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POLYPHONY IN THE EGYPTIAN CONTEMPORARY ARABIC NOVEL (A CASE STUDY OF GUANTANAMO)

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Abstract

Novel is one of the important written forms of the narrative fiction and due to being relatively long, creates a suitable atmosphere to bring different ideas and worldviews to the text and helps the writer mention different ideas and introduce different characters in the text. This paper aims at studying Guantanamo Novel by Youssef Ziedan, the famous Egyptian writer. The paper tries to apply Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of polyphony to Guantanamo novel and depicts the existing features of polyphony in it. The findings show that in Guantanamo, if a voice expresses its ideas, other voices will agree or criticize it. However, with further consideration, it is understood that the voices of the American characters are dominant over the Muslim characters and even the protagonist of the play. One of the significant features of the polyphony is the existence of intertextuality throughout the text. The writer brings quotations of Quran, hadith, poems and

news and historical points in the first two hundred pages of the novel. The strongest contrast is between the American and Islamic characters and is seen between Sarah Klaus as an American psychologist and the Sudanic-Egyptian character of the play who is the novel's protagonist. Youssef Ziedan has been successful in creating a polyphonic novel by Using different narrative modes and techniques such as stream of consciousness, religious and historic intertextuality, poetic language, decentralization, disinterestedness in presenting the voices and worldviews of characters.

Keywords

Contemporary Arabic Novel, Egypt, Polyphony, Guantanamo Novel, Youssef Ziedan, Mikhail Bakhtin, Monophonic

1. Introduction

Novel is one of the important written forms of narrative fiction and due to being relatively long creates a suitable atmosphere to bring different ideas and worldviews to the text and helps the writer mention different ideas and bring different characters into existence. Mikhail Bakhtin, the Russian philosopher and literary critic has categorized novel in two categories of the monophonic and polyphonic.

According to Bakhtin, a novel must be a place where various and numerous voices are heard rather than a place where a writer dictates his own ideas to the others. The voice of the narrator is only one of the voices that must be heard independently. This is the art of the writer to let multiple voices of the different characters be heard in addition to the voice of the writer (Payandeh, 2015). The function of art in capturing the reality and gaining the ability to perceive life totally is also highlighted in the novel. (Koseoglu, 2017)

Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975) is one of the philosophers of the humanities field and a literary critic of the twentieth century. The most prolific years of his life coincided with Stalin's dictatorship government. He was contemporary with important literary movements such as Russian Formalism and he was also influenced by the Kantian and neo-Kantian philosophies (Motlagh, 2008 & Gholam Hossein Zadeh, Gharib Reza, 2007). Polyphony is the concept which Bakhtin introduced to the world of criticism.

Polyphony is a term which Bakhtin borrowed from music and in the early twentieth century he introduced it in literary criticism for the first time. Polyphony, literally meaning the combination of the different parts, has influenced Bakhtin's main analysis of the Fyodor

Dostoyevsky novels. Bakhtin knows Dostoevsky as the symbol of the creation of polyphonic novels because all of his dialogues are wise and witty (Allen, 2013). In these literary works, “characters argue with each other, learn from each other and try to expand their attitude” (Bakhtin, 1970). They have “this gift to disagree with the narrator and stand against the narrator as a criminal” (Ibid.) what is important is that “polyphony focuses on the ideological problems” (Ibid.) While using the language, we enter into a layer with different economic, politic and historic variables; a combination of ideologies which are unique and non-repetitive (Holquist, 2002). In such narratives, ideas and how to discuss them are very important. Moreover, the final words are never told and the dialogue is infinitely continued (Meghdadi, 2014). In these works, the dialogue between the characters guarantees their personal worldview, their manner of speaking, their style of speech, social position and their ideology. In the novel but, when the author is exposed to cultural elements such as: proverbs, popular songs, games and folk beliefs, he used dialect in order to be faithful to the context by retaining the original words of characters in dialogue. (Benheddi, 2017)

In contrast, in a monophonic novel, the voice of the author or the narrator which is a solo and isolated voice is heard above any other voices (Ahmadi, 1991). Though other voices of the characters are heard, this is the voice of the author or the narrator which is ultimately dominant (Gholam Hossein Zadeh, Gharib Reza, 2007). The narrator’s personal voice is heard throughout the work and he/she talks instead of his/her characters and he/she concludes the novel. The narrator announces the final word and all other characters become mute. Monophonic texts are opposing to the external knowledge and overlook the external consciousness.

