

**Periphrasis and Brevity as a Tour de Force In****Little Dorrit and Black Madonna****Haider Ghazi Jassi AL\_Jaberi AL.Musawi****University of Babylon****College of Education****Abstract:**

Purport as periphrasis and brevity do some syntactic ramifications, they strike roots in psychiatry and literature as well; Syntactically accounting ,revealing a trait or an inspiration in innuendos requires a verb to which one or more auxiliary verbs are concatenated to obliterate ambiguity or to have transparency<sup>1</sup> ,in contradistinction to the direct infliction of the lexical items involved. Yet brevity comes to have two main isles in term of ellipsis and condensed narration, ellipsis is of two types; the deletion under identity and sloppy identity, for the former; the deleted identity is somehow or rather too compensated in the context, whereas the sloppy identity; usually aggravates the lack of revelation.

Moreover, periphrasis is termed psychologically "Free Associations"<sup>2</sup> that serves in literature as characters delineation to reach crystallization<sup>3</sup> in which a character gives full rein to his imagination that fluctuates between the past and present and vice versa that is etymologically called "Shuttle Technique"<sup>4</sup>. Yet ,brevity is to conceal identification and masked drives at the expense of candour. In novel as in all literature, they work in tandem to perpetrate through events and characters. In time, periphrasis exposes the internal and the external

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<sup>1</sup>R.L.Trask, *A dictionary of Grammatical Terms in Linguistics*, Cornwall, T.J.Press,p.205,1993.

<sup>2</sup>C.H.Patterson, *Counseling and Psychotherapy Theory and Practice*,Newyork:Harper and Row,p,163,1959.

<sup>3</sup>C.H.Patterson,*Theories of Counseling and Psychotherapy*, an Francisco: Jossey-Bass, fourth edition,1994,p.305

<sup>4</sup> Ibid,p.353.

conflicts that stem the human drives, in time; brevity tantalizes the other characters and readers to find a missing piece of information in a dialogue or a paragraph.

In point of fact, Dickens in *Little Dorrit* tints his lines with some periphrastic expressions that keep the readers pace with certain motives and ideas, similarly so often does Dickens resort into brevity due to certain technical targets. Analogously, Dorris Lessing in *Black Madonna* takes hold of both to have modern notions conveyed. In a sense the text is not only of essentiality, but it gives much shrifts to its creator; its "functional principle"<sup>5</sup> All in all, both *Little Dorrit* and *Black Madonna*, as to the actual research paper, depend mainly to some extent on the sense of periphrasis and the condensed revelation.

### **Little Dorrit toward Tour De Force**

The novel begins in Marseille with a notorious murderer; Rigaud informing his cell-mate that he has murdered his wife. Also in the town is Arthur Clennam, returning to London to see his mother following the death of his father, after twenty years of life in the East. In London, William Dorrit, imprisoned as a debtor, has been a resident of Marshalsea debtor's prison for so long that his children; snobbish Fanny, idle Edward known as Tip, and doting Amy known as Little Dorrit, have all grown up there, though they are free to pass in and out of the prison as they please. Once in London, Arthur is reacquainted with his former fiancée Flora Finching, though she is now overweight and simpering. Arthur's mother, Mrs. Clennam, lives housebound with her servant Jeremiah Flintwinch and his down-trodden wife Affery, and decides to employ Little Dorrit as a seamstress. There Little Dorrit meets Arthur and soon falls in love with him, much to the dismay of the son of the Marshalsea jailer, John Chivery, who is in love with Little Dorrit; Arthur fails to recognize Amy's interest, then intrigued by his mother's interest in *Little Dorrit*,

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<sup>5</sup> Shaarad Rajimwale, *Contemporary Literary Criticism*, New Delhi, Rma Brothers Press, p.13, 2005.

Arthur follows her to Marshalsea and tries to investigate William Dorrit's debt at the poorly-run Circumlocution Office. While there he meets struggling inventor Daniel Doyce, whom Arthur decides to help by becoming his partner, aided by debt-collector Pancks, Arthur discovers that William Dorrit is the lost heir to a large fortune and he is finally able to pay his way out of prison in which coincidences take priority over other events, thereby the readers pay much attention to such a detour. Mr. Dorrit decides that as a respectable family they should go on a tour of Europe and travel to Italy, carrying, with the exception of Amy, an air of conceit at their new-found wealth. Eventually Mr. Dorrit dies there after a spell of senility, and his distraught brother Frederick soon also passes away, leaving Amy to return to London alone to stay with newly-married Fanny and Edmund Sparkler. The fraudulent dealings of Mr. Merdle lead to the collapse of Merdle's bank, taking with it the savings of both Arthur and the Dorrits, with the former thus finding himself imprisoned in Marshalsea. While there he is taken ill, but is nursed back to health by Amy. Rigaud, now in London, discovers that Mrs. Clennam has been hiding the fact that Arthur is not her real son, and that Amy is herself heir to an estate, and attempts to blackmail her, such revelation to the identity of a main character accelerates the unhesitating events that's why, at the eleventh hour, she reveals the secret to Amy, and dies soon after, rather than hurt Arthur, Amy chooses not to reveal what she has learnt, though this means that she misses her legacy. However, when Daniel Doyce returns from Russia a wealthy man, Arthur is released and his fortunes revived. Arthur and Amy are married.

