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The Dictator: A Cross Cultural Image

(The Case of Graham Green and Ibrahim Nasrallah)

by
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Table of Contents

1. Introduction
2. Chapter One: Graham Greene and *The Comedians*
 - Part One: Graham Greene's Background
 - Literature Review on *The Comedians*
 - Part Two: The Novel
 - A- The Journey as metaphor
 - B- Corruption and dictatorship
 - C- Deconstructing the dictator
 - D- Conclusion
3. Chapter Two: Ibrahim Nasrallah and 'Aw
 - Part One: Background of Ibrahim Nasrallah
 - Part Two: The Novel 'Aw
 - A. The General and Power
 - B. Dog as metaphor
 - C. Relation between knowledge and oppression
4. Chapter Three: Image of dictator in both novels
 - Part One: The dictator in *The Comedians*
 - The Dictator in 'Aw
 - Part Two: Differences between *The Comedians* and 'Aw
 - Conclusion
5. Conclusion

Abstract

This study tries to demonstrate how the image of the dictator is an image that has haunted mankind throughout history, regardless of geographic, national, ethnic and cultural differences. In a framework of globalization, this subject can be of interest to scholars in order to see if the image of the dictator is indeed a global image. This thesis tends to examine this theory through a comparative study two literary works that belong to different societies, cultures and times; one is *The Comedians* by Graham Greene and the other is *'Aw* by Ibrahim Nasrallah. Moreover, this study tries to show that literary devices encrypted in these two novels with an image of a dictator as primary protagonist, authentically represent an original human reality that in a culture of social and political suppression, would otherwise never be revealed. By applying Marxist, structuralist and post-structuralist approaches to these novels, this claim is being further supported. The problematic issue that this thesis seeks an answer for is the following: does such a comparative study of literature provide a sufficient answer the above questions regarding the image of the dictator in human perception?

Introduction

According to Roland Barthes, “narratives of the world are numberless. Narrative is first and foremost a prodigious variety of genres, themselves distributed amongst different substances- as though any material were fit to receive man’s stories.” If one takes the above statement into consideration, one of the narratives of the world, that this study attempts to examine, is that of the dictator as a universal image. This will be accomplished through a comparative study of the two works: Graham Greene’s written in 1998 novel *The Comedians* written in 1965, and Ibrahim Nasrallah’s novel ‘*Aw* 1990.

Hayden White in his book *The Content of the Form* emphatically believes that nothing can express a historical political and social situation better than a narrative. White declares that “narrative account is always a figurative account, an allegory” (48). Furthermore, White considers the narrative as a possible “ solution to a problem of general human concern ... the problem of fashioning human experience into a form assimilable to structures of meaning that are generally human rather than culture-specific”(1).

The above quotation epitomizes one of the reasons why this research has chosen two novels from two entirely different historical, political, and social settings. In fact, this difference in the settings is what accounts for the significance of the two novels. For it is the general human meaning rather than the culture-specific that allies these two novels together. Moreover, we have to keep in mind that both Greene and Ibrahim Nasrallah had personal experience and direct association with dictatorship represented by regimes and individual leaders. Greene had the chance while visiting Haiti in 1963, according to R.H.Miller, to live certain episodes that happened at that time in Haiti governed by Papa Doc and was not allowed to enter the country after publishing *The Comedians*. In fact, both he and his novel were banned. As for Nasrallah, who lives in Jordan, at one time had his anthology of poetry confiscated and banned there after twenty years of its publication. In an interview with the journalist Adel Kader Hamida, Nasrallah confesses that when he heard the news he thought that the decision taken was directly by the Publishing House in Jordan. But, to his surprise he discovered that it was by the attorney general who accused

him of “deliberately harming the state, the army, disrupting the peace and causing sectarian rifts.” (<http://www.rezgar.com/m.asp?i=464>).

These incidents that happened to Greene and Nasrallah make them good representatives of two societies that differ in culture, yet share in a common predicament, that of the dictator and his image. This image is taken beyond the cultural and social boundaries and placed within the human concept of tyranny. Figurative language such as metaphor, simile, metonymy, personification, and irony will be one of the tools this study will use in order to depict the image of the dictator in the two selected novels.

The Comedians, was written by Graham Green in 1965. In his book *Understanding Graham Green*, R. H. Miller maintains that in order to understand Green’s novels, plays and stories one should consider them as fictions where two worlds “collide with each other at certain points in the narrative flow. One is an outer world, the geographical place; the other is the inner world that is the human heart. The reader is thus drawn to two worlds, that of a society or culture and that of the human being (1).

This concern with the conditions of the human being is probably what made Greene in the 50’s and 60’s travel to many troubled countries such as Malaya, Kenya, Indochina, Haiti, Cuba and the Congo (Miller, 7). Miller recounts how Greene’s experiences in Haiti consisted of three different journeys over the course of several years the last in which Haiti was “in the depths of the disaster of Papa Doc, Francois Duvalier”. Miller, considers *The Comedians*, an outcome of Greene’s experience in Haiti, as Greene’s longest novels. He believes that this novel marks a particular achievement in Greene’s ability to capitalize on a political theme (116). Travelers to Haiti were warned that the book, *The Comedians*, can be recognized even by the “luggage-rifling thugs” at the airport. Paul Farmer explains that Papa Doc was furious with the exposure and vexed by the ethnographic detail of the novel, because he was a trained anthropologist who knew “that careful observers like Greene are always more difficult to discredit.”

In order to avoid persecution, Greene starts *The Comedians* with a letter to his publisher, A. S. Frere, in which he insists that the narrator Brown is not himself but an imaginary character, and declares that the other characters are imaginary as well. Yet, he stands resolute that, “poor Haiti itself and the character of Doctor Duvalier’s rule are not invented, the latter is not even blackened for dramatic effect.” Greene, being a British

who is free to speak his mind and thus is not afraid to call things by their names, proceeds to sum up the situation to his publisher as full of evil men such as the Tontons Macoute who believe that by spying on the people and controlling them they are protecting the country . But, in reality the country is swarming with many a Joseph- a character in the novel- who “limps the streets of Port-au Prince after his spell of torture” (Greene, 2).

Later on in the story, we are told that “Joseph had always limped since his encounter with the Tontons Macoute” (Greene, 49). In other words we are led to know that it was after Joseph was tortured by Papa Doc’s spies, the Tontons Macoute, that he started to limp. He also confesses that even though he has never met young Philipot, another character in the novel, he has met “guerrillas as courageous and as ill-trained in that former lunatic asylum near Santo Domingo” (Greene, 2). That is to say, Santo Domingo, which is a nearby country, is the asylum that was also ruled by the same regime of Papa Doc’s, which is that of Trojellio’s. In his book *Saints, Sinners And Comedians : The Novels of Graham Greene*, Roger Sharrock considers that the “underlying theme of *The Comedians* is the fear of pain, the tortures that the Tontons-Macoutes are capable of inflicting, always recalled the maimed body of the barman Joseph; and... the climatic scene is when Brown bullied by the Tontons-Macoutes, actually urinates in his fear”. (205).

On the other hand, Cates Baldrige in her book *Graham Greene’s Fictions*, sheds light on the title of the novel which she considers as “centrally significant to its content” (142). Brown, the narrator is able to give an explanation to the meaning of the title, *The Comedians*. After making love to Martha, his lover and the wife of a South American diplomat, Brown admits that “neither of us would ever die for love, but we would grieve and separate and find another. We belonged to the world of comedy and not of tragedy” (143). According to Anthony Burgess, there are ‘committed’ characters, and other ‘uncommitted’ characters. What Burgess means by the committed, are the communists who were fighting against Papa Doc’s regime; such as, Dr. Magiot, a main character in the novel who serves as a voice to fill the reader and narrator in on certain details without which they would have been kept in the dark. The other uncommitted characters are the ‘comedians’ of the title, those who have marginal presence and action (98). Finally, in his book, *The English Novel at Mid-Century*, Michael Gorra considers *The Comedians* as

Greene's longest and "most richly conceived novel" which drained Greene of all energy to the extent he thought he will never be able to write another book (146).

All the literature on *The Comedians* on the social, political, and historical setting of Haiti in the 60's, makes this novel a good choice for this study. Moreover, the fact that Greene, as an author, was described and commended by Duvalier himself as a "careful observer" makes this novel reliable, in the sense that even though Greene is not a Haitian, but being described as 'a careful observer' can be trusted as a writer writing about a country not his.

The second novel that will be dealt with, is the Arabic novel *'Aw* by the Palestinian writer Ibrahim Nasrallah, in 1990. Nasrallah is a Palestinian who was born in a refugee camp in Jordan in 1954 and studied at UNRWA schools, then at the Teacher Training College in Amman. From the Jerusalem Forum, we learn that he worked for *al-Dostur*, *al-Afaq*, and *Hassad* newspapers and was in charge of cultural activities at Darat-al-Funun, a very prominent art and cultural center in Amman. Nasrallah won The Award for Best Poetry Collection published in Jordan and the Arar Literary Award for his body of work. He was also awarded the Jordanian Writers Society Honorary prize three times for three of his poetry collections and the Sultan Oweiss Award in 1998. What brings Nasrallah's novel together with *The Comedians*, is a dictator that appears in both novels. There are very few studies conducted on this novel. One is by a Syrian critic, Dr. Murshid Ahmad, who describes the novel as a well-structured text that employs modern tools to produce a narrative which portrays the political and social problems suffered by man (<http://www.alghad.jo/?news=4106>).

This work which contributes to the identification of comparative literary studies with on-going political issues proves that comparative studies can be in fact a framework that presents us, according to Matei Calinescu in "Literature and Politics", "with images of possible worlds...and this is because the "real" world is incomprehensible unless we see it within the context of possible worlds, of which it is a part" (141).

Trying to examine these two novels, this study will adopt theories of Marxism, and post-structuralism. One of the Marxist theorists this study will use is Fredric Jameson. In *Marxism and Form* Jameson insists that "content does not need to be treated or interpreted...because it is...meaningful in itself, meaningful as gestures in situation are

meaningful, or sentences in a conversation... Thus the process of criticism is not so much an interpretation of content as it is the revealing of it, a laying bare, a restoration of the original message, the original experience, beneath the distortions of the various kinds of censorship that have been at work upon it; and this revelation takes the form of an explanation why the content was so distorted and is thus inseparable from a description of the mechanisms of this censorship itself”(403-404).

In order to try and explain why “the content was so distorted”, Jameson, in the preface to his book, *The Political Unconscious*, cries out, “Always Historicize!” What Jameson means by historicizing is that we should look at the past with our new theories, for it is through what we have experienced and what resulted from that experience that we can understand the past. Moreover, Jameson declares that he has “tried to maintain an essentially historicist perceptive, in which our readings of the past are vitally dependent on our experience of the present...” (PU, 11). Thus, when we look at a work of literature, we should establish a relationship between the historical context in which the work was produced and received in its own times, and the significance of this work for the reader today. “Always historicize!” as explained in *The Jameson Reader*, “is one of Jameson’s mandates and serves as another approach to the task of addressing how each cultural and social object is embedded in a complex web of dynamic relations” (11).

This is also what Marx meant when he explained that “capital should not be conceived as a thing...but as a social relation” (JR, 11). That is to say, social relations are also a power just like that of capital. This could be seen applied in both novels where relationships and lives are constructed around power and where alliances shift and change according to this power. Furthermore, according to *The Jameson Reader*, the novel “has developed in matched studies with capital...The narrative practices of modern literature...thus provide us with one important set of tools and elements for approaching modern history” (12).

To throw further light on this study, the researcher will also consider two of the post-structuralist theoretician, namely, Michel Foucault in *Discipline and Punish*, where he uses “The Plan of the Panopticon”. The study will try to use this plan to understand the way a dictator’s mind works and on the way he builds his power. As for Jacques Derrida, his method of deconstruction will be used in an attempt to cancel hierarchies between

suppressor and suppressed in order to show that both share fear as a common denominator between them and both as humans arrive at the same destination, their demise.

Furthermore, Hayden White in his description of narrative declares that, "To raise the question of the nature of narrative is to invite reflection on the very nature of culture, and possibly even on the nature of humanity itself" (White, 1). In other words, one can consider the narrative as a representation of a certain human reality that can be shared by others, no matter what the cultural background of that other is. Moreover, White also considers the narrative as a possible "solution to... the problem of how to translate knowing into telling, the problem of fashioning human experience into a form assimilable to the structure of meaning that are generally human rather than cultural specific" (White, 1). Hence, when we use the human experience in a narrative, this experience becomes universal overstepping the cultural specifics. In "Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives", Roland Barthes underlines the general humanistic concerns of the novel and remarks that narrative "is present in every age, in every place, in every society; it begins with the very history of mankind and there nowhere is nor has been people without narrative [...] narrative is international, transhistorical, transcultural; it is simply there, like life itself" (Barthes, 251-252). In other words, it is through the novel that we as readers learn that humanistic experience and concerns are universal.

White; moreover, considers narrative important to distinguish "between a discourse that openly adopts a perspective that looks out on the world and reports it and a discourse that feigns to make the world speak itself...as a story" (White, 2). In other words, White distinguishes between a recorded historical discourse and that of the discourse of a narrative.

This distinction, namely, between written history and narration, is explicit in both Greene's *The Comedians* and Nasrallah's *'Aw* which are strongly grounded by a dictatorship embedded in the history of Latin America and the Arab World. Even though, Papa Doc in *The Comedians* is a real historical figure, all the other characters and the events are not. Except for Papa Doc, everything else is fictive. As for *'Aw*, it is written in a land where dictatorship still flourishes; this is why names of places, such as the name of the country, the names of streets and also the name of a specific dictator is not mentioned.

Having this in mind and using the different literary tools and theories, this study will attempt to explore the major theme underlying both the English and Arabic novel which is, namely, that of the image of the dictator. Some of these tools that will be used are: the role of narrator, polyphony, point of view, irony, metaphor, and symbolism.

Finally, the aim of this study is to give a new reading for both these novels. Hence, with the help and use of the literary devices and the use of the various theories such as Marxism where Jameson looks at the novel as a cultural text, and as a socially symbolic act; also, with the post-structuralist as in Foucault's theory of the panoptic which helps the researcher see through the dictator's mind and discover the way it is constructed, and with Derrida's theory of deconstruction that levels and cancels the hierarchies of oppressor and oppressed, with all these theories put together, this study will hopefully accomplish what it claims as true concerning the image of the dictator. What this study claims is true, is that the dictator's image is a universal image. Dictators are the same everywhere and at all times even though each might have their different individualistic qualities.

Chapter One: Graham Greene and *The Comedians*

Part One: Graham Greene's Background

Cedric Watts believes that one, “of the distinctive features of Greene’s life was his readiness to seek and find the ominous and the dangerous, sometimes the hellish amid the ordinary, the horrific within the mundane” (9). Looking into Greene’s life, one can only agree. For, even though Greene was born into a well-off family, he never forgot about the poor, the deprived, or the underdog. Both as a Catholic and a communist, Greene could not step aside and ignore the corruption, hypocrisy, and tyranny in the world around him.

To begin with, Greene who was born on October 2, 1904 was “exceptionally favored by the circumstances of his birth,” (Watts, 9). He was born to an upper-middle-class, and his father was a second master at a private school, Berkhamsted, in Hertfordshire. Greene had an uncle who was knighted in 1911 and another who was a wealthy and successful businessman. Yet, Greene belonged to the intellectual Greens who were also rich (Watts, 9). His mother was the cousin of the novelist Robert Louis Stevenson. He graduated at the age of twenty from Oxford with a second class BA in history. He worked as an unpaid journalist for the Nottingham Journal hoping that after serving an apprenticeship, he might be accepted by a London paper. Soon after, he became sub-editor of *The Times*. He also started his instruction in Roman Catholicism in Nottingham where he was engaged to marry a Catholic (Watts, 15). According to Watts “Catholicism had figured significantly in some of his earlier novels (notably *Rumor at Nightfall*, *It’s a Battlefield*), but in *Brighton Rock* the treatment is more radical and extensive, making it as Norman Sherry puts it, “his first Catholic novel, his first enquiry into the ways of man and God” (40).