In fact, polyphony is one of the new features of the literary discourse; A textual atmosphere in which multiple voices with multiple attitudes and with different world views try to converse and result into a significant mobility of attitudes under the condition that no voice is dominant over the other (Makaryk, 2009).

In Bakhtin’s idea, writer’s voice must have the least importance; otherwise we will face a boring novel whose content is unimpressive and we will witness the author abusing the characters as his puppets to further express his own goals and personal views. Bakhtin calls such novels monophonic. Monophonic novels are anti-democratic because they refuse to give the reader the chance of hearing different voices, and the chance to judge the ideologies exposed in the novel. In fact, the author of a monophonic novel has decided it all for the reader. For Bakhtin, nothing has been previously decided in the polyphonic novels; characters are free to act

according to their beliefs and worldviews (distinguished from the author's worldview) and the reader is also free enough to judge the characters and their acts as he/she wishes (Bakhtin, 2016).

Bakhtin believes that in a polyphonic novel, the role of the author becomes hidden between the characters and their world views about life. In other words, he says that in polyphonic novels, the ideologies are reflected within the voices and the language. Therefore, the protagonist does not reflect the ideas of writer and in fact he/she is independent to have his/her own idea. (Bouazze, 2016)

1.1 Research Methodology

This paper uses Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of polyphony as the method of the research. The writer of a novel can benefit from others not only as the others but also as his own self. This is what the great writers have done so far. Dostoyevsky becomes Bakhtin's ideal. Dostoyevsky gives his characters the chance to become a unique "self" and place the writer in another position. (Holquist, 2016). In a polyphonic novel, Bakhtin creates a space between the protagonist and the writer and that is his condition for a novel to be considered polyphonic (Almoussa, 2011). To Bakhtin, a polyphonic novel is a novel in which the author has the ability to picture the thoughts of another person (Bakhtin, 1986). In light of Bakhtin's polyphony, Fazel Samer, the contemporary Arab critic, explains some of the features and styles of polyphonic novels and these features are the features that Bakhtin believes a polyphonic novel must have. These features are: decentralization in creating the protagonist, paying attention to the environment or choosing different narrative voices, lack of integrity between the narrative techniques, different languages and different styles of speech (different utterances and different views), creating poetics of the narration, focusing on the type of the relationship in a group, encouraging dramatic epic figures of speech in the narration of the novel, using different connotative narrations, leading the narration to the some connotative readers depending on the number of narrators, lack of a cyclic structure going from the end of the novel back to the beginning, lack of emphasis on a clear time line and focusing on a collection of times and various place structure.

1.2 Research Questions

In this paper the researchers try to address certain questions. The first question is that which voice is more significant in comparison with other existing voices in Guantanamo novel? Second question that the researchers find worthwhile to answer is that what are the features of polyphony in Guantanamo novel? And how are they reflected? One more question which is

worth to be explored is that which voices are against each other in Guantanamo novel? By answering the above mentioned questions, the researchers are able to conclude the extent to which Youssef Ziedan has been successful in writing a polyphonic novel.

1.3 Literature Review

Many researches have been done on polyphony. The written and translated books are *The Dialogical Principle* by Mikhail Bakhtin, translated by Daryoush Karimi (1998), *The Dialogic Imagination* by Mikhail Bakhtin, translated by Roya Pour Azar (1999), *Mikhail Bakhtin; Life, Thoughts and Fundamental Concepts* by Gharib Reza Hosseinzadeh and Negar Gholampour (2008) and *Democratic Dialogism* by Mansoor Ansari (2005). Researches who have been done in the form of articles are: “Dialogism in Literature and Art: Collection of Essays” by Bahman Namvar Motlaq and Manizheh Kangani (2008), “Bakhtin, Dialogism and Polyphony; A Pre-textual and Intersexual Study of Bakhtin” by Bahman Namvar Motlaq (2008), “Polyphonic Literature and Drama” translated by Ehsan Moghadasi (2007) and another paper entitled “Taadod Alsout fi Ravayat A-Zini Barakat Le-Jamal AlGhaitani” by Alireza Kahe and et.al. A PhD thesis entitled “Jamalat Al-Havariat fi Revayat Mogharabiat” has been written by Soleyman Ghurari. In the first chapter of this thesis, polyphony in the novels of Libya, Tunis, Algeria, Maghreb and Mauritania have been analyzed. However, this thesis has not alluded to the novels of the Egyptian writers.

