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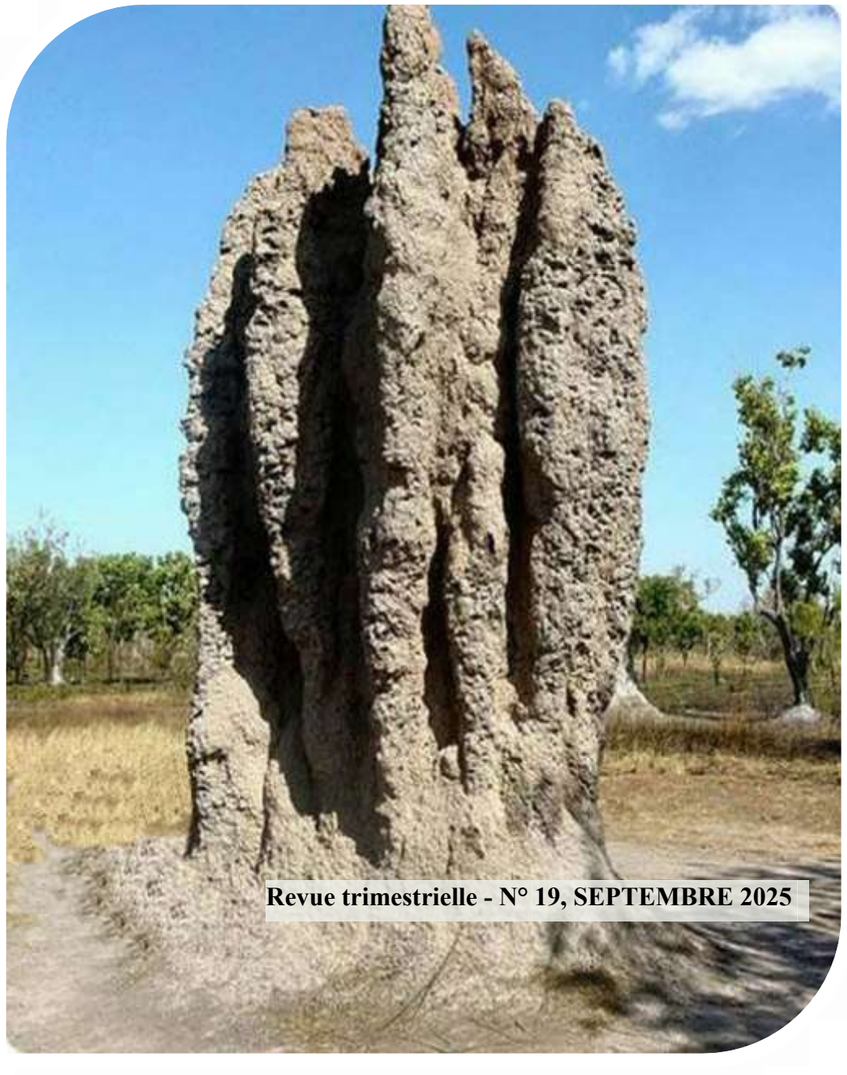

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"Dama Ninao" est une revue scientifique interdisciplinaire qui accepte et publie tous les articles relevant des Lettres, Arts et Sciences Humaines. A cet effet, elle s'intéresse aux études et théories littéraires, linguistiques, sociologiques, philosophiques, anthropologiques et historico-géographiques. La Revue "Dama Ninao", entendu "L'Entente" en langue kabyè du Nord Togo, est créée dans l'intention de matérialiser la mondialisation ou la globalisation qui s'opère avec l'esprit d'équipe et d'échanges et la désuétude du monde autarcique. Le monde scientifique universitaire ne peut échapper à cet esprit d'équipe qui fonde un creuset où « le fer aiguise le fer », les échanges se croisent, puis s'entremêlent pour aboutir à une reconstruction des connaissances scientifiques individuelles dans la collectivité.

La Revue Dama Ninao nous renvoie à la Civilisation de l'Universel du poète sénégalais Léopold Sédar Senghor, qui prône la porosité des âmes avec l'acceptation de l'autre, de ce qu'il dispose d'utile pour mon avancement : sa civilisation, sa culture, sa langue … Elle se fonde notamment sur la philosophie de Paul Ricœur qui préconise la perception de Soi-même comme un autre. Considérer soi-même comme un autre aux yeux de l'autre, nous amènerait à faire taire nos distensions et ressentiments afin de redimensionner notre espace, reconstruire notre histoire et notre société.

La Revue Dama Ninao s'est inspirée de la nature. Des insectes en miniature nous produisent de bels chefs-d'œuvre architecturaux, conjuguent leur génie créateur et leur force dans la patience et dans la tolérance. Ils créent des œuvres monumentales qui dépassent l'entendement humain, les termitières. A cet effet, la nature semble nous parler, nous guider, nous instruire dans le silence. Seules ces créations nous interpellent sans autant faire de nous des disciples. Comme la termitière qui, pour la plupart du temps, est une composante de maillons surgissant de la même matière, la Revue Dama Ninao se veut une termitière scientifique dont les enseignants-chercheurs en sont les maillons.

Au confluent de diverses sciences, la Revue Dama Ninao se propose de promouvoir la recherche scientifique et universitaire en impulsant le dialogue interdisciplinaire, le dialogue entre divers champs disciplinaires et divers contributeurs du monde universitaire.

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La taille des articles

Volume : 10 à 15 pages ; interligne 1.5, police 12 pour le corps du texte et les courtes citations ; police 11 pour les longues citations, Times New Roman, les références des citations doivent être incorporées dans le texte. Exemple : Guy Rocher (1968, p. 29), pas de référence en foot-notes à l'exception de quelques commentaires.

