Deanship of Scientific Research

The Representations of Ideological Closure in Maymūna and Ragtime

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Abstract

This paper discusses the representation of ideological closure in the Arabic novel, Maymūna by Mahmoud Tarawry and the American novel, Ragtime by E. L. Doctorow. These novels concentrate on the narration of racism. Also, the narrative structure conceals the social and political rejection of racism that relies on victimization and humiliation. Thus, the main argument is in Maymūna and Ragtime, the representation of anti-racism should not be seen as a utopian impulse, but it may be considered ideological closure that may be called "a global ideological closure" which means restraining the protagonist from providing an alternative imagination to change the status quo. In this paper, the discussion of the representation of ideological closure relies on Althusser's theatrical contribution to ideology.

Keywords: Ideological; utopian; Arabic novel; American novel.

تمثيلات الانغلاق الأيدولوجي روايتي: ميمونة وراكتايم

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ملخّص

تناقش هذه الدراسة تمثيلات الانغلاق الأيدولوجي في الرواية العربية (ميمونة للروائي: محمود تراوري) والرواية الأمريكية (راكتايم للروائي: إي أل .دكترو.) البنية السردية للروايتين تركز على نبذ العنصرية. كما أن تلك البنية السردية تخفي الخطاب الاجتماعي والسياسي الرافض للعنصرية الذي يتعمد على التجريم والإهانة؛ لذا جاءت الفرضية الرئيسية للدراسة:إن ميمونة وراكتايم يتضمنان تمثيلات رفض العنصرية الذي لا ينبغي عدّه باعث يوتوبي، وإنما انغلاق أيدولوجي عالمي الذي يمنع أبطال الروايتان من طرح تصور يوتوبي بديل لتغيير الواقع المعاش. هذه الدراسة اعتمدت على ما قدمه الفيلسوف الفرنسي لوي ألتوسير في دراساته حول الأيدولوجيا وتأثيرها في بنية الخطاب.

الكلمات الدالة: الانغلاق الأيدولوجي، الباعث اليوتوبي، الرواية العربية، الرواية الأمريكية.

Introduction

The ultimate level of human desire is obtaining a better future. This human desire relies on hope to change the status quo; therefore, this process may be considered a political and social factor. In this sense, the attempt of changing the status quo consists of two dimensions. First, ideology attempts to maintain the status quo. Second, utopia endeavors to criticize the present and imagine a better future. These two dimensions indicate that ideology aims to close any possibility of change while utopia's aim is to open all horizons for change. Indeed, some scholars such as Louis Pierre Althusser and Fredric Jameson discuss the dialectic of ideology and utopia. In this paper, Althusser's discussion of ideology and its apparatuses will be the primary theoretical source.

This paper focuses on the representation of ideological closure because the process of utopian imagination may be considered as a consequence of ideology. In literary criticism, the term of ideological closure means a literary text contains literary implication of an illusion of completeness that aims to prevent the reader from discovering the negative side of dominant ideology (Jameson, 2015). In other words, the ideological closure is the literary mechanism that restrains the protagonist from providing an alternative imagination to change the status quo.

The progress of obtaining a better future can be registered into different books that are affiliated to different disciplines, but literature may be seen helpful because the nature of literature relies on the essence of imagination. The most significant literary genre, which "most fully reflects this individualist and reorientation, is the novel" (Watt, 2001). Therefore, novelists' enthusiastic writings about problems and issues, which have happened in their societies, indicate that the premise of the novel is inherently social and political. In his sense, discussing the narrative structure of the novel may reveal the influence of history and society. In addition, the socio-historical context is derived from the conflicts that happen in history and society. Ultimately, studying the socio-historical context demands the discussion of the influence of ideology that is portrayed in the narrative structure of the novel.

The narration may contain the socio-historical context of the political and social problems and issues. In this paper, racism is the primary social and political issue. Subsequently, the narrative structure of novels, which are from different global literatures, share the theme of racism. Thus, this paper discusses the representation of victimization and humiliation which are a result of issues like race, class, social inequality. This discussion highlights how different hegemonies may produce narratives structures that contain the dialectic of racism and anti-racism. Hence, this discussion focuses on the representation of the ideological closure the narrative structure of *Maymūna* by Mahmoud Tarawry and *Ragtime by* E. L. Doctorow.

There are some scholars such as George M. Fredrickson who discuss the relationship between racism and ideology. For Fredrickson, racism arises when the interaction happens between the principles of egalitarianism with unjust treatment of a specific racial group (Fredrickson, 2015). The discussion of the representation of racism must not be isolated from its motives because they may help to reveal how ideology may shape people's view to the world. Thereafter, the discussion of ideology must concentrate on whether or not the representation of racism in the novel maintains or opposes the social and political motives of racism itself. Racism has different aspects including violence against certain social class, ethnic group, minority religious group, etc. (Willis-Esqueda, 2007). Thus, violence, which is supported by ideological racism, is the most dangerous social and political exercise. The narrative structures of *Maymūna* and *Ragtime* demonstrate how racism supports victimizing and humiliating minorities including African immigrants in Saudi Arabia and African-Americans in the United States. Simultaneously, the narrative structure of *Maymūna* and *Ragtime* show the representation of anti-racism as a consequence of rejecting victimization and humiliation that may be considered an ideological closure.

