Anti-colonialism vs Colonialism in Aphra Behn's Oroonoko; or, The Royal Slave [1]

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Give Africa a Black colonial power.
The Sunday Telegraph

Aphra Behn's novel [Oroonoko] confronts the ownership of Africa by the British, the ownership of American land by European colonialists, and the ownership of women by men.
Laural J. Rosenthal, Renaissance Drama

This paper is a study of anti-colonialsim versus colonialism in Aphra Behn's Oroonoko; or, The Royal Slave (1688). It discusses love and freedom as tools of anti-colonialism versus slavery, as a politico-socio-economic tool of colonialism.
Early in the twentieth century, Virginia Woolf, an Eng-lish woman, novelist, and feminist writer of considerable amo-unt of serious literary production, and good reputation, shows a good gesture for Aphra Behn. She remembers Aphra Behn and in a frank declaration, she pays homage to her as a brave woman writer who has been deprived of a veneration she deserves, for a long time. Woolf writes: "Let flowers fall upon the tomb of Aphra Behn."2 This statement reflects a celebration of, and an attribute to Aphra Behn as a pioneer woman writer. Though, Behn's work was immature for woman's legal rights and social position, it is still true that it represents a social concern and a courageous stand in the history of woman's literary writing; her writing inspired many literary imitations afterwards. Oroonoko is anti-slavery novel in which Mrs. Behn sets an axample to be followed by other women novelists to write in a new field and to fight against strongly built unjust politico-socio-economic institution.
Aphra Johnson Behn (1640-1689), known as Aphra or Afra Behn,3 was an English woman writer from the Restora-tion period (1640-1684). She was perhaps, the first profess-ional woman writer to live by her pen4 With her beginnings, she was the sole recepient of early biographical and critical atttention.5 Jane Spencer writes: "the reputation of Aphra Behn's pen certainly was great at the time that Oroonoko was written."6 However, strangely enough, afterwards, critical studies ignored her literary production. Aphra Behn's "jour-ney from popularity to obscurity,"7 continued well into the twentieth century until there came Montague Summers to edit her work in 1915 to open the door for many others to read them and thus to write about her life and literature.8
In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Aphra Behn's work used to be excluded from the anthologies of English literature for a variety of excuses by editors, antholog-ists, and publishers. Moreover, when Mrs. Behn was mention-ed, they obscured important dimensions of her writing such as the question of woman's freedom. In certain cases, some of Mrs. Behn's works were published and others were excluded because of what reviewers and publishers call, their "frank-ness" and "eroticism." In the middle of this controvercy, Jane Spencer mentions that among her attackers were eighteenth century writers like "Richard Steele, Alexander Pope, Henry Fielding, and Samuel Richardson. All recorded their disparag-ment of her and her work."9
But early nineteenth century witnessed some attention of Aphra Behn and her work.