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- Un **TITRE** en caractère d'imprimerie et en gras. Le titre ne doit pas être trop long ;

- **Nom et prénom(s)** du contributeur ou des contributeurs, **nom de l'institution** d'appartenance, **adresse mail**

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1-Pour le **Titre** de la première section

1-1-Pour le **Titre** de la première sous-section

1-2- Pour le **Titre** de la deuxième sous-section

2- Pour le **Titre** de la deuxième section

2-1-Pour le **Titre** de la première sous-section

2-2- Pour le **Titre** de la deuxième sous-section

3- Pour le **Titre** de la troisième section (si l'auteur de l'article le souhaite)

-Une **Conclusion :** elle doit être courte, précise et concise en mettant en relief l'authenticité des résultats de la recherche.

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- de matérialiser le monde universitaire qui est un creuset où « le fer aiguise le fer », les échanges se croisent, puis s'entremêlent pour aboutir à une reconstruction des connaissances scientifiques individuelles dans la collectivité ;
- de promouvoir la recherche scientifique et universitaire en impulsant le dialogue interdisciplinaire, le dialogue entre divers champs disciplinaires et divers contributeurs du monde universitaire.

La revue Dama Ninao a une portée scientifique et sociale. A cet effet, elle publie tous les articles relevant des Lettres, Arts et Sciences Humaines et s'intéresse aux études et théories littéraires, linguistiques, sociologiques, philosophiques, anthropologiques et historico-géographiques sur appel à contribution thématique (colloque) ou varia. Elle est un espace de rencontre, de construction et de reconstruction des réseaux relationnels et scientifiques.

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Revue Dama Ninao

MACHIAVELLIAN TACTICS OF ABUSERS IN FAR AWAY BY CARYL CHURCHILL

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Abstract: The paper intends to analyse the manipulative tactics in Churchill's *Far Away*, focusing on how these tactics distort reality and harm characters like Joan and Todd. The latter suffer the most from these manipulative pressures, with Joan's worldview warped by Aunt Harper's deceptive arguments and Todd disillusioned by the factory's corrupt practices. Their plight reflects the societal chaos, leaving readers with heart-wrenching concerns about Todd and the future of the youth. Thus, from a sociocritical perspective, Caryl Churchill's *Far Away* demonstrates the remarkably resilient behaviour of Joan and Todd and their unwavering hope for a humane society, even within their dystopian reality.

Keywords: Machiavellian, tactics, manipulation, suffering, corruption, resilient,

Résumé: Cet article se propose d'analyser les tactiques manipulatrices dans *Far Away* de Churchill, mettant l'accent sur la façon dont elles déforment la réalité et nuisent à des personnages comme Joan et Todd. Ces derniers sont les plus touchés par ces pressions manipulatrices. La vision de Joan du monde est faussée par les arguments trompeurs de Tante Harper, tandis que Todd est désabusé par les pratiques corrompues en cours dans les usines. La situation de Joan et Todd reflète le chaos social, laissant le lecteur avec des inquiétudes déchirantes concernant Todd et l'avenir de la jeunesse. Ainsi, d'un point de vue sociocritique, *Far Away* de Caryl Churchill démontre la résilience remarquable de Joan et Todd et leur espoir inébranlable en une société plus humaine, et ce, même au sein de leur réalité dystopique.

Mots Clés : Machiavélique, Tactiques, manipulation, souffrance, corruption, résilient

Introduction

The complexity and baffling bewilderment of the British political breach are the new challenges Churchill *Far Away* attempts to cope with offering new perspectives. Written in (2000) and due to its profound political commentary and

enduring relevance, Churchill's play earns its title of "the strongest theatrical response to 9/11 events" (S. Simon, 2004)[67]. And more than just a response to its time emergencies, Churchill's play dissects what Steve Waters (2004) aptly calls "'The Truth Behind the Facts'". *Far Away* enhances innovative ways and re-evaluates the fabric of British society and its employment of policies. In so doing, the playwright lays bare a critical analysis of tools used to govern the British technology-driven society. By contrasting Joan's idealism and Todd's pragmatism, Churchill offers a fresh perspective on British social dynamics, highlighting the ever-shifting stands of political behaviour. Equipped with a revolutionary mind, Joan and Todd confront the harsh reality and the repulsive ugliness of British social politics. In this society, people's views of daily events are filtered through the warped lens of the "big movement" and self-serving narratives of corrupt managers' views.

Amidst Britain's societal modernization, where gradual change is expected, Churchill's *Far Away* stands out as an avant-gardist leverage, denouncing the malfunctions embedded within. Her work, as A. Siân (2012, p.108) posits "…make space for what lies beyond existing systemic structures and discourses". And by British systemic structures, Churchill's people are unwittingly under abusive politics. In the play, the playwright exposes the Machiavellian tactics of those in power entrapping the underprivileged like Joan and Todd. The latter are victims of this Machiavellian politics as they are expected to comply without question. Churchill subtly evidences this control through dictated actions and imposed viewpoints. Joan's shift in perception from recognizing her uncle's cruelty to idolizing him as a saviour serves as a chilling testament to the manipulative forces at play.

The paper delves into pervasive manipulative forces and corrupt behaviour that successfully enslave attempts at freedom and constrict any flicker of individual agency in Churchill's portrayal of British society. *Far Away'*s analysis pinpoints the

[67] The citation is a debate held between Richard Bean, Mark Ravenhill and Simon Stephens. During this debate the playwrights decided the measure of the new writing scene. Simons Stephens, (2004) 'Debate: New Writing (2/3)', Theatre VOICE, May 28 http://www.theatrevoice.com/1891/the-theatrevoice-debate-new-writing12-playwrights-richa.

damage caused by a one-dimensional political strategy revealing the social chaos it unleashes upon the nation. Guided by its tripartite divisions, and quoting C. Edmond (1988, p. ix) that "the encounter with ideological traces and […] the antagonistic tension between social classes is central to any reading of texts", and the sociocritical approach, helps decipher the simmering social tensions giving "pre-eminence to the analysis of everything that is said, or not said" (C. Edmond, 1988, p.46). To say it differently, the paper seeks to illuminate the ideal British society Churchill envisions and how current political realities could be reshaped towards a more equitable and beneficial future.