However, Greene saw Catholicism in a different light and when once asked “Do you go to church? Do you go to confession? Do you even believe? He replied sharply that he views himself as a Catholic agnostic...a Catholic atheist,” (Murray Roston, 4). On the other hand, Greene’s novel *The Comedians*, is an indictment of the brutal regime of Papa Doc in Haiti. In the final chapter of this novel Greene reveals that “Catholics and communists have committed great crimes, but at least they have not stood aside, like an

established society, and been indifferent” (Neil Sinyard, 6). Anthony Burgess, views Greene’s Catholicism as ‘international’, that is accepted by everybody who is a believer in religion, and that the “politics of Greene are world politics” (Burgess, 95). This is reflected in the light that Greene sees his main character Jones in. Jones plays the role of the savior, in particular, the role of Jesus. This reveals the influence of religion on Greene.

Yet, Greene does find fault in both Catholicism and communism. In his novel, *The Power and the Glory*, “The imperfect priest on the run from the state police searches desperately for a bottle of wine with which to say mass. He procures one, only to have it drained by corrupt and hypocritical representatives of the new order, who toast human progress in it” (Burgess, 95). This quote is translated clearly in the closing passage of *The Comedians*, where Greene’s relationship with communism is revealed in the letter to the narrator “...I have grown to hate the word ‘Marxist’ [...] But communism ...is more than Marxism, just as Catholicism...is more than the Roman Curia... We are humanists you and I...” (Burgess, 97). Similarly, in an attempt to show Greene’s concern and commitment to just causes that concern human rights to freedom, Sinyard quotes Kim Philby who asserted that Greene’s *The Quiet American* is a perfect criticism of the CIA. He does not express his dislike of the Americans but rather of their chauvinism and their belief that they can teach people how to live (Sinyard, 7).

All in all, Greene’s literary life was a very productive one. He started with his novel *The Man Within* (1929), followed by *The Confidential Agent* (1939), *Brighton Rock* (1938), *A Burnt-Out Case* (1961), *The Quiet American* (1955), *The Heart of the Matter* (1949), and ended with *The Last Word and Other Stories* (1990). Greene died on 3 April, 1991.

***The Comedians*, a Literature Review**

According to Paul Farmer’s article “Graham Greene: an apprentice from Haiti”, Greene “introduced the English speaking world to the methods of governance of president-a-vie Francois Duvalier”. Furthermore, a comment by Greene himself, quoted by Cedric Watts in his book *Greene*, Greene reveals, “*The Comedians* is the only one of my books which I began with the intention of expressing a point of view and in order to

fight-to fight the horror of Papa Doc's dictatorship"(108).In a similar vein, Watts describes *The Comedians* as "a political comedy-thriller set in Haiti during the era of the ghoulish dictator, Doctor Duvalier" (76). He describes the era as full of tyranny, corruption, poverty, and decay. Greene knew it at first hand. In this novel one of the main characters is a Major Jones who after various escapades emerges as a courageous hero and dies while defending a group of rebels against the cruel regime. (76) In addition, Judith Anderson in her book *Graham Greene: The Dangerous Edge* tells us that just as *Travels with My Aunt* had its origins in journalism so did *The Comedians*. "Greene's two visits to Haiti were in the fifties, before Papa Doc became president. Though there were extreme poverty in the country...Greene traveled freely, speaking to Haitian poets, painters and novelists...Greene returned in 1963 to a different Haiti under Papa Doc when the capital was barricaded and manned by ragged militiamen" (150). Yet, with all the knowledge of Haiti's history that Greene possesses, the reader should always make the distinction that Greene is not Brown, the narrator. Anderson adds that although "Greene the journalist sounds sometimes like Brown the cynical and apolitical narrator of *The Comedians*, one must remember the novel's directive that Greene is not Brown" (152).

Part Two: The Novel

Looking at *The Comedians*, one should keep in mind the fact that it is not a historical but a fictive narrative. Thus, even though Papa Doc is a real historical figure, and Haiti has its place on the map of the world, yet according to White, *The Comedian* remains a fiction. Hence, in the novel we can consider Papa Doc a character like any other, but we can also compare our knowledge of him as a real historical figure, to what the discourse of the novel and the signs this discourse conveys in describing and revealing him as a fictive figure.

The Comedians is a first narrator novel written in three parts. In an article by Stanislaw Eile and Teresa Hlikowska-Smith explain that a novel written in the first person unifies the subject of the narrative with the subject of the narrated experience in two ways. The first is by continuously shifting from the plane of "the ready-made truths to the plane of the sought-after truths which are subject to the laws of memory and

chronological perspective”.According to the novel, the sought after truths were who killed Dr. Philipot’s death, who maimed Joseph, who are these Tonton-Macoutes, and , namely how does a dictator rule to control the country. Of course, we as readers know the answers from the novel.The second way is by “ interweaving the narrator into a present experience” (123). This is exactly the case in our novel and this is the method this paper will use in order to unfold these truths. Moreover, *The Comedians* starts with ready-made truths, that is the narrator starts by addressing the reader directly and expressing his opinion of military regimes of generals, and also by telling us about the death of Jones, who turns out to be a main character in the novel. But with the narrator embarking on his journey and venturing into a country, Haiti, trodden by corruption and tyranny, both reader and narrator discover the sought- after truths that are eventually revealed at the end.

A. The journey as a metaphor

In the first part, *The Comedians* opens with a scene in one of London’s squares with “grey memorials... equestrian generals ... heroes of old colonial wars, [and]...frocked-coated politicians” (3).The generals are those who “came home safe and paid with the blood of their... men” (3). The first-narrator, a Mr. Brown, is also one of the characters of the novel, and having a first- narrator, a narrative, according to Gerard Genette “lends itself better than any other to anticipation, by the very fact of its avowedly retrospective character, which authorizes the narrator to allude to the future and in particular to his present situation” (67). The alluding onto the present is manifested by our first narrator introducing to us Jones’s death and place of burial when he admits to a truth saying, “I am not to this day absolutely sure of where, geographically speaking, Jones’s home lay” (3).Moreover, this is a comparison made by the narrator about a ready-made truth; that of those generals who supposedly are the heroes while, in fact, the sought-after truth turns out to be different. According to our narrator it becomes clear that Jones is the real and actual hero, for unlike the generals of London’s square, Jones dies for a just cause. When speaking of Jones, the narrator regrets that he doesn’t know where “geographically speaking Jones’s home lay.” Speaking of home, the narrator intended the word to be a metaphor meaning, obviously, more than a place that one inhabits.

The narrator uses the word 'home' to indicate two things: one that since Jones had come to Haiti to fight the dictator. Jones must have considered all places in the world where he can be of help his home. A second meaning would be that of being estranged. The mere fact that the narrator didn't know where exactly Jones came from and where his body lay, means estrangement from his birth place, his home. Yet, the narrator compares the 'grey monuments of equestrian generals' and 'frock-coated politicians' to that of a "stone that commemorates Jones on the far side of the international road which he failed to cross in a country far from home..." (3). We understand from this description that the narrator is presenting us with a point of view. And, since the comparison between the generals and Jones is enormous and somehow ironic, we understand that the narrator is taking the side of Jones. According to Seymour Chatman in his book *Story and Discourse*, "a point of view is the physical place or ideological situation or practical life-orientation to which narrative events stand in relation" (153). The narrator, thus, stands with Jones and we can also predict where he will stand from the events that are to happen later on in the story.

The story starts when the narrator at a point of no return finds himself and Jones "...in the wake of the Medea...bound for Haiti and Port-au-Prince" (3). Yet, when the narrator discovered that sometime in one's life there is a point of no return, he was already on the Atlantic, on a cargo-ship bound for Haiti. The phrase 'in the wake of the Medea' reminds us of the expression in the wake of dawn. Yet, while dawn is the symbol of light and the beginning of a new life, the Medea stands for tragedy and death. For the Medea, in Greek mythology, is a sorceress who ends up killing her children after her husband deserts her. Hence, the Medea heading for Haiti could be a foreshadowing of what is to come. Is the Medea taking them to their deaths? This is a question that keeps echoing in the narrator's mind. For at one time he tells us that when he booked his passage through to Santo Domingo, he promised himself not to leave the ship before receiving certain assurance from the British consul. (9) This means that the narrator is anticipating some danger. The narrator warns the reader of danger when he reiterates, "I value my life more than an empty bar..." (9), meaning the bar at the hotel he owns in Haiti which he is hoping to save. As for the kind of danger, it is clarified by the purser on the ship who with a lot of sarcasm advises the Smiths, an American couple, not to drink

Coca-Cola for as he says, “You will need something stronger than that where you are going” (10). This is clearly sarcasm communicating an intentional mockery of a situation laden with the unexpected. Unfortunately, it does not take long for the unexpected to be revealed later on in the story. For right after the advice the purser gives, he goes on to expose more of what is happening at Port-au-Prince. He tells them, “At night when you hear the shooting in the streets you will think perhaps that a strong glass of rum...” to which Mr. Smith enquires, “Shooting? Is there shooting? ...Why shooting?” (10)

The purser on the ship is a voice besides that of the narrator’s. This is polyphony which is according to Mikhail Bakhtin, “allows a free play between character consciousness and points of view in which the judgments of the narrator are afforded no special privilege and the narrator counts merely as one voice in a dialogue of many” (444). Also, for Bakhtin “all utterances are multivoiced filled with dialogic overtones and overpopulated with the meanings and intentions of others” (444). By using Bakhtin ideas on the dialogical, we can understand why the American couple, the Smiths, understand what is said by the purser differently from what the purser meant. What the purser meant by needing to have a stronger drink than Coca-Cola, is that the bad situation in Haiti calls for a drink that will help them tolerate the situation they are heading into, but being Americans and coming from a completely different background from the purser’s, the Smiths didn’t get the gist of the speech.

Also, later on in the novel, the Smith’s understanding of what is happening in Haiti comes from how they as Americans see things. Yet, for Brown, the narrator, the answer about the shooting differs from that of the purser’s. Brown says, “I’ve not often heard shooting. They act more silently as a rule”. As to who ‘they’ are, the purser gives a direct identification but with a ‘wicked glee’. “The Tontons Macoute,” he answers. They are the “President’s bogey-men. They wear dark glasses and they call on their victims after dark” (10). The bogey-men are supposed to sow fear in the hearts of those who know or hear of them. This gives us an insight into the political situation in Port-au-Prince. Also, it gives us an idea of Papa Doc’s, entourage and modus operandi where everything happens in the dark, the shooting and the investigations. Darkness signifies a cover and to cover something is to hide it. In this case, everything that takes place in Port-au-Prince, we learn, takes place in the dark. It is usually because such a regime has

to keep things under cover and away from the people. That is why everything is done in the dark.

In answer to all this information given to us by the purser and narrator, Major Jones comes out with, "Give me fifty commandos, and I'd go through the country like a dose of salts." The commandos who are to go through the country like a dose of salt, is what Jones believes will be the remedy. This simile, like a dose of salt, could also be a metaphor since, and according to the Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory, it says, "Similes can also be seen as expressions of metaphor, and they may be plain or extended as well"(306). It is Greene's Catholicism that makes him utilize a lot of Biblical images. This metaphor reminds us of Jesus Christ in his Sermon on the Mount when He addressed his disciples with, "You are the salt of the earth" (Mathew 5:13). Both Jesus and Jones want to change the world with this "dose of salts". This place that Jones wants to change is where the narrator, Brown, makes his livelihood. Brown confesses to the Smiths when asked why he's going there knowing the situation "Because the only thing I own is there. My hotel," he answers. Mikhail Bakhtin writes, "social and political events gain meaning in the novel only thanks to their connection to private life. And such events are illuminated in the novel only insofar as they relate to private fates" (109). In the case of Brown, his hotel and coming back to find it is his fate.

As for the political scene, our narrator gives the Smiths an excerpt telling them "A man suspected of being concerned in an attempt to kidnap the President's children...no evidence against him... the Tontons Macoute surrounded his house and set it on fire with petrol and then machine-gunned anyone who tried to escape" (15). Coming from America, the Smiths could not believe or understand. All they were worried about is their mission in starting a vegetarian center. The irony in this, according to Roston, is that "under a regime where ninety-five percent of the population could not in any case afford neither meat, fish, nor even eggs", (108) the Smiths want to start a vegetarian center. Another irony that started with the Smiths is when Mr. Smith says with a strong faith that he's going to be protected. "We have a personal introduction to the Minister for Social Welfare" to which the purser answers with sarcasm, "Welfare? You won't find any Welfare there." (11) This sarcasm is carried further when the American Smith "believes naively in the rectitude of Papa Doc's regime and generously throws money to a crippled

beggar, totally unaware that the moment his back is turned the so-called 'justice of the peace' will brutally snatch it from the mendicant's hand" (Roston, 108).

The purser as well, is a persistent voice building in the minds of the passengers, on pages 12 and 15, a certain conflict of whether to proceed to Port-au-Prince or not. The purser repeats the same advice to the travelers saying that they should go to Santo Domingo instead. Furthermore, the purser explains his hopes to the narrator saying, "I hope we get in before the lights go out." One predicts from this remark that there is a curfew. Then he proceeds, "I suppose they still go out? [...] The town is under martial law." (23) The fact that the purser said, "I suppose they still go out," means that he already knows of what is going on which makes us believe in what he tells us. This is crucial to what happens later on in the story where the narrator had to trust the purser. Also the fact that we can rely on this voice comes in an answer from the captain of the ship when he says later, "I have received orders to land passengers promptly and proceed at once to Santo Domingo. I am not to delay for cargo." (30) This is the voice of the captain of the ship, which is meant to be the voice of authority. This voice is what gives weight to what the purser had already told the travelers about what is happening at Port-au-Prince. Hence the knowledge we gather about the going-on in Port-au-Prince comes through a dialogue among the travelers and narrator at the same time.

This kind of dialogue takes the form of a question and answer which turns dialectic most of the time. Within this dialogue there are very short embedded stories from which the reader builds some knowledge about what life can be like under dictatorship. Thus, these embedded stories, as well as the other literary tools such as the simile, metaphor and symbols that have already been used, also help reveal certain characteristics that contribute to the building up of an image of a dictator. One of these embedded stories is narrated to Brown by the purser. The purser describes the situation to Brown "...you will find nothing has changed for the better... There are barricades on every road out of Port-au-Prince... We have warned the crew that they leave the harbor at their own risk" (27). Then, when he is asked about Papa Doc, the purser shares a story he has heard, "They say he hasn't been seen for three months. He doesn't even come to the window of the palace to watch the band. He might be dead for all anyone knows" (27). This reminds us of Garcia Marquez's novel; *Autumn of the Patriarch*, where one of

the portraits drawn by the narrator starts with "...he would shut himself up in his office to decide the destiny of the nation..." (13). The words 'decide' and 'destiny' are given to an absolute authority, no other than that of God for who can decide a person's destiny other than God, hence, the dictator is given the same quality given to that of a god. In other words, the dictator becomes the personification of a god on earth.

According to Gerard Genette "...narrative discourse is the only one directly available to the textual analysis, which is itself the only instrument of examination at our disposal in the field of literary narrative" (27). Moreover, Seymour Chatman in his book, *Story and Discourse*, goes further to distinguish between story and discourse. For Chatman, "Story is the content of expression, while discourse is the form of that expression" (23). Thus, we can understand that discourse is also the "structure of narrative transmission". As for, *The Comedians*, the structure of narrative transmission is maintained through dialogue. The dialogue takes place among different people; that is we have a polyphony of voices; hence, a close reading is inescapable in order to find the point of view that orients the narrative perspective, that is according to Genette "...the second mode of regulating information, arising from the choice of (or not) of a restrictive point of view" (185-186).

