Gendered Violence in Pygmalion: Threatening Femininity and the Instability of Power Relations

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Abstract

This article is an analysis of George Bernard Shaw‚s *Pygmalion* (1912) within the theoretical framework of the Girardian mimetic theory. The issue of power in *Pygmalion* is no longer limited to knowledge and education; it extends to probe the male/female and mediator/disciple relations. Lurking underneath the illusively harmonious relationship between the mediator and the disciple, ‚acquisitive mimesis‚ culminates into violence. Such unleashed violence tends to fortify the frailty and instability of patriarchal heteronormativity. Indeed, this article follows Higgins‚s violence as it stems from his momentary lack of control and elapsing power. The concept of masculinity itself turns, thereby, to be controlled by the mainstream power. Although the reconstruction of the female gendered identity, in this play, aims at veering from the main orthodoxies, subversion is eventually contained. Eliza succumbs to the power of the male and accepts the rules of the patriarchal society that she has tried to defy.

KeyWords: Pygmalion; Power; violence; subversion; mediator/disciple.

1. Introduction

The Anglo-Irish playwright, George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950), was a devoted evolutionist who expressed, through his writings, challenging ideas which are imbued in the Shavian tradition.

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He aimed through his works, ranging from novels, short stories and plays, to put under the rubric of debate the demarcating line between the different social and gendered stratifications. *Pygmalion,* for instance, lays bare the social function of language and reveals the process of constructing a gendered identity. The play follows the double metamorphosis that Eliza "the flower girl"[1] undergoes: from a nameless creature to an "angel in the house", and from the "angel in the house" to an independent woman. The metamorphosis from a flower girl to a lady was tackled from feminist perspective. The bulk of critical studies were woven around the unbalanced power relation between male and female characters. Probing the question of constructing gendered identities has been a major concern for Judith Butler whose attempts are to unveil the fraudulent belief on a stable and fixed gendered identity. This thesis follows the process of becoming a duchess and then an independent woman. As every process of becoming involves the determinate absenting of the old status in favor of the new, the first chapter traces the representation of both male and female figures in each phase. Verbal violence is seized, concomitantly, as a performative act that contributes to constructing, framing, and controlling the female character. Along with Butler's troubling of gender, this study is to depict the theme of violence through the Girardian perspective of mimetic desire. Girard contends that violence is a repercussion of acquisitive mimesis whereby the disciple attempts to appropriate the mediator's object. He underlines the way rivalry undermines the position of the disciple and the mediator once indulging in reciprocal violence. The second chapter aims at examining the role of the Girardian violence in disturbing the status quo, demeaning male power and empowering the female's. Violence in Bernard Saw's *Pygmalion* can be tackled from an eclecticism of theories: gender studies, feminism, and mimetic theory. This article examines violence as a material ritual practice of power. The first objective is to study the role of violence in constructing gendered identities according to the model that the mainstream power structures set. The second objective is to read violence as the repercussion of an acquisitive mimesis. It is in this case the result of constructed gendered identities ensconced at the centre of power relation. The process of constructing femininity that Eliza, the flower girl, undergoes reveals along with the unnaturalness of gender, the instability of power relation within the patriarchal framework. Indeed, the metamorphosis unveils the way patriarchal hegemony shapes and controls the reproduction of a feminine other. It heralds the insurgencies of the _othered'8 female as it succeeds in destabilizing the preordained structure through mimetically reproducing the male paradigm.

2. The Mimic Woman

In *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel*, Rene Girard envisions the root of human violence through an exhaustive reading of the classic works of Proust, Stendhal, Flaubert, and Cervantes. He ventures instances of human violence as paradoxically encompassing both the causes and repercussions of social and cultural formation. In order to unravel the reason behind the endemic nature of violence, Girard proposes what he calls the mechanism of • "mimesis": an anthropological view of desire woven around imitation. • "Mimesis" is defined in the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary as • "the fact of a particular social group changing their behavior by copying the behavior of another social group". At the core of his trenchant insights lies the role of mimesis in the promulgation of cultures[1]. • If human beings suddenly ceased imitating, all forms of culture would vanish

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[1] Girard' mimetic theory offers an explanatory model illuminating the way imitation is a foundational element in the emergence of human culture, religion, and language. Girard discovers through a close scrutiny of human

[2:7]. The term •"mimesis" can be traced back to the 5th century original word •"mimos" that is traditionally bound with imitation, expression, and representation. In *Things Hidden since the Foundation of the World*, Girard explains his preference of the word •"mimesis" over •"imitation" for imitation is closely related to bodily and behavioral conditions. The term encompasses, as well, non-conflictual patterns which the Greek word •"mimesis" insinuates. He attests: If imitation does indeed play the fundamental role for man, as everything seems to indicate, there must be certainly exist an acquisitive imitation, or if one prefers a possessive imitative whose effects and consequences should be carefully studied and considered [2:9]. Girard seizes the emphasis on •"imitation" as the core aspect of •"mimesis" to launch a contemporary understanding of mimesis, built upon a phenomenological approach on how desire works. The contemporary understanding of mimesis marks desire as preeminently imitative. As defined in the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, desire is •"a strong feeling of wanting to have or to do something". A scathing distinction can be discerned between •"appetites and needs"; the biological basis of life; on the one hand and •\desire. which unlike needs, is less easy to satisfy, on the other hand: Once his basic needs are satisfied… man is subjected to intense desires, through he may not know precisely for what. The reason is that he desires being something he himself lacks and which some other person seems to suggest [3:177]. Desire is thereby •"mediated" or •"modeled" by the other whose indelible impression is glaringly imprinted on the subject in drag. Along the Girardian lines, the imitative aspect of desire jars with the •"mensonge romantique", the •"romantic lie", "the illusion of all times". Indeed, romantics have always cherished the autonomy originality and spontaneity of one's desire setting thus a "line of force" that inexorably links the desirous subject to a desired object. A close reading of the classics ultimately sheds light on the deliberate omission of a 'privileged' object. The cancellation of this party is felicitous as it dispels the characteristics of desire as the product of an inner subjective will. An explanatory schema is presented, instead, theorizing the interpersonal relation within a triangular frame. •"Desire is rooted neither in the subject nor in the object, but in a third party whose desire is mediated by the subject"[3:170]. Desire turns to be, a desire for and by the other. Girard's concern with the overarching importance of imitation in interpersonal relations, finds an echo in multifarious studies. Indeed, the anthropologist's speculation about mimetic desire resonates deeply with Freud's concept of 'identification'. Freud presented the notion of identification; the core of the oedipal complex, emanating from desire. "It is the father who directs the son's attention to the desirable object: the mother" [4:230]. The identification with the father seems to be a variation of Girard's imitative desire invested in imitating a chosen model. The mimetic model as well as the 'father' tends to direct the disciple's and the 'little boy' to a particular object simply by desiring it. Girard's mimetic intuitions, nonetheless, undercut with Freud's parental identification in that the choice of the model is not restricted with the circle of parentage. The Girardian subject is 'free' to choose the model. Girard's dismantling of the Freudian theory stems from Freud's engagement with the sexual theoretical constrictions as well as his •"inclin[ation] toward the desirability of objects" [4:226]. In his article •"Mimesis and Violence: an Introduction to the thought of Rene Girard", Fleming Purther underscores the relational aspect of mimetic desire; desire is premised on an inter-human relation; a view that can be found with Bulterian and Lacanian social character of human psychology. Indeed, within the framework of human development, parallel can be drawn between Girard and

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behavior certain repetitive patterns of social relation that proved reliable throughout history. A consistent underlying mechanism is hence unrevealed, operating via mimetic principles which are intuited into the subconscious level.

