



حوليات آداب عين شمس (مؤتمر قسم اللغة الإنجليزية وآدابها)

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Irishness, Nationalism, Resistance: A Study of Pre- Famine Irish Society in William Carleton's *Fardorougha The Miser*

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Abstract:

This paper aims to explore Irishness, nationalism and resistance as three issues that typically characterize the early nineteenth century pre-Famine Irish society through a critical study of William Carleton's (1794-1869) debut novel *Fardorougha The Miser* (1839). As famine is a fact of life in many pre- industrial societies, the Irish, rural society is no exception. Ireland is doomed with famines since the introduction of the potato growing to its land owing to either partial, or full crop failures. The potato blight which inflicted Ireland in 1945 caused the upper case Great Famine and attracted much critical attention worldwide, whereas relatively lower case famines of 1817 and 1822 for instance went unnoticed literary and critically, hence the purpose of this paper is to examine this neglected era. If not for Carleton, this critical moment in Ireland's history would have never been recorded. He gives a genuine portrayal of Pre- Famine Irish society which is obsessed with a fear of starvation, impoverished by a lack of food and cultural provisions, victimized by its famine conditions and authority mismanagement and threatened by vague politics and reckless violence.

Fardorougha The Miser is not a reflection of the abhorring vice of avarice, but a product of its age; of pre- Famine, poverty- Stricken, badly ruled Ireland that is torn between an increasing sense of national identity and a growing current of secret resistance. Unlike loathing, literary misers like Molie`re's Harpagon, or Shakespeare's Shylock, Carleton's *Fardorougha* strikes as pathetic and his miserliness is partly justified being nourished in such dismal conditions. This paper employs Postcolonial theory and Cultural Studies theory drawing upon Edward Said's postcolonial critique, Frantz Fanon's revolutionary theory and cultural notions of racism in addition to Michel Foucault's concepts of power and practices of freedom which provide the necessary tools for understanding the three aforementioned issues that shape pre- Famine Irish society.

Key Words:

Irish Great Potato Famine, Pre- Famine Ireland, Colonialism, Postcolonialism, Irishness, Gaelic Leaguers, Nationalism, Romantic Nationalism, Unionism, Catholic Emancipation, Gaelicization, Anglicisation, Land Laws, Resistance, Whiteboyism, Ribbonism.

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Irishness, or the Irish identity is the first characteristic of pre- Famine Ireland and it is deeply embedded in native Irish culture despite the British colonizer's perpetual attempts to change it and impose its own imperialistic culture upon it. In *Toward the African Revolution: Political Essays*, his postcolonial critique on colonialism, Frantz Fanon explains that:

The setting up of the colonial system does not of itself bring about the death of the native culture. Historic observation reveals, on the contrary, that the aim sought is rather a continued agony than a total disappearance of the pre-existing culture. This culture, once living and open to the future, becomes closed, fixed in the colonial status, caught in the yoke of oppression. (34)

Linda Hutcheon and Mario J. Valde's state in their article "*Rethinking Literary History- Comparatively*" that "Literature does not exist in isolation from the culture in which it is 'experienced'" (12). Likewise, Carleton's *Fardorougha The Miser* is a product of its own age; an age that is distorted by colonialism and agonized by its imperial culture. It is not a reflection of the abhorring vice of avarice, but a product of pre- Famine, "poverty-Stricken land where to be able to accumulate a few pounds could easily be

esteemed a sort of glory" (Kiely vii). Unlike loathing, literary misers like Molière's Harpagon, or Shakespeare's Shylock, Carleton's Fardorougha strikes as pathetic and his miserliness is partly justified being nourished in such dismal conditions of pre- Famine Ireland.

Fardorougha The Miser tells the story of Fardorougha Donovan of Lisnamona and Honor, his wife who, after being childless for thirteen years, finally have a boy, Connor. Whereas Honor feels divinely rewarded after too much yearning for a child, Fardorougha, who has already moved his attention to accumulating money through usury and extortion, is haunted with a fear of the future. He is afraid lest he should spend all his money on upbringing his son and die of hunger. Deeply immersed in miserliness for fear of a dreadful future of famine and profiting from the poor's misfortunes, he, unknowingly, sets in motion a dangerous course of revenge undertaken by Bartle Flanagan, an evicted neighbour and Connor's rival in love. Flanagan is "the Article Bearer, or the Captain" (181) of the Ribbonmen secret society that belongs to "the Whiteboy system" (184) whose extra-official activities and warning letters threaten Irish men's lives and properties. His machinations lead to Connor's denouncement of arson and a pass of death sentence which later on changes into a transportation for life. As events unfold, Flanagan's plot is revealed and he is hanged. Connor comes back home to Ireland, marries Una, his beloved and they live happily ever after.

Irishness in pre- Famine Ireland is equated with three intrinsic elements: rurality, Gaelicization and religiousness. With reference to history, politics and culture of Ireland at Carleton's time, these three elements can be examined within an Irish colonial experience that is dictated by the British colonizer and governed by its colonial rules and Western imperialistic culture. Ireland has a special colonial experience with respect to time and space. Unlike many other countries which were colonized during the late eighteenth century, colonization of Ireland went back as far as the twelfth century. Besides, it is Britain's nearest offshore neighbour and a western country. 1

Rurality is the first essential quality of pre- Famine Irish reality. Apart from the Irish intelligentsia who dwell in the cities and talk politics, pre- Famine Ireland is, by large, a rural country inhabited by rural peasants whose lives, concerns and problems are connected to land and farming. Like all his writing, Carleton's *Fardorougha The Miser* is all about rural Ireland. In the novel, Fardorougha and his wife are "cultivating but a small farm, which they held at a small rent, yet by the dint of frugality and incessant diligence they were able to add a little each year to the small stock of money which they had contrived to put together" (4).

Similar to William Wordsworth, Carleton finds rural life authentic, original, pure and simple and he sees the Irish peasants as the real representatives of the country. In his book *Inventing Ireland: The Literature*

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Of The Modern Nation, Declan Kiberd refers to "the notion of rural Ireland as real Ireland" (481) with her joys and suffering, interests and problems and opportunities and challenges. Dr. Murray of Maynooth College finds Carleton not only Irish, but "thoroughly Irish, intensely Irish, exclusively Irish" (qtd. in Kiely vi).

