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**Ideology and Neurosis in Laurence Holder's When the Chickens Came Home to Roost (1980) and John Millington Synge's The Well of the Saints (1905)**

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## **To**

My family, especially my parents, and to the soul of my brother, Bouaziz Akli, who died on February 26, 2017

My close relatives wherever they are

My friends and teachers without exception

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## Abstract

This Master dissertation is a comparative genre study which explores ideology and neurosis in L. Holder's When the Chickens Came Home to Roost (1980) and J.M. Synge's The Well of the Saints (1905). This study begins with an introduction, followed by Methods and Materials as well as the historical context of each one of the two aforementioned plays. Its discussion section includes two different chapters. In the first one, to discuss ideology in both plays I explore Terry Eagleton's theory of ideology as developed in his book Literary Theory: An Introduction by focusing on the element of domination. As for the second chapter, to cope with neurosis in both plays, I should like to throw light on Karen Horney's theory of neurosis as developed in her book Neurosis and Human Growth: The Struggle Toward Self-Realization. My main objective behind the whole work, first and foremost, is to draw an analogy between the two plays with regard to the exploration of the two abovementioned concepts. The study reveals that in Holder's play, Elijah Muhammad takes profit from ideological beliefs, and Malcolm X supports the charge of those beliefs. In Synge's play, the study reveals also that Martin Doul and his wife support the charge of ideological beliefs, and the other villagers take profit from them. It reveals, as well, that almost all the characters in both works suffer from neurosis.

## **Introduction**

This Master dissertation provides an exceptional environment in which I study a wide range of ideological and neurotic effects in Laurence Holder's When the Chickens Came Home to Roost (1980) and John Millington Synge's The Well of the Saints (1905). To begin with, ideology is a recurrent theme to so many writers recognized during the twentieth century. Laurence Holder, for example, in his play When the Chickens Came Home to Roost (1980) the characters live under obvious ideological influence. The ruling power, Elijah, exploits ideology in order to reach his aim of securing his position; and the subordinate power, Malcolm, suffers from the ideological laws established on purpose by Elijah. Also, in J.M. Synge's play The Well of the Saints (1905) the characters experience ideological effects. The overwhelming force, that is the villagers, use ideology in their favor; and the couple take the charge of the ideological beliefs built up by their fellow villagers. To continue with, neurosis also is an important theme to a lot of writers in the same century. Laurence Holder's aforementioned play is full of neurotic reactions produced by both Elijah and Malcolm. Similar to the first play, J.M. Synge's has also made use of characters who suffer from neurotic complexities.

## **Review of the literature**

Both of the two abovementioned plays have received a large amount of critical attention. As regards When the Chickens Came Home to Roost, Frank Rich, a reviewer for the New York Times, speaks about Elijah and Malcolm without any hint at either ideology or neurosis. Consequently, Frank Rich observes that Laurence Holder "has taken a pair of intimidating, legendary men - Elijah Muhammad and Malcolm X - and brought them to utterly convincing life."<sup>1</sup>

Additionally, to paraphrase Frank Rich, Holder's play is a fabulous tug-of-war between men who shared everything, who actually made history together - and who are now

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<sup>1</sup> Laurence, Holder, "When the Chickens Came Home to Roost" *The Best Short Plays* (New Delhi: Delgado, 1988), 73

enemies to one another. Frank Rich also describes Elijah and Malcolm as forming a well theatrical study in terms of infancy and maturity, of idealism and cynicism and of liveliness and tiredness.<sup>2</sup>

As a conclusion, Sir Frank Rich deals with the story of the play, the manner of writing and focuses on the relationship between Elijah and Malcolm X. However, he neglects the social, ideological and psychological factors which influence heavily that connection.

More than this, Anthony D. Hill and Douglas Q. Barnett state,

He (Washington, Von H.) struggles to find acting parts in New York City until he was cast in Laurence Holder's play When the Chickens Come Home to Roost, a play about an imaginary meeting between Martin Luther King and Malcolm X...His work in Chickens helped him to land the role of Private First Class Melvin Peterson in the Negro Ensemble Company's production of Charles Fuller's Pulitzer Prize-winning A Soldier's play<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, the two authors stress that the meeting between the two men was fictitious. They also aim at saying that Holder's play was successful, since they affirm that Washington who has taken part in it won a prize and burst into a triumphant career thanks to it. On the other hand, there is any hint at either ideology or neurosis in their saying.

As for The Well of the Saints, Anita Nemes writes,

Looked at with a 21<sup>st</sup> –century mind, blindness as the theme of a play may surpass the boundaries of political correctness in case it touches upon established stereotypes. Writing about blind people ridiculed by their fellow villagers is a sensitive topic. Synge's play itself contains references to stereotypes, such as the association of physical deformity with wickedness and stupidity, like in Timmy the smith's remark: "Oh, the blind, is wicked people, and it's no lie."<sup>4</sup>

In addition, but, to paraphrase Anita Nemes, beyond what the characters' observations suggest, the play of Synge does not cope with the important subject of bodily defect. Sightlessness ought to be understood in a symbolic way in Synge's work cited, through which

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Anthony D. Hill, Douglas Q. Barnett, *The A to Z American Theater*, (The United Kingdom: The Scarecrow Press, Inc. 2009), 294-295

<sup>4</sup> Anita, Nemes, *Illusion and Reality The Theme of Blindness in Synge's The Well of the Saints*., accessed June 17, 2016

seas3.elte.hu/angolpark

themes like illusion and reality, the well-intended suspension of disbelief, the power of language and the importance of religion and society might be dealt with.<sup>5</sup>

To conclude, Anita Nemes's work is clearly without any hint at either ideology or neurosis.

As for the second study, Dr. Arvind M. Nawale in her work From Ignorance to Knowledge: a Study of J. M. Synge's the Well of the Saints is besides void of any reference to the aforementioned concepts.

Dr. Arvind M. Nawale states,

What is most fascinating about the play is not the story but the questions it raises. Martin and Mary were ignorant about the real meaning of beauty, self and life but at last they attained a perfect knowledge of the self. At last, we can recognize their cry for assistance in their transcendence. They prefer blindness instead of sight because they come to know the finite nature of all the objects of the world and want themselves to lead *asat* to *sat*, ignorance to knowledge.<sup>6</sup>

Despite the fact that many scholars have well discussed the two abovementioned plays, no one has attempted to compare between When the Chickens Came Home to Roost and The Well of the Saints with regard to the exploration of ideology and neurosis. In fact, Holder and Synge have certainly hinted at ideology and neurosis in their works; therefore, through examining both When the Chickens Came Home to Roost and The Well of the Saints, I will trace the possibility to find almost all the similarities which exist between the two texts in their exploration of the issues of ideology and neurosis, since there is a stimulus need to analyze them.

Consequently, my analysis goes further than what is already done to explore ideology and neurosis. Before proceeding, a theoretical background must be established. In this research, I rely on Terry Eagleton's theory to discuss ideology and on Karen Horney's theory to deal with neurosis. Then, I plan essentially not only to show that these themes are

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> Nawale, Arvind, "The Criterion: An International Journal in English," *From Ignorance to Knowledge: A Study of John Millington Synge's The Well of the Saints*, June 2011., accessed June 24, 2016, www. The -criterion.com

explored, but to demonstrate that there are numerous similarities in analyzing the daily life of the characters in both plays in relation to ideology and neurosis.

Each of the two aforesaid works presents characters who either take profit from ideological established orders, and others who suffer because of them. Both of them also feature on the whole characters who experience and or suffer from neurosis. However, almost every character produces in both works different neurotic reactions from the others. In the first chapter, I cope with ideology focusing on the element of domination. Actually, in this chapter, I attempt to explore Terry Eagleton's theory of ideology both on Holder's work and on Synge's. Eagleton stresses the six strategies which the dominant power often uses to exercise and maintain its dominance over its subordinate.<sup>7</sup> As for the second chapter, in the light of Karen Horney's theory of neurosis, I deal with this issue. In this part, I endeavour to analyze the characters' reactions in the two plays. In order to reach my purpose, I try also to link each character in both plays to the convenient neurotic reactions he produces, which might have been enumerated in Horney's work.

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<sup>7</sup> Tomado de Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: An Introduction*: accessed June 24, 2016, [academic.uprm.edu/id214.htm](http://academic.uprm.edu/id214.htm)

## Methods:

### **I-Terry Eagleton's Theory of Ideology**

Since the word ideology is the main concept in this theory, I would like first to begin with defining it briefly. So, according to the Collins dictionary, when people communicate the word ideology, they refer generally to the group of beliefs, especially those which concern politics on which people, parties, or countries base their actions. On the other hand, in this work I put emphasis on what Terry Eagleton calls the process of legitimating.

Consequently, the process of legitimating, according to Terry Eagleton, would seem to entail at least six strategies.<sup>8</sup> They are as follows:

1. **A dominant power may legitimate itself by promoting beliefs and values congenial or agreeable to it.**<sup>9</sup> Indeed, a dominant power can refer to a person such as a king, also may be to a political party as well as to the Elite in a given society. Therefore, this dominant force strives to produce beliefs and values which fit its aims and expectations.
2. **Naturalizing and universalizing such beliefs so as to render them self-evidently unavoidable.**<sup>10</sup> To persuade the subordinate power adopting these beliefs; the dominant one uses some strategies. Among these is to say that what happens here happens all around the world. For instance, to argue that slavery is natural; the dominant power (the master) says that in all countries there are slaves as if the second fact justifies the first. More than this, the master tries to convince his slaves that people can hardly imagine a country without slaves.

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid

<sup>9</sup> Ibid

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

3. **Denigrating or belittling ideas which might challenge this dominant power.**<sup>11</sup>

Another important tactic of the dominant authority is to put down all ideas which may threaten its dominance. To achieve this purpose, the dominant power uses a wide range of methods such as corrupting, threatening, putting in jail and so on.

4. **Excluding rival forms of thought, perhaps by some implicit but systematic logic.**<sup>12</sup>

In some circumstances, a dominant power dictates to the subordinate one how to think and put borders indirectly to thoughts which confront the prevailing authority. For example, if the leading power asks its subordinate to believe that what it says is the truth, it is systematic to say that what its opponents say is a lie.

5. **Obscuring social reality in ways convenient to itself.**<sup>13</sup>

It is obvious that the subordinate power generally has a lot of questions which remain unanswered. As an illustration, if the subordinate force believes that slavery is unavoidable, the questions like who should be master, or why slaves ought to be slaves often rise.

6. **Masking or suppressing social conflicts.**<sup>14</sup>

Almost all countries which contain different classified social groups suffer from class struggles. To remain in its dominance, the central power tries to put out of sight these hostilities.

According to Eagleton also, it is worth to keep in mind that all these strategies are likely to interact in complex ways.<sup>15</sup>

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11 Ibid

12 Ibid

13 Ibid

14 Ibid

15 Ibid

## **II-Karen Horney's Theory of Neurosis**

As the term neurosis is the essential concept of this theory, I look forward to start with defining it as briefly as possible. Therefore, when people make use of the word neurosis, they commonly use it to refer to a mental condition which causes people to have unreasonable fears and worries over a long period of time.

According to Horney, a German-American psychoanalyst, to reach self-realization the individual needs some approving conditions. While it is up to him to develop his given potentialities; he needs internal security as well as inner free will to facilitate expressing his personal thoughts and opinions. For the sake of fulfilling complete maturity, the human being is required to get the good will of other individuals. He is also asked to experience some well friction with the desires and wills of others. If he is capable to grow with others, in love and in disagreement, he will also grow up without friction with his real self.<sup>16</sup>

In other unfavorable circumstances, the child may be prevented from growing in accordance with his individual needs and possibilities. Such bad conditions are of many different kinds to mention all of them. But, to epitomize them, the most basic aspect is that the people in the environment are too wrapped up in their own neuroses to be capable of loving the child, or even to regard him as the particular person he is; their neurotic claims and responses determine their attitudes toward him.<sup>17</sup>

To sum up, to Horney, every child is born with potentialities that will help him to develop a real-self when becoming adult, that is the continuous touch with spontaneity; however, when a child is surrounded by a hostile atmosphere early in his life, that future adult grows up losing his innate spontaneity.