Butler's theory of performative citation enunciating an imitative process in doing one's gender. According to butler, gender is a seamless sequence of repeated acts. The regulated process of repetition is solidified through faithfully imitating the other, and persistently duplicating the flawless model: the source of inspiration. Another scathing distinction tends to label mediation into external and internal mediation. In *DDN*, Girard sets the framework for each category. Indeed, •"when the distance is sufficient to eliminate any contact between the two spheres of possibilities of which the mediator and the subject occupy the respective centers", mediation is external[2] [5:9]. However, "when this same distance is sufficiently reduced to allow these two spheres to penetrate each other or less profoundly", mediation is said to be internal. (ibid).The external mediation depicts the mediator as an ideal, essentially superior to the disciple. These attributes enable and facilitate the process of imitation, for self- consciously, the imitator is fully aware of the impossibility to emerge like the model. His faithful reproduction of the manners and the beliefs is, nevertheless, a vestige of the old order of social hierarchy. Internal mediation is, conversely, marred by its 'authenticity'. The model is close- both in time and space- to the disciple. This relation intensifies the proximity of desires and consequently culminates in rivalry. Eliza emerges as the typical victim of the triangle of desire. Fueled by her unquenchable thirst for respectability and sophistication, she pursues the object, predetermined on the surface level by "the duchess in the flower shop", yet read more overly by Higgins who ushers her to the object to be desired. Indeed, Eliza's model: the duchess represents the emblem of femininity. She is virtuous, vulnerable powerless to challenge the dominant male rules, for she is conditioned to obey. Her submission and sweetness are the incarnation of the ideal womanly behavior. She entices in Eliza an urgent desire to "see [herself] as [she] is not" [5:6]. The man made mediator aims at abdicating women's autonomy. Eliza finds in reproducing the slightest details a way to fulfill her aspiration. She seems to follow the steps of Mme Bovary " in order to reach their goal … the subject finds a model for himself, and imitate from the person they have decided to be all that that can be imitated, everything exterior, appearance, gesture, intonation, and dress" [5: 5]. This stage entails an amalgam of conflicting feelings ranging from admiration, infatuation, jealousy, and envy. "The hero of external mediation proclaims aloud the true nature of his desire; he worships his model openly and declaims as disciple" [5:10]. In this vein, Eliza might be classified within the realm of what Girard calls 'snob'. According to Girard, the snob is an imitator who "slavishly copies the person whose birth, fortune, or stylishness he envies" [5:43]. Eliza goes through a process of social feigning, concealing her former self, and masking instead as an upper-middle class duchess. "She evolves from confusion, ignorance and illusion to coherence, knowledge and reality" [6: 42]. Appalled no less by the dim intimation of her fate, Eliza embraces a life of the emblem of femininity; a life which lines and details are 'pre-ordained'. Thereby, in the fetish declaration to emerge as the replica of her model, Eliza insinuates a sense of self- despise branded by a paradoxical fluctuation between pride and shame: a pride for getting closer to the •"divine auto sufficiency"; "for it is through imitating the model, the subject sees itself on the verge of attaining the same autonomy"[7:15]. The subject exudes, as well, a concomitant sense of shame of her original self. The subject's adulation of the model undergoes a metamorphosis into a more complex stage:

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[2] In Miguel de Cervantes, Don Quixote, the protagonist openly gives voice to his dire need to turn into a replica of the fictitious knight Amadis de Gaul. Don Quixote's infatuation of the paragon of chivalry annihilates any possible rivalry as they are Remote in time and space. The infatuation of Flaubert's Emma with the fictitious characters she reads about illuminates and fortifies the aspects of external mediation as well. Both Cervantes' and Flaubert's heroes profess a state of self .dramatization; they tend to see their lives as part of the fiction with which they are overwhelmed

'the vaniteux'. For Girard the 'vaniteux' is •"the vain person cannot draw his desire from his own resources, he must borrow them from others… the vaniteux will desire any object so long as he is convinced that is already desired by another person whom he admires" [5:46]. At the core of this definition lies certain indelible characteristics setting the subject in a perpetual and obstinate attachment to the model who "becomes a God"(ibid). Girard's trenchant depiction of Stendhal's 'vaniteux' fortifies the modern emotions the disciple harbors. Self debasement mingles with a concomitant adulation of the other who is "distinguished by his emotional autonomy, by the spontaneity of his desire, by his absolute indifference to the opinion of the other" [5:19]. Stendhal's 'vaniteux' shares with Proust's 'snob' the same position as imitator."The agonizing conflict between personal experience and the testimony of the others is resolved in favor of the mediators. But choosing the other in such cases is only a particular way of choosing oneself"[5: 22]. Indeed, as soon as the comparison to the other is established, a fraudulent quest for shaping the original and unique self is launched. The choice of the model stems from a need to consolidate one's other self, to partially -and at times fully- remedy one's self made inferiority. The process of self debasement transforms the subject into a flexible construct ripe for displacement and absorption of the other. Desire is aimed, hence, to the model's being. Self cancelation would constantly annihilate the signs of one's own autonomy and consequently power. In his momentary 'identification' with the other, •"the vaniteux will desire any object as long as he is convinced that it is already desired by another person whom he admires"[5: 7]. Once the object on which desire is premised is attained, rivalry begins leading to an inevitable violence between the mediator and the disciple.

3. The Eruption of Violence

"[B]ut there are certain words I must ask you not to use. The girl used it herself when she began to enjoy the bath… But she must not hear it from your lips."[1: 50]. Mrs. Pearce's pleading evinces the inauguration of the process of recurring imitation and doubling reproduction of Higgins' behavior: a process that congeals over time to produce an analogous copy of the model. The passage from external to internal mediation is inadvertently lacerated by a remarkable change in the different parties constituting the triangle of desire; the subject and the object remain the same whereas the model turns to be Mr. Higgins. The proliferation of a more accessible; less celestial model jeopardizes the apparent harmony. Eliza's re-modulation of her desired object reveals new forms of emulation rooted neither in the object, nor in the model of external mediation, but in the astutely chosen model: an always present prestigious male. The reproduced acts and manners make a tangible testament to the imitative process which holds in its fold repressed violence. The choice of the model is felicitous. The portrait of Mr. Higgins lays bare a version of Stendhal's Del Dongo; •"a passionate person, he is distinguished by his emotional autonomy , by the spontaneity of his desires, by his absolute indifference to the opinion of others […] draws the strength of his desire from within himself and not from others" [5:19]. Such characteristics form an inescapable allure to Eliza; urging her to appropriate the prestige and then the autonomy that Higgins embodies. That desire, ultimately, exteriorizes and exorcises social tension. As introduced in the previous section, internal mediation leads to an inevitable scene of rivalry and violence. Coming closer to the mediator- both figuratively and literary- , the disciple starts regarding the model as a rather obstacle obliterating his desired object. "The closer he mediator is to the subject, the more conflicting convergence of the two desires towards the same object tends to grow" [5:55]. With mimetic desire metamorphosing into mimetic rivalry, violence, hatred and destructive impulses erupt. The threshold of rivalry drags the desired object into oblivion. The disappearance of