Carleton is a uniquely distinguished writer not only because of the incomparable role he undertakes in the development of Irish literature, but also because of initiating the first Irish literary revival almost a century before Yeats's contribution in creating the modern Irish literary revival. Carleton is the only writer who records famine periods whether in pre-Famine Ireland such as those of the years 1817 and 1822, or the Great Famine of the year 1845. In her essay, "*William Carleton and Famine*", Melissa Fagan asserts that:

Carleton is the pre- eminent chronicler of famine in Ireland- not just what we now term *the* Famine, the Great Famine of 1845- 52, but the perennial state of famine afflicting Ireland in the early nineteenth century ... Indeed there had been fourteen partial or complete potato failures in Ireland between 1816 and 1842. (1- 2)

In *Fardorougha The Miser*, Carleton captures this moment of pre-Famine life in such a critical time in the history of Ireland through depicting the rural life style of the Irish people, their manners and everyday occupations. For the Irish, this phase in the history of Ireland would have been missed forever because of the drastic changes that took place in Ireland after the Great Potato Famine including the large death rates, the enormous emigration and the dwindling of both the Gaelic language and traditional Irish culture. In short, Carleton's contribution of writing such an important phase in the history of Ireland as a nation in the early nineteenth century is indeed a very early and essential step before Ireland gets its actual independence later on in the early twentieth century. This history of Ireland, as a nation, is written, as William Butler Yeats says: "not in Parliaments and battlefields but in what the people say to each other on fair days and high days, and in how they farm and quarrel and go on pilgrimage" (qtd. in Kiely vi).

The miser whose name is given to the title of the novel is obsessed with a terror of famine and its aftermath of starvation, fever and death. *Fardorougha* is a lively embodiment of famine in the novel as he always claims to be poor, preys upon his neighbours' destitution and feeds on the poor tenants' dismal conditions in order to collect as much money as he can and save it for a time of need when famine befalls Ireland. Though the novel does not discuss the topic of famine overtly, the whole plot is incidental to

the famine which indirectly acts as the real protagonist that gives way to the appearance of "the scene of the darkest and tenderest passions of the human heart" (*Fardorougha The Miser* 1).

Fardorougha is torn between the tenderest passion of his parental love for Connor and his fear of a future of famine. His darkest passion, miserliness and love of money emanate from a belief in a future that is predestined owing to past experiences of famines in Ireland. Honor, seeing that Fardorougha is all the time occupied with hoarding money, accuses him of not loving his son. He, however, assures her that his love for their son is so great that he is very much concerned about his future. He explains: "Honor; I do love the child ... If I didn't love him, I wouldn't feel as I do about all the hardships that may be before him. Think of what a bad saison, or a failure of the crops, might bring us all to! God grant that we mayn't come to the bag and staff before he's settled in the world at all, poor thing" (18- 9). Through Fardorougha, Carleton is prophetic of the arrival of the Great Famine because of the recurrent existence of dismal conditions of pre-Famine Irish life and society.

The issue of land in the rural Irish society is of utmost importance for both the British colonizer and the colonized Irish as well as elsewhere in other colonies. For Britain, geographical expansion on non-British land is the first of two strategies which constitute top priorities to achieve its imperialistic enterprise. This strategy is defined by Edward Said, in his book *Imperialism and Culture*, as: "Imperialism after all is an act of geographical violence through which virtually every space in the world is explored, charted, and finally brought under control" (225).

Though the British colonizer uses to propagate the idea that colonialism is primarily a cultural movement that seeks to educate the colonized natives and improve their life conditions, its imperialistic strategy is strongly connected with the idea of geographical expansion and always endorses such practices as domination and subjugation of the natives of its colonies. Worse, it pursues a second strategy of cultural racism which Fanon could articulate as "the destruction of cultural values, of ways of life. Language, dress, techniques, are devalorized" (*Toward the African Revolution: Political Essays* 33).

For Ireland, land is not only a territorial space, but it is a defining identity. It is a matter of life, or death for the Irish natives. Though it may be usurped at one phase in history by the British colonizer, its restoration to the Irish is undebatable. As Said suggests for natives in general, the Irish are also aware that "the history of colonial servitude is inaugurated by loss of the locality to the outsider; its geographical identity must thereafter be searched for and somehow restored. Because of the presence of the colonizing outsider, the land is recoverable at first only through the imagination" (225).

The problems of pre- Famine Ireland are mostly related to the land such as reclamation process, drainage level rights, agriculture, landlord ownership, land hiring, tenant eviction, estate boundaries, land mortgages and incessant partial potato famines. That most of the Irish population depend on the potato crop as their main nutritious diet acts, however, as the most serious problem of all. In *Pre- Famine Ireland: Social Structure*, Desmond Keenan clarifies that: "In 1816 came the first of the partial failures of the potato crop. ... this affected chiefly the cottier class. They had no potatoes and there was no work locally to enable them to buy food" (172). The basic problem that faces pre- Famine Ireland was "the growth of the cottier class, dependant on the potato for a large part of their sustenance, in parts of Ireland where casual work, or any paid work, was almost impossible to organize" (173- 74)

In *Fardorougha The Miser*, it is clear that the only work available is farming and because owners of small farms like Fardorougha are too poor to pay hired labourers, they cultivate their own fields by themselves. When Flanagan came to seek service at Fardorougha's farm, he sees "Connor is now making hay" (22) and later on, he is asked by Fardorougha to join Connor at work: "Well, you'll get a rake in the barn, Bartle ... an' now tramp down to Connor, an' I'll see how you'll handle yourselves, both o' you, from this till night" (26). This lack of a social divide between tenants and labourers shows how poverty and food insecurity are threatening conditions to pre- Famine Ireland.

Language is the second notion of Irishness that characterizes pre-Famine Ireland. The life of the vernacular, or, native, Gaelic, Irish language, however, has been shortened gradually amidst the continuous anglicisation process of the British colonizer and its enforcement of the English language on Irish life and culture. In his article "*The Necessity of De- Anglicising Ireland*", Douglas Hyde emphasizes the fact that native, Irish language is a strong protective shield against the British colonizer's Anglicisation process. He believes that:

every Irish- feeling Irishman ... should set himself to encourage the efforts which are being made to keep alive our once great national tongue. The losing of it is our greatest blow, and the sorest stroke that the rapid Anglicisation of Ireland has inflicted upon us. In order to de- Anglicise ourselves we must at once arrest the decay of the language.

(136)

A staunch believer in the importance of Ireland's Gaelic language and roots in defining her identity, Hyde insists that "this island *is* and will *ever* remain Celtic at the core, far more Celtic than most people imagine" (159).