In the case of, *The Comedians*, it is Brown, the first narrator, who directs the narrative perspective. Since Brown is not a hero, but an ordinary character and according to Adamson, "Brown is the least involved of the comedians. Since he is entirely rootless and without belief of any kind, and he knows Haiti well" (153), one would consider him trustworthy, a reliable narrator who is not biased but tells really what happens. Yet, Brown is a very ironical and cynical narrator. Most of his comments are implicit. At one time when the purser asks him why he was going back to Port-au-Prince, "Brown thinking to himself comments, I wasn't going to confide my reasons to the purser. They were too personal and too serious, if one can describe as serious the confused comedy of our private lives," (27).

To compare what is too serious and personal to a comedy of life is a very ironical comment. It reflects a certain bitterness or frustration about the situation Brown might be facing to the extent that he has finally given up on everything. But, Brown carries the irony further when he confesses that, "Life was a comedy, not a tragedy for which I had

been prepared, and it seemed to me that we were all, on this boat with a Greek name, driven by an authoritative practical joker towards the extreme point of comedy” (28). In this quotation, Brown becomes a rebel. He refuses to submit to the tragedy for which he was prepared and insists that life is a comedy. His rebellion is directed towards God calling him “an authoritative practical joker”. By doing this Brown has reduced the authoritative to the practical joker canceling all hierarchies and making them equal; thus, canceling the power of authority. This can be a foreshadowing of what is to happen later and how Brown will behave in a situation where he might need to rebel.

Brown doesn't only reduce the power of God, but also reduces the impact of tragedy and its seriousness to that of a comedy. Brown at one time remembers a phrase he used to hear on Broadway. The phrase says, “I laughed till the tears came”. By remembering this phrase, Brown has leveled laughter with tears; thus, tragedy with comedy by making them equal. This deconstruction of opposites has a purpose and the purpose here is to bring a totally new outlook to life where one is to leave the past behind, live the present and move into a new future. In an article by Mark Poster titled, “The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act” Poster shows how Fredric Jameson looks at a text as a cultural text that “fulfills both an ideological strategy and a utopian impulse”, an impulse to maintain hope for the future. (255). In other words, it is this cultural text that unifies people around the world giving them the right to desire and maintain a hope for a better future; thus giving them the power to change.

Towards the end of the trip, we are introduced to Jones once again and also as a Christ figure, but this time, according to the narrator “wearing his ambiguity like a loud suit...Proud of it like a man who says you must take me as you find me (37). These sentences are full of biblical resonance that remind us of Jesus while on his way to be crucified when he says, “I am telling you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe that I am He. I tell you this truth, whoever accepts me accepts the one who sent me” (John 13: 19-20). The above description of Jones by the narrator brings Jones closer to the image of Christ on his way to be crucified. This is also how Jones sounded when he was already inside the cabin with Brown. A more biblical image of him and a more forceful one is the way he came into the cabin. Brown says that “it was well after mid-night when Jones rapped on my cabin door”. In Mathew 24: 42-44, it

says “Watch therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the householder had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have watched [...] Therefore you also must be ready; for the Son of man is coming at an hour you do not expect” .

Like the householder, Brown was not expecting Jones; in fact he was looking into some private papers thinking of destroying them for the authorities would misinterpret their contents as some sort of treachery against the regime. Thus, together the appearance of Jones and that of Jesus were done in critical and feared political situations. In the case of Jesus, it was king Herode and his oppressive regime that Jesus and his disciples had to face and live with. Even though, the appearance of Jesus gave those who believed in him hope for a better future, yet still there were dark times that his disciples had to face just as Jones’,s appearance was a foreshadowing of dark times, even though he meant well and wanted to help overthrow tyranny. When Jones raps at the cabin door, Brown responds nervously thinking it is the Tontons Macoute coming to take the letters related to the sale of his hotel because “in some of them...dangerous references to the political situation” were included.(36) Hence, as Jones’s character unfolds to us, so does the political situation and with it all the knowledge of what the regime is like.

It is all these biblical images that make intertextuality a successful tool to use in a literary text. In his article, “An Absent Complement and Intertextuality in John 19:28-29” , Robert L. Brawley , citing John Hollander and other critics, comes to the conclusion that “Intertextuality alters what two texts mean in their own independent context by both conflict and consonance. That is, they stand in tension with and extend each other simultaneously. This dialectical relationship is metaphorical, figurative...the play between the texts, like wordplay, produces a meaning that is figurative because it goes beyond the independent meaning of either text” (431), that is it is a metaphor. Also, according to Brawley “This double-edged character of metaphor is a part of its persuasive effect. One side of the metaphor presents a conventional view in order that the other side may transform the conventional into something novel” (Brawley, 431). In the case of *The Comedians*, Jones is set against Papa Doc, while in the Bible Jesus is set against Herode.

According to Brawley’s interpretation, we can say that the Bible represents the conventional side of the metaphor while *The Comedians* is the side that is to transform

the conventional to something new. In the Bible, Jesus was meant to die in order to save the human race, and in *The Comedians* Jones was to fight, win, and change a present full of oppression to one bright with freedom just the same as with Jesus. This is how intertextuality can play a role extending the past into the present to give us a new future “transforming the conventional into something novel”.

At the end of the journey, we know that Jones was introduced to one of the army colonels of Haiti. When Jones asks Brown about this colonel, Brown gives him and at the same time gives us some knowledge of how Papa Doc looks at the army. Brown declares that “Papa Doc doesn’t trust the army,” and that it is better not to predict before one is sure his man is still alive (37). At the end of the journey the reader is left with Brown contemplating a remark Jones has made while looking at the “rolling night”. Jones maintains that “scruples cost a lot” (39). As readers, we are left to wonder with the narrator, Brown, about Jones, his colonel, what the scruples are, and what the cost of these scruples might be. With this in mind Jones comes to Haiti. As for Brown, and after he leaves the boat, he ventures “without much hope to a country of fear” where the dictator’s men, the Tontons Macoute, watch everyone and everything that moves on the ground. With this image in mind Brown introduces us to Haiti, the country of fear. In fact, Brown returns to a deserted hotel, a castrated hotel assistant, Joseph; an already doomed love affair, and an unknown corpse lying in the hotel’s swimming pool. This is the dictator’s waste land. Brown comes to Haiti with high hopes. He tells us “I remember thinking I am going to make this the most popular tourist-hotel in the Caribbean”, then he suddenly realizes that he might have succeeded “if a mad doctor had not come to power and filled our nights with discords of violence instead of jazz”(59).

The violence manifests itself the minute Brown arrives at his hotel, in the bleeding corpse of Dr. Philipot, an ex-minister in the government of Papa Doc. Discovering the dead body, Brown calls an old and trusted friend of his and his mother’s, a Dr. Magiot, for advice on what to do with the body. The first thing that Dr. Magiot does is to make sure that the corpse has nothing on it that would indict Brown because according to him the devilish dictator “is like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour” (96). Magiot compares Papa Doc to both a devil and a lion in search of something to put his teeth in. Injustice to people and turning innocent people into preys

are a necessity for a dictator's survival. Dr. Magiot, even expresses his delight that Brown's mother is not there to see this for according to him "One Hitler is sufficient experience for one life time" (96). Under Hitler's regime people rushed their lives to escape, and under Papa Doc people were escaping by taking their own lives. Dr. Philpot believed, that taking his own life would leave his wife and a six-year-old only son safe. Brown expresses fear that the servants at the hotel may find out about the corpse and expose the secret. But we are reassured by Magiot that "They'll be afraid to talk. A witness here can suffer just as much as the accused" (100).

Thus, so far we have all these images, similes and events to help build an image of a dictator. Also, the many adjectives in the text help bring Papa Doc's dominance and oppression alive. Brown describes Papa Doc "Clothed in the heavy black tail-suit of graveyards," and that he peers at people through thick lenses with expressionless eyes, expressionless because of the cruelty inside him that he has built as a defence mechanism to shield him from guilt. (113). These adjectives of black, heavy, thick, graveyard-like, and expressionless eyes are loaded with meanings representing the image of the dictator, Papa Doc, who does not only look at his people through his thick lenses but peers at them as if to penetrate their heads and find what plots they may be entertaining.

This reminds us of Michel Foucault's theory of discipline where he investigates the power of space distribution. What concerns me as a researcher is Foucault's idea of psychological control over the suppressed. Foucault in his book, *Discipline and Punish*, and in his definition of Disciplinary space states that the "aim was to establish presences and absences...to be able at each moment to supervise the conduct of each individual, to assess it, to judge it, to calculate its qualities or merits" (143). I think, this could also be true of a picture "peering" all the while not only at civilians coming into government offices, but it also over those who run these offices. This definitely shows a dictator's distrust in everybody and thus his fear of everybody. This is why we are told later by the narrator that "In a dictatorship ministers come and go...only the chief of police, the head of the Tontons Macoute, and the commander of the palace-guard had any permanence-they alone could offer security" (115). At the Secretary's office Brown with Smith are later accompanied down a long corridor of cells to find Jones sitting on an upturned bucket "His face was criss-crossed with pieces of plaster and his right arm was bandaged

to his side” (115). Brown and Smith bail him out. The next day, and while Brown is reading Smith’s article on Smith’s project of founding a vegetarian center in Haiti, Joseph arrives with news about Dr. Philpot’s body being discovered. This, of course, makes sense since we already know that Magiot and Brown had buried the body the night before in a place far enough from the hotel. Having no idea about Dr. Philipot’s fate, Smith shows regret to the fact that Dr. Philpot will not be able to read his article.

The importance of Smith’s article and Philipot’s death sounds very cynical. What is worse is the fact that Smith right after finding out about Philipot’s death, considers taking his article to Papa Doc, the person who caused Philipot’s death. Smith thinks that “From him I can expect a sympathetic hearing, for before he went into politics he won golden opinions as a doctor during the great typhoid epidemic some years ago” (123). This reminds us of how in a multivoiced narrative we can have more than one opinion, and that it could be dialogical as Bakhtin believes since Smith as a person who cares for the well-being of people sees our dictator as a doctor as a doctor who has saved people in an epidemic. This is also an irony since we know more than Smith does about the killings and not the rescuing done by this doctor, Papa Doc.

Over and above, irony and sarcasm also show in Brown’s answer to Smith when the latter asks Brown what he thinks of the article on the vegetarian center. Brown answers very sarcastically that “It should please the authorities” (123). And when Smith is advised not to mention the name of Dr. Philipot in the article’ he could not understand why. But we know that Smith is a different voice from that of Brown since he comes from a different background and vocation. Smith had to be reminded that the government “may be sensitive about him at the moment” since “he had spoken ill of the president” (124). Over and above, Smith insists on going with his wife to Philipot’s funeral. At the burial ceremony and when the militia intercepts the hearse not allowing it to pass, Smith stands in total shock of what is happening. As an American, he could not understand what could happen under a dictatorship. Even when Madam Philipot explains to him that they “murdered him, and now they will not even allow him to be buried in a plot of ground”, Smith still insists: “There must be a mistake, surely” (126).

The burial ceremony; however, is another incident that adds to our understanding of what a dictatorship is capable of doing, thus adding another image of a dictator, in this

case the image of sacrilege not allowing the dead to be buried. It is when Brown, with Madame Philipot and the Smiths are left alone with the hearse that they “listened in silence to the other silence on the road” (129). That other silence is nothing but their expectation of a certain eruption happening which materializes right after the Tontons Macoute with their “soft hats and very dark-sun-glasses” appear carrying “guns on their hips,” going up to the hearse and smashing the glass. Brown stood helpless. He tells us that “Madam Philipot didn’t move or speak, and there was nothing I could do. One cannot argue with four guns,” he adds “we were witnesses, but there was no court which would ever hear our testimony” (130). To be witnesses and have no courts is a situation full of sarcasm and irony.

In her book *Irony* Claire Colebrook defines this situation as “an irony of existence; it is as though human life and its understanding of the world is undercut by some other meaning or design beyond our powers” (14). When finally the four militia men take the hearse with the body away from his wife and friends, Brown declares that “in a dictatorship one owns nothing, not even a dead husband” (131). Brown voices another conclusion about the regime after an argument he has with one of the four men. Brown comes to an understanding why “these men wore dark glasses”. He realizes that “they were human but they mustn’t show fear,” and he concludes that if they do, then “it might be the end of terror in others” (132). Thus, the dark glasses become their defense mechanism which they use in order to hide their weakness. Also, Brown discovers why they took the corpse away. He asks “What use to any one was the body of an ex-Minister?” For, a corpse couldn’t even suffer. The answer comes as a grounded truth when he declares to us “But unreason can be more terrifying than reason” (132).

Therefore, from this embedded story we learn more about a dictatorship from which we can draw some truth about a dictator. This is how in a place where, according to Brown, “nightmares are real...More real than ourselves”, and in a place where “Cruelty’s like a searchlight...sweeps one spot to another” (173), a group of guerrillas were trying to establish themselves. So, one night while Brown was enjoying an evening at the Peruvian embassy with the ambassador and his wife, Dr. Philipot’s cousin, Henri Philipot is introduced into the room. Philipot announces he and some men are plotting against Papa Doc, and they “need a few men of guerrilla experience” to teach them how

to use a Bren. When the ambassador tries to make light of the conversation inviting him to a cigar and a drink, and considering that we are nothing but comedians and that “Perhaps even Papa Doc is a comedian”(140), Philipot objects strongly saying “Oh no. He is real. Horror is always real.” (141) It is, then all the other characters in the novel that are the comedians, that is those who are not real, those who are only playing a part in a play. But, as for Papa Doc he is real and what makes him more real is the horror he is identified with. Moreover, we can always identify Papa Doc as real by going back to history, the history of Haiti.

After this sudden meeting with Henri Philipot, the narrator leaves the embassy and drives along the seaside describing the road as “pitted with holes” (148). This statement is another metaphor foreshadowing the dangers and difficulties that are to follow. Finally, Brown arrives at a brothel where he finds Jones accompanied by the Tontons Macoute who had smashed the windows of the hearse of Dr. Philpot earlier. The name of this Macoute is Captain Concasseur, meaning ‘the breaker’ which later on in the novel he proved to be. It seems that Concasseur and Jones got together by mistake. Concasseur had mistaken Jones for another person who was supposed to have bought the army arms in Miami, and Concasseur took him thinking he will eventually have a share of money from the arms deal. Brown, shocked to find Jones carrying on with this game, left him with a note to “be careful...He’s dangerous” (158) meaning Concasseur. With this note the first part of the novel is concluded.

B. Corruption and Dictatorship

Part Two of *The Comedians*, is dedicated almost all to the Smiths and their project of establishing a vegetarian center in Haiti. This part projects mainly the corruption of the system under a dictatorship and is full of irony and symbolism. In fact, the first chapter opens up with an ironical conversation going on between Mr. Smith, the Minister of Welfare, and with narrator Brown acting as their translator. Brown is given the role of translator at this point in the novel in order to bring the reader to some understanding of what goes on within a dictatorship. The conversation starts with Smith apologizing for having had his letter of introduction addressed to Dr. Philpot in the first place. He expresses his regrets to the Minister to which the latter, when reminded of

Philipot, emphasizes that they, meaning his government “Will probably never know” what exactly happened to Philipot since he was “a strange moody man” and “his accounts were not in good order”. When Smith faces him with “Are you suggesting he’s killed himself?” the Minister answers “Perhaps, or perhaps he has been the victim of the people’s vengeance” for the Minister explains, “We Haitians have a tradition of removing a tyrant in our own way” (164). This is an answer full of irony since we know that Dr. Philipot is no tyrant, in fact, he is the victim of the real tyrant, Papa Doc. Not only does the Minister deny what had happened to Dr. Philipot, but he also denies his knowledge of what happened at the funeral. And when confronted with the details by Mr. Smith, he tries to convince Smith that “the coffin was filled with stones” (164).

This is another clear picture given to the reader by this embedded story that makes us as readers have an idea of what usually takes place in a dictatorship and in particular the dictatorship in our novel. What is worse is the Minister admitting theft of what, he corrects himself, to have been bricks and not stones in the coffin. When Smith asks in a shock, “Stones?” the Minister answers shamelessly “Bricks to be exact brought from Duvallierville, where we are constructing our beautiful new city. Stolen bricks” (165). Knowing that what is in the coffin is nothing else but Dr. Philipot’s corpse, we are brought to think that bricks stand as symbols of corpses over which the city of Duvallierville is being constructed.