In *Maymūna* and *Ragtime*, this representation of anti-racism may be considered a utopian impulse that aims to change the status quo and seeking better social and political life. However, in these novels, the social and political rejection of racism commits violence. Ultimately, I argue that in *Maymūna* and *Ragtime, the representation of anti-racism should not be seen a utopian impulse, but it may be considered ideological closure because it relies on victimization and humiliation.* Hence, I, also, argue that although *Maymūna and Ragtime* are from different cultural contexts, they provide what I call "a global ideological closure."

Since the main issue, which is narrated in *Maymūna* and *Ragtime,* is racism, I will discuss how the representation of

racism illustrates Mahmoud Tarawry and E. L. Doctorow's imaginary relationship to historical reality and the world itself. Therefore, I will rely on Louis Pierre Althusser to examine the representation of ideological closure in *Maymūna* and *Ragtime*. To this end, the paper is divided into two parts. The first illustrates the theoretical scope of ideological closure while the second discusses the representation of victimization and humiliation as an ideological closure in the narrative structures of *Maymūna* and *Ragtime*.

There are some questions and aims which may help the reader to follow the argument. This paper attempts to reveal the representation of the global ideological closure. Then, how can the representation of ideology conceal antithesis of the foundational ideology socially and politically? Also, the paper proposes to examine the influence of culture and social values on the representation of ideology and anti-ideology. Does anti-racism in *Maymūna* and *Ragtime* challenge the dominant ideology and provide an alternative imagination for the status quo?

Moreover, the discussion of the ideological closure is important. First, this discussion will show that socio-historical context from different cultures may share what could be called the global problem: racism. Second, discussing the representation of ideology and anti-ideology, as a global cultural practice, may reveal some characteristics that *Maymūna* and *Ragtime* share such as limited consciousness, concealed ideological discourse.

Indeed, this paper is preceded by many academic articles that rely on the contributions of many critics such as Karl Mannheim, Althusser, Paul Ricœur. In point of fact, there are papers that discuss *Maymūna* and *Ragtime* severally. On the one hand, there are numerous academic papers discuss various topics in *Ragtime* within different approaches. In the general run of the discussion of *Ragtime*, scholars discuss the intertextuality between fiction and history. However, there are few articles examines race, identity, the representation of social inequality, etc. For example, Tessa Roynon writes an article that entitled "Ovid, Race and Identity in E. L. Doctorow's Ragtime (1975) and Jeffrey Eugenides's Middlesex (2002)". Roynon argues that "the earlier novelist successfully deploys the radical potential in the thematic of transformation and the stance of playfulness, and thereby envisions an altered racial landscape" (Roynon, 2019). This paper concentrates on the representation of African Americans and the struggle for black equality. Although this paper discusses race and identity, it does not focus on how encountering racism may produce another ideological closure. In addition, this paper relies on a comparative approach, but these novel are American novels that share the same historical context.

Besides, some articles, which are published in Arabic, discuss *Maymūna*. However, many of these papers do not address the representation of ideological closure in *Maymūna*. For instance, Dr. Husain Almanasrah writes "The Memory of *Takārna* (Africans) in *Maymūna*." He discusses how the narrative structure of this novel represents social context of Africans in Saudi Arabia. He argues that *Maymūna* is a historical novel whose narrative structure focuses on criticizing the history of slavery in different places in the world. However, He does not examine the representation of ideology and its influence on the socio-historical context of the Africans' immigration into Saudi Arabia. However, this paper will examine the representation of racism and anti-racism as a global ideological closure within a comparative angle.

Theoretical scope of ideological closure.

Louis Pierre Althusser's discussion of ideology has been a profound influence on literary and cultural studies in the contemporary era. He argues that ideology can constitute our understanding of historical reality and the world itself. For Althusser, ideology is a structure; therefore, it may be discussed synchronically. He claims that "ideology has no history" (Althusser, 2006) which indicates that ideology is a persistent social historical practice. In other words, Althusser claims that ideology (structuralism) doesn't have a history because it is structural, but ideologies (Marxism) do because they are social and historical. For Althusser, ideology, as a structure, should be linked to the idea of unconscious which he borrows from Freud and from Lacan. In this sense, the representation of ideological closure may be considered a structure that may be found in different cultural contexts. Thus, *Maymūna* and *Ragtime* share the same structure of the global ideological closure.