Indeed, the last decade of the nineteenth century witnessed the formation of Irish societies and associations such as the Gaelic League (1893) 2 which called for the revival of the native Gaelic Irish language as a basic feature of the Irish identity and as a tool of political protest against British Anglicisation of Ireland. In the same vein, Kiberd affirms that:

The revival of the native language, led by the Gaelic League in the final decade of the century, was an inevitable protest against such homogenization, a recognition that to be anglicized was not at all the same thing as to be English. ... and it was from Gaelic Leaguers, who painfully studied and repossessed Irish, while continuing to speak English in public life, that much of the impetus for political independence would come. (2- 3)

The traditional notions of Irishness as existed in the early and late nineteenth century are almost the same and language is an important marker of Irishness in the two periods. In his Ph.D thesis, *Paradigms of Irishness for Young People in Dublin*, Joseph Moffatt explains that:

the late nineteenth century saw the solidifying of Irishness around particular characteristics; notably that Irishness essentially means Catholic, that Britishness was a fundamental cultural Other to Irishness and that upon Independence any Irish government should promote, and be popularly supported, in a policy of Gaelicising Ireland. (vi)

These notions of Irishness are observed by Carleton several decades earlier in the early nineteenth century. He seems to be ahead of his time in his perception of Irishness which is distinct from his fellow Irish writers at the time. He understands it as encompassing the traditional paradigms of Irishness as mentioned by Moffatt. For him, Irishness means the cultural components that mark pre- Famine Ireland including the rural nature of pre- Famine Irish society, the Gaelic language as the vernacular language of the Irish at the time and the Irish people religiousness.

In Carleton's *Fardorougha The Miser*, the abundant use of Irish words and expressions shows his serious aspiration for his mother tongue to survive in literature even at the minimal level of frequent local words and expressions. Unlike Irish activists' practical approach towards political motivation, Carleton's approach appears idealistically romantic. In his article "*Notes Towards a Definition of Romantic Nationalism*", Joep Leerssen describes the approach of Romantic Nationalism which is also Carleton's in its reliance on "the basis of facts: real actions and utterances, undertaken and made by real people at specific moments and in specific places" (3). The novel teems with Irish words like "ca woul thu?" (7), "Bravery" (34), "larnin' on the flure" (37), "arhighad" (44), "mo colleen dhas dhum" (45), "grah" (45), "feasthalagh" (50), "a shan roghara" (68), "ma colleen voghth" (93), "when I wint acrass" (178), and "oh ma shaght millia

mallach orth" (194) which stand respectively for "where are you?", "Breviary", "dancing", "money", "my beautiful brown girl", "love", "nonesense", "the old rogue", "my poor girl", "when I was transported" and "seven hundred thousand curses on you". The translation is provided in footnotes in the novel.

Carleton's belief in Irish as the vernacular language of Ireland which may act as a binding factor of Irish solidarity and powerful position as a nation seems to stress the importance of the return to the source as a leading step towards self-assertion and self-realization. He is, however, realistic enough to discern the dwindling of this source of Irish language and the spread of the colonizer's English language. In this respect, Kiberd thinks that:

In theory, two kinds of freedom were available to the Irish: the return to a past, pre-colonial Gaelic identity, still yearning for expression if long-denied, or the reconstruction of a national identity, beginning from first principles all over again. ... The problem with the 'return to the source' model was clear enough: there was very little source left. (286)

Carleton seems to be aware that the Irish speaking people are diminishing in number specially after the emigration of large groups to England because of famines and their consequent unfavourable living conditions. These people, being isolated from their native land and language, have easily adopted the English life style and spoken the English language.

Some Irish writers also follow the same path and leave for England like James Joyce, George Bernard Shaw and others. There, Kiberd comments:

The Irish writer has always been confronted with a choice. This is the dilemma of whether to write for the native audience- a risky, often thankless task- or to produce texts for consumption in Britain and North America. Through most of the nineteenth century, artists tended to exploit far more of Ireland than they expressed. (136)

Carleton is probably successful in solving this dilemma. He writes in English for an ample readership, but he preserves Irish words and expressions in his writings. At the same time, he does not exploit Ireland to amuse the English audience, but he expresses the real Ireland in all what he writes; her rural Irish nature, people, problems and challenges.

Religiousness is the third notion of Irishness which characterizes pre-Famine Ireland. Roman Catholic religion in Ireland is more than a sacred

belief as it has a strong role in the Irish society despite secularization attempts at understanding the role of religion in politics in the West in general. In *Fardorougha The Miser*, Honor who is a representation of real, religious Ireland is a frequent church-goer, She never loses faith even during the most distressful moments in her life. Before becoming pregnant with Connor, she and Fardorougha "became somewhat religious, and both remarkable for a punctual attendance upon the rites of their church" (4). Facing the calamity of losing her one and only son to an unjust death sentence, she stands firm and pious: "I am sure my son is innocent, an' surely, although it's hard, hard to part with such a boy, yet it's a consolation to know that he'll be better wid God, who is takin' him, than ever he'd be wid us. So the Lord's will be done this night and forever! Amin!" (134). In her fortitude and piety, Honor genuinely resembles Ireland who despite all her troubles of colonialism, famines, poverty, corruption and political unrest gradually emerges strong and resilient. Through Honor and all the faithful, loyal and religious Irish people like her, Carleton is prophetic of an Ireland of a better future despite all the dismal conditions from which she suffered.

Ireland is mainly Catholic and Catholicism features not only as an effective force in Ireland's social life, but in her politics as well. Catholic religion in Ireland, as John Coakley states in his article "*The Religious Roots of Irish Nationalism*", is performing three functions; as an ethnic marker, a community difference marker and a group solidarity promoter. It is this third function that priests make use of to shape the political views of the Catholic middle class people. The clergy, by building secular, social organizations such as schools, hospitals and welfare institutions, has "also affected a mechanism for local meeting and communication" (104) and helps facilitate the priests' role in politics and in funding the Catholic Association founded in 1823 by the Catholic lawyer, Daniel O'Connell the aim of which is to achieve Catholic emancipation. In pre-Famine Ireland, the involvement of some clerical radicalism with nationalist rebels probably accounts for the general notion of considering any resistance movement religious. Coakley affirms that "This strategy of appealing to the masses was instrumental not only in raising significant funding for the association but also in involving many thousands of poor as well as rich Catholics in a country-wide political movements" (104).

In her essay "*Prose Writing and Drama in English, 1830- 1890: From Catholic Emancipation to the Fall of Parnell*", Margaret Kelleher remarks that "*Fardorougha the Miser* is set in the background of resurgence of Ribbonism in the 1830s, but characteristically for Carleton the motivation for violent deeds is presented as what he terms the 'savage principle of personal vengeance' rather than political or economic grievance" (457). Whatever the motivation of the rebels is, whether political, or personal, it all culminates in and reflects an existing reality that pre-Famine Ireland delves in chaos and agitation. Such secret resisting currents as Whiteboyism, or

Ribbonism are descendents of Orangeism in the first decade of the nineteenth century and are prophetic of much more resisting movements to appear in the future such as Young Ireland around 1840.

