

Egomania, Self-Certainty, and Thinghood: A Hegelian Reading of Rousseau's "Julie" and Goethe's "Werther"

Noor Nader Mohammad A'bed
Faculty of Foreign Languages
University of Jordan
noor_alabed@yahoo.com

Samira Fayyad al-Khawaldeh
Faculty of Foreign Languages
University of Jordan
s.khawaldeh@gmail.com

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Abstract

This paper aims to read Rousseau's *Julie, or the New Heloise* and Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther* in light of the Hegelian dialectic of lordship and bondage. The appreciation of these novels lies in the fact that they have triggered social changes, mutinous attitudes, most importantly, the socio-political emergence for the French Revolution. They are pragmatic texts that implicate certain purposes and ideological tenets toward social and cultural rejuvenations. Subsequently, Hegel's ideas of the "struggle for recognition" in subject-object relationship will be utilised to interpret the relationships between Julie and Saint-Preux, on one hand, and Lotte and Werther, on the other. These characters are determined by love and domination, their encounters as self-consciousnesses are analogised to the battle to death. Each consciousness endeavours to oblige their point of view on the other while extracting his/her recognition from that other. The self-consciousnesses of these characters are traced through three particular phases: confrontation as a position of power, recognition and acceptance. As roles of ascendancy and captivity are ultimately reversed, the process reveals itself as constituted of the Hegelian stages of thesis, antithesis and synthesis.

Keywords: Julie, The Sorrows of Young Werther, Subjection, Hegel's Thesis, Antithesis and Synthesis.

Introduction:

"If we hold fast to the side that man is absolutely free, we condemn slavery. Still it depends on the person's own will, whether he shall be a slave or not, just as it depends upon the will of a people whether or not it is to be in subjection" __ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*.

In addition to his minute scientism on Logic, Nature and Spirit, Hegel's utmost epitomised notions consist of social and political theorisations on freedom, reason, self-consciousness and recognition. The Hegelian dialectic has been of great significance in literary criticism and interpretation. Derrida is a great assertive of Hegel's legacy and contribution to world philosophy. He demonstrates how Hegel re-establishes thought as the store copious of signs and reinserts the quintessential inevitability of the 'written trace' in a Socratic discourse.¹ Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807) is the primary material utilised to interpret the texts under scrutiny in this paper. In the chapter titled "The Truth of Self-Certainty," his generally discussed ideas on the "struggle for recognition" epitomise lordship and bondage dialectic. His insight into the conflict between the lord and the bondsman typifies dichotomous themes of ascendancy versus subjugation and reliance versus liberty. He theorises this conflict between two polar antagonisms over the

attemptable attainment of self-consciousness, self-recognition and self-appreciation.

In his reading of Hegel, Alexandre Kojève labels "Lordship and Bondage" as "Master-Slave" and deciphers Hegel's idea of recognition in regard to Desire. He considers Love, more specifically 'anthropogenic' love, as additional form of the desire for recognition. A lover wishes to be loved and seeks to be recognised as an essential or universal worth in his individuality and this is what differentiates him from all others. Therefore, Love induces a human realisation of man's particularity and then satisfaction. Thus, Hegel's conceptualisation of "self-consciousness" is "the 'I' of desire" in the coinage by Kojève who argues that: "Human Desire must be directed toward another Desire".² All human *Desire*, which creates *Self-Consciousness* and thus the human reality, is ultimately a venture of the desire for recognition. In other words, Kojève continues: "the risk of life by which the human reality 'comes to light' is a risk for the sake of such a Desire. Therefore, to speak of the 'origin' of Self-Consciousness is necessarily to speak of a fight to the death for 'recognition'".³

As a dialectical contention between two self-consciousnesses, Hegel's dialectic *gradualises* through different spheres towards the Spirit or *Geist*,

the synthesised self-consciousness; or what R.C. Solomon defines as a “general consciousness, a single “mind” common to all men”.⁴ This developmental approach goes through three phases of thesis, antithesis and synthesis. It clarifies the conflictual occurrence between thesis and antithesis that results in the emergence of synthesis, not as a mere integration between the former and the latter but as a meta ramification or a beyond outcome of them. The thesis phase as the initial state, however, starts with the struggle between the lord and the bondsman, being stimulated by the lord’s propensity to master, dominate and control the bondsman. As a consequence, the lord’s autonomy and liberty is only attained through the bondsman’s total reliance upon him. The antithesis phase as the second state manifests the negation of the thesis which happens when the lord becomes fully dependent on the bondsman. In this stage, the lord starts to lavishly enjoy services and tasks performed by the bondsman who, in his turn, relies on his labor and service to combat his fear of death, catalysed by the lord. The final stage of Hegel’s dialectic, furthermore, epitomises his terminology of the synthesis which only occurs through the demise of one of the two consciousnesses, most importantly the reversal of roles.