What is to the point is that the atmosphere of intimacy prevails in the novel; everyone cares of the Dorrit's' baby, the narrator reports in one of the important quotes that explains her state among the inhabitants: "What Affection in her words"<sup>6</sup>. Little Dorrit spends her childhood in prison, where the "iron bars of the inner gateway Home", in time Dickens delineates, in a periphrastic style, the prison as nasty and agonizing; as in the below excerpt:

<sup>6</sup> Charles Dickens, *Little Dorrit*, London, Oxford Press, P.80, 1989.

**A prison taint was on everything there. The imprisoned airs, the imprisoned light, the imprisoned damp, the imprisoned men, were all deteriorated by confinements. As the captive men were faded and haggard so the iron was rusty, the stone was slimy, the wood was rotten, as the air was faint, and the light was dim. Like a well, like a vault, like a tomb<sup>7</sup>....**

In time, for those who are deprived of being free, it is of convenience to channel themselves into accepting their realities as they exist, that is why the prison is taken into account as a home:

**But we are always glad to come home, father; now, are we not? And as to Fanny, perhaps besides keeping uncle company and taking care of him, it may be as well for her not quite to live here, always. She was not born here as I was, you know father<sup>8</sup>.**

Moreover, she feels empathy with the bars as a home:

**We shall be able to go home To speak of home, and to go and look at it, it being so near, was a natural sequence. They went to the closed gate, and peeped through into the country yard. "I hope he is sound asleep", said Little Dorrit, kissing one of the bars, and does not miss<sup>9</sup>".**

It would not be accurate, of course, to argue that the prison society is a completely functional one, and Little Dorrit herself provides the best example to refute such an argument. Because she was born within the confines of the Marshalsea and had never been beyond its walls, she could not imagine what the outside world was like and is, in many ways, a part of the prison in that she reflects both the positive and negative aspects of the community where she arises. In a condensed style with the turnkey, they talk about fields and Little Dorrit asks, "Does anybody open and shut them? Are they locked?"<sup>10</sup>. Little Dorrit has no frame of reference for knowing what a field is or knowing that the

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p.17.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p.62.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p.147.

<sup>10</sup> www literature notes, (Retrieved on 5-2-2009).

outside world does not operate exactly as the prison society. Such condensed expressions manifest highly deepened issues in the novel; the sense of claustrophobia in which the character feels life repressed him<sup>11</sup>.

The inhabitants of this poor community are described by the narrator himself as “inmates” and "Collegians" and they share many similarities with the residents and workers at the prison. Dickens resorts into the periphrastic style to illustrate the kind of the nexus prevailed in the prison, in this regard; he loathes to denude those people of their humanity that is a prominent issue in his great ire against institutions:

**Collegians were not envious. Besides that they had a personal and traditional regard for a Collegian of so many years standing, the event was creditable to the College, and made it famous in the newspaper. Perhaps more of them thought, too, than were quite aware of it, that the thing might in the lottery of chances have happened to themselves, or something of the sort might yet happen to themselves, some day or other<sup>12</sup>.**

It is also worth pointing out that the choice of the particular word “inmates” alludes that the inhabitants of this one-time “aspiring city<sup>13</sup>” have no choice as to whether they wish to stay or leave and are all under the thumb of some unnamed ruler or law-giver who has the power to decide the fate and outcomes of those in this setting. All of the institutions and communities described by Dickens are, in their own way, incredibly oppressive. In a certain sense, then, the community in Marshalsea is perhaps more functional than the other institutions and communities that are portrayed in *Little Dorrit*. Dickens was deeply concerned with social problems and wrote extensively about them in his novels. *Little Dorrit* appears as it is in a prison and the reader may expect that Dickens would condemn the institution completely. While Dickens was no advocate of imprisonment, he clearly acknowledges that most institutions have

<sup>11</sup> www psychiatry and literature,p2 of 10,(Retrieved on 15-8-2009)

<sup>12</sup>Charles Dickens, *Little Dorrit*,London,Oxford Press,P.355-56,1989

<sup>13</sup> www modern novel, diction in usage ,dickens(Retrieved on 6.6.2009)

limiting, restrictive qualities that oppress its inhabitants. It is how the inhabitants respond to the limitations of the institution that defines just how confining their experiences and relationships will be.

