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The Aesthetics of E. Ethelbert Miller's Poetics of Solidarity and Identification: A Phenomenological Reading

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Abstract

This paper explores the aesthetic poetics of identification and solidarity in selected poems by the modern African American poet E. Ethelbert Miller. It derives from the assumptions of the phenomenological critical theory stated by the German philosopher Edmund Husserl and the French philosopher Gaston Bachelard, mainly human consciousness, poetic imagination and intention, and thematic implications. The argument features Miller's poetic creativity of portraying his own concerns and experiences. It explores his thematic implications of social, political, human, and personal concerns. Meanwhile, Miller's poetic imagination and intention are introduced as poetic motives for readers to show human solidarity and identification with the poetic self and consciousness.

Keywords: phenomenology, aesthetics, human consciousness, poetic intention and imagination, identification

Introduction

Phenomenology is a form of systematic idealism that seeks to explore the idea of human consciousness and special capabilities. It has established the centrality of the human self and consciousness to re-establish self-trust and self-realization. The German philosopher Edmund Husserl (1970) is recognized as the sole founder of modern phenomenology in 20th century western philosophy. Husserl (1970) asserts that human intentional experiences embody significant meanings. He indicated that there is no real separation "between two different sections of our inquiry, the one bearing on pure subjectivity, the other on that which belongs to the constitution of objectivity as referred to its subjective source... the intentional reference of experiences to objects" (p. 234). Relevantly, phenomenology examines the momentum of human pure consciousness and its essences in human experiences. Michael Q. Patton argues that a phenomenological study thoroughly focuses on people's descriptive experiences in reality. He adds, "One can employ a general phenomenological perspective to elucidate the importance of using methods that capture people's experience" focusing on the essence of their experiences (Patton, 1990, p. 71).

Meanwhile, Husserl's phenomenological assumptions include a number of premises. First, there is no subject beyond what people think outside the center of the self. Second, consciousness is born in the past, the present, and both of them together. Third, readers should examine the phenomenology of interpretation, which includes language, aesthetics, and logic. Fourth, readers should move from the attractiveness of thinking to its intentionality. Similarly, Gaston Bachelard (1960) argues that phenomenology stands at the starting point of the perception of the images and the identification with their multiple signifiers, pinpointing the poet's incarnation of his self (p. 69). In other words, the poetic image offers the reader the possibility to move from the moment of poetic expression to creative consciousness.

It means moving from the negative self-consuming stage to the holistic involvement in the creative process. For this reason, Bachelard resorted to the poetic contemplation as a means of securing the novelty of the image and its ingenuity.

As a literary creative theory, phenomenological criticism sees that the language of a literary work supersedes the expression of its inner meanings. This old view dates back to Husserl himself, in which language occupies only a narrow space, in which he talks about an internal private domain of human experiences. Similarly, Wolfgang Iser (1974) states that the way through which human experience occurs is "a process of continual modification" (p. 281). Once each experience requires a language, the process of expression actually becomes a fantasy, for a language is social in nature. There is no real experience unless the language that enables the author to express such an experience from within first mediates it. Such a process of expression is an artistic thematic act that should be exposed independently of language itself. In other words, Husserl believes that language is only a secondary activity that defines the meanings that the write possesses.

Furthermore, phenomenology examines the basic structures of human experience, such as imagination, visualization, feelings, dreams, perceptions, and thoughts. Imagination is a cognitive way of both perception and description as a phenomenological technique. Poetic language and images can deliver novel meanings based on imagination. In this sense, Bachelard (1960) views the poetic image as a favored space to deliver a new meaning and through which "The poet speaks on the threshold of being." Bachelard adds that the authenticity of poetic imagination signifies human freedom to reveal "the unforeseeable nature of speech" (pp. xii xxiii). Phenomenological criticism also explores poetic imagination of language and its aesthetic role in creating new meanings and implications in texts. In poetry, creative language is used to deliver new meanings that appear relevant to human imagination. Phenomenological aesthetics relies on basic structures of human consciousness as ideal objects.