2. Statement of the Problem

This paper aims at reading Youssef Ziedan’s novel, *Guantanamo*, in the light of Mikhail Bakhtin’s concept of polyphony and also tries to depict how the features of polyphony have been reflected in the Egyptian novel and how it shows the contrast of between different ethnics and different religions of the world.

2.1 Polyphony in the Contemporary Arabic Novel

It has long been recognized in literary studies that stories, novels and narratives are narrated from different points of view ranging from the godlike ‘omniscient narrator’ whose position is outside the story, to the unreliable narrator who is a character acting within a given story. Hence, it is assumed that the selection of a narrative voice in which to tell a story is one of the most important stylistic choices to be made by authors since it affects in a quite crucial way the attitude of the reader to the events related in the story. (SARNOU, 2016) Polyphony in Arabic literature is not a new concept. Arabs have explained this musical concept in the world of

literature and have paid attention to it. Abu Nasr Muhammad ibn Al-Farabi who was one of the most important music theorists has distinguished three forms of polyphony in music. The canonic diaphony which happens when two tunes are played together, the organal homophony where two tunes are played one after the other; and vocal drone organum, playing a tune completely, and retorting with the same style. Later, Avicenna, the Iranian philosopher added three other types of polyphony to what Al-Farabi had previously said; *Tabdil* which is the reversion of the harmonic spaces, *Tashghigh* which is when one plays two strings but only one tune is heard. In the last type, *Tareed*, intervals, one of the strings is played minor to make the tune more beautiful. *Tareed* is the polyphony based on the musical notes written by the songwriter.

If we focus on the polyphony between the characters of the novel, we can find its examples in *Kililah wa Dimnah*, the Indian *Panchatantra* translated into Persian and later into Arabic by Ibn Moghafa. However, as it was previously told, it was Bakhtin who introduced and explained the concept of polyphony in literature. When William Faulkner wrote *The Sound and the Fury* in 1929, other Arab writers imitated him consciously or unconsciously. Ghassan Kanafani's novel, *All That's Left to You* (1966) is an example. He soon expressed that he was disappointed with this technique because he believed there were few Arab readers who could connect with this technique of writing. (Shikh Khalil, 1989) In addition to Kanafani, Naghioub Mahfouz also used this technique in his novel *Miramar*. Critics believe that Mahfouz has used the technique in a way that not only it develops the sequential actions of the novel, but it also depicts the four main characters of the novel which are moving in their own orbit (Siza, 1993). Gibran Khalil Gibran is another writer who has used this technique by translating William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* into Arabic. He also wrote his novel *The Prophet* by imitating this technique from Faulkner. Nabil Suleiman, the Syrian novel writer is another writer who has used this technique of polyphony in his novel *Solj-al-Seif*. He believes that this technique has flourished the polyphony not only for the writer, but also for the reader and the theme of the novel. (Naeese, 2001)

2.2 Summary of the Novel

As the name indicates, the novel reminds us of the Guantanamo Bay detention camp. Guantanamo is the second novel of Ziedan's trilogy. The novel narrates the story of a Sudanic young man who is not guilty but has been arrested and jailed in Guantanamo for seven years. This novel highlights human miseries namely pain and torture of the prison. In this novel,