Janet Todd writes: "Leigh Hunt claims that [Mrs.] Behn affects and makes us admire her, beyond what we looked for."10 To say the least about Aphra Behn, she inaugrated the history of woman as a professional writer. She fights against strong stream of dominant cultural thoughts, and well established social meanings and practices.
In the twentieth century, scholars and critics have given Mrs. Behn some kind of respect; they described her as a prominent professional Restoration writer worthy of study.11 In the meantime, twentieth century readings of Aphra Behn's Oroonoko have been given different slants.12 In my reading, I would like to make the following points:
First: Oroonoko is the most known fictious work by Aphra Behn. It gained fame after the death of Mrs. Behn when in 1696 it was dramatized by Thomas Southern.13 Mrs. Behn insists on saying that Oroonoko is a fictionalization of a real love experience she practiced during what she calls, a family visit to Surinam.14 In Oroonoko, Aphra Behn creats new domains for critics and criticism, proving herself a remarkable writer. Her mastery of narration, enabled her to convince the readers of her time that she had been to Surinam in the West Indies though there is no clear biographical evidence that she had been there. Her reality of her visit is still debatable among critics. On this question Maureen Duffy writes
It has been alleged that she never went to Surinam at all but wrote the whole thing up from a little book published in 1665, A Brief Description of Guyana by George Warren. What is possible is that she had the book with her when she wrote Orinooko [sic], which she did very duickly and, according to her editor, Charles Gildon, often in a room full of company and taking part in the convesation, as had observed her full of commpany.15
A second preposition, according to Duffy, is that "she did go there but invented the story of Orinooko, is more difficult to prove either way."16 In this context, I would suggest that Oroonoko is Aphra Behn's brilliant device for two main reasons. First: with it, she kept her parantage and origin uncertain and a mystery to biographers.17 Second: she let the English people know that slaves (mainly blacks) are around and they have a sophisticated culture and ideological force that cannot not be ignored. Thus, the whole world has to deal with the blacks humanely and logically.
Second: Oroonoko examines some dimensions of human experience in the seventeenth century. It opens with some detailed description of Coremantien in West Africa, its nature, its culture, and its people. It tells the story of two black lovers in freedom then in slavery. Mrs. Behn's creation of those lovers and the impact which they and their images create upon the readers, constitute a new stream of thinking in the life of the European woman, in general, and the English woman, in particular. Then, most readings in the twentieth century, see that Mrs. Behn's treatment of the theme of freedom and slavery adds to the respect she deserves as an early woman writer of humanistic aspirations, social concerns, and feminist thought. She advocates anti-colonialism vs established concepts and practices of colonialism. For instance, slavery was one of the strong tools of colonialism; it was a money-making business in the seventeenth century. Thus, it influenced the British economy, politics and morals and vice versa. My point is that when slave trade was an institution, it was lucrative, and its markets were common in the Continent and Britain, but Mrs. Behn voiced out her humanitarian feelings in favour of the enslaved people whose vast majority was from the black people. Wilbur L. Cross suggests that perhaps, Mrs Behn was the first woman writer to declare her sympathy with the slaves and fight by her pen in defense of them.18
Third: Oroonoko opens with a fascination of distant and barbarous places. This situation helped her in creating new ideas as regards the image of the other. Mrs. Behn introduces three different cultures of colonial and colonized nations, as well as the controversial issue of slavery and freedom. She paid special attention to the culture of Africa describing the Coremantiens in West Africa as primitive, naive, good, and

they have a native Justice, which knows no Fraud; and they understand no Vice, or Cunning, but when they are taught by the White Men. ... With these People, we live in perfect Tranquillity [sic], and good Understanding. (4)

Then, Coremantien is

a country of Blacks so called, was one of those places in which they found the most adventageous Trading for these Slaves, and Thither most of our great Traders in that Merchandize traffick.(5)

The problem with those Africans, according to Aphra Behn, is that they practice plurality of wives. Oroonoko and Imoinda are two black lovers -- who fell into slavery afterwards -- belong to that African culture and source of slaves.

Then, Surinam and its culture. It is an exotic locale good for the Others – an early idea of the noble savage (50-60). Mrs. Behn introduced the idea of the noble savage seventy years earlier than J. J. Rousseau (It is not the concern of this paper.)19 Surinamese are the Red Indians of the Amazon area; they are savage barbarians and far from civilization. Surinam is colonized by the British, then they sold it to Holland.

Third is the English culture. It the culture of strong power, dominance and decision. It is the colonizing force over the other two cultures and societies. They look with superiority at the Others and thus the behave with them in terms of commerce; profit and loss is the ultimate end of the colononizer against the colonized.

Those three images of the three different cultures imply satirical notes against colonization and its resulting principle of slavery, then Aphra Behn resents the mechanism of selling man to man as a commodity.

Fourth: Oroonoko tells the story of the moor prince Oroonoko, the protagonist, and his beloved, then wife, Imoinda. In freedom, Oroonoko was a slave trader, making business with English traders, then he was subjected to a trick by an English slave trader, and thus was sold to an English slave trader (32). He is a gallant moor, a highly born person, a great and just character, a man of most captivating beauty, good manners and delicate behaviour (7-8); before slavery, his apperance and speech reflected his nobleness. He falls in love with Imoind, a black woman of stunning beauty, the daughter of his ex war-captian. On the other hand, Aphra Behn describes Imoinda in the following words:

Female to the noble Male; the beautiful Black Venus to our young Mars; as charming in her person as he, and of delicate Vertues. I have seen a hundred White men sighing after her, and making a thousand Vows at her feet, all in vain, and unsuccessful. And she was indeed too great for any but a Prince of her own Nation to adore.(9)