This paper approaches Miller's poetics in the light of the phenomenological literary approach and its assumed mechanisms of communication and interpretation. Based on the true fusion between language and intentionality, the basic structures of human consciousness fused with their linguistic structures create a "basic scheme of poetic communication" within Miller's poetics and arise from the poetic self's consciousness (Levina, 2013, p. 197). Obviously, the process of understanding a text in the phenomenological criticism is a functional process that embraces the ethics that control the relationship between the text and readers. It explores "the way the author experiences time and space; the way he\she establishes relation between self and other; the way he\she perceives the material world" (Eagleton, 1996, p. 51). In a sense, phenomenological critics argue that a poem is a significant event that is a discourse between two subjects: the poet and the reader. Thomas Pison (1976) states that the phenomenological approach to literature is formalistic in a sociological or psychoanalytical sense that is "imperfectly encompassed by written language" (p. 38).

Ultimately, the phenomenological approach seeks to emphasize the effectiveness of human consciousness in the theory of knowledge. It is also a strong philosophical reaction against the dominance of the mental and logical positivism that prevailed in the nineteenth century. It also refused to acknowledge the presence of a given objective reality outside the boundaries of human consciousness. Moreover, this approach assumes that things do not exist as objects in themselves, innate and independent. Rather, they always appear as objects assumed, or intended, by human consciousness. Husserl (1970) emphasizes that phenomenology explores "the things themselves;" their essences that reshape the perception of the real human world (p. 52). In this sense, there can be no object without a self that assumes or identifies the former. Further, phenomenological consciousness is the pure agency and medium of what Husserl repeatedly refers to as "sense-giving" (Levina, 2013, p. 198).

Certainly, phenomenological readings seek to reveal the author's dominant mental structure in his work and attempt to reshape his

emotional experience as an intentional matter, creating both semantic unity and coherence. In addition, human consciousness is intentional consciousness that enacts imagination and images, which are born in "an act of consciousness directed to an object beyond consciousness" (Husserl, 1970, p. 14). In other words, both intentionality and consciousness are fused, and on seeing an object, the beholders immediately become conscious of this object. Accordingly, the act of reading becomes a sort of a textual human dialogue between the reader's consciousness and the author's. This conscious dialogue is an effective dialogue with significant human and moral aspects. Raman Selden (2005) argues that "consciousness is always of something, and it is the something that appears to our consciousness which is truly real to us" and people recognize things that appear in their real consciousness (p. 49). In this respect, Miller's poems present "an overwhelmingly thick web of allusions across the full paradigm of discourses" that creates tensions of meanings in readers' consciousness (Levina, 2013, p. 198).

The phenomenological familiarity shared between the reader and the author is what Hans-Georg Gadamer (1997) calls the fusion of significant semantic prospects or horizons. On understanding the meaning of poetical texts, Gadamer writes, "Coming to understanding is not a mere action, a purposeful activity, a setting up of signs … It is a life process in which a community of life is lived out" (p. 446). This life process is Gadamer's crucible of human experiences and language practice. For the French philosopher, Paul Ricoeur (1981), understanding a text becomes a process of self-realization of itself through the abandonment of its centrality and the openness towards the other and identifying with his emotional experience. He asserts that imagination is a phenomenological aspect with a considerable power based on meaningful images from "sensory experience," in which imagination is a part of language (p. 181). Thus, through the process of reading and interpretation of the text, the readerly self rediscovers its entity and rebuilds its psychological and intellectual world. Moreover, phenomenology emphasizes the participation in the creative process in order to assert the originality and primacy of the image. In this regard, "phenomenology of the image requires us to contribute to the creative

imagination" (Bachelard, 1960, p. 58). Meanwhile viewing the image in its virtue of originality necessitates first imagining this image and then participating in the stage of creativity.