Some previous studies have implemented a similar line of analysis when examining certain literary works using the Hegelian dialectic. Marziyeh Farivar, for instance, applies Hegel’s theory to decipher Lord Byron’s “The two Foscari,” “Sardanapalus” and “Werner” based on the theme of love, where Marina, Myrrha and Josephine eventually become self-conscious and thus achieve their true acknowledgement of the self. According to the Hegelian dialectic, this realisation “makes them independent and courageous, which is the significant change that took place in the Romantic Era” (2013, 31).⁵ Moreover, Stephen Houlgate argues that Goethe’s *Wilhelm Meister’s Apprenticeship* is a “novel of education” and self-recognition which traces the individual development through a process of dialectical orientations as interpreted in Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807). Wilhelm’s psychological evolution and despair caused by his failed love for Mariane represents him as a Hegelian individual who reaches self-absorbed consciousness. Goethe and Hegel’s works, Houlgate illustrates, are *Bildungsroman* material since they aver the individual experiences, to what amount these experiences affect that individual.⁶ Furthermore, Seungjae Lee, through examining the relationship between Clegg and Miranda, describes John Fowles’s *The Collector* as a Hegelian text that critiques the dilemma of otherness, the collapse of self-other affairs founded on unreciprocated recognition and power, and a life-death power struggle. Hence, he considers Fowles’ work as a “heuristic novel” that avers the significance

of accepting otherness as a quintessential element of life.⁷

Julie, or the New Heloise is Rousseau’s celebrated epistolary, philosophical and sentimental novel. It is one of Rousseau’s best endeavours to re-evaluate and re-moralise the connection between individuals and their societies. Rousseau dramatises the tragic destiny of the heroine, Julie, the daughter of the Baron d’Etange, who falls in love with Saint-Preux, her tutor. The elucidative gist of the novel poses and critiques the reliance of the Enlightenment on rationalism and scientism and how such mind-sets and attitudes bewilder man and culture apart from natural, spiritual and emotional domains and towards acts of inequality and hierarchy. Likewise, *The Sorrows of Young Werther* is one of Goethe’s philosophical, romantic and famous epistolary works. It narrates the story of the Werther’s misery as he suffers from living in a class-oriented society ruled by patrimonial aristocrats. Goethe deliberately fictionalises his utmost abhorrence to the deplorable experiences of the lower classes in that society. On the other hand, critics assert that these novels are autobiographical since they reflect Rousseau and Goethe’s real unrequited love for Sophie d’Houdetot and Charlotte Buff, represented in the characters of Julie and Lotte.

In spite of their excessive emphasis on emotionalism, the novels emphasise individual loss, unacceptability and failure to obtain any identification within a materialistic and hierarchical society. For instance, Werther’s simplicity impedes his ability to comprehend the actual mentality of the upper-class people, even before falling in love with Lotte. This can be illustrated in how his cordiality with Miss B causes him humiliation, alienation and most importantly the demission from his job. Subsequently and since art, according to Samuel Johnson, needs to have purposes and effects and thus “it is always a writer’s duty to make the world better”,⁸ these novels are pragmatic texts and manifest the relationship between text and audience. They conform to utilitarianism that accentuates the usefulness of art from which the idea of the content is prioritised over the idea of the form and consequently the moral and social effects a work of art achieves.

In view of the fact that the heroines in these novels are engaged, Wolmar to Julie and Albert to Lotte, special emphasis should be placed on the Hegelian idea of “mediation” in his dialectic. This is further explained, Kojève argues, in how Desire “directed toward a natural object is human only to the extent that it is ‘mediated’ by the Desire of another directed toward the same object: it is human to desire what others desire, because they desire it”.⁹ Applying Hegel’s dialectic, however, shows how Julie and Lotte characterise the Hegelian lord, while Saint-Preux and Werther are representatives of the Hegelian bondsman, albeit not permanently. Julie and

Lotte attain their self-realisation through a "position" of sovereignty as the universal 'I'.¹⁰ On the other hand, Saint-Preux and Werther are the other sides of conscious beings who work for and serve Julie and Lotte, obey their commands and perform their errands as an attempt to attain self-independence. Therefore, Hegel's dialectic of lordship and bondage, draws the lines of "an essentially unbalanced relationship in which the bondsman altogether gives up his being-for-self in favour of the lord [who] uses him as an instrument... for his own (the lord's) purposes..., and the bondsman acquiesces in the situation, and becomes in fact part and parcel of the total objective situation".¹¹

By the same token, these two novels incorporate the whole circulation of Hegel's dialectic: thesis, antithesis and synthesis, through which roles ultimately are reversed. The lord and the bondsman are unequal and incompatible. They, Hegel determines: "exist as two opposed shapes of consciousness; one is the independent consciousness whose essential nature is to be for itself, the other is the dependent consciousness whose essential nature is simply to live or to be for another. The former is lord, the other is bondsman".¹²

Egoistic Scrupulosity and Subjectification in Rousseau's Julie

Since individuals endeavour to control and affect one another, Hegel's dialectic of lordship and bondage is of focal importance to utilise in order to highlight the motives of subject-object relationships in deciphering Rousseau's Julie. In his Phenomenology, Hegel points out that encounters of one-other or self-other are determined and conceptualised by anxiety, passion, severity, rule and subordination. The narrative is constructed on imbalanced connections between clashing binaries: Saint-Preux, Julie and her family. As a young middle-class tutor, he is invited to teach Julie and her closest friend Claire by Julie's mother who is hopeful to surprise her aristocratic husband by their daughter's educational progress. Julie and Saint-Preux soon fall in love and aspire to marry but her father Baron d'Etange pitilessly opposes the marriage due to class distinctions. Instead, he plans to wed his daughter to a Russian nobleman named Wolmar. In spite of the father's rejections and Edward Bomston's intermediation to reconcile as the family's English friend, the affair continues secretly until Saint-Preux asks Julie to elope. In turn, afraid to ruin her parents' hearts and recognition, Julie rejects his idea and instead sends him away with Edward Bomston. Unenthusiastically, she consents to marry Wolmar so as not to break her father's pledge to his friend. Even though, she tells Saint-Preux about her courage to appoint rendezvous that "can fulfil [her] promises and pay all of love's debts all at once".¹³