innocent characters are the victims of the continuing aggression of people in power, those who condemn and punish innocent people because of unjustified doubts. The incidents of the novel happen in different atmospheres that make the reader doubt if it is a dream or the reality. The novel begins with a phrase that makes the reader think that the wrongdoing of Americans to the Afghans and Arabs who have been transferred to Guantanamo is nothing more than a dream and that's while the writer begins the novel with "as if all that happened has never happened" (Ziedan,2014). Based on life evidences of the protagonist, whose name is Beres Abu Balal, it seems to the reader that this is the life of Sami Mahi al-din Al-haj, the Sudanic photographer who went to Afghanistan for photography and was captured by Americans without committing any crime. Over the course of the novel, the protagonist tries to show American's interaction with Guantanamo prisoners who are from countries like Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia (Abu Salmi), Yemen (Abu Sab Al-Yemeni) and Tunisia (Moheb Alhur) in the form of their views and voices. After strongly struggling with the American police officers and detectors, the protagonist is transferred to London under the pressure of the Americans, and although he has not committed any crime, he is forced to yield to the desire of the Americans to be able to gain his conditional freedom. The novel does not have a clear ending and it ends with the phrase "Va Noor" (Ziedan, 2014), to encourage the reader to imagine how the protagonist's relationship with his lover would be in Cairo. In fact, this shows that the polyphony is depicted here very well because the beginning and the ending of the novel are not on the same place in a circle. The beginning of the novel is in the darkness of the Guantanamo detention camp "my surrounding is destructive; darkness and the pain have been mingled. (Ziedan, 2014).

2.3 Polyphony in Guantanamo Novel

[1] In Youssef Ziedan's novel, Guantanamo, decentralization has played an important role in achieving polyphony of the novel and the voices of characters. The protagonist tries to give a chance to other characters to think and express no matter they are internal or external, Islamic or non-Islamic and he never tries to make his voice dominant. For example, in the beginning of the novel the protagonist is confined in a dark and torturing place but he is still seeking a mirror named "others" to hear their ideas and thoughts about him "Can I find someone who can listen to me, see my reflection in his mirror, and save me from this marsh of loneliness" (Ziedan, 2014). In fact, the writer tries to show his open-mindedness by reflecting different voices and letting others talk. This novel does not conform to the timeline of the linear novels but the unity of its theme connects different parts of this novel to each other (Mir Sadeghi, 2011). The features of a

polyphonic novel are the existence of various narrators, various cultures, stream of consciousness, intertextuality, combination of literary genres and literary schools, using poetic language and dialogues. Using these elements assist the reader to have a new interpretation of the text. (Hassan Zadeh, 2012) In Guantanamo, one of the significant features of polyphony is using intertextuality in the whole parts of the text. The writer has quoted from holy Quran, has used hadith in addition to using news and historical quotations from the Historical Book of Avicenna in Prison while writing the novel to enrich the utterances. For example, the protagonist combines his voices with the voice of holy Quran to protest against the wrongdoings of Americans to the prisoners. He calls Americans ruthless and is eager to create a wall between himself and the Americans. He believes that they cannot be integrated and he uses a simile comparing himself and the Americans to the sweet and salt water that cannot become combined and he brings an Ayah 19 of Alrahman Surah to show the concept of intertextuality regarding his thoughts “He released the two seas meeting side by side, between them is a barrier so neither of them transgress (Ziedan, 2014)(Holy Quran). Style of writing is another technical feature of this novel which contributes to its polyphony and that’s why the writer has used stream of consciousness for the protagonist and other characters. Stream of consciousness is a new narrative mode in which the role of the writer is minimized unlike the classical narratives and the writer becomes omniscient and tries to narrate the thoughts and the emotions of the characters intact and without any censorship [22]. In Guantanamo, in addition to minimizing the role of the writer, Youssef Ziedan is the witness of the thoughts and the deeds of Beres, the young Egyptian, Moheb Alhur, the Tunisian extremist, Sarah Klaus, the American psychologist who insists on the interaction with the Americans and she believes some of them are worth to interact with (Ziedan, 2014). Shikh Noghteh Al-akbari, the Sufi character of the novel is the Arabic spiritual voice and the protagonist uses his words and his thoughts, and it seems like the protagonist can read the thoughts of this Sufi and can even talk to him. At times even the writer tries to show the thoughts and the views of this character to the protagonist in hypnagogia “I went to talk to Shikh Noghteh whom I see in dreams and reality. We talk through our eyes” (Ziedan, 2014). The voice and the thoughts of the Sufi inter into the imagination of the protagonist and the protagonist knows Shikh as his guidance after God; he considers him as the light of his life and also asks for his help. The narration of the novel sometimes changes from prose to poetic to show another feature of polyphony in the text. It seems like the writer and the characters are different even in style of writing. For instant, the writer uses poetic language as such: “I took a sit and wrote. This entire

empty place belongs to me, and the roller coaster dreams, they all belong to me, the dreams are rolling but the memories are as still as stones and I am stuck between these two” (Ziedan, 2014).

