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Magical realism in the transcendental discourse of rehabilitation in Nnedi Okorafor's *Who Fears Death* (2010)

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Abstract: This essay is an examination of Nnedi Okorafor's *Who Fears Death* (2010). The problematic that holds the discussion concerns the use of magical realism as a literary aesthetic for the construction of a discourse of rehabilitation of the postcolonial society. Accordingly, the essay resorts to the postcolonial theory with a particular emphasis on the concept of "subaltern" coined by the Indian postcolonial feminist Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. The argument helps to show that magical realism is used as a transgressive narrative technique to break the colonial discourse and its politics of silencing the voice of the colonized. The outcome of the discussion is that magical realism is an efficient way to overturning subalternity by allowing the colonized to tell his own story, subverting proportionally the colonizer's voice.

Keywords: Magical realism, Subalternity, Colonized voice, Transgression, Rehabilitation

Le réalisme magique dans le discours transcendantal de réhabilitation dans *Who Fears Death* (2010) de Nnedi Okorafor

Résumé: Cet article est une étude analytique de l'œuvre *Who Fears Death* (2010) de Nnedi Okorafor. La problématique qui sous-tend cet article concerne l'usage du réalisme magique comme une esthétique littéraire pour la construction du discours de réhabilitation de la société postcoloniale. Par conséquent, cet article fait recours à la théorie postcoloniale tout en mettant un accent particulier sur le concept « subalterne » de la théoricienne féministe et postcoloniale indienne Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak a été exploitée comme cadre analytique dans ce travail. La construction argumentative aide à prouver que le réalisme magique est utilisé comme une technique narrative transgressive pour casser le discours colonial et sa politique du silence imposée à la voix du colonisé. Il en résulte que le réalisme magique est un moyen efficace pour renverser la subalternité en ce qu'il permet au colonisé de raconter sa propre histoire, subvertissant ainsi de façon proportionnelle la voix du colonisateur.

Mots-clés: Réalisme magique, Subalternité, La voix du colonisé, Transgression, Réhabilitation

Introduction

Writing about sociopolitical issues in works of science fiction is being tailored as a particularity of the literary style of the African American science fiction. This use of the realistic style to deal with daily social experiences portrays a discursive and an ideological politics inherent to black science fiction authorship. The present essay studies Nnedi Okorafor's *Who Fears Death* (2010). It sheds light on the fact that the science fiction novels produced by African American writers read as the vehicle for the assertion of the cultural, political, and social representations of these authors. For the latter, the science fiction narrative emphasizes the expression of Blacks' identity by thoroughly adapting "cognitive estrangement" (M. K. Booker and A. M. Thomas, 2009, p 4) as a fundamental element of science fiction to Africans and African Americans' cultural context.

These contexts of science fiction have given birth to the non-conventional/Eurocentric patterns in the field such as magical realism. In her book *Magic(al) Realism* (2004), Maggie Ann Bowers quotes Wendy Faris who defines magical realism as:

> All narrative fiction that includes magical happenings in a realist matter-of fact narrative, whereby, 'the supernatural is not a simple or obvious matter, but it is an ordinary matter, and everyday occurrence - admitted, accepted, and integrated into the rationality and materiality of literary realism' (M. A. Bowers, 2004, p. 2).

According to Bowers, magical realism integrates supernatural occurrences in the daily experiences as normal and accepted. It breaks the frontiers between the natural and the supernatural while inscribing them as elements of literary realism. Therefore, magical realism lends itself to the transgression of the normative or overpowering discourse to pave the way to new imagined possibilities where the normative and the marginal intertwine. This trend for magical realism to go beyond the normative sets it as a literary esthetic that is amenable to a politics of protest.

As a matter of fact, magical realism suits for the discourse of resistance of the margins. That is certainly why Bowers goes further by declaring that: "magical realism provides a means for writers to express a non-dominant or non-Western perspective, whether that be from a feminist, postcolonial or rural standpoint, in opposition to dominant cultural discourse" (p 97). By this statement, Bowers acknowledges the combative framework that magical realism offers to the struggle against domination, hence the postcolonial theory used in this essay.

In his *Orientalism* (1978), Edward Said denounces the stereotypical images released by the Eurocentric standpoint against the Asian and mostly Middle West Arabic peoples. Postcolonial theory developed from then on to thrive with theorists like Bhabha K. Homi who phrased the theory of 'hybridity' in his *The Location of Culture* (1994). In his turn, Homi describes spaces where cultural borders are broken to engender hybrid culture. This essay focuses on the postcolonial feminist theorist Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak who released the concept of 'subaltern' in her essay entitled 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' (1988). Gayatri's concept of "subaltern" that originally points to those excluded from the structure of power and whose voices are silenced by the overpowering colonial forces, frames the discussion in this essay.