Starting from his own humanisitic feelings and out of good principles, loyalty, and gratitude to the late his leader and foster-father the war-general, Imoinda's father, who has been murdered in the battle field (9-10), Oroonoko visits Imoinda to "present her with those Slaves that had been taken in this last Battle, as the Trophies of her Father's Victories"(9) He arrived

attended by all the young Soliders of any Merit, he was infinitely surpriz'd at the Beauty of this fair Queen of Night, whose face and Person was so exceeding all he had ever beheld, that lovely Modesty with which she receiv'd him, that Softness in her Look and Sighs, upon the melancholy Occasion of this Honour that was done by so a great Man as Oroonoko, and a Prince of whom she had heared such admirable things. (9)

Oroonoko's first visit to Imoinda was a beginning of a mutual admiration. Then, the situation develops leading them to fell in love with each other and thus, to vow and seriously promise each other of getting married. In the end, their marri-age took place in the slave-camp which is an unfavourable place, but it ended dramatically by the end of the novel.

In Oroonoko, the protagonist is a steadfast center. Mrs. Behn claimes him to have been an image of her ex-lover in Surinam. Through him, Mrs. Behn investigates the impact of social changes on individuals taken, by tricks, from freedom into slavery (33-

34) and then their struggle to get back to freedom, a matter which lasted to the close of the novel, but freedom was never achieved. Mrs. Behn calls for the freedom of woman from man's tyranny, despotism, and hygemony within the framework of strongly built European politico-socio-economic system in favour of white man. Thus, I see Oroonoko as anti-colonialist literary document.

Fifth: At orders from the king, Imoinda was taken to the Royal Palace by "virtue" of the Royal Veil. In the cerem-ony of the king's "invitation" to Imoinda:

He sends [to] the Lady he has a mind to honour with his Bed, a Veil, with which she is cover'd, and secur'd for the King's use; and 'tis Death to disobey; besides, held a most impious Disobedience. (12)

Coming back from a hunting trip, Oroonoko realizes that Imoinda has been taken by the Royal Veil. He sadly reacts and says, "Ioimda is as irrecoverbly lost to me, as if she were snatch'd by the cold Arms of Death."(14)

In realty, the Royal Veil demonstrates a variety of negative meanings. It deprives the enslaved of their person-alities, dignities, cultures, and histories; it tears them off themselves towards a new life; the enslaved comes under a change into someone's else. The Royal Veil is only a piece of cloth to hide woman's face in certain Eastern and African societies and cultures. But, it becomes authoritative, forceful, despotic, and "Royal" when it is sent by the king! That is to say, it becomes a sublime order to be obeyed, or else. It means a drastic and dangerous change of woman's great value at home and in society, to become a physical object to be used for entertaining and gratifying man's desires.(14-18) It repre-sents absolutism, despotism, and dictatorship of the king. It also means the king's complete possession of the woman who accepts it. Meanwhile, it means death for the woman who rejects it. This extremely powerful means of enslavement is a colonilaist symbol that Aphra Behn satirizes.

The Royal Veil is supposed to cover and hide quite a good part of woman's face.(12) Its undeclared objective is to reveal that woman's whole body afterwards. It means concub-inage of the woman who accepts the order; its a shift of the woman from being a free person into a dancer, a transference of the woman from her home into the seraglio or the corner of the harem in the Royal Palace.(12) With the Royal Veil woman turns from someone with a family, social relations and duties, and human rights, to someone else deprived of all her social and human rights.(14)

Let me consider the case of the king's old wife Onahal; she is neglected as a wife. Even worse, she has been turned to teach the newly brought women, the manners and customes of the seraglio and the Royal Palace.(20-22) The end of the game is that Imoinda the woman has become a means for entertaining, pleasing, and satisfying the king, or else! In the end, there is a satirical glance by Aphra Behn at the Royal Veil and the "violence" that it brings to the women who consent to wear it, and the more violence it brings to those women who refuse it!

With this context, Oroonoko is in a weaker position than the king, so he expresses his dissatisfaction only by lamentation, agony, contemplation and meditation. What occ-ures with Imoinda is a type of slavery in which she became a concubine. In the end, the idea and concept of the veil means that "woman is present in men's world, but invisible; she has no right to be in the street."20 However, Imoinda has never submitted herself to the king who realized that there is a sincere love relationship between her and Oroonoko. The authoritative attempts, by the king, to destroy this relationship ends with failure. Thus, to revenge himself against Imo-inda's abstension, the king sells her to a slave trader.(28-32) Thus, Imoinda was taken from one type of slavery into another. Aphra Behn satrizes the king and his selfishness, despotism and silly behaviour towards Imoinda. She satarizes the king as a representative of capitalism.