Carleton is particularly critical of those who link Ribbonism in pre-Famine Ireland with religion. Such secret movement uses religion as a façade to justify its murderous and criminal attacks day and night. The novel shows that Ribbonism is often fueled by personal cruelty, not by religious fervour. In the novel, Carleton expresses his belief that:

The curse, however, of these secret confederacies, and indeed of ribbonism in general is, that the savage principle of personal vengeance is transformed from the nocturnal assault, or the mid- day assassination which may be directed against religious or political enemies, to the private bickerings and petty jealousies that must necessarily occur in a combination of ignorant and bigoted men, whose passions are guided by no principle but one of practical cruelty. This explains ... the incredible number of murders which are committed in our unhappy country, under the name of waylayings and midnight attacks ... It is true, that the occurrence of murders of this character has been referred to as a proof that secret societies are not founded or conducted upon a spirit of religious rancour ... Their murdering each other is ... such a consequence as might naturally be expected to result from a combination of men, who in one sense consider murder no crime. (183- 84)

An event that agitated the political pre- Famine Irish scene with great force was the Catholic Emancipation Act in April 1829 which entitled the Catholics to join the parliament and hold civil and military offices, thus occupying a fairly powerful position, fulfilling some of the British political promises and achieving some rights for the Irish Catholic including their right to call for reform and change. These political rights found vent in cultural and literary contexts, thus, expressions of political unease and a discourse of improvement of the Irish conditions were clearly heard in political circles and reflected in very few works of art.

In *Fardorougha The Miser*, Carleton portrays this political turmoil in pre- Famine Ireland through the aggressive and criminal actions of Ribbonism. He shows how the ribbonmen are intimidating and blackmailing the rich Irishmen for moral and financial support. He also shows that their actions are neither familiar at the time nor publicly approved of. They are generally regarded as criminal even if they serve as one of the tools of political action. Carleton addresses the readers saying: "At the time laid in

this story, neither burnings nor murders were so familiar nor *patriotic*, as the fancied necessity for working out political purposes has recently made them. Such atrocities ... were certainly looked upon as criminal, rather than meritorious" (85). Carleton is probably the only Irish author to depict this unstable era in pre- Famine Irish rural life; an era of poor social conditions, strong, agrarian violence, disturbed socio- political consequences and agitating calls for repeal of the Union.

Nationalism is the second issue that occupies a considerable space in pre- Famine Irish consciousness. Liam Kennedy notes that:

Nationalism ... is more likely to emerge in the context of rapid economic and democratic change, when there is a sense among some ethno- cultural groups that they are somehow losing out or being disadvantaged. The growth of national sentiment, therefore, forms part of a political and ideological backlash against the disruptive impact of economic and social change and the state structures that appear to house these forces. (1)

Applying this explanation to the case of early nineteenth century pre-Famine Irish island, it is worth noting that the existence of Nationalism as a movement indeed starts in the aftermath of three political, social and economic upheavals; the uprising of the French Revolution, the rise of the Romantic movement and the issuing of the Act of Union.

The national urge of Ireland to move the British rule to national, or home rule was stimulated by the French Revolution with its motto of liberty, equality and fraternity. Such a great event that took place in France in 1789 and impressed many countries worldwide found a strong expression in Ireland. It was strongly nourished in the Irish people's hearts and minds as it offered them an ideal model for self realization of a whole Irish nation.

The urge towards Nationalism in pre- Famine Ireland was also deeply affected by the Romantic movement that took place in the early nineteenth century Europe and highly appealed to the people's taste and aspirations to the extent that Nationalism in Ireland was described by some critics as Romantic Nationalism. Leerssen states that "Romantic nationalism is the celebration of the nation (defined by its language, history, and cultural character) as an inspiring ideal for artistic expression; and the instrumentalization of that expression in ways of raising the political consciousness" (1). Indeed, it gained its political legitimacy from Ireland as a nation and the Irish people who were born within a specific Irish culture with its own distinct language, race, religion, customs and traditions. It also existed as a reaction to the British, imperial hegemony which gained its political legitimacy from the British monarchy, an outsider's authority that justifies the existence of such hegemony. Both movements, the Romantic and the Nationalist arose almost at the same time around the 1800s, 3 thus, Leerssen suggests that they "shared the turbulent political and social

circumstances of that period, ... Romanticism and nationalism ... arose simultaneously, concurrently, in one specific part of the world at a particular historical moment, and therefore unavoidably shared common features, interactions, and cross- currents" (1-2).

Besides, this idea of developing a sense of nationalism was, in fact, an important characteristic of the general Romantic movement which greatly influenced the Irish literary culture at the time. In her article "*Irish Romanticism, 1800- 1830*", Claire Connolly alludes to this fact saying:

An important effect of Romantic aesthetics was the development of Romantic nationalism. Ireland emerges from this period with a renovated reputation as a naturally distinct national culture; this in turn fostered and supported new theories of nationality and nourished the cultural nationalism of the 1830s and 1840s. (408)

Britain, being sceptic of the reaction of the Irish, issued the Act of Union that united Great Britain and Ireland in January 1801. The Act of union acted as a nightmare to the Irish majority as it generally aggravated the rights of the Irish society, culturally and politically. The Irish parliament was dissolved and a legislative union was declared which rendered Ireland 'defeated', dependent country that followed the British law. For many critics, the union was rather regarded as a discord in the British- Irish relationship. At a time when Ireland was trying to revive her dying culture which faced the already established British one, this "sense of a cultural barrier that had to be crossed was intensified by the passing of the Act of Union" (Connolly 409). This general feeling towards the union directed the Irish literary culture towards adopting the idea of a search for a separate national identity. Thus, the Act of Union together with the influence of the French Revolution and the emerging Romantic movement served to arouse the Irish authors' and critics' deep sense of nationalism.

Pre- Famine Ireland under British colonialism, as Kennedy proposes, is torn between two kinds of Nationalism. The first is Irish Nationalism or in other words, Irish Romantic Nationalism which is locally restricted to the small Irish island and tries to revive the heyday of traditional Gaelic-speaking, Catholic- believing Ireland. The second is British Nationalism which is regional and aims through Unionism at fostering the sweeping imperialistic attitude of the English- speaking, protestant- believing Britain. This distinction is clearly felt in the aftermath of the British Union with Ireland with drastic socio- political and socio- economic impacts on pre-Famine Ireland.

On the political level, Ireland, under the Act of Union, became, as Oliver MacDonagh mentions in his book *Ireland: The Union and its*

Aftermath, "a political dependency. Although formally part of the same state, she was not and could not have been ruled in the same fashion as Great Britain" (33). Ireland became a subordinate, subjugated entity, not an integral part of the most powerful Great Britain and Irishmen were not turned into Britons. She was treated like all the British colonies at the time, a separate entity. The Irish, as Fanon states, could easily witness "the setting up of archaic, inert institutions, functioning under the oppressor's supervision" (*Toward the African Revolution: Political Essays* 34). Irish natives were treated within the colonizer's frame of reference. Irish political and judicial institutions were set according to the British model, but the administration of politics, law, or governmental issues superficially resembled it. 4 Fanon believes that a colonizer's strategy never changes. It is enacted in the same systematic way in any of its colonies and likewise in Ireland. Fanon describes it as:

in an initial phase the occupant establishes his domination, massively affirms his superiority. The social group, militarily and economically subjugated, is dehumanized in accordance with a polydimensional method.