This essay studies Nnedi Okorafor's *Who Fears Death* (2010). In this novel, Okorafor introduces the reader into the journey of a black young lady born in a state of chaos after her mother, an Okeke woman is raped in a day of destruction of her village. The rapist is nobody else than the enemy army's general.

While growing up, this lady; Onyesonwu, discovers that she is endowed with supernatural powers. She can shift her shape into any species she wants and can do a lot of things impossible to a natural human being. From then on, she uses her superpowers to resist, protect and subvert many social and cultural orders that are oppressing to her as a woman and her peers. By this way, she becomes the epitome of resistance and change in her society.

The essay purports to define magical realism as an African American literary aesthetic that rehabilitates Black people. The argument in this essay is that Black people qualified as the subaltern can overturn the power of the dominant group through a counter-reaction to the discursive and systemic oppression of the pole of power. Therefrom stems out the problematic of the subalterns' politics of subversion of the colonial discourse. What is the politics of silencing used by the system of domination against the subaltern? What are the subaltern's strategies to counter-balance the colonial discourse? How will the subaltern construct his rehabilitating discourse?

Answers to these questions prompt firstly an analysis of the political agenda of the colonial powers in the building of subalternity. Then, an examination will be made on the subalterns' struggle to reposition themselves by the reinvention of their history. Finally, the inclusion of the literary techniques of magical realism will be analyzed as a discursive politics of reconstruction.

1. The Construction of Subalternity or the Political Agenda of Colonialism

Colonialism is a political ideology that contends that some people must be imposed economic, political, and social domination in order to be brought to civilization. It might be fueled by a racist impulse but not always. Colonialism can be motivated by mere will of power or/and economic reasons. Anyway, colonialism encourages territorial domination by implementing an administrative domination by the colonialist power. According to Edward Said, " 'colonialism,' which is almost always a consequence of imperialism, is the implanting of settlements on distant territory" (E. Said, 1994, p 8).

This projection of one's domination power cannot be possible without the stigmatization of those who are regarded as subalterns. Therefore, the dominated peoples are reduced to a state of subalternity. In Gayatri Chakravorty's words, the "general subalternity of the colonized can be seen as the position of those who have no access to the means of representation" (G. C. Spivak, 1989, p 283-284). By this contention, Spivak underlines the propension of the colonizer to erase the representativeness of the colonized at the extent to try to assimilate his voice and even his cultural identity.

In fact, in *Who Fears Death* (2010), Okorafor highlights a politics of silencing systematically implemented by colonialism. This politics starts by constructing a status of subalternity for the Okeke people. By doing so the Nuru who represent the dominant culture wants to delineate the borderline between them who would be of a noble breed and the Okeke that would be less noble and fitting for domination. In this attempt, the Nuru make use of extreme violence, rapes, and scorched earth policy to express their power. This reality that pictures the foundations of the Nuru's relationship to Okeke is revealed in this account:

> But one day, thirty years earlier, a group of Okeke men and women in the city of Zin rejected it. They'd had enough. They rose up rioting and demanding and refusing. Their passion spread to neighboring Seven Rivers towns and villages. These Okeke paid dearly for having ambition.

> Everyone did, as is always the case with genocide. On and off this had been happening since. Those rebelling Okekes that weren't exterminated were driven East. (N. Okorafor, 2010, p 12)

This account unveils the tensed relationship that lays between Nuru and Okeke. In reality, in Nuru's eyes, Okeke are nothing else than subalterns whose voice does not matter nor does their life. They are good only to serve as a springboard for the expression of Nuru's power.

Moreover, the construction of Okeke's subalternity goes with their banning of all processes that require or can develop intelligence. For the Nuru, the Okeke must remain a community of ignorant in order to maintain them in captivity. This intellectual disability partakes actively in the process of constructing subalternity. Consequently, impeaching willingly a whole community to have access to the means of transferring of knowledge must be seized as a politics of construction of subalternity that is a key policy for colonialism. An edifying example of that politics is described in this passage:

> Some of these villages are valuable. Some have been allowed to manage crops like corn and palm trees. The Okeke managers of these crops have gathered a little power for their good work. They will lose it all dying or fleeing. Daib does this as we speak. Gradually, Okekes will be fully wiped from the kingdom. The only ones kept will be the most broken slaves. Very soon, it could be two weeks, maybe less, Daib will start leading the Nuru military east to seek and destroy the exiles. (N. Okorafor, 2010, p. 268)

This account shows how much maintaining the subaltern in ignorance assures the colonizer's overwhelming power and how it helps controlling the future of the colonized. The fact is that those among the Okeke who started mastering some agricultural techniques are considered as dangerous because they were constituting an influence. Knowing that influence means representativeness, the Nuru think that it is a danger for their own influence to let such influence prospering by their subalterns' part.