the object announces simply the disciple's witless quest to emerge like the autonomous other. In his article "Rene Girard and the Boundaries of Modern Literature", W.A. Johnson proposes a detailed account of the fraud of autonomy. He states: Each subject privately discovers that he is no god, but blames himself,…He feels that he alone is incapable of autonomy, and must therefore secretly imitate the autonomous desires of others, masking his discipleship as an originality powerful enough t o enslave others. The illusion of divine autonomy promised t o an enlightened world is thus perpetuated; men become gods in the eyes of each other, while remaining disciples in their own eyes [8:278]. Autonomy hence vanishes as soon as the subject chooses his mediator. The disciple's acts and behavior are curtailed as they turn to be a mere reproduction of the mediator's. Brought into existence by an uncontrollable and overlapping desire, the 'vaniteux' delves into the personal realm of the sturdy model •"who can act no longer his role of model without acting or appearing to act the role of obstacle"[5:45]. The greater the disciple gets close in fulfilling his primal desire, the tenser is the rejection aggression meted out. Far from preferring his infatuation with the mediator, the subject of internal mediation tends to shroud his own intentions which are, in fact, supped into prosaic and raging emotions. Jealousy and envy are ensconced at the centre of his obstinate attachment to the other testifies to the change both the subject and his other undergo. The apparent harmony is now shattered into fissiparous fragments paving the path for the contagious and later reciprocal violence to unleash. Being bludgeoned with these inner, yet awe-inspiring feelings, the subject resumes insistently his quest for sameness. Envy is defined by Girard as "the feeling of impotence which vibrates our attempts to acquire something because it belongs to another" [5:13]. Violence, in this vein, could be read as the calamitous denouement in the relation between the two parties which is marked by a tragic change from veneration to envy and from infatuation to hatred, with the 'god' metamorphosing into a hateful persecutor. Along with fury and jealousy throbbing at the subject's inner self, a feeling of worthlessness is lodged in him. It echoes the damaging internalization of the belief of immutable inferiority when compared to the other: 'the god'. The disciple •"feels both rejected and humiliated, judged unworthy by his model of participating in the superior existence the model himself enjoys"[3:156]. By virtue of her position in the triangle of desire, Eliza's misconception of her own manners emanates from an inner despising glance. Her self-loathing bespeaks an uncertainty about •'her' choices, distrust in her manners. Liza: An old lady has just told me that I speak exactly like Queen Victoria. I am sorry if I have lost your bet. I have done my best; but nothing can make me the same as these people [1:95]. Although she grows to the desired status by becoming a mimetic version of the upper class, her inner feeling of proliferated inferiority betrays her. In an attempt to become fused with the model, the disciple's performative acts turn to be a mimetic version of those of the mediator. As they grow alike, the demarcating line that has long been separating the two parties is now blurred. Similarity and sameness bereft the society from its illusive harmony and exposes an uncontrollable upsurge of violence. Girard explains that "two desires converging on the same object are bound to clash. This mimesis coupled with desire leads automatically to conflict" [5:15]. Violence is, thereby, explained not in terms of social difference but rather as the by-product of mimetic desire. The presence of the disciple seems to be the incarnation of a distorted self-image, an imperfect other that threatens to usurp one's position. At this level, imminent deep rage is directed toward the emerging copy who is tangled in a desperate process of self-seeking. The mediator himself desires the object, or could desire it; it is this very desire, real or presumed which makes this object infinitely desirable in the eyes of the subject…the mediator can no longer act his role of model without also acting or appearing to act the role of obstacle [5:7]. The electrifying effect of indignation when seeing his own portrait projected into

another as well as the incubus of a possible acclamation of his social and professional position turns Higgins' wrath astir. •"[h]is superiority is constantly challenged by Eliza's wisdom and he feels very much irritated when he starts to see that Eliza has a great many ideas that he cannot have put into her head since he does not himself possess them"[6:42]. Eliza's decision to "offer [myself] as an assistant to that hairy faced Hungarian, teach him [my] methods, [my] discoveries. awakens Higgins' atrocious, grouchy violence"[1:131]. It is the threat to be surpassed by the "concealed, eclipsed" flower girl who eventually succeeds in altering her life beyond recognition. An inner world of outlandishly well crafted illusive harmony crushes into ruins with the first signs erupting. "You take one step in his direction and I will wring your neck" [1:131]. The model scoffs at the ambitious man who narcissistically hunts after success. His remarks grow bitterly sarcastic as he ponders over Eliza's fretful toiling to become a part of the upper class. Oblivious of the fatal moment where the subject would replicate his distinctive features, "the model considers himself too far above the disciple" [3:156]. Yet his mockery is growingly overshadowed by the anxieties that competition triggers off. "He concluded that the disciple has betrayed his confidence by following in his footsteps. [3:157]. Likewise, Higgins' irreverent treatment has soon veered toward intense and violent opposition. In Order to avoid the inevitable slippage into the swirl of violence, traditional societies imposed a set of stern rules; prohibitions and taboos. Once one's desire is projected onto the other, society risks exposure to an unquelled violence. Indeed, Girard regards prohibition and taboos, deeply entrenched in primitive societies, as means to maintain harmony and order. In VS, he considers violence as the "cardinal" of human culture. Building on Freud's *Totem and Taboo,* Girard hones an insight claiming that "violence is both the disease (inside) and the cure (outside)" [232]. Violence is thus a means to preserve order, and a kind of mimetic anti- mimesis. Cultural prohibition inaugurates with the "murder of a surrogate victim", proclaims Girard. Mimetic desire entails uncontrollable violence that encompasses indiscriminately both 'impure and sacred'.Impure violence is manifested through a propensity to tarnish the harmony of the community and loosen, consequently, its social fabric. Impure violence can be sealed, though, with punishment meted out to the sacrifice; A victim [which] is not a substitute for some particularly endangered individual, nor is it offered up to some individual of particularly bloodthirsty temperament. Rather it is a substitute for all the members of the community, offered by the members themselves. The sacrifice serves to protect the entire community from its own violence [3:8]. The taint of impure violence necessitates a set of rules to contain the unleashed flaw of threatening chaos. Prohibitions are, therefore, initiated, as suggested by Freud, to "eliminate[s] violence, and our violent impulses (including those resulting from our sexual derives) destroy our inner calms without which human consciousness cannot exist" [3:234]. Prohibitions turn, henceforth, to be a means to •"prevent[ing] the transgression of the taboo" (6). They are in fact infused in the habitus, they come to be instilled in people's rearing. Yet, along the Girardian line, "the prohibitions were dictated by violence itself, by the violent manifestation of a previous crisis, and they are fixed in place as a bulwark against similar outburst. In this vein, violence against those who veer from the preordained path is intrinsically needed. It emerges as a "mimetic anti-mimesis", driving people to follow the rules. Violence is felicitous though scarcely distinguishable at some points; it is what Girard marks as"sacred". Sacred violence attempts to cleanse the society, restore the apparent order and repress any transgression. Eliza's appropriation of male distinctive features is unsurprisingly a tremendous transgression of the Victorian codes of behavior. She embraces the prohibited as the supreme form of autonomy. Her determinant assertion to become a mimetic version of Higgins reveals the deviant characteristics that make her presence encumbering in the society. By