In their first intimacy which was initiated by Julie, she, as "a much more talented seductress",¹⁴ even

demands Saint-Preux to protect her chastity from herself. This idea of performing demands defines Hegel's basic foundation in self-other relationship. It aptly shows her complete control over him that he seems wholly objectified. Accordingly, she proposed the secretly continual liaison before her marriage. Paul Young explains how she holds "an easy time dominating Saint-Preux, and rather than yielding to his advances, she offers her own plan of attack, setting the times and places for their rendezvous; Saint-Preux, for his part is reduced to showing up and performing the role to which she has constrained him".¹⁵ Such propositions, however, lead to Saint-Preux's state of fragility and Julie's dominion over him. Saint-Preux, who asserts, "Ah Julie whom I worship!"¹⁶ ends up with a struggle between virtue, remorse and shame, uttering:

I know not what I write; my soul feels in a frightful state, worse even than the one I was in before I received your letter. The hope you restore to me is a sad and sombre one; it puts out that purest glow that so often lighted our way; because of it your beauties are tarnished and become only the more touching for it; ... and I bitterly reproach myself for a happiness I can taste only at the cost of yours.¹⁷

After eight years of excursion around the world in a British expedition with Edward Bomston upon Julie's desire, Saint-Preux returns to Switzerland. Described as "eternally ready to suffer pain and humiliation at the hands of the woman... [Julie] who dominate[s] him",¹⁸ Saint-Preux returns from his alienation to Claren, where he, for the first time, visits Claire who unequivocally depicts his character in a letter to Julie:

Here's your Slave, Cousin, I am sending him back to you. I have made him mine this whole week long, and he has borne his chains so contentedly that one can see he is just made for service.... I have sometimes felt in myself that pride of soul which disdains rigid proprieties and becomes virtue so well. I have been more timid on this occasion without knowing why; and the only sure thing is that I would be more inclined to reproach than to congratulate myself for such reserve.¹⁹

In the meantime, Julie, married to Wolmar, intends to confess her pre-nuptial liaison with Saint-Preux to her husband. In turn Wolmar invites Saint-Preux to Claren so as to recuperate from his previous heartbreak. Inasmuch as recovered upon Wolmar's attempts, Saint-Preux can serve to teach Julie's two sons and the widow Claire's daughter. Wolmar states:

I am trying to familiarize him with the objects that panic him, by presenting them in such a way that they will no longer be dangerous to him... In the place of his mistress I force him to see always the spouse of an honourable man and the mother of my children: I overlay one tableau with another, and cover the past with the present.²⁰

Edward Bomston portrays Saint-Preux as the slave of Julie and of his passions, whose soul is fragile, yet vivacious and loves virtue. He blames him for his letters that diffuse infirmity, asserting: "Your passions, of which you were long the slave, have left you virtuous... Your strength itself is the product of your weakness. Do you know what it is that caused you always to love virtue? It took on in your eyes the appearance of that adorable woman who so well represents it".²¹ As a Hegelian lord, Julie possesses the intensity to subjugate people of both genders, Claire, Saint-Preux, Bomston and Wolmar, through her enthusiastically generous behaviours, charming beauty and delicate affection. Her mastery can also be seen in her relief and content to be surrounded by little community whom she admires, loves and dominates. In the scene that portrays her dining room, with her father, Wolmar, her two sons, Claire, Edward, Saint-Preux and her favourite servant, Julie confirms that life and death have nothing to give her nor to steal from her. She describes: "I live at once in all those I love, I am sated with happiness and life: O death, come when thou wilt! I have no more fear of thee, ... there are no new sentiments for me to experience, there is nothing more of which thou canst cheat me".²²

She is the heroine of instructs and demands that Saint-Preux and others can never choose but to obey. For instance, when she asked him to travel on a trip, she sent him an amount of money to use. Saint-Preux sent the money back but soon is obliged to accept the double amount of money along with a letter in which she objurgates his inappropriate demeanours. She says "I used to spend my leftover money; that is another reason for disposing of it as I am doing: I must humiliate you for the evil you cause, and love must atone for the sins it occasions".²³ Although these observations, Young argues, "may pervert our image of the saintly Julie that Rousseau portrays at the end of the novel",²⁴ they precisely depict her ascendancy over Saint-Preux. He is, according to Wolmar's descriptions, "fiery, but weak and easy to tame".²⁵ Hence, Hegel's symbolisations of the bondsman, nonetheless, illustrate how Saint-Preux's accomplishments of Julie's demands transform him into a thingified being who realises his insufficiency and captivity compared to her. He responded to her previous letter, pitifully stating: "I have received your gifts, I departed without seeing you, now here I am very far from you. Are you satisfied with your tyranny, and have I obeyed you well enough?"²⁶

Hegel's antithesis can be seen in the first parts of the novel when Saint-Preux starts to think of his position and becomes aware of his weakness. His self-consciousness of subordination occurs in different occasions in their first camaraderie. One day, he threatened to kill Julie when he knew about her marriage. He expresses his thoughts:

