

“YAŞLI ŞEF MSHLANGA” ADLI HİKAYENİN GREIMAS’ÇI GÖSTERGEBİLİME GÖRE İNCELENMESİ¹

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ÖZ

Bu çalışmanın amacı Doris Lessing’in kısa hikayesi *Yaşlı Şef Mshlanga*’yı (1951) Greimas’ın aktan modeline göre incelemektir. Hikaye, adının bilinmediği başkarakterin çocukluğundan ergenliğine geçen süreyi kapsamaktadır. Hikayeyi anlamak için siyah kültür ve beyaz kültür arasındaki çatışmayı gözlemlemek çok önemlidir. Takma adı Nkosikaas (Ö1) olan başkarakterin siyahiler ile ilgili fikri çocukken okuduğu masallardan ve ailesinden edindiğidir. Yaşlı şef Mshlanga (Ö2) ile karşılaşana kadar bu fikre inanmaktadır. Bu karşılaşmadan sonra Ö1 siyahilere karşı daha nazik olmaya başlar ve onlarla selamlaşır. Bu şekilde davranarak siyahilerin topraklarında yaşamasını haklılaştırmaya çalışıyor gibidir ancak bunun siyahilere bir faydası yoktur. Hikâyenin anlamı yüzeysel anlamdan başlanılarak soyut veya derin anlama yapılan bir araştırmayla bulunmaya çalışılacaktır. Yüzeysel anlamı araştırırken hikâye üç ana kesite ayrılacaktır. Bu kesitlerde birey ya da soyut şeyler olabilen özneler zaman ve uzamdaki yerlerine uygun olarak gösterileceklerdir. Bunun yanı sıra, aktanların figurative yapılarına değinilecektir. Son olarak, semiyotik karelerde anlatının ana temasını oluşturan zıtlıklar anlam bilimsel düzeyde gösterilecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Göstergebilim, Doris Lessing, Siyah kültür, beyaz kültür ve zıtlıklar.

Işık, Sevcan. "A Semiotic Analysis of *The Old Chief Mshlanga* Based on Greimas’s Narrative Semiotics ". *idil* 6.33 (2017): 1461-1484.

Işık, S. (2017). A Semiotic Analysis of *The Old Chief Mshlanga* Based on Greimas’s Narrative Semiotics. *idil*, 6 (33), s.1461-1484.

¹ This study was presented at 10th International IDEA Conference.

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A SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF *THE OLD CHIEF MSHLANGA* BASED ON GREIMAS'S NARRATIVE SEMIOTICS

ABSTRACT

This paper aims to analyze the short story *The Old Chief Mshlanga* (1951) by Dorris Lessing according to Greimas's actantial model. It covers the period from the childhood of unnamed protagonist to her adolescence. In the story, the opposition between black culture and white culture is of great importance in giving the meaning of the text. As a child, the girl whose nickname Nkosikaas (S1) has an instilled white perspective towards the natives. She takes for granted them through the fairy tales she has read and through the white culture imposed on her by her parents. This is her inverted reality until she encounters the old Chief Mshlanga (S2). After that S1 changes her attitude towards the natives, offers and takes greetings with them and by doing this she tries to justify her position as a white settler in the lands of S2, which brings no gain to the blacks neither in the sense of the unequal treatment of them or the usurpation of their lands. The meaning of the story will be searched from surface level to the abstract or deep one, that is, narrative, discursive and logical-semantic respectively. In the former, the story will be segmented into three main segments which will include a many sub-segments. In these segments, the actions and actants that can be an individual or an abstract thing will be displayed in accordance with their places in time and space. Besides, there will be a focus on the figurative natures of the actants. Lastly, when the logical-semantic level is concerned the oppositions that compose the main theme of the narrative will be shown in semiotic squares.

Keywords: Semiotics, Doris Lessing, black culture, white culture, and oppositions.

A Semiotic Analysis of *The Old Chief Mshlanga* Based on Greimas's Narrative Semiotics

According to semiotic theory “meaning is not inherent in objects, they do not signify by themselves, but meaning is *constructed* by a competent observer - a subject - capable of giving 'form' to objects” (Martin and Ringham 118). In this context, Algirdas Julien Greimas (1917–92) who was a French semanticist and semiotician emphasizes the importance of narration because he believes that meaning is given through narration that can be perceived through other systems besides natural languages. Thereupon, it is stated

Greimas' semiotics, which is generative and transformational, goes through three phases of development. He begins by working out semiotics of action where subjects are defined in terms of their quest for objects, following a canonical narrative schema, which is a formal framework made up of three successive sequences: a mandate, an action and an evaluation. He then constructs a narrative grammar and works out a syntax of narrative programs in which subjects are joined up with or separated from objects of value. In the second phase he works out a cognitive semiotics, where in order to perform, subjects must be competent to do so. The subjects' competence is organized by means of a modal grammar that accounts for their existence and performance. (Cobley 194-95)

As for narrative semiotics, it “manifests a desire to make literary studies systematic and scientific...Narrative semiotics seeks, rather, to reveal semantic and ideological content of texts” (Duvall 192). Greimas has made use of both Saussure's structural linguistics and Propp's structural analysis of folklore. Especially, Greimas studies certain kinds of difference by having been influenced from Saussure's understanding of meaning that occurs as a result of relationships and, then, he classifies oppositive properties in order to use as the concepts in the discussion of the first signifying structure (Martin and Ringham 4). He also makes use of Saussure's differentiation between *langua* and *parole*. Greimas believes that literature is a language and the individual narrative is a sentence. Therefore, he wants to understand “the grammar of the narrative sentence, to find the paradigmatic *langue* of narrative, and to see how it is embodied in the *parole* of the individual narrative...Greimas looks for *sememes*, the smallest unit of semantic signification, which he finds in the *actant*” (Duvall 192). Thus, stories have a common ‘grammar’. He defines his *actantial* model as