virtue of her social status; a 'fatherless' girl in a community built on the concept of the "name of the father", as well as her appointed gender, Eliza is set under rigid system of stern rules that patriarchy imposes. As she undergoes this metamorphosis, she is stigmatized as a "foolish" dissenter. As lihua demonstrates,"Even after Eliza's transformation after she can speak perfect English and behave like a duchess, the men's contempt for her is no less" [6:42]. The society brands any rebellious act as a demonic deed which needs to be repressed and contained in order to alleviate the tension that has long been seething underneath the apparent harmony. The threat of distorting the preordained hierarchy exudes from the impure transgression encroaching upon both the social and religious order. Violent victimization could act as a tendency to preserve the status quo. Higgins' violent intervention is seen as a social tranquillizer that quells violence and cleanses the community. Girard would read in Higgins' "rising in a fury" and • " lay[ing] hands on her" [1:129] a space to implement sacred violence for the dissolution of the threat could only be engendered by a larger swirl of purifying violence. Violence, at this level, is allowed a freer reign as it endorses a moralizing character. Higgins' violent reaction tends to seal the peril that infiltrates human upsurge of violence emanating from the 'impure'. Such conflict registers the foreground for domination and the background for a set of prohibitions and taboos. Prohibitions, in fact, demystify a fully codified system upon which culture is built. As rivalry grows into an upsurge of violence, chaos hangs oppressively over the community; a dire need to impose the culturally sanctioned violence urges the two rivals to conceal their hideous intentions. The antagonists suspend their struggle, now and forever. Henceforth everything touched by the sacred violence belongs to the gods, as such; it becomes the object of a most solemn prohibition. The antagonists have been sobered and thoroughly frightened. From now on, they will do anything possible to keep from relapsing into reciprocal violence [3: 230]. Prohibitions, thus, enable to release the community from the grips of the violence that is ensnared by the emergence of the monstrous double "who are interchangeable, although their basic similarity is never formally acknowledged"[3:161]. Religious rituals embody these prohibitions "enable[ing] each society", as David Gownfield explains in *Body /Text in Julia Kristeva*, "to both commemorate the crisis that signaled its beginning and manages further confrontations in ways that do not put an entire community at risk" [9:72]. By purging from the 'human memory' the founding conditions upon which the society is anchored, prohibitions and taboos turn to be mere rituals inherited from one generation to the other. The Victorian society Eliza acquaints tends to marginalize the religious and social misfit according to a set of codes of sanctioned behavior recorded in the holy script. In fact, Higgins insistent orders, imbued in the patriarchal hierarchy, are unavoidable reproduction for the bible.s verses. His condescending, yet aggressive remarks force Eliza into a subjective silence. His "wallop her" , "put her in the dust bin", "throw her out" can be read as a plausible reaction to her uncanny behavior ; a tendency to cleanse what has been tainted [1:44;46]. Eliza's rebellious character and her autonomy are a glaring deviation from the religious statement for the ideal woman is represented as meek, submissive, asexual, and compliant: Let the women learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed than eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in transgression. (Timothy 2:11-14) The representation of the typical virtuous woman in the bible serves primarily to emphasize the society's attitudes towards the female's role and inferior status to that of the male. Any threatening deviation is marked by sexual slander and a subsequent punishment meted out on the rebel. Beauvoir explains man's superiority as a divine right stating, "For the Jews, Mohamedians [sic], and Christians among others, man is master by divine right. The fear of God will, therefore, repress any impulse

towards revolt in the downtrodden female" [10: 154]. The Christian's concern with Eve's fault and the original sin is exacerbated, pinning down the inferiority of women as part of the natural order. The Bible, indeed, offers an illustrative instance of blind submission prohibiting, at the same time, any attempt to deviate the biblical image of the woman bringing about sin and death into the world seems to be a mimetic version of the Greek myth "Pandora"[3]. Both Eve and Pandora contribute to the social death of the female character. The debauched account of the female maintained in both texts allows for singling her out from the fringes of civic life. A discourse of moral denunciation forbids an erring act or a word that would divert from the destined path. As claimed by Girard, all cultures begin with the murder of the surrogate victim. Once the dysfunction of the society is sealed with the appropriate • "purifying rituals", a set of taboos and prohibitions is presented ; the goal of which is to avoid the slippage into the swirl of violence again. Analogically, a patriarchal society can be deemed as built upon the 'symbolic death' of the woman. The exclusion of the • "weaker vessel" as well as the proscription of "copier les gestes de un autre membre de la communaute, de repeter ses paroles" (reproducing the acts of another member of the community and repeat his words [My translation]) found the codes upon which patriarchy is rested [2: 33]. Breaking up the taboos turns to be two folded; it is manifested on the religious order, as well as the social one. Although she grows to a heroic stature by refusing to submit to the whims of the patriarchal and theocratic society, she falls prey to what the society would hail as purifying violence. Her breaking up of the taboos sets her as both unruly and irrepressible dissenter who seeks to acquire the male paradigm divinely bestowed upon him. She is, consequently, stigmatized as the demonic evil-doer whose corrupt deed would tarnish the pre-ordained hierarchy.

4. Deconstructing Masculinity

The previous section is woven around what Girard calls 'purifying violence'; a means to contain subversion and cleanse the society from corruption which sole aim is the destabilization of the mainstream codes. On the surface level, Higgins' violent intervention ultimately mitigates the debauched insurgencies incarnated in 'impure violence'[3: 62]. Yet read more overly, Higgins's licensed violence testifies to a change he undergoes from the moment he is in supreme power to the moment when he is divested of his manly prerogatives. "Firmly convinced that it is he who has .created this thing out of the squashed cabbage leaves of Covent Garden" [11:337]. Violence, henceforth, tends to undermine the cohesion of masculinity instead of solidifying his position as an emblem of Victorian masculinity in authority. Masculinity is to be analyzed performatively and discursively. It is inexorably linked to the presence of the other; the female. As gender is deemed as a seamless, though unstable, set of performative acts, verbal violence turns to be of crucial importance in doing one's gender. Gender, as attested by Butler, is produced and maintained by the socio-political conditions. It "intersects