To achieve the study's objectives, the analysis is organised into three sections. The first section explores the way people's thoughts are influenced and controlled. The second one examines the process of building a true-false image of British society. Then, the final section, accounts for the re-setting up process of Joan's mind.

1-Influencing and Controlling People's Thoughts

Controlling people's viewpoints and thoughts stands as the necessary condition and appropriate policy for guiding them according to one's will. This strategy is leading in the analysis of Churchill's play, because the mentioned policy helps conceal one's true self, and certainly allows keeping one's hand to himself. So, a false-true image makes it easy for people to implement their feigning activities.

1.1-Feigned Active Listening

Feigning to listen to someone by giving an underhanded nod of approval are key stage in the process of impacting and swaying people's views and controlling them artfully. This strategy is the rule rather than the exception in Churchill's play. In *Far Away,* when a character is irritated by a current situation or expresses inconvenience with the surrounding realities, he/ she is swiftly confronted with active solutions or led towards innovative ways. Churchill portrays politicians like Aunt Harper as an adept at implementing this manipulative strategy for their gain. In this process, critics like A. Siân (2012, p.108) consider that "[…] her theatre […] is

exposing the horrors of the [British political] system". A political system that is driven by puppet-mastery enterprise. Regarding the goal of this flawed norm, Harper is adamantly turned into dominating Joan's viewpoint using it for her sole profit. The stratagem is at work and renewed whenever Joan and her aunt have to decipher the events of the night young Joan had her sleepless night.

When young Joan pours on the gruesome details of the horrible night, her explanation is unexpectedly curtailed by Harper. Julie Tremouihe denotes in Harper's attitude a sign of gaining control over Joan's thoughts. The scholar clarifies her intent and puts that "From the moment Joan begins to explain what she heard and saw, her credibility is undermined by Harper who uses her status of adulthood to gain ascendency over the child, and over the truth" (J. Tremouille, 2019, p.62). In fact, Harper's prompt opposed reaction to Joan's words, mirrors the behaviour of "[…] the ruler who never minds being called cruel for any action that has the effect of keeping his subject loyal" (N. Machiavelli, 2019, XVIII). Harper's unexpected interest, tinged with a boldness Joan had not witnessed before, instantly redirected her focus. By this well-shaped corrupt strategy, Aunt Harper expresses concern about Joan's story, before feeling affected by the story and regularly asks questions for clarification and confirmation. "How could you see there were children?" Aunt Harper asked. She argues later that, some of the children get bad, and bad children betray their parents (I.141). As the plot of *Far Away* intensifies, each clipped question of Harper tears at the edges of Joan's memory, urging her to relive the terror in ever-finer detail.

Aunt Harper expresses her astonishment at the horrible adventure her niece experienced last night. Sometimes, she seems to be preoccupied with Joan's sleeplessness state. Other times she attempts to change the course of the debate diverting Joan's mind on the reality of that night. Through her short and deceiving questions, Harper meticulously ignites Joan's will to speak and make herself understood. Harper's words cover up shifty menace that upgrades A. Kubiak's notion of terror. There is therefore a manipulative mind enhanced by an indirectly conveyed terror that aims to dampen Joan's awaken mind. Consecutively, in *Far Away*, Aunt

Harper's terror appears to be "the real terror, the terror that silenced performance itself, remains hidden" (A. Kubiak,1987, p. 82). Harper's intent and true mind are carefully dissembled. To say it differently, Aunt Harper's concern seems genuine, yet something calculating stands in each of her syllables. It is as if Harper is weaving a net that Joan could not escape. And when Joan asserts that she went out that night, Harper pesters her with many questions, when she says "[…] you're shivering. Are you hot? "when? Just now? How did you get out?" (I.135). Harper drives Joan to the snare of manipulating her mind on the reality Joan is the only eyewitness.

By scrutinizing Harper's manipulative tactics, Churchill reveals the underlying chaos and uncertainty that pervades the dystopian world of British society. S. Edward (1999, p.74) denounces the damages caused by the British one-sided systemic malevolent and asserts that "punishment is its own goal, bombing as a display of [the British] authority its satisfaction". Churchill's play kicks off with a negation, which is immediately challenged by an affirmative sentence, then a resolution. As Joan cannot sleep, she is informed by Aunt Harper that "it's the strange bed" (I.133) that causes her sleeplessness growing her restlessness. When Joan insists on revealing that her uneasiness stems from the fearing shriek she heard last night, Aunt Harper rather persuades her and drives the young girl's attention to trivial events. Concerning the noise that shattered Joan, Harper provides clarity when she posits, "An owl then. There are all sorts of birds here, you might see a golden oriole. People come here specially to watch birds and we sometimes make tea or coffee or sell bottles of water because there's no café and people don't expect that and they get thirsty. You 'll see in the morning what a beautiful place it is" (I.135).