2.3.1 Voice of the Americans

Voices which show the worldviews of different groups, different people and good or bad people, have a good variation in this novel but the yelling of the American soldiers in the novel is dominant over the course of the novel. Soldiers yell at the Muslims in an insulting way and this depicts contempt for the Muslims which seems like all of them are condemned to be terrorized and the victims of aggression. Therefore, the writer intends to put Muslim characters in front of the Americans to correct the views of the Americans and make them stop aggression. The writer also talks about negative attributes of Americans such as lying, “Americans are constantly lying” (Ziedan, 2014). In another place he tries to explain the worldview of the Americans for some Muslims “definitely, I am not here to welcome you, because you don’t worth it. I’ve come to tell you that you are the symbol of evil and sworn enemies of America” (Ziedan, 2014). The American soldier in Guantanamo tries to make his voice dominant by being aggressive toward the Muslim characters and also creates this hegemony in their thoughts. The writer has successfully put the opposite voices of the novel next to each other.

2.3.1.1 The Female American Psychologist

Another voice reflected in the novel which is against the aggressive voice of American soldiers is the voice of the female American psychologist. Apparently, she comes to Guantanamo to help the protagonist of the novel and other Muslim characters and seems like she is not against them and in fact she is on their side. “I’m not your enemy; I’m not apart from you; I’m not on a side which is against you” (Ziedan, 2014). Her view and voice rejects the aggressive interaction approach of the American soldiers with the protagonist and other Muslim characters and what she is trying for is to bring these two closer to each other by the help of the dialogue. She believes that most of the American Generals are fair and are not like Jeffry Miller. As a female character with her feminine feelings and with her peace-seeking thoughts, she understands the painful experiences of the protagonist and his companions and tries to change the protagonist’s mind and his friends’ “This is understandable that you have a low opinion of Americans according to the experiences you had, but I want you to know that most of the Americans are fair” (Ziedan, 2014). Today’s woman tries to fight against the dominance of the culture and the history. (Moshafeghi, 2010). The American woman in this novel cries the escape from the American culture and dominance.

2.3.1.2 The American Female Correction Officer

Along with Sarah, who is a moderate character and believes that the Americans' behavior has to change with the Muslim prisoners, there exists another female character in the novel who tries to seduce the protagonist. Sali and Sarah's difference remains in the fact that Sali tries to make the protagonist regress, while Sarah tries to help the protagonist and leads him to his normal life and this shows that the thoughts and the deeds of Sarah are positive. Sali who looks like Sudanic women tries to win the heart of the protagonist and get closer to him. The protagonist who is a devoted Muslim cries Islam's idea about the haram affairs and he does not even intend to look at her "She asks me many times why I do not look at her or do not talk to her and I answer this is the rule of Islam (Ziedan, 2014). This woman is the voice of the seducing correction officers of Guantanamo and the protagonist resists her temptation as much as he can. Sali depicts herself as a woman who tries to have sexual affairs with the Muslim prisoners "I could get rid of my thoughts with the beliefs I had but then this correction officer, Sali, came and showed me my weakness" (Ziedan, 2014). In fact, Sali's voice is one of the important voices in the narration of the novel as it shows the society's view of women in daily relationships. (Alghazami, 1997) In other words, Sali's voice shows her attitudes towards the prisoners regarding the daily life and their ideas about her.

2.3.2 Voice of the Muslims

2.3.2.1 Voice of the Indonesian Muslim Translator

In another place, we hear the voice of an Indonesian Muslim man who works as the translator for the soldiers of Guantanamo detention camp. He has learnt Arabic in Pakistan (Ziedan, 2014). In addition to familiarizing the protagonist of the novel, he tries to introduce the protagonist with a group of Arabs who believe in Quran in the surface and are just limited to praying and being fast and do not respect other sayings and aspects of Quran. The Muslim Indonesian man does not have any dreams or intentions to go on the pilgrimage to Mecca "He doesn't believe in Islam more than five-time-daily prayers and being fast in Ramadan" (Ziedan, 2014). There are different characteristics in this novel that enrich the narrative discourse and this helps the world view of the narrative not to be limited to the writer's but to be connected to the network of the characters who reside in the narrative discourse. The basis of such a narrative is polyphonic and this is polyphony which gives the characters, this Indonesian character and others, the independence to speak their minds without needing to dictate their ideas to each other. (Aboud, 2013)