Three basic binary oppositions underlie all narrative themes, actions and character types (which he collectively calls 'actants'); namely, *subject-object*, *sender-receiver* and *helper-opponent*– note that the hero is both *subject* and *receiver*. The *subject* is the one who seeks; the *object* is that which is sought. The *sender* sends the object and the *receiver* is its destination. The *helper* assists the action and the *opponent* blocks it...in traditional syntax, 'functions' are the roles played by words – the *subject* being the one performing the action and the *object* being 'the one who suffers it'. (Chandler 118-19)

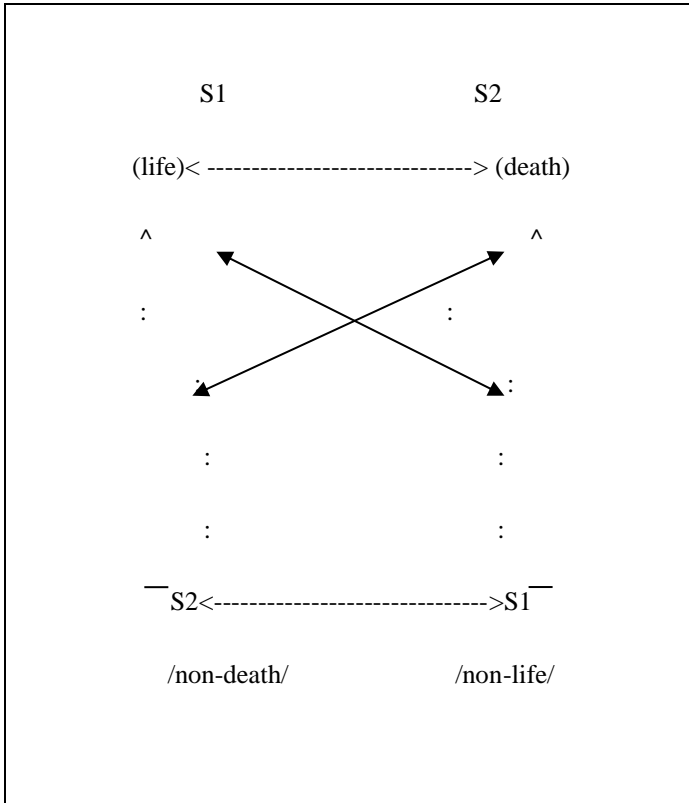
Moreover, these six actants operate on three axes; that is, the axis of desire on which the subject does his/her action to get the object, the axis of communication on which the sender delivers the object to the receiver that is the subject, and, lastly, the axis of conflict on which the subject encounters both the helpers and opponents (Jonn 192).

Despite the fact that any sign can be studied in semiotics the narrative becomes one of the most important research topics in it. That is, "the semantic universe could be apprehended only when articulated or narrativized. So too with meaning that can be conceived of as such only when manifested in the form of articulated signification" (Paul 527). For instance, Propp studies Russian folktales and reduces the narration into their basic narrative elements. He determines thirty one common events in all tales. Greimas is influenced from Propp but he does not take Propp's theory as it is but he develops it. For instance, he called 'sentence' what Propp called as 'function'. Besides, instead of using the terms such as heroes and traitors Greimas uses terms like subject, object, conjunctions, disjunctions, and transformations as mentioned. He explains the function as a verb in his narrative semiotics as being composed of modalities as follows

The modalities were explored and then articulated into four fundamental ones: two virtualizing and two actualizing ones. On the one hand, wanting and having-to virtualize the process and, on the other, being-able and knowing actualize it...What became obvious is that if you want to construct a narrative grammar, then it has to be a modal grammar. From this point of view the whole grammar is composed of modalities; the rest is simply content, semantics. (Greimas545)

At the end of the narrative program the subject may either fail or succeed in achieving the object. To show the meaning of the text, we can draw a semiotic square which can be defined as "a visual presentation of the elementary structure of meaning. Articulating the relationships of contrariety (opposition), contradiction and

implication, it is the logical expression of any semantic category” (Martin and Ringham 13). There is an example taken from Martin and Ringham below.



(Martin and Ringham 13).

According to the semiotic square “(1) S1 and S2 are in a relation of opposition or contrariety (one term presupposes the other). (2) S1 and —S1 are in a relation of contradiction: —S1 negates S1. S2 and —S2 are also in a relation of contradiction: —S2 negates S2. (3) —S1 and S2 are in a relation of implication: —S1 implies S2. Similarly, —S2 implies S1” (Martin and Ringham 13). As it is seen, a semiotic square is an effective means to emanate the meaning of the text by relying on the oppositions. Besides, it can be considered as helpful makes displaying “textual dynamics by plotting essential stages or transformations in a story and to follow the narrative trajectory of the subject” (Martin and Ringham 13).

1.Surface Level: Discursive and Narrative level

The story is about a white girl's experience of the black society firstly through the lens of the white society that regards the natives as ones "existing merely to serve" (Lessing 2) and, later, through a more objective perspective. At the beginning, S1 feels estranged and alienated from her surroundings. For instance, it is said that "...a small girl whose eyes were sightless for anything but a pale willowed river, a pale gleaming castle...for many years, it was veld that seemed unreal; the sun was a foreign sun, and the wind spoke a strange language" (2). Nonetheless, as S1 grows older she becomes dissatisfied with the farm she lives at and wants to discover her surroundings. As a result of her instilled ideas about the natives she carries a gun and two dogs with her before she goes out.

This goes on until S1 meets S2. Then, S1 learns to respect the natives, which does not make the situation of the natives better, though. S1 becomes aware of her position as a white settler in the lands that originally belongs to the tribes of S2 and her prejudiced behavior changes towards them. Even at the end of the story, S1 wants acceptance both from the lands of Africa and the native people. For instance, when S1 is returning to her farm from the kraal S2 lives she feels that "it (the landscape) seemed to say to me: you walk here as a destroyer" (8). When S1 meets S2 in his kraal she is not accepted, either. For instance, when S1 sees S2 there he says that "the small white Nkosikaas is far from home" (7). In past, S1 takes for granted both the supremacy of white culture and the inferiority of the natives. For instance, S1 says that "the servants in the house would come running a hundred yards to pick up a book if she dropped it" (2). Besides, when her mother sees S1 is talking a native her mother as an opponent tells that "come away; you mustn't talk to natives" (2). By doing this her mother (S4) teaches S2 to fear the natives. Even though S1 knows the fact that the natives are not bad people and the lands belong to them S1 does not take any action approving the change in her thoughts. S1 does not oppose S5 when he confiscates the goats of S2 and complies with the system in which she was born.