As a corollary, Dickens furnishes his scenes in *Little Dorrit* with the sense of barred souls, though free to some extent, to have them all transmitted vehemently. In endeavouring to portray a prison-like world not as much as that of the image "Stone wall do not a prison/Nor iron bars of cage"<sup>14</sup>, he creates ubiquitous visions that pertain to both the internal and the external prison to where man intermittently resorts, man cages himself behind his fears, frustration and disappointment due to masked identities, in so doing, he seems engrossed in delusion and deception that smirch his intentions and volition, by some means or other, he lives in a dilemma whether involving himself in having some of his hopes or not, from repressed drives the human conflicts stem<sup>15</sup>. In this regard, these conflicts take shape either in approach-approach one in which man usually is rather stable, or in avoidance-approach conflict in which man tends in a dilemma as in approach-avoidance conflict, or in double approach-avoidance conflict that heaves into view as ubiquitous and of majority among people in which one confronts two alternatives and in each one, there are merits that stimulate man into an approach, and the demerits that attract Avoidance, and such a conflict terminates in hesitation, instability and so forth.

Consequently, a character who hides his identity or a secret behind either periphrastic expressions or brevity ones, regarding approach-approach conflict finds himself in a state of equilibrium, but when having avoidance-approach, he has some subconscious ideas that hinder his approach, but in having approach-avoidance; there is an utter desire, in time there is a barrier that emerges as a conflict, however, double approach-avoidance conflict indicates

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<sup>14</sup> www, notes, **style in dickens's novels**(Retrieved on 06-02-2009)

<sup>15</sup>C.H.Patterson,**Theories of Counseling and Psychotherapy**, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, fourth edition, 1994, p.289.

having two desirous motives to have something ,in time there is a great obstacle that wrecks havoc on the whole desire, in the aggregate ,a character who resorts to periphrasis, is either to hide one of the conflicts or to equivocate from certain course of action, or to attract the attention of the readers. As to brevity, it reproduces the whole reasons beyond periphrasis; one resorts to brevity either to conceal a certain conflict or to vex the readers as in Empson`s fiction<sup>16</sup> ,or to draw the attention of readers to certain targets as in the below excerpt that held between Fredrick and William that impart a great desire to each one, at the eleven hour, such a valediction appears poignant:

**"That's it!" cried his brother" That will help me."**

**"I find that I think, my dear Frederick, and with mixed emotions in which a softened compassion predominates, What will they do without me!"**

**"True" returned his brother." yes, yes, yes, yes .I'll think that as we go. What will they do without my brother! Poor things! What will they do without him!"<sup>17</sup>**

Apparently, it is a moment of highly revealed emotion, but there are some essential facts still submerged, as to readers, it is tantalizing to follow all these lines. The glimpsing fact never floats into surface and for the sake of attracting the eyes to further and further events.

It is quite convenient to have Dickens securitized at certain critiques concerning the institutions of debtors` prisons, the social safety, industry, the treatment and the safety of workers, the bureaucracy of the British Treasury as incarnated in the novel "Circumlocution Office" and the separation of people based on the lack of intercourse between the classes. In all these isles, the novelist endeavours to depict his ire against the shortcomings of the government and society of the period.

In certain excerpts the novelist tends to have a sense of free association for

<sup>16</sup>www ,Modern poetry ,Empson Style in writing poetry.(Retrieved on 4.7,2009)

<sup>17</sup>Charles Dickens, *Little Dorrit*,London,Oxford Press,P.358,1989.

the sake of self-effacement, since the little Dorrit approaches being antihero<sup>18</sup> and then ascends to eponymous one:

**"that I knew him, and I might, I would tell him that he can never, never know I feel his goodness, and how my poor good father would feel it. And what I was going to say, sir, is, that if I knew him, and I might-but I don not know him and I must not-I know that!-I would tell him and reward him. And if I knew him, and I might, I would go down on my knees to him, and take his hand and kiss it, and ask not to draw it away, but to leave it-O to leave it for a moment-and let my thankful tears fall on it, for I have no other thanks to give him!"<sup>19</sup> "**

On the contrary, in the below excerpt Dickens tends to have brevity in term of "shuttle technique":

**I was there all those years. I was-ha-universally acknowledged as the head of the place. I-hum-I caused you to be respected there, Amy. I -ha hum- I gave my family a position there. I deserve a return. I claim a return. I say, sweep it off the face of the earth and begin afresh. Is *that* much? I ask, is that much?<sup>20</sup>**

Although condensed and terse, but such lines make the sense ring true and painful, the father tries to drag his daughter, since he believes that she derails in time his other sons emulate his steps. Now such condensed style, though simple, gives a transparent portrait to a man who toils and now he is whole-hearted to cuddle his family. Shuttle technique comes to highlight two important issues; perceiving the tone in the paragraph and to keep us in touch with the main characters and meant targets, here an elliptical statement serves to inform us how naïve Little Dorrit is:

**O thank you, thank you! But, O no, O no, O no!" She said this, looking at**

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<sup>18</sup> Michael Meyer, *The Bedford Introduction to Literature*, Boston, Quebecor World, p.119, 2005.

