

الميل نحو المساواة بين البشر: دراسة تحليلية

لمسرحية سونيا سانثيز (قلوب قذرة)

الأستاذ الدكتور حامد حماد عبد

جامعة الانبار/ مركز الدراسات الإستراتيجية

البريد الإلكتروني Email : hamed.abed@uoanbar.edu.iq

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Tendency Towards Egalitarianism: An Analytical Study of Sonia Sanchez's *Dirty Hearts*

By/ Prof. Hamid Hammad Abed (PhD)
University Of Anbar/Center of Strategic Studies

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المستخلص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تسليط الضوء على الإجراءات القاسية التي يتخذها بعض الأشخاص ضد بعضهم البعض، والتي يُنظر إليها على أنها أشكال من الرفض الاجتماعي. تعتزم (سونيا سانشيز) التركيز على نظرة الناس للفن الأسود واتهامه بكونه راديكالياً وذلك باستخدام تقنيات الفن الأفريقي. ان العلاقة بين السود والبيض غالباً ما تكون سيئة وتزداد قسوة ، لاسيما عندما تكون مدفوعة بأهداف شخصية غير أخلاقية. تبحث (سانشيز) في معظم أعمالها الأدبية عن بيئة آمنة ومتساوية وودودة ومحترمة في محاولة للقضاء على بذور التمييز العنصري. ولكونها شاعرة وكاتبة مسرحية شجاعة فقد عملت بجد لتغرس في مجتمعها الأسود إحساساً حقيقياً بالمساواة والاحترام. لذلك كرست غالبية شعرها ومسرحها للدفاع عن حقوق بلدها ولاسيما حقوق النساء السود. يُستخدم الحوار الدرامي بين الشخصيات في مسرحية "القلوب القذرة" لسانشيز للتعبير عن نوايا الكاتب المسرحي المخفية كمحاولة لتحقيق المساواة. إن هدفها الرئيسي هو إظهار أن كل فرد من أبناء جلدتها في المجتمع يتجه نحو تحقيق المساواة من أجل ضمان قدرتهم على العيش بشكل مريح. بينما جادل البعض من أجل وحدة السود ، في رأيها ، أن النساء تعامل وكأنهن أشخاص من الدرجة الثانية. تتناول العديد من مسرحيات سانشيز دوافع قيادة الذكور السود في هذا السياق. تستغل سانشيز بهدوء فكرة المساواة في جميع أجزاء هذه

المسرحية من أجل تعزيز فرصة أن تكون قادرة على الترويج أو تقديم حل لوضاعة شعبها الأسود في الثقافة الأمريكية التي يغلب عليها هيمنة البيض .

Abstract

This study highlights the unkind actions some people take against one another, which are perceived as forms of social rejection. Sanchez intends to show how, if African art techniques were used and adapted, people may view black radical art. The relationship between blacks and whites is frequently bad and increasing harsher, particularly when it is driven by immoral personal objectives. In the majority of her literary works, Sanchez looks for environments that are safe, egalitarian, amiable, and respectful in an effort to eliminate the seeds of racial discrimination. She is a fearless poet and dramatist who has worked hard to instill in her black community a true sense of equality and respect. She has, therefore, committed the majority of her poetry and plays to defending the rights of her community, particularly those of black women. The dramatic dialogue between the characters in Sanchez's play *Dirty Hearts* is used to express the playwright's concealed intentions as an attempt to achieve her aim of equality. Her main purpose is to show that everyone in the society is moving towards equality in order to assure their ability to live comfortably. While some argued for black unity, in her opinion, Women were given inferior treatment. Several of Sanchez's plays questioned the motives of black male leadership in this context. In order to promote the chance that she will be able to propagandize for or offer a solution for the inferiority of her black people in a predominately American white culture, Sanchez quietly exploits the idea of egalitarianism throughout this drama.

1-Sonia Sanchez: A Poet and Dramatist

Sonia Sanchez (1934-2018) is an American poet, playwright, educator, bestselling novelist, and member of the Black Arts Movement. A sizable portion of American culture regards her as one of the brave dramatists. One of the best pieces of American literature is considered to be her expressive poetry. Over the course of a more than 40-year career, Sanchez lectured and taught at more than 50 universities both locally and abroad. She wrote several books of poetry, eight plays, and a number of novels. She, like many others, was drawn into the civil rights fervor of the 1960s(Hill & Barnett,2009). Sanchez believed that writing and political engagement were interwoven. She had previously thought that black people could and should assimilate into the largely white United States. The black Muslim leader Malcolm X had a profound effect on Sonia Sanchez; his call for black people to reject white civilization substantially





Tendency Towards Egalitarianism: An Analytical Study of Sonia Sanchez's *Dirty Hearts*



influenced her later attitudes. She was profoundly influenced by Malcolm X and his ideologies, which helped her find her spiritual home in Islam. With this extreme idea in mind, Sanchez joined the Nation of Islam and embraced Islam, but she soon returned to Christianity (Hochstein, 2004).