1.1. Segmentation

In order to obtain the deeper meaning of the story, the text is segmented into three main segments which include a number of subdivisions in them according to time, space and action. The first segment includes S1's childhood period before her encounter with S2. The changing in the perspective of S1 towards the natives and the events happening as a result of this change constitute the second segment when she is 14, that is, adolescent period. The second encounter of S1 with S2, which reveals the fact that she is not accepted neither by the blacks and the lands composes the third segment. To avoid confusion with the segments A, B, C will be used while

determining the main three divisions and subdivisions will be shown as A1, B1, C1, etc.

The first segment called A1 starts with the description of African lands and a comparison between them and a farm belonged to the white settlers in Rhodesia by a third person narrator:

A2 starts with “this child could not see a msasa tree, or the thorn, for what they were. Her books held tales of alien fairies, her rivers ran slow and peaceful, and she knew the shape of the leaves of an ash or an oak, the names of the little creatures that lived in English streams, when the words ‘the veld’ meant strangeness, though she could remember nothing else” (Lessing 1). The slice ends with the information about S1 as such “because of this, for many years, it was the veld that seemed unreal; the sun was a foreign sun, and the wind spoke a strange language” (2).

A3 starts with the introduction of the black people and their functions in the eyes of the white people and ends with “the child was taught to take them for granted (Lessing 2). Besides, the nickname of the protagonist is given here as Nkosikaas.

A4 starts with an adverb of time ‘later’. Not only S1 but also other white children see themselves as rightful to tease the black children. It ends with the information “white children could tease a small black child as if he were a puppy” (2).

The third person omniscient narrator continues to inform us about some inner thoughts of S1 in the segment called A5. It starts with that “certain questions presented themselves in the child’s mind” (2). The segment ends by explaining the reason why white children laugh at black children so easily.

A6 starts with first person narration. S1 goes out one evening when she is fourteen with her rifle and two dogs accompanied her and she meets S2. This segment ends when S2 stops to greet S1.

The second main segment, that is, B1 starts with “morning Nkosikaas” said by S2 and ends with the dogs’ sniffing and growling.

B2 starts with an adverb of time “not long afterwards”. S1 starts to read an old explorer’s book which uses the phrase ‘Chief Mshlanga’s country’. The segment ends with S1’s reading books about Chief Mshlanga.

The segment B3 starts with S1’s meeting S2 and ends with S1’s changing feeling towards the natives in a positive way.

B4 starts with the introduction of a new subject, that is, the cook (S3) in the house of S1. S3 is the son of S2 and thus a candidate leader to rule the tribe after his father. The segment ends with S2's mother (S4) saying to S3, losing her temper, that "you are not the chief yet, you know" (5).

B5 starts with "one afternoon" and ends with S1's saying that "for all the years I had walked by myself over this country I had never known a moment's uneasiness; in the beginning because I had been supported by a gun and the dogs, then because I had earned an easy friendliness for the Africans I might encounter" (Lessing 6).

B7 starts with the uneasiness in S1 in contrast to the easiness in B5. S1 is disturbed with the bigness and silence of Africa. The segment ends with S1's realizing that ten minutes lasts although she feels that hours last while she is feeling anxious.

B8 starts S1's finding her easiness as meaningless. S1 says that "the point was that it was meaningless. I was not ten miles from home" (6). It ends with a comparison between a white place and a native place.

The last main segment, C1, starts with S1's anxious situation. S1 says that "and now I did not know what to do next" (7). It ends when S1 says that she wants to see the chief.

C2 starts with S1's walking through huts where the natives live and sees S2 among a dozen old men sitting cross-legged (7). It ends with S1's observations about the place where S2 stays.

C3 starts with the speech of the old man saying that "the small white Nkosikaas is far from home" (7). It ends with S1's descriptions of Africa as such "...the great rich green valley where the river meandered and the pigeons cooed tales of plenty and the woodpecker tapped softly" (8).

C4 begins with S1's feeling of loneliness and of herself like a destroyer in the valley. It ends with her saying that "I could not help it, I am also a victim" (8).

C5 informs S1's meeting S2 once more. It ends with a comparison between the beautiful evening scene of Africa and ugly scene in S1's house (8).

C6 starts with S1's father (S5) saying that "I am keeping the goats" (8). It ends with S3's leaving the house after S2.

The last segment of C starts with information about the last situation of the kraal where S2 lives and ends with S1's thinking about how lucky the new settler coming there would be.

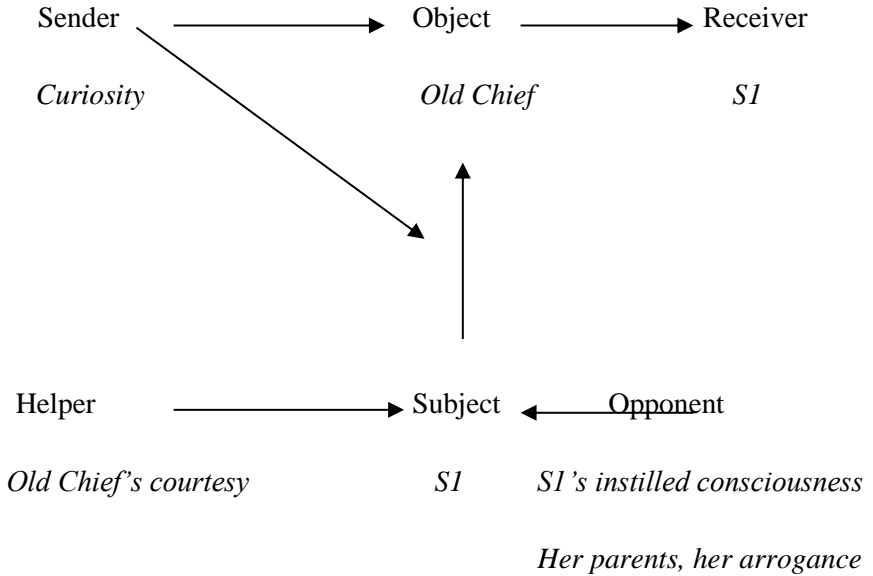
After these segments at the narrative level, the actions of the actants in the narrative and how the narrative is composed can be seen clearly. The narrative will be analyzed from three views; a white girl ignorant of the natives, her changing attitude towards the natives in a positive way after her encounter with S2, and a transformation from romanticism to the reality which shows that the unequal treatment of the natives cannot be corrected only with an adolescent girl's becoming conscious in a patriarchal colonial society, which results her complicity with the existing system.