Furthermore, constructing subalternity keenly encompasses the instauration of a gender disability. Gender disability must be understood as a politics of exclusion of a whole gender class from the ability to partake in the social change. Indeed, colonialism necessarily makes use of patriarchy to disable a whole part of the colonized people to assure a struggle for enfranchisement. In *Who Fears Death* (2010), the Nuru's politics of gender disability has consisted in excluding women from any aspect of knowledge acquisition as depicted in this narrative:

> You're full of fire," he said. "But I won't teach you." He motioned with his hand up and down, in reference to my body. "Your father was Nuru, a foul dirty people. The Great Mystic Points are an Okeke art only for the pure of spirit."
>
> "B-but you teach Mwita," I said working hard to control my despair.
>
> "Not the Mystic Points. What I teach him is limited. He's male. You're female. You can't measure up. Even in.... the gentler skills."
>
> "How can you say that?" I shouted, my diamond almost flying from my mouth.
>
> "And furthermore, you're filthy with woman blood as we speak," he said. "How dare you come here in this state."

> I only blinked, not knowing what he was talking about. Later I would realize he was referring to the fact that I was having my monthly. (N. Okorafor, 2010, p 56)

This dialogue between Aro, an Okeke master spiritualist and Onyesonwu sheds light on the highly patriarchal society that is the Okeke society. Indeed, their conversation underlines the trend to behave according to their conviction of the reality of a gender disability. This reality causes them to deny to women to take part in some rituals, to learn and grasp some secret knowledge.

This essentialist regard on women in the Okeke society reinforces the domination of the Okeke, their colonizers for it disrupt equality and self-reliance amidst themselves and creates a kind of gender segregation. In so doing, the Okeke women suffer from a "double jeopardy" (F. M. Beale, 1979, p 109) as developed by Frances M. Beale. Unfortunately, this double jeopardy emphasizes the weakness of the dominated society of the Okeke. Granted that Okeke women's voice is erased by both Nuru colonizers and their own men, it becomes a more complex duty to end with their shared subalternity. It will coast them to overcome their own hierarchical contradictions before facing efficiently with their men the social hindrances fostered by subjugation.

2. Cultural Reinvention and the End of Subalternity

In his *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (1971), Antonio Gramsci examines the social representativeness of the subalterns and designates them as: "The social groups that are subject to the direction and initiative of the dominant groups, and are therefore excluded from any autonomous political activity and from access to the apparatuses of the state power". (A. Gramsci, 1971, p 52) By this statement, Gramsci pinpoints the status of the subalterns as individuals whose voice is erased at a point where they fall in a kind of structural exclusion. This exclusion is not only social but also structural, that is to say, a political and systemic exclusion by those Gramsci will refer to as the "dominant groups" or the "hegemonic classes". Consequently, the subalterns cannot use the same canals with those of the hegemonic classes if they want to reinvent themselves for a better representativeness.

As a matter of fact, the subaltern can speak, that is, he can affirm his culture, his experience, and his identity. This starts by the contestation of the colonial voice that pretends to speak for him. The fact is that contesting the colonial voice goes with the reinvention of one own's canal for the diffusion of one's message so as to be liberated from the domination of the colonial voice and its distortions.

This process of liberation from the storytelling of the colonial voice has to do with literature. By their literary works, descents from formerly colonized people have an avenue to tell their people's story distinctively of what is recounted in the western/ Eurocentric metanarratives. Accordingly, the field of science fiction is used by Black authors to recount the story of subalterns differently. In Nnedi Okorafor's *Who Fears Death* (2010), the voice of the subaltern is brought out from the politics of silencing of the colonial voice as well by the narrative style as by the storyline. To give an illustration, Okorafor privileges the voice of the subalterns in her novels.