From the reading of Harper's words, one could notice that her forceful influence bends Joan's perspective because Harper's engagement looks like a gardener who meticulously shapes a young sapling. The idea is as S. Alisa (2001, p. 3) underpins it "[…] thoroughly Joan's rebellious spirit has been contained within the dominant values of the political culture". Thus, driven by a deep-seated need for validation, Aunt Harper relentlessly steers her niece toward conformity with her

narratives. That way, Joan's Aunt's controlling tendency is not simply a harmless quirk, it's rather a celebration of Harper's power to dictate Joan's mind and thoughts. Harper's manipulative force, according to the words of J. Colleran (2008, pp.107-8) reveals "[…] an act [that] serves the interests of power, and nearly disables the possibility of resistance". Being persuaded of the righteous path, Harper employs subtle psychological manipulation to reshape Joan's perception, pulling her further into Joan's relatives' crafted world.

Churchill, through Harper's manipulative game, displays by exposing the insidious nature of social conditioning within British society on the one hand, and the mental enslavement in progress in British families on the other hand. Thus, Lady Joan is an undisputable target of the system. Churchill's *Far Away* deals with Harper's lines with so much realism that Joan's rendering of the night adventures fails to catch the reader's attention. The idea is that while Joan's tale resembles whimsical fairy tales, the truth, as Harper relentlessly drills home, lies in a far more sobering reality. Harper can now and then refute, and re-direct Joan's words to generate what she considers as the reality of things. This reality, according to Churchill's words founds the evidence Harper is the only one to speak knowledgeably about. Aunt Harper's verb choice register overtly challenges Joan's words. Churchill's use of "Seeing and imagining" activates the opposed mind taking Joan away from Aunt Harper's expectations. When Joan claims that "I saw my uncle" that night, Harper listens to her carefully and assesses this assertion as an imagination. Aunt Harper constantly revamps Lady Joan's perception giving them the direction she wants, with the sole objective of expressing a mask of concern.

1.2-A Mask of Concern, a Heart of Indifference

In *Far Away*, Joan and other people are deceived by the mocking empathy displayed by Aunt Harper and the British society of her era. The psychological process Harper is the initiator in chief helps her appear to be greatly disturbed and upset by Joan's mishaps. While Aunt Harper attempts to denounce any direct or indirect responsibility for the unrelenting human catastrophe, Joan puts the final

touches on the horrible drama she experiences when she gets out by one of the windows. Once on the fearful stage, she hears a man yelling from the rooftops, she sees some people bundled into a shed and some other children who are still crying inside a lorry. Despite Joan's psychological disaster, Aunt Harper dismisses her niece's trauma and instead suggests that it is a figment of her imagination. Harper explains further and says "Poor girl, what a fright you must have had imagining you heard somebody screaming. You should have come straight down here to me" (I. 136).

Accusing Joan of being in a movie, stands as an absolute denial process of the conclusive reality Joan experienced. The rejection of the human tragedy that Joan is a first-hand witness has to meet a twofold purpose. By turning down Joan's words, Harper is somehow describing her niece as a pathological liar and deceitful person. Equipped with the mind that a perjurer is not worth hearing or reliable, Harper is convinced that her niece's deviancy claims warrant attention so that she "might [avoid participating in] things that are not her business…" (I.137). Another focus of Harper's refusal of Joan's pretended-false enterprise aims at clearing the name of her husband of any allegations Joan thinks of or opinions that may suggest a connection between her husband and the relentless event of human chaos she pretends to have experienced since the former night.

Gaining trust by genuinely listening to one's needs and concerns is a powerful way to influence people's perspectives. In the play, Churchill shows how Aunt Harper achieves this with Joan. In fact, by listening intently to Joan's story of her night misadventure, Aunt Harper sparks her curiosity and bolsters her confidence. Aunt Harper's well-adjusted strategy helps her demonstrate her care by nodding thoughtfully, asking insightful questions, and readily complying with Joan's suggestions for their next adventure. Raya Jassam and Mohammed Ali are favourable to the idea of Harper's willingness to assist her niece. They are persuaded that the reading of Harper's line thoughts "vividly conveys to the spectator the anxiety and helplessness that come with being imprisoned in a dangerous environment" (R.

Jassam, M. Ali, 2023, p.200). Harper's current doing sheds light on her true and hidden intent. Harper's behaviour betrays the evidence of her thoughts and confirms the mask she still wears. K. Ann Considine (2011, pp.44-5) believes that "Harper's practice of the repetitive language and tone have a calming effect on Joan developing the cadence of […] masking the dangerous and controversial subject matter with which it deals".

It is indisputable that through Harper's attentive listening, she not only builds trust with Joan but also opens doors to new possibilities. The possible directions are guided according to Aunt Harper's will and foreordination. And one of Harper's outstanding notifications to Joan is when Aunt Harper ceaselessly draws her mind to the evidence that "There might be things that are not your business when you are a visitor in someone else's house" (I.137). By this much-clear clarification, Joan's aunt strengthens the tactic of apathy that has been strongly at work since the previous warning with consequences. She accuses Joan of interfering in matters that are not hers, and holding the status of an ordinary and basic visitor, Aunt Harper reminds her that she must not be involved in subjects that do not concern visitors.

Joan's inconvenience irritates Aunt Harper (Joan's former moral support) and hanging on her niece Gaucherie, Harper refreshes the dangerousness of her niece's act. This authoritative pattern is frequently used in the play by adults including Aunt Harper. Raya, al (2023, p.204) underline that **"**Harper utilizes her adult status to establish authority over the kid and the truth from the minute Joan starts to describe what she heard and saw". And surprised by the solecism of Joan, Aunt Harper questions her directly, "How could you do that up in a tree? Further, she says "something you could never [do]. Because if you do you could put people's lives in danger" (I.138-9). The second step in Harper's scheme echoes as a decisive one because it incisively condemns Joan for wrongdoing to herself and the community. By climbing up a tree, Joan endangers her life and engages dangerously in the lives of people in her surroundings. Joan's misconduct transgresses norms that protect a child from a risk of danger, and climbing up a tree, especially at night, increases the

risk of an accident. Climbing up a tree in a hazardous area can pose serious safety risks for oneself and other people who may be passing by.