A white girl ignorant of the natives

Third person omniscient narrator is used throughout the main segment of the text. It starts with the description of a white farm in Africa as "they were good, the years of ranging the bush over her father's farm which, like every white farm, was largely unused broken only occasionally by small patches of cultivation. In between, nothing but trees, the long sparse grass, thorn and cactus and gully, grass and outcrop and thorn" (Lessing 1). In this segment we are also informed about S1 "whose eyes were sightless for anything but a pale willowed river, a pale gleaming castle..." (1). S1 does not know the things in Africa as they really are but knows them with what she has learnt through reading about England. S1 seems to be blind to the real Africa in which she lives, which may be expected from a white child opening its eyes to Africa. A2 supports this view since it is said that "her books held tales of alien fairies, her rivers ran slow and peaceful, and she knew the shape of the leaves of an ash or an oak, the names of the little creatures that lived in English streams, when the words 'the veld' meant strangeness, though she could remember nothing else" (1). It continues that "because of this, for many years, it was the veld that seemed unreal; the sun was a foreign sun, and the wind spoke a strange language" (Lessing 2). Instead of looking at the things around her S1 tries to compromise what she sees with what she learns about England because she feels estranged. Even the sun seems different to her from the one in England. Besides, S1 has some superstitions about Africa. For instance, the narrator states that "the Northern witch, bred of cold Northern forests, would stand before her among the mealie fields, and it was the mealie fields that faded and fled, leaving her among the gnarled roots of an oak, snow falling thick and soft and white, the woodcutter's fire glowing red welcome through crowding tree trunks" (1). As it is obviously reflected, everything is seen as alien by S1 and she does not have a voice yet because what she feels and sees are imposed on her both through her readings and her family as she is just a child now.

Like Africa, Africans seem unreal, alien and remote to S1. For example, A3 introduces the black people and the reason of their existence in the eyes of white people. They are described as “amorphous black mass, mingling and thinning and massing like tadpoles, faceless, who existed merely to serve, to say ‘Yes, Baas’, take their money, and go” (2). This information is the refracted representation of the black people and thus it does not tell us how the black people really are. To say the same thing in a different way, this is the ideology of white people against the black ones. S1 is unaware of the natives’ real identities and functions as human beings but she keeps seeing them through the lens of white culture she belongs to. According to it, the natives are those who are fearful and assaulter. Therefore, when she is fourteen S1 carries a gun and two dogs with her to wander around out of curiosity. Although S1 does not know a native in person she uses pejorative words such as ‘kaffir’ when she talks about them. S1 exposes that her dogs will chase the natives and if they complain about it in their native language which is described as rude it will be “cheek” (2) that is another word to humiliate the black. Not only S1 but also other white children see themselves as rightful to tease the black children. For instance, it is stated that “white children could tease a small black child as if he were a puppy” (Lessing 2). While these events are taking place the third person narrator reflects some inner thoughts of S1 in A5. For example, it is acknowledged that “certain questions presented themselves in the child’s mind; and because the answers were not easy to accept, they were silenced by an even greater arrogance of manner” (2). Like other white children S1 knows the black people with taken for granted reality. When S1 starts to question the reason why the black children, for example, have to bear these humiliations by white children her arrogance does not allow her to accept the answers as a consequence of her instilled consciousness. For instance, when her mother (S4) sees S1 talking the black people S4 warns her that “come away; you mustn’t talk to natives” (2).

The last segment of the main slice A, A6, mentions S1’s encounter with S2. S1 wants to go out of the farm as she becomes curious about the life out of the farm. In this sense, curiosity is a sender that helps S1 to meet her object S2. While S1 is wandering she sees three men coming and expects them to move aside to let her pass. However, they do not stop, rather, they come steadily. She becomes angry because this behavior is considered as ‘cheek’ by whites. S1 observes them carefully and decides that they are not ones who seek work but they look like following their own purpose (Lessing 3). She feels a kind of dignity towards S2 who offers greeting to S1. This can be shown in the actantial narrative schema as follows



Curiosity motivates the action by communicating the modalities of desire to S1. Thus, a contract is settled and the receiver, S1, becomes a subject and launches on the quest. In order to actualize this contract, the subject has the ability to act as she goes out of the farm and the knowledge as she meets S2 and has a chance to know a native in person. In order to achieve her object S1 takes help from S2's polite behaviors and is prevented by her imposed white culture accompanied by arrogance. The object of S1 is S2 who represents the black culture, Africa as a space and, fear from the blacks and ignorance of S1 against the blacks. S1 is having a transformation after her achieving her goal.

S1's changing attitude towards the natives in a positive way as a result of her encounter with S2

With the encounter of S2, S1 has a chance to know the blacks at first hand. In the segment B1, S2 says that "morning Nkosikaas". S1 takes the greeting of S2 but her voice is said to be a bit "truculent" (Lessing 3). S2 continues to speak in his native language and one of the companions translates his speech in polite and careful English. S1 learns from the translator that S2 is a chief. S1 thinks that "a Chief! I thought, understanding the pride that made the old man stand before me like an equal-more than equal, for he showed courtesy, and I showed none" (3). Even though S1

does not show any courtesy towards S2 he shows it to her. This is an incident which makes S1 to think the position of natives on her mind. After they talk for a while S1 says good morning politely despite the fact that she finds politeness difficult as she uses it not often (3). While S1 is leaving she hangs the gun awkwardly because in contrast to what she expects from a native she does not need to use it. This is not the case with the dogs, however, their hostile attitudes towards natives do not change because they behave instinctually and they do not have a consciousness.