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16 Karen, Horney, *Neurosis and Human Growth, The struggle Toward Self-Realization*, (New York: W-W- Norton & Company, INC., 1950),18

17 Ibid

## **Materials**

### **Historical Context of When the Chickens Came Home to Roost (1980)**

The Civil Rights Movement, strengthened during the 1960s, has very much helped African Americans to overthrow the enduring white ascendancy. Black Americans have felt they were entitled to take back their basic human rights. In fact, they did not reach their aim all at once, but step by and each event has led to another.

To begin with, African Americans have above all strived against the social segregation. Through the foundation of a good many associations, this dominated category of American citizens have asked for similar rights to all Americans with regard to accessing education, opportunities related to employment and the use of communal transportation systems and so forth. For the sake of combating this kind of discrimination, a lot of African American individuals as well as groups used other peaceful objections and civil defiance. As an illustration, Rosa Parks, a black seamstress, refused to vacate her seat for a non-colored passenger who got a bus on which she was taking home after an exhausting day of work in 1955.<sup>18</sup>

To continue with, Black American citizens have also fought segregation related to the franchise. The campaigns of Martin Luther King, for example, by means of boycotts, demonstrations and marches or sit-ins opened eyes to national consciousness of the unjustified denial of voting rights to African Americans. Therefore, the two successful marches of 1963 and 1965, organized by King, have gained national support in favor of the Civil Rights Movement, which obliged the federal government offering better protection of Black American essential claims. Indeed, two pieces of legislation: the Civil Right Act (1964) and the Voting Rights Act (1965) were passed by the American Congress. While the first rule outlawed all forms of social discrimination, the second disallowed segregation related to the franchise.<sup>19</sup>

To end with, the strongest claim of African Americans was longing for Black Nationalism. Malcolm X, the best-known black spokesman during the 1950s, has strongly

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<sup>18</sup> *A Brief History of the Civil Rights Movement*., accessed March 17, 2017, [www.whatsoproudlywehail.org](http://www.whatsoproudlywehail.org)

<sup>19</sup> Ibid

called for a wide band of young metropolitan African Americans. Malcolm has also refuted Martin Luther King's pledge to nonviolence and instead he appealed his supporters to secure their rights by any means required. Thus, Malcolm X, who has highly voiced the black desire to self-government, has delivered in 1964 a charismatic speech advocating blacks to use the any means necessary to promote black political and economic independence from the crippling white hegemony.<sup>20</sup> Another prominent political party was the Black Panthers, founded in 1965 by Huey Newton and Bobby Seale; it advocated the reorganization of American society by means of realizing societal, political and monetary uniformity for African Americans. Nevertheless, by the late 1970s, tribulations and disagreements within the militant group had obviously removed its political power.<sup>21</sup>

To conclude, Holder's When the Chickens Came Home to Roost (1980) is written at the centre of the period when white ascendancy was threatened by blacks in the United States. At first, the African Americans' focus was to regain their full rights of citizenship. However, at the end, some blacks have called for Black self-government granting even the use of violence against their opponents.

### **Historical Context of The Well of the Saints (1905)**

Ireland has known a lot of invasions and incursions into the island. For instance, about the middle of the seventieth century, Protestant settlers from England and Scotland have subjugated Ireland. Until and numerous years after 1905, the new settlers of the time-honored Church dominated political leadership as well as land ownership in the Irish island, and severe edicts discriminated in favor of the Protestants.<sup>22</sup>

During the eightieth century, a strong parliamentary tradition was developed by Protestant hegemony which came to regard itself as the Irish nation. These aspects have played a crucial role in creating a tradition of radical nationalism among the native Irishmen

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20 *The Civil Rights Movement* (The United States: Szumski, 2005), 140-141

21 *The Civil Rights Movement in the USA in the 1950s and 1960s*, 140

22 *Ireland in Brief* (Ireland: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, January 2013)

to bring forth the society of Irish race. As far as the nineteenth century is concerned, it was monopolized by the longed-for Catholic emancipation and the fight for Irish independence. There was an uphill struggle to bring about change or untie the Union between Great Britain and Ireland. Throughout the 1880s, at Westminster, the Irish Parliamentary Party put the Irish question the most prominent inquiry of British politics under the control of Charles Stewart Parnell. Therefore, the Liberal party in 1886 came to encourage some degree of Ireland's autonomy when being headed by W.E. Gladstone. There were also everlasting sectarian conflicts between Irish Nationalists, who were generally Catholics, and the Unionists, basically Protestants, who wanted the question of Irish Home Rule be rid of.<sup>23</sup>

By 1900, a civil war loomed over in Ireland. Later on, The Easter Uprising of 1916 has not succeeded in spreading further than Dublin and the leaders were put in jail and executed. Their atrocious conduct enlarged public support in favor of independence; therefore, the Irish War for self-government occurred three years later. As a result, twenty six Irish counties withdrew from the United Kingdom in 1922, and the new country took the name of the Irish Free State. The other six counties in the north of Ireland, called Northern Ireland, remain until the present time an important part of the UK. Together with the English tongue, Gaelic became as well, regarded as the official national language.<sup>24</sup>

As a conclusion, Synge's The Well of the Saints (1905) is written in a period when Ireland was experiencing significant historical events. The play is written while native Irish people advocate and long for independence from English ascendancy. It is also published five years after the looming bloody Irish civil war and fourteen years before the starting up of the Irish War of Independence.

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid

<sup>24</sup> *A Brief History of Ireland.*, accessed March 26, 2017, ©2008 abcteach.com

## **Biography of Laurence Holder**

Laurence Holder is an American dramatist who has garnered a lot of professional New York productions, critical acclaim, and nominations during his career. This well-known black playwright has created a lot of works which basically deal with historical figures related to the African American world. Among the famous plays written by Mr. Holder are Zora and Langston, Laurel Wreath and The Fighter. In addition to playwriting, scripts for radio and television have also been created by Mr. Holder. In regard this, he has written and produced his personal radio show, entitled New Ark Show as well as a television series, Watch Your Mouth. He has also been a musical creator of the story of Juba for which an Audelco award went to him. More than this, as being a unique creative person, Mr. Holder has also written and directed writing as well as acting workshops for several groups like the New Federal Theatre, the Cell Block Theatre, and the American Writer Enterprises.<sup>25</sup>

### **The Meaning of the Title:**

According to the Collins dictionary, if mistakes or wrong things that somebody has done in the past **have come home to roost**, or if their **chickens have come home to roost**, they are now experiencing the bothering consequences of those actions. Regarding Holder's play, Elijah Muhammad has raped some female secretaries. Consequently, Malcolm X and many political activists have got more cause for opposing the aforementioned wrongdoer.

### **Summary of When the Chickens Came Home to Roost (1980)**

The Messenger of Allah, Elijah Muhammad, helps Malcolm X to get out of prison. Afterward, this young and eloquent person joins Elijah's movement and becomes the most influential spokesman of the Nation of Islam. Actually, Malcolm and his master respect and admire each other to the extent that Muhammad's sons usually accuse their father of favoring Malcolm over them. However, things change when some female secretaries of Elijah

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<sup>25</sup> Laurence, Holder, "When the Chickens Came Home to Roost" *The Best Short Plays* (New Delhi: Ramon Delgado, 1988), 73

Muhammad have accused the latter of adultery. After that, the suspicious Malcolm possesses evidence that supports the charge of Elijah. This results in an obvious break between the two men, since Malcolm has felt betrayed by his master as well as responsible to do something to those women. Finally, even if he disagrees with his master over some issues, Malcolm keeps arguing in a respectful way so as to maintain their joint cause until the end.

## **Biography of John Millington Synge**

The Irish novelist, short story writer, poet, dramatist and essayist, Edmund John Millington Synge was born into a family of settled Protestant nobility on 16 April 1871 and grew up more or less unhealthy. Before meeting W.B. Yeats in 1896, Synge was meaningless and unsuccessful. Indeed, it is Yeats who has spurred J.M. Synge to deal with the issue of Irish nationalism and the supernatural. Today, Synge is considered as a key figure in the Irish Literary Revival and one of the co-founders of the Abbey Theatre. He is well known for his play The Playboy of the Western World (1907), which led to riots in Dublin throughout its opening run at the Abbey Theatre. Synge's writings were mainly concerned with the world of the Roman Catholic peasants of rural Ireland and with what he viewed as the essential paganism of their world vision, though he actually has come from a privileged Anglo-Irish background. He attended private schools in Dublin and Bray and studied music at the Royal Academy of Music. Then, he turned his attention to works of Christian evidence. Afterwards, he took up more serious interest in the kingdom of Ireland; therefore, he similarly developed an interest in Irish antiquities and Aran Islands, and became a member of the Irish League. Among his outstanding plays The Shadow of the Glen (1903) as well as Riders to the Sea (1904).<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> David M., Kiely, *John Millington Synge: a Biography* (Dublin and New York: Gill & Macmillan and St. Martin's Press, 1994)

## Summary of The Well of the Saints (1905)

In a small Irish village named Grianan live unhappily Martin Doul and his wife Mary. Since they are sightless, their fellow villagers deliberately cause them to believe they are handsome to make fun of them. A saint cures them of their blindness by means of water taken from the holy well of the grave of the four beautiful saints. This day is not a good one as it seems for them because they are dismayed by each other. Then, Martin goes to work for Timmy, a middle-aged vigorous blacksmith, and tries to seduce Timmy's betrothed beautiful, Molly, but she rejects him fiercely and sends him away. After a while, the Douls lose their sight once more, and the Saint returns to marry Timmy and Molly. Towards the end of Synge's play, Martin refuses the Saint's offer to cure their sightlessness again this is why the Saint takes offence, and the fellow villagers drive out the couple, who head south aiming at finding kinder neighbours.

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## Results

This dissertation dealt with ideology and neurosis in Laurence Holder's When the Chickens Came Home to Roost (1980) and J.M. Synge's The Well of the Saints (1905). As a first theory, an appeal is made to Terry Eagleton's Literary Theory: An Introduction (1996) to discuss ideology in both works. As a second theory, another appeal is made to Karen Horney's Neurosis and Human Growth: The Struggle Toward Self-Realization (1950) to demonstrate the difficulties to obtain self-realization in either works. It has been demonstrated in the two chapters of the present dissertation that both aforesaid playwrights have shared much similar views about ideology and neurosis.

From the outset, Holder's play When the Chickens Came Home Roost seems to have been more historical and Synge's The Well of the Saints more social. But at the outcome of the analyses, it has been first concluded that the historical context of both plays have been famous of their tragedy. Second, the influence of ideology and general neurotic state upon social and cultural environments of both playwrights has been indicated. Consequently, focus is put on the ideological and the neurotic effects of both Holder's and Synge's characters. In fact, to discuss ideology, I checked the relevance of Terry Eagleton's theory by focusing on the element of domination. And to deal with neurosis, I relied on Karen Horney's theory. Indeed, there are a lot of affinities between the daily lives of the characters in both aforesaid plays. Thus, class conflicts, sectarian struggles and war are aroused and experienced in the same way either by American or Irish people as also reflected in the two aforementioned plays. Third, it has been shown in the first chapter that ideological beliefs have hindered Malcolm from securing a high position and the Doul family from belonging to the village. While in the second chapter, it has been proven that most of these characters are neurotics who failed to reach any self-realization.