Aunt Harper hangs on the evidence of risk from tree-climbing to conduct her manipulative enterprise that potentially leads the entrapped mind to submission. Julie Tremouille holds observations on the power and sharpness of Aunt Harper's manipulative skill. The critic asserts that

> Harper, however, has all the answers and, when she finds herself in an uneasy position because Joan has witnessed violent deeds, she manipulates her niece. Not only does she convince the child that the violence committed by the uncle against other children is necessary and just, but she also enrolls Joan in covering up the horror (J. Tremouille 2019, p.70).

In the course of their dialogue, Harper successfully submits Joan to the ideology of their society convincing her to believe in not what she thinks but what Harper is currently telling her. Actually, Harper starts a new process of ruling Joan's insight. And the process consists in building a false-true shinning image of their inhuman society.

2-Building a True-False Image of the Society: Deception in Progress

In the sequence that follows, Aunt Harper adopts a new approach, a fresh scheme that consists in blocking in the end the negative and biased thoughts Joan still feeds on her husband. Aunt Harper reshapes Joan's preconceived attitudes toward the doing of her husband and the ruling of society. And, to achieve the work in progress, Aunt Harper makes use of two well-shaped tactics. One consists in idealizing the image of her husband, and the other helps her paint the British society as the warranty of liberties.

2.1-Idealized Image of Harper's Husband

Harper's idealization project of her spouse is reflected in her commitment and eagerness to showcase his collaborative endeavours, qualities, and virtues. She clings to optimistic images of her husband to maintain some sense of worth-living situations

and stability amidst the chaos that surrounds them. Consecutively, Harper's husband "is helping these people […] because they were attacked" (I.140). Life is worth living, and in Harper's viewpoint, her husband is the one who enables people to enjoy life's sweetness. Harper displays her husband as someone who creates and favours good living conditions for helpless people, and, who offers a scope of warrant, increasing people's expectation to a better living condition. When people are in dire straits and need urgent assistance, Harper's husband is engaged to transform their despair into hope. Sometimes people are driven by the accomplishment of a craving desire, other times, they want to satisfy a raging need or want for something importantly persistent. In one case or another, Harper's husband is ready to assist them. The husband of Harper is still on duty when people attend the spectacle of watching myriad bird-sorts and is ready to impact positively their stay into renewable souvenirs. Aunt Harper opines: "People come here specially to watch birds and we sometimes make tea or coffee or sell bottles of water because there's no café…" (I.135). People's nightmare is transformed into pleasant time, and obstacles are tamed, thanks to the aid of Harper's husband.

Harper's husband's altruism is undisputable. Because, knowing that people are fond of birds' spectacles, he creates enjoyable atmosphere for people who attend the birds' show spectacle. As the people enjoy show quietly, they can also rely on the peaceful and professional services run by Harper's husband. When they get thirsty, spectators have some bottles of water within their reach. As they want to vary their taste, bird-show spectators can drink warm-sweet coffee and tea. The idea of the availability of a reliable service during the birds' spectacle, underlines the hard-working aspect of Harper's husband. And according to the description of Harper, this idea puts an attractive shade on her husband's sense of duty, especially his humanism.

A second step in Harper's policy implies showing the relevancy of the actions her husband undertakes every night. When people enjoy the tranquillity of the night in their softened beds, Harper's husband takes care of thirsty-bird spectators. Thus, people attending this spectacle are persuaded that their ability to get food and cope

with drinking issues is managed efficiently by Harper's husband. Aunt's husband's undertaking works as a comforting way for people at the bird show. Harper's husband's professionalism occurs as a protective shelter whenever bird spectators need aid of any sorts. Once at the bird exhibition, people can be victims of noxious actions and harmful deeds by traitors. In the mind of Aunt Harper, a traitor is a person who is attracted by spectators' goods and money rather than the bird's spectacle. And every night, there is at least, a traitor among birds' show spectators. Aunt Harper argues "He wasn't really one of them, he was pretending, he was going to betray them, they found out and told your uncle […] your uncle had to fight him" (I.141). This statement is reassuring as it highlights Joan's uncle strong sense of duty and altruism.

As the play unfolds, it occurs clearly that merit is at the forefront of Harper's husband's qualities, transforming him into the providential-leader. In fact, by his endeavouring enterprise, Harper's husband helps people, to experience new adventures, offering them a saving hand. According to Harper's revelation, when her husband comes across some "children in the shed" some crying for pain, and other complaining for being in a predicament, Joan's uncle puts public interest above his gain, offering alternative assistance to these children. Through this anticipating action, Harper's husband leads the children-in- pain out of oppression into enlightenment and freedom. Thus, Harper's husband brings assistance when people lose any hope in their failing attempt to find an asylum. Actually, Uncle Harper stands present, when people are desperately hopeless. As some people hopelessly seek assistance, Joan's uncle provides them with the required aid. One day, people were packed in a Lorry making frantic effort to escape, Joan's uncle "[gives] them shelter […] helping them escape" (I.140).

Harper's attempt to unveil her husband as the providential-leader, consists in fuelling the relevancy of the extra-ordinary and divine-inspired acts he undertakes on behalf of the society. In Harper's viewpoint, these actions are significantly rewarding for his family, who can afford a protector. At the national ground, the actions are

meaningfully empowering for the community that genuinely relies on someone who assesses public concerns over individual and personal ones. As a matter of fact, Joan's uncle serves as a living example of ideal behaviour, embodying virtues like compassion, wisdom and humility. This way, his action shapes the course of the ongoing events weeding the path for the further one. Doing so, Joan's uncle providential-leader quality equates with the leadership-figure of the Pharaoh. The Pharaoh was famous for his implementation of the beliefs and principles of the Ma 'at or Maat in the Egyptian mythology.