Then, S1 reads an old explorer's book which mentions Chief Mshlanga's country. It also goes on that "our destination was Chief Mshlanga's country, to the north of the river; and it was our desire to ask his permission to prospect for gold in his territory" (Lessing 4). The statement "ask his permission" is shocking to S1 as a white child since S1 regards the natives as "things to use" (4). This phrase evokes the questions which have been suppressed before because of the arrogance. However, it is not easy to ignore the questions from now on. For instance, an old prospector visiting their farm mentions that these lands were known as the old Chief's country. S1 thinks that "that was his name for our district: The old Chief's country; he did not use our name for it- a new phrase which held no implication of usurped ownership" (4). S1 does not try to suppress her thoughts any more. Contrarily, S1 lets her thought free and realizes that this new name does not imply the usurpation of the lands. If that is true then the usurpers should be her people, which is impossible to accept for a white child as she takes the things for granted. However, it is not impossible for an adolescent who enquires the answers without any restriction on her mind. Other white people like old prospector (S6) and S1's father (S5) already knows that this district belongs to S2 but they do not bother themselves to question their staying on the land of S2.

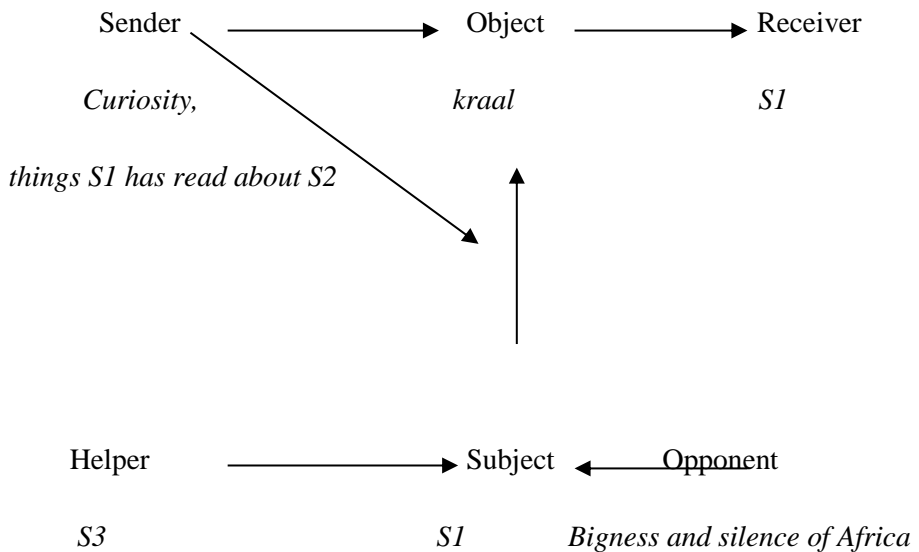
S1 tries to see S2 and, thus, she often goes to the path that is recognized as highway for migrants. S1 wants to meet him in order to be greeted by S2 and, gives and takes courtesies, which, S1 believes, answer the questions disturbing her (4). S1 seems to believe that by showing courtesy to S2 and treating him like equal may make her position as a white settler forgiven in her living S2's lands. S1's feeling and treating in this way in contrast to other whites who see themselves as righteous to usurp the lands and mistreat the natives, at least, shows the change in her consciousness in evaluating the natives. S1 seems to leave her ungrounded or taken for granted realities about the natives. Moreover, S1 reveals that she does not carry a gun for protection anymore and her dogs learn to behave in a better manner (4). S1 tries to see Africa as it is without comparing it with England. Moreover, S1 tries to justify her living in S2's lands by stating that as she is bred there it is her country as well as the black men's. S1 believes that the land is big enough to embrace the both cultures and hence suggests that every culture should show respect for the differences

in each other. S1 seems that she is trying to get rid of the feeling of guilty for being responsible from the usurpation of African lands. This transformation is really a big step from regarding the blacks as the servants in Africa to considering herself and her people as the usurper of Africa. The transformation in S1 is achieved in two levels, that is, she respects the blacks and Africa after she knows both of them as they are and she accepts that they are the real owner of Africa.

In the segment B6, S3 wants a whole day off to visit his home. S1 follows the direction S3 takes to see the kraal of S2. S1 sees this place for the first time because it is Government land that is not cultivated by white men. S1 looks around and says that “it was a wide green valley, where a small river sparkled, and vivid water-birds darted over the rushes. The grass was thick and soft to my calves, the trees stood tall and shapely” (Lessing 5). S1 compares her farm with this land and says that “I was used to our farm, whose hundreds of acres of harsh eroded soil bore trees that had been cut for the mine furnaces and had grown thin and twisted, where the cattle had dragged the grass flat, leaving innumerable crisscrossing trails that deepened each season into gullies, under the force of the rains” (5). While S1 is thinking how nice this land when compared to her farm and listening to a woodpecker she feels “a chill feeling” (5) because she realizes that she is alone there. When S1 looks at Africa without thinking what she knows about it she sees everything is fine. However, after S1 recognizes that she has neither a white nor a black company becomes cold and goosefleshed (6). S1 cannot define this fear as it is new for her.