Another incident full of irony, is when Smith pretends to believe the Minister and tells him, “This new city of yours, Duvallierville, might provide an admirable situation...New ideas need new shapes and what I want to bring to your republic is a new idea” (167). This statement is ironical, for we know that what Smith wants to bring to the country, at this point, is no more a vegetarian center but in reality he is alluding to a new type of government. The corruption, though, is seen later when the Minister suggests to Smith indirectly that “Of course, our government would make the final decision between the tenders” and that “There are the amenities of Duvallierville to be considered” (167). Smith concludes that if he wants to establish his center he will have to stretch his money to satisfy the “Treasury. And the Customs. The Imports...” (167). The ‘stretching of the money’ is an indication of bribery which is one of the incidents portraying corruption.

When Smith is finally taken to the site where Duvallerville is to be constructed, he asks where the people are. He says “I don’t see many folk around here,” to which the Minister replies, “There were several hundred on this very spot living in miserable mud huts. We had to clear the ground. It was a major operation. (175). In this case, the major operation is a metaphor that stands for the uprooting of poor people from their own lands and homes. Then, Smith looks around and sees many beggars and dares to face the Minister with “You have your beggars then,” to which the Minister tries to explain that the man he sees begging “...is no beggar. He is an artist” (177). This is one of the common lies used in a dictatorship to distort the truth. When Smith offers to pay this artist some money, the Minister refuses telling him “No need. The government looks after him.” (177)

C. Deconstructing the Dictator

Towards the end of Part Two, we meet the purser of the *Medea* suddenly at a bar where he mistakes Brown for Jones. The purpose of this sudden appearance of the purser is to remind us of all the passengers who were on the *Medea* and to remind Brown of the happier days before he landed in Haiti. Also, Brown confesses to the purser that the Smiths “flew out today. Disappointed” (215). Part Two ends with Brown anticipating the air “full of coming rain” as the two friends bid good night to each other leaving the reader wondering what kind of rain it is and whether it is real rain and not a symbol of trouble coming our way.

With Brown’s metaphor of the “pitted road full of holes” that he takes after leaving the embassy, we approach the third and last part of the novel. Brown opens the first chapter with “I found it hard to sleep. The lightning flashed on and off as regularly as Papa Doc’s publicity in the park” (221). Thus, we know that Papa Doc’s picture doesn’t hang only in the government offices watching over the employee’s loyalty to the regime, but it also dominates public places making sure that no body dares to even think of disrupting order. Then Brown tells us, “I fell asleep and dreamt I was a boy kneeling at the communion-rail... The priest came down the row and placed in each mouth a bourbon biscuit, but when he came to me he passed me by” (221). Even in his dream he wonders why he is left out and surrounded by caged parrots when he hears someone calling

“Brown, Brown” , but doesn’t wake up until he hears his name called for a third time. Brown tells us, “I awoke and a voice came up to me from the verandah below my room” (221). His name being called three times and a voice coming to him reminds us of Jesus asking Peter three times “Do you love me?” and Peter answering him “Yes” (Mathew 21:15-19).

This biblical image is to be repeated when Brown switches on his torch to find that “The light fell on the path leading to the bathing-pool. Presently, round the corner of the house and into the circle of the light, came Jones” (223). One cannot ignore this glaring biblical image calling us to remember Jesus’ transfiguration on the mountain when suddenly “the appearance of his countenance was altered, and his raiment became dazzling white” (Luke 9:29). This is a foreshadowing of what is to happen to Jones later. Jones, after being found, barges into Brown’s hotel insisting “I’ve got to get out quick. Somehow” (222). We know from Jones that he is being suspected of leading Concasseur on. For he tells Brown “Concasseur was speaking from Miami...He wasn’t suspicious yet, only puzzled” (222).

In such a regime it is enough for a person in authority to be puzzled to get someone’s head. Jones it seems has invented a story to Concasseur that he has something to do with a shipment of arms but the “American authorities were tipped off, the arms were seized” (224). Brown takes him to hide on the Medea, and after begging the captain accepts. Yet, trouble doesn’t stop here for the government looking for him sends “the worst police-officer to search the boat. The captain refuses that any such thing happen on the Medea for it is considered Dutch territory. To his good luck Jones escapes, but the captain insists that he leave the boat. Finally, after dressing him up like a woman, Jones accompanied by the narrator and the purser go to the gangway where the latter tells him, “You must kiss me” (232). This incident reminds us of Jesus at the table with his twelve disciples when he says, “I say to you, one of you will betray me”. And it turns out to be Judas who betrays Jesus when he tells the chief priests, “The one I shall kiss is the man seize him” (Mathew 26:48). From the Medea Brown takes Jones to the only place he knows to his lover’s embassy. Jones stays there till his last journey. Everybody falls in love with him starting with the dog to the ambassador to the kids up to Brown’s lover, the ambassador’s wife, Martha. The reciprocal attention between Jones and Martha drives

Brown crazy with jealousy. One day Dr. Magiot comes to Brown and tells him, "I had a message from Philpot. He's in the mountains behind Les Cayes, but he plans to move north. He has a dozen men with him including Joseph. He wants to join with the guerillas near the Dominican border [...]. He needs Jones" (252). Brown wonders "Why Jones?" to which Magiot answers, "He has a great belief in Jones" (252). Hence, it is faith and belief in Jones that drives young Philipot to send for Jones so Jones could take care of the twelve men in the mountains just as Jesus was taking care of his twelve disciples.

Another biblical image, is before Jones leaves the embassy when he knows of the disappearance of one friend. He tells Brown, "Give me my old company back, and I'd go through the police station like a dose of salt till I found him" (258). And that was what Philipot needed. He needed Jones and thus sought his company (294). To use the Bible in this context, is to show that human fate should be in his own hands. In the case of Jones, he decides to do something about Papa Doc and his oppressive regime. Thus, Jones takes his fate in his own hands. The verb "sought" is used by Jesus when he tells us, "Seek and you shall find". Philipot did seek and he found Jones more than ready to join him. But, it was Brown who seduced Jones into accepting to join Philipot in the mountains. Brown didn't do it out of love for Jones, but out of jealousy over Martha. We know that Brown knows that Jones is no fighter, yet still he challenges Jones into going. This reminds us of the betrayal Jesus had spoken of to his disciples and the kiss the purser gave to Jones at the gangway of the boat. It sounds like Brown is betraying Jones when he takes him to Philipot. The road they take to Philipot's proves to be "pitted and full of holes". Brown describes it saying, "Dank huts wobbled in the headlights beside the road, the mud and thatch broken and bedraggled in the rain: no lamps burned, there was no human being to be seen, not even a cripple. In the small yards the family-tomb looked more solid than the family huts" (277).

This is definitely not Papa Doc's beautiful city Duevallierville, but the city of the poor and deprived living under Papa Doc. Finally, Brown finds what he was looking for. He says, "At last my torch picked out what I was looking for: a cemetery on my right, stretching uphill into the dark" (280). This cemetery was supposed to be Jones's hiding place till Philipot would come and take him into the mountains. The cemetery is also the place where Jesus was to wait before rising up from the death on the third day. Jones says

to Brown with apprehension “I doubt if anyone comes here except to bury the dead” (282). But, he is proved wrong when Brown leaving Jones asleep ventures into the road to find a jeep standing facing the cemetery and Concasseur’s voice whispers to him “Stay just there...Don’t move [...] I am taking you and Major Jones back to Port-au-Prince. Alive, I hope. The President would prefer that” (288). Suddenly, Jones appears behind surprised Brown. Concasseur orders him to get into the jeep and strikes him on the face calling him “You cheat” when out of nowhere Philipot and Joseph appear. They finish off Concasseur and his driver by shooting them. Brown describes Jones who had watched the scene telling us, “Jones was there, kneeling beside the tomb in the attitude of prayer, but the face he turned to me was olive-green with sickness. He had vomited on the ground” (289). What is worse is when he asks Brown to, “Please don’t tell them, but I’ve never seen a man die before” (289).

This is when we are sure that all the stories Jones used to brag of were nothing but lies. Jones though didn’t want Philpot and Joseph to know. He did not want to let them down nor their dream to vanish. When finally Brown and Jones are transported to the mountains Brown sits watching Jones talking and listening to the men compassionately. Brown tells us, “The men clustered close; they couldn’t understand a word he said, but it was as though a leader had come into camp” (295). Brown at this point leaves Jones with the guerillas and is smuggled into the Dominican Republic for his safety. There Brown meets the Smiths for the last time and bids his final goodbye to his beloved Martha, and heads to Monte Cristi looking for work. On his way Brown is stopped at a military post where he is told by a lieutenant that “There is a lot of firing on the other side of the international road. Wild firing” (299). He also tells Brown that twenty guerrillas were killed. Brown remembers Philpot, Jones, and Joseph. After few hours of waiting, the lieutenant tells him that the fighting has subsided and that he can pass. Just then Brown sees “...Dominican soldiers...plodding up the road to the post... They bore their rifles slung and carried in their hands the weapons of the men who had emerged from the Haitian hills and who walked a few paces behind them...”. Then Brown tells us “...at the tail of the column I saw Philpot...but I don’t think he recognized me...At the very end of the small column two men carried a stretcher. On it lay Joseph. His eyes were open, but he couldn’t see the foreign country into which they were carrying him” (301). This is a

scene that reflects a typical situation in a dictatorship. This is an oxymoron where Joseph's eyes are open but they cannot see. This reflects the frustrating situation of the oppressed knowing what is happening but cannot act. It also reflects freedom of speech where everybody has a mouth but cannot speak.

Then, Brown manages to take Philpot and his wounded comrade into his car away from the other captured guerrillas. On his way, he asks Philpot "And Jones- is he dead?" Philpot answers "By this time". Then Brown comes up with the important question, "Was he all that you hoped?" to which Philpot assures him saying, "He was a wonderful man. With him we began to learn, but he didn't have enough time. The men loved him"(302). Brown then tells Philpot, "I would like to find his body. I would like him to have a proper grave. I'm going to put up a stone where we crossed the frontier, and one day when Papa Doc is dead, we shall put a similar stone at the spot where he died" (303). This similar stone on both Jones and Papa Doc's graves cancels all hierarchies between persecuted and persecutor, thus, diminishing authority.

Brown ends with another dream of Jones. He dreams that Jones is lying among the dry rocks on the flat plain next to him, and Brown asks him, "Why are you dying, Jones?" Jones answers simply, "It's my part, old man, it's in my part" (309). Hence just as Jesus had to die for the scriptures to be fulfilled", and Herode lives, so it is in *The Comedians* that Jones dies, so that Papa Doc lives.

In conclusion, I can say that this ending of *The Comedians*, also, confirms the idea of Anthony Burgess on Graham Greene's beliefs. Greene believed that even though Catholicism and Marxism did commit crimes, but "they have not stood aside...and been indifferent" (Burgess, 6). Moreover, from this ending of the novel, one can conclude that Jones represented Greene's beliefs in both Catholicism and Marxism. For, as a Marxist, Jones has died fighting against injustice, and as a Catholic, he died for the deprived and poor and just like Jesus his body couldn't be found. Yet, what remains important is the fact that throughout, the image of the dictator shone clear in all the events of *The Comedians*. Maybe, this is what makes them the comedians, puppets in the control of the regime.

Chapter Two: Ibrahim Nasrallah and 'Aw

Part One: Background of Ibrahim Nasrallah

The second author that this study is considering to compare with Graham Greene is Ibrahim Nasrallah. Nasrallah was born in Ilwihdat refugee camp in Jordan, in 1954. He studied in the UNRWA schools in the camp where he got his teaching degree from a training college there. Then, he went to Saudi Arabia where he taught for two years: 1976-1978. Later, Nasrallah worked at *Dostur*, *Afaq* and *Hasad* newspapers. Now he is in charge of cultural activities at Darat-al-Funun in Amman. Nasrallah received many awards some of which are: The Award for Best Poetry Collection published in Jordan, The Arar Literary Award for his body of work, and the Jordanian Writers Society Honorary prize three times for three of his poetry collections. He also received the prestigious Sultan Oweiss Award in 1998. Nasrallah is a member of the Sakakini General Assembly, a cultural, non-governmental, and non-profit organization founded by the Palistinean Khalid Sakakini. In 2001 he donated all the proceeds from his poetry collection "*Maraya al- Malai'ka*" (*Mirrors of Angels*) to the Sakakini. This collection was written in tribute to the infant, Iman Hijjo, who was killed by the Israeli shelling of Gaza on May 7, 2001. (<http://www.jerusalemities.org/poem/nasralah.htm>).

Ibrahim Nasrallah and His Works:

Moreover, Nasrallah has also many novels, some of which are: *Barari al- Hama* (1985), *Hares al- Madina* (1998), *'Aw* (1990), and *Tufl al- Mamhat* (2000), and others. In a daily newspaper, *al-Waqt*, Nasrallah tells of his experience in both poetry and fiction. He says, "Poetry has tightened its grip around me...It has become completely thwarting... Thus, I committed the act of narration." This is how the Palestinian writer starts deliberating about his life to *al-Waqt* declaring that hadn't he lived in a refugee camp and hadn't he been exposed to the problems that ensued from such a life, his writings would never have been what they are. He would have been a different person with a different outlook to life. He tells Hussein Merhoun, his interviewer, how he started as a poet at a very early age. In his opinion, poetry was a normal outlet for a young boy living and experiencing life in a camp. But, as he grew up his outlook to the world

matured and so did his poems. Still, Nasrallah believes that poetry is an expression of the personal while a narrative expresses a more developed consciousness of what goes around in one's life socially, politically, and otherwise. When asked whether his novel *al-Malhat al-falastinyah* is a rewriting of Palestine's history, he answered that for him history is a dangerous thing to be retold. He believes that a historical novel may well be transformed into a documentary. Nasrallah describes history as a spoon of sugar that can sweeten a cup of tea and that is how history should be used when writing a novel.

It is true that Nasrallah is a recent author, but he is deeply rooted in the problems of the region, and has his works banned in Jordan which could mean that these works cause enough discomfort for the regime that banned them. Not only were his works banned, but in an interview with Abdel Kader Hamidah, in the journal *al-Hiwar al-Mutamaden*, Nasrallah reveals that he was accused of plotting against the government and the army in an attempt to destabilize the security and the peace of the country.

In conclusion, even though Greene and Nasrallah come from two completely different backgrounds, socially and geographically, and even with the difference of time- 1965 and 1990- in which each has written his novel, still, what brings them together is that both are fighters for justice, both have stood with the poor and deprived and; moreover, both have written about a dictator, each in his own way.

Part Two: The Novel 'Aw

Examining Ibrahim Nasrallah's novel 'Aw, the reader cannot escape the heavy pace of the story where the voice of a general reigns supreme throughout the novel ringing with words laden with meaning resonating power and oppression, and where the oppressed is imprisoned within his own interior dialogue writhing with frustration, not being able to escape. Not only does the interior monologue reflect this entrapment, but so does the circular frame of the novel where everything ends from where it has started. Moreover, the ever-present metaphorical image of the dog is a major contribution that helps in building up the image of the dictator, represented by the general. The parallel description of how the general treats the dog and how he treats Ahmad Al-Safi, adds to the image of the dictator and his belief in his ability to tame people the same way he can tame a dog. All these literary tools work together to build a true image of a dictator.

'*Aw* is presented in different episodes by a third-narrator who is able to delve into the minds of the two main characters of the story, namely, Ahmad Al-Safi, a writer and a journalist, and the dictator general. The narrator is covert, omniscient, and detached from the action himself. He is also capable of peering into the characters' minds and projecting their most intimate thoughts. For Seymour Chatman in, *Story and Discourse*, "the narrator is given omniscience in order to trace the second-by-second interplay of attitudes..." (219). Chatman also believes that, "This is omniscient precisely because it evokes clear plot movement" (218). Not only does the narrator trace the attitudes of the character, but also their thoughts which Chatman calls "Internal Analysis" (209). Furthermore, Chatman adds that, "The most obvious and direct means of handling the thoughts of a character is words-the exact words, diction, and syntax, as "unspoken speech" in the character's mind-have been taken down. The narrator is a bit more prominent by assuming this function...The result is direct free thought (182), which helps the reader build a clear and vivid image of the dictator.

