

Existence, heritage, identity; connections and antagonisms: Humankind march towards its end or  
there is hope still?

What is humankind planning to leave as a heritage for the future, for the next generations? Men and women have been fighting to find harmony within fertile and various civilizations. Behind the scenes of the confident and tireless people, some cultures claim the importance of their legacy. Unmercifully, those who conquer fields worldwide claim power in the name of their Gods while brainwashing their subservient devotes. Others invest in the future through the promising Artificial Intelligence, and others struggle to maintain a glimpse of respect, trying to keep memories of ancient history. While each convention sticks its roots and believes in one's lands and minds without empathy or tolerance, the forgetfulness of humankind as a whole leads the Existence to a deep silent future, where people are unable to understand one another. Universal connections in consonance with kindness, respect, and compassion might be the lost breath of many that already suffered for a better world storytelling - hope in the fundamental freedom of human beings.

Sam Cooke's sweet melody and 'pray' "A Change Gonna Come" shares hope and faith in better times; besides the suffering, the author uses the figure of speech simile to compare the persona with the river; furthermore, he is part of the ones who swim against the torrent waters, along with the "running" is a metaphor of his life's conflicts.

I was born by the river in a little tent

Oh, just like a river, I've been running ever since

It's been a long, a long time coming

But I know a change's gonna come, oh, yes, it will

It's been too hard living, but I'm afraid to die

'Cause I don't know what's up there above the sky

It's been a long, a long time coming

But I know a change's gonna come, oh, yes, it will (Cooke)

The smooth sorrow for a fair life reflects how long his people fight, even afraid of death, which represents the faced racism, they march towards their identity. Cooke's Soul is a symbol of his culture as an African American; also, it touches the listener's soul while invites the world to see and feel the steady strength and resistance against injustice and intolerance. Fifty years after Sam's music has been launched, the journalist Arun Rath states during a Radio program: "If that doesn't give you the chills, there might be something wrong with you. (...) 'A Change Is Gonna Come' is now much more than a civil rights anthem. It doesn't age. It's become a universal message of hope." (Weekend All Things Considered NPR).

Literature is a network where human's lives, and histories are portrayed and shared in a deep connection with one's culture and beliefs. The message within every piece is singular, although they can reflect universal awareness of humankind and engage and discuss amid itself. Inviting Judith Ortiz Coffer to the discussion, she writes about her roots and the paradox of living between two countries, including prejudice as a subject matter that prevails paired with hope as well as in Cooke's lyric. In the poem "Latin Women Pray," Ortiz depicts the pursuit of identity within another country where there are no memories or identification with their culture. While Sam sings a Soul showing his heritage, Coffer brings 'the pray' as a strong habit; faith and hope surround the poem showing women from Latin America trying to find their belief within North America. The Irony in the sentence "And this Great White Father" shows the ambiguity between the expectation and perseverance of four women who pray for a decent future, along with after years of longing, their faith is still strong as they continue to knee before the figure of

a white unresponsive god. Full of metaphors, Ortiz's poem delivers in a witty way the idea of prejudice and lack of communication among her people's faith and life in Anglo America.

"Yet year after year

Before his image they kneel (...)

All fervently hoping

That if not omnipotent

At least he be bilingual." (Cofer)

Despite the fact of being from different cultures, Sam and Judith share the anguish about bias; they also experience together relentless confidence in a fair world as human beings. "But I know a change's gonna come, oh, yes, it will" should be the response from Sam to Ortiz's persona. Besides of the fact Cofer recognizes and write about her home country and its legacy, she also has a desire for being away from the strict religious traditions as she explains during an interview, "As I was growing up I felt that if only I could get rid of all those rituals (...) that I would be free." (Acosta 87-88). The ambiguity of their persistent praying, even in front of a "marble pedestal" (Cofer), can also portray a feeling of antagonism from the author for her home culture.