In addition, the discussion of the representation of ideological closure has to be within Althusser's framework of ideology

as a system of representation. He claims that "ideology is matter of lived relation between men and their world" (Althusser, 1969). In this sense, Althusser's approach of ideology may be helpful to discuss how ideology has been represented in the narrative language and the structure of narration which reveals eventually the representation of reality. In addition, for Althusser, the ruling class maintains its ideology as strongly as the proletariat does, which can help the researcher to discuss how the representation of anti-racism contains an ideological closure.

The representation of racism and its ideological closure may be considered what Althusser call the "Ideological State Apparatuses" because all cultural aspects are parts of these apparatuses. For him, "The ideological state apparatuses function massively and predominantly by ideology, but they also function secondarily by repression, even if only ultimately, but only ultimately, this is very attenuated and concealed, even symbolic" (Althusser, 2006). In this sense, the representation anti-racism may conceal the ideological closure because "reading off the different kinds of social contradiction at different levels of social practices" (Hall, 1985) can help to understand the totality of racism. In other words, anti-racism may be considered social and political ideology that rejects racism. Eventually, anti-racism relies on ideology that may justify social and political practices such as violence, humiliation.

Moreover, the discussion of the ideological closure of racism may reveal how ideology, as Althusser argues, interpellates individual subjects (Althusser, 2006). In addition, since Althusser links ideology with interpellation to produce individual subjects, he writes that "an ideology always exists in apparatus, and its practice, or practices" (Althusser, 2006). His discussion of the interpellation of individual subjects shows how the ideological closure in *Maymūna* and *Ragtime* cannot be isolated from socio-historical context because "hailing is the process by which language identifies and constructs a social position for the addressee. Interpellation is the larger process whereby language constructs social relations for both parties in an act of communication and thus locates them in the broader map of social relations in general". (Rivkin & Ryan, 2017). In other words, the practice of social and political anti-racism interpellates protagonists' individual subjects who believe in victimization and humiliation. Ultimately, this interpellation reveals the representation of ideological closure.

Furthermore, science, for Althusser, can produce knowledge of ideology, but art can help to see ideology. He writes, "I believe that a peculiarity of art is to make us see, make us perceive, make us feel something which alludes to reality" (Althusser, 2006). In this sense, *Maymūna* and *Ragtime* present this perspective on integration the ideological closure of racism and anti-racism. In addition, these novels, as historical and realistic literary works, provides knowledge of ideology because they can provide detailed functions of ideology that influences the movement of history in both Saudi Arabia and the United States.

Indeed, ideology is the most significant term that has been discussed in the literary, political, and sociological disciplinary. This description of ideology is derived from Marx's false consciousness. In this sense, ideology, for Marx, is linked to a social structure that shapes the view of class, race, gender. Also, ideology is a practical way of thinking that aims to support the status quo. Therefore, Marx and Engels associated ideology with the negative characteristic "false consciousness" that is used by Engels in a letter to Franz Mehring in 1893 (Hossler, 2020). Since Marx "believes in contrast to René Descartes's idealist dictum "I think, therefore; I am", Marx emphasis on many aspects that may determine human life including ideology. Thus, Perry Anderson points out that some Western critics focus on the aesthetics of art to explain the development of history.

In addition, ideology can be seen as a system of belief which can be produced by historical conditions. For Marxism, the most important factor that can affect historical conditions is the economic system. Thus, the representation of racism and anti-racism may be production of certain historical conditions that are shaped by ideologies, which may aim at preventing people from understanding the historical conditions themselves. The social and political contradictions are consequence of the role of ideology in maintaining the power to reinforce victimization and humiliation in *Maymūna* and *Ragtime* that have a different historical conditions, but they share a global ideological closure.

The Representation of Ideological Closure in *Maymūna* and *Ragtime*.

Mahmoud Tarawry's *Maymūna* is a novel narrated mostly by the main character Maymūna who talks about how her

parents came to Mecca and Madina last century. They faced many frightful things in their journey. When they got into Madina, her father decided to visit Jerusalem before she was born. Her father left her mother and his brother, Omar. Posteriorly, her uncle left Maymūna's mother in Madina to join a gang that aims to sell slaves in Jeddah. However, he was betrayed and sold. In short, Maymūna narrates about slavery in the last century.

In *Maymūna,* the narrator illustrates the reason that encourages her family to immigrate into Mecca from Africa. She says, "They flee Christians' brutality" (Tarawry Mahmoud, 2007). She shows that Africans have faced the colonial brutality which is related historically to the White European. In other words, her family attempts to change the status quo which may be a consequence of certain social and political conditions. According to Marx and Engels, the premise of material conditions can shape people's existence (Marx & Engels, 1976). In this novel, the reason of immigration is not to change dogmas, but it is due to the premises of the material conditions that are a consequence of Christian colonial brutality. The attempt of changing of status quo indicates arguably that Africans maintain the structure of ideology. In this sense, the ideological motivation of immigration reveals what Althusser's discussion of ideology as "system of representations relating to material practices" (Green & LeBihan, 2006). Therefore, the narrator implies that refusing the domination of Christians indicate that the only utopian solution is the immigration to Islamic land. Despite the fact that the colonial brutality is not Christianity's attitude, the narrator links this brutality to Christianity which shows that the narrator's utopian impulse contains ideological closure. Also, the narrator's ideological closure shows that the attempt of changing status quo is metaphysical because she concentrates on the consequence of ideological closure of religion.