Then, S1 explains that “I had read of this feeling, how the bigness and silence of Africa, under the ancient sun, grows dense and takes shape in the mind, till even the birds seems to call menacingly, and a deadly spirit comes out of the trees and the rocks” (6). Consciousness of S1 is reflected here. When she remains alone in Africa for the first time she feels fear which is defined as meaningless by S1 such that “the point was that it was meaningless. I was not ten miles from home: I had only to take my way back along the valley to find myself at the fence; away among the foothills of the kopjes gleamed the roof of a neighbor’s house, and a couple of hours’ night and sets him howling at the full moon” (6) in the segment B8. This is another confrontation of S1 with her instilled consciousness but when S1 becomes sensible she finds it meaningless. Afterwards, while S1 is trying to find the village she feels, besides fear, loneliness which can be interpreted in two senses; in a literal sense, that is, she is in the lands of S2 and she does not have any accompany neither a white nor a black, and in a figurative sense, that is, she does not feel herself belong to these lands which are not cultivated by white and originally belong to the natives like other lands in Africa. Even though S1 feels fear and loneliness she keeps trying to find the village because she cannot suppress what she has learnt the facts about the natives as the real

owners of the lands. In a sense, S1 wants to confront with what she has read about S2 and S2 himself. When S1 sees the village she compares the huts the natives live and the farm she lives. That is, the former is described as lovingly decorated, and having yellow, red and ochre mud on the walls and the latter is described as compound, dirty, neglected and temporary home without roots in it (7). This segment can be shown in the actantial narrative schema as



From Romanticism to the Reality

S1 sees a black boy and says him to “tell the Chief I am here” (Lessing 7). The boy runs and comes back with a few women who are wearing bright clothes and ornaments. They do not understand S1 and she confesses that she does not understand herself, either. That is, S1 does not really know why she comes here and what she will tell to S2 when she sees him. Later, S1 comes past the huts and sees a big shady tree and a dozen old men sitting cross-legged on the ground and S2 leaning back against the tree (7). S2 is not pleased to see S1 who realizes this. Thereupon, S1 reveals that “what had I expected? I could not join them socially; the thing was unheard of. Bad enough that I, a white girl, should be walking the veld alone as a white man might: and in this part of the bush where only Government officials had the right to move”

(7). As it is seen, S1 cannot be accepted by the black people because they are different from her. It does not necessarily mean that one is superior to other. Then, S1 describes the conditions around her that “it was a village of ancients and children and women. Even the young men who kneeled beside the Chief were not those I had seen with him previously; the young men were all away working on the white men’s farms and mines, and the Chief must depend on relatives who were temporarily on holiday for his attendants” (7). S1 realizes that the black men work for the white men but there is no explanation for the reason why it should be in this way. The words of S1 sound critical and questioning instead of taking the situation as taken for granted.

Then, in C3, S2 says that “the small white Nkosikaas is far from home” at last. Even though S1 wants to say that “I have come to pay you a friendly visit, Chief Mshlanga” (7) she cannot say it. S1 explains this that “I might now be feeling an urgent helpless desire to get to know these men and women as people, to be accepted by them as a friend, but the truth was I had set out in a spirit of curiosity; I had wanted to see the village that one day our cook, the reserved and obedient young man who got drunk on Sundays, would one day rule over” (7). As it is shown, S1 is not accepted by them but she does not want to be accepted, either. As she explains S1 comes to see the kraal that will be ruled by her cook one day. S1 realizes her identity here by seeing the difference between her culture and the native culture and also understands that her being kind and respectful for them makes neither the situation her nor the situation of them better. Then, S1 leaves for her farm by saying good morning. While she is returning S1 confesses that “the fear had gone; the loneliness had set into stiff-necked stoicism; there was now a queer hostility in the landscape, a cold, hard, sullen indomitability that walked with me, as strong as a wall, as intangible as smoke; it seemed to say to me: you walk here as a destroyer” (Lessing 8). In this segment, C4, S1 regards the natives as the landowners of these lands and herself and her people as the destroyers and intruders. In the sense of consciousness, it can be said that S1 confronts with the natives fighting with her feeling of fear, arrogance and her instilled consciousness; hence, she sees them and the world around her as they are as an individual rather than just a product of white culture.

S1 mentions her meeting with S2 once again in her house in C5. The land of S5 was damaged by the goats of the kraal that belongs to S2. Hence, S5 confiscates the goats. When S2 arrives at the house S5 is sitting in a big chair. S2 crouched carefully on the ground. Knowing that the kraal of S2 cannot pay the damage S5 insists on confiscating the twenty goats. Because S2 cannot speak in English and S5 does not know dialect of Africa S3 is called for translation. S5 is aware of his power and the weakness of S2 both physically and economically and, thus, he does not retreat. Seeing this situation S1 does not feel happy about the power S5 holds. Contrarily, S1

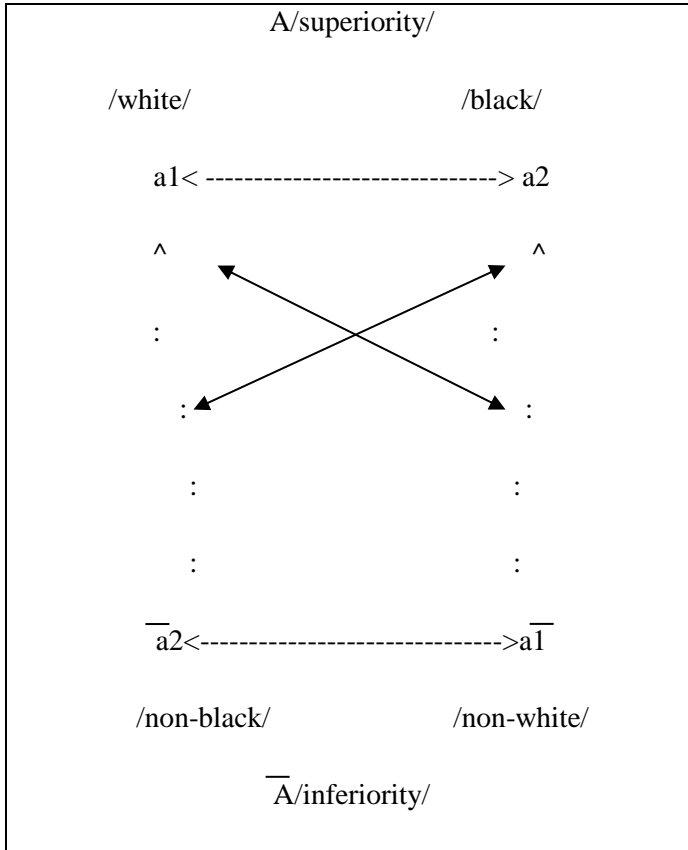
mentions that “it was now in the late sunset, the sky a welter of colors, the birds singing their last songs, and the cattle, lowing peacefully, moving past us towards their sheds for the night. It was the hour when Africa is most beautiful; and here was this pathetic, ugly scene, doing no one any good” (8). Keeping the goats does not make S1 feel happy because S1 has knowledge about the blacks and the lands enough to realize the injustice S5 brings about. However, in terms of actin S1 does not do anything to dissuade S5, that is, she does not resist to S5.