Eventually, this paper explores Miller's conscious experience and discloses his poetic and human implications in which he shapes his own vision of humanity, universe, and existence. Respectively, Pison (1976) asserts that phenomenological criticism explores the poetic transcending language of a text to establish the primacy of poetic experience that embodies human existence as a center (p. 38). This vision makes readers indulge into a common existential life to have a dialogue with the other in order to achieve a more condense level of awareness of the nature of human selves. For Patrick Howard, life, in its phenomenological and poetical sense, signifies an extended moment in which people have "conversations about values, ideas, and insights" that shape human experiences and practices (2010, p. 53).

The Phenomenological Poetics of Identification and Solidarity

Miller is one of the most prominent contemporary African American poets. His poetics have a significant impact on the movement of poetry in modern America and constitute a crucible for critiques. Miller's poetics are not only trapped with the noise and concerns of the modern life, but they reflect his inner self: its strengths, hopes, expectations, and weakness. Aesthetically, Miller's poetics are characterized by "gentle wit, topicality, particularity of incident, simple language, and metaphoric references" that offer thematic poetry of various issues (Hudson, 2001, p. 805). His poetics are strongly associated with the daily sensible experiences to embody the phenomenological and philosophical stances of human life.

With significant aesthetic simplicity and construction, Miller's poetics capture readers' identification and phenomenological familiarity about real life of people and things. Such identification and familiarity come through the re-creation of the relations that connect humanity and universal truths with the details of everyday life. In this regard, Miller's thematic sense centers on the realistic meaningful experiences, evoking

a structural poetic language that "shapes perception into a meaningful world-vision" (Levina, 2013, p. 194). Accordingly, the immense displacements in Miller's poems are not aesthetic or linguistic only. Rather, they are primarily existential displacements that make the act of reading an adventure that pushes readers' consciousness to higher levels of condensation and refinement. Meanwhile, Miller's poetry is full of vivacity, depicting the daily tangible events and concerns; it is a mirror of the poet's culture, culturation, and acculturation. Miller evokes various significant characters and events from various times, transcending the poetic image in a deep spiritual atmosphere that makes the reader listen to his poetic language, the absent, and the imagined. In this respect, Pison (1976) argues that Miller's poetic self experiences a significant mobility when it moves from a place to another. This poetic self uses a voice that appeals to the phenomenological critic, for it uses poetic imagination full of diachronic human experiences (p. 41).

On a thematic level, Miller's poetics are almost a documentary of his life; especially his provoked emotions are related to identity and roots. In "Panama," he says,

> in the early twenties
> a boat brought
> my father to America
> his first impressions
> were spoken in Spanish
> … he
> had forgotten the
> language (L. 1-8) [1]

Clearly, this poetic epigram establishes a set of poetic contemplations and suggests a receptionist vision of a "boat," which offers readers an image that dominates the lines. For Selden, imaginary consciousness enables people to sense the world and "masks or represses [their] real relationship to it, prompting the belief in human freedom" (2005, p. 98). Meanwhile, Theodore R. Hudson (2001) describes Miller's poems as

[1] All excerpts from Ethelbert Miller's poems are retrieved from https://www.poemhunter.com/eugene-ethelbert-miller/

"conversational, vernacular, and pithy" for they are composed of fragments and epigrams (p. 806). Miller views human body as important as his imagination faculty and his diction transforms to an entity and his poems become prayers and a reminder of human love and life.

In the light of Miller's poetic faculty of imagination, his poems are universal in nature; he wants to touch the concerns of people in El Salvador, Chile, Nicaragua, and South Africa. Sometimes, his language, structures, choices, and general human climate suggest that there is no confined homeland or shelter for his poems. Here, there is semantic condensation in the absence of the article "the" in the word "boat," any boat of any sort as a vehicle that brought the father to a new area and exile. In addition, distancing the language from the memory suggests the deletion of the memory itself, including major events, people, and realities. Meanwhile, the loss of the mother tongue is the loss of identity. Thematically, Miller uses his own poetic imagination and creates an aesthetic language to convey his perceptions of life and people. However, phenomenology refuses that language is self-confined, for "Texts speak of possible worlds and of possible ways of orientating oneself in those worlds" (Ricoeur, 1981, p. 144). Thus, both language and imagination are unstable, for meaning is open to new transformations.