Undoubtedly, the releasing of the voice of the subaltern is the motivation of the main character of Okorafor's novel. For instance, in *Who Fears Death* (2010), Onyesonwu, the young black Okeke woman refuses to be submitted to colonialism, sexism and the Jwahir society's discriminatory attitudes against mulattoes. Concerning the discriminatory rules of the Jwahir society, it can be easily perceived

how people consider them as sub-humans because of their double origins as descents of Okeke and Nuru for Nuru people are regarded as naturally violent people by the Okeke people. This demonization of the alterity by the Okeke sounds very much as a counter-attack to Nuru people's condescending and violent attitudes to them. Be that as it may, the Ewu, that are the mulattoes borne of Okeke and Nuru parents – and mainly as fruits of rapes – are the scapegoats of this mutual distrust between these people. As a result, they are bullied by both the Nuru and the Okeke. As an example, this passage reveals the poor treatment reserved to the Ewu in the Jwahir and Banza inhabitants:

> In Jwahir, Ewu people were outcast. In Banza, Ewu women were prostitutes. It was no good wherever I went. "I'm a holy woman," I asserted, holding my voice steady. "I entertain no one. I am and will remain untouched."
>
> "We respect that, lady," the tall one said. "It doesn't have to be intercourse. You can use your mouth and let us touch your breasts. We'll pay you well for ..." (N. Okorafor, 2010, p 171)

This aggressive dialogue between Onyesonwu and a group of young Jwahir boys sheds light on the level of condescension of these boys to Ewu people, and especially the Ewu girls. Truthfully, their attitude describes a psychological conditioning that aims to dehumanize the Ewu people. This systemic politics of subalternity is subverted by the mystic powers of Onyesonwu. She breaks her oppressors into meek adversaries as recounted in the following:

> Onyesonwu! Don't!" Mwita's voice was resonant, as if he'd thrown it at me. I looked up. "See me!" I shouted. "See what they wanted to do to me!" The wind kept Mwita back. "Remember," he shouted. "This is not what we are. No violence! It's what sets us apart!" I began to tremble as my fury retreated and clarity set in. Without the blindness of rage, I clearly understood that I wanted to kill these men. […] I threw the spear and it blasted a large hole beside the young one. Then the idea came to me. I changed myself. In the Great Book there is a most terrifying creature. It only speaks riddles and, in the stories, though it never kills, people fear it more than death. I changed into a sphinx. My body was that of a giant robust desert cat but my head remained mine (N. Okorafor, 2010, p. 172)

This passage shows that Onyesonwu's mystic powers have helped her disarming and overturning the domination pride in the group of oppressors that wanted to rape her. Even if she has not killed them, her shape shifting to a terrible sphinx recalls a discourse of subversion of power. By the same way, this narrative anchors the prescription of a postcolonial discourse of rehabilitation face to colonial cultural domination.

Furthermore, the exaltation of magical powers in works of science fiction reveals a transgression of the western techno-scientific conventions on science fiction. This use of mysticism in the novel of science fiction contends the conception of a cultural contextualization of the novel of science fiction. As a matter of fact, this particular redefinition of the novel of science fiction projects a subversion against the authoritative discourse inherent in the colonialist discourse. Besides, the highly political and postcolonialist discourse inherent in this literary technique is what has caused Ann Maggie Bowers to state that:

> It has also become a common narrative mode for fictions written from the perspective of the politically or culturally disempowered, for instance indigenous people living under a covert colonial system such as Native Americans in the United States, women writing from a feminist

> perspective, or those whose lives incorporate different cultural beliefs and practices from those dominant in their country of residence, such as Muslims in Britain. (M. A. Bowers, 2004, p 31-32)

Evidently, the conversion of the science fictional narratives into realities of cultural contextualization for the purpose of political and social struggles of the people of the margins confers to the ontological elements like magical realism the trait of the postcolonial discourse.

3. Magical Realism and the Discursive Politics of Rehabilitation

While studying the use of magical realism in the works of science fiction, it is important to differentiate the components of this non-technoscientific characteristic of the novel of science fiction. In her *Magic(al) Realism* (2004), Ann Maggie Bowers establishes an important difference in the specification of this literary technique. In fact, she makes the distinction between ontological magical realism that "can be described as magical realism that has as its source material beliefs or practices from the cultural context in which the text is set" (p 76) and epistemological magical realism that "takes its inspiration for its magical realist elements from sources which do not necessarily coincide with the cultural context of the fiction, or for that matter, of the writer" (p 77). From this distinction, it can notice that magical realism is a double-skilled narrative technique for it can take its source in the cultural belief system of the author as well as the pure imaginative, even if, marvelous source.