Exploitation, tortures, raids, racism, collective liquidations, rational oppression take turns at different levels in order literally to make of the native an object in the hands of the occupying nation.

(*Toward the African Revolution: Political Essays* 35)

On the economic level, "Ireland was deeply affected by the forces of modernisation emanating from the epicentre of the industrial revolution, the neighbouring island of Britain" (Kennedy 2). Though the six counties of Northern Ireland somehow financially benefited from their active interaction with the Union, the Southern twenty six counties refused to adopt the notion of Unionism, or in other words British Nationalism. Rather, they fought for the Repeal of the Union and struggled to attain political independence and economic benefits.

To measure the rate of economic development in each of Southern and Northern Ireland under British Nationalism, Kennedy's scale may best be applied. This scale covers several periods of time and consists of five economic indicators; living standards, economic crises, emigration, industrialisation and economic justice. In pre- Famine Ireland, there are no remarkable gains with respect to the first three indicators, in both of Northern Protestant and Southern Catholic Ireland. Irish people experience low living standards, lack of versatile, favourable economic opportunities and increase in the rate of immigration.

The last two economic indicators of industrialisation and economic justice are somehow satisfactorily achieved in Northern Unionist Ireland whereas they are not realized in Southern Nationalist Ireland. The industrial revolution in Britain leads to the mechanization of many industries such as

the spinning industry and the increase in textiles and cotton dispersing, as a result, many of the hand- spinners are cut off their manual jobs. Similarly, this takes place in Ireland, her Union partner where mechanization of major Irish productions of linen and woolen handicrafts take place leading to Irish industrial decline in its own goods. Besides, "Cheaply manufactured British textiles displaced handicraft production. Though a small number of Irish firms made the transition to factory conditions, the more visible result was unemployment and underemployment" (Kennedy 7). Industrial conditions in Northern Ireland are much better than in Southern Ireland. As religion matters highly in Ireland, Protestants' economic gain is much more than Catholics' and economic justice is somehow satisfactorily achieved in Northern Unionist Protestant Ireland whereas it does not exist in Southern Nationalist Catholic Ireland.

In *Fardorougha The Miser*, all the above mentioned political and economic conditions that are characteristic of pre- Famine Ireland are deeply reflected through their impact on the poor Irish people and their lives. In the novel, male servants like Nogher M'Cormick, his son Ted, and female servants like Susy, Peggy and Bridget Nulty are almost destitute. Old hedge schoolmasters and priests are poor. Poor scholars write petitions and warning letters for the ribbonmen to have some money. Carleton comments that they "were uniformly the petition writers, and indeed, the general scribes of the little world in which they lived. In fact, we have abundance of public evidence to satisfy us, that persons of considerable literary attainments have been connected with Ribbonism in all its stages" (216). Small industrious tenants like Fardorougha, gentlemen farmers, widows, or orphans are all deceived by the county treasurer who has run away with their money. Small tenants like Flanagan's family who cannot pay the rent are evicted. Thus Carleton believes that poverty which is the direct result of incessant famines, in addition to irresponsible landlords and food and housing insecurity are the real causes which have ruined Ireland.

Resistance is the third issue which is part and parcel of everyday pre-Famine Irish life. The British perception of the Irish, as Said mentions, as "a barbarian and degenerate race" (220) emphasizes the long lasting racist superior attitude of Britain towards Ireland, her colony. The British colonizer and its imperialistic regime created a sense of hatred, antagonism and resistance in the Irish people who saw that their "land was and had been dominated by an alien power" (Said 221).

Michel Foucault is least interested in the word "power" than in the "relations of power". A power relation for Foucault is "a relationship in which one person tries to control the conduct of the other. ... these power relations are mobile, they can be modified, they are not fixed once and for

all" (292). For him, these power relations are unstable, reversible and possible as long as the subject has a degree of freedom. The existence of the notion of resistance against power is an essential condition in a power relation even if power is dominant and far reaching. Oppressed subjects may resist against the power of the oppressor only if both parties enjoy a bit of freedom. Thus, Foucault asserts that:

in order for power relations to come into play, there must be at least a certain degree of freedom on both sides, Even when the power relation is completely out of balance, when it can truly be claimed that one side has "total power" over the other, a power can be exercised over the other only in so far as the other still has the option of killing himself, of leaping out the window, or of killing the other person. This means that in power relations there is necessarily the possibility of resistance because if there were no possibility of resistance (of violent resistance, flight, deception, strategies capable of reversing the situation), there would be no power relations at all. (292)

In *Fardorougha The Miser*, resistance is embodied in Ribbonism which belongs to the movement of Whiteboyism. The white boys revolt against any relation of any power whatsoever. They are against three entities which are related to three powers; the Irish government which represents the political power, the rich agriculturists who represent the economic power and the misers who represent the social power. Like Foucault, Fanon advocates revolutionary acts as part of the natives' resisting force to confront the colonizer's power relations. He believes that "The movement of groups, the liberation, in certain parts of the world, of men previously kept down, make for a more and more precarious equilibrium" (*Toward the African Revolution: Political Essays* 36).

The novel suggests that famine, like colonization, is one of the reasons that increases the Irish people's sense of resistance. Famine draws the attention to the emergence of three highly distinctive classes within pre-Famine Irish rural community. The first class is that of the strong, rich agriculturists like Bodagh Buie, Una's father, whose granaries are stacked and haggards are bursting with provisions such as potatoes, " hay, oats, and wheat" (31) until a year of potato crop failure, or scarcity when the markets are high in price. The second class is that of the opportunistic, hard- hearted misers who get their money at the expense of the struggling farmers who could not pay the rent in its due time. These two classes are set in contrast with a third class of poor tenant farmers who are always threatened by eviction, or service whenever they can neither pay their landlords' high land rent nor the miser who lends them money in advance.

This class distinction of pre- Famine Irish society which is also fed by colonial exploitation of the native Irish people's culture and national

independence has evidently changed the Irish's generally kind behaviour into an aggressive conduct and encouraged a move towards patterns of organized crime. Discussing these turbulent relations in colonized societies, Fanon states in his book *The Wretched of the Earth* that:

The negation of the native's culture, the contempt for any manifestation of culture whether active or emotional and the placing outside the pale of all specialized branches of organization contribute to breed aggressive patterns of conduct in the native. But these patterns of conduct are of the reflexive type; they are poorly differentiated, anarchic and ineffective. Colonial exploitation, poverty and endemic famine drive the native more and more to open, organized revolt. (238)

This revolt is felt by the native Irish people and these tensions on their part, by time, materialize into precise objectives and means of struggle for liberation from any kind of oppression whether social, economic, or political.