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[3] "Hesiod's epic poems Theogony relate the 'birth' of the first woman in Greek mythology, portraying her as the source of all evils. The god Zeus creates Pandora's as a weapon in his contest against Prometheus. Molded from earth as a beautiful young girl, Pandora is gifted by the gods "to be a sorrow to men who eat bread… "(82). Mortal men □"had been living on earth free from all evils, free from laborious work, and free from all wearying sicknesses…" (90-92).Yet, Pandora's falling down to earth and releasing the jar of sicknesses and plagues pins down the representation of women as "pollutable, polluted, and polluting in several ways at once. . . They are, as individuals, comparatively formless themselves, without firm control of personal boundaries . . ." (women, gender and religion)

with racial, class, ethnic, sexual, and regional modalities of discursively constituted identities" [12: 3]. Within this theoretical framework, Higgins' unstable gendered identity is revealed through a close scrutiny to his temporary temperament his concomitant refuge to injurious speech. Violence has long been associated with authority and control. Deemed as a supreme power, it enables the dominant party to take control of the non-hegemonic other. Higgins' verbal violence aims at fortifying his patriarchal hegemony. His injurious words are an installation of the Law of the Father, singling the lady to the fringes of civic life. She is forced into silence, and submission; the mandatory attributes of Victorian ideal woman. Higgins' violence, initially, reproduces faithfully patriarchal norms and codes of behavior. Yet, at the confrontation scene, Eliza tends to withstand the dominant ideology resorting to what Girard calls •"counter-violence". Violence, at this level fails to fulfill its 'original' role; it fails to engender the power needed to submit the rebellious other: Eliza. •"I wanted to smash your face. I'd like to kill you, you selfish brute" [1:100]. It, inadvertently, questions the existing phallogocentric mode of expression and domination as it unveils the witless quest to insistently attain the masculine paradigm prevalent in the Victorian era. Rebuking Freud's belief that "all people are innately aggressive", McKinnon adheres to the belief that violence is a mechanism of self defense. It marks the long held universal superiority of men over women. "Women are the property that constitutes the personhood, the masculinity of men" [13:40]. Men, on the other hand, depend on the females' subjection to fulfill their own masculinity. It is through the use of violence that Higgins succeeds in manipulating the gendered subject and it is through submitting to the upsurge of violence that Eliza contributes to amplify Higgins' masculinity. Hence, masculinity seems to be intertwined to femininity and the heteronormative presentation of the weaker sex. Taming the 'othered' female adheres to the law of the father which can be read as a set of rules aiming at asserting the long establishing rightful hierarchy. Beauvoir attaches man's desire for domination to a false call to liberate the othered. She states, "[i]t is clear that in drawing of himself as a donor, liberator, redeemer, man still desires the subjection of women" [13:37]. In translating domination as a mere desire, Beauvoir unveils the fraud of masculine independence; men are in inevitable dependency on the female subordination to reclaim their position. The violent attempts to attain the masculine paradigm depict the heedless, yet desperate need to emerge an emblem-like. The desire is shrouded with fear of lack emanates from the threat of exclusion. The exaggerated attempts to "fit in" are controlled and governed by the patriarchal order which coerces the male to live up to such expectation. Another Girardian triangle can be founded with Mr. Higgins occupying the position of a disciple whose model is the paragon of masculinity incarnating all virtues and virility. 'Masculinity' eventually emerges as "the male standard for men" [13: 40]. The masculine standard[4] is not, though, an ongoing stable and universal identity shared among men. It is bound up to the cultural and social background, Don Quixote's model, thereby, strays apart from Higgins'. The portrait of Don Quixote's model Amedis as "the pole, the star, the sun for brave and amorous knight" [5:1] is well-ensconced in medieval era where masculinity is woven around chivalry. The gendered identity that has been fashioned to suit a model can be unfashioned, refashioned, reshaped into a new portrait. Higgins; an upper-middle class Victorian gentleman indulges into a process of becoming the Victorian

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[4] As argued by Bob Cornel, masculinity •\ assumes that one's behavior results from the type of person …that is to say, an unmasculine person could behave differently : being peaceable rather than violent , conciliatory eschews a universal notion of masculinity propagating instead a wide range of masculinities. Butler deflates the allegedly stable notion of gender; "a set of static attribute and behavior", considering "doing gender" as a continuous process of re-establishing, sustaining one's gender.

masculine despite his concealed -and sometimes expurgated .intentions behind an oscillation between violent and genteel manners. This tension is less a manifestation of Victorian masculinity than a manifestation of a fear of an inevitable threat of losing one's virility; •"[I]ndeed, no one is more arrogant toward women, more aggressive or scornful, than the man who is anxious about his virility" [13]. "A wealthy landowner, a fine , tall person with handsome features, he is proud of manners and a strong sense of what is due to his family and position […] his is always just, and a good master to his tenants" [14:12]. Such is the portrait of the emblem of masculinity as hailed by Jane Austen in her Pride and Prejudice. The representation pertains to the paragon of dignity, success, and gallantry; a portrait of the imaginary model that Higgins emulates. Entangled in the external triangle, Higgins projects himself into another. His parodical sententious and paradoxical performances are corporeal testaments to the witless quest to see himself as another. Whenever he falls in his own swirls of violence, he reclaims his manners. •"You have caused me to lose my temper: a thing that hardly ever happened to me before. I prefer to say nothing more tonight" [1: 104]. His adoption of the manners of the model who is nonetheless always expurgated from the scene •"is so fundamental and primitive that [they] completely confuse it with the will to be oneself" [5:4]. The portrayal of the ideal Victorian man is engendered as well by male discourse. It endorses male dependency and vulnerability to the regulation of patriarchy. The immense dependency of the disciple on the model positions him in an inferior to the norm. Subjugating, which is created by violence is a mechanism characteristically used by the male character when his virility is jeopardized. Yet, violence seems to betray the notion of homogenous, hegemonic and controlling male. It turns to be a subsequent revelation of his subjection to conflicting feelings; the momentary lack of control of the other, and a desire to be projected in and onto the model. Be it a means of maintenance of the dominant position, verbal violence subsequently serves as a protection shield; a state of weakness which needs a full re-appropriation of female power. •"Thrilling with Hidden joy", Eliza cherishes her momentary, transient self-cancellation, as she defies Higgins' attempts to suppress her [1: 100]. Higgins, on the other hand, exposes his dim perception about his own position. Galling as it may seem to him, Eliza's usurpation of his male paradigm makes his own presence encumbering in a manly society. It is eminently probable that a violent reaction would restore his authority. Eliza's insubordination is an unsurprising transgression from the codes of sanctioned behavior. A presumably liberated woman debunks and ridicules the dogmatic teaching of the patriarchal and theocratic society. She irreverently pries loose male authority, unveiling its various defects. Trying to analyze such change in Eliza's attitude, Pirnajmuddin states: Pace Foucault • es claim about the lowers • e inability to criticize the uppers in a power relation, Eliza has gained a gift of articulating her critical opinion about Higgins and his education system. Higgins • es deficiency arises from the fact that he teaches only pronunciation to Eliza and is unaware of his awful manners which make Eliza diffident about her worth. [15:1]. In the digressive discourse she adopts when confronting her master, Eliza vehemently demurs a flaw of injurious speech, refusing to be condescendingly •"treated as a flower girl" [1: 124]. Such a confrontation embeds her within the overarching gender relation web. Though she remains entangled within the strictures of the rigid patriarchal heritage, her momentary deviation from the age-old, man-made norms re-vibrates male position. Eliza's transgression is registered as an elusive acquisition of the male paradigm. She is fully inscribed in the reproduction process as to de-familiarize herself and be self represented as powerful enough to be an aggressor. In this vein, Luce Irigaray proclaims, in *The Sex Which is Not* that female subversion and confrontation with the prevailing orthodoxies bring her nearer to the masculine gender: The nearness is so pronounced that it makes all discrimination of