2.3.2.2 Voice of Islam

In the first few pages of this novel, the voice of Islam is a divine voice and one might think that this makes the novel a religious one. Quoting from the Ayahs of holy Quran is a regular technique and the use of Ayahs, Hadith and religious sayings are visible within the text up to page 170. The protagonist uses the Ayahs of Quran and Islamic thoughts against the wrongdoings and the tortures he witnesses and he even takes refuge to the Ayah “In the name of God the Merciful” in his painful trip and when he is tortured he says “where is the end to this torture? In the name of God, the Merciful who sent Quran to teach us and created humanity” (Ziedan, 2014). The protagonist uses the divine voice in these two cases and other cases to show the two worlds of the dominating and the dominated. However, in another place he uses his open-mindedness and Ayahs to complain about the divine rules “Why these aggressive soldiers are lost in the darkness and hurt us. Do they think that their God has created them for no purpose? Do they think they won’t return to God? God! Why did you make many people dominated to come to you and complain to you like me? (Ziedan, 2014). Though the protagonist is kept in a one-person cell in Guantanamo and he is punished severely and tortured, in his mind he cries as someone open-minded and complains about the divine rules.

2.3.2.3 Mormon and Christianity’s voice

In this novel we can hear the voice of the variety of religions such as Islam, Christianity, Jewish religion and Taiwan religion. In addition to being exposed to the ideas and thoughts of the different characters including the Americans, Arabs and Afghans who have their religions, we also encounter different religions which have their specific ideologies and thoughts. One of these characters is a Puerto Rican man who stays in front of the protagonist’s cell one day and the protagonist gets familiar with his beliefs and his religion. “One day a soldier named Tom came in front of my cell and told me that I am Mormon and I think our religions have much in common. I want us to talk so that I can know more about Islam (Ziedan, 2014). Tom is a person who believes in Mormon religion and since his thoughts are quite similar to those of the protagonist, he tries to get familiar to the protagonist’s religion as well. He wants to tell the protagonist and even the readers that there is a voice familiar to Islam in America and this can be heartwarming for the protagonist as he is trapped with the opposite religious beliefs of his. Mormon is a religion in America whose number of believers is approximately six million people. Mormons do not use the cross and they believe they are innocent. They pray five times a day, they do not drink and etc. (Ziedan, 2014). In this novel, at times, we even see the contrast of the

characters' dialogues about religion. Moreover, some of the characters like Sarah are Christians and with getting closer to the protagonist, they wish the protagonist of the novel to be a Christian someday. At the same time, the protagonist of the play in his opposing voice wishes Sarah to be a Muslim someday because both of the characters find each other's peace-seeking voice similar and the existing difference is their different religions that have created their different ideologies. This is the reason why when the protagonist farewells Sarah, he says that "I wish you were a Muslim. While she was smiling at me, she said I wish you were a Christian" (Ziedan, 2014). If there is no relationship between the two participators of the dialogue, the sender of the message (the protagonist of the Guantanamo novel) tries to build a relationship with the receiver and building a relationship between the two participants of the discourse becomes the goal of the dialogue and here there might appear the vertical and horizontal discourse. (Al-Shahri, 2004) In the horizontal discourse, for instance the relationship of the protagonist and Sarah Klaus, horizontal linear relationship is seen within some characteristics such as religion (Christian-Muslim discourse, gender characteristics (male-female discourse) and race characteristics (American-Egyptian or American-Sudanic discourse).

2.3.3 Voice of Other characters

2.3.3.1 The Tunisian Muslim Man's Voice

Each character of the novel like us has opinions about religion, society, economy and philosophy for his/her. In other words, each character owns a philosophic, religious and ideological dimension, and another dimension which is related to one's beliefs (Naserzadeh Kermani, 1994). In this novel different dimensions of the characters are fully reflected. In a part of novel, the Tunisian man whose name is Moheb Alhur is considered as one the significant characters of the novel. This character's ideas depict that he does not trust Americans under any circumstances. He believes that at an international level, even trusting an American child is not possible. This is the idea of a Tunisian extremist because in his point of view all the Americans are untrustworthy and he does not even trust an American child (Ziedan, 2014). What is problematic here is that an American child does not understand aggression and we cannot consider American children untrustworthy.