No. I would rather lose you than share you. Would that Heaven gave me a courage equal to the transports that toss me!... before your hand could defile itself by that fatal bond abhorred by love and reproved by honour, I would come and plunge with mine a dagger in your breast: I would drain your chaste heart of blood as yet unsullied by infidelity.²⁷

Wolmar, in spite of his acquaintance of their premarital affair, decided to approach them together so as to be friends, hoping they might forget and cure their obsession for each other. He once left them alone for a while. Saint-Preux accompanied Julie to distant places, aspiring to remind her of the monuments of their bygone love. Controlled by a crisis he could not cope with, he tried to kill himself and her twice, once by falling into the edge of the abyss. It was Julie who rescued both of them. He describes the situation as follows:

O you for whom I was born! Must I find myself with you in the same places, and long for the time I spent here grieving over your absence?... I was about to go on; but Julie, who seeing me move closer to the brink had taken fright and seized my hand, clutched it silently, looking at me tenderly and barely holding back a sigh; then all of a sudden turning away her eyes and pulling me by the arm.²⁸

Over and above that, Saint-Preux in this scene seems to have started to think of negating his position and moving into the second phase by killing both himself and Julie. During the fatigues of that day, Saint-Preux had experienced the most powerful sentiments and predicaments that retrieve him wholly to himself. This excursion that Wolmar intended the lovers to take, Saint-Preux tells Edward, has persuaded him of the autonomy of man and the worth of virtue. Yet, it was Julie who "sustained that day the greatest battle that a human soul could have sustained; yet she triumphed".²⁹ The word triumph is of quintessential referentiality in Hegel's theorisation for it clarifies how Saint-Preux's sentimental portrayals of that scene betray Julie's extreme sovereignty over him that she can even prevent him from committing suicide. He, despite Edward's influential advice, refrained from committing suicide for her sake. The descriptions of that picnic, Julie's recurrent presence and Saint-Preux's disoriented mentality, define his inner feelings, most importantly the developmental gradualisations of his consciousness which constitute the Hegelian dialectic, he continues:

When I grieved from far away, the hope of seeing her again gave my heart relief... But to be near her; but to see her, touch her, speak to her, love her, worship her, and, while nearly possessing her anew, to feel she was forever lost to me; all this cast me into fits of fury and rage that stirred me by degrees to the point of despair. Soon... I was violently tempted to hurl her with me into the waves, and there in her arms put an end to my life and my long torments.³⁰

Accordingly, Julie's mastery cannot only be noted in her relation with Saint-Preux, but also with Claire and Wolmar whom she tried to convert to Christianity. She proposed Saint-Preux to marry Claire, in an endeavour to be sure of his presence around her. To fence her self-importance through him and others, she as a Hegelian lord achieves her "recognition through another consciousness".³¹ In spite of Saint-Preux and Claire's rejection to accept her command of being married, she never surrenders. This illustrates her chaining mastery over her favourite people. She admits to Saint-Preux her insistence to consummate her plan, stating: "I still stand by my plan; ... it would so honourably rescue you from the precarious state in which you live in the world, [and] make for us so natural a duty of that friendship which is so sweet to us, that I cannot entirely give it up".³²

Nelson Lund emphasises the role of Julie in dominating others, relying on her power of affect. Even in her illness, she encourages Claire and Saint-Preux to marry. She, Lund continues, "has enslaved these two [Claire and Saint-Preux] so completely that it is apparently beyond her power to set them free".³³ Demonstrated thereby, Claire writes to Saint-Preux and Edward, upon hopes to asking them to care for Julie's father, sons and husband, saying: "Come then, dear and respectable friends, come join with what remains of her. Let us gather together all those who were dear to her. May her spirit inspire us: may her heart unite all of ours; let us live continually under her eyes".³⁴

On the other hand, Saint-Preux's objectified-self consolidates the construction of Julie's subjectivity. His bondsman characteristics, moreover, are originated from his social inferiority which prevents him from a convenient image of his reality. Consequently, these conceptualisations, adhere to his social instability and negation that cause his isolation and bewilderment. From a Hegelian perspective, Saint-Preux's self-realisation is achieved in his servitude to her and in his performance of her commands, leaving and returning to Clarens, to exemplify, changing his mind to commit suicide, marrying Claire and tutoring her sons and Claire's daughter. Furthermore, the application of the Hegelian ideas indicates that her self-reality of the "I" is grounded on another self-actuality, which is considered to be an external substantiation in the presence of Saint-Preux around her.

Manifested thereby, his absence will deprive her of objective reality, because she needs his service to attain recognition from him and thus can satisfy her inclination to self-appreciation. It is the lord, Hegel argues, "who reaps the enjoyment from the bondsman's labours".³⁵ He performs whatsoever she commands in order to impress her and please her by providing her actual needs and personal wishes that make her recognise the purpose of her offers. His

bondage is evident in his letters to her, most particularly his following reflections:

Whatever you may dictate, I can but obey. Will you impose an everlasting silence? I shall manage to force myself to observe it. Will you banish me from your presence? I swear you shall see me no more. Will you order me to die? Ah! That will not be the most difficult thing. There is no command to which I will not agree, except to love you no more: and even in this I would obey you, if there were a way for me to do so.³⁶

Saint-Preux's duties of obedience to Julie place him as a Hegelian bondsman. Yet, despite his obligation to leave and later return to Clarens, his serving as a tutor for her sons and her "adopted" daughter, Saint-Preux could not accept to marry Claire during her life. This deed which does not only seem an act of simple denial to Julie's proposition, but a real "negation" to his position of subordination to her. It is the sphere of the antithesis that Hegel accentuates as the subsequently second occurrence of this dialectic. In this juncture, Julie is wholly reliant on Saint-Preux, and in turn, he is aware of his status of inferiority and begins to negate it. Claire, Julie says, "Loves like Julie, she must be loved like her. If you feel you can be deserving of her, speak; my friendship will undertake the rest and expects the most of hers".³⁷ Yet, in this particular phase, Saint-Preux does not seem to represent a complete image of Hegel's bondsman.