identity, and thus all forms of property impossible. Woman derives pleasure from what is so near that she cannot have it, not have herself. She herself enters into a ceaseless exchange of herself with the other without any possibility of identifying either. [10:367]. The identification[5] with the male consists on a mere aping of the dominant orthodoxies. The deviation from the mainstream doctrines only brings closer to these very doctrines. The prevailing portrait of the ideal woman; a meek, submissive, and asexual is altered with one that jeopardizes male hegemony, putting Higgins' emblematic position under the rubric of debate. Reconciliated as an expression of desire, Higgins' verbal violence -an alternative language -exposes the struggle inherent in the relation between the two genders. It sheds light on the discrepancy between the seemingly powerful male and the 'othered' woman. The violent response to Eliza's subversion is nevertheless instilled in male rearing and has long encrusted his weakness and flaws. It failed, however, to reaffirm and bolster male dominance. Higgins is ironically entangled within the patriarchal culture that he himself considers as the unfailing opponent. He falls short of the goal of sealing the dysfunction of the society and regaining male power as he can define his masculinity in its dependency to the model which he cannot attain. He unwittingly endorses the flaws of defective masculinity through the upsurge of violence.

5. Reciprocal Violence and the Inversion of Gender Roles

The male intervention coincides with the awakening of female desire which repercussions are social dysfunction and religious corruption. The hysterical conflict that erupts by the end of the play is woven around one specific concern: the appropriation of male paradigm. In the second confrontation, Eliza seems to be empowered by her newly-acquired status, as the differences are abolished. She seeks to seize the model's position and desires"[adopting] the jerky movements of a marionette" [3: 196]. She incarnates the 'oppressed' as she is caught in the double bind of the model and obstacle. Entangled within the unquelled thrall of desire, the subject directs her grudge, resentment, and hatred towards Higgins who manifests himself the obstacle to be expurgated. Higgins [wondering at her] you damned impudent slut, You! But it's better than sniveling; better then fetching slippers and finding spectacles, isn't it? [Rising] By George, Eliza, I said I'd make a woman of you; and I have. I like you like this. Liz a Yes: You can turn round and make up to me now that I'm not afraid of you, and can do without you" [1:132]. The mediator's presence fuels the disciple's feelings of hatred tinged with sour dismay. The subject internalizes a sense of self hatred as she discovers that "the possession of the object did not change his doing" [5:8]. Hatred is, hence, a common denominator of both the model and the disciple. Hatred is reciprocal. The belief in his own inferiority along with his hampered and denied desire; culturally sanctioned and socially unacceptable, turns his deep hatred ablaze. Lodged in his inner self, hatred not only deepens the subject's woundability, but also culminates into loss and an unavoidable destruction. The subject is now entangled in the realm of in-betweeness. "He does not recognize in the other the void gnawing at himself" [5: 50]. Infatuation mingles with abhorrence making Eliza's metamorphosis a replica of Proust's constellation "of hatred in desire; desire in hatred… for hatred transfigures individuals no less than does desire and like desire

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[5] "Identification …has to do with the father: A little boy will exhibit a special interest in his father; he would like to grow like and be like him, and take his place everywhere. We may say simply that he takes his father as his ideal. This behavior has nothing to do with a passive or feminine attitude toward his father (and toward males in general); it is on the contrary typically masculine. It fits in very well with the Oedipus complex, for which it helps to prepare the way.. (The Girard Reader 227)

sets us thirsting for human. On the other hand, it can find facts only in the destruction of the supposed self satisfaction"[5:4]. Holding a despising glance while striving to sabotage it exposes self contempt and a cultural foible originating in the outside gaze, that of the model. "The person who hates first hates himself for the secret admiration concealed by his hatred" [5:11]. Such derogatory and damaging internalization of immutable inferiority impinges upon the life of the disciple while at the same time excluding him from the circle of power. Despite the faithful reproduction of the 'original copy'; the signifier seems to bear no subtle signification. He chooses to internalize within himself the values of the mediator, thus consequently lives a life of self-hatred and inevitable damnation Eliza diagnoses the glamour virtues of Higgins; his autonomy, power, his ability to create the norm and then deconstruct it. She bears a concomitant self despise suggested by the act of "tak[ing] a last look at herself in the glass. She suddenly puts up her tongue at herself"[1:105]. Playful in its unfolding, yet earnest in its implication, such act is supplanted by the anxieties that are increasingly sharpened by her awareness of the pseudo-derogatory position in her momentary identification with Higgins. Appalled no less by his current fragile position, Higgins is overtaken by an overwhelming surge of hatred. This emanates from the perception of the disciple as the other in drag. Her distorted reproduced acts tend to defamiliarize and subsequently disrupts his emphatic male portrait; depicting his various defects and imperfection. Ensconced at the core of the Girardian theory, wrath and hatred emanate from the feeling of being betrayed. •"He [the mediator] is surprised to find himself engaged in competition; he concluded that the disciple has betrayed his confidence by following his footsteps" [3: 156]. Such 'greedy and wicked' motives fuel the model's hatred. They seem to deflate his complacent quest for uniqueness and originality. Anger, as attested by Girard, is always alternating between the "monstrous double" and the "obstacle; there is always one character who is angry; but while one of the enemy brothers rants and rages, the other may temporarily regains his composure.[3: 158]. Higgins envisions a dim intimation, the dark side of desire as soon as the whole process of emulation inaugurates. His harbored abhorrence is translated into verbal violence poured on the emerging monstrous double. Both Eliza and Higgins could envision a fervent reciprocal dependency on each other. Violence and the disturbing pathos of the model and his disciple derive not only from their critical relation shrouded in cold hatred but also from their awareness of the desperate need for each other. Eliza's fathomless yet, insistent dependency on Higgins embraces the premonition of an inevitable loss once he disappears .His presence defers the question •"What am I fit for? What have you left me fit for? Where am I to go? What am I to do? What's to become of me?"[1:102]; a deferral that is maintained by the model's willingness to point to another object for as soon as the first goal is reached, the disciple shows a readiness to be ushered towards another object. The disciple's dependency emerges from the feeling of imminent ever-lasting inferiority. A subsequent need to be guided by the illusively flawless other suggests the revivifying part of his intention. Subordination is, thereby, a kind of forthcoming conciliation, a social tranquillizer that alleviates tension by tacitly re-establishing the rightful order and hierarchy. Higgins' dependency, on the other hand, is woven around his need to attain the emblem of masculinity. Such a goal can only be achieved with the repression of the other, the stifling of any form of insubordination that would sabotage his hegemonic position. In fact, Higgins violence can be read as a means of containing a threatening subversion; an empowerment of the dominant ideology. The transgression is, in fact, grounded in the authorities that the rebel claims to dismiss. Eliza must, therefore, rely on Higgins' tutoring, his male-constructed language, and his male-generated insights for her deviance. Indeed, violence occupies a transcendent position where it exercises a general domination over the other sex; a domination that