Taraway utilizes narration techniques to fictionalize reality of the practice of victimization during the journey of immigration. This victimization becomes a part of continual process of change. In addition, this victimization may be considered as an ideological closure, as it reveals how individual's relation to the world. This change may cause some unpredictable consequences. Therefore, hte narrator describes the immigration from their homeland to Mecca as movement of horrors (Tarawry Mahmoud, 2007). In their way to Mecca, they encounter the pagans who do not believe in Islam, Christianity, or Judaism. The narrator says, "We fear nights, darkness, and pagans" (Tarawry Mahmoud, 2007). Here, the ideological closure makes the narrator links pagans to darkness who must be feared. She implies that this darkness is reality. Howard Williams points out that Hegel and Marx consider reality as "the process of fluid change" (Williams, 1989). Although the narrator and pagans are black, they kill each other because they have a different religious ideology which implies that it is reality. Ultimately, the narrative structure reveals that the ideological closure that is associated with victimization of black people is not necessarily racial issues.

Consequently, the novelist implies that the only utopian impulse in the narrative structure of *Maymūna* is reciting Quran. Indeed, reciting Quran may be considered ideology because calling "something ideological is never merely a theoretical judgment but rather implies a certain practice and a view on reality that this practice gives to us" (Ricoeur, 1986). In this sense, reciting Quran is a practical view on the existence and reality of the narrator's family. Thus, the utopian impulse to avoid victimization is a sort of ideological closure that aims to determine the existence of living human individuals by relations of class dominations. In addition, for the narrator, encountering the dominant ideology in her family's journey is ideology itself that is represented by reciting Quran. In short, her family cannot avoid the ideological closure when they face victimization.

In addition, ideology of anti-racism influences the structure of the narrative language. Valentin Nikolaevich Voloshinov says "without signs there is no ideology" (Voloshinov, 1986). For instance, in *Maymūna,* searching for a utopian place forces Muslim Africans to go through forests which means they may be attacked by predators. (Tarawry Mahmoud, 2007). In this sense, although the narrative language may portray an incident, this language is constructed by ideological signs that reveals the narrator's individual consciousness of victimization to imply that Muslim Africans are victims of many enemies including nature itself. Subsequently, Muslim Africans cannot do anything to find utopian solution. Consequently, the signs of ideology in *Maymūna* produces the closure that implies African are always victims of all enemies.

The narrative structure of *Maymūna* contains what Terry Eagleton calls the "limited power of consciousness" (Eagleton & Terry, 1991). In other words, limited imagination indicates that the ideological closure is stronger than utopian energy.

Since the novel discusses the representation of racism, the novelist implies that there is a way to change the status quo, but one associated more with ideological closure emphasizes that there is not a way to change the status quo available to the characters. However, the narrator says, "The secret of existence is absorbing defeats"(Tarawry Mahmoud, 2007) which means that the narrator is not able to achieve victory. This failure of changing the status quo is a consequence of limited of power of illusion of victimization. In this sense, the narrator intends obliquely to convince the reader that the main character is the victim of the dominant ideology. Consequently, the narrative structure of *Maymūna* may be considered an ideological allegory.

Consequently, the narrator claims that her story is very horrible like smelling a dead body. She implies that racism is a factor that distorts the social movement. In other words, the narrator asks readers to smell her horrible experience to open their eyes to horrible racist history (Tarawry Mahmoud, 2007). In this sense, the narrative structure of *Maymūna* can be an ideological medium of anti-racism which may be seen simultaneously an ideological closure. In other words, the narrator demands to pay attention to the consequence of racism. This request may be considered an ideological closure because she implies that history does not have any social justice. This implication shows that her action which refers to consciousness which reveals her relation with the world including history. She insists that the reader has to look at the negative side of history. She implies that the ideology justifies racism to produce horrible historical conditions. However, she is a result of these historical conditions; therefore, she cannot be free of ideology. Thus, as we see, the narrator attempts to justify any social and political resistance against racism whether this resistance is legal or not.