Assessed as Cosmis Order and Justice, the Ma 'at is part of the Pharaoh's primary responsibility. As a pharaonic task, the fulfilment of the Ma 'at requirements consists in upholding the principal of truth, balance, harmony and social order, and the "ethical and moral concepts of Maat were further formulated, promoted, and maintained by [the Pharaoh]" (M. Karanga, 2004, p.38). Consecutively, the task of the promotor of the social harmony is dedicated to the Pharaoh, who endeavours to get means for human pleasure and security. Actually, the Egyptian conception of providential-leader takes into account actions dictated by the Ma 'at beliefs that is granted as "(…) a concept based on humanity's attempt to live in a natural harmonic state" (C. Lipson, 2004, p.81). Likely, Harper's husband provides his community with satisfying means, so that each of them could individually appreciate life experiences. Joan experiences life in a reliable shelter, when, in-pain-children are successfully saved from their predicament. And certainly, Joan's uncle "maatic" actions are comforting, because they reassure the family and neighbours by the climate of security and freedom it embeds within the community.

2.2-The British Society as the warranty of Liberty

Harper consistently portrays British society as an idealistic haven, a place that champions both collective and individual security and freedom**.** She emphasizes that liberties such as freedom of movement is indisputably guaranteed and legally protected in Britain. In a notable conversation with Joan, Harper subtly highlights the dangers her niece might have faced, had she "went out of the window in the dark

night" (I.135-45). She points out that the British had already implemented measures to ensure people's safety day and night. Despite Joan's unauthorized escapade, a misstep Harper ultimately tolerates, Harper's permissive attitude serves a strategic purpose: it reinforces her attractive depiction of British society as one that reasserts people's freedom and independence.

Aunt Harper's efforts to polish the image of British society aim to praise its harmonious organization while forwarding artificial arguments to justify and accuse a corrupt implementation of certain decisions and actions. Analysing Harper's actions, H.A.G. Salem (2021, p.33) observes that Joan's aunt embarks in an exhibition process that "creates a hypothetical world of different realities [and] perfect societies that are possible [and] in which man lives in different social and political conditions". And the above distorted decisions are according to Harper's view, unfavourable and detrimental to people's enjoyment and willingness to embrace individual liberty, which they schedule for themselves and their own pleasure. In this perspective, Harper feels at ease portraying a positive image of her environment and the British society as a whole. Through a proactive strategy, Harper's persuasive insistence on presenting British society as a protector of human rights forces Joan's admiration, who eventually offers help to injured children in the shed. Upon hearing Harper's apodictic arguments, Joan experiences remorse, overwhelmed by a sense of guilt due to her prior inaction toward children and men, the victims of hitting and violence packed in a lorry.

In another scene, after a conversation centred on freedom of speech and thought, Aunt Harper encourages her niece, Joan, to speak without constraint or hesitation. She ensures Joan feels comfortable asking her "Now what did you imagine you saw in the dark?" (I.136). The question leads Joan to explain the events of the previous night with clarity. Through attentive and patient listening, Aunt Harper creates a calming atmosphere, allowing Joan to freely detail everything she witnessed. When Joan describes people being pushed or hit by her husband, Aunt Harper looks aghast. Yet, she permits Joan to continue recounting the episodes she

observed from the tree and later near the lorry. As Joan persists in detailing scenes of human massacre, Aunt Harper remains stoic**.** Aunt Harper's stoicism facilitates the acceptance of Joan's revelations, free from any ulterior motives. The dialogue between Harper and Joan concludes positively, with Joan ultimately accepting Harper's recommendation to get some sleep.

The alternative Harper offers in previous lines is indicative of her willingness to act at two essential levels. Aunt Harper expresses motherly hearing to Joan's anguish, getting annoyed at the danger her niece may be faced with. Secondly, Harper is indisputably an open-minded relative. She showcases a receptive mind that encourages and initiates debates favouring constant exchange between, parents and sons, aunt and niece. Recent evidence suggests Harper's acting fosters "a manifestation of desire and hope for a better world and an unalienated order that upsets the status quo" (M. D. Gordin et al., 2010, p.209). The status quo is underfed in the play by the interactive process she initiates with Joan. Harper's niece exposes her mind according to personal opinion, breaking the supposed parental predominance view over children wording.

By her action, aunt Harper demonstrates the British society's attachment to some social values including personal and individual freedom of conscience. Both aunt Harper and Joan are aware of some danger, faced by some people that the British is supposed to protect. Evocating the predicament of these people by Joan and encouraged by aunt Harper, looks a campaign for the promotion of global security for the whole British society. Violence against one person sounds an attack against the society. Aunt Harper feels ready to combat any violence, that is why she urges her Joan to explicitly detail facts, actions and scenes of human torture she experienced at night.

The possibility Harper presents in the preceding lines reflects her willingness to act on two fundamental levels. First, Aunt Harper displays a motherly attentiveness to Joan's anguish, deeply concerned about the dangers her niece might face. Secondly, Harper is undeniably an open-minded relative, when she fosters a receptive

mindset that encourages meaningful discussions. Her action promotes continuous exchange between parents and children, as well as between an aunt and her niece. When Joan speaks and knows that she is listened to, she feels confident in and can legitimately detail moments of her experience. Likely, Harper's attentiveness towards Joan fuels her niece ability to relate events the way she witnesses them and guess how the society should react to them. Eventually, Joan's Aunt's behaviour aligns with the role attributed to British society, as Harper helps balance Joan's emotions with the broader expectations of humanity.