has to be constantly secured in the face of social changes. Likewise, the relish at the prospect of domination exudes from the male's ability to seal the social dysfunction and disarm transgression. Higgins turns, inadvertently, to be subordinate to the feminine other in order to maintain the cohesion of masculinity that patriarchal society coerces them to fulfill. Hence, through the momentary lack of control contained by a sudden upsurge of violence that restores order, the dissident's intentions are dragged into oblivion while the decadence of main stream power structure is pre-empted. Condemned, if not urged to accept the unavoidable reciprocal dependency and the fervent mutual hatred, the enemy brothers are enmeshed in a relation embedded in power. Higgins and Eliza's relation was first branded by a violent upsurge that aims at constituting femininity and repressing the other into the heteronormative matrix. By Law of reciprocity, "one cannot exert power without submitting to it"[3: 257]. A counter violence, indeed, erupts. The normative violence meted out on the parodic one exacerbates violence instead of eradicating it. This 'reciprocal violence' in the Girardian terminology, is characterized by its blurriness, since the demarcating lines that have long separated the model and the disciple are now eroded. Eliza's violence is chronicled as a menacing transgression from the dominant orthodoxy. A rather rebellious "femme habillée en homme" tends to construct a space where she could overthrow the atavistic views about women. She emerges as a parody of an independent man. The revilement of her uncanny behavior is spurred less by the excruciating teaching experience under Higgins. •"I was brought up to be just like him , unable to control myself_ and using bad language at the slightest provocation…" [1:121]. Eliza's avowal adduces the mimetic attribute of violence. Despite the ostentatious self pity, she regains self control in her momentary appropriation of manly defense mechanism. To make reciprocity complete, we need only add that the disciple can also serve as a model, even to his own model. As for the model, no matter how self sufficient he may appear, he invariably assumes the role of the disciple, either in this context or in another [3: 156]. Indeed, as agued previously, the feeling of indignation of being himself a model in drag intensifies Higgins' vulnerability. His injurious speech, in this vein, recuperates the dissonance between the sordid reality and the aspired model. Self dramatization and self aggrandizement mingle with a sense of frustration and loss to endow the male with tragic grandeur at the moment of his downfall. He is confronted by the existential by dilemma: the inevitability of an expurgated attachment to the patriarchal emblem of masculinity on the one hand, and his assertion of his ordained superiority on the other. Building on the Girardian triangle of desire, the object is lost in oblivion. Rivalry would probably conceal the importance commonly given to the object. However, tarrying with grief at the loss of the possession, the model undergoes a metamorphosis from a source of infatuation to a rival who defends himself from the 'emergent monstrous double'. "The object itself seems of such importance that its loss entails a radical reversal of status, a passing from being to nothingness, or from nothingness to being" [3: 160]. A propensity to seize upon the usurped object drives Higgins into the swirl of reciprocal violence. Both Eliza and Higgins end up eventually resembling each other in spite of the discrepancy between them. Higgins has initially been endowed with ordain and social prerogative; a powerful, learned gentleman. Eliza, conversely, is portrayed as "a common ignorant girl, [and you a book-learned gentleman; but] I'm not dirt under your feet"[1: 92]. The relation in which both Eliza and Higgins are enmeshed is reversed. "In short, there is a tyrant and always an oppressed, but the roles alternate"[3: 18]. Alternation is, indeed, inevitable as the differences that have separated the enemy brothers are blurred. Higgins is fully aware of himself as an oppressor; a master. He revels at his at his ability to manipulate the other. Branded by his indifference, the master •"seems to possess that radiant self mastery which we all seek, he seems to live in a closed circuit

enjoying his own being, a state of happiness" [5: 107]. Indifference endows the master with unfailing sovereignty; a privilege that enables him to contemptuously bully, undermine and berate the other, treat it as less than equal human being. LIZA. You don't care. I know you don't care. You wouldn't care if I was dead. I'm nothing to you not so much as them slippers.

HIGGINS [thundering] THOSE slipper   [1:91]

The indifference marking the teaching of Eliza, testifies to the powerful position Higgins is astounding. Such captivating and mysterious quality endows the male figure with an aura that makes his position overpowering. His absent presence accentuates an awe-provoking omnipotence and fortifies the way he is venerated. Hegel's dialectic resonates in Higgins and Eliza's experience of mastery and servitude. Tracy C. Davis draws a parallel between Higgins, the tutor and a colonizer. Higgins and Eliza are, thereby, "master and slave; colonizer and colonized" (225). From their first encounter, a social relation embedded in power is constructed. "A battle to the death" is inaugurated, a notable animosity arises. Highly contrastive voices emerge, striving for domination. Obliterated and silenced, the oppressed submits to the oppressor's rules. The hierarchical structure is, henceforth, aided and reinforced by a discourse both religious and social which goal is to legitimize and instill the dominant ideology. The other is controlled, mastered by a seamless process of not only dehumanization, but also objectification. The slave is repeatedly referred to as "an infamous creature", "a presumptuous insect" [1: 100]; a creation that should be invigilated and put under close scrutiny as it embodies the dangers of exoticism and marginality. Because of the debauched account forcefully attributed to him, the slave allegorically undergoes a double metamorphosis from human to slave, from salve to an object. Such representation intends to fortify the dominant's position in relation to that of the lesser groups. Innes points to the "brutality of his [Higgins] own behavior in using Eliza as an amusing experiment, objectifying her as a product of his own skill, then taking her presence as perpetual slipper-fetcher for granted"[1:252] . Once turned into an object closely scrutinized by Higgins' gaze, Eliza's authentic possibilities are burdened by the crushing power of the normalizing regime. Within the framework of a patriarchal society, women have occupied the inferior position. The long established association between the female sex and the biblical phrase "weaker vessel" ill-represents them an easy prey, an acquisitive object (New Jerusalem Bible, Peter. 1.3-7). The representation of Eliza as an object is, in fact, infiltrated in female rearing through deeply instilled codes of sanctioned behavior and teaching of masculine authority. Drawing on popular pattern of imagery, Mrs. Higgins depicts Eliza as "something lost": "What rights have you to go to the police and give the girl's name as if she were a thief, or a lost umbrella, or something" [1 112]. The association with a lost umbrella adheres to the principle of objectification, where women are portrayed as a mere property of men. Lihua staunchly supports the objectification of women as she asserts, "that's just the position of woman in a man-dominating society. She is nobody but something, especially when she comes from the bottom of the society"(42). Higgins' insistence that he "[has] created a thing out of a squashed cabbage leaves of Covent garden"(Pygmalion121) staunchly supports Mrs. Higgins .more particularly patriarchy- view of women as objects of surveillance, correction, and comment. The circulation of women as property and household goods lures male to appropriate the female subject among their possession. Higgins' strong desire to possess Eliza; "to pick [your] slippers and out up with [your] temper and fetch and carry for [you]" [1: 90] is consistently a sign of his mastery what Hegel conceives as the unleashed 'desire for possession'. Although the concept of 'desire for possession' is not explicitly proffered, it can be delineated