Her adherence to Islam and later renouncing it is comprehended as an identity crisis, which was mostly attributed to the lack of a proper guide.

Sanchez's dramatic works have had a profound impact on the growth of African American theater. Obviously, Sanchez has shown exceptional boldness in writing literary works that jeopardized the dynamics of black male militant discourse while yet being a renowned literary personality in that field. Sonia Sanchez surpasses those well-known authors of her day with her poetry on womanhood, love, strength, and progress.

Prior to studying American drama, it can be beneficial to keep in mind that freedom is the fundamental component of all art. In America, playwrights should have the freedom to base their works on research into the vast universal emotions of pity, dread, and sympathy as well as on the great universal passions of love, hate, jealousy, fear, and doubt (Quinn, 1923). She is of the opinion that speaking at a predetermined place and time will be more beneficial than speaking at random times. She thinks that while some advocated for black unity, women are treated as second-class citizens. Sanchez authored multiple plays that questioned the motivations behind black male leadership in this setting.

In 1976, Sanchez was chosen to serve as the English Department Chair at Temple University. Until her retirement in 1999, she held the Nora Carnell Chair (Hill & Barnett, 2009). Frequently, she argues that African American women attempt to define themselves in the face of years of historical misrepresentation. The plays of Sanchez show her involvement in the Black Arts Theatre and the black arts aesthetic, as well as her writing efforts throughout the Black Power Movement. More particularly, Sanchez's plays shed light on the militant and feminist viewpoints that she expresses in her writing during the course of the second half of the 20th century and into the 21st (Kolin, 2007).

From her earliest play onward, Sanchez investigates issues of radicalism alongside a growing investigation into the worth and dignity of black women in the black community. In the recent play, Sanchez does appear to be presenting a notion of potential honesty within a victim's own unusual location. In the overall evolution of the African American literary heritage, Sanchez is a noteworthy character. She has had a significant impact on the growth of African American women's dramatic



literature (Kolin, 2007). Her plays, like earlier texts, center on the obligation of the African-American community to love themselves and one another in order to overcome racism. She wants to illustrate how people might perceive black radical art if African art techniques were applied and modified.

In order to fulfill his/her wants, a person must express their uniqueness, whether directly or indirectly. This is no doubt known as self-actualization, which enables anyone to work hard to accomplish his way of life. His efforts must be related to his capacity to regain his equilibrium, which allows him to apply these skills in helping both society and himself and to carry out his regular roles and obligations in an appropriate manner. Sanchez subtly uses the idea of egalitarianism throughout this play to support the likelihood that she will be able to propagandize for or provide a solution for the inferiority of her black people in a predominantly American white culture. In reality, addressing any social, sensitive issue takes actual resources and knowledge in order to develop a significant controversial subject.

Logical speaking, one must never compromise one's principles for anyone or anything. For everyone, but especially for those who have been suppressed, self-respect is crucial. Hence, Sanchez searches for a means of releasing such negative energy in order to demonstrate that the suppression of sentiments and emotions is more harmful than the underlying illness. In addition, similar to what militant playwrights and revolutionaries around the world have done, Sanchez shows her faith in the unique ability of drama to inspire revolutionary political reforms. Egalitarianism can be interpreted as a commitment to human equality, particularly in relation to social, political, and economic issues. The dramatist seeks out environments that are secure, egalitarian, friendly, and respectful in order to eradicate the germs of racial prejudice.

2- Sonia Sanchez: *Dirty Hearts*

From the outset, Sanchez expresses her deep desire to live in a world where love, respect, and equality rule the relationships between the people of her nation. She constantly expressed her desire and hope during interviews: "I wish people in this country would begin at some point to deal with people on an equal basis." (Sanchez & Kelly, 2000, 682). Without a doubt, it alludes to the ongoing conflict and struggle brought on by racial discrimination, which darkens human relationships. Because of its link to satisfaction, the notion of egalitarianism is connected to positive psychology; as one might expect, people who are deemed to be equalized also tend to have high levels of wellbeing. Numerous psychologists and behaviourist scientists have claimed that





Tendency Towards Egalitarianism: An Analytical Study of Sonia Sanchez's *Dirty Hearts*



many characters are driven by a desperate desire for protection. Pioneer in humanistic psychology, Abraham Maslow has theorized the hierarchy of needs: “Starting with the satisfaction of psychological needs, the child moves on to a desire of safety, mastery, belongingness, love, esteem, and final self-actualization.” (Page, 1975, 132). Sanchez’s primary interest has evolved into examining human behaviour under pressure and placing her characters in difficult circumstances.