In *Fardorougha The Miser*, Flanagan's family is evicted when it can not pay Fardorougha what it owes him in due time. Flanagan relates to Connor what happens to his family at the hands of his father: "a family that was strugglin' but honest, brought to dissolation. We're broken up; my father and mother's both livin' in a cabin they took from Billy Nulty; Mary and Alick's gone to sarvice, an' myself's just on my way to hire wid the last man I ought to go to- your father" (22). To take revenge upon Fardorougha, Flanagan plots to get rid of Connor. When the truth is revealed by the end of the novel, Flanagan confesses that Connor is innocent of the charge of arson and that "*it was I that burned Bodagh Buie's haggard ... I swore away his life out of revinge to his father, an' jealousy of himself about Una O'Brien*" (217). Thus, desolate political and economic conditions render people uneasy and threatened and drive them to resist all forms of power in their governing system.

Such an illegal movement as Ribbonism forces the poor Irish either to join it, or to pay allegiance to it in return for its assumed protection. Ribbonmen send "notices" (*Fardorougha The Miser* 209), or warning letters to the rich and powerful for financial and moral support. Those who refuse their blackmailing and intimidating methods put their lives and properties at risk. Bodagh Buie is one of the rich and powerful who having received many threatening letters, is "resolute in resisting what he conceived to be oppressive or unjust ... Anything against the law o' the counthry is bad, and never ends but in harm to them that's consarned in it" (209-11). Ignoring their letters and defying them, his haggards are burnt down.

Later on in the novel, when he and his son John start taking legal steps to prove Connor's innocence, he finds "a threatening notice written to be posted " (209) on his door threatening to prepare his coffin and kidnap his daughter. In the last part of this notice, he is asked to "prepare yewr coughin an' not that same remimber you've a praty dother an' may no more about her afore your much oulder" (209). Like his father, John is also adamant "to resist a system which is equally opposed to the laws of God and of man, as well as to the temporal happiness of those who are slaves to the terrible power which, like a familiar devil, it exercises over its victims, under the hollow promise of protection" (210).

In *Fardorougha The Miser*, Flanagan skilfully contrives to manipulate his personal vengeance into the violent actions of Ribbonism. Since by modern literary theory, the personal is political, it seems that this is meant by Carleton. His main concern is to describe the behaviour of all the Irish people, the kind and virtuous as well as the evil and vicious. He aims at reform not only in the political sphere, but more important for him in the social one. In " *Catholics and Fiction During the Union, 1801- 1922*", James H. Murphy explains that: "The period between Catholic Emancipation (1845- 9) was a time of Whig reform in Ireland and thus a period of particular anthropological interest in the habits of the Irish peasantry. This was the context of the work of the peasant novelist William Carleton (1794- 1869) from Co. Tyrone" (101).

Resistance demonstrates itself so powerfully in pre- Famine Ireland especially after the pass into law of the Act of Union. Irish politics are deeply affected as the development of Irish Nationalism and the activists' resistance weaken the authority of the Act of Union legally and morally. MacDonagh mentions that "in 1800 neither parliament represented, in any acceptable sense, the peoples involved; and as popular sovereignty as the source of political authority gained in estimation in the nineteenth century, so the Act of Union became more vulnerable" (14) 5

MacDonagh refers to the fact that "The Union of 1801 was meant to be a union of churches, finance, administration, and political forms and participants. But no one saw it as a problem of uniting the masses" (33). The British colonizer sees itself as powerful, educated and owner of non- British lands. Great Britain could not perceive, however, that the Irish are aware of the colonizer's machinations and that Ireland will never give up her lands and can very well express herself in demanding her right in decolonialism.

The Irish people's movements of resistance come as a direct result of the oppressive system of colonialism and are nourished by its imperialistic culture. Pre- Famine Irish rustics feel insecure with respect to their basic needs; nutrition, work and housing. In such a potato economy, where the whole of pre- Famine Ireland depends on one crop only, the potato, as its main diet, people are liable to be easily broken when agricultural calamity

strikes. Explaining how pre- Famine Ireland suffers from a continuous sense of food insecurity, Kennedy states that:

In pre- industrial societies the availability of food might change violently over time, being heavily dependent on unpredictable climatic and environmental factors. In the Irish case, severe shortages of the staple food crop, potatoes, affected the country in 1800- 0, 1816- 17, 1824- 25 and again in 1836 and 1839, as indicated by the evidence of potato prices. 16 Hunger, at irregular intervals, visited the millions mired in the poverty and squalor of the potato economy, on top of the recurrent seasonal "hungry gap" between the exhaustion of one potato crop and the arrival of the new potatoes. It is clear that fluctuations in food supply, and the attendant food insecurity, were a common feature of the pre- Famine economy. (Kennedy 6)

The Irish government tries to solve the problem through relief schemes such as the "gratuitous relief or simple hand- outs of food" (Keenan 172- 73), but the high prices and the lack of money drastically influence the already vulnerable local markets and the trade rate. Both destitute and near- destitute Irish people, including tradesmen, strive to get the free hand- outs and many migrate to places where food is available. As a result, the market system is not working efficiently and there are no labourers during seed- time. As this complicates the problem of poverty and does not contain the recurrent famines, or prevent their occurrence, the government decides that "There would be no *gratuitous relief*, but *schemes of public works* could be organized locally to give work to enable the destitute to purchase food. However, this also does not solve the problem" (Keenan 174) specially in Irish communities that totally lack the availability of any kind of work.

Ireland, as a rural island, is always thought of as a country which grows enough food for its population even during famine times, but the problem, as Keenan believes, lies in "the prompt and adequate local provision of relief works for the able- bodied and soup kitchens for the infirm" (174). It is the mismanagement of crisis and the insistence of Irish rulers to use the same relief schemes that render the problem of recurrent famines unsolvable and lead the Irish people to suffer from severe hunger and fever.

Amidst these unbearable circumstances and its logical aftermaths of food and work insecurity, the poor tenants of pre- Famine Ireland could not pay the rents of their lands and were thus subjected to aggressive eviction and housing evacuation. Worse than that, they were not protected by any laws in the British colonial system. MacDonagh explains that "in general

Irish landlords and agents behaved and were treated as if they were at war with their dependents. The English system made obeisance at least to the squirearchical tradition of duty and service" (36). As a result, the Irish gentry felt that they bore no real responsibility towards their tenants. By law, they had no obligations to the tenants and labourers in their rural territories. Besides, "the land legislation from 1801 to 1870 was, in general, in the interest of the Irish landlord and against the interest of the Irish tenant" (43). In the existing British system, landlords had limitless control over their own properties. They had the full power to evict the tenants and dismiss them out of their own lands. A Tenant lacked every right to stay in the land without his landlord's consent. He was denied all legal rights such as to "own saleable interest in his land" (MacDonagh 48), or to establish a "joint proprietorship" (MacDonagh 48).