In her final days, Julie wrote a letter to Saint-Preux and asked Wolmar to send it to him if he decides to agree. Wolmar enclosed it along with minute portrayals of Julie's last moments. In the letter, Julie faces death and tells Saint-Preux that she can now be healed of "the first sentiment that brought [her] alive," asserting:

We must abandon our plans. All is changed, ... let us suffer this change without murmur... We were planning to reunite: this reunion was not good... I have long deluded myself. That delusion for me was salutary; it collapses at the moment when I no longer need it. You have believed I was cured, and I thought I was. Let us give thanks to him who made this error last for as long as it was useful; who knows whether seeing myself so near the abyss, I would not have been drawn into it?³⁸

Furthermore, on her deathbed Julie ultimately confesses her full servitude to Saint-Preux.³⁹ Yet, this scene can complete the Hegelian phases, most particularly, the synthesis phase, wherein roles are reversed. Julie is now the slave bondswoman and Saint-Preux is the lord; and one side of consciousness chooses death and submission. Her final confession is apparent in her letter, stating:

[T]his sentiment which subsisted despite me was involuntary, it has cost my innocence nothing... If the heart, which is not in its power, was for you, that was a torment for me and not a crime. I have done

what duty required; virtue remains to me without spot, and love has remained to me without remorse. I dare pride myself on the past; but who could have answered to me for the future? One day more, perhaps, and I was criminal! How about a whole life spent with you? What dangers I have run unawares! To what greater dangers was I to be exposed!⁴⁰

Hegel's three phases of thesis, antithesis and synthesis are applicable to the novel in the two characters' relationships and the gradual developments in their thoughts and consciousnesses. The first phase of their relationship represents Hegel's concept of the thesis. It passes until Saint-Preux started to think to forget Julie, to resist, which underlines what Hegel means by the antithesis phase. This thought is a determinant of the negation of the thesis, from which Saint-Preux's consciousness of his reality gets into a realm of changeability and transformability. Finally, Hegel's concept of the synthesis is of apt identity to Julie and Saint-Preux's culminative changes in personality, behaviour and mentality. Julie's decision of committing suicide and eventual death nullifies her status of mastery in the Hegelian perspective. Hence,

She ends up recognising her need to depend on Saint-Preux's presence and this, nonetheless, characterises the overturn of roles, most importantly her lordship and his bondage. She is no longer the lord and Saint-Preux is not any more the bondsman.

The Apotheosis of Self and the thingification of Other in Goethe's *Werther*

Goethe's novel is written in the form of descriptive, rhetorical and aesthetic correspondences between Werther and his close friend, Wilhelm. It narrates "the history of poor Werther," a young, innocent and harmless man who hides in his soul a great sympathy towards people and nature and most specifically who is a human of inexpressible delicacy. He, Ignace Feuerlicht designates, "makes friends easily, even among the aristocrats. He is particularly attracted to children and common people, and easily gains their confidence and attachment".⁴¹ His mother sent him on a journey to a small township in order to resolve an inheritance issue. In the town of Wahlheim, Werther's fondness of the peasant life increased due to his full resentment for higher social elegances. He depicts the town to his friend, Wilhelm: "I am alone and glad to be alive in this locality, which was created for such souls as mine..., while on the earth near me a thousand varied grasses strike me as significant; when I ... feel the presence of the Almighty".⁴²

Soon, he became charmed by the exquisiteness of Wahlheim's environs, where he meets and falls in love with Lotte, an aristocratic girl who is already engaged to a wealthy man named Albert. He describes her to Wilhelm: "And yet I am not in a position to tell you in what respect she is perfect, why she is perfect; enough! she has taken possession of

my whole being".⁴³ Chained by his despondent sentimentality and inescapable dilemma, he finds in suicide a great salvation of not only Lotte's manipulation of him, but of "leaving the prison of life and the limitations of human existence" whenever he desires.⁴⁴

The major thematic structure of the novel runs from temptation, seductiveness, and unilateral egomania epitomised in Lotte, and innocence, torture and futility, encapsulated in Werther. Despite her marriage to Albert, the novel dramatises the interior struggle in her mind and "the lust for possession of Werther... that she wants to keep [him] for herself".⁴⁵ The text is illustrative of the essence of Goethe's poetical, fictional and dramatic legacy. Goethe, Tobin Siebers demonstrates, "doesn't need to suffer in order to write his novel. The poetics of suffering in both Goethe's life and writing precedes and displaces the act of suffering, and only Werther must die".⁴⁶

Through Hegel, Lotte and Werther are two self-consciousnesses who must engage in a struggle to win their recognition, constructed on the reason that each of them sees one-another as a danger threatening his-her life. Most importantly, words such as "danger" and "struggle" are not to be perceived literally since the story narrates the sorrowful consequences of unreciprocated passion that ends tragically. Before the confrontation begins, which Hegel initialises his dialectic with, both Lotte and Werther consider themselves to be the source of their values, their autonomy and their reality.