To conclude, it is noticeable that Laurence Holder and John Millington Synge have portrayed the hostile ideological and neurotic environments under which the characters evolve, like class struggles, sectarian conflicts and racism.

## **Discussion**

### **Chapter One: Ideology in Holder's When the Chickens Came Home to Roost and Synge's The Well of the Saints**

#### **Legitimizing: Legitimizing ideas which are convenient to the dominant power**

Terry Eagleton writes: "We may disagree on this or that, but we can only do so because we share certain "deep" ways of seeing and valuing which are bound up with our social life, and which could not be changed without transforming that life."<sup>27</sup> That is to say, under ideological and social life, people share the same criteria, established on purpose by the dominant power, to value and view things as well as events. Furthermore, it is not easy for anyone to change that way of seeing things; therefore, it would be easier only if he changes the environment which surrounds him. Actually, the following facts suggest how much both Elijah Muhammad in Holder's play and the fellow villagers of the couple in Synge's try to maintain their social and ideological higher position.

#### **In When the Chickens Came Home to Roost**

First, Elijah Muhammad tries to persuade Malcolm X that the king Elijah is the only man to whom people should address. When Malcolm is informed about the acts of adultery committed by Elijah against some female secretaries, he has tried to discuss with Elijah's son Wallace about this issue. For Elijah, what Malcolm does is dishonorable because, being only a minister, Wallace is too small to find out a solution to his complicated problem. Contrary to Elijah, Malcolm thinks that Wallace is an open-minded person. Elijah wants to treat this problem in secrecy, even through using other illegal practices like corruption, declaring that he is ready to offer money to those women to silence them. As a short conclusion, if Elijah

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<sup>27</sup> Terry, Eagleton, *Literary Theory, An Introduction* (The United States: 111 Third Avenue South, Suite 290 Minneapolis, MN 55401-2520s.: The University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 12

succeeds in persuading his men, especially Malcolm, to address only him in such state of affairs, he will surely be able to secure his position.<sup>28</sup>

Moreover, Muhammad tries to convince Malcolm X that the latter is in a position that everyone wants to obtain; as a result, people want to kill him because of envy. For Elijah, Malcolm has everything, since he is given more importance than Elijah's sons, who frequently accuse their father of favoring Malcolm over them. He reminds Malcolm also of the fact that many people want to take his life, but not because of jealousy, as he is a very good orator as Elijah declares. But I think rather that because he is the most faithful devotee of Elijah that people want to murder him. To conclude, the Messenger of Allah reminds Malcolm a lot about his position in order to prevent him from rebelliousness.<sup>29</sup>

Another important belief Elijah wishes to promote to his men is that he rules under the protection of Allah. This is why he has defeated his previous antagonists and he is going to beat also the actual as well as the coming ones. Elijah reminds frequently Malcolm that it is God who has saved him in the past; he will surely save him today and tomorrow, since he is his Messenger. "We've had fights and arguments in this room that would have frightened even a strong man like you. But I'm the one who's still here, Malcolm. I was the strongest one. And I still am"<sup>30</sup> In fact, Elijah aims at saying to his men, especially Malcolm, that it is of no value to rebel against him, since he is a prophet.

Apart from the preceding beliefs, Muhammad insists that people under Elijah's rule live in peace thanks to Islam; therefore, they are not obliged to revolt. Generally, people revolt when they feel oppressed and when their rights are violated. According to Elijah's words, his people live in harmony, pride and goodness. "We look good. We stand straight. We have already got our pride because we worked for it"<sup>31</sup> Conversely, those infiltrators for

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28 Laurence, Holder, "When the Chickens Came Home to Roost" *The Best Short Plays* (New Delhi: Delgado, 1988)

29 Ibid

30 Ibid., 81

31 Ibid., 80

Elijah also, threaten the peace they have got from Islam. In short, Elijah Muhammad wants to say that saving the Nation of Islam is the only way to defeat those who menace its harmony. On the contrary, joining the civil rights fools is a means to do mischief in his nation.

#### In The Well of the Saints

First, the fellow villagers of Martin and Mary are selfish because they have permitted themselves believing and doing sometimes the impermissible. Some of these deeds are as follows: the fellow villagers of Martin and Mary have allowed themselves to make the couple believe that they are fine-looking, while they are blind, old and ugly, to laugh at them. Since the idea that he is wedded with the beautiful dark woman of Ballinatone is a lie, Martin says: “The devils mend the old saint for letting me see it was lies.”<sup>32</sup> So, people in the village do not hide the truth for the old couple because of pity and mercy but to make fun of them as it is a social habit. For instance, when Martin has been cured from his sightlessness, he has failed to recognize his wife Mary, and his environment does not make any effort to tell him the lamentable truth. On the contrary, they laugh at Martin and ask him to carry on trying to find whom among the women can be his wife.

The fact that the old couple are poor and blind denotes that they are sinful for the fellow villagers. Consequently, the rich people in the village usually neglect them. According to the Saint, rich men in the village look barely to wretched people like Martin and Marry except to throw at them, with some contempt, a minor thing such as a crust of bread. For some villagers also, the darkness of the couple’s sight corresponds to the wickedness of their hearts. As a result, Molly Byrne, when Martin refuses to be cured from his blindness, asks the Saint to leave the latter in obscurity if that best fit the wickedness of his heart. According to the Saint as well, it is sin that brought about darkness to the world. In his sense, the couple’s blindness does not come from nothing but from their sins.

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<sup>32</sup> John M., Synge, “The Well of the Saints” *John Millington Synge Plays, Poems and Prose*. (London: Dent, 1958), 90

Timmy employs Martin Doul in his forge. Actually, he nearly enslaves him with too much work. When Martin's sight is restored by the Saint, he has been employed by Timmy in his forge. Indeed, he has been working long hours without rest, for this Martin argues that normally each employee has an hour to have a rest every day. Martin denounces: "Would you have me getting my death sitting out in the black wintry air with no coat on me at all"<sup>33</sup> Moreover, because of the misery he experiences in Timmy's forge, Martin wishes to come back to his prior mournful life in his blindness, judging it easier than the last.

The people in the village think that Mary and Martin must obey the Saint's orders to cure them from their blindness. Instead of questioning the reason that pushes the old couple to refuse the Saint's offer to cure them from their sightlessness, the fellow villagers are intensely unmerciful towards Martin and Mary treating them as sinners and villainy-hearted people. More than this, the villagers do not fear curse because of treating badly an old-blind couple. Rather, they fear curse because the couple refuse the Saint's aforesaid offer. Consequently, the couple are unjustly expelled from the village as the villagers say: "Go on now, Martin Doul. Go on from this place. Let you not be bringing great storms or droughts on us from the power of the Lord"<sup>34</sup>

### **Naturalization: Naturalizing such beliefs so as to render the self-evidently unavoidable**

As to Naturalization, Terry Eagleton explains:

What we have uncovered so far, then, is not only that literature does not exist in the sense that insects do, and that the value-judgments by which it is constituted are historically variable, but that these value judgments themselves have a close relation to social ideologies. They refer in the end not simply to private taste, but to the assumptions by which certain social groups exercise and maintain power over others.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 79

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 102

<sup>35</sup> Terry, Eagleton, *Literary Theory, An Introduction* (The United States: 111 Third Avenue South, Suite 290 Minneapolis, MN 55401-2520s.: The University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 14

Explicitly, it is obvious that value-judgments change throughout history; however, the element which is not discovered yet is that they have close relation to social ideologies. Actually, those value-judgments which people have in common in a particular societal or ideological sphere, which differ from those which another category of people have, refer not only to private taste in relation to other people in history or sphere, but to the procedures taken by the dominant power to exercise and maintain force over the subordinate one in each era. In fact, the following paragraphs confirm how Elijah in Holder's play and the villagers in Synge's have taken these tactics to preserve their position and exercise their power over the subordinate ones through establishing some incoherent shared value-judgments.

a- When the Chickens Came Home to Roost

Through our reading of Holder's play, we understand that Elijah wants to teach Malcolm to address only him when approaching some specific issues. For Elijah, it is unnatural as well as a shame to address Wallace who is just a minister instead of him. Elijah also blames Malcolm for talking to the girls who have accused him. Essentially, the Messenger of Allah intends to contend with the acts of adultery and similar issues in secrecy so as to avoid troubles, and to reach this aim he has to persuade Malcolm not to consult others' opinions. More than this, after denying the fact at first, Elijah indirectly confesses that he is the real father of the illegal babies. What is astounding yet, is that he declares to Malcolm the possibility to commit the same guilt in the future as if to say it is an affair of destiny or simply a human matter.

You've done something bad. Something that you know you're ashamed of, but then there's no one to talk about it, so you do it again because all the time it's helping you to feel a little better. But then the guilt keeps coming and packing it on you, and then you make a change, but all the time the reason in the first place for doing the thing comes back then there's no one to talk to. And then it's done again.<sup>36</sup>

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36 Laurence, Holder, "When the Chickens Came Home to Roost" *The Best Short Plays* (New Delhi: Delgado, 1988), 83

According to Elijah, Malcolm possesses a great position that everyone is envious of. For instance, after stating good qualities of Malcolm X as being an understanding man along with a fantastic energy, he declares that this man is going to be one of the American superheroes. Conversely, sometimes Elijah is quick to remind Malcolm that there are other people, who can replace him (Malcolm) and do what he was and actually is doing. “And that means you can’t speak at the mosque. I’ll get someone else to speak until the sentence is served. And remember that means no talking. You are silenced.”<sup>37</sup> So, Elijah Muhammad uses two different ways to keep Malcolm in line: inciting him to like the position given by his master, and frightening him that someone else is able to take his place. Consequently, Malcolm has to obey inevitably Elijah’s orders to maintain his position.

Additionally, through our reading of Holder’s play, we understand that Elijah wants to instruct his men, especially Malcolm, that he is born to be a sovereign. Then, since he rules under the protection of Allah, there is no way for Malcolm or another to outfox him. After that, Elijah also aims to teach Malcolm that the means to maintain reigning very long is to be an absolute monarch. Furthermore, the Messenger of Allah does not expect someone to give him a piece of advice and more importantly orders. As a conclusion, Muhammad argues that it is natural for him to last as an absolute ruler and be the only one who gives orders. On the contrary, Malcolm, Wallace and all members of Elijah’s monarchy should be his followers. “People ain’t got no right to expect anything from you except what I dictate to you. This ain’t no democracy, Malcolm, this is the Nation of Islam. Malcolm, you got to understand all of this because you are sure resisting my world.”<sup>38</sup>

Furthermore, according to Elijah Muhammad, the American community has already got its perfection thanks to Islam. As a consequence, he instructs Malcolm to convince people that the future in America rests with the Nation of Islam. And that people can make something

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 97

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 84

out of them if they come in and believe in Elijah. For him, there are also a lot of people who want to take his position; especially a bunch of ambitious Ministers who all view they are prepared to take over his job. Moreover, for him, those who organize the civil rights fools are not only self-seekers, but are also incapable to change a lot of things especially to the miserable life of the black Americans. "I can't really understand how anybody in their right mind could think that guaranteeing civil rights is going to change anything for the black person in this country."<sup>39</sup> Finally and thanks to Islam, several problems have been solved this is why people in America should as expected support The Nation of Islam, since it is according to Elijah the most important organization; and all the previous ideas and beliefs lead straight towards achieving Muhammad's aim to maintain his highest position. "The Nation of Islam is the most efficient organization and look at the huge problems we have getting by."<sup>40</sup>