<sup>19</sup> Charles Dickens, *Little Dorrit*, London, Oxford Press, P.142, 1989.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, p.399.



**him with her work-worn hands folded together, and in the same resigned accents as before.**

**I press for no confidence now. I only ask you to repose unhesitating trust in me.**

**Can I do less than that, when you are so good!**

**Then you will trust me fully? Will have no secret unhappiness, or anxiety, concealed from me?**

**Almost none<sup>21</sup>**

Though such elliptical expressions convey a sense of confidence that creeps between the main characters; Little Dorrit and Clennam, the whole excerpt leaves us with suspension whether Little Dorrit reposes trust in him or not.

Dickens exerts himself to have his characters sounded true and realistic, that's ,the characters ,by some means or other, tend to juxtapose their milieu, to be a part from their environment:

**He was a dreamer in such wise, because he was a man who had deep-rooted in his nature, a belief in all the gentle and good things his wife had been without. Bred in meanness and had dealing, this had rescued him to be a man of honorable mind and open hand. Bred in a creed too darkly audacious to pursue, through its process of revising the making of man in the image of his Creator to the making of his Creator in the image of an erring man, this had rescued him to judge not, and in humility to be merciful, and have hope and charity<sup>22</sup>.**

In *Little Dorrit*, he explores the criminal system that prevails in his time, he does not advocate imprisonment as a social control. Although of different entities, they both, the prisoners and the staff accept their destiny. Not only does Dickens seam whole-hearted in reflecting some consequences of the Crimean War 1854, but he mainly depicts some aspects autobiographical, social and political that surge into view in his *Little Dorrit*. Throughout the events, he

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid, p.323.

<sup>22</sup> . Ibid, p.139.

tackles, as it seems, some universal issues whose dimensions are of ubiquity.

Sometimes, the narrator himself resorts into either periphrasis or brevity to achieve such targets:

**She forgot to be shy at the moment, in honestly warning him away from the sunken wreck he had a dream of raising; and looked at him with eyes which assuredly, in association with her patient face, her fragile figure, her spare dress, and the wind and rain, did not turn him from his purpose of helping her<sup>23</sup>.**

Here Dickens resorts into brevity to leave the reader with a sense of suspension, and to have more information about a man who is thoroughly benevolent enough to help people as a saviour. The visual image that lurks in "her fragile figure" and "the wind and rain<sup>24</sup>" is manifested through such a condensed style. Or sometimes, Dickens is to manipulate a "roundabout speech" for the sake of both clarity and satisfaction:

**There are only three branches of my subject, my dear Clennman, said Doyce, proceeding to mould them severely, with plastic thumb on the palm of his hand, and they `re soon disposed of. First, not a word more from you about the past. There was an error in your calculations know what that is. It affects the whole machine, and failure is the consequence. You will profitably the failure and will avoid it another time .I have done a similar thing myself, in construction, often. Every failure teaches a man something, if he will learn and you are too sensible a man not to learn from this failure. So much for firstly. Secondly. I was sorry you should have taken it so heavily to heart, and reproached yourself so severely ;I was traveling home night and day to put matters right ,with the assistance of our friend, when I fell in with our friend as he has informed you. Thirdly. We two agreed, that after what you had undergone, after your distress of mind, and after your illness, it would be a pleasant surprise if we could so far keep quiet as to get**

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid,p.81.

<sup>24</sup> [www.dickensandvocabularies.com](http://www.dickensandvocabularies.com),6 of 33 (Retrieved on 12-8-2009).

things perfectly arranged without your knowledge and then come and say that all the affairs were smooth that everything was right that the business stood in greater war of you that ever it did and that a new and prosperous career was open before you and me as partners. That's thirdly. But you know we always make an allowance for friction and so I have reversed space to close . My dear Clennam,I thoroughly confide in you, you have it in your power to be quite as useful to me, as I have or have had it in my power to be useful to you, your old place awaits you and want you very much there is nothing to detain you here ,one half-hour longer. <sup>25</sup>

So often does Dickens take hold of some periphrastic expressions to sufficiently pinpoint the last moments of their departure from the prison:

**Bu all these occurrences precede the final day. And now the day arrived when he and his family were to leave the prison for ever, and when the stones of its much trodden pavement were to know them no more<sup>26</sup>.**

As to be minded, Dorrit`s family knows no limits or bonds to their intimacy that floats into view in a periphrastic style:

**Noon was the hour appointed for the departure. As it approached, there was not a collegian within doors, nor a turkey absent. The latter class of gentlemen appeared in their Sunday clothes, and the greater part of the Collegians were brightened up as much as circumstances allowed<sup>27</sup>.**

The aforementioned excerpt that manifests great emotion in the ultimate moments of valediction, so here the sense of periphrasis comes to pinpoint all the accurate details of the reaction of the "Collegians" .As a matter fact ,such lines divulge the state of man who is about to change the course of his life.