Therefore, the presence of another self-consciousness stimulates a new tension and a provoking mission which is to compare the pillars of each entity of being with that of the other. Each consciousness pre-requires the affirmation of its personality from the other, consequently to be sure of its strength in respect to that other. Upon Hegelian postulations, Lotte and Werther are unequal and live as two contrasting forms of consciousnesses. In their struggle, they endeavour to determine and establish the actuality of their existences not only for themselves but for one-another. They strive to evidence each one's value to the other as well as to their own personalities. She wants Werther's attendant escort, albeit during Albert's absence and presence, in a way "to keep him at his distance rather than to lose him completely".⁴⁷ She struggles between possessing him so as to secure her self-image from him, her emotions of misery and her life-duty as a wife.

Of importance is to point out that Lotte has intentionally captivated Werther in order to gain her 'I' of the self at the expense of his encounter and proximity. This proximity is what manifests her self-distinction that she seems to be fully apprehensive about. Although some critics see her as the one responsible for Werther's self-annihilation, like Tobin Siebers who argues that she holds "a position

necessary to Werther's self-injury".⁴⁸ However, Robert Ellis Dye, upon the base of controversially different scholarly views on Lotte, concludes that she is not "self-evidently the conventional paragon of virtuous young womanhood that she has traditionally been taken to be".⁴⁹ The caution Werther gets from her aunt on his way to meet her: "Be on your guard... that you don't fall in love!",⁵⁰ explicates the negativity of her, her society and the designation of her as the "habitual breaker" of hearts. She seduces the new settler in a way to renovate the monotonous existence of her township.⁵¹

Like Saint-Preux, Werther is a man of virtue and dignity. In spite of his misery, thoughts of death and obsession, he did not incline to perplex Lotte and her fiancé and thus stopped his quest for her. Referring to Hegel's antithesis, after staying for five months in Wahlheim, Werther absented himself and decided to work at an administrative legation in an anonymous city where members of the aristocrats treated him disrespectfully. Managing to overcome his obsession for Lotte, his initial decision to leave her town, to move to a new township, to work at the legation and to start a new life, moreover, unveils the liberty of his soul and his energetic nature of rejecting servitude, even that caused by passion.

In his departure, he befriends Miss von B., a local girl whom he thinks might vanquish Lotte's phantom. Her social rank, which is higher than Werther's, her mother's insistence and her social clique occlude their courtship and thwart their tryst. This experience, in addition to the underestimation he received from the aristocratic community and the Ambassador, made his life and work in that township intolerable. After a few months, Werther receives a letter from Albert, informing about his marriage with Lotte. He is back to Wahlheim where Lotte lives.

One, perhaps, can perceive Lotte's noticeable and inevitable passion for Werther through the narration of her behaviour. Like Julie's conduct toward Saint-Preux, she attempts to bring Werther closer to her, even at the expense of introducing him to Albert. Werther meditates on Albert's respectful interactions with her and recognises Lotte's interference with that in an avenue to preserve her two lovers. He reflects:

[Albert] wishes me well, and I surmise that that is Lotte's doing rather than his own feeling. For in that respect women have a fine instinct, and a sound one: if they can keep two admirers on good terms with each other, which is bound to be to their advantage, however rarely it succeeds.⁵²

In the following scene, Werther describes to his best friend Wilhelm, Albert's promise to him to meet in the garden with Lotte after dinner. Despite the languishing thoughts of departure and of return after waiting for a half hour, the couple finally arrived. Werther narrates: "Lotte went in and sat down, Albert at her side, and I too; but my unrest would not let me

sit long; I got up, stepped in front of her, paced back and forth, sat down again: it was a disquieting situation".⁵³ The three friends enjoyed conversing about different topics while climbing the top of the hill. However, in a moment of silence that astonished the three by the glorious effect of the moonlight that brightened the entire terrace before them, Lotte started to enunciate: "I never go walking in the moonlight, never, without encountering the thought of my departed ones, without having the feeling of death and of the future come over me. We shall live!... but, Werther, shall we find each other again? Know each other again? What is your premonition?"⁵⁴ This event is of elucidative value that crystallises Lotte's love for Werther. Yet, the psyche of Werther is different, since he nurtures his heart with "the sweet feeling of freedom" and in spite of his fetters and chains, he knows that "he can quit this prison whenever he will".⁵⁵

Nonetheless, his love for Lotte transforms him into a state of childhood. Like Saint-Preux who is "frequently referred to by the infantilizing and feminizing language",⁵⁶ he became easily controlled and enslaved by her. This state of childhood and most importantly, Werther's consciousness of it, moreover, poses the Hegelian manifestations of servitude. According to Hegel, the bondsman reconciles with the fact that he is in a state of servitude to the lord and at the same time realises the lord's need for him. Accordingly, Werther reaches the finality of consciousness that he is ruled like a child. He confesses that he is like children who obtain a less important and more marginal status in society. Their helplessness mirrors that of the young, like Werther's, who asserts:

[C]hildren do not know why they want what they want; but that adult too, as well as children, stagger around on this earth, like them not knowing whence they come and whither they go, pursue true goals just as little as they, and are just as completely governed by biscuits and cakes and birch rods.⁵⁷

The word 'governed' and its 'governors' of "biscuits, cake, and birch rods" are symbolic and appear as connotations of Werther's bondage and Lotte's lordship through beauty and lure. This can be illustrated in Werther's own confession about his childhood status and how he is against the marginality of the helpless, especially children. Werther confesses to Wilhelm "what children we are" and "O what a child I am!"⁵⁸ This comparison between mature men and children, moreover, poses the Hegelian second phase of antithesis, wherein the bondsman starts to be aware of the lord's lordship and makes an attempt to negate it. This is analogical of Werther's consciousness of the dominance of Lotte and his negation of it. His advocacy for the miserable and the helpless stands lucid in enhancing their dilemma; most importantly, he instrumentalises

his consciousness in favour of inferior individuals in status-oriented society.