#### b- The Well of the Saints

The reader of Synge's play discovers that for the villagers, there is no other ordinary possible reaction than laughing at the ignorance of Mary and Martin, while actually there are so many other reasonable reactions, such as understanding their situation and sympathizing with them. For the people in the village, it is normal to make fun of such blind- ugly couple as if all blind people deserve to be laughed at. In addition, since this category of people represents the very few minorities in the village, there is only the couple who oppose weakly this kind of discrimination. Moreover, the fellow villagers of Martin do not think about the day in which the couple would restore their sight and do not question what would be their reaction, which is refusing to regain their sight for ever. To support this idea, Timmy says: "What will he be doing when he sees his wife this day? I'm thinking it was bad work we did when we let on she was fine-looking, and not a wrinkled, wizened hag the way she is"<sup>41</sup>

In addition, from our reading of the aforesaid play, we understand according to the villagers' talks and attitudes that there is a tight link between blindness and sin. According to the Saint, sin has brought about loss of sight to the world. Actually, this belief offers the

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 89

<sup>40</sup> Ibid

<sup>41</sup> John M., Synge, "The Well of the Saints" *John Millington Synge Plays, Poems and Prose*. (London: Dent: 1958), 72

fellow villagers justification to make fun of the old couple and facilitates persecuting and punishing them for sins they do not commit. Then, the couple are often treated as two deplorable sinners of the globe as well as wicked-hearted people. At the end, the following sentence is merely an example in which the villagers link the old-blind couple especially, Martin, to sin: “It’d be an unlucky fearful thing, I’m thinking, to have the like of that man living near us at all in the town-land of Grianan. Wouldn’t he bring down a curse upon us, holy father, from the heavens of God?”<sup>42</sup>

After that, as Martin works for Timmy, the latter aims at teaching the first to work hard. From our understanding of Synge’s text, Timmy, who aims at teaching Martin hard work, is unable to distinguish between employing and enslaving people especially Martin. First, Martin works long hours whacking thorns with no food in his stomach. “The devils mend Timmy the smith for killing me with hard work, and keeping me with an empty, windy stomach in me, in the day and in the night.”<sup>43</sup> Second, when Martin wants to get rid of Timmy’s work through refusing to cure his blindness, Molly Byrne informs the Saint that Martin’s refusal to cure his blindness results only from his laziness, since he has always been wishing to restore his sight. Finally, even if Timmy gives Martin a spot to sleep in as well as money with it, he is not entitled to oblige him to continue working for him.

At the end of Synge’s play, the fellow villagers of Martin and his wife can hardly live with them because of their refusal to be cured of their blindness, a fact which is going to bring natural calamities such as, drought, to the village. For instance, the people say: “Go on now, Martin Doul. Go on from this place. Let you not bringing great storms or droughts on us maybe from the power of the Lord.”<sup>44</sup> As a unique solution to avoid curse, the couple are unreasonably expelled from the village.

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42 Ibid., 102

43 Ibid., 90

44 Ibid., 102

## **Denigration: Denigrating or belittling ideas which might challenge the dominant power**

To denigrate means to insult or criticize unfairly.

Concerning 'Denigration', Terry Eagleton writes:

The exaltation of the peasant, the downgrading of reason for spontaneous 'pre-understanding', the celebration of wise passivity—all of these, combined with Heidegger's belief (that man must turn to the earth, the inexhaustible mother who is the primary fountain of all meaning), in an 'authentic' existence-towards-death superior to the life of the faceless masses, led him in 1933 into explicit support of Hitler.<sup>45</sup>

To be precise, every claim or change, which stands antithetical to the benefits of the ruling power, is going to be downgraded. In my opinion, Terry Eagleton views Heidegger similar to Hitler in the sense that they were convinced well to get rid of all those who may do mischief in the world according to them. Consequently, through the following section I show a few of the manifold ways in which both Elijah in Holder's play and the villagers in Synge's denigrate ideas.

### a- When the Chickens Came Home to Roost

According to Malcolm, Wallace has an open mind, and he is able to see the future more clearly than so many people. More than this, Malcolm tries to convince Elijah that he and Wallace can help him to overcome the problem of the illegal babies. Actually, speaking about Wallace is a thing that bothers Elijah Muhammad, especially when it comes from his faithful man Malcolm. For instance, Elijah addresses Malcolm: "Don't come in here and start thinking. I've got to be saved and you and Wallace are the only ones who can do it. I've been saving myself before you were born."<sup>46</sup> As regards the movement, Elijah thinks it his own, while, in fact, the movement itself is created by someone else called Fard. "And recently you

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45 Terry, Eagleton, *Literary Theory, An Introduction* (The United States: 111 Third Avenue South, Suite 290 Minneapolis, MN 55401-2520s.: The University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 55

46 Laurence, Holder, "When the Chickens Came Home to Roost" *The Best Short Plays* (New Delhi: Delgado, 1988), 78

have been the one to help me, but it's my movement.”<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, Elijah Muhammad prohibits Malcolm to mention the name of the one who has pointed the way for Malcolm to Elijah; and who thanks to him Malcolm gets out of prison. Then, that person is kicked out of the movement because he has violated the codes set up by Elijah. Malcolm thinks that Reginald is telling the truth, and more importantly he argues that the codes must be wrong if they do not help someone to be true to himself. After that, Malcolm refuses to relate the religious message and declares that they have rights like the rest of the Americans in America as they have always strived for their full rights of citizenship. As usual, Elijah has denigrated this idea saying that it is worthless to preach his master, since he has already used those misleading words.

Then, Malcolm refuses to be silenced by his master Elijah, who continuously asks him not to make any comment about the illegal babies. For example, Elijah says to Malcolm the following: “You can just keep saying no comment. No comment. That'll be a change for some of those reporters, not hearing you say something to them.”<sup>48</sup> In return, Malcolm answers his master that people all around the world are expecting him to talk about what happens between them during the meeting. As expected, Elijah denigrates this idea saying that people do not have the right to expect something from Malcolm except what is dictated by his master. Then, Malcolm declares that he has no intention to disobey his master; whereas, he can hardly be silenced about the illegal babies. As regards this, he says because it is a moral trouble the young women all over the world are watching and waiting to see how the things would be set on. Malcolm thinks he is betraying the victims. To belittle Malcolm's justification, the Messenger of Allah says he and Malcolm are not talking about morality, the norm that people often use to distinguish between what is right or wrong, but about whom gives orders to others.

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47 Ibid., 79

48 Ibid., 84

In addition, Despite Elijah's directives that prohibit Malcolm to say a lot about the death of President John F. Kennedy to the Radio Interviewer, Malcolm confesses in a way or another that there is violence in Elijah's country saying that it is a dishonor, but somebody cannot live in an aggressive nation without being touched by that violence. Without surprise, Elijah blames the leading orator of the Nation of Islam for his deed against his orders asking why he has opened his mouth about the assassination.

Therefore, Malcolm realizes that expressing an opinion means violating the directive of Elijah, but he continues to contradict Elijah's view arguing that he is a man with thoughts and ideas of his own, and he needs and does express them whenever he wants to. Furthermore, Malcolm goes too far, declaring that he would express his views even if that can bring about his death. "I can say what I want to for as long as I want to until someone shuts me down. I'm going to die anyway, so I don't really have that much time."<sup>49</sup> Finally, to belittle Malcolm's idea as usual, the Messenger of Allah accuses his main man of disobedience; and reminds him that the initial code in Islam is obedience.

#### b- The Well of the Saints

Timmy continuously asks Martin to make haste when cutting sticks in Timmy's forge. In a moment of extreme tiredness and hunger, Martin reacts angrily telling him to cut those sticks if he wants them cut, since every employee has a right for some rest. In return, Timmy warns Martin to drive him off his forge to be walking the roads unless he works hard. Furthermore, Timmy punishes Martin via obliging him to strip off his coat in order to teach him hard work preventing him from speaking. Additionally, Martin knows that what Timmy gives him for hard work is much less than what he used to earn when he was begging people in the streets, for this he says: "No fear, maybe, and I here with yourself; for it's more I got a while since, and I sitting blinded in Grianan, than I get in this place, working hard, and

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 95

destroying myself, the length of the day.”<sup>50</sup> Finally, Timmy denigrates Martin unfairly because he does not want work for him anymore.

Martin Doul tries to seduce Molly Byrne; therefore, he enumerates the lacks of Molly’s fiancé, Timmy, as if to suggest that he and Timmy are alike in badness. For instance, Martin treats Timmy as a fine, stout and hardy man. Moreover, he says that if Molly Byrne is like Timmy, she would give birth of the fear-fullest little children in the world when they are wed. Furthermore, he describes him as having bleary eyes and big nose like an old scarecrow. As expected, Timmy denigrates Martin saying that he thinks Martin’s tongue is worse than his view. On the other hand, Martin enumerates the qualities of Molly Byrne as if to say that Timmy does not deserve a woman like her. For example, he treats her as a grand, white and handsome girl. More than this, Martin imagines himself better than Timmy to be with Molly, saying: “For it’s a fine sound your voice has that time, and it’s better I am, I’m thinking, lying down, the way a blind man does be lying, than to be sitting here in the grey light taking hard words of Timmy the smith”<sup>51</sup> Unsurprisingly also, Molly Byrne, in her return, belittles Martin Doul treating him as a little, old, and a shabby stump of a man as if to say there is no chance for him to take Timmy’s place.

In addition, Martin Doul refuses the Saint’s offer to cure his blindness as well as that of his wife Marry. “We’re not asking our sight, holy father, and let you walk on your own way....leave us here in our peace, at the crossing of the roads, for it is best we are this way, and we are not asking to see.”<sup>52</sup> As a reaction to this, the villagers including the Saint accuse the couple of madness as well as Martin alone of laziness. However, Martin answers that at his first sight he observes the Saint’s bleeding feet cut with the stones; and he sees in his last day the villainy of hell looking out from the eyes of Molly Byrne. Then, to denigrate Martin’s explanations the Saint says to the people that it is of no value to talk with the like of him.

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50 John M., Synge, “The Well of the Saints” *John Millington Synge Plays, Poems and Prose*. (London: Dent, 1958), 78

51 *Ibid.*, 84

52 *Ibid.*, 98

Furthermore, when Martin notices that the Saint is determined to cure them, he thinks of a ruse to prevent him definitively. And he does it successfully in the sense that when the Saint has come near the couple to drop the can of holy water upon them, Martin strikes it with a sudden movement. Therefore, as Martin's aim is reached, he boasts of his sharp ears and takes profit to challenge and ask the Saint to go off again. Of course, the fellow villagers denounce fiercely their attitude, deciding to send them away on the road.

### **Exclusion: Excluding rival forms of thought, perhaps by some implicit but systematic logic**

A step further from 'Denigration' is 'Exclusion', Terry Eagleton states:

Nobody will penalize me heavily if I dislike a particular Donne poem (as an illustration), but if I argue that Donne (he means the poem or any work regarded as being literary) is not literature at all then in certain circumstances I might risk losing my job.<sup>53</sup>

To be exact, under the pressure of the ruling ideology exercised by the principal force, the subordinate subjects do not argue openly in regard to things that they hate so as to preserve other privileged rights. Additionally, the opinions of the subordinate individuals which bother their counterparts are not welcomed, or rather, they are to be excluded. For that reason, Malcolm in Holder's play and the Douls in Synge's are prevented from defending some ideas as it will be highlighted herein.