2.3.3.2 The Anti-Shia Voice

One of the voices reflected in the Guantanamo novel that shows some of the Tunisians' opinions about the Shias is the idea of Moheb Alhur. Moheb Alhur is a Tunisian character who has a low opinion of Shias, he calls them Rafezi (rejecters) which is a derogatory term when it is

applied to Shias and he detests Shias as something which is haram (forbidden). He believes that Shias have deviated from Islam. He has been one of those who helped Taliban in the war with the Iranian Shias whose Iranian leader was Ahmad Shah. This is the voice of the extremists in Islamic extremism who does not recognize other religions and are usually monophonic. Moheb Alhur thinks that Shiasm must view Islam with his point of view. On the whole, the writer brings a politico-religious voice to the novel with this character. As it seems, the protagonist does not agree with the extreme voices in the novel but he listens to all of the voices within the course of the novel.

2.4 Conclusion

In Guantanamo novel we witness that the characters cleanse themselves from the point of view of the writer whose result is the polyphony of the text. In such an atmosphere, the characters talk to each other with different world views and at the same time The narrator's voice is subdued and surrendered to some characters, like American characters. The narrator, without having bias, lets different voices vote and express their view point. As we see, the voices of American characters are dominant over Muslim characters and even hero character.

Moreover, the narrator never tries to judge, convict or acquit the characters. In Guantanamo, they all take turns to become the speaker or the audience. When a voice expresses his or her point of view, it also hears the voices opposing or agreeing to his/her. With taking a closer look into the novel, we can see that the voices of the Americans are louder and more dominant to some extent in comparison with other voices in the novel, even the voice of the writer. However, the writer imposes the American voices over the other voices. One might think that in the beginning of the novel the voice of the American soldiers is imposed on the others but over the course of the novel other characters freely and independently express their ideas even when their voices are anti-American. Therefore, one can say that there are contrasts between Islamic and non-Islamic American voices and Arab thoughts. The writer leaves the characters of the novel, even the protagonist, to their own devices to get familiar with the thoughts, point of views and ideas of other human beings in different times and different places and jumps from Kandahar to Pakistan, from Pakistan to Abu Ghraib and from there to Guantanamo. In Guantanamo, one of the significant features of the polyphony is the existence of intertextuality throughout the text. The writer brings quotations of Quran, hadith, poems and news and historical points in the first two hundred pages of the novel. In Guantanamo novel, the dominance of the voice of writer is minimized and writer is only witnesses the thoughts and

opinions of different characters such as Beres, the young Egyptian, Sarah Klaus, the American psychologist who cries and advises others to interact with some Americans believing that they are worth it and He listens to their voices from the outside.

Stream of consciousness is another technique used in the novel which contributes to the polyphony of the novel and has been used by the protagonist and the other characters. Stream of consciousness is a modern narrative mode in which, unlike the classic modes of writing, the role of the writer has been minimized and the writer becomes omniscient and just witnesses everything and tries to picture all the thoughts and the emotions of the characters without any censorship for the readers. The prose of the novel changes into a poetic language to depict the different styles of writing of polyphonic novels. It seems that just like their thoughts and ideas, the characters and the writer are different. The strongest contrast is between the American and Islamic characters and is seen between Sarah Klaus as an American psychologist and the Sudanic-Egyptian character of the play who is the novel's protagonist. On the other hand, we can see the contrast of philosophic Islamic and non-Islamic thoughts as Another effect of Polyphony in this story and the author asks the reader to enter the story as an analyst and answer the philosophical thoughts and ideas. Youssef Ziedan has been successful in creating a polyphonic novel by Using different narrative modes and techniques such as stream of consciousness, religious and historic intertextuality, poetic language, decentralization, disinterestedness in presenting the voices and worldviews of characters, Youssef Ziedan has successfully shown his ability in using the technique of polyphony in his novel Guantanamo.

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