By its conception, magical realism sets itself as the bearer of a contentious and transgressive ideology against the hegemonic colonial discourse. In this vein, magical realism favors the releasing of the discourse of the margins. It de-centers the narrative from the western point of view to upgrade the postcolonial subversive discourse. Thus, it opens an avenue for the assertion of the voice of the dominated or the formerly dominated people. Undoubtedly, the breaking of the colonial system of silencing of the colonized people's voice offered by the magical realism gives place to the nascence of a rehabilitating discourse.

In reality, magical realism vehicles a discursive politics of rehabilitation in favor of the non-Western people. The fact is that this narrative technique emphasizes on the empowerment of the oppressed people, community or social groups. Such a reality is depicted in Nnedi Okorafor's *Who Fear Death* (2010). In this novel, the author willingly puts forwards the breaking of the codes of oppression by allowing the dominated people that are the Okeke to walk all their way out from the oppression of the Nuru. Assuredly, the psychological strength that supports the Okeke all the way through their oppression to freedom is based on their belief in the mystic of the "Great Book" as demonstrated in this story confirmed by a young Okeke storyteller lady:

> As we were doomed in the past and are doomed in the present, we will be saved in the future," she said. "There's a prophecy by a Nuru Seer living on a tiny island in the Unnamed Lake. He says a Nuru man will come and force the Great Book's rewriting. He'll be very tall with a long beard. His mannerisms will be gentle, but he will be cunning and full of vigor and fury. A sorcerer. When he comes, there will be good change for Nuru and Okeke. When I left, there was an ongoing manhunt for this man. They were killing all tall Nuru men with beards and gentle mannerisms. All of these men have turned out to be healers, not rebels. So have faith, there is hope. (N. Okorafor, 2010, p. 80)

This revelation underlines at least three important points. First, the promise of the Okeke's freedom is based on a mythic belief but it is so strongly taken for granted that the young Okeke storyteller holds it and announces it everywhere to each one that would pay attention to her stories. Second, the power of belief in that prophecy resides in the fact that it has been done by a Nuru Seer, that is to say, an enemy Seer. This element reinforces its credibility in the eyes of the Okeke. The third point is that since the Nuru discovered that prophecy, they started leading an attempt of its purge by killing any man among them who resembles physically to the description of the man of the prophecy.

Consequently, the rehabilitation of the Okeke as an oppressed people forced into bondage by Nuru lies primarily in the diffusion of the discourse of hope. This discourse announces an unavoidable time of rescue from the direness of oppression and massacres that is to come. Therefore, this discourse inscribes itself in a prophetism that keep high the moral strength for a future rehabilitation. Followingly, this discourse proves to have had its effects seeing that some time later Okeke's bondage disappeared after chaotic struggles throughout the Okeke lands. To give an illustration, this account describes the circumstance in which the Okeke have been set free:

> We didn't stop what was happening there but we allowed several Okeke to escape. And I pushed to the ground and healed as many Nuru people as I could subdue. Those men then cowered in corners, appalled at what they'd done only moments ago. In a few minutes, they would begin to help the wounded, Nuru and Okeke. They would put out the fires. Then they would try to stop those other Nurus who were happily killing Okekes. And then these healed Nurus would be killed by their own bloodcrazed people. (N. Okorafor, 2010, p. 203)

This account exposes the chaotic struggle in which the Okeke finally obtain their freedom. In fact, the steady maintaining of hope in a better future has kept their mind prepared to such days. As a result, the discourse of hope in a better future works as a springboard for the rehabilitation of the Okeke. In so doing, the main element that engenders rehabilitation is not a superior technological or scientific power, but rather a belief prompted by the power of hope in the prophetism based on ancestral powers.

Assuredly, the fact for Okorafor to allow the change happens not by the power of science but by the power of ancestral beliefs is a response to the Western compulsory techno-scientific feature in the novel of science fiction. Besides, the development of this subgenre of the novel shows that the techno-scientific pattern has not always been the exclusive trait of science fiction. In his *Terminal Visions* (1982), W. Warren Wagar explains that: "much of what passes for science fiction clearly fits into the category of "realistic speculation," a phrase once seriously proposed by Robert Heinlein as a replacement for "science fiction." (9). By this remark, Wagar insists on the fact that science fiction bears in itself elements of realism that do not compulsorily have something to do with the field of techno-science.