#### **a- When the Chickens Came Home to Roost**

When Elijah Muhammad thinks that the problem of the pregnant girls is easy to be resolved, Malcolm takes the dilemma more seriously and foretells dangers in the future. Actually, Elijah's aim is to silence the pregnant lasses through corrupting them. While he pretends them blackmailing him, they all want only come back to the movement. "All those girls want is some miserable money. That's all they want. They fell out of favor in the

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53 Terry, Eagleton, *Literary Theory, An Introduction* (The United States: 111 Third Avenue South, Suite 290 Minneapolis, MN 55401-2520s.: The University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 12

movement and now they are blackmailing me.”<sup>54</sup> As for Malcolm, inside him he believes the story that Elijah makes some girls secretaries so they can be close to him, and he rapes them in the right moment. And this thing, according to him, will reduce the movement’s credibility; consequently, only few women are going to join Elijah’s movement. Furthermore, according to Malcolm, people do hate him, since he is an impostor. Finally, to exclude this rival kind of thought, Elijah says simply that the Lord God has in no way said something about illegal babies, just men who live in this world.

Elijah Muhammad hates too much that someone intends to take over his position as the absolute leader of the Nation of Islam. Therefore, although all Malcolm’s dedication and faith to his master who declares openly that he admires and worships him, Elijah tries to outsmart him. However, Elijah similarly insinuates that Malcolm will replace the Messenger of Allah in his job, and he is sure that he would be his successful successor. For example, Elijah says to Malcolm: “Yeah, and soon you’ll take everything I know and make this empire even larger and more prestigious.”<sup>55</sup> On the other hand, Malcolm thinks rather the contrary informing the Messenger of the faith that Wallace is likely to replace the latter in ruling the Nation. “I want you to know that when you retire or die, you should leave the Nation to Wallace. He’s the natural successor.”<sup>56</sup> Lastly, Elijah always changes the topic when he has no answer to a difficult question like this one, but he equally always succeeds in achieving his purpose.

Malcolm believes what the pregnant girls say about Elijah, even if he knows he may be punished for that. “The pregnant girls told me how you back-stabbed out of jealousy. They told me and I have to believe them.”<sup>57</sup> According to the girls, Elijah wishes he were younger and energetic like Malcolm, who can do many things successfully contrary to his master.

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54 Laurence, Holder, “When the Chickens Came Home to Roost” *The Best Short Plays* (New Delhi: Delgado, 1988), 76

55 *Ibid.*, 89

56 *Ibid.*, 97

57 *Ibid.*, 95

Indeed, both of the Messenger of Allah and Malcolm know that the punishment of the latter because of thinking in that way is kicking out of the movement. Indirectly, Elijah warns his interlocutor that if he continues thinking and behaving in that way, he would have no choice except excluding Malcolm from the movement. For this, Elijah asks Malcolm if he wants to withdraw from the Nation of Islam. Then, as far as the movement is concerned, Malcolm after being condemned of craziness declares that Elijah undervalues Wallace, who is the greatest thing in the Nation of Islam. “You won’t let me talk with Wallace anymore because you think I have an undue influence on him, but you underestimate Wallace. He is the best thing in the movement.”<sup>58</sup>

b- The Well of the Saints

When the time to cure the couple’s blindness for the first time has come, Timmy feels a certain degree of regret for telling lies to Martin Doul concerning Mary’s appearance in the sense that she is ugly, while Martin is informed that she is tremendously beautiful. Actually, Martin and Mary think that Timmy’s consciousness is right in the sense that they only interpret the fellow villagers’ deed in a negative way. Conversely, Mat Simon excludes this thought saying that Martin has not the right to be irritated, since they have offered him great pleasure and pride when he was sightless. Molly Byrne also justifies the lies in another way saying that Martin shouldn’t care a lot about his wife because for a maximum of three weeks he will lose the ability to see her. “...what does any man care for a wife, when it’s two weeks, or three, he is looking on her face.”<sup>59</sup>

As soon as Martin’s sight is restored for the first time, he feels almost immediately that his life has gone from bad to worse. So, sometimes, he complains about hard work and at times about cold weather along with hard work, and what is amazing yet, is that he mourns the act of looking on wretched faces like that of Timmy. For example, he says: “That’s a hard,

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58 Ibid., 96

59 John M., Synge, “The Well of the Saints” *John Millington Synge Plays, Poems and Prose*. (London: Dent, 1958), 72

terrible stick, Timmy, and isn't it a poor thing to be cutting strong timber the like of that, when it's cold the bark is, and sloppy with the frost of the air?"<sup>60</sup> As a consequence, living blind to him is better than being a seeing man. Timmy intends to frighten Martin that the Saint may refuse to cure his sightlessness if he hears Martin's reasoning. However, this time Timmy fails to achieve his purpose, since he has lost credibility due to prior lies according to the blind man. For this, Martin informs Timmy that it is worthless to torment his own trying to scare the blind man.

Moreover, when Mary is informed that her husband has tried to seduce Molly Byrne, she orders him to keep off from her. Consequently, Molly supports Mary's attitude, and on the other hand she has hurt Mary's feelings through treating her as a miserable street woman. Mary, in return, has defiantly foretold Molly that she is going to become a hag by means of years. For instance, Mary says to Molly: "When the skin shrinks on your chin, Molly Byrne, there won't be the like of you for a shrunk hag in the four quarters of Ireland...It's a fine pair you'd be, surely!"<sup>61</sup> Undoubtedly, Timmy and his fiancée do not agree with Mary's rival thought and refuse any comparison between the beautiful Molly Byrne and the old Mary Doul. To illustrate this attitude, Timmy asks Mary if there is no shame to think that Molly would ever become like her.

### **Obscuring: Obscuring social reality in ways convenient to the dominant force**

Obscuring means to make the situation more difficult or to make it seem tricky.

Terry Eagleton also remarks:

It would give them a pride in their national language and literature: if scanty education and extensive hours of labor prevented them personally from producing a literary masterpiece (for example) they could take pleasure in the

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 79

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 87

thought that others of their own kind-English people- (in this context) had done so.<sup>62</sup>

The above quote denotes that the dominant power and its subordinate have two unbalanced as well as limited roles. Additionally, the subordinate power ought to be pleased all for the fact that the dominant authority takes the responsibility of leading the country, the district, the village and so on. Therefore, people who belong to the subordinate power should also assume the charge of their position in the society. In fact, the upcoming are few illustrations in which Elijah deliberately puts out of sight the truth for Malcolm in Holder's play and some developed thoughts in which I demonstrate how the old couple suffer too much because of their position in the village in the play of Synge.

a- When the Chickens Came Home to Roost

Malcolm is much interested in increasing the number of adherents to his movement; however, his master Elijah considers the fact as dangerous. So, contrary to Malcolm who expects to gain more power through integrating some black people into their movement, Allah's Messenger thinks about the problem of the FBI, the risk that the number of infiltrators would intensify then and the possibility to murder Malcolm because of disagreement over his endeavor. As an answer to Malcolm's reasoning Elijah says:

“And the FBI would be down our backs worse than they are now. We'd have more infiltrators than we would have people in our side. That's the whole problem with doing it your way. You would wash out the truth of the movement for numbers. And then they would kill you and where would your movement be then? I'll tell you.”<sup>63</sup>

Furthermore, Elijah tells his interlocutor that the truth is much more obscure than he thinks saying that, in America people expect black ones merely as slaves. To reinforce this idea, Elijah Muhammad says to him: “It's hard to be a black man in this country because you got to

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62 Terry, Eagleton, *Literary Theory, An Introduction* (The United States: 111 Third Avenue South, Suite 290 Minneapolis, MN 55401-2520s.: The University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 22

63 Laurence, Holder, “When the Chickens Came Home to Roost” *The Best Short Plays* (New Delhi: Delgado, 1988), 80

be paranoid also, because no one wants a black man; they all want a black boy. Someone they can whistle for and not have to say thank you to.”<sup>64</sup>

Also, Malcolm is very eager to satisfy his curiosity concerning the adulterous acts of Elijah who in return accuses Malcolm of sneaking behind the back of his master. For Elijah, due to his higher position in the country, people always do inspect his weaknesses to prevail over him. Elijah says: “And when you’re at the top, other men are always looking for your weaknesses. And so you can’t talk to anyone. No one wants to hear you when you’re feeling weak and tired. They take it as a permanent weakness and that you can be toppled.”<sup>65</sup> Therefore, he is in a complicated situation, but he can handle the adversity well as he declares. Furthermore, Elijah also intends to convince Malcolm that American people would find out that he is perfect, and the girls are liars. To conclude, Elijah hopes that Malcolm believes that things are not as easy as he thinks.

Additionally, Malcolm X devotes his entire life to serve the Messenger of the faith; this is why he has not much time to be with his family. Malcolm is responsible of gathering, organizing people and relating the religious text to them. Then, it is Malcolm who has sweated, bled, and almost died to build the mosque where he makes his speeches. Consequently, Malcolm is deprived of enjoying his family life, especially his wife Betty. Besides, after being interviewed on the radio, Malcolm has to face first Elijah’s blame because of his declarations upon the death of John F. Kennedy, and being reminded that he should talk more to his master than to his heart Betty. Furthermore, contrary to Malcolm, the Messenger of Allah makes amends with his family; this is why Malcolm foretells that Elijah would leave the Nation to his natural heir Wallace. At the end, the worst of all is that Elijah even expects his main man to lay down his life for his master when it is required. Intended for

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 81

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 83

this, Elijah says to Malcolm: “I want some honest warm talk from a man I consider my friend. Someone whom I know would lay his life down for mine, if it was required.”<sup>66</sup>

b- The Well of the Saints

To begin with the first thought, when the old couple hear their associate villagers speak about a wonder to be done in a short while for the first time, only negative memories and expectations have come to the minds of Martin and his wife. Therefore, Martin Doul remembers the night when an old fellow being killed and his corpse is thrown down to the bog. As for Mary, she expects the big wonder would be no more than an image of robber being hanged at the bit of a tree. Consequently, Martin dislikes such wonders. To reinforce this idea, Martin says: “Let them not be doing the like of that this night, for it is ourselves have a right to the crossing roads, and we don’t want any of your bad tricks, or your wonders either, for it is wonder enough we are ourselves.”<sup>67</sup> And Mary also does not expect finding any pleasure when hanging a thief, since she as well as her husband, are not going to see that anyway because of sightlessness. As a conclusion, I may say that the life of the old couple is as dark as their sight contrary to all the fellow villagers’ lives.

To continue with the second idea, the old couple are poor and homeless; this is why they look always ragged, awkward and miserable. Therefore, when the Saint has come to cure the couple from their blindness, Martin Doul feels ashamed to meet the Saint in that filthy situation. Instead of giving help or suggesting someone to wash the couple, Molly Byrne rather reminds the betrayed Mary that she is the finest woman in the country to appease them. More than this, Timmy informs in detail the Saint about the couple’s bad manner:

“They are, holy father; they do be always sitting here at the crossing of the roads, asking a bit of copper from them that do pass, or stripping rushes for lights, and they not mournful at all, but talking out straight with a full voice, and making game with them that likes it.”<sup>68</sup>

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66 Ibid., 88

67 John M., Synge, “The Well of the Saints” *John Millington Synge Plays, Poems and Prose*. (London: Dent, 1958) 64-65

68 Ibid., 70

To conclude, giving such obscure image of the couple is not necessary at all; thereby, I think rather that their fellow villagers should veil their vices.

To end with the third thought, before Martin Doul's sight is restored by the Saint, Molly Byrne has intentionally taken Mary Doul's seat to mislead Martin. Despite his blindness, Martin has little information about the fellow villagers by means of people's talk. To reinforce this idea, he says: "That's Timmy, I know Timmy by the black of his head...That's Mat Simon, I know Mat by the length of his legs...That should be Patch Ruadh, with the gamy eyes in him, and the fiery hair."<sup>69</sup> According to me, it is predictable that Martin would take Molly as Mary. Therefore, when Martin sees Molly Byrne, he, excited with pleasure, thanks God, since he is alive and able to see her. Furthermore, Molly keeps her head down when Martin looks at her for the first time, the fact which gives more evidence to think that Molly has intended in advance to misinform Martin. To support this assumption, Martin asks Molly, taken as Mary, to hold up her head so that he witnesses to be wealthier than the great kings of the east.