Moreover, Miller engages himself in evoking his own suggestive poetic musicality, sounds/voices, signs/signifiers, and cultural and poetic visions. His poetics come consistent with a totalitarian human vision that seeks to overstep the narrow confines of the poetic experience at the geographical, cultural, and ethnic levels. These poetics touch the essence of human suffering regardless of the determinants of sex, race, and color. In this point, poetic experiences offer the modern world a unique structure, which never appears in other poetic images unless they are re-imagined or re-visualized. Bachelard (1960) states, "shadow is concealed under infinite forms of exciting kernel," emphasizing the role of imagination in criticizing a text to attain the essence of objects (p. 86). Hence, Bachelard asserts that the poetic image has its own entity and dynamicity with certain real themes that

the reader acquires in his consciousness. Through the phenomenological medium of a text, words arouse in readers' consciousness "certain concepts, certain sensuous experiences, certain images of things, people, actions, scenes" that evoke unique meanings and associations (Howard, 2010, p. 55). For Eagleton (1996), the language of experience is meaningful and "language is not more than a secondary activity that gives names to the meanings that one somehow already possesses" (p. 52).

The most important implications of Miller's poetic experience include the rejection of all forms of oppression, repression, and fascist dictatorships. In this sense, a literary work should engage readers' imagination in conceiving its content and implications "for reading is only a pleasure when it is active and creative" (Iser, 1974, p. 275). Thus, Miller tries to make his poetics embody a global nature that touches people's concerns in everywhere in the world. In the epigram "Orphan in Beirut" reflects Miller's ability to deliver highly charged poetics through concise words, "Yesterday/I had a mother and father/Yesterday I had two arms" (L. 1-4). The aesthetic dimension of the text is reflected in the structural link of the possessive "I," the past tense of "Yesterday," and the simple past "had." Yet, the absence of any reference to the present or future tenses paves the way to the semantic energy of the striking contradiction between the past and the present or future. Obviously, the poem completes itself in readers' consciousness, making them emotively identify with the poetic self. Furthermore, this poem strongly condemns the current brute forces that cause the loss, suffering, and passions of the innocent. Meanwhile, Miller devotes his human sense and intimacy with the human being everywhere and with what is going on around in the world. Moreover, Miller shows identification and sympathy with an orphan in Beirut and speaks to him from within.

In his revolutionary human sense, Miller evokes the broadest revolutionary icons prevailing in the global political and popular cultures, such as Che Guevara. In "Che," Miller sees the face of Che Guevara everywhere in the capital of Bolivia, La Paz, "Do you remember when you stopped to catch your breath?/ Was that the day

you decided never to sleep again?" (L. 4-5). Obviously, Miller has a comprehensive vision of the details of daily human suffering by the ugly forces of oppression and persecution. This vision enables Miller to poetically fuse the distanced themes in terms of time and place, yet they overlap at the level of significance and content of struggle. Moreover, the poetic image is born out of human fertility of conscious contemplation in time and space that arouses human solidarity and identification with the distanced, oppressed, and exiled. Poetically, Miller has "a noticeable talent" that enables him to condense his poetics with exciting conceits and images (Hudson, 2001, p. 806). In this regard, Miller refers to the time and space that characterize all human experiences, presents poetics from the commonplace events and ordinary life, and transforms these marks into smart and reduced analogies and intersections.