As a consequence of the justification of resisting racism, the narrator sustains her identity as an African woman. In *Maymūna*, the narrator does not rely on ideology of integration with other people, but to build racial binary between them. In addition, there is a self-consciousness which is revealed by another self-consciousness. In other words, the ideology of racism may be revealed by the ideological closure of victimization or humiliation. Hegel claims, "Self-consciousness is faced by another self-consciousness; it has come out of itself. This has a twofold significance: first, it has lost itself, for it finds itself as the other being; secondly, in doing so it has superseded the other, for it does not see the other as an essential being, but in the other sees its own self" (Hegel, 1998). In this sense, the ideological closure of the racial binary prevents the narrator from illustrating the dilemma accurately; hence, she follows the same path of the dominant ideology by insisting on the binary of we/them. In short, this insisting on the racial binary may be considered an ideological closure.

Moreover, the narrator shows that the movement of history does not help to solve social issues. She feels stranger after her long living in Mecca. She says, "My name does not characterize me as a stranger... but time does because it does not celebrate my color... water integrates into my people's color- All races crowd in their coasts" (Tarawry Mahmoud, 2007). Therefore, the narrator's ideological closure indicates that "ideology is indeed a system of representation… they are perceived-accepted-suffered cultural objects and they act functionally on men via process that escapes them" (Althusser, 1969). The narrator implies that all races are derived from her color which indicates that she has a superior race. Also, she implies that people do not know this truth. In this sense, the narrator attempts to manipulate the reader to accept her ideology about the superiority of her race. In other words, when white people rely on the ideology of the superiority of the white race, the narrator relies on this ideology to convince the reader to understand how her color is the center from which all races radiated outward. Her attempt to convince the reader about her race's superiority may be considered an ideological closure.

The narrator shows that black people face victimization and enslavement as a consequence of racial and religious ideology. As Terry Eagleton claims that ideology is "action-oriented sets of beliefs" (Eagleton & Terry, 1991), in *Maymūna*, the narrator says, "I hear my father and my uncle are talking about white Christians who steal my predecessors and put them in crowded ship to far lands...they were naked and bleeding" (Tarawry Mahmoud, 2007). In addition, black people are humiliated and they must obey their masters to avoid the horrible punishment when they are exposed like animals (Tarawry Mahmoud, 2007).

The narrator implies that facing unjust situations/systems/historical conditions may cause an ideology that justifies revenge which shows how ideological causes illusion. She says, "When my father narrates his memory, his eyes become red from his angry feeling" (Tarawry Mahmoud, 2007). Her uncle attempts to remind her father about many good things that

they achieve when they arrive at Mecca. However, her father comments about how white Christians cause horrific issues because they know the only language of money (Tarawry Mahmoud, 2007). In this sense, the ideological closure functions, as Karl Mannheim mentions, as a correspondence between her father's social and racial position and his point of view to the world (Mannheim, 2018). In this sense, her father cannot get rid of the angry ideology. In *Philosophy and the Spontaneous Philosophy of the Scientists,* Althusser says, "We understand that…ideological representation imparts a certain representation of reality, that it makes allusion to the real in a certain way" (Althusser, 2012). Although the uncle tries to put forth utopian energy, the ideological closure is strong; therefore, her father relies on his experience that is shaped by ideology to justify his anger. Then, this justification deviates him from understanding the reality. Subsequently, the ideological closure prevents the narrator's father from utopian impulse of living in Mecca.

In *Maymūna* ideology shapes the representation of the imaginary relationship to socio-historical context. Althusser says, "An ideology is a system of representations (images, myths, ideas or concepts, depending on the case) endowed with historical existence and a role within a given society" (Althusser, 1969). The narrator says, "Different races … they find in Arabic communitive medium, the religion unifies them, their dream to live in Mecca causes their harmony. They always exclaim the religion that does not unify us, we do not need it" (Tarawry Mahmoud, 2007). She comments on her father's journey to Mecca from Africa when he faces ideological discrimination by an African religious group. She implies that when the African religious group rely on ideological religion, her people should follow the same path. Nevertheless, this what may be considered a utopian impulse is a sort of concealing ideology. She relies on ideology to fight another ideology which indicates the narrative structure contains ideological closure of victimization and humiliation.

In this novel, the narrative structure shows the narrator's ideological positioning. For instance, the narrator humiliates Bedouins. In this sense, she uses her beliefs to justify being racist toward Bedouins. For the narrator, they are bandits and they deeply attract to sex (Tarawry Mahmoud, 2007). Also, she portrays them as roughnecks and gangsters who live to attack caravans of pilgrim…She implies that they are not Muslims (Tarawry Mahmoud, 2007). The narrator points out that ignorance and hunger destroy humanity and religion; therefore, Bedouins are ignorant and ruthless. The narrator relies on an ideology to describe Bedouins' behavior as non-acceptable social practice, but she insists they are not Muslims. In this sense, the ideological closure of anti-racism reveals how ideology itself can interpellate, as Althusser argues, individual as subjects (Althusser, 2006). In other words, she relies on ideology to give herself a justification to expel Bedouins from Islam which shapes their individual subjects.