### **Masking and Suppression: Masking or suppressing social conflicts**

Masking: comes to define putting out of sight the truth.

Terry Eagleton says: "The crisis of European society-global war, severe class-conflict, failing capitalist economies-might be resolved by turning one's back on history altogether and putting mythology in its place."<sup>70</sup> That is to say, the overpowering class knows that all personal, national and global conflicts such as those which concern gender and race do not go in its favor; this is why it should find explanations or ways to stop them, or at least put them out of sight. Concerning the two plays, *Elijah* in Holder's play and the villagers in the other work have attempted to put some of such disturbances out of sight by suppressing and or masking them.

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 73

<sup>70</sup> Terry, Eagleton, *Literary Theory, An Introduction* (The United States: 111 Third Avenue South, Suite 290 Minneapolis, MN 55401-2520s.: The University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 35

a- When the Chickens Came Home to Roost

It is obvious that there is a hidden conflict between blacks and white men in Elijah's country, whereas, he continuously aims at keeping this kind of struggle out of sight to maintain his higher position in the Nation of Islam. In America, white people do only expect blacks as slaves. For example, Malcolm is black and is Elijah's slave. To reinforce this thought, the Messenger of the faith says to Malcolm the following: "It's hard to be a black man in this country because you got to be paranoid also, because no one wants a black man; they all want a black boy. Someone they can whistle for and not have to say thank you to."<sup>71</sup> Conversely, to make Malcolm far from this identity quandary, Elijah argues that thanks to Islam in America black people look good, feel proud and do not need more special considerations from white men, for this he says: "We don't need no special concessions from the white man."<sup>72</sup> Furthermore, the Messenger of the faith persuades Malcolm to keep away from these hostilities and contradictions to stay alive.

Generally, every generation disagrees with the previous and or the next generation over some issues. Therefore, in America during Elijah's era, there is also an unseen quarrel between young and old people, especially about the best way to lead the Nation of Islam. Actually, this kind of struggle can be easily recognized in the relation between old Elijah and his boy Malcolm. For example, when the young man declares that black people have rights like the rest of the Americans, since they have fought for them, the old man answers him that he has already used those words referencing indirectly to his long experience in life. This is why Malcolm should not try to preach him. In addition, when Malcolm gives his opinion about the way they should act regarding the illegal babies, Elijah answers him saying that young Americans have a lot of energy, but they are not advantageous: "You young people got so much energy that has just got to be burned."<sup>73</sup> To conclude, Elijah for the sake of suppressing this form of social conflict intends to establish Malcolm as his successful and most faithful lad and be a model to be followed by the rest of the American young people. For instance, he says to Malcolm: "And besides you are the best. The others are still growing, and

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71 Laurence, Holder, "When the Chickens Came Home to Roost" *The Best Short Plays* (New Delhi: Delgado, 1988), 81

72 Ibid., 80

73 Ibid., 83

they need a model, and that's why I'm letting you go as far as you do go, so they can see what a man does.”<sup>74</sup>

Furthermore, according to Elijah Muhammad, American people live well thanks to Islam; while, many of them advocate more rights to be given through establishing another way of governing such as Democracy. Then, old Elijah admits that there is disagreement about the rational way, his country, should be governed. Malcolm expects that Wallace and many others can bring a lot to their country. Contrary to Elijah, Malcolm makes a great deal of efforts to be coherent and thinks in a realistic way. What is more important is that he works for the benefits of the whole country if not the whole world. To support the last idea, Malcolm says to Elijah: “Because it's a moral problem, Messenger. I told you that the young women all over the world are watching and waiting to see how the thing gets resolved.”<sup>75</sup> However, Elijah tries to persuade Malcolm that these civil rights fools are going to satisfy only the needs of white people expressing his inability to understand how some people can think that guaranteeing more civil liberties will change something to black people in the country.

#### b- The Well of the Saints

In Synge's play, there are a lot of elements which reflect the disagreement between the two genders in the Irish society. For example, when Timmy is informed that the Saint has given the holy water to Molly and to her young girlfriend; he wonders how the Saint trusts the like of Molly Byrne as far as to hand over the holy water, which is going to cure the couple's blindness to her. On the other hand, the young girls inform also that the Saint thinks that girls are the most unsoiled divine people in the world. Whereas, from another angle, perhaps because he is a holy man the Saint intends to equalize between men and women through including one male flaw and another female one when he enumerates the dirtiest things that generally soil either the soul or the body of a man. The first one concerns a smith's job, and the second is the words of women. In Addition, when the couple's sight is restored and each of them recognizes the other, both Martin and his wife are disillusioned with the real physical appearance of one another. For instance, Mary tells Molly: “I'm thinking it's a poor thing when the Lord God gives you sight and puts the like of that man in your way.”<sup>76</sup> As an answer to her comment, Martin tells his wife that it is on her two knees she ought to thank God because she cannot see herself. Then, this exchange of hard words in which each one highlights the lacks of the other leads to physical violence. At first, it is Mary who declares

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74 Ibid., 81

75 Ibid.,85

76 John M., Synge, “The Well of the Saints” *John Millington Synge Plays, Poems and Prose*. (London: Dent, 1958),75

that she wants to hit her husband, but at the end Martin takes the initiative to blow her. After that, Timmy intervenes to stop the fight between Martin and his wife asking them if they have no shame to make such noise when the Saint is praying. To reinforce this argument, when Martin's rage disappears, the Saint asks Timmy to release the blind man.

Martin Doul works for Timmy, the smith, in his forge. The blacksmith exhausts his employee with too much work. Actually, they disagree about a lot of details in relation to duties as well as rights of the employee Martin. On the one hand, Martin complains, for example, about the fact that he works long hours whacking old thorns like a pig with an empty stomach. Then, Martin also protests the amount of money he receives from Timmy for hard work which is, according to him, less than the number of pennies he receives when begging people in Grianan. On the other hand, Timmy denounces Martin's laziness, for this, Timmy tells Martin: "There's no fear of your having gold--a lazy, basking fool the like of you."<sup>77</sup> More than this, Timmy affirms that he offers his employee food, shelter and money with them. To reinforce the last idea, he says: "There you are now, and I giving you your food, and a corner to sleep, and money with it; and, to hear the talk of you, you'd think I was beating you, or stealing your gold."<sup>78</sup> However, to put out of sight the serious problem that exists in the relation between employer and employee, the fellow villagers of Martin focus only on the argument that Martin is lazy instead of putting into question the reasons which lie behind his refusal to work for Timmy.

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 78

<sup>78</sup> Ibid

## Chapter Two: Neurosis in Holder's When the Chickens Came Home to Roost and Synge's The Well of the Saints

### Basic Anxiety

Both main characters in When the Chickens Came Home to Roost and The Well of the Saints have failed to achieve self-realization in their adulthood. Referring to this, Karen Horney traces back to childhood this inability to achieve self-realization.

As a result, the child does not develop a feeling of belonging, of "we," but instead a profound insecurity and vague apprehensiveness, for which I use the term *basic anxiety*. It is his feeling of being isolated and helpless in a world conceived as potentially hostile. The cramping pressure of his basic anxiety prevents the child from relating himself to others with the spontaneity of his real feelings, and forces him to find ways to cope with them. He must (unconsciously) deal with them in ways which do not arouse, or increase, but rather allay his basic anxiety.<sup>79</sup>

In other words, due to a lot of factors, the individual develops what Karen Horney calls basic anxiety. The latter, according to her, refers to that feeling of isolation and helplessness in a world potentially hostile to the human being. Later on, under the pressure of that basic anxiety the person fails to relate himself to others with the spontaneity of his true feelings and also forces him to find ways to accept or bear them. He must unconsciously deal with them in ways which may basically put to rest that basic anxiety. Actually, the following paragraphs will emphasize to what extent the characters herein suffer from what Horney calls basic anxiety.

#### a- When the Chickens Came Home to Roost

From the beginning until the end of Holder's play, Malcolm feels anxious and frightened. For instance, Elijah says to Malcolm insinuating to his uneasiness that the latter looks like gloomy Sunday on a Monday. Likewise, in another situation Malcolm guesses that he is still nervous and anxious. Furthermore, Malcolm says also to Elijah: "I'm scared, Mr.

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<sup>79</sup> Karen, Horney, *Neurosis and Human Growth, The struggle Toward Self-Realization*, (New York: W-W- Norton & Company, INC, 1950), 18

Muhammad. I'm really scared.”<sup>80</sup> In addition, Malcolm says that it is not death that he fears, but the humiliation of betrayal and the abundant sacrifice of one man to hide the inadequacies of another.

Because of his adulterous acts, Elijah encounters a lot of problems that terrify him so much. In addition to this, his position in the country has become under threat. In point of fact from that day on, people especially women and political activists have found more reason to oppose the Messenger of the faith even his son, Wallace, and Malcolm. To reinforce this thought, Elijah tells Malcolm: “There have been men who wanted to take over this movement from right under my nose. We've had fights and arguments in this room that would have frightened even a strong man like you.”<sup>81</sup> Similarly, Elijah says that he is the man who is in a difficult position. This is why Malcolm should relax.

#### b- The Well of the Saints

Due to his perpetual wretched daily life and his disagreement mainly with Timmy, frequently Martin Doul seems troubled along the play. For example, he says he is destroyed waiting to look upon Mary's face. He also confesses to being no more than an aged-feeble man, since he has lived with a hag for several years in another circumstance. Then, since he is perplexed, he says: “It is hard set I am to know what would be right. And isn't it a poor thing to be blind when you can't run off itself, and you fearing to see?”<sup>82</sup> Moreover, when Mary tries to convince her husband that she should cure her blindness before him, Martin asks her anxiously if she can hold her tongue. More than this, Martin also declares: “I'll be going now, I'm thinking, but I'm not sure what place my stick's in, and I'm destroyed with terror and dread”.<sup>83</sup>

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80 Laurence, Holder, “When the Chickens Came Home to Roost” *The Best Short Plays* (New Delhi: Delgado, 1988), 97

81 Ibid., 81

82 John M., Synge, “The Well of the Saints” *John Millington Synge Plays, Poems and Prose*. (London: Dent , 1958), 95

83 Ibid., 91

Like her husband, Mary Doul seems anxious all around the play. For instance, she says mournfully: “God help me; the blackness wasn’t so black at all the other time as this time, and it’s destroyed I’ll be now, and hard set to get my living working alone, when it is few are passing and the winds are cold.”<sup>84</sup> She also talks uneasily due to the insistence of the villagers to kneel down and disobey her husband Martin, who tells her not to. Additionally, when Martin decides to be walking to the south with his wife; and get rid of the villagers’ lies, Mary agrees with him telling despondingly:

“That’s the truth, surely; and we’d have a right to be gone, if it’s a long way itself, as I’ve heard them say, where you do have to be walking with a slough of wet on the one side and a slough of wet on the other and you going a stony path with a north wind blowing behind.”<sup>85</sup>

Since he disagrees with the couple about many things, Timmy seems offended and anxious throughout the play. Sometimes, Timmy’s anxiety can be justified as it concerns him personally more than ever when Martin Doul bothers him with his bad talks. For instance, Timmy tells Martin: “God forgive you! If you’re an ugly man to be looking at, I’m thinking your tongue’s worse than your view.”<sup>86</sup> However, sometimes Timmy worries about things that concern the whole community more than all the other villagers do, and often when it is the others who should pay attention, especially about the religious matter. The following are few examples: first he says uneasily to Molly Byrne that she would have the right to leave Martin alone; and what the Saint would say, if he sees her making game with his cloak. Then, he also tells anxiously: “God help him....What will he be doing when he sees his wife this day? I’m thinking it was bad work we did when we let on she was fine-looking, and not a wrinkled, wizened hag the way she is.”<sup>87</sup> After that, Timmy also, traumatized, orders Molly Byrne not to raise her voice while the Saint is at his prayers. In addition to that, Timmy also

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84 Ibid., 90

85 Ibid., 103

86 Ibid., 82

87 Ibid., 72

tells the couple almost the same thing as follows: “Have you no shame to be making a great row, and the Saint above saying his prayers?”<sup>88</sup>

Like the other characters, Molly Byrne also seems anxious throughout the whole play. Actually, sometimes Molly’s weariness is rational, especially towards Martin who has wanted to seduce her. In other times, Molly worries about things that do not concern her at all. For example, she asks nervously Mary Doul to kneel down for the Saint.