Moreover, his suicide, and more precisely his redundant threats of it, are epitomes of Hegel's second phase in the circulation of his dialectic wherein the bondsman starts to negate his position of dependability. In the Hegelian antithesis, Werther does not solely renounce his status of subordination to Lotte, but also endeavours to unfetter himself from her manacles, the doctrines of her society and the institutions of her culture. To explain his suicide, Feuerlicht reflects, "by his insanity is easy, but wrong. Werther has never been more disciplined and logical than on the day before his death".⁵⁹ He seeks a harmonious unity between his soul and the world around him; that is, even the notion of suicide occurred in his mind in early occurrences even before meeting Lotte. His suicide did not only emerge from the doomed affair with Lotte whom he is unable to possess but from "a more profound dislocation between [himself] and the life around him".⁶⁰

In the June 16 letter, Werther relates to Wilhelm the dance party in the country, arranged by young people, which he agreed to join. After the party, Lotte decided to start the "counting game" with gentlemen, ladies and Werther. They went into a room where Lotte occupied herself with laying chairs in a circle and all attendants sat down at her request. Werther narrates how she boxed him twice harder:

She walked around the circle with her arm outstretched. "One," said the first, his neighbour said Two, the next one Three, and so on. Then she began to walk faster, and faster and faster; soon there was a mistake and slap! Went her hand, and the laughter confused the next one, and slap! And still faster. I myself got two slaps, and with keen pleasure I thought I observed that they were harder than the ones she usually dealt the others.⁶¹

This scene distinguishes her intentional manipulation of him; she loves him but intends to blur her passion out in order to keep him subjectified and controlled. It could, perhaps, appear as if he allied himself with self-injury and suffering to gain distinction, but this is an idea that can be refuted if there were no other evidences that manifest her complicity and involvement in his love. Yet, what she aspires to reach is her amour de soi, or the desire for self-decency and agency. Following that game, Werther resumes his portrayals of that day:

She stood leaning on her elbows, with her gaze searching the countryside; she looked up to heaven and at me; I saw her eyes fill with tears, and she laid her hand on mine, saying, "Klopstock!" I recalled at once the glorious ode she had in mind, and became immersed in the stream of emotions which she had poured over me by uttering this symbolic name. I could not bear it, I bent down over her hand and kissed it amid tears of the utmost rapture. And looked into her eyes again- Noble poet! Would that you had

seen your apotheosis in that gaze, and would that your name, so often profaned, would never reach my ears from any other lips.⁶²

Moreover, her gratifications of his services and performances of reading poetry pose the question of her leverage over him that she even asks for his presence and dismissal upon her will. In addition to her request of reading Klopstock's "The Festival Spring," she suggests to him to read the Ossianic poems in another occasion. Next to their loud recitation of it, they begin to moan together over their own anguish and the tragic fate in the songs of Ossian. *The Editor of the novel describes: "Both were in a fearful agitation. They felt their own wretchedness in the fate of those noble souls, felt it jointly, and their tears united".⁶³ They embraced and kissed each other until, unexpectedly, she shattered the scenic unison and sensuous harmony, yelled at his face and expelled him. Trembling between love and anger, she said: "That is the last time! Werther! You will not see me again".⁶⁴ The Editor continues: "And casting a glance of the fullest love upon the wretched man, she hurried into the adjoining room and locked the door behind her".⁶⁵

What Lotte intended boomeranged since she was able to control Werther's physicality and mentality yet unable to rule his sense of respect and assurance. Werther constructs his personal status and supports the legitimisation of his life in society through his consciousness of his place in the world. On the other hand, she cannot legitimise her role as a lord nor construct her self-respect and status in life without mastering Werther. More particularly, the Editor establishes a connection with how she used to "share with him everything of interest which she felt and thought, and his removal threatened to make a breach in her whole being which could never be filled again".⁶⁶ In such a relationship, Hegel depicts symmetrical stance, arguing as follows: "The self-consciousness of the lord is essentially related to the being of the mere things he uses and uses up, and these he enjoys through the bondsman's self-consciousness".⁶⁷

Lotte could not expect to be under Werther's control. She has no power even to expect that statuses will be reversed. Werther states: "She does not see, she does not feel, that she is preparing a poison which will destroy me and herself; and I sip to the bottom,

* The Editor is one of the novel's main characters, who affirms that he has compiled the biography of ill-fated Werther. He expresses a sincere sentiment for him and endeavours to accentuate the readers' admiration for his persona and their genuine sympathy for his calamities.

with fullest enjoyment, the cup she hands me for my ruin".⁶⁸ In his elective self-ouster, Werther aspires to affect her and inform her of his discovered consciousness, his freedom and her dependency upon him for her self-recognition. She and Albert have apparently been sceptic about the solemnity of Werther's intimations of committing suicide. An important factor to emphasise, nonetheless, is Lotte's reluctance to hand the pistols to him.