At its most basic, *Dirty Hearts* involves four people getting together to play cards. In the straightforward gathering game Dirty Hearts, one loses by accumulating points, and this is the first sign of a more sophisticated working dynamic. Most of these flaws are carried by the Dirty Queen of Spades. Not getting the Queen of Spades and any hearts is the goal of the card game called Dirty Hearts. The Dirty Hearts that are used in card games may be a reflection of people's bad intentions and nastiness toward one another and serve to accentuate certain people's negative perceptions. Furthermore, Sanchez wanted people to be aware that there is not a black lady present. The black woman emerges as the undesirable criminal (Joyce, 2007).

In fact, Sanchez’s play is essentially a game of hearts in which the individuals represent different racial groups in American society who are wealthy and powerful. First Man and Second Man stand for white supremacy and power. Shigeko and Carl, two more prominent characters, are defined by their unique names and the groups they stand for (Kolin, 2007).

The four characters' argument over the game of dirty hearts will demonstrate an egalitarian tendency. Sanchez tries to show that equality, which is believed to be true in democratic cultures like the American society, is not genuine.

The resentment is evident among the characters, who are seen as archetypes.

In fact, there are only a few characters in this play, giving the audience plenty of time and space to consider and concentrate on each word that is said. Shigeko, a Hiroshima Maiden who fled Japan after World War II, is a young woman. She starts her conversation with the two men, “ i felt very sad; i felt as if i had forgotten something, but i did not know what it was; so i had no place to go. i miss perhaps my beautiful, levelled country.” (Sanchez, 2010,45). She works for First Man as his former wife's maid. He tries to soothe her suffering by providing her a different job, but his sympathy for her is only pretended. Her speech serves as a first indication of loss because it shows that she no longer feels a sense of belonging. The female protagonist is socially



marginalized and unable to express her urgent call for liberty, equality, and autonomy. Shigeko is a clear example of how women are battling for equality outside of the strict confines of the patriarchal system. She is quite depressed because she is unable to provide dramatic treatments for the problems in her community. Without a question, it is important to understand that “Dehumanizing and marginalizing certain individuals will cause hatred, rejection, and violent acts.” (Abed, 2016,159).

The individual Carl does not perform any better in this group. He is a black businessman determined to persuade himself of his worth and success in a society dominated by white people. It should come as no surprise that he gauges these in terms of wealth and power, “neither of which he truly possesses.” (Kolin,2007). He has little choice but to participate in the race for material gain and power in a white capitalist society. Thus, he expresses his bad situation “This day is strange. i’ve had the feeling today that if i screamed no one would hear me, not that i entertained any such nonsense.” (p.47). The two men are aware that his response is only acting. He will play the game repeatedly since it is how he identifies himself. Carl is the play's representation of capitalism. He is a black businessman who is determined to convince himself of his worth and achievement in a society where white people predominate (Wood, 2007). He is undoubtedly describing himself in front of other characters to highlight the level of suffering and annoyance he endured. He states that “everyone here knows who, what i am. i am a blk/capitalist. i am the president of Lanson and company. ... i am the american way of life; i am American dream.” (p.47)

Carl claims that the game of cards is a way for him to escape his miserable life, which is only ostensibly framed with respect and equality. Sharon Glazier Hochstein (2004) has claimed that, as in many of her works, also offers a timeless portrait of black America's yearning for equality and respect. As a result of his disappointment, Carl has had a terrifying dream in which he is being apprehended by the police and is being interrogated. He gives details of his dream:

I had a dream last night. the first dream i have ever had or remembered. I was in a strange place, a southern town and i was picked up for vagrancy by the police. they took me to their country club for questioning. then I was released and escorted to a dining room. (pp.47-48)

It is true that the horrible situation one may encounter in his or her day-to-day existence might lead to a dreadful dream. Accordingly, not just African Americans, but all people who are subjected to oppression and social rejection, ought to pursue freedom and equality.





Tendency Towards Egalitarianism: An Analytical Study of Sonia Sanchez's *Dirty Hearts*



Shigeko is quite disappointed because she is unable to provide dramatic treatments for the problems in her community. She is nevertheless firmly committed to changing how people lead their lives. Through her dream employment, she hopes to enhance her community. Thus, she says: “i think i shall become a nurse and treat new wounds already closing. i will give the medication of blue winds that stir dead tissues. i will bring love to man & spread its carriage over the universe until we forget the clouds & taste the sweet rain.” (p. 51). Her desire to become a nurse highlights the humanity and generosity she possesses, as well as how willing she is to share the suffering of her community in order to lessen the horrible load she has personally experienced. In spite of their damaging views towards one another, men and women interact in this drama (Wood & Sanchez, 2005). The fact that women bear the weight of the patriarchal society's suppression of efforts to create a female identity, equality, and independence is rather Sanchez continually emphasizes.