### **The Black Madonna toward Tour de Force**

The literary career of Doris Lessing spans more than four decades; consequently her texts, both fiction and nonfiction reconnoitre the most basic

<sup>25</sup> Charles Dickens, *Little Dorrit*, London, Oxford Press,P.646,1989

<sup>26</sup>.Ibid,p.356.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid,p.356.

level of historical records that tackle the central political, spiritual, and psychological locus of the last half of the twentieth century. In politics, she can not curb herself; quite recently she declares that "Barrack Obama is not good and "would certainly not last long, a black man in the position of president. They would murder him" adds Lessing "The best thing would be if they were to run together. Hillary is a very sharp lady. It might be calmer if she were to win, and not Obama," since she is an admitted Clinton supporter. In literature, as a conscientious novelist, she views the kinks and fissures of the recent drastic changes in the world, in time she reaches 90 years old, and won the Nobel Prize for literature, and known for her sharp statements as the aforementioned one. The Swedish Academy, which awards the Nobel Prize, previously praised Lessing for her "skepticism, fire and visionary power"<sup>28</sup>. In most of her works Lessing's focus is on marginal characters; people living on the fringes of a society, but many critics have attacked the somewhat sprawling narrative style and uneven prose in her novels. Her ability to write tight, terse prose is highly noted in her short fiction and is shown to particular targets, but London Times nominates her not only the best female novelist, but one of the most brilliant and virtuous writer of the postwar generation<sup>29</sup>.

Here Lessing returns to one of her most central concerns: the chasm of misunderstanding and miscommunication that yawns between the genders, concentrates on the human discrimination that prevails in the soul rather than the lands, that is why she averts tackling anything irrelevant to her main issues; there is no a sense of "antropocentric language"<sup>30</sup>, although in the cauldron of the second wave feminist movement, but she never tackles a linguistic sexism throughout *The Black Madonna*. Quite recently, critics have found it

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<sup>28</sup> www **literature, modern novel**, Lessing, styles, 33 of 40. (Retrieved on 11-8-2009)

<sup>29</sup> Paul McCormick, *Adventures in English Literature*, London, Harcourt, Brace and World Inc, P, 846, 1968.

<sup>30</sup> Pauwls Anne, *Women Changing Language*, London, Longman, p. 16, 1998.

extremely hard to categorize Lessing, for she has at various stages of her life espoused different causes and been labeled over again: feminist, Marxist, mystic, materialist, experimentalist, realist, conservative. While she displays a powerful commitment to causes she views as vital to the survival of humankind, her greatest strength lies in her flexibility. She is always prepared to change her views to accommodate new insights ,contradictions and serious questions that actually vex man<sup>31</sup>.

Lessing's chef d'oeuvre encompasses an amalgam of genres: science fiction, drama, essays, autobiography, short stories, and poetry. She displays a tireless interest in the interplay of idea and form; consequently **The Black Madonna** explores the shaping qualities of the genre in which she writes. Some feminists have found her works a fruitful ground for investigating the interplay of gender and genre. Despite her experimentation with other genres Lessing's commitment to the short story is evident enough :

**Some writers I know have stopped writing short stories because, as they say, 'there is no market for them.' Others like myself, the addicts, go on, and I suspect would go on even if there really wasn't any home for them but a private drawer<sup>32</sup>.**

Despite her disavowal of feminism she is perhaps most successful and most renowned for her portrayals of the changing female consciousness as it reacts to problems of the age. Her works display a continuing self-conscious exploration of the limits of genre and form; most of her texts work on metafictional levels<sup>33</sup>. As T.S.Eliot proclaims that the real focus must be steered to a situation, a

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<sup>31</sup>Paul McCormick, *Adventures in English Literature*, London, Harcourt, Brace and World Inc,P,846,1968.

<sup>32</sup> Website (([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lessing\\_style](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lessing_style),p.4 of 12,(Retrieved on 06-01-2008)

<sup>33</sup>Ibid,p.2.

relation, and an atmosphere to which all the characters pay "tribute"<sup>34</sup>. At the very outset of the storyline the narrator states:

**There are some countries in which the arts, let alone art, cannot be said to flourish. Why this should be so, it is hard to say, although of course we all have our theories about it.**

Here as was the case with the introductory episodes in *Little Dorrit*, Lessing launches her episodes with the sense of in medias res to create intimacy between her coming lines and the readers<sup>35</sup>.