through Alexander Kojeve's reading of Hegel. The concept remains locked up in a comparison with the "desire for recognition". According to Kojeve, desire can be riven into a human and animal. The desire to possess a person can fall within the scope of human desire as it holds in its fold a quest for self-recognition. Relying on his possession of Eliza as the slave, Higgins is set on a quest for recognition; the recognition of his own masculinity. Feminists see in his struggle for recognition an attempt to dominate the weaker other. Inadvertently, as discussed earlier, Higgins is deprived from his power, turning into a slave. Entangled in the triangle of desire, he is imprisoned within the male-generated emblem of masculinity. He parodies his manners which reduces him to an inferior position; that of a slave. "[I]f you dare to set up your little dog's tricks of fetching and carrying slippers against my creation of a Duchess Eliza, I'll slam the door in your silly face"[1: 128]. It is through his experience of slavery that he attains recognition. His recognition is eventually two-fold: a double recognition encompassing indiscriminately his masculinity, and the instability of his gendered identity. In his avowal to Eliza about the power relation in which they are enmeshed, he illuminates his newly acquired insights. "Of course I do, you little fool. Five minutes ago you were like a millstone round my neck. Now you're a tower of strength: a consort battleship" [1: 128]. Higgins' image of power -ebbing and fowling- seems to explain the unstable relation between the male and female in a patriarchal society. Yet, read more overly, it enhances conformity of conduct to the institutional dogma, investing the male in authority with further prerogatives in the hierarchical stratification of power. Men are always on the top of the pyramid, while women; whether struggling for their independence or obedient to their lords are in the bottom. Higgins' avowal fails to affirm his own position as neither a master nor a self-possessed male. His words tend to deconstruct the masculine claims he desperately clings to. The relish at the newly acquired position of a model-like entices Eliza to unswervingly appropriate male paradigm among which the desire for possession. Indeed, she starts playing the role of a mediator as she enslaves the rather •\weak and poor. Freddy •"who could not get a job as an errant boy"[1: 131] with the dim intentions to "make something out of him.. Being a jobless poor man, Freddy seems to deviate from the heteronormative rules and Victorian gender roles. He is described by Gareth Griffith as •"the shabby genteel man of straitened means [who] lacked 'exchange value'"(177). His vulnerability comforts the society of its choice of him as the victim of Eliza's sado-masochism. Deemed as an effeminate, Freddy seems to violate the masculine ideal and shake the proper balance of authority and obedience. The appropriation of a disciple empowers her, insufflating a fraudulent relief for finally usurping the master's position. She accepts to fill the position of a man, working thereby to financially support the family. The new state of a mediator rests in large part on having a 'weak husband' who conspicuously veers from the patriarchal norms.

6. Conclusion

In *violence and the sacred*, Girard asserts: "violence is the divine force that everyone tries to use for his own purpose and that ends up by using everyone for its own"[3:153]. For Shaw's *Pygmalion* a wide range of studies tends to read violence and power as inexorably linked to the question of knowledge and education. This article, however, attempts to probe the issue of violence – in both its physical and verbal forms- from Girardian framework. This analysis of Pygmalion follows the process of discursive formation according to a set of heteronormative codes which cannot be realized away for the notion of normative violence through which Higgins succeeds in shaping and fashioning Eliza's performativity. The conceptualization of gender as

performative divulges the reiterative enactment of stylized acts ensnared within male-dominated orthodoxies. The process of discursive construction submits to an interpellative act that breathes upon an abject a given sex and controls the materiality of the body. The study also tackles violence as a repercussion of acquisitive mimesis. Enmeshed in an overarching web of unstable power, Higgins tends to reproduce, reinforce, and thereby protect the patriarchal heteronormative hierarchy. His attempts are eventually derided as the female, cyclically singled out of the society, is now empowered enough to dissent from the male-dominated and theocratic community and dare usurp his own emphatic manly stature. Mimetic Desire accentuates the need for the disciple to emerge as a replica of the mediator. Once the differences are eroded, rivalry erupts. As reciprocal violence escalates, it gives rise to what Girard calls the "monstrous double": Eliza. Higgins's violence, in this part of the study, turns out to be a sign of vulnerability, stemming from the threat that the imitator posits as well as a concomitant lack of control. Violence serves as a shield for protection against the insubordinate female. It also shows that gendered identity is neither fixed nor stable; an argument supported by Butler. violence is the means to control, stigmatize and marginalize the misfit. It explores the notion of gender through Butler's ground-breaking gender theory. It traces the conceptualization of performativity of gender as performative acts and the way such acts are congealed in order to naturalize the state of female submission. The process of construction is, therefore, closely invigilated by compulsory heterosexuality. Butler introduces "normative violence" as a form of regulation under which gendered identities are reproduced. It is through the repetition of stylized acts that femininity is constructed. Parodic performative acts are, thus, corporeal testaments of the unnatural characteristic of gender. Eliza's femininity is rehearsed and acquired under Higgins's gaze, supervision, guidance and violent correction. 'Corrective' violence in this vein aims at fortifying a hegemonic position in a male dominated society along with framing the othered female into a confined domain, through reproducing a version of the ideal Victorian woman. Furthermore, elaborating on Beauvoir's analysis of sex as allocation, Butler hones the idea that gendered subjects are shaped through a seamless process of discourse formation. Gender and body are hereby fashioned and refashioned by the subject being constantly interpellated; an act that is itself informed by the dominant ideology. Violence can also be read as a sign of vulnerability. Elaborated within Girard's anthropology, verbal violence appears to undermine the cohesion of Higgins' masculinity. Following the emergence of Eliza from an infatuated imitator to a _monstrous double'; an upcoming threat jeopardizes the male hegemonic position. The difference between the disciple and the mediator are leveled up and a subsequent rivalry erupts. 'Acquisitive mimesis' thus culminates into an inevitable surge of violence. The transformation from an external mediator to an internal one exposes Eliza's fathomable motives to appropriate the male distinctive features. Higgins' violence accordingly stems from the momentary lack of control and elapsing power. It misrepresents the protagonist masculinity as aberrant and dysfunctional. The concept of masculinity itself turns to be controlled by the mainstream power structures. It coerces men to live up and meet specific expectations. Higgins is targeted to an upsurge of violence for he is now deemed as only an obstacle instead of an idol. The process of "becoming the same" affects gender roles as well. Eliza intends to usurp the male position in her society by choosing Freddy as a husband and accepts to support him economically.

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