition of this imagination, which emphasizes on the sublimely religious mysticism and the aesthetic truth dedicated to the patriarchal ontogenetic archetypal. In the next section, I discuss the eccentric model of thought that characterizes patriarchy as a formative principle that embodies overthrown proscribed sphere; in the succeeding section, I deal with the psycho-theological analysis within El Saadawi evaluates and re-orders socio-political disequilibrium; in the third section, I determine the realm of Saadawi's *A Daughter of Isis* as

a creative repository within the feminine conjectural affective memoir stands as a theoretical line, which arouses an affective authority.

### The Despondency of Religious Representation

Through the construction of its perspective, *A Daughter of Isis* exposes the reading of Nawal El Saadawi's particular attitude, which within the intrinsic value of a feminine logic of affinity enthuses over a discursive method. Therefore, in search of a real and intimate pleasure, the enquiry of opposition and negotiation embedded in the socio-cultural milieu of this text impels the emerging of a new order of experience. Indeed, *A Daughter of Isis* becomes ethically and aesthetically illustrative as regards the mutations expected within the Muslim civilization. The literary mechanism within El Saadawi dives the discursive intelligence of her first person narrative, elaborates a technical purpose that increasingly encourages the establishment of a privileged fact of basis of interchange between the individual and the milieu. It is in this line Khaled Abou El Fadle declares that:

There should be little doubt that there is a battle being wage over the very identity and character of the Islamic message. The battle includes fighting over the normative values, the ethics, and morals that the Islamic message is supposed to represent. There is also a battle over the relevance of the Islamic intellectual heritage, its role and character, and an instance battle over who gets to speak for Islamic law, how, and what ought to be said [1].

Within this respect, the nominal value of this text finds its essence, within the revolution of the scheme of otherness, and the evolving of a new order of reality. The objective reality, within which El Saadawi anchors her referential system of analysis concerning the reality of the Muslim cultures, goes beyond contexts characterized by domination and subjugation:

Two concrete walls started to rise until they blocked out the sunlight from my window. Over one wall rose the tall minaret of a new mosque bathed in the white of neon lights. Over the other hung a billboard for McDonald's surrounded by revolving neon lights. On the ground floor appeared other circling lights for something new called Disco Club [2].

Indeed, through her attempt of participating in the conception of a field of mutation materializing the shifting of the constituting referential, El Saadawi explicitly provides responses to questions related to active visibility, and to incipient customs of cultural identities. By this means, the Muslim patriarchal referential becomes absorbed by the horizon of subjectivity, which through a generalizing movement characterized by a gathering of methods and sights

elaborated within a system of thought, alters profoundly the patriarchal illusory objectivity.

Her arms embrace me, hold me high up over the waves, leave me free to swim alone, then encircle me again, so that her body becomes my body, before she lets me go once more, her body separate from mine... My father always kept a distance, his distance separated between us in the photograph, on the sea-shore. Sometimes in my dreams, my arms would stretch out and embrace my father, but his arms never stretched out to me. He always maintained this distance between us [2].

In this perspective, the conception of time and space, through the progression of specific requirements and linguistic substances, impels the run of *A Daughter of Isis* to interrogate the basis of the Muslim patriarchal internal signifying system. Obviously, El Saadawi acknowledges that the efficiency of this anthropo-semiotic view remains the core material of cultural conventionalism, instead of the deference or the acknowledgement of the real. Correspondingly, the philosophy of opposition that defines the effective imaginary transformation, in this first person narrative exhibits the scheme of illusion as not contradiction or implausibility with reality, but a power efficiently connected to a desire that builds itself through deteriorating any features of purely intelligent nature. This fact is illustrated by Hiadeh Moghissi when she argues that:

The colonial construction of 'Muslim woman', her sexuality, sexual power and sexual enslavement, could cause cultural anxiety and rage in the Muslim man. The 'civilizing' and 'liberating' colonial policies in the area of women's rights would inevitably further aggravate the Muslim male, the colonized. Hiding women from the gaze of the Westerners viewer, and guarding women's bodies and their minds from changes produced by foreign intervention, symbolized protection of Islamic identity communal dignity, and social and cultural continuity... [3].

By this way, the feminine voice, which is regarded within the process of male socio-cultural omnipotence as *awra*, becomes legitimized, at the time El Saadawi's transgressive philosophy inscribes a structural discourse that sees religious illusion to implant itself around a reality prompted by social affliction. Subsequently, the realm of religious illusion divulges the purely political characteristic of social construction, and the phallic hegemony in male-controlled context. Therefore, the issue of desire and the effective imaginary synthesis in the perspective of *A Daughter of Isis* are active commitment and an essential step to alter social condition of submission and restriction. In this respect, El Saadawi's discursive method forecasts and crosses the threshold of another

reality, wherein the patriarchal abstractions are opposed to the feminine discernment of truth. The effective imaginary transformation, therefore, stands as a realistic value and a discursive feminine attitude in the perspective to recreate the real, which the patriarchal system through its religious representation alters the truth of religion, and installs a sphere of ambiguity.