## **Idealizing**

When some people hold others in contempt, other men give other people much more importance than they really deserve.

Karen Horney also states:

Distortions may result from endowing others with characteristics they do not have or have only to a negligible degree. The neurotic may see them as completely ideal persons, endowed with godlike perfection and power. He may see them as contemptible and guilty. He may turn them into giants or into dwarfs. Externalizations may also make a person blind toward the existing assets or drawbacks of others. He may transfer to them his own (unrecognized) taboos on exploiting and lying, and hence may fail to see in them even flagrant intents at exploitation and deception. Or, having stifled his own positive feelings, he may be incapable of recognizing in others an existing friendliness or devotion.<sup>89</sup>

That is to say, because of a mental condition, a person may grant others with characteristics they do not have or have merely to a minor degree. Resulting from this state of mind, he may know another at fault, but he turns him into infallible if not God. In addition to this, he may fail to recognize others’ overt intents to exploit or deceive him, as he can be unable to recognize an existing devotion.

As a consequence, to establish a link with this idea Malcolm has produced so many compulsive reactions; those are habitual and uncontrollable, which reflect the fact that he idealizes others throughout the play.

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 76

<sup>89</sup> Karen, Horney, *Neurosis and Human Growth, The struggle Toward Self-Realization* (New York: W-W- Norton & Company, INC., 1950), 294

First, he goes to Elijah's son, Wallace, to discuss about the acts of adultery committed by his master because he neither can believe the story nor know how to react properly. Therefore, since he feels unable to deal with this moral calamity alone, Malcolm thinks that Wallace can help him understand and take the right decision. To strengthen this argument, Malcolm says: "Well, sir, Wallace has an open mind and he can see the future more clearly than some of these self-seekers."<sup>90</sup>

Additionally, he considers Elijah to be his God, this why he loves as well as worshipping him too much. Indeed, Malcolm has never imagined himself to be capable of disobeying his master one day. Moreover, Malcolm argues that he has more faith in Elijah than the latter does to himself. To reinforce this idea, Malcolm says: "My God! You are the last person in the world that I would ever have thought I would be talking to like this. Messenger, I got more faith in you than you have in yourself. I love you. I worship you."<sup>91</sup>

Moreover, unnaturally Malcolm worries about Elijah's status more than Elijah does about himself. Consequently, there is a moment in Holder's play when it is Elijah who tries to quiet down Malcolm's worry, when it should be the contrary. To reinforce this idea, Elijah says: "Thanks, Malcolm. Thank you very much. Don't worry so much about the old man. He can still handle anything they throw at him."<sup>92</sup> Actually, Malcolm X has failed to develop his intrinsic potentialities in the sense that he can hardly live independent from Elijah though he knows that the latter is a betrayer. To reinforce this idea, Malcolm says: "This isn't an easy thing to do, sir. I mean I have only the greatest respect and admiration for you. I- I love you like the father that was taken away from me."<sup>93</sup> He also says to Elijah that if he goes, Malcolm does not know where he should go, since Elijah is everything for him. In short, Malcolm treats Elijah as his God.

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<sup>90</sup> Laurence, Holder, "When the Chickens Came Home to Roost" *The Best Short Plays* (New Delhi: Delgado, 1988), 77

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 87

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 84

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 76

## Egocentrism

While some people idealize others once in a while, other men are frequently wrapped up in themselves.

Karen Horney also writes:

To begin with, the pride system removes the neurotic from others by making him *egocentric*. To avoid misunderstandings: by egocentricity I do not mean selfishness or egotism in the sense of considering merely one's own advantage. The neurotic may be callously selfish or too unselfish—there is nothing in this regard that is characteristic for all neuroses. But he is always egocentric in the sense of being wrapped up in himself. This need not be apparent on the surface—he may be a lone wolf or live for and through others. Nevertheless he lives in any case by his private religion (his idealized image), abides by his own laws (his shoulds), within the barbed-wire fence of his own pride and with his own guards to protect him against dangers from within and without.<sup>94</sup>

According to Horney, to simplify, egocentrism refers to the state of being wrapped up in himself either the person is coldly selfish or too unselfish. It is similar if he lives alone or associates with others, but he basically lives by his own laws aimed at protecting his pride, at the same time, protecting himself also against dangers from within and without. Consequently, Elijah Muhammad produces a lot of compulsive reactions during his long conversation with Malcolm which reflect his egocentrism all around Holder's play.

Elijah hates too much that someone talks about the adulterous acts, the fact which gives evidence to think that he is the really father of the illegal babies. For example, he tells Malcolm: "Aw, man I don't want to hear nothing about that. I been pestered my own self with them paper people."<sup>95</sup> He also tells him to forget about the acts of adultery then, and invites Malcolm to eat and remember a few of the good times.

In addition, naturally to solve a problem existing between two opposing views, someone calls for succor a neutral opinion to find out the right view and the wrong one. In this play, there is Elijah's view, which claims innocence; and the antagonistic opinion of the

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94 Ibid., 191-192

95 Laurence, Holder, "When the Chickens Came Home to Roost" *The Best Short Plays* (New Delhi: Delgado, 1988), 75

female secretaries, which proclaims Elijah's guilt. But, Elijah in this case prohibits strongly Malcolm from addressing anyone with regard to the acts of adultery even Wallace. To reinforce this thought, Elijah says: "Malcolm, you should never have gone to Wallace with any kind of a story about me."<sup>96</sup>

Furthermore, Elijah also reacts abnormally when Malcolm praises Reginald, who has originally pointed him the way to Elijah Muhammad. He forbids first to mention his name, and then Elijah reveals the reason for his assassination saying: "Don't mention his name. I know who you're speaking about. But he violated the codes we have here."<sup>97</sup> That is to say, he confesses unconsciously that he is behind Reginald's murder.

In fact, Elijah Muhammad has failed to develop his intrinsic potentialities in the sense that almost all his arguments are unconvincing. More than this, to reach his aforesaid aim, Elijah is always ready to corrupt, kick out of the movement, put in jail, and murder all those who may threaten his position; the fact which denotes his egocentrism as the absolute leader of his movement. To justify the previous idea Elijah says to Malcolm: "Hmm. We don't have to say anything. We'll give them some money and that will satisfy them."<sup>98</sup> Finally, Elijah Muhammad also argues that they are not discussing what is right and fair. But they are rather talking about who gives orders around there.

## **Rebellion in Conventional Environment**

Rebellion or disobedience may touch every aspect of the person's life including religion. As a consequence, the person may possibly show explicit disrespect and in some circumstances disbelief in what his environment considers conventionally to be true.

The environmental situation—home, work—may become so unsatisfactory that the person finally stops putting up with it any longer and in some form or other rebels openly. He may leave his home or his job and become militantly aggressive toward everybody with whom he associates as well as toward conventions and institutions. His attitude is one of "I don't give a damn what

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 77

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 79

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 82

you expect of me or think of me." This may be expressed in more or less urbane ways—or in more or less offensive forms. It is a development of great interest from the social point of view. If such a rebellion is directed mainly outward, it is in itself not a constructive step and may drive a person further away from himself, although it releases his energies.<sup>99</sup>

To explain this quote, because of dissatisfaction particularly with people with whom s/he associates, any person may show disrespect and in some form or other rebel against them. Therefore, s/he may leave that environment and become aggressive towards everybody together with conventions and institutions. In addition, s/he may also get rid of all what people expect or think of her or him. This attitude may be well expressed, as it may be shown through taking offensive forms.

As a consequence of the overwhelming anxiety, Martin Doul produces a wide range of compulsive reactions in the play of Synge.

Martin Doul often disrespects others even the Saint who is the only one who can bring to him sight again as he has done it earlier, and this time it will last forever. As an illustration, he asks angrily Timmy to tell him where the act of restoring his sight would be done rather than blathering all around the day. More than this, when Martin quarrels with his wife, Timmy intervenes to stop the fight by reminding him to show respect towards the holy man; whereas, Martin answers him disrespectfully saying that he does not care.

Then, Martin Doul tries to seduce Molly Byrne; therefore, to reach this aim, he tells her that he is not as old as she does hear people say. Later on, he contradicts himself confessing to Molly, who disagrees with him, saying: "It's not a lie you're telling maybe, for it is long years I'm after losing from the world, feeling love and talking love, with the old woman, and I fooled the whole while with the lies of Timmy the smith."<sup>100</sup> After that, Martin obliges his wife not to restore her blindness. Truly, Mary is almost sure that the villagers are right when they insist to cure her sightlessness; this is why she begs the holy man to restore

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99 Karen, Horney, *Neurosis and Human Growth, The struggle Toward Self-Realization*, (New York: W-W- Norton & Company, INC., 1950), 284

100 John, M., Synge, "The Well of the Saints" *John Millington Synge Plays, Poems and Prose*. (London: Dent , 1958), 84

her sight. What's more important is that she is afraid to disobey her husband, Martin, who orders her not to.

Besides, Martin Doul hopes to see Molly Byrne and Timmy screech in hell. To reinforce this idea, he says:

“Yet if I've no strength in me I've a voice left for my prayers, and may God blight them this day, and my own soul the same hour with them, the way I'll see them after, Molly Byrne and Timmy the smith, the two of them, on a high bed, and they screeching in hell.”<sup>101</sup>

Reading between the lines, it seems that it is powerlessness that prevents Martin to wreak revenge on Timmy and his fiancée. Finally, Martin Doul fails to reach self-realization and is unable to make bigger his innate potentialities, since he disrespects others, contradicts himself and seeks revenge.

The same thing occurs to Mary Doul in the sense that she produces a slew of neurotic reactions throughout Synge's play.

When she hears the villagers talk about a big wonder to be done, she only expects that it would be a thief being hanged; therefore, she is pessimistic in the sense that she does not imagine that the wonder would be restoring her sight. From another angle, what bothers Mary is the fact that she and her husband are not going to see that image because of blindness not the act itself that is hanging a thief. To reinforce this idea, Mary says: “Maybe they're hanging a thief, above at the bit of a tree. I'm told it's a great sight to see a man hanging by his neck; but what joy would that be to us, and we not seeing it all.”<sup>102</sup>

Additionally, many people in the world think that it is a bad image for a woman to be seen or heard shouting even the Irish society itself; therefore, Mary Doul does not only yell at her husband, but also warns Martin of beat. To strengthen this proposal, Mary tells Martin, raising her stick, the upcoming: “Maybe if I hit you a strong blow you'd be blind again, and

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101 Ibid., 89

102 Ibid., 65

having what you want.”<sup>103</sup> More than this, Mary Doul doesn’t simply disrespect her husband but also she disdains him; for instance, she tells him he would not ever need to talk again of his fine looks for the day of that talk has gone forever. To sum up, because of the aforementioned remarks, I kindly deduce that Mary Doul is incapable to reach self-realization and cannot fully develop her intrinsic potentialities, as she is pessimistic; she disrespects her husband and has contempt for him.