Furthermore, Miller's very condensed "Untitled" consists of five words in three lines, "At night/We are all/Black poets (L. 1-3). Here, night makes everyone a black poet and poetically portrays all poets uniquely black in the darkness. Miller epitomizes the justification of equality by appealing to nature that does not distinguish between human beings. Albert Kapikian (2016) argues that Miller offers his public vision in which his "non-material values as an artist [are] linked to his belief in the power of the Black Spirit." Meantime, Miller addresses Guevara, "Our hats sit on the top of our heads like the mountains we live in" (L. 3), expressing his solidarity and using the language of humanity full of passion, love, and nostalgia and the images of "hats," "mountains," and "face." In its phenomenological sense, the poem shows condensation as a basic feature of constructing an epigram that settles in mind and heart. Miller consciously characterizes his poetics with universal human aspects and themes. This epigram embodies features of Miller's intertextual inclination to Sufi doctrine, and expresses his thematic aesthetic intention. Also, Miller refers to the simplicity, equality, and humanity in the highest degrees of warmth and innocence that poets understand and express. For Miller, modern man becomes the center of the world, without hatred, complexities, and worshipped machineries.

With the same poetic skill and in "The Widow of Baghdad," Miller intertextualizes the said experiences in America and the similar events in Baghdad, "In Baghdad even soft things explode/A husband's smile sleeps on a sidewalk/glass glittering instead of teeth" (L. 9-11). Miller's poetic memory recalls similar events and experiences that evoke human identification and solidarity with the victimized or the oppressed. Miller uses suggestive images of "soft things explode," "smile sleeps," "glass," and teeth" that bear his human concerns and implications. Contextually, such poetic implications and their meanings are obvious when our human dreams become true despite some inevitable difficulties and challenges. Meanwhile, as human beings experience inconstancies in life, Miller's poetics express them in words deriving from human "profound a temporal experience of life," enabling sensitive readers to realize that Miller's poetics consciously revolve around "a filled space and a fulfilled time" (Bachelard, 1960, p. 40). Ostensibly, Miller's poetics never confine to boundaries of space, gender, race, religion, and ethnicity; they are human, influential, strong, and diachronic.

The poetic dialogue between Miller's poetics and readers' consciousness makes this recipient stand face to face with all those disappointments and failures at once. For Levina (2013), human consciousness perceives reality as "meaningful entities or objects" that entail "an intentional act" (p. 197). This empowerment mechanism enables readers to bear a practical responsibility for such failures and misachievements. Miller avoids dictating particular solutions to those problems on readers; he does not suppose an intellectual position to himself above the readers. Each human individual has uniqueness that distinguishes him from others. However, the confrontation of problems is half way to solutions. Yet, Miller's poetics beg his readers to fight "local and worldwide abuses," obsessions, frustration, and isolation (Kapikian, 2016).

In a similar poetical way, Miller evokes various names of mythicized people and places that are linked to the issues of liberation and struggle, such as Malcolm X in America, Oscar Romero in El Salvador, the victims of violence in Sierra Leone, Beirut, Jerusalem,

and Iraq. Humanly, Miller never submits to excessive despair, violence, and cruelty against humanity. Rather, he exposes all inhuman practices to public readers and expresses his deep human identification with all victims. Accordingly, Miller poetically expresses a vision full of optimism and existential aspects of life that cannot be defeated before death. In "She Wore a Red Dress," Miller says,

> In the morning
> I see bodies
> Lying on the ground
> Like discarded bottles and cans
> In the afternoon
> Everything is normal (L. 5-10)

With his human holistic sense embodied in these lines, Miller's poetics depict special rituals and ceremonies and radiates spiritual dynamicity that enables human beings to continue life on a daily basis and survive. Furthermore, in "Salat" (Prayer), Miller states, "poetry is prayer/light dancing inside words/five times a day" (L. 1-3). Here, the semantic correlation between the act of praying five times a day and the rituals of prayer in Islam is clear and suggestive. In his poetics, Miller repeats the reference to Islam and semantically links it to the values of freedom, humanity, and equality. Miller's reference to Islam often intertextualizes with his poetic evocation of Malcolm X, Quran, Kaaba, mihrab, and Hajj. Similarly, Miller culturally refers to Buddhism as a spiritual thought that rejects violence and killing and values the human spirit. Furthermore, an Afro-American poet, Miller's poetics expose the problematic issues of identity, language, displacement from the homeland, and exile that occupy a large area of his poetics.