'*Aw* opens with a direct thought, with the words of the general ringing in the reader's mind. "I oppressed, thus I felt safe, so I slept" (7). With these words the novel starts, introducing us from the first page to the general surveying what had happened during the day. He remembered getting mad at his guards because they wanted to escort him while driving to his new house in the forest in the suburb. He was confident that after what he had done, he didn't need to be surrounded by bodyguards. He even rolled his window down at the traffic light and looked into the woman's eyes in the car next to his who has recognized him. "He smiles: I have reared this town myself...I have taught it day by day how to be docile, and I have paid with my nerves and my life in order to pass through it feeling safe"(7). The fact that the general is presenting himself as a father to his countrymen sounds very ironical. When he addresses the city, he is in fact addressing its citizens. But he is not like any father. He is a father, a patriarch, who has taught his children docility, and to be docile, according to Franklin's dictionary and thesaurus, is to be "easily taught, led, or managed" which means you have to be subdued. Thus, this sentence is laden with the power of control. Moreover, what a father figure indicates is namely discipline. Foucault in *Discipline and Punish*, explains how discipline fixes, arrests, and regulates movement, and how it clears up confusion, dissipates compact

groupings of individuals roaming the country in an unpredictable ways. Foucault also sees how discipline is used as a must to “master all the forces that are formed from the very constitution of an organized multiplicity...neutralize the effects of counter-power that spring from them and from a resistance to the power that wishes to dominate it: agitation, revolts, spontaneous organizations, coalitions- anything that may establish horizontal conjunctions”(219).

This disciplinary power is manifested in the different events in the novel. The first sign of this disciplinary power is evident with the general fully confident that no one will dare touch him, rolls down his bullet-proof window and stares out at the couple in the car next to his which makes them look away, while a taxi driver salutes him “with fear constraining his face” (8). Feeling safe, the general repeats addressing himself, “I oppressed, thus I felt safe, so I slept. I even walked the streets fearlessly” (8). As readers we cannot but notice that the general addresses himself using the third person pronoun. Addressing himself in the third person, he is adding more reverence and importance to his person. Also, as the general was driving along the streets of the city, which the narrator describes as full of “streets stretching out like black ropes connecting towns with other towns, houses to other houses, and each moment to the moment following it”, we experience a feeling of emptiness and dreariness. This feeling reflects strongly the individual’s estrangement and alienation even within one’s own hometown. The narrator compares this alienation to “a container ignorant of what it contains, or shirts that are unfamiliar to their wearers” (8). But, along with using the metaphor of the container, the narrator compares the people of the city to a “black sector in a black everlasting night” (8); thus, using the color black not only to indicate alienation, but also the inability to reveal an incident or event that might have occurred. The “everlasting black night” is also an indication of the longevity of this oppressive regime.

As the general reaches the top of an unknown hill, after crossing a difficult winding and twisted road, and having had to “ascend”, “take sharp turns”, and “climb a steep hill”, he suddenly finds himself in what seems to be an observation tower where the city lies naked before his very eyes, not even able to hide itself in its own alleys” (8). This is a strong metaphor of the city standing in the nude like a woman. To be in the nude is to be exposed, and to be exposed makes one vulnerable and to show vulnerability is to

show weakness. Moreover, being nude and exposed means that you are giving all that you have away; thus, you are left with no secrets or privacy. This is what all dictators wish for. They aim at establishing and implanting in their subjects' minds, the idea that they see all and know all. In fact, this pretence of having all this knowledge is what gives the dictator power. Thus, with this metaphor of the city standing helplessly in the nude, the dictator is able to see through his "subjects" in order to keep them under his control. It is this knowledge that the dictator uses as a tool for his power. Simon During in *Foucault and Literature*, describes how Foucault understands this power of knowledge. He explains that, "...Foucault argues that such binding of power on knowledge "transforms human beings into subjects" and the word subjects has two meanings. One means "subject to someone else by control and dependence," and the second means "tied to one's own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge" (153).

This is why when the general discovers in the middle of the country a forest that he had no inkling it existed, felt shocked: "A forest with this beauty in the middle of this country and it is only by chance that I find it ... There must be something else that I don't know about as well" (9). The next day his bodyguards make sure to raise a sign with a new name of the forest bulldozing the old name and the pine trees to make it a clear spot with nothing to hinder the general's view or block his view of the naked city. With this done, the narrator tells us how the following day the general "roamed over the forest in a sky full of grounded pine trees, laughed like a hurricane and felt orgasmic" (9). The narrator compares the general's laughter to a hurricane giving him a power that can be endowed only by nature. Furthermore, the grounded pine trees are a symbol of men being castrated physically and mentally vis-à-vis his strength and capability. This is what probably makes the general revel in his male potency and thus feels orgasmic. He then talks to himself saying "Now the forest has no more secrets to hide... I have uncovered all its secrets... Not only this... On the top of this hill I will be seen as a statue of destiny standing upright in front of all to see" (9). It is also this hill, this summit at the center of the city where he can witness all that happens which adds to his strength. As mentioned by During "for Foucault, sovereign power is possessed by a presence at the center of society" and that "Behind the presence of the king stood God himself" (147-8). Hence, according to During, Foucault distinguishes modern power from sovereign and believes

that modern power will never replace sovereign power. As for the novel *'Aw*, it is the general standing at the top of the hill looking down at his people, representing this sovereign power.

In addition to the representation of power, the top of a summit standing in the center of the country also represents Foucault's "Plan of the Panopticon". In his book, *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault explains that, "Hence the major effect of the Panopticon: to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power" (201). Thus, without being watched, people as well as inmates will always feel that they are being watched while in truth they are necessarily not. After having established the general's power and authority, the narrator introduces Ahmad Al-Safi, an author, a journalist, and an intellectual. We, as readers, are also simultaneously introduced to the guard-dog of the general. After this celebration of his potency, the general is awakened to the barking of his dog. This makes the general feel confident and is assured that the training he has given the dog has paid off. The narrator says, "Whenever the dog sees or hears the roaring engine of the general's car, he would bark three times" (10). What is more important is the relationship between the general and his dog, for the general seems to know how to cater to the dog's needs in a way that puts the dog in total submission to the general. The general never punishes his dog to get his submission; instead, he uses the method of reward.

This scene of general and dog is a beginning to an answer to why *'AW* is the title given to this novel. It is not until the narrator introduces us to Ahmad Al-Safi that we know the answer. It is only when the general sees Ahmad's house in the distance and glimpses his gray car that he smiles wondering to himself: How seductive must power be...Damn it. Ahmad, when he sees the general standing at the window of his new house, immediately realizes that this man is now his neighbor which is something he has to live with. Moreover, Ahmad remembers what he has written about the general in last night's newspaper. He feels impotent, not being able to salute the general and thus "feeling the hand of the general inside of him, he slips happily through the open door of his house and disappears", as if the general has castrated him by taking away his self-esteem. (*'Aw*, 12) This is what makes of the dog a metaphor that runs throughout the novel. This is also why the novel is called *'Aw*, which in Arabic designates the barking of a dog.

In the book, *Tropics of Discipline*, Hayden White presents Giambattista Vico's definition of a metaphor as "the most luminous and therefore the most necessary and frequent" of the tropes..., but metaphor of a specific kind, that is to say, that in which "sense and passion" are ascribed to "insensate things" (205). It is in this relationship between the general and the dog that the dog is given the characteristics of a human being: thus, giving him, as an "insensate thing", the "sense and passion" required to make him stand out as a metaphor of a "specific kind". The dog, and whenever the general gives him food, rolls with gratitude at the general's feet as if thanking him and appreciating his concern which makes the general feel a certain satisfaction. At another time, when trying to play with the general, he leans with his hind legs on the general who suddenly discovers that the dog is taller than he which infuriates him. Not only is the general infuriated but he also bears a grudge against the dog. These two feelings of fury and vengeance, are expressed only towards a human being and not an animal such being as the dog and the only human being that we know of is his neighbor and enemy Ahmad Al-Safi.

Applying the same method mentioned in White's book *Tropics of Discourse* in order to explain the metaphor of the dog the way Vico explains his metaphor, I had to look at both the similarities and the differences that bring Ahmad and the dog together. The most eminent and dominant similarity that cannot be missed is the submission to the general by both the dog and Ahmad. Yet, the difference between the two is that Ahmad as a human being has the ability in making a choice which the dog lacks. This difference is what makes Ahmad's identification with the dog significant. Also, the narrator takes us a step further when he tells us that the general "used to bring him newly cooked food, something a prodigal dog doesn't dream of, he who owns nothing but his barking, but this soon changed gradually... The dog started to realize that instead of barking he should smile at the general... A truth he learned gradually" (10). Moreover, to use the verbs "dream of", "own", and "realize" when describing a dog, is a personification that brings the dog closer in similarity to Ahmad. Also, we can compare the barking of the dog to the written word of Ahmad. The barking of the dog is a metaphor that can be seen as a foreshadowing of what is to happen later on in the story when Ahmad starts writing his praises of the general.

After sneaking into his house, Ahmad remembers when he was investigated by this guy who is given the title of “the elegant”, as an irony to what he really is, no more than an investigator working for a general. Ahmad remembers the exact words that this investigator addresses him with trying to convince him to stop writing and publishing cheaply paid stories for stupid newspapers. Ahmad, the intellectual who opposes the regime of the general and who writes stories to provoke change in society, remembers objecting to what the investigator says about his stories and tells him that he publishes these stories because people like to read them and that he publishes them in all the well known newspapers of the Arab world. To this the investigator answers with an arrogance presenting Ahmad with the sad truth that the regime “can buy any publishing house” and adds another truth that everything that has a price is cheap and can be bought (13). Then the investigator throws the real bait, that of money. He asks Ahmad about his salary and whether it is sufficient reminding him that his “house is nothing but a pigsty” (15). While this is going on in Ahmad’s head, the general is standing on the balcony of his house thinking that it is only God who can change conditions, and suddenly he realizes that if God does not he will. (15). He then wonders how he and Ahmad Al-Safi are neighbors living on the same street. This fact of being next door neighbors seems to bother Ahmad and not the general. In fact, while the general revels in feeling Ahmad under his eyes, namely, under his control, the other feels the weight of being under surveillance and admits that “he has been castrated a long time ago...and that all his attempts at writing one decent story have evaporated in the wind...He asks how he has become so broken without being once mistreated, without any direct blows to his person” (18).

In her book, *Ambiguities of Domination*, Lisa Wedeen quotes Hannah Arendts in explaining how the “Authoritarian discourse prevents the emergence of what she identified as the public “personality,” a uniquely political self constituted through words and deeds. The rhetoric attempts to destroy the possibilities for public expressions of contingency, frailty, and interpretive ambiguity, thereby fixing meanings and censoring facts in ways that silence or render irrelevant people’s understanding of themselves as publicly political persons” (45). Ahmad draws our attention as readers to the important change in the approach used by investigators in a dictatorship, in this case, in a military regime. Even Ahmad cannot believe that he has complied with the investigator without

being mistreated or hit by him, not even once. Yet, the narrator tells us that, "In the long tunnel that connects darkness to light...was Ahmad Al-Safi" (19). With these words we feel the heaviness and the slow pace of the story which reflects the weight under which people survive under such a regime where the shadow of the general always exists even in his absence. The darkness also reflects an atmosphere laden with hidden, mysterious, and unknown events. When the engine of the general's car roars "it echoes in the house next door", that is Ahmad's. And, when the general's car nears Ahmad's window "he steps away afraid, not realizing that the general cannot see him" (20). What makes this feeling of the ever lasting presence of the general worse is Ahmad's impotence that he carries with him, even to his marital bed. "He slides quietly into his bed with his clothes on...His wife stays away...leaving him to his isolation" (20). He becomes so alienated and locked inside himself that, according to the narrator, he "stops hearing her footsteps in the corridor or her movements in the kitchen" (20).

In his book, *The Experimental Arabic Novel*, Stefan g. Meyer quotes Malti-Douglas as she characterizes the environment of Nasrallah's narrative as "conducive to the creation of ambiguities, to the elimination of individuality," and comments that his vision "questions the identity, even the existence, of the individual as a social reality and conscious subject" (262). Ahmad in 'Aw is also questioned as a social reality and conscious subject. For Ahmad was a journalist and an intellectual who supposedly has to speak the truth and be the people's conscious. The narrator in 'Aw, tells how "The city has changed...and the streets turned into highways so wide that people cannot be seen walking on them...People have become smaller and streets wider" (22). This is how diminished a human being is in a military regime under a dictator general. Even when the general is watching what is supposed to be a competition game between two football teams, he has to be involved taking the side of the winner only, for the general can only identify with the hero, the one who wins.

The narrator describes the football game that the general is watching from his balcony "In this very long night that spreads its wings over the city...the general hears the cheering of the crowds reaching him from the nearby football field...and he is happy to hear the word, the word intended only for him, that is the word 'hero' screamed by the cheerers in the football arena, a word not allowed to be used except in playgrounds...This

is why he was sure and certain that the applauding and cheering were meant for him and only him” (23). A dictator likes to be applauded all the time to ascertain his power. Even in a game of football, the general had to identify himself with the winner, the one considered the hero, for he sees himself as the only hero. For him, there is no other hero. Looking closely at this description, we cannot miss the personification of the “long night extending its wings over the city”. What is meant by this long night is the regime and its grip on the people. Also, the “long night extending its wings” leaves the reader with a feeling of heaviness and frustration not being able to escape the darkness that seems to spread its wings like an inescapable eagle and reach him wherever he is.

Moreover, the general believes that he owns everything (23). The game makes him feel strong. He revels in the cheering of the crowds because he identifies with it. No one can be cheered but him. Feeling full of himself when he hears the cheering he thinks: “How I love these games...How I worship this cheering...It is I who has shaken the net...I who scored a goal in both the two teams’ nets...It is my miracle...” (26). Thus, we see how the general views himself like a God who is capable of miracles. But, with the cheering receding in the distance, he reminds himself saying, “I still have one weak point, for it is very possible that one of the balls might take me by surprise and shake the net while I’m enjoying a last safe moment” (26). This feeling of staying on guard all the time is typical of a dictator.

Along side what is going on in the general’s mind, the narrator exposes what goes on in Ahmad’s mind. Ahmad seems to be the one who is suffering most from living within this proximity to the general’s house. The narrator describes him coming back home feeling the silence of the place that is interrupted only by the barking of the general’s dog. And as he steps out of his car he notices the reflection of the moonlight on his gray car and feels the January wind as strong as “isolation’s teeth biting into his heart” (28). Again Ahmad is seen suffering from alienation, from being a stranger on his own street coming to his own home. It is when he carries a dialogue between him and his double self that we feel his shame for giving in to the investigator and writing what the regime expects him to write. At first he writes without signing his name; thus, when he carries this dialogue with his double self trying to feel better he says: “Will I regret?”...His double self answers: “It is only the living who regret, but in your case you

are dead” (29). This is metaphorical language which means that he as a just person who knows the injustices of such a regime is dead. But, he says trying to feel better that nobody knows it is him writing, to which his other self reminds him that “The chief editor has played well his roll of a pimp,” and asks him whether he feels the general’s hand roaming inside his behind. (29). This is meant to be an insult. It is as if the general is raping him and he should feel ashamed.