Following the Hegelian hypothesis, the encounter of two consciousnesses stimulates a fear over their identity and thus both want to be "loved," "desired" and "recognised" in order to attain their self-identification. This demonstration, however, points out how the Werther encounter with Lotte "invaded her very being",⁶⁹ especially in his first absence that caused a real wound in her. He reaches the finality of Hegel's synthesis for he becomes fully aware of Lotte's dependence upon him for the sustainability of her recognition; and thus, his suicide almost tore her apart. He is the Hegelian lord ultimately because his consciousness attained the double consciousness, one of himself and the second of Lotte's limitedness and feebleness. This "synthesised" consciousness is what abrogates her mastery over him, above all, she also realises her indigence to his existence that appears as a motivational apparatus to the establishment of her entity.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Julie and Lotte's natural consciousness of mastery relies on their immediate surroundings that "will show itself to be the only notion of knowledge, or in other words, not to be real knowledge".⁷⁰ They are the heroines of the narratives under scrutiny, since they endeavour to construct their subjectivity by imposing their superiority over Saint-Preux and Werther, respectively, with reference to their rigid, independent and leading personalities. Saint-Preux and Werther are always reachable and all set to be commanded by Julie and Lotte; a phenomenon that unavoidably implies the latter's masterhood. This demonstration, however, epitomizes how they possess the subjectifying nature of the "I" that is not easily negatable or changeable. Hegel argues "The 'I' that utters itself is heard or perceived; it is an infection in which it has immediately passed into unity with those for whom it is a real existence, and is a universal self-consciousness".⁷¹ They live surrounded by people who can serve them and perform any mission for them. They are autonomously conscious beings who rely on an-other to give them the actuality of their existence. Their laconic comportments as lords lie at their attainment of "the pure enjoyment" of Saint-Preux's and Werther's "services" in Hegel's terminology. Both Werther and Saint-Preux deified their beloveds. Saint-Preux mentions that he worships Julie and Werther "liked to cast [himself] down

before [Lotte] as before a prophet who has washed away with holy water the sins of a nation".⁷²

Julie and Lotte in the end of the narratives appear as confused and unable to make decisions; that their inefficient capacity to reason manifests the obvious sign of their weakness as inverted from their powerfulness. Hegel's three states of confrontation, recognition and acceptance, through the relationships of Julie and Saint-Preux, and Lotte and Werther, determine how the movement and experience of the natural consciousness manifest itself as a history of positions where statuses of superiority or inferiority reverberate. Therefore, Saint-Preux and Werther manifest their triumph since Julie and Lotte's existence seems to be fundamentally dependent on them. Ultimately, they are the conclusive Hegelian lords who attain the "real existence of the I," "true nature of the 'I,'" the "universal I" and most importantly the "double self-consciousness".⁷³

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الهوس الأناني واليقين الذاتي والشئئية: قراءة هيكلية لرواية روسو (جولي) ورواية غوته (آلام فرتز)

سميرة فياض الخوالدة
كلية اللغات الأجنبية
الجامعة الأردنية

s.khawaldeh@gmail.com

القبول: 2021/12/01

نور نادر محمد عابد
كلية اللغات الأجنبية
الجامعة الأردنية

noor_alabed@yahoo.com

الاستلام: 2021/11/03

المخلص:

تهدفُ هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل رواية (جولي، أو إلواز الجديدة) لروسو، ورواية (آلام فرتز) لغوته في ضوء الجدلية الهيكلية للسيادة والعبودية. وتكمن قيمة هذه الروايات في الحقيقة أنها أحدثت تقلبات اجتماعية، وحركات تمرد، والأهم من ذلك، الظهور الاجتماعي والسياسي للثورة الفرنسية. فهي نصوص براجماتية تتضمن أهدافاً معينة، ومعتقدات فكرية نحو الإصلاحات الاجتماعية والثقافية. وبالتالي، ستوظف أفكار هيكل المتعلقة بـ "النضال من أجل الاعتراف" في العلاقة بين الأنا والآخر؛ لتفسير العلاقة بين جولي وسان برو من جهة، ولوت وفرتز من جهة أخرى بناءً على ذلك. وستحدد هذه الشخصيات من خلال عوامل الحب والهيمنة، وتتماثل لقاءاتهم كأفرادٍ وواعين ذاتياً بالصراع حتى الموت، حيث يسعى كلٌ وعيٍ إلى فرض وجهة نظره على الآخر، وفي الوقت ذاته ينتزع الإقرار بوجوده من ذلك الآخر. وسيتم تتبع الوعي الذاتي لهذه الشخصيات من خلال ثلاث مراحل: المواجهة كمركز قوة، والاعتراف، والقبول. ومع انعكاس أدوار السطوة والخضوع في نهاية المطاف، تكشف النظرية عن نفسها على أنها مؤلفة من الأطوار الهيكلية الديالكتيكية للطرح والنقيض والتركيب، أو ما يسميها هيكل عادةً بـ: التأكيد، والنفي، ونفي النفي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: رواية (جولي)، رواية (آلام فرتز)، الخضوع، مبادئ الجدلية الهيكلية: التأكيد، النفي، نفي النفي.