Poet is yet another figure who feels isolated and silenced. He represents society and must have experienced a horrible shock upon understanding that some people are helpless to free themselves from the chains of racial supremacy. He confirms that, “i write about old things, past things, perhaps dead things because i am dead and at ease with my contemporaries. i no longer write about you- or Shigeko or Carl. you are the world's painful propaganda.” (p.49). The Poet's sensitive nature allows him to express the suffering of his country in an accurate and educational manner. Here, the Poet actually describes a dreadful life, “ I am going to museums unadorned. i am going home. i am going to change congenital poverty. i am going young heads in my hands and turn them slowly. i am going to cry.” (p.50). Any person who becomes aware of his lack of acceptance in society instantly begins to investigate the causes.

The distinction between ascending the social ladder and maintaining order is one of the causes. Consequently, “enmity and threat among individuals never come as a result of materialistic and conditional circumstances, but competition and enmity among them emerge because of the historical developmental rules towards the individual's position in the social order.” (Abed, 2016, 161). However, Poet, another minor character, utilizes a chant to reveal his lack of morality and genuineness. Poet foretells his own destiny as he accepts his emotional and creative bankruptcy. He previously cherishes his imaginative creativity, but as he grows older, he gives in to his frailty and abandoned his lyrical vision (Kolin, 2007). As demonstrated by various characters in this play, the notion of equality is truly absent in American society. In *Dirty Hearts*,



Sanchez expresses her animosity toward white Americans by decrying their aggressive hostility toward black people. The way to real egalitarianism cannot be taken until the two parties involved agree on a course of action that could stress and bring about actual equality. It is anticipated that when black authors put more effort into advancing equality, their writings will become more popular.

3- Conclusion

No sense of egalitarianism or satisfaction is demonstrated by the characters in this play. White Americans who consider themselves to be superior are passionately opposed to the aspirations and tendencies towards egalitarianism of the oppressed people. If correctly implemented, the principles of equality and non-discrimination constitute the foundation of human rights and aid in the eradication of deficiency in all facets of life. It is not only the tendency but rather a revolution to gain human rights. However, there is still discrimination against individuals of African origin, native Americans, people with disabilities, immigrants, the elderly, young children, and women. The equality principle prohibits discriminating between members of the same sect who hold identical legal positions. Legislation must adhere to the equality principle and treat everyone equally.

In short, equality prohibits discrimination against people based on any factor. The principle of equality states that all people must be treated equally when they are in the same legal positions, regardless of their gender, color, language, race, origin, or any other factor. Finally, Sanchez's general concern about the mistreatment of women both domestically and internationally is examined in *Dirty Hearts*. She views Shigeko as being socially outcast and unable to embrace her femininity in a world that is dominated by men. The three characters stated above support societal transformation that could lead to fair egalitarianism, but the methods for bringing about this change are constrained.

Sanchez exposes the drama, *Dirty Hearts*, to explain herself more clearly and to provide information about the impossibility of egalitarianism. The majority of black dramatists, and female dramatists in particular, are perceived as supporters of regaining their taken-away rights by depicting their dreadful situations in a peaceful, democratic manner free of violent tactics. Black Americans struggle to understand and communicate their own intents in American society. Therefore, they require leadership and motivation in order to reclaim their lost rights. Consequently, most of the American dramatists tend to imply in the majority of their literary works that American guilt is so deeply





Tendency Towards Egalitarianism: An Analytical Study of Sonia Sanchez's *Dirty Hearts*

ingrained that the evil it inspires will inevitably demolish everything it is based upon.

Even though black Americans appeared to make headway in politics, business, and culture in the middle, late, and early 2000s, economists discovered that the average racial wealth disparity had barely narrowed at all. The daily social lives of individuals are actually directly impacted by the strong relationship between politics and economy. Here, the importance of literature in educating the general public and decision-makers about the need for harmonious relationships and a fair distribution of riches without compromising freedom is stressed. In all of her theatrical and literary works, Sonia Sanchez has affirmed this in order to demonstrate to the public the misery that black people in a civilized society that claims democracy endure due to their own skin colour. Additionally, it became evident *Dirty Hearts* that black Americans had endured societal rejection and marginalization for decades solely because they are black, not for any other reason. This is made obvious by the characters' animosity throughout their influential performance.

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