Walking to his house, Ahmad also realizes that the general’s dog doesn’t bark any more when he sees him, for he has become familiar to him. He wonders, how much time has elapsed before the dog got used to him...before his barking turned into a look full of tenderness or reciprocal understanding of what is going on (29). Thus, Ahmad and the dog identify with each other. What brings them together is the general’s generosity in keeping them well fed each according to his needs. Hence the general succeeds in taming both the animal and the intellectual bringing them under his submission. In his article, “I Read in the Novel ‘*Aw*””, Dr. Habib Boulus writes, “An image of a dog tamed to guard the house of the general while it’s being built, and an image of a simple ordinary journalist who turns into an editor of chief for accepting to serve the general and comply to his wishes...meet to make one image: a dog and a journalist having the same fate. And when the ironical question of whether the general forgets his dogs arises, the answer is that the general will not forget his dogs as long as the dogs bark when he wants them to”. According to Boulus, “This integrated image is the basic idea of the whole novel and it stems from the main idea of the keen and fierce struggle between dictatorship and the simple dreams of man. It also discovers with daring the attempt of turning man into a propeller in the regimes machine...It also studies carefully the progress of the awareness of the authority and the down fall of the intellectual”(Boulus,*al-Ittihad*).

Another image that shows how authority with its knowledge and awareness of how to handle those who rebel is evident in Zakaria Tamer’s short story which our narrator refers to . In Tamer’s story it is not the intellectual who turns into a dog but the tiger., and the tiger is a symbol of power and pride. The trainer of the tiger knows that the tiger will finally be under his submission before he even starts his taming. It is this knowledge that the trainer possesses that makes him succeed in bringing around the tiger. From the very start he tells his students that this tiger is a fake and is made of paper. This

turns to be right when the tiger starts to obey the trainer in whatever the latter asks him to do. The story ends with, "On the tenth day the trainer, his students, and the tiger with his cage disappear. The tiger becomes a citizen and the cage becomes a city" (58).

This metaphor is of a cage becoming a city similar to the prison becoming a city, and in both cases it is the citizen who is the prisoner. The intertextual reference to Tamer's novel helps strengthen the basic idea of our novel which is that of taming anyone who thinks of rebelling or even criticizing the general's regime. Seeing Ahmad's car passing by his well guarded fence, the general says to himself, "How stupid of him to have believed that our attempts of summoning him trying to recruit him to our camp will be our daily chore ... We know him very well and we know that we are dealing with a writer who is empty...He suddenly came into being taking us by surprise...Had we known, we would have broken his neck," then he wonders if any of Ahmad's fans still remember him as the rebellious writer, for he adds proudly: "we have not only neutralized him...but now he is our son" (36). Then, the general proceeds to tell us about the two young men who were caught shooting missiles at Israel. We know that one of them did what he did under the influence of one of Ahmad's stories "*The Child of the Long Night*". Hence what makes the general afraid of a writer like Ahmad is Ahmad's influence on young people, for the general knows that change always comes from the new generation and the new generation is the future. This, in particular, is what frightens a totalitarian regime. Hence, when the general himself is questioning this young man, he looks at Ahmad's story lying on the table and addresses the boy saying, "Maybe your other friend was shooting bullets...But you had this story as your weapon...How many words did you shoot..." (38). The general knows the effect of words; this is why he compares them to bullets.

In another scene, we have Ahmad face to face with the general who tells him that he is as great like himself. Ahmad swallows the bait. He sits face to face with the general, and addresses himself wondering, "Here you are face to face with someone who represents death to you...Death is smiling at you...He is taking his seat...He is presenting you with a choice: to drink tea or coffee" (47). The dictator plays on Ahmad's ego trying to inflate him. He recounts the names of many of Ahmad's articles, articles that, according to the dictator, he was pleased to read and learn from. (48). All this praise

made Ahmad fall into the general's trap that finally led to Ahmad's self destruction. The narrator compares Ahmad to a horse hesitating before the general. Yet, the general finally throws the rope around Ahmad when he, as if confessing, tells him, "You think we don't know you? We do. We are closer to you than you think" (48). The rope is actually tied around Ahmad's neck when he shakes the general's hand on his way out. As for the proximity the general pretends to share with Ahmad, it is only to say that he knows more about Ahmad and the likes of Ahmad than they think he knows.

This is how Ahmad finally surrenders to the general's temptations. The narrator in a new episode tells us how Ahmad sitting in his room, tries to convince himself "Had it been a story that I have to write I wouldn't have accepted...But, it is just a daily editorial in a newspaper, a way of earning my bread" (5). Yet, his conscience tells him otherwise. It tells him that "Words are words and a truth is a truth whether said in a poem or in a story (56). This is when Ahmad realizes his disloyalty to the cause of freedom and free speech. The narrator draws a clear image, of how at this moment of truth Ahmad is attacked by the books he has lined up on his library shelves when he suddenly sees "one of the books on the upper shelf open voluntarily and black creatures rush out. This is followed by other books...and suddenly he hears a bang behind him. He looks to find an open book following him...and black spots rushing out of the pages leaving them empty (56), The narrator goes on to tell us how Ahmad becomes helpless not able to close his mouth or take his breath, overwhelmed with the waves- of black ink- rushing into his mouth, blocking the air till finally he falls to the ground...his body swelling up slowly while open books drop onto the ground one by one from on their shelves. The lake of ink disappears inside of him...He tries to scream but to no avail" (57).

According to Wedeen and while describing Hafez Asad's regime she writes, "The regime produces compliance through enforced participation in rituals of obeisance that are transparently phony both to those who orchestrate them and those who consume them [...] A politics of "as if," while it may appear irrational or even foolish at first glance, actually proves politically effective...it occasions the enforcement of obedience; it induces complicity by creating practices in which citizens are themselves "accomplices" (6). This description is very similar to the description of the general's regime in the novel *Aw*. Hence the protagonist Ahmad is attacked by all the books on the

shelves of his study. This is a painful image since Ahmad is a conscious witness who just looks on not able to lift a finger to stop his downfall. In her book, *The Body in Pain*, Elaine Scarry writes describing pain as an "...intense pain that destroys a person's self and world, a destruction experienced spatially as either the contraction of the universe down to the immediate vicinity of the body or as the body swelling to fill the entire universe. Intense pain is also language-destroying: as the content of one's world disintegrates, so the content of one's language disintegrates; as the self disintegrates, so that which would express and project the self is robbed of its source and its subject" (35).

This is physical torture that can be compared to the mental torture Ahmad is under. Thus, Ahmad, a writer in a military oppressive regime, is subjected to a kind of investigation that he is made to believe is nothing but an interview. In this interview Ahmad betrays his beliefs by complying with the general and the next day his editorial bears witness to his betrayal. Betrayal is an example of self disintegration, thus, it becomes a pain of a different kind, a mental pain. In the next episode we feel a pain with more intensity, Scarry's physical pain, for the doors of a prison cell are opened unto a torture scene with a young man hanging from the ceiling. The doors open allowing the general to enter. The minute the general is in the cell the light of the day shuts off while the light in the cell shines. "Approaching this human body that looks like a cross adds mystery to the scene where the features disappear behind a web of bloody lines and scars painting the human flesh" (59). When the general sees this, he pretends to be upset with the investigators for what they have done to the young man, Saad. He screams at them protesting against what they have done and orders screaming, "untie him, a young man with all this goodness, a child with whom you should never use these rude methods to this extent" (60). Furthermore, the general seems to have asked one of his assistants to wipe Saad's face "playing the repeated recording of the affectionate father who has suddenly felt a gush of fatherly emotions" (61). The general in this scene behaves like a touched father seeing his son tortured. He even describes Saad as "a child".

This image of the father is described by Wedeen as a metaphor and "Implicit in the metaphor of the father is also the love and connection between ruler and ruled" (51). As for the crime that this "child" has committed, it is that he, in an operation against Israel and influenced by a story written by Ahmad, is caught on the borders with Israel.

This boy's pain is of a different quality. The pain is not that of physical torture only, but it is the pain at finding out that what he believed in, which is fighting against Israel, as a deed glorified by both the regime and the writer Ahmad, turns against him, Saad who believed but was betrayed. Scarry goes on to explain more that, "Torture.....consists of a primary physical act, the infliction of pain, and a primary verbal act, the interrogation" (35) With his body "hanging from the ceiling of his cell, he focuses on the blood drops dripping onto the general's decorations that are settled on his left shoulder" (60). This pain, Scarry explains, "As in dying and death, so in serious pain the claims of the body utterly nullify the claims of the world" (33). Thus, Saad does not notice the general and every time he tries to escape his pain he thinks of the operation that has failed and falls into a deep comma only to be awakened again to the voice of his torturer. But, as Scarry explains, "World, self, and voice are lost, or nearly lost, through the intense pain of torture..." (35).

To compare, while the real physical torture is taking place with Saad, the narrator takes us to an episode with a different kind of torture, Ahmad's own self-torture. The episode is that of Ahmad finding himself seated on the floor of his room "drowned in black spots... dirty...not being able to reach his feet...dragging himself on his four trying to stand up" (66).

This is an image that reminds us of the dog that walks on four. The narrator wants to bring to the reader's mind the image of the dog that Ahmad realizes he has become. His betrayal and submission bring his self-torture: "Taking off his clothes he sees his body covered with black spots. He tries to picture his mother's face and features, but can't. It was as if a black spot has swallowed up his imagination leaving him with a strong feeling of his being an illegitimate child; otherwise, I would have remembered her, he thinks to himself" (67). The more Ahmad realizes the wrong he's done in his submission to the general the more convinced he becomes of his being an illegitimate child (a bastard). In her book Wedeen recounts a story of an officer in the army called "M". M believed that his education will secure him power in the ranks, but was mistaken. At one time a high-ranking officer visits the regiment and starts asking the soldiers about what they had dreamed of the night before, to which M answers, "I saw that my mother was a prostitute in your bedroom" (67). In this short incident, Wedeen clarifies that, "M

plays off an allusion to the etymological relation between *umma* (nation) and *umm* (mother)" (70). Hence, M sees his mother as his country. And the fact that he sees her with his own eyes in bed with this officer makes him according to Wedeen "a witness, a voyeuristic spectator to his mother's defilement. Helpless to prevent his mother-country from selling her body to the officer, M nevertheless can watch it. His self-announced voyeurism suggests his awareness of his own complicity" (70).

This applies to Ahmad who seems to be living in a regime very similar, if not the same, to that of M's. At one time, he remembers seeing a shy young man making his way through the crowds that had gathered in the hall to attend his lecture, and who had slipped a paper in his hand with the words I am "*The Child of the Long Night*" written on it. He asks, "Why don't I too be the child of my long night...or am I this child in reality" Then, again "this feeling of being an illegitimate child overcomes him once again... Was I looking for a mother when I wrote the story [...] Why don't I be Mariam's son as well...I am her son... Yes I am her son... The story is mine...I have written it...and I have the right to tailor it the way I like" (72). But, in real life, Saad, the child, dies under torture just as Ahmad finds "the solid straw that a drowning man can hold to" (72), meaning his writing.

Ahmad realizes with the death of Saad, who believing in him, tried to imitate one of his characters in his story "The child of the Long Night", that it is time for him to go back to writing stories and to forget about the flattering editorials that he is writing in praise of the general. His feeling was so strong that he had a dream of taking his three-year old son to the general's office, placing him on the general's desk, and finally taking out a knife and slaying his little son, Fares. (114). According to Wedeen, "Dreams, like familial metaphors, offer a charged rhetoric terrain both for producing an idealized representation of the regime and for inviting subversive possibilities (71). As for Ahmad's dream, it is as a terrain "inviting subversive possibilities. Also, looking at this dream, we cannot but remember the story of Abraham in the Bible when God asked him to sacrifice his only child Isaac. Abraham, in submission and obedience to God, takes his son to the mountain where while trying to do what he's asked, God, to reward him for his obedience, sends him a lamb to slay instead. Comparing this story to Ahmad's dream the difference stands out strikingly. Both are called in their dreams, each by his own God, but

while Abraham accepts to show obedience in order to please God, Ahmad chooses to do it in order to be free of his god's (the general) innuendoes and hidden threats about his son. He does it in an attempt to regain himself as a free human being and writer. Wedeen, in her close study on dictators' behaviors, comments saying "Whether dreams are regarded as divinely inspired messages conveyed to selected ordinary humans, or... as unconscious, personal expressions of wishes and anxieties that find no outlet in daily life, dreams are suggestive of private parts of ourselves" (71). For Ahmad it is definitely to "find an outlet in daily life", which in his case is giving up his son for gaining his freedom of expression and; thus, putting an end to his suffering and his impotence. It was the only way, he thought, of being able to produce and write stories again.

As for the general, "he hated writing and envied those who can write" (78). In reading the general's mind the narrator is trying to convey a picture of how far behind the general is in relation to what is happening in the civilized world. Instead of him trying to develop his country in the way the world is developing, the general strengthens his military power, the only power he depends on. The narrator is being ironical when he compares the general to the free world. He describes the general as "leaning on to his gun and his intelligence service, strengthening their presence; hence, increasing the pressure on the streets and on the platforms by his persistence" (79). The irony lies in the narrator using the words "lean on his gun" meaning on his power of oppression manifested in guns and informers while the free world leans on the free word and on learning. (79)

But, still the general keeps on trying to write till he finally figures out that the reason he cannot is "the unsuitable atmosphere that envelops the newspaper offices and the rotten smell of ink emanating from the stupid articles" (86). Then, he suddenly discovers that he wants to go to "the great library of the man of our nation". For, according to him "there and only there one can enjoy an atmosphere of education and learning" (86). On the way to the library, we are reminded of Wedeen's description of the streets of Syria in her book. Wedeen describes the streets as "the cluttered public space" (33). Cluttered because of the many pictures of Assad and the many slogans hung everywhere on the streets, just as in our novel, where the narrator describes the streets as each bearing a name that refers to a victory obtained by the general such as the name of "The Glory", "The Triumph", "The Victory" and all these are of course, military

accomplishments of the general. This “clutter of space” with names, pictures of the general, and slogans is what Wedeen views as a kind of politics “about contests over the symbolic world, over the management and appropriation of meanings. Regimes attempt to control and manipulate the symbolic world, just as they attempt to control material resources or to construct institutions of enforcement and punishment (30). When the general fails to write he screams saying “I wish I can write using a tank instead of using a pen (86). And, when Ahmad suggests to him to try and build more public libraries, he screams again, “Building a prison will contribute to our internal security more than any library can do” (110).

Hence, with all these symbols, metaphors, and adjectives, the general’s image shines from the beginning to the end of the story, an image with piercing eyes looking into the dreams of his people, and with extending arms reaching out all over the country keeping every one, not under his protection as one might think, but under his power in submission and complete surrender. Ahmad feels that there is nothing left of him that he hasn’t given to the general. This is when he starts running leaving the newspaper’s office behind. “He goes past his house...climbs the stairs to the general’s house...The dog barks when he first sees him...Ahmad comes closer to the dog...He rubs against him feeling his warmth [...] His hand reaches out to the leash and unties it gently...The dog sees Ahmad tie the leash around his neck...This is when the dog realizes that he has become free and descends the stairs...He begins running like he’s never done before” (172). With the leash around his neck Ahmad moves towards the general and rubs himself against his feet while the general empties the bag of food on the ground not looking to see who he was emptying the food for. In addition to the dog used as a metaphor, deconstruction can be used to cancel all hierarchies between the dog and Ahmad, the intellectual and writer. By doing this, Ahmad loses all the importance given to an intellectual as one who can inflict change and improve his country’s political situation.

Finally, the story ends with the general standing out on his balcony looking at the country lying before his eyes. The country looks distant and mysterious, yet with his hand on his pistol he continues watching the guards disperse in the area (174). The story ends with the defeat of the intellectual and the victory of the general, but as long as the general

keeps his hand on his pistol there is always hope of change lurking somewhere in the allies of the city.