It is true to say that through her actions, Aunt Harper embodies British society's commitment to essential social values, including personal and individual freedom of conscience. She reasserts "the ideals of equality, freedom, and substantive democracy (K. Manuka, 2019, p. 22) that founds the British society. Both Harper and Joan recognize the threats faced by certain individuals whom the British are expected to protect. Joan's invocation of their plight, supported by Aunt Harper, resembles a campaign advocating global security for the British society as a whole. In Harper's mind, any act of violence against one person is perceived as an attack on the collective. Thus, determined to oppose any form of violence, Aunt Harper urges Joan to explicitly recount the facts, events, and harrowing scenes of human suffering she witnessed in the darkness of the night. This achievement is meant to benefit the British society, which ultimately guarantees the protection of all, and minorities are not forgotten.

3-Re-setting up Joan's Mind

When people claim to speak and hold the absolute truth, it is sometimes necessary to confront them with perspectives they pretend to understand but do not. In her attempt to condemn Harper's husband, Joan is forced to face the harsh reality of thoughts she is still an ignorant. And, to serve her own goals, Aunt Harper manipulates Joan's line of thought systematically dismantling her mindset, even resorting to coercion to threaten her niece.

3.1-Aunt Harper's Deconstructing Projects

Aunt Harper is sceptic and incredulous at Joan's testimony of the night story. She questions Joan's narration, refuting the confession that her niece has heard a strange noise, that "was more like a person screaming" (I.136). This cry, according to Harper's clarification, may be a shriek from birds, and occurs when golden orioles sing at night for the pleasure of people who came to watch birds' spectacle. When Joan conjures up the idea of horror, as someone violently pushes another one, Harper challenges this mistruth, raising humanitarian act her husband accomplishes on behalf of the British society. Joan insists on the fact that she eye-sees and hears beating noise from the lorry, aunt Harper hits backs Joan's argumentation drawing forth the danger people in the lorry are victim of. The husband of Harper has to take away one of the children, who "was going to betray them" (I.139). Harper is confident in her argumentation because, she "aims to reveal the concealed and other implicit meanings" (J. Balkin, 1995-1996, pp. 1-3) of the acts her husband goes through. She severely tests the words of Joan revealing their distorted traits.

In the preceding lines, Harper actively deconstructs Joan's assertions, a strategy that challenges her limited meaning and scope. Through this deconstruction[68], Harper highlights the discrepancy between Joan's interpretation and the current events. She contrasts Joan's narrative, which she views as reductive despite Joan being an eyewitness, with the on-the-ground reality. Harper swiftly identifies the core tenets of Joan's story-reality and dismantles them, offering the audience a fresh understanding that aligns with the event in which her husband plays a central role. In her reconstruction process, Harper inverts the stereotyped hegemony of reality in the relationship reality/belief, thereby stripping Joan's account and its accompanying arguments of any simplistic, suspicious perspectives. As a reconstructionist, Aunt Harper breaks down Joan's perceptions into logical components that reflect the story of the night she must believe in.

[68] Deconstruction, a theory founded by J. Derrida, shows the meaning unstable, and can be reconstructed.

A key element in Aunt Harper's deconstruction strategy is her ability to question the underlying assumptions in Joan's claims. When Joan confronts her aunt with the idea of people's enslavement as an inherent practice to British society, Harper rejects the idea and paints a more pleasant picture of Britain. Instead of a killer, Harper starts to introduce her husband as a saviour: a man who was attacked, forced to fight a traitor, and ultimately works to protect others. By establishing this binary opposition killer/saviour, Harper reconstructs a new narrative that offers a more hopeful and accurate understanding of her husband's true role. This approach moves beyond Joan's reliance on emotive and outdated facts to define all aspects of British life through one narrow societal lens. Joan's reductive viewpoint ultimately harms the very British society she claims to protect. Harper's deconstruction aims to counter this, advocating for an open-minded perspective that could instead inspire enthusiasm and collaborative action among people, helping to bridge social divides.

Harper's analysis of Joan's allegations broadens the understanding, emphasizing the danger of treating fixed interpretations as absolute truth**.** In Harper's view, Joan's reductive mindset creates more problems than it resolves, due to its inability to explore situations comprehensively. Joan's restricted interpretations of her immediate observations could jeopardize lives, as Harper warns: "Something you must never talk about, because if you do you could put people's lives […] and your uncle's life in danger" (I.138). Throughout the play, Harper consistently exposes Joan's flawed analysis**.** She notes Joan's misplaced sympathy for the supposedly injured children, while simultaneously disregarding her uncle, the true protector. When Joan speaks of danger and violence, she is ignorant of the full details. Harper believes Joan perceives reality superficially, neglecting causes and fixing consequences without any in-depth examination of prior events. This narrow perception fosters a biased perspective and undermines the sensibility of her arguments.

Aunt Harper's endeavour to reframe Joan's stance is viewed through the lens of the incongruity of her argument and the paradox her affirmations pose. When

recounting her night experience, Joan uses confusing words to express her perceptions and ideas. She feels cold but does not want a hot drink. “Are you cold?” Harper asks her, and she replies, “No”. When Harper then questions Joan, “Do you want a drink?” she responds, “I think I am cold” (I.132-33). In another scene, Joan claims to have heard a cry, possibly an owl, that was, ultimately, “like a person screaming”. Joan’s mind clearly exhibits the bemused spirit of someone who struggles for clarity without abandoning her turbulent perception of things. Aunt Harper persuades her niece that her current thoughts on the ongoing situation stem from the chaotic perspectives she wilfully maintains regarding both British society and her uncle’s saving actions. Through pieces of advice, she rearticulates Joan’s view, urging her "To be proud of her uncle, and think here we are […] on the side of the people who are putting things right" (I.142). Harper’s husband is a source of national pride, as he exemplarily overcomes British social challenges.