In the novel, Carleton criticizes pre- Famine Irish society where absence of laws for the poor tenant rights leads to unhealthy relationships among the people in the society. Fegan explains that famine exposes the deep fissures within Irish society, particularly between landlord and tenant, but also between clergy and people, merchants and customers, even between neighbours or family members. In his pre- Famine works, Carleton presents vulnerability to famine as a consequence of the breakdown of the vital relationship of landlord and tenant. (4)

Accordingly, crime, violence and aggression increase in pre- Famine Irish society.

Moreover, in the presence of a corrupt legal and judicial systems, life becomes unbearable. Irish people who belong to different social strata, whether poor, or rich lack confidence in pre- Famine Irish law systems. Poor Nogher M'Cormick, Fardorougha's loyal servant, for instance, expresses his fear to Bodagh Buie and John that Ned, his son and two of his friends may get into trouble if they are legally called upon as evidences against Flanagan. He tells Bodagh Buie that "it's a bad business ... but it can't be helped now; no man's safe that won't join it" (211). Una is also sceptic of the justice of law though she never suspects Connor's innocence. Carleton describes her attitude in the novel saying that "As for Una, it would be difficult to describe her struggle between confidence in his innocence and apprehension of the law, which she knew had often punished the guiltless instead of the criminal" (111).

The climax of the novel is reached when Fardorougha, discovers his ruined state at the very moment when he decides, with struggling difficulty, to pay O'Halloran, the attorney for Connor's defence. He learns from O' Halloran that the county treasurer at whom he keeps all his money has robbed half the county, abandoned his house and escaped. The scene in front of the treasurer's house is extremely telling of a pathetic as well as corrupt Irish reality. The novel shows:

Persons of every condition, from the squireen and gentleman farmer, to the humble widow, and inexperienced orphan, stood in melancholy groups about the deserted mansion, interchanging details of their losses, their blasted prospects, and their immediate ruin. The cries of the widow, who mourned for the desolation brought upon her and her destitute orphans, rose in a pitious wail to heaven, and the industrious fathers of many struggling families, with pale faces and breaking hearts, looked up in silent misery upon the closed shutters and smokeless chimneys of their oppressor's house, bitterly conscious that the laws of the boasted constitution under which they lived, permitted the destroyer of hundreds to enjoy, in luxury and security, the many thousands of which, at one fell and rapacious swoop, he had deprived them. (103)

In "*Crime, Justice and Legal Literature in Nineteenth-Century Ireland*", his recent study of the judicial systems in nineteenth century Ireland, Desmond Greer ensures that "trial practices and procedures" (259) in Ireland are not the same as those in England. What has been allowed in the English justice system is not permitted in the Irish one. Some features of the early nineteenth century criminal justice system in Ireland reveal doubts about the nature of the procedures taken to establish real justice. These features include, for instance, the doubled criteria for trying cases with the death penalty for convicts and absence of such formal panels for appeal against penalties as a court of criminal appeal, for instance. According to Greer: "a higher percentage of those sentenced to death in Ireland before the Famine were actually executed. ... in the absence of a formal provision for appeal against conviction and/ or sentence, much depended on the informal way in which the Lord Lieutenant exercised the royal prerogative" (252).

The novel reveals a fact that pre- Famine Ireland Criminal justice is questionable and it does not always rely on evidence as much as on relations with some authority. For example, the death sentence is imposed on the innocent Connor whereas the criminal Flanagan is left astray. Later on, the death sentence is converted to transportation for life on the intervention of John O'Brien who sees an attorney and collects evidence against Flanagan. John, acting as the mouthpiece of the loyal Irish people who belong to either Catholic, or Protestant Ireland, regrets "That ever the day should come when the government of the country will shamefully and basely truckle to those agitating politicians, who, spiritual or otherwise, keep alive such murderous combinations for their own personal purposes" (211). He desperately

assures M'Cormick who is afraid lest his son's and his two friends' names should be known to the Ribbonmen that:

villain as Flanagan is, we shall let him once more loose upon society, sooner than bring the lives of your son and the two other young men into jeopardy. Such, unhappily is the state of the country, and we must submit to it. ... God help the country in which the law is a dead letter and the passions and bigoted prejudices of disaffected or seditious men, the active principles which impress their vindictive horrors upon society. ... better that one guilty should escape, than that three innocent persons should suffer. (211-12)

This corruption in the criminal justice system in pre- Famine Ireland has led to the increase in the rate of crimes and aggression. It becomes uncertain whether the innocent will be acquitted, or the criminal convicted. Greer asserts that:

The death penalty, the royal prerogative, the question of a court of criminal appeal all threw into focus the fundamental questions of any criminal justice system- did it result in the conviction of the guilty and the acquittal of the innocent? ... In nineteenth century Ireland, the issue tended to be overshadowed by a controversy, amply covered in contemporary writings, over the packing of justice- by Crown or defence- on the basis that the composition of the jury, rather than the evidence, might well determine the outcome of a trial. (253)

In the introduction to his *Chronicles of Ballymacruiskeen*, Carleton sets his aim clearly in any of his works which is:

to improve the character of the peasantry of my native country, whose faults are the result more of circumstances than of vice, but whose virtues are their own, very often in spite of those circumstances. With their moral and physical welfare my heart is identified; and with all their sorrows I have always sympathized, and ever will until that heart shall have ceased to beat. (N.P.)

Indeed,

Carleton is always sympathetic towards his characters and their behaviour and this is quite evident in the novel. He believes that people err because of the difficult circumstances with which they are surrounded, not because they are primarily evil. Flanagan's revenge upon Fardorougha and Connor is not because he is an evil person, but it is the result of seeing his family mercilessly evicted, his brother and sister gone into service and his life ruined. Likewise, the Ribbonmen are forced to commit criminal acts because of extreme poverty and pitiful life conditions. Though Carleton does not approve of aggressive deeds, or criminal resistance, he is certain that Irish outlaws' and highwaymen's behaviour can be morally corrected.