When reading **The Black Madonna** themes of racism and ignorance, it is quite convenient to find them repeatedly presented. The thought of how one ethnic group has rendered themselves as superiors to another is a recurring theme. All forms of racism and ignorance are nothing but forms of madness. Melvin Maddocks simply states: "Lessing is prepared. Lessing, in short, appears to be a versatile and talented writer. Her politics are one sided, her characters are limited in conception, and her world resolves in a simple pattern". There is a wide range of the opinions that concern Lessing's writings; much agree that Doris Lessing is often thought of as ponderous, clumsy, a thinker rather than a novelist. With the knowledge of human shortcomings Lessing should have made her writing more easily comprehensible, it is unnecessarily difficult to read her issues. Lessing sees, understands, identifies and expounds on these particular shortcomings of humanity and dovetails them into her writing.

*The Black Madonna* opens African Stories, probably because Lessing feels so strongly about it: "I am addicted to '**The Black Madonna**,' which is full of the bile that in fact I feel for the 'white' society in Southern Rhodesia as I knew and hated it." The story could almost be characterized as Lessing's

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<sup>34</sup> Philip Rahv, *Literature in America*, New York, Viking press, p.223, 1957.

<sup>35</sup> Mick Short t, *Exploring the Language of Poems, Plays and Prose*, London, Longman press, p.267, 1996.

revenge against white colonial Rhodesian society, for she brutally exposes Zambesia philistinism and bigotry in a tragicomic tale of friendship and betrayal. Michele, an Italian intern in Zambesia during World War II, paints amateur frescoes and portraits that are revered by the ignorant white colonials, tends to germinate some ideas that reflect his wisdom and naivety; he is a tragicomic hero, but unlike Don Quixote, Michele is without a boon and faithful friend<sup>36</sup>. As a corollary, he is to be befriended by another exile figure, a fascist soldier named Captain Stocker, who fears women and can therefore find happiness only with subordinate black women, putting his emotions in conflict with his racist beliefs. The story ends with the collapse of their friendship when Michele laughs at the white colonial society that Captain Stocker must uphold for his own survival. With Michele's departure Stocker loses his chance at confronting his loneliness and emotional sterility.

As an epicist of the female experience Dorris Lessing incarnated in subjecting a devastated civilization with skepticism, fire and visionary power to scrutiny. As a matter of fact, her styles journey from the communist viewpoints, in which she tackles some social issues, through the psychological ones in which she endeavours to fathom the human recesses in term of man versus himself conflict. **The Golden Notebook** is the most lurid artwork she has endeavoured to write; it is a chef d'oeuvre in portraiture of the manners, aspirations, frustration and specific preoccupations of the moments in which we live:

**'About five years ago I found myself thinking about that novel which most writers now are tempted to write at some time or another - about the problems of a writer, about the artistic sensibility. I saw no point in writing this again: it has been done too often; it has been one of the major themes of the novel in our time. Yet, having decided not to write it, I continued to think about it, and about the reasons why artists now have to combat**

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<sup>36</sup> Kian Pishkar, Nooshin Nasery, *A Reader's Guide to Practical English Literary Analysis*, Azad Islamic University, p.4.2006.

various kinds of narcissism<sup>37</sup>.

Hence Lessing portrays Africa as an adventurous escape or at least an elemental challenge for the men who seek to conquer the land. However, for the white women who marry these men and try to make homes for their families, Africa is both a prison and a cultural desert. If the white men sometimes break through to a limited understanding of Africa, the white women seldom connect with the land or the culture. Lessing portrays white-settler women as doubly alienated from African life: they remain exiles because of their stubborn British identification and outsiders by virtue of their gender.

In 1950 Lessing published her first novel, *The Grass Is Singing*, which was hailed as one of the first honest presentations of the horrors of the apartheid system and the hypocrisies of the white colonial society that maintained it. However, Lessing was not pleased with such narrow political or sociological readings of her work. She complained that *The Grass Is Singing* and her first collection of short stories, *This Was the Old Chief's Country* (1951), "were described by reviewers as about the colour problem ... which is not how I see, or saw, them."