S2 thinks about his people. If they lose twenty goats they will be hungry for the dry season. S5 ironically offers S2 to go to the police if he wishes as S5 knows that all the official places belong to the white people there. In response, S2 says that “all this land, this land you call yours, is his land; and belongs to our people” (Lessing 9). Then, S3 goes after his father while S1 keeps her silence before the unjust situation. Even if S1 would have resisted S5 it might not have changed the situation in a patriarchal colonial society. However, that would be good in terms of S1’s fulfilling her responsibilities towards the natives and her conscience. Instead, S1 chooses to be ignorant to what she has just witnessed and becomes one of the others in her community by complying with the system.

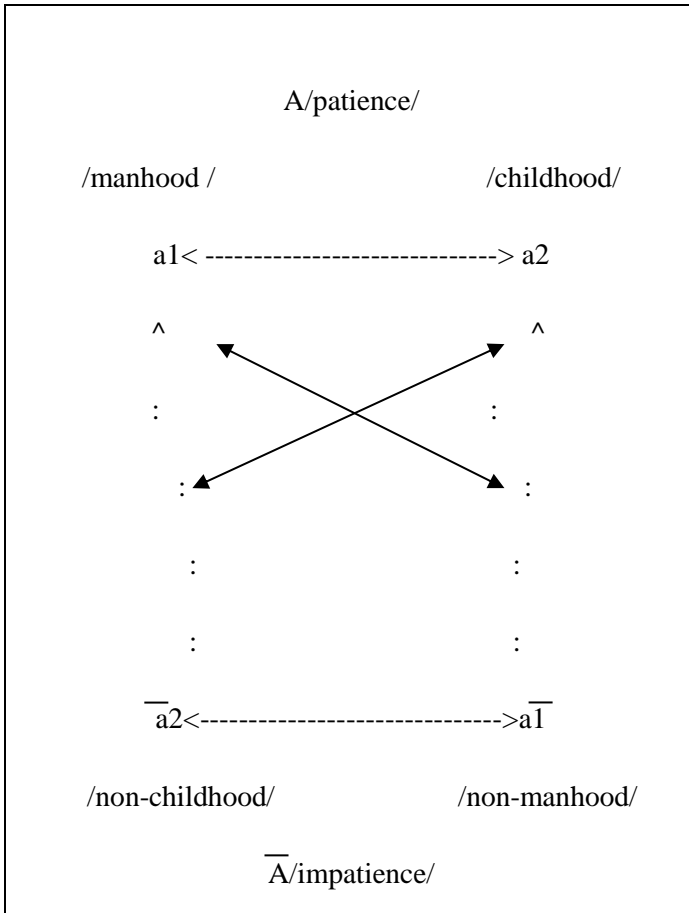
In the last segment, C7, S1 learns that S2 and his people have been moved two hundred miles east and their former land will be opened for white settlement soon. S1 visits the kraal of S2 once more and sees that everything is removed. S1 confesses that the settler would be lucky in plating there (Lessing 9). This is not the first time S1 has become silent before the injustices done against the native people. Thus, the story ends ‘and yet’ as in most of the other stories of Lessing. This segment can be shown in the actantial narrative schema as

2. The Abstract or Deep Level: Semantic-Logical Level

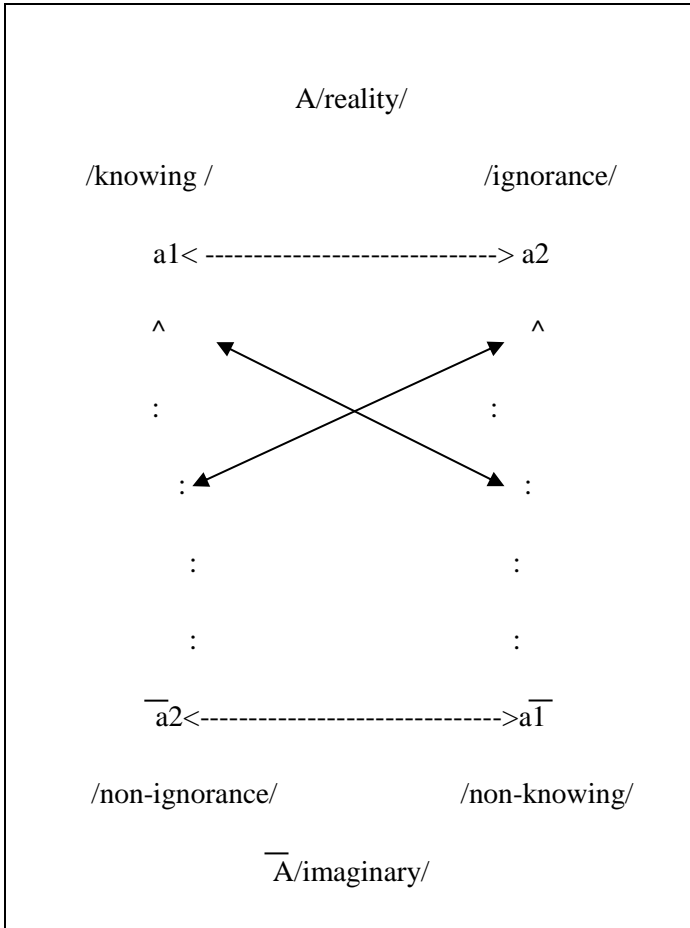
The narrator introduces S1 as a white child whose eyes are described as sightless for anything in Africa as she is ignorant of Africa and the natives at the beginning. S1 lives in Africa but she feels that even the sun is foreign to her. Moreover, when S1 and other white children tease the black children as if they were puppies some certain questions present in her mind but she suppresses them. That is, even though her nation usurped the lands of S2, S1 feels herself as rightful to be there and to tease the natives who are considered to be servants and temporary there. This, indeed, can be expected from a white ignorant child as a result of her bringing up in white culture that imposes the superiority of itself over the black one. It can be seen in a semiotic square as follows