Indeed, the narrator claims that Africans are free of ideology. In other words, this narrator implies that Africans' "consciousness is a social-ideological fact" (Voloshinov, 1986). She says, "The black is human of nature. He lives with his land. He has open senses. He does not accept a mediation between subjectivity and objectivity. However, he accepts all rhythms, odors, colors. He feels more than sees" (Tarawry Mahmoud, 2007). Therefore, the narrator shows Arabs who have a kinship with Africans are brave and smart (Tarawry Mahmoud, 2007). In this sense, she implies that all people who attack blacks do not know nature, they are not smart, and they are not brave. In other words, she relies on ideology for humiliating and attacking other people.

The narrator mentions that Africans must encounter Arabs' racial practices. Then, the narrator points out that believing in pace is not the way of utopia; hence, she relies on ideology. For instance, she says, "Mnaor agrees with handful men of his tribe to leave nightly with their victims who have good intentions, silly rationale, and belief" (Tarawry Mahmoud, 2007). She implies that being peaceful does not help to avoid racist practices and social injustice. In addition, the narrator illustrates the dialogue between her uncle and other slaves who encourage him to fight for his freedom. Otherwise, her uncle will be enslaved forever (Tarawry Mahmoud, 2007). In other words, she thinks that the ideology of anti-racism which depends on victimization can protect Africans from victimization itself.

This discussion of the representation of ideological closure in *Maymuna* shows that anti-racism is a social and political practice. It is supposed to be the social context of racism. However, the social and political practice of anti-racism relies on the ideology of racism that is represented in humiliation and victimization. This social and political view of changing of the status quo reveals the historical movement of slavery in the Arabian Peninsula in the last century. In this sense, the

representation of ideological closure as global ideology cannot be isolated from the inference of history and society which means it can be found in other literatures. Thus, this issue may be found in the American novel, *Ragtime*.

The socio-historical context influences the representation of ideological closure in *Ragtime*. It is a historical novel that shows how the premises of the material conditions may change the movement of history. Therefore, changing the status quo is practical premises of anti-racism within the historical context that is influenced by economic condition in United States in the early 20th century. In short, the historical movement, as a result of the economic system, may produce the ideological closure that is represented in the narrative structure of *Ragtime*

In addition, the historical narrative structure of *Ragtime* shows that the representation of changing the status quo is ideological practical premises which relies on the novelist's ideology. Subsequently, the ideological closure reveals what Fredric Jameson calls "weak historical thinking" (Jameson, 1991). In short, the narrative structure of *Ragtime* shows that the representation of the premises of the material conditions may produce ideological closure because the attempt of changing the status quo, itself, contains the essential ideological closure.

In addition, the historical context, which is represented in *Ragtime*, shows that ideology is everywhere. In United States, the most important ideology in early 20th century is patriotism. In *Ragtime*, the narrator says, "Patriotism was a reliable sentiment in the early 1900's […] The population customarily gathered in great numbers either out of doors for parades, public concerts, fish fries, political picnics […] There were no Negroes. There were no immigrants" (Doctorow, 2007). Indeed, the narrator aims to impose his ideological thought about American society. Also, his narration contains what Terry Eagleton calls "confusing linguistic and phenomenal reality" (Eagleton & Terry, 1991) to describe how ideology shapes social and political context of reality. Consequently, Doctorow points out the ideological conflict that shapes reality. This conflict was between capitalism and socialism.

Indeed, in *Ragtime*, Doctorow relies on the narrative technique of blurring the binary between historical figures and fictional characters (McHale, 2003). The representation of racism and anti-racism reveal the historical context of social and political issues that influenced historical figures' attitude. In addition, Doctorow illustrate how industrial revolution, economic development and construction of American identity have had a profound influence on racism in the United States in the last century. Indeed, his narrative technique of combination of historical figures and fictional characters shows that Doctorow blurs the binary between ideology and anti-ideology which causes an ideological closure in the narrative structure of Ragtime.

Doctorow implies that the historical conditions shaping American identity are a consequence of the exploitation of people. The narrator shows Ford had taken advantage of his workers to produce cars. The narrator describes Ford's ideology:

The employer of many men, a good number of them foreign-born, he had long believed that most human beings were too dumb to make a good living. He'd conceived the idea of breaking down the work operations in the assembly of an automobile to their simplest steps, so that any fool could perform them" (Doctorow, 2007).

The narrator implies that Fordism causes humiliation. In this sense, the ideological closure of humiliating workers indicates that ideology is the manifestation of the problem of Fordism that influences the contemporary American history and society. For instance, the narrator says, "Ford established the final proposition of the theory of industrial manufacture— not only that the parts of the finished product be interchangeable, but that the men who build the products be themselves interchangeable parts" (Doctorow, 2007). In other words, the narrative structure of *Ragtime* reveals ideological closure of exploiting people and how it effects the socio-historical context.