Throughout her career Lessing has resisted labels and external literary proscriptions. She was well aware of the material expected of her as a new colonial writer from Rhodesia, and she found such expectations limiting. Lessing sums up the merits and the demerits of being a writer from Africa:

**Writers brought up in Africa have many advantages--being at the centre of a modern battlefield; part of a society in rapid, dramatic change. But in a long run it can also be a handicap: to wake up every morning with one's eyes on fresh evidence of inhumanity; to be reminded twenty times a day of injustice, and always the same brand of it, can be limiting. There are other things in living besides**

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<sup>37</sup>Website ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sufism#Basics\\_beliefs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sufism#Basics_beliefs)). (Retrieved on 06-01-2008)



**injustice, even for the victims of it.**

In *The Black Madonna*, she tries to fathom the great agony the colonized suffer from during the stick of occupation; people are defiant enough to comply with the colonizers as they desire to confiscate the colonized. Those people who reveal their refusal plough a path to fellow men; Michele with his defiance takes hold of reality and as a painter he portrays his freedom with his fingers: "**I paint this way ,that way. There is the picture .I look at it and laugh inside myself**"<sup>38</sup>. But here Michele's deep thoughts and fluttering imagination purport as an "extended metaphor"<sup>39</sup> to the rich ores of Africa, it means his ideas are as rich and prosperous as his land. Lessing ,at the very outset, manipulates some periphrastic expressions to give some hints about the setting of her storyline:

**Zambesia is a tough, sun burnt, virile, positive country contemptuous of subtleties and sensibility: yet there have been States with these qualities which have produced art, though perhaps with the left hand**<sup>40</sup>.

Though repressed and dejected, but Michele resents being humiliated, he expressed his sense of self-dignity, here Lessing reverts into some periphrastic expressions to highlight the act of refusing any sense of self-effacement:

**Michele stood up. He lifted the bottle against the sun, then took a gulp. He rinsed mouth out with wine and spat. Then he poured what was left on to the red earth, where it made a bubbling purple stain**<sup>41</sup>.

Lessing herself can not curb her overtones, she identifies herself with

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<sup>38</sup>Dorris Lessing, *The Black Madonna*. London, Hunt Barnard printing,p.34,1966.

<sup>39</sup> Elizabeth McMahan, *Literature and the Writing Process*, New Jersey,p.496,1998.

<sup>40</sup>Charles Dickens, *Little Dorrit*, London, Oxford Press,P.7,1989.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid,p.15.

Michele not as did Hawthorne in *Young Goodman Brown*<sup>42</sup>. that is, she pinpoints the sense of social issues very vehemently: "It is not too much to say that while some were dying for freedom, others were dancing for it"<sup>43</sup>. Moreover, there is some lines expressing the sense of condensed styles to convey top-dog dialogue:

**You are wanted, said the captain**

**Who? Said Michele. He sat up, a fattish, olive skinned little man. His eyes were resentful.**

**The authorities**

**The war is over**<sup>44</sup>.

Lessing has a gift for realistic dialogue, especially when expressing social codes through her white characters' accents, vocabularies, and tones; the silences and gaps in their conversations are even more subtly revealing. In the tragic storyline there is a mutual lack of self-acceptance. Lessing attacks and detests the inefficacy of liberal values and the misguidedness of charity work without a concomitant program of political and social reform.

Under the premise of language, Lessing exploits the sense of schema-related language to convey certain viewpoints:

**And Michele went off to his room with a friend and stayed there drinking red wine from the Cape and talking about home. While the money lasted he could not be persuaded to do any more portraits**<sup>45</sup>.

It is clear that what Michele may decide later on; since the schematic information are evident in such cases, he is furious and not "persuaded", that is to say, the schema related language purports viewpoints that the novelist herself desires to address the readers and such a device is implemented in both cases,

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<sup>42</sup> Wilfred L. Guerin, *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature*, the Murray Printing Company, p.98, 2006.

<sup>43</sup> Charles Dickens, *Little Dorrit*, London, Oxford Press, P.12, 1989.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, p.14.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 11.

periphrastic and condensed:

**Michele stood up. He lifted the bottle against the sun, then took a gulp. He rinsed his mouth out with wine and spat. Then he poured what was left on to the red earth, where it made a bubbling purple stain<sup>46</sup>.**

Here the schema-related language manifests the state of pride that prevails in Michele's soul after being treated under the premise of humanity, since his toiling hours will be sufficiently paid.

There are some signs of culture pollination between the Captain and Michele, though different and grotesque, the former was secretive, sometimes surreptitious, and cognizant of imparting his private affairs but with lapse of time they are dovetailed to the extent, the Captain stops short of divulging himself and through some periphrastic expressions the narrator elicits:

**Yet he spoke of her to Michele, and of his favorite bush–wife, Nadya. He told Michele the story of his life, until he realized that the shadows from the trees they sat under had stretched right across the parade-ground to the grandstand<sup>47</sup>.**

As to the light, Lessing manipulates the device of light as essential in delineating a character, in her church scenes ,she drags the readers to the light tricks to the extent the readers envisages the village though not existed. Moreover, the use of such a setting and color tricks in **The Black Madonna** gives much shrifts to the main character in the story. Lessing discreetly describes how Michel differently views his surroundings along the story, making use of elements in his surroundings, including the starkness of the landscape to represent his emotional status, and later using his strokes to have his say candidly. The light serves to convey that one sometimes obliged to cherish the illusion and regard the alluded sense as reality:

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid,p.15.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid,p.21.