3.2-Coercive Acts: Catalyst for Redemption

There are many and different ways to reshape the convictions of someone who remains steadfast, denying or refuting alternatives. Among these are intimidation and gas lighting-oriented tactics. This process is the innovative strategy Harper adopts to mould Joan's mind and gain control over her confused assertions. By employing this psychological approach, Harper not only challenges Joan's affirmations but also scrutinizes her mental state, drawing a parallel between Joan and Lady Macbeth's sleepwalking scene. “Look at you, you're asleep on your feet” (I.135), Aunt Harper notices. In her imagined account of horror, Joan, in Harper's explanation, is influenced by her sleep-like state and consequently does not have full control of her mind and speech. She asserts trivial things and cannot reasonably consolidate or correlate what she sees with what she says. Joan mistakes the shriek of an owl for the cry of a human, symbolizing her deep confusion and disorientation.

Faced with Joan's biased interpretation of events, Harper harbours some doubt and conveys a derogatory message to her niece. She expresses her great annoyance at Joan's going out late at night, and, being “responsible for her niece,” Aunt Harper

was not informed about Joan's plans for the night. To Harper's mind, Joan's disrespectfulness toward her relatives is a direct consequence of the misinterpreted understanding she still holds regarding the facts. This situation causes more damage than it solves, especially as it pollutes the aunt-niece relationship. Harper discredits Joan's information, arguing that her niece was in darkness and, objectively, could not see and identify the people who were supposedly ill-treated. Joan's declaration stems from an emotive reaction that aims to create a confusing atmosphere through event optimization. Aunt Harper treats Joan's utterances with careless attention, considering them something she "shouldn't know […] and must never talk about" (I.139) to anyone else.

The regrettable situation strains the parental relationship, leading the aunt to address aggressive question to her niece. "[…] are you mad? (I.140), Harper nervously asks. Verbally, Harper becomes aggressive, asserting that "when people go to bed they should stay in bed" (I.135). Adjusting her line of thought further, Harper asserts, in the dark, "Now what did you imagine you saw in the dark?" (I. 136). Harper's intimidating questions raise the fundamental essence of the ideas Joan presents when the niece accuses her uncle of physical abuse. To Harper's mind, Joan's declaration reveals the spread of rumours and gossip, wrongly indicting innocent and hardworking people in events unknown to them. Harper targets Joan with very aggressive questioning to understand and gain a clear, sensitive evaluation of the ongoing situation.

A new stage in Harper's coercive actions implies Joan's guilt and responsibility in the night's events. Joan is held responsible for any misfortune the family may face in the coming days. To Aunt Harper, Joan's intrusion into other people's affairs is bound to cause damage to the family's stability. Joan's sudden and unexpected appearance at the crime scene threatens the lives of Harper's loved ones and tarnishes her husband's good name. From Harper's perspective, Joan's interference is seen as an act of betrayal, as she has now become privy to the secret operations of the Big Movement, which her uncle manages perfectly. Since Joan is

not a member of the inner circle, Harper fears she might expose the hidden activities of the organization.

Aunt Harper is sceptical about Joan's distressing behaviour, asserting that her niece must not, deliberately or accidentally, reveal what she witnessed last night, "because if you [Joan] do, [it] could put people's lives in danger" (I, i, 139), including her uncle's life. According to Harper, Joan stumbled upon a scene she was neither expected nor invited to. By misfortune, she witnesses a harrowing act, in which her uncle is a prominent figurehead. And, Joan, intruding into Harper's private domain, becomes an unwelcome witness. In response, Aunt Harper deploys a psychological tactic designed to shape Joan's perception of reality. She attempts to coerce her niece into accepting the version of events as Harper narrates them. To do so, Harper relies on a strategy of humiliation, subtly discrediting Joan's thoughts and casting doubt on her emotional and intellectual integrity. Ultimately, Harper challenges her niece's credibility, questioning the truthfulness and objectivity of Joan's claims, and working to dismantle her reputation piece by piece.

Conclusion

Caryl Churchill's *Far Away* presents a dystopian world marked by pervasive oppression and gratuitous violence. Acts of killing, abuse, and torture have become disturbingly routine, and implemented with inhuman precision as part of daily life. In contrast, the desire for freedom and autonomy emerges as a form of resistance against established societal norms. Joan, Aunt Harper's niece, ventures out at night without permission and accidentally witnesses a scene she is neither invited to nor expected to see. Her commentary on the events places her at odds with a system that suppresses truth. Through her experience, Churchill interrogates patriarchal hegemony and its fragile grip on control, viewed through the lens of individual freedom. Within this nightmarish society, suspicion runs deep, uncle, aunt, and niece each doubt one another's loyalty as the ruling authority systematically manipulates and oppresses its citizens through elaborate deceit. Children labelled as "traitors" are subjected to cruel and inhumane treatment. In a chilling display of normalization, victims of the regime

known as the Big Movement are packed into lorries and executed. Their massacre is disturbingly reframed as a festive gathering enjoyed by Harper's husband and his companions. The coexistence of extreme violence with a longing for justice destabilizes Churchill's fictional society. This tension not only pits opposing forces against one another, but also fractures the social fabric, exposing the limits of collective cohesion. In this way, Churchill's vision operates as both a warning and a critique, rather than a straightforward offering of solutions. The dystopian landscape embodied by aunt Harper and her husband, mirrors some aspects of British social realities in the 21st century. Churchill's underlying message champions the utopian ideals embodied by Joan, while rejecting apathy and political complacency. Ultimately, she calls for stronger equity and accountability between citizens and institutions in a world increasingly marred by moral decline and unrelenting conflict.

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