As Judith Ortiz, Marjane Satrapi in her books *Persepolis 1* and *Persepolis 2* shares also a paradox between love and avoidance towards her home country, Iran. The comic book could suggest a fiction narrative regarding the figures and fantastic draw overall the two volumes' pages with bad faces, talking's with God, jackals, men walking like sheep, and vegetables with a face. Nevertheless, they are her autobiography, an unbelievable woman who seems to have superpowers fighting for her heritage, for her beliefs, for her family, and for her life. She lives a war by herself, trying to understand the motifs around so many dichotomies that appear during

her life. Profound and sagacious, her memoir is an intense piece of Literature as it makes the reader be inside her world for about fourteen years, feeling her hassle within and throughout her life. The veil is the first sign of distaste related to her culture. The symbol of an oppressive regime makes the young girl question the motifs behind such a decision. "We didn't really like to wear the veil, especially since we didn't understand why we had to. And also because the year before, in 1979, we were a French non-religious school" (Satrapi 1 3-4).

The attributes that have analogy among Satrapi, Cofer, and Cooke's literature pieces are related to the strong presence of the persona's heritage, the pursuit of identity, and hope in humankind, even in three unrelated styles. Another symbol used by Marjane, which was a vivid moment in the story, is the sand she takes with her to live abroad. "The next day I filed a jar with soil from our garden Iranian soil" (Satrapi 1 149). After all suffering she passes with her family within Iran, her nation is still meaningful. She is fourteen at this time, and after the day her street was bombed and so many losses, her parents decide to send Marjane to Austria. Each chapter of her books represents some symbolism and analogy of her learnings and experiences. As an example, through the episode "The Dowry" Satrapi discovered about the 500 tumans given "for the life and virginity of an innocent girl" (Satrapi 1 146).

The fact of Judith and Marjane are distant from their homelands does not nullify their connection with their roots neither fulfills their need for freedom; on the contrary, this matter can reinforce the inside battle portrayed in their writings. "Before his image they Kneel" (Cofer), and "The harder I tried to assimilate, the more I had the feeling that I was distancing myself from my culture (...), That I was playing game by somebody else's rules" (Satrapi 2 39). "It appears that Marji experienced marginalization in Austria, as well as at home in Iran. In Vienna she felt as a

stranger because of a different cultural paradigm and in Iran because of the political situation and restrictions connected with religion" (Stola 274).

The symbolism of heritage and the pursuit of unity in Literature seem to look towards humanity as a whole, once; even being part of a specific culture, tolerance and respect should be pre-requisites for all: the ones who leave and the ones who host. Nevertheless, the memoirs of a culture can also be stolen; moreover, besides pride and desire, what remains are the history left behind and the fight to preserve it. In "How to Write the Great American Indian Novel," Sherman Alexie depicts the sadness of the slowly 'annihilation' of Indians culture. Day after day, the imagery of Indians comes to change until this figure is entirely deformed. "Such large-swath stereotyping isolates images of Indians as artifacts from a past America, even as it allows Anglo-Americans to develop themselves as Indian wannabes with little real understanding of the patronized culture." (Sax)

The poem is like a recipe for the best movie ever about a culture, but the author of the novel forgets to ask who they actually are. The irony is a mark throughout the narrative, and the persona describes, between the lines, the misfortune of a people 'watching' a movie does not represent them at all. "In the Great American Indian novel, when it is finally written, all of the white people will be Indians, and all of the Indians will be ghosts" (Alexie).

Sherman Alexie describes a lack of symbolism and missing heritage when he narrates a poem full of metaphors: half-breed, horse culture, endless beauty, savage, tragic features. "Such absolute statements demand response and argument, but Alexie purposefully continues to state new stereotypes that are increasingly disturbing" (Sax). Nevertheless, none of these materializations are part of his Indian culture, and the poem is a claim for a misplaced and stolen history, where love and passion for the real symbols still exist, vivid; however, they are not

recognized by the actual 'owners' of the land. The miscellany within this conversation share bonds as well as farewells of unique cultural heritages, although, at the same time, the entire portrayed characters move forwards to a broad concept of ancestry; freedom as human beings capable of recognizing semblance in others of the same species.