I had just turned seventeen, but in my mind I was not convinced by what my father was saying. If God's wisdom could not be understood by human beings, how could it be wisdom, and to whom then was it directed? If God was not just in his dealings with people irrespective of race or sex, how could we ask people to be more just than he was? If God had created man and woman from the same living thing, why should he discriminate between them? [2].

Accordingly, in a various forms expressing affection and forms of ordinary language, the realm of *A Daughter of Isis* reflects a domain of a relentless mirror image upon the reservations of the feminine status. In this run, the existential reflection that constitutes the core of this first person narrative determinesthe patriarchal illusory method as an eccentric and a conflicting form to expression, and to reforming intellection. Indeed, the obscurity that inhabits the attitude of the "I" character in this work displays that the illusion and the internal organization of the patriarchal discourse present a system of interpretation outside of the Islamic referential. Correspondingly, El Saadawi imprints the hermetism of this patriarchal illusory representation by emphasizing on deterministic, psycho-theological and environmental causalities. In effect, the structure of the work highlights the phallogocentric method remains an accumulation of a creative spiritual process that systematizes its art, and intellectual activities on cosmological theories and anthropological characteristics. Succinctly, El Saadawi demonstrates that the imaginary and symbolic of the Muslim phallic order constructs its reality around an imaginary conventional commonality between illusory truth and ethical values.

At the same time, the religious sheikhs of A I-Azhar and the leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood were playing this game with the people in the name of Allah and religion. My father described Sheik h A I-Maraghi as the 'sheik h with the beard': 'Can you imagine', he said, 'that that Sheik h with the beard is cooperating with the king and with the British in the name of Islam. He keeps saying: "Obey whoever is responsible for your affairs."' When he addresses King Farouk hesays, "Allah is with you", and the king takes the cue from him and responds, "Yes, Allah is with us." This has nothing to do with faith or religion, Sheik h A I-Maraghi, this is just making fools of us [2].'

Therefore, the act of representation becomes an abrupt expression of the traditional thought of the Muslim patriarchal primitive sense. Within this respect, the formulated denegation concerning the phallic illusory sphere elevates the main character of this work to a transcending accord of the self. This metamorphosis process installs, in fact, a progressive structural transformation, which its axiomatic values provide a rational intellectual reaction and an affective language within the patriarchal religious interpretation. By this way, through an affective force El Sadaawi introduces an internal ambulatory useful search for truth, which carries along its desires to the disclosure of a new realm of knowledge and self –appropriation.

### The Conception of Reality and Fiction

Theevolutionary transformation of the Muslim civilization brings the realm of *A daughter of Isis* within a psychoanalysis sphere, which regards culture, through its function of representativeness between the individual and the collective, becomes consubstantial with the issue of instinct. Therefore, El Saadawi ningrains the new order of this instinctual source within the inner connection of the collective, and through the somatic and psychical rapport of Muslim cultures toward the world. It is in this sense Fedwa Multi-Douglas [4] declares "El Saadawi's position simply foregrounds the complicated relationship that exists between politics and women's liberation in a non-Western and a non dominant cultural context". By this way, the specific linguistic substance requirements and the structural common shaft through which El Saadawi sites this narrative, display that the patriarchal reality remains imbued with an intellectual indigence, which is definitely detached from the feminine new affective and psychological state:

My relationship with my mother decided the course of my life. I used to think that my father's influence on it was greater thanhers. I discovered while I was writing that this was not true. The spinal column that has held me up was built on what my mother said when I was young: 'Throw Nawal in the fire and she will come out unhurt.' After hearing that, I could walk into danger with a brave heart. Maybe that is why I was able to escape death more than once [2].

Indeed, the intellectual objectivity, and the rules of reality that are pinpointed in the new feminine discourse emphasizes on the phallogocentric system of nominalism that within a scheme of a correlated series of appearance, installed an aesthetic and moral perfection. In this perspective, the domain of *A Daughter of Isis* gets through the concern of the reality of ideas, and then carries the posture of an anticipating politico-scientific fiction. In effect, the reality of facts as regards the representation of the individual-collective, exhibit that the constituting of the different parts of the Muslim civilization, par rapport to the

expected mutations have been under influence of the patriarchal order of appearance. This patriarchal appearance, by handling the conception of reality alters the material reality of culture and the invisible basis of instinctual and reserves of its considerations. Correspondingly, the reality and appearance that are imbibed in the emergence of this politico-scientific fiction designate the significant and the rule of necessity of choice and opinion to make intelligible the interior transformation of the phallogocentric truth and affective state of reasoning:

Nawal El Saadawi has locked her powerful pen on many of the gender obsessions in her own culture and has woven memorable narratives around them. Her work demonstrates that it is possible to denounce women's oppression without taking a pro-Western stance and without forgetting the reality that class differences make in the varying patterns of that oppression... to privilege patriarchal discourses within these zones. Anti-imperialism can easily become a trap through which nationalism, while seeking to defend the native against the outsider, really defends those in power in the native society. A feminism that is not internationalist will find itself powerless because it will allow nationalisms to be used against the empowerment of women in each separate society [4].