However, when S1 becomes an adolescent her knowledge about Africa, the natives and herself expand. In her transformation from ignorance to knowledge her age has an important role because she cannot suppress the aforesaid questions. S1 defines herself as white by contrasting the black, that is, she is civilized because the blacks are uncivilized or she is superior because the blacks are inferior. While having this binary opposition in her mind S1 goes out of her farm as she is not a child anymore to play in the garden. S1 meets S2 and is old enough to understand the dignity in S2. In order to understand the dignity and judge it with her rude behavior S1 waits until her fourteen. So S1 should be patient. This can be shown in a semiotic square as follows:

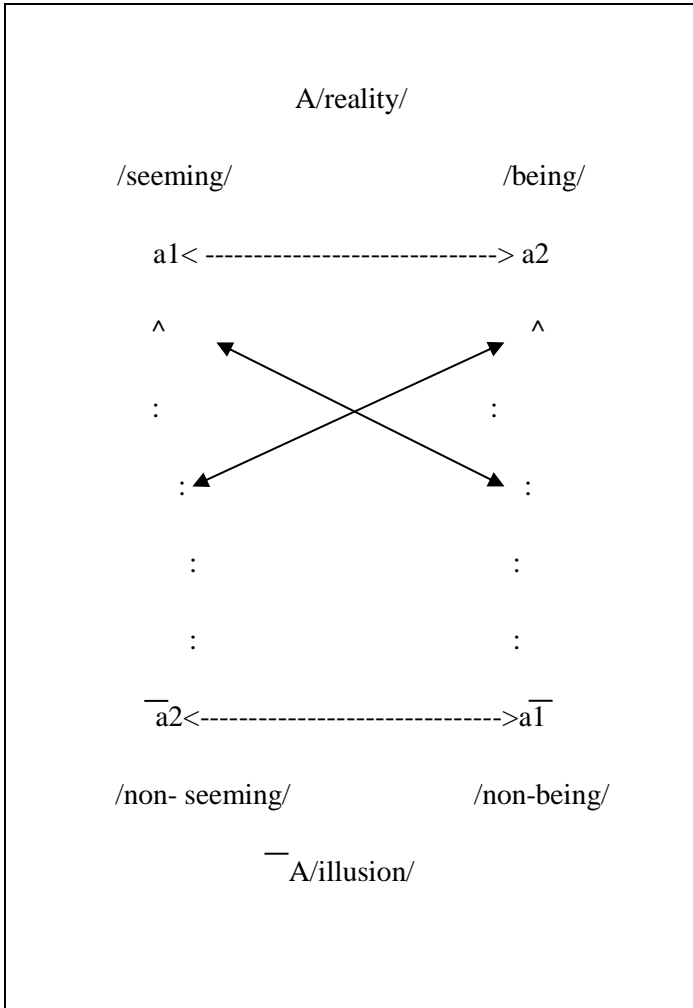


In other words, the square shows the change in S1's consciousness in relation to her age. After her seeing the courtesy of S2, besides being an adolescent and observing what is happening around her S1 cannot suppress the questions anymore. S1 learns the answers even though they are hard for her to accept. It can be shown in a semiotic square as follows:



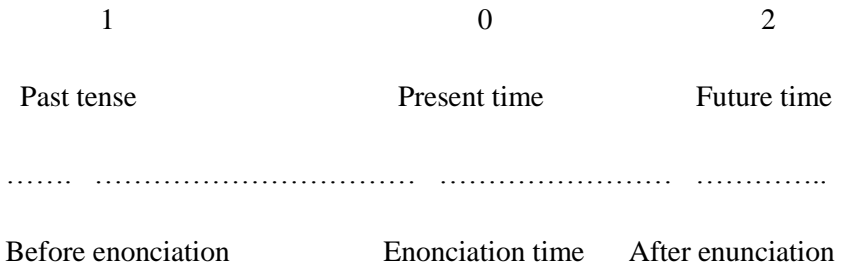
Nonetheless, in spite of the fact that S1 knows the lands belong S2's people and they are not people to be feared she does not resist eliminating the injustices made to the natives no matter she would achieve it or not in a patriarchal and colonial society. By knowing and respecting S2 and other natives S1 achieves her object at

level of action but she does not do anything showing this transformation in her. S1 seems to comply with her father and community. This can be shown in a semiotic square as follows:



In the story, there is not a definite date telling the time of the story. We only have “later, for a while. Besides, the narrator mentions a child, then, she is told to

become 14, which gives an idea about the duration of the story. There are two narrators: first one is omniscient third person and extra-diegetic and second one the first person narrator and homodiegetic. The third person and first person narrators do not mention the events while they are taking place. Instead, they use “later, a long time ago, one afternoon”, etc., while narrating the story. The events take place in the time of enunciation. It can be drawn as



As for space, it takes place in every level of the text. Space is very important to create the meaning of this story. It can be shown as

| | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Inclusive space | Included Space |
| South Africa | a white farm |
| Real and unsafe | fictive and safe |
| Outside the white farm | Garden in the white farm |
| Open, unsafe | Closed, safe |
| Huts in valley | white farms |
| Open, unsafe | Closed, unsafe |

| | Beginning stage | Ending stage |
|------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Africa | Unsafe | Safe |
| White farm | Safe | Unsafe |

While S1 feels unsafe in Africa and feels safe in her white farm at the beginning she feels safe in Africa as she learns the natives as harmless and that Africa belongs to the natives. S1 feels unsafe in Africa because she feels herself and her white farm as destroyers there.

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