Moreover, Miller's sense of humanity evokes intellectuals, writers, and black activists like Malcolm X and Che Guevara to establish an intimate relationship with the citizens all over the world. This condensed poetic sense is reflected in "Maintenance Man,"

> with empty eyes/he lifts his mop/out of the bucket
> …
> water drips/cleaning alone/ in a tenement hall (L. 1-10)

As depicted in these lines, the maintenance man finds himself robbed of identity, dignity, and memories with alienation and frustration. He loses his sense of belonging and turns into a tormented soul. Miller describes this man as a poor self-relying man "with empty eyes" lifting "mop" which drips water to clean "alone" the hall. Consciously, the suffering of the labor is reflected in the human consciousness of Miller, represented by this maintenance man. Miller depicts this man with accurate details of his daily routine, with two eyes and a human vision.

Obviously, Miller's poetics recall the human tough traditions of the black poetry, characterized by emotional excitements, witty linguistic and visual adventures, and human intertextualized themes. Hudson (2001) adds that Miller has internalized experienced "acuity of vision and thought, wit, technical subtlety, and artistic integrity" (p. 806). Certainly, Miller shares with the blacks their songs, labor, drumming, jazz, roads, cars, and cathedrals. He writes witty poetics and influential cadences using everything around him. Furthermore, Miller's poetic power, which derives from his cultural and human phenomena such as jazz, rock and roll, absurdism, and racial-class conflict, dominates his poems. In "Those Winter Days before Cell Phones," Millers flashbacks events from the past, "In the days before cell phones/ … / You wanted to find a pen not a phone/before the ringing in your head stopped (L. 21-25). Miller expresses his own conscious reflections about the multifunctional technology, cell phone, pen, and headphones; he employs a poetic language that has "delight" and "shock at its decay" (Kapikian, 2016). Ironically, instead of getting rid of noises and pollution of any source, people become more vulnerable to painful episodes of headaches and disappointments. Miller calls his readers to express their identification and sympathy with his soul, living the absurdity of modern life.

Generally, Miller's thematic scope includes sports, social familial issues, jazz, race, and religion. Hudson (2001) points out that Miller's favorite theme is love and its "spirituality" as a reality (p. 806). Aesthetically, the structure of Miller's poetic language expresses the meaning of human reality, using figurative language and poetic metaphors. In addition, Miller's poetical thought of the bond between

reality and language is suggestive; it signifies his poetic consciousness and aesthetic language. Using his imaginative faculty in "City," Miller draws a hell-like image of American reality,

> We are all victims
> The living and the dead
> We let our fears divide us
> We let it infect us our wounds
> Even in the same city
> We let our silence speak too loudly
> We let our friends die alone (L. 15-21)

Obviously, human life becomes distorted under such inhuman conditions that Miller poetically exposes. Family ties and love gradually dissolve at homes that couples turn into strangers and children become enemies dreaming only of materialistic opportunities full of social and moral absurdities. Meanwhile, the poetic self tries to put things, objects, and subjects into their historical and aesthetic contexts. Miller's city stays transcendent in itself, and the self admits that modern readers cannot digest or contain the city in human communities.