In *Ragtime*, the narrator suggests that economic discrimination and humiliation are broader than race alone. However, if racist ideologies were not racially focused, they wouldn't really be racism. They would be classism. The narrator shows that Morgan exposes his ideological racism by saying, "I admire what you have done, and while I must have qualms about a motorcar in the hands of every mongoloid who happens to have a few hundred dollars to spend, I recognize that the future is yours" (Doctorow, 2007). His ideological racism is derived from his economic vision which produces his categorization of society. This social classification reveal humiliation which represents ideological closure.

Indeed, Morgan's ideological view is not against people of color, but it can be against anyone who does not believe in

his ideology. For example, in his discussion with Ford, Morgan insists that he has philosophy; therefore, he employs scholars to intentionally make formal philosophy reflect his ideas, rather than emerge from independent analysis. He asks Ford to learn some of these ideas. However, Ford refuses to reveal his beliefs. Hence, Morgan says, "You may need me more than you think. Suppose I could prove to you that there are universal patterns of order and repetition that give meaning to the activity of this planet" (Doctorow, 2007). Obviously, Morgan explains the system of the universe based on Christian ideology when he points out, "Christian alchemists of the Rhenish palatinate" (Doctorow, 2007). In this sense, the narrative structure of *Ragtime* indicates that the essence of narration is an epistemology that shows Morgan's perception of people's experience.

In addition, in *Ragtime*, the ideological closure may be a sort of epistemological issue. For example, Morgan finds that Ford has achieved a milestone that he could not. Consequently, Morgan insists on humiliating Ford by revealing his ignorance and showing Ford's disbelief is wrong ideology. As Eagleton points out that " epistemology itself is at the moment somewhat out of fashion, and the assumption that some of our ideas match or correspond to the way things are, while other do not (Eagleton & Terry, 1991). In this sense, this ideological closure of humiliation may be considered political unconsciousness. Indeed, "the idea of false consciousness can be taken as implying the possibility of some unequivocally correct way of viewing the world" (Eagleton & Terry, 1991). In this sense, the narrative structure reveals that there is an ideological closure that is derived from the combination of two wealthy men who share the same race. However, they have different economic visions. In short, the ideological closure utilizes humiliation to reject other ideologies of economic view.

Moreover, In *Ragtime*, the narrative structure shows that ideology, as Jameson claims, "not merely as limitation, a premature closing-off of thought to the truth about History, but as the repression of those underlying contradiction that have their source in History and Necessity" (Dowling, 2020). In this novel, the narrator implies that the ideological closure is a consequence of social contradictions that are hiding in the structure of the movement of American history. Therefore, the ideological closure may prevent people from many good attitudes such as love. For instance, Coalhouse Walker Jr has tried to meet Sara, but she refuses to see him. Therefore, the mother comments on what happens when Coalhouse leaves their residence as "a courtship of the most stubborn Christian kind" (Doctorow, 2007). This ideological closure shows that the system of belief may close the horizon of solution. In addition, the mother's comment indicates that she is surprised by Sara's rejection because she is black who doesn't religious experience in Church. In short, the mother's comment and Sara's rejection may be considered ideological closure because she relies on what Jameson calls "great collective story" (Jameson, 2015) that reveals how Whites think that blacks cannot practice courtship within Christian ideology. In this sense, the mother's attitude exposes her humiliation toward blacks.

As mentioned above, Althusser illustrates that ideology can interpellate individual subjects. For example, the narrator says, "It occurred to Father one day that Coalhouse Walker Jr. didn't know he was a Negro" (Doctorow, 2007). In this sense, the father's ideology interpellates Coalhouse's subject because he cannot recognize his social status when "didn't act or talk like a colored man. In this sense, the father, as a member of society, attempts to hail the subjectivity of Coalhouse Walker Jr because " Through ideology, Althusser remarks, society interprellates or hails us appears to single us out as uniquely valuable and address us by name" (Eagleton & Terry, 1991). He seemed to be able to transform the customary deference practiced by his race so that they reflected to his own dignity rather than the recipient's" (Doctorow, 2007). This indicates that the father attempts to rely on his social class that is placed in history to judge the values of Coalhouse's social practice. This interpellation contains the implication of humiliation because the father wonders how Coalhouse greets everyone nicely and conveys his appreciation for taking care of Sara. This wonder shows that the father believes greeting people, showing appreciation or other good social practice cannot be mostly done by black people.

The father's wonder at how Coalhouse Walker Jr "didn't act or talk like a colored man" (Doctorow, 2007) is similar to Emerald Isle volunteers' feelings because "He was not unaware that in his dress and as the owner of a car he was a provocation to many white people. He had created himself in the teeth of such feelings" (Doctorow, 2007). This ideological closure encourages volunteers to vandalize Coalhouse's car. In this sense,

ideology can designate anything from a contemplative attitude that misrecognizes its dependence on social reality to an action orientated set of beliefs, from the indispensable medium in which individuals live out their relation to a social structure

to false ideas which legitimate a dominant political power (Zizek, 2012).