**What's that? said the Captain, furious**

**The church, said Michele.**

**Wha-at?**

**You will see later. It is very hot<sup>48</sup>.**

The sense of brevity in the dialogue explores the chasm between the outer, visible world from which Michele comes and the inner, the silent world his portraits describe as disconnected. Even by portraying the closeness of the two characters and their struggle to connect over a common dialogue come quite evident, that is why Lessing makes the reader question the nature of such a nexus. The exploration of the relationship between the individual and collective spiritual entity is investigated in the acts of the village erecting. It is of quite convenience to trace Lessing's movement from inner-space to outer-space fiction, exploring her mapping of the personal spiritual journey and the extension of such an experiment to humankind as a whole.

It is quite convenient to have some periphrastic expressions in term of free association that helps impart all the Captain's agony and repressed plights:

**Go ahead, my Storm-trooper. If you want to waste your money on private detectives, go ahead. But don't think I don't know what you do when you're in the bush. I don't care what you do, but remember that I know it<sup>49</sup>**

...

With lapse of time, they promenade hand by hand and singing under a tree and the sense of condescension vanishes. Michele sings some Italian songs in time the Captain does in English, they spend good time together, friendship makes miracles when it happens that the Captain sacrificed himself to protect Michele from an eminent shelling, since Michele was fully engrossed in painting black Madonnas on the walls:

**They are going to kill my Madonna, he said miserably.**

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<sup>48</sup>Ibid,19.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid,p.23.

**Come away, Michele, come away.**

**They're going to<sup>50</sup>...**

This final, bittersweet scene dramatizes how the human emotion knows no any sense of apartheid system. Much as Lessing highlights on the intimacy that lurks in her protagonists who struggle to come to terms with new modes of living and social structures.

Lessing, throughout **The Black Madonna**, endeavours to reflect how superior the occupier appears ,if need be, and all his resentment surges into surface when Michele talks candidly about his experience with the General's wife:

**Get out, he said suddenly.**

**You wish me to go**

**You saved my life; I was a fool that night. But I was thinking of my offering to the Madonna-I was it myself. I was drunk; we are fools when we are drunk.**

**Go out of here,**

**And take that bloody picture with you.**

**Yes, sir<sup>51</sup>.**

Of most importance ,the apartheid aspects here lurk not only in lands but also do in hearts, as an antidote, Michele never moves a muscle ,though he exerts himself to sever the chains of segregation that clanks on the black, but segregation is to be forever<sup>52</sup> .but he retaliates against him by saying "yes ,sir,"

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid,30.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid,p.34-5.

<sup>52</sup> Don Yaeger, *Turning of the Tide*, New York, Hachette Book Group,p.50,2006.

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with great salutation that leaves the Captain scrupulous, then bends himself inferior and ultimately groans as Michele passing with a flying colour.

### Conclusion

First of all, Dickens exploits the sense of defamiliarization; intimacy lurks in a prison, though most of the characters get mingled with the surroundings, whereas other characters protest against the sense of self-effacement. In so doing, Dickens portrays his characters by both styles periphrasis and brevity to convey their delineation and self-identification. As was the case with Dickens;

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Doris Lessing does exploit both too; periphrasis and brevity to have different viewpoints ramified in **The Black Madonna** where the dialogue serves as a stimulator to Michele and the Captain who give full rein to their imagination to impart all their secrets; here the sense of periphrasis gives much shrifts to the free association, but when having the worm's eye view to have the characters delineated in particular, Doris reverts into brevity to have the sense of intimacy that people share though different in colour and race , the sense of superiority and being discriminated that people defy and loathe nip the seed of the friendship in the bud. ; the captain fails to exorcise himself from such a sense though hollow." yes, sir" flummoxes him and leaves him groaning...groaning.

Both novelists portray man as smarting under a provocation so stringent and so strong, both convey some thematic viewpoints in term of various technical maneuvers. Structurally account, Dickens's resorts into several human conflicts, techniques ;shuttle to the past ,yoking a character to his real milieu and the free association in term of both periphrasis and brevity; in other words, psychology and sociology find vent in such periphrastic and condensed styles. Yet thematically, the novelist manipulates wide range of social and political issues in term of periphrasis and brevity as manifested at the onset of the present paper. It is analogous to Dickens's dexterity ,Lessing manipulates structurally some psychological viewpoints; top-dog dialogue , free association, some light tricks ,and even the atmosphere of the storyline in term of periphrasis and brevity, yet thematically she does convey, in term of periphrasis and brevity, the main conflict of man versus himself, the horrors of apartheid system that lurks in hearts not only in lands, the refusal to any assortment of self-effacement and the fiasco of culture pollination between Michele and the Captain.

Notes