In addition, Miller shows his own aesthetic consciousness, fusing it with space, time, history, events, and challenges in life. For example, in "How We Sleep on the Nights We Don't Make Love," Miller asks his self about the mystery of the death of love of his parents, and it no longer connects them except their being in the same spatial area,

> They slept like strangers in a bus terminal or on plane
> I refused to believe they were lovers
> I closed the door in order to keep their secrets (L. 9-11)

Here, Miller depicts the tense situation of parents' love; time passes and their familial feelings of intimacy weaken and are replaced by overwhelming feelings of disappointment. In this sense, all good beautiful memories are winded and swept; however, Miller does not abandon hope against despair and keeps a space for joy, endurance, and love. Miller's poetics manifests an emotional power that makes human

life possible in the light of modern civilization. Further, Miller's poetics show significant aesthetic power that "works as a quintessentially phenomenological statement about the nature of experienced reality" (Levina, 2013, p. 197). Also, Miller's consciousness poetics recapitulate real human poetic experiences, showing his solidarity and identification with the sufferers, the lost, and the oppressed. In "Untitled," Miller says,

> if i must suffer and live alone
> in the ruins of some lost or forgotten city
> let it be one that has know
> the civilization of your love (L. 1-4)

Accordingly, love is an adventure of a renewed discovery and an experience of individual privacy for the poet. Here, love is a state of conscious spiritual union that combines two souls in one and is a source of pleasure. Once the poet speaks of love, his poetic self gets drown in ideal romanticism that is escalated intentionally to emphasize, indirectly, the inability to achieve spiritual love in reality. In this view, Miller suggests that this human individual should transcend with his emotion and his spirit should rise out of this world. Ultimately, the poem identifies with the beloveds for they are intimately close to the poetic self. Meantime, these lines reflect the daily and the ordinary to change them into poetic analogies with phenomenological reduced intersections, by using words such as "live alone," which suggests a sense of alienation and loneliness. In addition, words like "ruins of … forgotten city" and "the civilization of your love" imply the conscious human feeling of passions, loss, and fragmentation.

Moreover, this epigram offers a social signification of the consciousness of the blacks' presence in a white society. Miller enriches and aestheticizes these lines with images, events, and symbols to express his true identification with the oppressed and displaced blacks. In this respect, Iser argues that the "aesthetic experience" of a literary text results in a "balancing operation" among the basic components and elements of artistic language (Iser, 1974, p. 286). This language, as a socially constructed sign-system, is a material reality

with "dynamic and active nature" that expresses certain human experiences (Selden, 2005, p. 40). Here, Selden asserts that textual language defies social authority and offers expressive voices about human conditions and concerns that provoke human interpersonal solidarity and identification. In his phenomenological poetic vision, Miller offers his readers "overtly emotional poetry" full of breathtaking imagery that suggests political, social, and human concerns (Hudson, 2001, p. 805). For instance, Miller says in "Thriller,"

> America wonders why Michael Jackson
> wears one glove
> …
> and the coast of Nicaragua
> is surrounded by mines (L. 2-6)

Here, Miller is concerned with the dangers and threats like death, hunger, classicism, prejudice, wars, and racism that endanger humanity everywhere. He fights such dangers and vulnerabilities with words and human expressions. Miller's poems have totalitarian presence that is reflected in language, poetic structures, and artistic devices. However, they provide readers with dramatic stimuli that arouse the sensory and contemplative capacities and aesthetic sensitivity of the readers.

Similarly, in "Rosa Parks Dream," Miller expresses his views towards oppression and dehumanization by some senseless and inhuman people,

> Rosa Parks dreams about
> a bus in Jerusalem. A headless
> woman sits in her seat. There is no
> driver today (L. 1-4)

Rosa Parks is an Afro-American woman who refused to give up her seat on the bus to a white man and was beaten, humiliated, and imprisoned for a long time (Theoharis, 2014, p. xv). Later, she became an icon of the struggle against racism. In Miller's lines, the semantic overlap between Rosa Parks and the Palestinian woman without a head from

Jerusalem arises from the situational and thematic unity. Basically, the racist behavior is a condemned behavior in all cases and in all places. Miller shows sympathy with Rosa Parks and the Palestinian woman and considers them part of a racist past manifesting human vision and identification. On the phenomenological grounds, Miller's poems are thematically human and acultural.