Indeed, Coalhouse attempts to find help from the authorities, but he was rejected. Therefore, he relies on his ideology to revenge. In this sense, he faces vandalizing with victimization; therefore, he creates an explosion on Emerald Isle that kills officers. In this sense, Coalhouse's revenge is a result of illusion that prevents him from utopian imagination and produce an ideology closure. In short, the narrator implies that violence underlies the ideology of all of Coalhouse's principles.

As mentioned above, there is no ideology without signs. In *Ragtime*, the narrative language shows that "[i]deology is a matter of 'discourse' rather than of 'language'—of certain concrete discursive effects, rather than of signification as such. It represents the points where power impacts upon certain utterances and inscribes itself tacitly within them" (Eagleton & Terry, 1991). For instance, the narrator says, "He [Emerald Isle Chief, Will Conklin] wanted to go to the black neighborhood and clean all the niggers out once and for all. The officers heard this with disinterest. They teased him about his fate" (Doctorow, 2007). Ideological victimization is essential to this narrative language. However, the novelist implies that when victimization is the only option to changing the status quo, there is another victimization that relies on anti-racism. In this novel, the discourse of ideology "in Althusser's account is simply the way the same process of self-occultation occurs at the level of collective consciousness or thought, not illusion merely but necessary illusion produced by the operations of the system itself" (Dowling, 2020). In this sense, this anti-racism, which may be considered ideological closure, appears when officers discuss the probability of Will's fate. In short, Will wants to victimize the black neighborhood, but there is probability that black residents may kill Will. In this sense, they are the ones upholding the status quo

In *Ragtime*, the narrator shows how Jews are humiliated for being traditional people who aim to protect their social values. This is similar to what Jameson claims that ideology is "one of structural limitation and ideological closure" (Jameson, 2015). For example, the narrator points out that Tateh is sensitive about his daughter's cultural identity. Thus, the narrator says:

Tateh was scandalized by her visit [Evelyn]... Her arrival had caused a storm of consternation in the old artist, who paced up and down in the candlelight and did not know what to do about her... Finally, the old man gave in, if only to avoid the terrible strain on himself of her presence in his home" (Doctorow, 2007).

Tateh's reaction reveal his ideological closure which may be considered "identity thinking" (Eagleton & Terry, 1991). However, the narrative language reveals the production of meaning that shows Tateh's reaction as unreasonable; hence, Evelyn enters the house and closes the door that indicates that she does not care whether he considers it scandalized. This thoughtlessness shows that Evelyn relies on ideology which offers herself social position that is legitimated by her ideological dominant power.

Conclusion:

This paper concentrates on the discussion of the representation of ideological closure in *Maymūna* and *Ragtime.* The main argument is in *Maymūna* and *Ragtime*, the narrative structure conceals the representation of social and political ideology of anti-racism that is not different from the representation of racism that is primary topic in these novels. Therefore, the narrative structure of these novels shows how humiliation and victimization as social and political imagination of anti-racism can produce the ideological closure. Then, the discussion of the representation of ideology of racism and anti-racism reveal that *Maymūna* and *Ragtime* share the global ideological closure.

This discussion relies on Althusser's contribution on ideology as a system of representations that influences people's imaginary relationship to the world. In addition, in *Maymūna* and *Ragtime*, protagonists share imaginary relationship to the world. This imaginary view is represented in the practice of humiliation and victimization as social and political tendency that causes ideological closure of maintaining the structure of ideology and rejecting utopian imagination. The theoretical discussion of ideology shows that the historical and social context may affect the representation of ideological closure.

The discussion of the representation of the ideological closure shows that socio-historical contexts of different cultures share the unity of the global ideology. They share the social and political ideology of anti-racism that concentrates on humiliation and victimization. Therefore, the significance of the different social and political practices of different chapter

of history may expose the structure of the ideological closure. In this sense, the discussion of the representation of ideological closure in *Maymūna* and *Ragtime* shows several outcomes. First, each novel concentrates on different social and political practices of racism and anti-racism. For instance, *Maymūna* contains the humiliation of a certain social group such as Bedouin. But, *Ragtime*, contains the humiliation of a certain religious group such as Jewish and African Americans. Second, they share the representation of victimization and humiliation as a consequences of the ideological closure of racism; therefore, they rely on some techniques such as limited consciousness, or interpellation. Third, the narrative structures of *Maymūna* and *Ragtime* indicates the justification of victimization and humiliation is a concealed ideological closure. Fourth, the ideological closure in *Maymūna* and *Ragtime* is influenced by the socio-historical contexts. Subsequently, *Maymūna* relies on metaphysic ideological closure i.e. religion. In *Ragtime* exposes ideological closure that relies on economic and technological factors.

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