Accordingly, in *Who Fears Death* (2010), Okorafor gives back the power to the colonized woman. By doing so, she breaks the codes of subalternity that weighs on their shoulders as the yoke of a "double jeopardy" as Frances M. Beale would say. In her *The Black Woman: An Anthology* (1979), she comments on Black women's condition by saying "as blacks they suffer all the burdens of prejudice and mistreatment that fall on anyone with dark skin. As women they bear the additional burden of having to cope with white and black men" (F. M. Beale, 1979, p 109). Truthfully, apart from the Black

women, such is the condition of women from formerly colonized societies and, by extension, third world country's women.

What is more, Okorafor restores the postcolonial society from the margin to the up by empowering the image of the postcolonial woman as the leader of change in the society. Indeed, the positioning of a female character as the protagonist endowed with magic powers challenges seriously the place left for women in the system of colonization for the women in the conquered territories. For instance, the fact for Onyesonwu to overturn the cultural practices that harms women's sexuality is evidence of her leadership at the top of social and political change. This passage describes how she makes use of her mystic powers to make grow her clitoris again after having been submitted to excision:

> Do something about it then, Eshu woman."
>
> I blinked, realizing what he meant. I concentrated. He began to move inside of me again and immediately, it felt like I had released my very being. "Ooooooooooooooooh," I moaned. From far off I could hear Mwita laughing, as I fell into sleep with a sigh. That tiny piece of flesh made all the difference. Growing it back hadn't been hard and it pleased me that for once in my life obtaining something of importance was easy. (N. Okorafor, 2010, p. 109)

This narrative gives some hints on the fascinating powers of Onyesonwu who consciously caused her clitoris to grow again after an excision so as to enjoy an orgasm. In fact, by this mystic performance she overturns not only the patriarchal domination but she also positions herself as the story makers knowing that she will do the same thing to her friend Luyu, Diti and Binta. Therefore, by overpassing her people traditional practices, Onyesonwu breaks sociocultural codes of the double jeopardy that weighs on her female counterparts. She becomes as such the leader of a new generation of women whose will, voice and desire cannot be silenced any longer by the alienating power of subjugation, patriarchy and subalternity.

To finish, Nnedi Okorafro's *Who Fears Death* (2010) makes use of the contextualized narrative technique of magical realism to rehabilitate the social, political and cultural identity of the colonized people. by doing so, Okorafor exorcizes the formerly colonized people from the dark sides of the "cultural trauma" (Eyerman, 2003:2) they underwent. More importantly, she rehabilitates the individual in his position without entering a struggle for a reverse hierarchization.

Conclusion

To put an end to this discussion, it is important to notice that the work of rehabilitation of a people or community that has encountered, lived, and experienced colonization has to deal with a thorough politics of reconstruction. This reconstructive politics depends on the efficiency of the political cultural responses brought to the effects of colonialism. In fact, colonialism strengthens its hold on the colonized people by the politics of subalternity for only the internalization of subalternity as a psychological condition by the colonized can assure the perennity of the colonial power.

In this vein, subalternity appears as the warranty of the colonial power. For that matter, the colonial system works to deprive the colonized from any noble faculty of mind. That is to say, colonialism works to destroy the process of learning and the process of acquisition of knowledge. With this systemic attack against knowledge, the future of the colonized people is weakened and jeopardized. Similarly,

by its manifestation, colonialism begets patriarchy, which at its turn divides more the colonized community according to gender classes where women become the receptacle of all the oppressive systems.

Notwithstanding the politics of oppression implemented by colonialism, the discussion in this essay has proved that the subaltern can speak. However, if the subaltern wants really to speak, he has to come out of the beaten track. This is what Nnedi Okorafor's *Who Fears Death* (2010) does by paving the way to the breaking of the colonial overwhelming voice and its silencing politics of the colonized voice. Indeed, the representativeness of the colonized has necessarily to go through the creation of his own canal of expression and his own techniques to vehicle his message.

That is what the usage of magical realism stands for. Magical realism works as a narrative esthetic that aims to contextualize the field of science fiction according to the cultural experience of the colonized in general and the Blacks in particular. Therefore, magical realism is the canal found to utter the particular reality of the non-Western people. Even if, magical realism transgresses the techno-scientific characteristic of the novel of science fiction Okorafor has demonstrated that it serves more in the storytelling of the postcolonial society.

Consequently, magical realism epitomizes a transgressive politics directed against the colonizer's voice. In the same way, it holds the contentious voice of the colonized. This particular aspect makes of it a literary esthetic that fits more for postcolonial literature. Most importantly, magical realism bears a restorative and a rehabilitative politics for the subaltern in a different position no longer as subaltern but rather as a free and empowered individual.

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