Another title that links with this analysis is "Everyday Use" By Alice Walker. The quilt that is the motive of dispute in the narrative is a symbol of Black culture. This element has different matters among Dee and her mother, representing distinct aspects of one heritage. While the piece is proud and of everyday use for Mama, Dee shows a lack of identity towards her roots, as she changed her name (another emblem in the plot) and claims the quilt as an adornment.

The quilts that Wangero covets link her generation to prior generations, and thus they represent the more considerable African American past. The quilts contain scraps of dresses worn by the grandmother and even the great-grandmother and a piece of the uniform worn by the great-grandfather who served in the Union Army in the War Between the States. The visitor rightly recognizes the quilts as part of a fragile heritage, but she fails to see the extent to which she herself has traduced that heritage (Cowart 1).

Comparing Dee and Marjane, both struggle in recognizing many aspects of their homelands, even though, in another manner, the motifs of each exile are diverse. They also share the search for a dream abroad. The paradox between the denoted wedding and the desired happiness for Marjane is depicted by her mother's crying and the figure when she is afraid and behind bars. Besides, she also projects herself in Reza's life showing two totally different personalities, learning a little more about her real self. The last chapter, "The end," was full of significance, and, instead of soil, she went after collecting memories before her second departure to live abroad. "(...) freedom has a price (...)" (Persepolis 2 163). Emphasizing the quest of

exemption against inheritance, Cowart brings a "Dee" who fights to meet herself when goes to study abroad within a different culture, "(...) where apparently she immersed herself in the liberating culture she would first urge on her bewildered mother and sister, then denounce as oppressive" (2).

Thinking about legacy from an all-embracing perspective, Ray Bradbury depicts a narrative without humans in "There Will Come Soft Rains." The symbols related to human beings can be found through the avant-garde technology in the plot; still, the missing heritage here are the memories from whom once lived there. Making a parallel with Sherman and the annihilation of one's Existence, the Indian becomes "ghosts" within the "Great Indian Novel," along with humanity becomes unheard voices within a wise plot that looks towards 70 years beyond.

The designed tech 'hero' cultivated by society's years remains alive until the end of Bradbury's short story from 1950. The McClellan's' bright guardian is there, prepared to the planned routine, accessible to read poems or amuse the kids; he is skillful and disciplined in his post to defend the house, even if there is no one. As seeming knowing what is going on outside the walls, he randomly chose a verse that said, "Not one would mind, neither bird nor tree, If mankind perished utterly" (Teasdale 204). Many voices, throughout the story, many smart walls and doors portray a wealthy family with an outlined schedule. The dog was the last spark of life within the plot, although he died, and after two hours, the smart hero cleaned the corpse; he seemed to like his owners. "The dog ran upstairs, hysterically yelping to each door, at last realizing, as the house realized, that only silence was here" (Bradbury). The solo hero, from whom the reader could 'hear' the sound of the clock, could not win the battle against the fire.

There are no citizens in Allendale while the smart tech screamed for help, "Fire, fire" (Bradbury). Who lived there? What were their values as a society?

The allegory from the 1950s shows a world surrounded by smart, developed devices, but no wise human beings to tell their story. However, of course, there is no one to enjoy these fantastic benefits; despite the technological wonders, people could not put aside their penchant for destruction." [8] Overly dramatic maybe, but the information world is all about who and what we are as a people. We must concern ourselves with how this new information order will define us as a people (Losavio). What leads to the end of mankind in Bradbury's narrative? "What is uncommon about "August 2026," then, is not its theme of nuclear disaster but its view of the technology that made such a disaster possible" (Everman 745).

The sadness of the hopeless meets the reliance of the fighters across the years along with the anthology's patchwork, representing diversity and multicultural features. While they are being sewn, each person's voices claim together for freedom, for identity, for respect, for dignity as human beings, for life.

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