### **Compliance, Aggressiveness and Aloofness**

Being neurotic, somebody often shows full compliance with people and their rules or overt antagonism towards them while he may make obvious disinterest in them.

Since under these conditions the child is driven not only in one of these directions, but in all of them, he develops fundamentally contradictory attitudes toward others. The three moves toward, against, and away from others therefore constitute a *conflict*, his basic conflict with others. In time, he tries to solve it by making one of these moves consistently predominant— tries to make his prevailing attitude one of compliance, or aggressiveness, or aloofness.<sup>104</sup>

Explicitly, by circumstance, one may develop contradictory attitudes towards others. Sooner or later, he intends to resolve his basic conflict with others by making one of the three moves which constitute a conflict which are toward, against or away from others, continuously predominant. In fact, the following paragraphs demonstrate how aggressiveness, especially toward the couple, dominates Timmy and Molly’s reactions throughout Synge’s play.

So, due to his continuous anxiety Timmy produces a lot of neurotic reactions during the play.

Timmy criticizes the couple’s ugliness. Take, for example, the following sentence addressed to Martin Doul: “God forgive you! If you’re an ugly man to be looking at, I’m thinking your tongue’s worse than your view.”<sup>105</sup> Whereas, Timmy contradicts himself when he says to Martin, talking about his fiancée, that she doesn’t mind what way he looks, since he

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103 John M., Synge, “The Well of the Saints” *John Millington Synge Plays, Poems and Prose*. (London: Dent, 1958), 76

104 Karen, Horney, *Neurosis and Human Growth, The struggle Toward Self-Realization*, (New York: W-W- Norton & Company, INC., 1950), 19

105 John M., Synge, “The Well of the Saints” *John Millington Synge Plays, Poems and Prose*. (London: Dent, 1958), 82

has built a house with four rooms in it above on the hill. The previous sentence shows that Timmy confesses that Molly is more beautiful than him, if it doesn't mean he is ugly. More than this, Timmy also says that talking too much about fine looks is the work of devils, and he would do right to step in and wash the blackness from his eyes.

In addition, just after hearing Mary Doul's bothering foresight about Molly's old age, Timmy beseeches God to protect him and his wife from the words of the couple. In the same circumstance, he orders Martin to go off the world and frightens him off through warning him of beat using a hammer, if he would come across him again. To reinforce this idea, Timmy says:

Oh, God protect us, Molly, from the words of the blind. There's your old rubbish now, Martin Doul, and let you take it up, for it's all you have, and walk off through the world, for if ever I meet you coming again, if it's seeing or blind you are itself, I'll bring out the big hammer and hit you a welt with it will leave you easy till the Judgment Day.<sup>106</sup>

Furthermore, Timmy also warns Martin of beat if he would come across him again in another circumstance, boasting about his physical strength in which Timmy's arm is harder than the bone of Martin's skull.

Moreover, while all his interventions all around the play show the contrary, Timmy boasts as having a kind heart filled with sympathy towards even fools like the old couple. For instance, he says:

“The Saint's come to marry the two of us, and I'm after speaking a word for yourself, the way he'll be curing you now; for if you're a foolish man itself, I do be pitying you, for I've a kind heart, when I think of you sitting dark again, and you after seeing a while, and working for your bread.”<sup>107</sup>

Finally, Timmy fails to achieve self-realization and cannot fully develop all his natural potentialities, as he contradicts himself, proceeds with a lot of violence and fails to distinguish between the right acts from the wrong ones.

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106 Ibid., 88

107 Ibid., 97

Similar to her fiancé, Timmy, Molly Byrne produces so many compulsive reactions during the play.

Indeed, Molly is a sadistic woman. When Martin Doul declares that he hates too much that someone reminds him of the day when his sight has been restored, Molly insinuates that she finds pleasure to put him in mind of that day. To reinforce this assumption, Molly says maliciously: “I was thinking it should be a fine thing to put you in mind of the day you called the grand day of your life.”<sup>108</sup>

Besides, Molly Byrne frequently contradicts herself. For instance, she accuses Martin of laziness, as he refuses to cure his sightlessness; and in her following intervention she asks the Saint to leave Martin in his darkness because he has tried to seduce her. To support these two ideas, Molly says: “It’s lazy he is, holy father, and not wanting to work; for a while before you had him cured he was always talking, and wishing, and longing for his sight.” Just after, she tells the Saint:

“Let you not mind him, holy father; for it’s bad things he was saying to me a while back---bad things for a married man, your reverence---and you’d do right surely to leave him in darkness, if it’s that is best fitting the villainy of his heart.”<sup>109</sup>

More than this, Molly holds the couple in contempt and makes fun of them wickedly. For example, when Mary’s sight has just been restored, Molly asks Mary’s opinion, about Martin’s appearance even though she does not wish for her answer, saying: “You’re not saying a word, Mary. What is it you think of himself, with the fat legs on him, and the little neck like a ram?”<sup>110</sup> In short, Molly Byrne has failed to obtain self-realization and cannot develop her intrinsic potentialities, since she is sadistic; she contradicts herself and feels contempt for the heartbroken couple.

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108 Ibid., 83

109 Ibid

110 Ibid., 75

Unlike the other characters of Synge's play, the Saint is able to calm down his anger every time and react rationally habitually. Except a very few ones, the attitudes of the holy man seem each time coherent especially towards Martin Doul who has shown obvious disrespect towards him. Therefore, among the bad attitudes taken by the holy man, for me, is the one in which the Saint rejects waiting for Martin's consent if his wife, Mary, would accept to be cured of her blindness. "If she is wanting her sight I wouldn't have the like of you stop her at all."<sup>111</sup>

## **Self-Realization**

Horney observes then:

Lastly, the problem of morality is again different when we believe that inherent in man are evolutionary constructive forces, which urge him to realize his given potentialities. This belief does not mean that man is essentially good—which would presuppose a given knowledge of what is good or bad. It means that man, by his very nature and of his own accord, strives toward self-realization, and that his set of values evolves from such striving. Apparently he cannot, for example, develop his full human potentialities unless he is truthful to himself; unless he is active and productive; unless he relates himself to others in the spirit of mutuality. Apparently he cannot grow if he indulges in a "dark idolatry of self" (Shelley) and consistently attributes all his own shortcomings to the deficiencies of others. He can grow, in the true sense, only if he assumes responsibility for himself.<sup>112</sup>

For Horney, to explain the above quote, man by his very nature and of his own harmony strives to achieve self-realization and the set of values he gains, originally results from such striving. To continue, to develop complete human potentialities, it is necessary for the person to be truthful to himself, to be active and productive and to be able to relate himself to others in the spirit of mutuality. What is most important is to grow capable of assuming responsibility.

In fact, the Saint, in Synge's play, produces so many spontaneous reactions.

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid., 99

<sup>112</sup> Karen, Horney, *Neurosis and Human Growth, The struggle Toward Self-Realization*, (New York: W-W- Norton & Company, INC., 1950), 15

The Saint does not pretend that it is himself who cures people of specific needs such as blind people, the deaf and those without sense. On the contrary, the holy man often expresses gratitude towards the Lord God, who is behind the blessings which the Saint brings to people. For instance, he says, : “And let you not be raising your voice, a bad thing in a woman; but let the lot of you, who have seen the power of the Lord, be thinking on it in the dark night, and be saying to yourselves it’s great pity and love He has for poor, starving people of Ireland.”<sup>113</sup>

Additionally, when the Saint has come back again to wed Timmy and Molly as well as to restore the couple’s sight; Martin and Mary refuse to cure their blindness. However, even if Martin refuses the Saint’s offer and says to him hard words, the holy man is always ready to forgive him and cure his sightlessness. For example, the Saints says: “...so if he has found a right mind at the last minute itself, I’ll cure him, if the Lord will, and not be thinking of the hard, foolish words he’s after saying this day to us all.”<sup>114</sup>

Furthermore, at the end of the play, there is any chance left, for the holy man, to cure the couple’s blindness because of the stupid attitude of Martin who has deliberately struck the can containing the holy water. However, the Saint does not want to prevent the couple from leaving to the south in order to punish them, but he rather continues to ask the Lord God to have mercy upon the two disrespecting people saying that the couple have chosen their lot and the Lord God may have mercy upon them. As a conclusion, the Saint succeeds in obtaining self-realization and develops to a large extent his intrinsic potentialities, as he is faithful and thankful towards God and forgiving as well as merciful towards Martin.

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113 John M., Synge, “The Well of the Saints” *John Millington Synge Plays, Poems and Prose*. (London: Dent, 1958), 77

114 *Ibid.*, 101

## Conclusion

Although they came completely from different geographical areas- Laurence Holder from the United States and J.M. Synge from Ireland- a lot of similarities exist between Holder's When the Chickens Came Home to Roost and Synge's The Well of the Saints. As far as this Master dissertation is concerned, ideology and neurosis are obviously explored in the two aforesaid plays. To begin with ideology, in discussing both works cited in regard to their way of exploring the issue of ideology, mainly focusing on the element of domination, it can be assumed that the two works can be likened to one another. First, each of the two plays has displayed a dominant power and a subordinate one. When the Chickens Came Home to Roost has Elijah Muhammad as the dominant force and Malcolm as the subordinate one. Similarly, The Well of the Saints has Martin and Mary Doul as representatives of the subordinate power, while all their fellow villagers represent the overwhelming and strong one. Then, it is always the dominant power, either in Holder's work or in Synge's, which produces beliefs, ideas and views. More than this, these beliefs usually fit only the expectations of the ruling power. On the contrary, Malcolm X and the Doul couple support the charge of these beliefs and their consequences. Furthermore, the dominant power always strives to silence and oppress any idea which may threaten its dominance.

Subsequently, to establish a link with the historical context of both plays, it can be understood that the home-land of Holder is similar to Synge's, in its bloodiness and tragedy. In fact, throughout history African Americans were deprived of their basic human rights contrary to white American citizens. Likewise, in Ireland the native Irish Catholic people have been oppressed by protestant settlers of Britain and Scotland. To conclude, many historical facts can constitute a reasonable explanation of the similarities which exist between the two plays.

To end with neurosis, both aforementioned plays have obviously shown likenesses to each other. First, almost all the characters seem troubled, furious and tired throughout the

plays. Then, the most important concepts of Horney's theory of neurosis focus on what happens when one's spontaneity is crushed in early life. Therefore, because little information is given about all the characters by Holder and Synge, I am obliged to analyze the adulthood compulsive reactions of every character and attempt to demonstrate its relatedness to childhood and environmental neurotic inheritance.

Ultimately, the writings of both abovementioned dramatists are heavily influenced by these comprehensible historical and literary backgrounds. Having gone throughout wars, famine and segregation children often feel terrified and grow unhealthy in both countries. Consequently, the tensions under which Irish and American people used to live until the late twentieth century are well reflected in Holder's When the Chickens Came Home to Roost and Synge's The Well of the Saints. In other words, almost all the characters suffer from neurotic diseases.

As a final conclusion, Laurence Holder, the American playwright, and J.M. Synge, the Irish dramatist, grew up seeing awesome atmospheres. Accordingly, in analyzing Holder's When the Chickens Came Home to Roost and Synge's The Well of the Saints, I have deduced that they are very like each other in their exploration of ideology and neurosis. In one sentence, I would like also to stress that almost all the characters mentioned herein have not succeeded in attaining self-glory and self-realization.

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