Irishness, Nationalism, Resistance:

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William Carleton's *Fardorougha The Miser*

Thus, this paper presents a study of three main issues that characterize pre- Famine Ireland; Irishness, Nationalism and Resistance. It makes use of Postcolonial theory and Cultural Studies theory as the theoretical framework which provides the appropriate tools required to interpret Carleton's rendering of pre- Famine Irish reality in *Fardorougha The Miser*. Accordingly, Said's postcolonial critique is a suitable tool to explore the effect of British colonialism on pre- Famine Ireland. Besides, Fanon's revolutionary theory and his cultural notions of racism are effectively used to draw upon the atrocious behaviour of the British colonizer towards the natives' culture, the need to appease the colonized's agitated souls and the natives' unrelenting persistence for freedom. Foucault's concepts of power relations and practices of freedom are also adequate for understanding the psychology of resistance in pre- Famine Ireland. The novel at study is a genuine, realistic portrayal of the Irishness of pre- Famine Ireland; its rural landscape, long- suffering lease holders, evictions, poverty and emigration. It also depicts a badly ruled Ireland that is torn between an increasing sense of national identity and a growing current of secret resistance. The novel ends in a happy note, marriage and harmony which is not indicative of the well known ending of a typical romance, but it is reflective of the strong Irish community which, though terribly oppressed could finally emerge as united and harmonious.

Endnotes:

1. With reference to Angus Calder's book *Revolutionary Empire*, Said mentioned in his book *Culture and Imperialism* that "Ireland was ceded by the Pope to Henry II of England in the 1150s; he himself came to Ireland in 1171. From that time on an amazingly persistent cultural attitude existed toward Ireland as a place whose inhabitants were a barbarian and degenerate race". (220)

2. The Gaelic League is an Irish society which is founded in 1893 and had a programme of national culture directed at the revival of the native Irish language. The Leaguers believed it could serve as an impetus for political independence. (Kiberd 99)

3. In his essay, Leerssen mentions that "it is argued that something which can legitimately be called 'Romantic nationalism' indeed took shape Europe-wide between 1800 and 1850" (1).

4. In this respect, MacDonagh further explains the difference between the two cases of Britain and Ireland by asserting that:

The core of English local government in 1800 was the parish and the justice of the peace. But in Ireland the basic unit was the county, and the basic administrative instrument the county grand jury. This simple contrast in itself reveals two fundamental differences between the Irish and the English situations: first, that the Irish ruling class were much too few and scattered to govern individually or in twos and threes after the English fashion; and, secondly, that Ireland was much too poor for so small a unit as the parish to be administratively self-sufficient. In short, Ireland lacked the men and the material which made amateur government endurable in Britain. (34)

5. Since the time of the issuing of the Act of Union in 1801, the Nationalist movements in Ireland are incessant. A new Irish government is formed of Irish activists who are expressive of the Irish people. In the late 1840s, Young Ireland party came into existence to act as the new voice of the Irish people. Then, in 1905, Arthur Griffith initiates the Fenian movement, or Sinn Fein (Ourselves Alone) which aims at reviving the idea of the Irish republic. In his explanation of the strategy of Sinn Fein, MacDonagh states that:

Assuming the illegality of 'British rule'- because the Act of Union was illegal- it looked forward to the development of indigenous organs of government which would quietly come to provide the order currently imposed by an alien, illegitimate power. The British state in Ireland would wither away and the native Irish state took form. (15)

Finally, an independent government in Ireland is formed and the Irish Republic is proclaimed in Easter week of 1916. An Irish nation is ultimately born.

المخلص:

الهوية الأيرلندية، الانتماء الوطني، المقاومة:
دراسة للمجتمع الأيرلندي لفته ما قبل المجاعة الكبرى
في رواية وليام كارلتون *فاردوروجا البخيل*
نادية حشيش

يهدف هذا البحث الي اكتشاف الهوية الأيرلندية، و الانتماء الوطني، و المقاومة كثلاثة مواضيع واصفة للمجتمع الأيرلندي لفته ما قبل المجاعة الكبرى في بدايات القرن التاسع عشر، و ذلك من خلال دراسة نقدية لرواية وليام كارلتون (1794- 1860) الأولى، و هي *فاردوروجا البخيل* (1839). تعد المجاعة حقبة حياتية في كثير من مجتمعات ما قبل الصناعة، و لذلك فان المجتمع الزراعي الأيرلندي لا يعد استثناء من هذه القاعدة. لقد ابتلت المجاعات أيرلندا منذ استفاد زراة البطاطس باراضيها، و ذلك نظرا لاصابة زراعته سواء جزنيا او كليا. تسببت اصابة البطاطس التي ابتلت أيرلندا في عام 1945 في حدوث المجاعة الكبرى. و جذبت الانتباه النقدي علي المستوي العالمي بينما لم تجذب نفس الاهتمام تلك المجاعات الصغيرة نسبيا كالتي حدثت مثلا في عامي 1817 و 1822 سواء من الناحية الادبية، او النقدية. لذلك فان هدف هذا البحث هو استكشاف هذه المرحلة المهمة دراسيا. و يرجع الفضل كله الي كارلتون الذي بدونه لم يكن بالامكان ابا تسجيل تلك المرحلة الحرجة في تاريخ أيرلندا. فقد صور بدقة المجتمع الأيرلندي لفته ما قبل المجاعة الكبرى و الذي كان مرعوبا خشية الجوع، و مفتقرا الي مؤن طعام، و مخزون ثقافي، و مجنيا عليه بسبب احوال المجاعة، و سوء تصرف السلطة، و مهددا بسياسة خاوية، و عنف عشوائي.

لا تعد رواية *فاردوروجا البخيل* انعكاسا لصفة البخل المذمومة، و لكنها نتاج عصرها، عصر ما قبل المجاعة الكبرى، و الفقر، و الحكم الفاسد الذي مزق أيرلندا مل بين احساس متزايد نحو الهوية الوطنية، و تيار أخذ في النمو من المقاومة السرية. و علي عكس تقديم البخل بصورة مذرية في الاعمال الادبية كصورة ارباجو عند موليير، او شايولوك عند شكسبير علي سبيل المثال، فان شخصية *فاردوروجا* عند كارلتون جاءت مثيرة للتعاطف، و جاء بخله مبررا بترعرعه في ظل ظروف قاتمة. استخدم البحث نظرية ما بعد الاستعمار، و نظرية الدراسات الثقافية مستعينا بدراسة ادوارد سعيد النقدية، و نظرية الثورة، و الاراء الثقافية عن التمييز عند فرانتز فانون، بالاضافة الي مفاهيم القوة و ممارسات الحرية عند ميشيل فوكو مما يمد البحث بالادوات اللازمة لفهم الموضوعات الثلاثة السابق ذكرهم، و التي تشكل المجتمع الأيرلندي لفته ما قبل المجاعة الكبرى.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

مجاعة البطاطس الكبرى الأيرلندية، المجتمع الأيرلندي لفته ما قبل المجاعة الكبرى، الاستعمار، ما بعد الاستعمار، الهوية الأيرلندية، الاتحادات الجيلية، الانتماء الوطني، الانتماء الوطني الرومانسي، الاتحاد البريطاني الأيرلندي، حركة التحرر الكاثوليكي، الجيلة، الانجلة، قوانين الاراضي، المقاومة، حركة الاولاد البيض، حركة الشرائط.

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