Chapter Three: Image of the “Dictator” in Both Novels

Part One: The Dictator in *The Comedians*- The Dictator in ‘*Aw*

As for the two novels being researched, and with all the differences relating to their setting, structure, and narrator, they both refer to one common reality, that of the dictator. According to the English novel, *The Comedians*, the dictator is a real historical figure; namely, Francois Duvalier known as Papa Doc the dictator of Haiti; whereas, in the Arabic novel ‘*Aw*, the dictator remains an unknown figure, who can be placed anywhere and at anytime in history. In her book, *Images of Dictatorship*, Rosalind Marsh quotes Kate Hamburger as saying: “The form of fiction in and of itself posits a demarcation from reality of any kind” (5). Mars also goes on to explain that Hamburger “... makes a general point about historical characters when she refers to the difference between an invented content and a fictive one. Historical characters in a novel... are not 'invented', but nevertheless in their capacity as figures in a novel they are fictive. Just like purely invented characters, they ‘are’ only by virtue of their being narrated” (5). This being established, we can proceed to discuss the image of the dictator in both the English and Arabic novels, as a fictive character and try to find a common ground of the real dictator, Papa Doc, in *The Comedians* being turned fictive and a fictive dictator in ‘*Aw* alluded to as fictive. Keeping in mind, that a real historical dictator can always be compared to a fictive dictator to see the similarities shared by both.

It is true that the two novels concerning this study have many differences, whether regarding their narrator, place, or setting, yet one should always remember the most important and common denominator that brings them together and that is the image of the dictator. In Greene's *The Comedians*, the dictator is given a real name, the setting of the novel is a real place, which is that of Haiti, and the time is that of Papa Doc, the dictator. As for Nasrallah's ‘*Aw*, we notice that the dictator has no name, the place is not identified and the time unknown or lost. These are important differences that may reflect a certain reality which could be that the writer Nasrallah , due to certain restrictions, one of which could be the lack of freedom of speech, especially since we know he lives in a world with many dictators, could not use real names. Nasrallah comes from what the west calls a third world and according to Fredric Jameson in an article called, “Third-World

Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism”, he explains that, “All third-world texts are necessarily...allegorical, and in a very specific way: they are to be read as ...national allegories...particularly when their forms develop out of predominantly western machineries of representation, such as the novel” (69). Moreover, Jameson argues that “Third-world texts...necessarily project a political dimension in the form of national allegory: the story of the private individual destiny is always an allegory of the embattled situation of the public third-world culture and society” (69). The novel ‘*Aw*’ is allegorical because writers of the third world where dictators still rule cannot give real names to rulers, people or places. Hence, in ‘*Aw*’, the story is of a “private individual destiny” which is that of Ahmad who represents the intellectuals of his country since he is a journalist and a novelist. With this outstanding difference in mind, we discover why the narrator had no name, why the story’s title is ‘*Aw*’, and why the protagonist Ahmad becomes the dog at the end of the novel.

As for the difference in structure, *The Comedians* is divided into three parts. The first part is written in five different chapters. The first chapter starts at the end of the story, and then in a flashback the narrator takes the reader to the very beginning when the journey to Port-au-Prince starts. The story starts with Jones being dead, and the lamentations of the narrator over this death especially when comparing Jones’s tomb stone that is erected in an unknown place and paid for with Jones’s own blood to those of “grey memorials erected in London to equestrian generals, the heroes of colonial wars” who paid with the blood of their men for theirs. From the very beginning of the novel, the narrator draws a line between those who oppress, ‘the equestrian generals’ and those who fight against them, that is, Jones and people like Jones.

The Comedians opens with the narrator addressing the reader and revealing to him at the same time that when he thinks of the 'grey memorials' in London he remembers Jones’s tombstone. The narrator in this sense is taking the reader into his deep thoughts and is voicing a point of view about the generals and Jones. Thus, from the very start of the story, the narrator takes a clear stand against the generals and with Jones. Moreover, the narrator starts the story with a flashback addressing the reader and revealing his innermost feelings and ideas. He also starts the story with a statement that foreshadows what is to happen later in the story alerting the reader what to expect. This, however,

might be not only a foreshadowing but also a lesson the narrator has learned, and an experience that he wants his reader to share.

Towards the middle of the story, Brown confesses to his feeling jealous of Jones when the latter was taking refuge at Martha's, Brown's mistress, and the wife of an ambassador of one of Latin America's countries. He confesses that he had made a mistake when he encouraged Jones to leave to the mountains with the rebels. Moreover, he confesses to the reason why he let him go. It was after he had made love to Martha that Brown felt very upset that she had to leave him for a game of gim-rummy with Jones. Brown confesses that, "It was only ten days after I had deposited Jones under her roof, and when she told me that, I felt the premonition of jealousy like the first shiver which announces a fever" (242). Actually, Brown's jealousy is what speeds Jones's going with young Phillipot, the rebel, to the mountains. Towards the end of the story, and while having a heart-to-heart talk with Dr. Magiot about Jones, Brown admits to the doctor that he wants Jones "out of the embassy every bit as much as Phillipot does" (253). And, when the doctor says, "And yet you had put him there", Brown confesses, "I didn't realize" (253). What Brown didn't realize, only the reader knows. Dr. Magiot has no idea of Brown's affair and jealousy, for when he asks him "What?" Brown answers, "Ok, that's quite a different matter. I'd do anything" and he does. One evening while at the embassy with Martha, the ambassador and Jones, Brown challenges Jones saying, "What a tragedy it is you are shut up here... there are men in the mountains now who only need to learn...", and then he adds, "It's a great pity you didn't go with Phillipot", and when Jones answers with, "Oh, I'd go, like a shot now", Brown doesn't hesitate in proposing to arrange an escape for Jones to which the latter accepts gladly and with enthusiasm falling into Brown's trap answering, "Just show me the way" (259). Brown, in this case, acts like Judas who gave Jesus up.

Moreover, Brown, can sometimes sound like a dictator, for he is the one who introduces the characters, builds them up in order for them to produce the events and move on with the story. Martha, at one time confronts Brown saying, "...don't you see you are inventing us" (245). And at another time she tells him, "We are what you choose to make us" (246). But, at another time still, we find that Martha can see through Brown and Brown does not hide his weakness towards her. This gives Martha the courage to

challenge him, the way a persecuted would challenge his persecutor, and say, “My dear, try to believe we exist when you aren’t there” (246). Hence one can say that in, *The Comedians*, the voice of the narrator reigns supreme, even though he allows for the voices of his characters every now and then, keeping in mind that what he allows is, also, what he probably wants us readers to know.

In fact, it is not only he who builds the character of the dictator, but also the other characters share in describing the dictator and the dictator's behavior. Thus, he and his other characters share in giving the reader a clear image of the dictator. The first time the reader hears of Papa Doc and what is happening in Port-au-Prince is by the purser of the ship. Yet, the narrator is not ignorant of what Port-au-Prince is like, for before their ship arrives in Port-au-Prince, he remembers what the town was like before he left. He tells the reader, “When I had left Port-au-Prince, the embassy (that is the American embassy) staff had already been reduced to a charge, a secretary, and two Marine guards...” (11). At another time when Mr. Smith tries to compare a vacation he had had with Mrs. Smith in Nashville in the United States telling Brown, “We have a great love for colored people”, Brown answers with, “I’m afraid they’ll prove a disappointment to you where you are going” (14).

The blacks in America were enslaved by the whites, but those of Haiti are free Haitians enslaved by a Haitian. This is the narrator’s point of view which carries in it a bit of sarcasm, knowing that what the Smiths know of colored people who live in Nashville and the way they as Americans see them, is different from what he knows of the blacks of Haiti and how he sees them. The blacks in America were enslaved by the whites, but those of Haiti are free Haitians enslaved by a Haitian Brown, when was asked to read Mr. Smith’s article, which was written upon the latter’s arrival at Port-au-Prince, and called “Mrs. Smith and I”, reads one of the descriptions of Haiti’s blacks that reflects an American’s point of view alien from the reality of the Haitians. The article reads, “A black republic –and a black republic with a history, an art, and a literature. It was as if I were watching the future of all the new African republics, with their teething trouble... Haiti has experienced monarchy, democracy, and dictatorship, but we must not judge a colored dictatorship as we judge a white one” (121-122). Brown upon reading this, comments “I seemed to be reading about a different country” (122). Brown here proves

his unbiased and knowledgeable position of the social, economical and political situation of Haiti.

Later, to try and make the Smiths see the true Haiti that he knows exists tells them about the Tontons Macoute who surrounded the house of a man suspected of an attempt to kidnap the president's children and how they "... Set it on fire with petrol and then... machine-gunned anyone who tried to escape" (15). After hearing this, Mr. Smith, ignorant still of what it is really like to live under a dictator, tries to justify this incident by asking, "Hitler did worse, didn't he? And he was a white man. You can't blame it on their color", to which Brown answers bluntly, "I don't. The victim was colored too" (15). The victim that Brown is talking about is, of course, the suspect who had his house burnt by the 'President's cogency-men' as the purser describes them. Mr. Smith doesn't seem to be satisfied for he asks Brown: "Then why is it... that you are going back?", to which Brown answers: "Because the only thing I own is there. My hotel" (15).

This fact of Brown returning to the only thing he owns, which is in a dangerous zone ruled by a dictator ready to do anything in order to protect his regime, shows the reader in this concept how politics affects personal life. And just as Brown's life is affected so are the lives of others. Thus, the image of the dictator is also built by other characters besides that of the narrator. The captain of the ship gives his passengers a full report on what is going on in Port-au-Prince before he lands them which builds a backdrop for the reader to fall upon. The captain tells his passengers: "The news on the radio tonight is not good. Rebels are said to have attacked across the Dominican Border. The government claims that all is quiet at Port-au-Prince ..." (30). The fact that the government denies the attacks by the rebels is a well-known strategy in a dictatorship where no one is supposed to know anything. Everything is kept quiet so that the majority of people will stay in the dark not knowing what is happening around them and thus won't have to protest or rebel. It is very important that people living under a dictatorship believe and trust their dictator. This is partly why freedom of speech and media are two things that are always suppressed in a regime of dictatorship.

Thus, the novel doesn't start right away with the dictator. It rather builds the setting in which the dictator operates. The setting is that of Haiti and in particular the capital Port-au-Prince where the Tontons Macoutes make sure everything is under control

and no one passes into the country unnoticed. When Brown arrives at the port, he is met by Petit Pierre. Brown describes Pierre as 'a familiar figure' and as a person who 'haunted the airfield' and a journalist who "was believed by some to have connections with the Tontons" (41). Hence, everyone in such a regime is either a suspect or one who suspects others, but all in all there are those whose job is to know who is who. At the customs, Brown tells us how he is met, "the customs – man allowed my baggage to pass unopened. He exchanged some words with a Tontons Maconte at the door and by the time I emerged he had found me a taxi" (14). But, of course the taxi driver was guaranteed to be an informant. Brown says, "I asked the driver – he was probably a Tontons agent, Shall we get to the Tianon before the lights go out?" The driver, Brown tells us "shrugged his shoulders". It was not his job to give away information (43). When Brown left the taxi far from the hotel he is supposed to go to, he knew that the colonel in charge of the Tontons Macoute would certainly know next morning where he had left the taxi (43).

Thus, everything is supposed to be known to the regime, for knowledge is power. Attacking the philosophers, Friedrich Nietzsche declares in his book *Beyond Good and Evil* that "their knowing is creating, their creating is a law-giving, their will to truth is – will to power" (143). This could also apply to rulers as well, for Nietzsche meant that those philosophers aspire to be the rulers. They believe that they are "... actual commanders and law-givers they say 'thus it shall be'...it is they who determine the wherefores and wither of mankind" (Nietzsche, 142). Thus, the job of the Tontons and informants is not only to control peoples' behaviors, but also to know everything about them. Hence the road-blocks all over the country and from one street to another, the curfew, the dead bodies, people disappearing, and in the public park the musical fountain that stood black, waterless, and playing with electric globes winking out the nocturnal message, "Je suis le drapeau Haitian, Unix et Indivisible. Francois Duvalier" (45). All this happens with Francois Duvalier looking on from his portrait and watching over his people constantly, which makes the people fear his presence without him actually being there.

Not only is Papa Doc described as a devil and a roaring lion, but also in one of his portraits that hang in official government offices, he is described as "clothed in the heavy

black tail-suit of graveyards he peered out at us through the thick lenses of his spectacles with myopic and expressionless eyes. He was rumored sometimes to watch personally the slow death of a Tontons victim” (113). His clothes are heavy black, his eyes expressionless, and above all, he has the heart to watch the slow death of a victim and not any victim but that of a Tontons Macoute which means as a result of torture. Brown, then, ironically states that while Papa Doc or Doctor Duvalier watches, his eyes would not change. Presumably, his interest in the death was medical (113). Thus, a dictator can be so ruthless and pitiless that Brown at one time wonders “whether the world would ever again sail with such serenity through space as it seemed to do a hundred years ago... Haiti was not an exception in this world: it was a small slice of everyday taken at random. Baron Samdi walked in all our graveyards” (137).

Moreover, within Haiti Papa Doc was building his own city, the city of Duvalierville. When on a tour of Port-an-Prince with Brown and the Smiths, the Ministry of Interior reveals to them that Duvalierville is being constructed with stolen bricks that they are smuggle in coffins. The smuggling reveals the corruption in the system. He says: “Bricks... brought from Duvalierville, where we are constructing our beautiful new city. Stolen, bricks. I would like to show you Duvalierville one morning...” (165). The stolen bricks show the corruption in the system. Brown tells the reader: “Mr. Smith had been in the republic a week... He had seen the kidnapping of Doctor Phillipot's body; I had driven him through the worst of the shanty-town... Two one – armed men and three one-legged men hemmed around. One trying to sell him dirty old envelopes... others were more frankly begging. A man without legs at all had installed himself between his knees and removed his shoe-laces... another one with no hands raised his pink polished stumps... to exhibit his infirmity to the foreigner” (166). This foreigner, who is no other than Smith, takes the minister's bait when the latter tells him “you will find nothing impossible in modern Haiti... I would suggest... a contribution for the site equivalent to the cost of construction...” (168). Smith, an American, couldn't see the bait that smelled of nothing but corruption. The bait is the fact that the minister would get Smith's money promising him in return a construction that will never materialize. Smith; moreover, didn't understand the irony of “nothing is impossible in modern Haiti”. Smith didn't know what Doctor Magiot knew about the people fleeing “to escape the forced levies that the

Tontons Macorite collected at night for the construction of the new city Duvalerville” (99). This also is an indication of corruption, the money taken from people under threat and fear.

It seems that neither the scenes of poverty nor the 'stolen bricks' could register as a corrupt social situation for Smith, because he is not aware of what is going on in Haiti. It is by Brown's comments that the reader is able to see the corruption with open eyes. Brown also tells the reader more about Duvalerville. He tells us that, “Around the corner of the great cockpit came seesawing one other human being. Hence, the justice of peace was not after all the sole inhabitant of the new city. It already had its beggars too...He had very long arms and no legs and he moved ...nearer...Then he saw our driver and his dark glasses and his gun, and he stopped...from under his torn...shirt he drew a small wooden statuette which he held out towards us” (177). This cripple is introduced to Mr. Smith by the minister as an artist. He also tells Smith, as if to alleviate whatever pain the other has felt or even to remove from Smith's mind any wrong impression, says, “The government looks after him...Later we will have a proper art-center here where the artist can live...” (177). When Smith gets out of the car to give the cripple money, Brown describes the scene telling us that there was an expression of rage and disgust on the driver's face, meaning the minister's driver, and adds that he even thought that the driver contemplated drawing his gun (his fingers went to his belt) putting an end to at least one artist (178). Of course, as readers who are aware that this beggar is not an artist as the minister wants Smith to believe, we can feel the irony underlying Brown's description of the beggar who came 'seesawing' towards them.