In this dynamic, the reality of matter and spirit that El Saadawi develops through the imaginary of her fiction shows that the process of mutation is maintained within a determined position and in a socio-political immobility:

The disease was a calamity sent by God as SittilHajja said, but biggest of all calamities were the eleven girls born to her, of whom to her misfortune only six had died, leaving five to live on. She would clench her five fingers into a fist, as though waving it in the face of an enemy, or of Satan and say, five girls. A catastrophe of girls! [2]

Therefore, the determining psychological canal of this historical and political situation is oriented by the alienation of the national sense and the formulas of a psychosis that determines a derealization of consciousness. In this sense, the process of mutation becomes a mode of thought, within El Saadawi unveils her perception of living reality and inner reality. However, stamped by colonial violence, the patriarchal system foresights the approach of this mutation toward modernity stands as an obsessive psychosis transposition. Undeniably, through the installment of an objective reality *A Daughter of Isis* delves into the subject of depersonalization within, the conception of the phallogocentric truth ceases to be the principle of reality. In this line Miriam Cooke argues that:

Clearly, El Saadawi is staying close to the bone, compelling her reader to pay attention to her real intent. What this reader has understood is that if women are always associated with the devil, the corollary must be that men are associating themselves with God. In a religion like Islam where God is transcendent and humans are not supposed to experience divine immanence, such a notion is blasphemous. Worse, the characters blur into each other as abusive figures of unprincipled authority [5].

Correspondingly, beyond the patriarchal value system, the descriptive and narrative elements that coordinate the affective, psychological and intellectual material organism of this fiction heightens its perception of cultural transformation by centralizing its dynamic on reality judgment. In this run, the vision of a hidden reality brings El Saadawi to foster the alteration of the mechanism and the ideology of economic development. By this way, *A daughter of Isis* through its status of politico-scientific fiction becomes an effective grace. In effect, it establishes a burgeoning insight of object, and a collective fantasy within the patriarchal subjective reality undergoes a revolution, in the sense, the feminine experimental method of reality implants the practical Islamic consideration of the reality of equality. This fact is correspondingly heightened while Asma Barlas explains that:

If what we know (the content of knowledge) depends on how we come to know it (the methods by which we generate knowledge), then we must look to the modes of knowledge creation among Muslims in order to understand conservative-patriarchal readings of the Qur'an [6].

In this line of ideas, El Saadawi's references to the Ulemas of Al-Hazar, and the political parties in post-colonial social context signals the substance and the appearance of a revocatory subjective process. In fact, by involving in a scheme of cultural mutation and by deconstructing the patriarchal point of reference as regard the truth of their subjectivity, El Saadawi introduces a destructive seed within the abstract speculation of the patriarchal being, and its elastic consistency in the run of the Muslim symbolic order.

### The Repression of the Constituent Traditions

The descriptive and denotative semiotic involved in the line of El Saadawi's *A Daughter of Isis* exercises, a new temperament that warrants a new scheme of communication, and interaction with the outward sphere. Therefore, this discursive method establishes a positional consideration, principles and choice within the respect of familiarity, and real-world object. The organizing dynamism of psycho-sociological knowledge within the internal structures of the phallogocentric system implies, a process of disintegration

of structures and perception concerning the issue of identification and the morally intelligible core of sensibilities.

That day it all came back. I picked up a pen and wrote one page about my circumcision, then tore it up. The pieces of paper flew up into the wind, then dropped to the surface of the ocean, floating up and down until they were out of sight. I have not written yet about the sexual experience I had at the age of five. Maybe I shall write about it soon, moved by the earth as it goes round and round, by the waters and the winds when they reveal a new layer of the iceberg hidden in the depths of the ocean [2].

By this means, through a new deal of intellectual representation, El Saadawi re-evaluates the setting up of membership empathy of individual *vis-à-vis* the traditional mode of object. Correspondingly, by differentiating this approach to the affective phenomena, the realm of *A Daughter of Isis* exhibits that the Muslim traditional objectivity understanding is not always about object.