Miller's poetic implications manifested in his subliminal and cognitive experience are common in modern poetry. Thus, the holistic human feeling and the problems of identity, migration, disintegration, and love are major themes addressed by modern poetry. However, Miller's poetic experience is characterized by his liberation from the rhetorical trend, ideological position, tragic sense, and the tendency of exaggeration to deal with those implications. Therefore, Miller writes poetry characterized by simplicity and clarity, away from prolongation and digression; unraveling the contradictions of human existence in terms of daily life practices. His poetics evoke the small disappointments that modern man tries to intentionally hide in his subconscious.

Conclusion

Miller has his own creative essence of poetic experience that maintains its aesthetic, semantic, and suggestive vocabulary energy. Phenomenologically, Miller's poetic epigrams are characterized with a narrative suggestive style and a poetic flavor. Miller keeps structuring narrative condensed murals of vivacity and poetic imagery and vision. He may have derived his narrative epigrams from the very depths of his life, evoking closest characters, thematically, imprinting his aesthetic poetic techniques. The diversity of Miller's poetic implications and conscious cultural dynamicity are suggestive and epistemological. Therefore, the echoes of civilizations are inscribed in Miller's human memory with shadows of various places and cities, manifesting acculturation and intertextuality. Miller evokes such signified echoes from Lebanon, Iraq, Palestine, El Salvador, Chile, Nicaragua, and South Africa. He also evokes influential characters along with the victimized, oppressed, and martyrs. His poetic talent helped him to formulate his

influential epigrams and to poetically epitomize a biography of contextual fertile life of phenomenological signifiers and images. In this regard, Miller's poetics are concerned with assumptions of phenomenology, based on the experiential approach and a rational approach to life.

Thematically, anti-racism vision, which works against the mentality of invasion and oppression, and the bias to the issues of justice, freedom, and human stability dominate Miller's poetics. Phenomenologically, the aesthetic qualities of Miller's poetics withstand reduction and defy misinterpretations, for they constitute human themes, expressions, and thoughts. Moreover, Miller's poetic space, imagery, and symbolism manifest his aesthetic human experience, in which he can express everything that poetry can say. Meantime, Miller's poetics have a warm sensory language in a transcended spiritual and multicultural poetic atmosphere. One of the most prominent characteristics of Miller's poetic talent is his ability to intensify and condense his poetics. Thus, Miller's epigramic poetics are condensed without verbosity, making his poems interpretively endless and multileveled. Therefore, Miller's poetics are consistent with readers' consciousness and abilities to interpret such poetics. Ostensibly, Miller's poetics are characterized with a comprehensive human vision in their themes, tones, and intertextualities, which signify various religions, civilizations, traditions, and beliefs to which all human beings belong.

Phenomenologically, Miller's poems reflect basic changes that have crystallized in the consciousness of the African Americans at an important historical crossroad in the 1960s. Such poems reflect black literature of black power, in which Miller documents his collective biography in terms of his ethnic, human, and identity aspects. Moreover, some of Miller's poems are, intertextually and interculturally, inspired by the Islamic religion, in particular, the Sufi doctrine. Based on this noble human and cultural consciousness, Miller's poetic spirit becomes intimate and has suggestive clues that enable readers to participate consciously in the creation of the intended aesthetic meanings. Further, his poems embody poetically metaphorical

and thematic language, structures, and patterns that offer exciting motives to arouse the contemplative energies and aesthetic sensitivity of readers. Moreover, human public sense and the rejection of all forms of oppression, repression, and fascist dictatorship are among the most important poetic implications that characterize Miller's poetic experiences. Moreover, Miller's aesthetics derive from the structural poetic language, which creates intertextual or disciplinary intersections and amplitude. Miller's aesthetic poetics capture different readers from different cultures, for they evoke appropriate diction and deal with language as an organic object that grows and develops. Eventually, these poetics consist of suggestive structures and thematic aesthetics that exceed the immediate lexical meaning and arouse readers' solidarity and identification with the prejudiced, oppressed, and exiled.

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