Besides the scene of poverty and corruption, Brown has another image of a dictator and a dictatorship to expose and that is that of cruelty. In an intimate conversation with his lover, Martha, Brown reveals to her that, “Doctor Philipot was lying dead in the pool” She asks, “killed?” to which he answers, "He had cut his own throat. To escape the Tontons Macoute", and when she says, “They are like nightmares” he answers knowingly, “Only the nightmares are real in this place. More real than Mr. Smith and his vegetarian center. More real than ourselves” (173). People under a dictatorship, thus, live in fear and horror. For a second time the regime under Papa Doc is compared to that of Hitler. At one time Doctor Magiot tries to defend Brown's German

mother: “she had borne enough. One Hitler is sufficient experience for one lifetime” (96). And strangely enough, Martha's father seems to have also suffered from Hitler's regime. Martha tells Brown that, “people in Germany too cut their throats to escape his justice – meaning Hitler's justice”. To this Brown answers: “the situation isn't abnormal. It belongs to human life. Cruelty's like a searchlight. It sweeps from one spot to another” (173). In another conversation with Brown, and when Martha tells him that the situation in Haiti is no longer an adventure, they hear “somewhere from far away in the town... the sound of shots”. Brown tells her, “somebody's being killed”, to which Martha questions, “Haven't you heard? [...] I mean about the executions?” (201-202).

Hence, we discover how people in Haiti live under the shadow of fear and horror being kidnapped, disappearing, tortured, and executed for no reason. Thus, people either escape by slitting their throats or by fleeing the country or by taking refuge in the mountains and becoming rebels trying to fight the regime. Jones was one of those who joined the commandos, the rebels in the mountain. Jones, like young Philipot and Dr. Magiot had a dream, a “Marxist dream of a far future... when... there are... local elections.” (248). Yet, and as Doctor Magiot puts it, “Freud's wish – fulfillment dreams are usually not so obvious” (248). And as it turned out their dreams of overthrowing Papa Doc were neither obvious nor were they fulfilled. At the end, Brown standing at the borders of the Dominican Republic, describes what had happened to the rebels. He tells us that the rebels were following the Dominican soldiers who “bore their rifles slung on their shoulders and carried in their hands the weapons of the men who had emerged from the Haitian hills and who walked a few paces behind them, limp with fatigue, wearing an abashed look on their faces like the expression of children who have broken something of value” (301). It is then that Brown discovers that Jones was dead. According to young Philipot Jones's feet gave out on line and he couldn't run away from the Haitian police.

The story ends in the Dominican Republic with a mass for the “dead men” who tried to fight the regime of a dictator but failed, and with Brown looking at Martha, who was attending the mass and wondering why their semi-attached life had seemed to him so important then. Then Brown, as if summing up what life is like under a dictator, ponders saying, “it seemed to belong now exclusively to Port-au-prince, to the darkness and the

terror of the curfew, to the telephones that didn't work, to the Tontons Macoute in their dark glasses, to violence injustice, and torture” (304).

As for Ibrahim Nasrallah's *'Aw*, and with comparison to Greene's, one cannot but remember Greene's narrator, Brown in *The Comedians* who says at one time that, “Cruelty is like a searchlight. It sweeps from one spot to another” (173). In fact what brings these two novels that are written in two different decades, by completely two different authors, and about two different places is their shared condition of cruelty that “sweeps from one spot to another”. Cruelty is a human condition, but in these two novels it is inflicted by the same cause, that of the existence of a dictator.

Part Two: Differences between *The Comedians* and *'Aw*

Unlike *The Comedian's*, though, Nasrallah's *'Aw* has no specific spot, for it could and at an unregistered time and its main character, the general dictator, could also be any dictator.

Even though the narrator in *'Aw* is a third narrator, with no name and who doesn't share in the events, unlike the narrator in *The Comedians* who is a first narrator, with a name and who shares in the events, yet both are able to bring to the reader a clear image of the generals. In *'Aw*, the narrator, and as if he can read the mind of the dictator, conveys to the reader what passes through the dictator's mind and how the dictator thinks. Thus, the narrator starting with the voice of the dictator congratulating himself with, “You suppressed... then you felt secure... thus you slept” gives the reader from the start of the novel a message. The message is namely that without oppression a dictator cannot feel safe or even secure.

Hence, the major constituent of a dictator's character should be that of oppression. In his book *Al Bunyah Wa Al dalalah*, Meshid Ahmad states that, “the narrator in his introducing this domineering character made sure to give it the function of oppression... this already fulfilled function shows clearly the most important internal features that distinguishes this personality for it is unjust, dominating, and absolutely selfish”(75). Ahmad explains that the narrator opened the story with this main function of the character, that is, the general in order to place the reader in the innermost of the story where the message is namely that of political oppression (75). Also, it is true that the

name of the place is unknown, but what is known is that of space given to the general which is the city. It is usually from the city that a dictator operates just like Papa Doc's Port-au-Prince. Ahmad explains that this space is needed "in order to make certain that this unjust personality has an aim to exist in a place where it can spread its fear and horror in the hearts of people so that it can itself feel comfortable, secure and in absolute control" (75-76).

Thus, both dictators are given the same space to operate from and both live in big houses isolated from the crowds in order to feel safe and stand out as different and thus more powerful. And just as Francois Duvalier wants to build his city Duvalierville, so does the general in 'Aw want to build his house far away from the city in the center at the top of a hill where he can see all that goes on around him. In *The Comedians* the minister tells Smith that he can build his vegetarian center anywhere as long as it "does not conflict with the amenities of Duvalierville" (168), also in 'Aw, the narrator tells us how the general asked his men to clean the forest of everything that might block his sight or disturb him. (9). The only difference is that Papa Doc's voice is not directly heard, but only through the other characters. Furthermore, just as there should have been a Jones, a Josph, and a Dr. Phillipot in order for Papa Doc to exist, so in 'Aw there had to be an Ahmad Safi, and a Saad for the general to exist. In *The Comedians*, we see the torture of Jones while being investigated and the kind of place where the investigations take place. Brown tells us, "a corporal led us down the long corridor of cells that smelt like a zoo. Jones sat on an upturned bucket... his face was cress-crossed with pieces of plaster and his right arm was bandaged to his side. He had been tied up as well as could be ... his... waist coat looked more conspicuous than ever with a small rusty stain of blood" (115). When he is asked by Mr. Smith about the crime that caused his detention, Jones tells him: "They haven't explained things very clearly to me yet" (116). Just as it is with Jones, so it is with Saad in 'Aw except that the torture is much more present on Saad's body and the visitor is not Mr. Smith or Brown, but the general himself. The place where the investigation is carried is also described as "two dark walls that make up the long faint corridor that looks as if leading to a cemetery..." (59).

As for Saad, the narrator describes him as "a human cross... with features hiding behind cross-crossed lines of blood and wounds that occupy the far dimensions of the

body hanging on the cross” (59). At this point the general tries to play the role of the father reprimanding the jailor who had tortured Saad. This is another of the general's tricks to win the prisoner over to his side so he can trust the general and talk and also because generals and dictators in particular always tend to pause as fathers of their nations and countries. Ahmad Safi witnesses how one of the general's assistants wipes Saad's face when the general asks him to. (61) Here the general tries to play the role of the father for a second time. Of course, he does this in order to make Saad feel safe to confess. Saad surprised asks “You want to take me to court for possessing a short story in my pocket (62). Yet, the reason is known to the reader. It is because Saad and his friend have engaged in a shooting against the Israelis on the boarder of their country and have killed few soldiers thinking that this will make them heroes not prisoners. However, what interests the general is not the heroic act but what instigated it. He had reason enough to think that it is this short story they found in Saad's pocket. Thus, the general starts his war against the author of the story who happens to be no other than Ahmad Safi an intellectual and a journalist, who lives in the general's neighborhood. When he discovers the story the general realizes the importance of writing, the importance of words and the influence they can have on readers. The general realizes the danger of these words. The narrator tells us that again the general “... descends the stairs to the basement... the basement with endless corridors” He is annoyed with the continuous screams of torture coming from the deep end of the corridor. This is when he decides that he is sick of the writer and the reader and feels the urge to crush them both. (108). This time he doesn't take the role of the father. Instead, he gives the jailer an order to carry on with torture.

Actually, the general, in order to crush both, uses two different methods with the writer and the reader. The general while using physical torture on Saad, he uses mental torture on Ahmad the writer. In fact, he tries to buy Ahmad's principles and beliefs in freedom and justice and he succeeds. But, it is when Ahmad relents and gives in to the general that his mental torture starts. The narrator while telling us what is happening to Saad in his cell, at the same time, tells us what is happening to Ahmad in Ahmad's mind. Ahmad, instead of finding blood on his body, started seeing black spots covering him to the extent that he stopped being able to take off his clothes in front of his wife. Not only that, but it seems everywhere he looked, he would see black spots. The black spots on his

body meant according to Dr. Mershed Ahmad, “his change from being humanistic to being animalist” (16). Ahmad after succumbing to the general's orders and after changing from a writer of stories that can change people's minds and liberate them he becomes a columnist writing articles full of praises of the general. What he gets in return is a high salary, a good job for his wife, and a respected nursery for his only son. Furthermore, he becomes the chief editor of the most prominent newspaper, of course, a newspaper that belongs to the general. Yet, when all this is said and done, he feels guilty. He knows all along that what he's doing is wrong. He knows that he has changed as Dr. Ahmad says, from a human being to an animal. In fact, Ahmad Safi has changed not into any animal but into a dog. A dog that is loyal to his owner, but at the same time Arabs look down at dogs and hate them. And just as the dog who guards the general's house and lives on the leftovers of the general's food, so does Ahmad become, a dog living on what the general bestows on him.

This is the kind of oppression, the general of *'Aw* administers on his people, the suppression of freedom, not only freedom of speech, but also freedom to think, and to live a decent life. Finally, and after a lot of suffering, Ahmad Safi in one of his articles writes describing the homeless children roaming “the streets, selling newspapers, chewing gum, garbage bags and lottery tickets by the traffic lights, children who do hard labor at garages, brick factories, and blacksmiths... when they should really be on school benches...”(154). But, Ahmad Safi after writing the article is afraid to go back to his office. The narrator tells us: “he completely collapses; he can never go back to the newspaper... he has written two contradictory articles one on the first page, the second on the inside page” (154). In one he praises the general and in the other he criticizes the system. This is the mental torture Ahmad Safi faces. He becomes paranoiac with time, impotent, and treacherous. The narrator admits that he “understands that he is now castrated... He can't go near any creative work” (148). The word castrated is a metaphor meaning intellectually not being able to produce.

Ahmad, at the end of the story feels that he was robbed of his freedom and thus of his dignity. He feels just like the dog that guards the general. Thus, towards the end, the narrator tells the reader how Ahmad starts running towards the city away from the forest while gradually taking off his clothes and throwing them in the air; “he passes his

house... goes up the stairs that lead to the general's house... approaches the dog... rubs against him like old friends meeting after a long separation... then he removes the dog's leash and puts it around his neck... He barks..." (173). Ahmad becomes the dog with all what a dog signifies of submission and loyalty to its owner. Ahmad becomes the general's dog that he had turned into the minute he accepted to become editor of chief giving up his freedom for material gain. The dog, on the other hand, is released, is set free, and the reader is meant to notice how appreciative the dog feels towards his new freedom. The narrator describes the dog after his release: "the dog moves away a bit... then he finds that he has a wider space into which he can freely move... and the further he went the wider the space became... and when dawn started to creep towards the forest and its suburb... the dog realized that he has become free of his leash... and started running into the far distance..." (173). Thus, Ahmad at the end of the story exchanges places with the dog giving up his freedom for a leash around his neck. The narrator ends his story by Ahmad Safi turning into a dog and by Saad the reader having no one to read for and by the general looking out "contemplating the world which is represented by his big city" (174). The general knows that the city looks far and mysterious, but as long as he has guns and guards he has nothing to worry about. The story ends with the general feeling his gun and watching "his guards spread around in the area" (174).

After examining the two novels one can conclude that the dictators in the two different novels are one and the same. They both use the same methods to suppress, investigate, spread fear, and to finally prevail. The main difference though is that in *The Comedians*, we have rebels who try to fight against the dictator; thus, leaving an open horizon full of hope for a possible change; whereas, the horizon in *'Aw* is a closed horizon dominated from beginning to end by the dictator. Ahmad starts as a believer in freedom and ends up at the footsteps of the general.

Conclusion

Concluding, I want to answer important questions that might come to the reader's attention. One question concerns what I have presented and at the same time accomplished by writing this thesis. Second, whether this thesis adds anything new to comparative studies, especially, in the field of comparative literature.

To answer the first question, I can say that this thesis has accomplished bringing to light the fact that comparative literature allows for relatively unknown authors to be compared by renowned authors. In the case of this comparative study, the recent author who is not very well known is Ibrahim Nasrallah, while Graham Greene to whom Nasrallah is being compared is a very famous and well documented author and even though Greene was not a Haitian, he lived in Haiti long enough to be able to write about its dictator and experience the latter's oppression. Besides this fact, this thesis has proved, by comparing the two totally different authors, that comparative studies is able to push all boundaries and trespass them while still maintaining the diversities. Looking at both authors, the differences between the authors stand out clearly. Graham Greene came from an upper-middle-class British family, was educated in the best of private schools, and graduated with a BA in history from Oxford university one of the best universities in England. On the other hand, Ibrahim Nasrallah, comes from a poor Palestinian family, lived in a refugee camp in Jordan, was educated in the UNRWA schools at the refugee camp, and graduated with a teaching degree also from a training college in the camp.

With all these differences in mind, this thesis proves that the content and the text have priority over the identity of the author representing similar phenomena belonging to different cultures. This comparative study brings a kind of unity among diverse elements while keeping the diversity. The different identities are never damaged in comparative studies; Greene stays Greene and Nasrallah stays Nasrallah.

However, one cannot ignore the fact that the literary text is relevant to a variable extent to the author. For, even though this study has kept completely away from the author's background interfering with the analysis of the text and focused on content only, yet this study has tried to assume certain realities about the author through the textual analysis based on theory.

Concerning Graham Greene's *The Comedians*, and after a thorough analysis based on different theories, one cannot but feel the author's influence creeping into some of the characters' dialogues and actions. According to the reading of Greene done in this study, one cannot but admit to Greene's Catholic vision while portraying Jones, and his Marxist vision incorporated in the actions and speeches of Dr. Magiot, young Philipot, and even our narrator Brown. Brown as a narrator was not only aware of the injustice, corruption and killing that were taking place, but he also chose to expose them to the reader. With this in mind, one cannot escape this mixture of Christianity and Marxism. Roger Sharrock admits in his book, *Saints, Sinners, and Comedians: Novels of Graham Greene*, that, "Some Catholics... have been displeased with his handling of religious themes in *Brighton Rock*, *The End of the Affair*, and *The Heart of the Matter*". He adds, "Other critics have carped about his techniques and views of modern society, while many Americans have been annoyed by his anti-American and pro-Marxist sentiments in *The Quiet American* and *The Comedians*" (Sharrock, 298).

As for Nasrallah, he too seems to associate the savior or rebel to the religious figure of Jesus just as Greene did. At one time and when Ahmad Safi, along with the general, face Saad, the rebel, in his cell, Ahmad Safi remembers the story '*The Child of the Long Night*' that he Ahmad himself has written and by which Saad was motivated. Ahmad remembers this with bitterness for he was looking at Saad's face, the face of a rebel he had always dreamt of creating. But now Ahmad sees himself standing at the other side, the side of the general. At this point Ahmad Safi screams silently contemplating: "Why can't I also be the son of Mariam... I am the son of Mariam... yes I am the son of Mariam... the story is my story... I am the one who wrote it" (72). This image of Mariam is taken from both the Bible and the Quran, where in the Quran we have Surat Mariam. Again Nasrallah returns to religion as if all ideologies have failed. We should not forget that Nasrallah as a Palestinian lives in close proximity to the Christian religion; Jesus himself was a Palestinian. Also, what happens in the novel of persecution and oppression is not new to the real world which Nasrallah himself inhabits.

Finally, this thesis has revealed the image of the dictator as a universal image, the universality which is similar to that of the image of the lover, the father, and the scientist. Thus, cultural boundaries become unable to separate a dictator coming from Latin

America, namely, Haiti, from a dictator coming from an unidentified place in the Arab World. Hopefully, this thesis has succeeded in achieving this universality; even though superficially there might be some differences, but they remain superficial.

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