In this sense, the progressing feminine discursive thought demonstrates, the aspirations and the contemporary illusion of the Muslim civilization mutation forces the observation of the materiality of an identity crisis. In effect, through a cultural enquiry El Saadawi's order of repression puts the focus on the disintegration of the patriarchal essence, in the perspective to deprive its decision theories, and its reality and appearance principles. Explicitly, the reality of *A Daughter of Isis* seems to ingrain, not only a systematic order of reduction, and an inexpressive style to patriarchal conservatism; but it pursues to assimilate to nothingness the phallogocentric quality of identification and genealogy symbolic order. Therefore, the tenets of this feminine repression of the Muslim traditional order go through the establishment and the assuming of a new technical object, which ensures the basis and symbols of a new relation. In this run, the narrative structure of this observational intellection puts forth the scheme of trans-individuals process that through its active sense and ideal being deconstructs the patriarchal historico-sociological truth. Thus, the direct apprehension of this trans-individual process, naturally, involves itself in the conception and understanding concerning the separation of the patriarchal imaginary attributes:

Was it my grandfather who caused the unhappiness which filled this house? Was it the army discipline he imposed on it? Patriarchal authority destroying those who are closest to us? The feudal class collapsing at the end of the Second World War? The patriarchal class system which rules over our world to this day? Was it a poison which runs in the blood, ran in my veins, in my arteries, a poison I used to breathe in with the air when I lived

surrounded by the sadness and desolation of that house [2].

Consequently, the feminine repression of the phallus imaginary esteem and system becomes a means of substitution par rapport to the patriarchal realm of prohibition. By this way, El Saadawi disguises in the run of her discourse that the phallus illusory truth by appropriating the emotional and bodily prominence of the being, digresses the cogent source of religious representation. This heterogeneity observed within the structuration of the Muslim societies shapes, the feminine effective and rational authority, in the perspective to construct intellectual constructions and structural changes to alter the patriarchal passionate values. In the respect of a prospective and affective philosophy, the observational basis of *A Daughter of Isis* inserts the constituents of Muslim tradition in a scale of disintegration and reconstitution with constitutive and formative structures based on reforming perspective. Through the avant-gardism of this process of rationalization, the concern of political equality within the collective principles of ethic appears to be reactions to redefine the intellectual and moral incongruities seeded between the realms of sex binary subdivision. In this sense, Amina Wadud argues that:

That the Qur'an has been invoked by various ethical theorists, but has resulted in the development of theories sometimes contradictory to each other, reiterates the significance of interpretation as a process of constructing "Islam." In other words, even based upon the same primary sources, practical implications, implementations, and the development of ideas and theories will differ based upon many other factors relative to being human. The Qur'an does not develop a single uniform ethical system; it contains ethical principles and values. The development of a system must be formulated through human beings, the agents responsible for implementing and maintaining those systems in the first place [7].

This dynamic, continuously, strives for a reflective propensity moving of the individual-collective, which stands above causality connections as regards extrinsic values. This feminine mechanism to question the insufferable patriarchal exigencies becomes a profound new accent with a pure intellectual effusiveness, which infuses the desire of a transposition of the reality of power between the masculine and the feminine being. It is in this perspective; El Saadawi's consciousness of the patriarchal instinctual representation befits an enterprise of knowledge within the observational system puts into view the subjective formal norms of reality and syllogism figures capable of exhibiting the entropy discrepancy of the phallus system.

## CONCLUSION

Through the debate of the reality of power within the structuration of the Muslim societies, Nawal El Saadawi succeeds in unveiling the illusion of religious representation that the Muslim phallus system utilizes to maintain its willing of domination. The realm of *A Daughter of Isis* is, an undeniable evidence of re-centering the feminine-self par rapport the encumbering patriarchal psycho-affective values that within the intrinsic of its object, installs an unequal relation. The variety conception of the sphere of reality, and illusion has given impetus to elaborate a strategic sight of authority by emphasizing on the milieu and prospects.

The immediate apperception concerning the quality and the quantity attributes of power redirects the centrality and reality of the feminine perception of identity. Through this respect, the feminine identity molds itself out of the principles of the patriarchal illusory reality and misogynistic inherited traditional rules. Differently, out of cultural determinism traits, moral magnetism and politico-economic obligation, El Saadawi spreads an approach of cultural mutation based on the respect of authority hybridity and on an interdependent system of authority.

For this reason, the line of *A Daughter of Isis* reveals the complexity, and contradictory context of the Muslim phallogocentric system, lies in its refusal to engross rational reforms. Traditional values remain the main receptacle that guaranties the subjective reality of

the system, and then, regard codes and ancestral beliefs as inflexible. It is in this line, the discursive method and deconstructionist discourse that sustains the progressive movement of this narrative introduces a rationalization process based on consultation and consensus to impel a profound process of transformation.

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