Sixth: Oroonoko has fallen a slave to an English ship captain. The story begins with Oroonoko welcoming the captain in his place. In return, the captain invites Oroonoko

on board of his ship where he is made to "drink hard punch and several sorts of Wine, as did all the rest."(33) Then stragely enough, Oroonoko was enslaved by the ship captain who sold him to an Englishman named Trefry, at the mouth of the river of Surinam. Thus, prince Oroonoko has become a slave, and has been taken to the slave-camp. (37-38) Not only Trefry, but also the slaves treat Oroonoko with esteem and veneration as he possesses qualities that are not available with the slaves. For example, "his Eyes insensibly commanded Respect, and his Behaviour insinuated it into every Soul."(39-41)

Oroonoko captures some kind of excitment of the time – slavery and slave markets. There are types of slavery portrayed in the novel. In both cases of the seraglio and the slave-camp, Mrs. Behn initially uses Western literary tradi-tions infusing these forms with the sound, colors, confusions, dilemmas, and dreams of their native land – Africa. In other words, she puts black contents into white literary forms.

Seventh: In Oroonoko, Aphra Behn introduces colon-ialism represented by the institution of slavery with its strong and oppressive power, then she encounters it with love as anti-colonialist tool. Love comes forward to prove itself more gen-uine and authentic than enslavement. Mrs. Behn introduces love as humanistic force vs despotism. Under the influence of his love of Imoinda, and despite himself being a slave traffic-ker and trader,(32) Oroonoko struggles for liberty of women. He fights for Imoinda, in two different situations. First, when he is free while she is captured, by the king, in the seraglio. Secondly, when he is a slave, fighting for his own freedom, the freedom of Imoinda, and the freedom of the rest of the slaves in the slave-camp. Those images of slavery and the fight against it imply despotic and tyrannical power of colon-ization; it is also a satire against it.

Thus, the atrocities of slavery were rendered to seem satirical. By re-naming Oroonoko to Ceaser, and Imoinda to Clemene, the enslavers meant to rape them from their identi-ties, and inner selves; this sounds a knell of British tyranny and colonialist feeling, in Surinam. Therefore, it is no wonder that, finally, Oroonoko cried out for freedom and realized that the way to achieve it is not to be found in "the law of the land" nor by following the Christian commandment of turning the other cheek to the aggressor. He and the slaves who are unhappy in the slave-camp, are still as yet making an effort to retrieve what they have lost so long; they are still freedom seekers. Though they have not ventured to protest their current miserable situation and intolerable burden of woe and shame, they have not ceased to love. In the end, Oroonoko was fueled with fury until he died for his own freedom as well as the freedom of the other slaves. In this situation, without senti-ments, Aphra Behn seeks the promotion of those interests in freedom against the hard facts of the case as slavery in abusiness run by a solid socio-economic system. However, Aphra Behn beleives that the population of such a country like Surinam will ultimately determine their abiding condition.

The strength of love against enslavement appears when Clemene prefers death at the hands of her husband Ceaser than living any more, in slavery; the situation in slavery has been aggravating to become unbearable. The sad and yearning spirit of the brave but defeated Ceaser has taken over Clemene and she accepts his suggestion. Clemene's love of Ceaser is one of the reasons behind her acceptance of his suggestion; his love of Clemene leads him to carry on and put an end to her life with her personal concent. Grief prevades the camp of slaves and renders it in grey. Ceaser rebels against the principles of slavery. His call to the slave-camp falls on good ears.(61) Then one of the slaves called Tuscan brings up new ideas for liberty, and all slaves accept his suggestions and promis to follow Ceaser even to death.(62) However, things never go on well with Ceaser because some slaves turn to be black legs; old friends bacome new enemies. Mr. Trefry, the Englishman stands in between Ceaser and the traitor slaves. In the final battle, Ceaser is met by treason, but Clemene saves

the situation with one poisoned arrow when she shot the governer who could hardly escape death, but died later. Ceaser faces harsh punish-ment but could not moan. His eyes dart fire of revenge. He thinks of avenging himself on his enemies, then he thinks of killing Clemene and himself; his wife immediately agreed upon his suggestion. After killing his wife, Ceaser lives a dep-lorable condition. In his final moments, Ceaser is desperate; he holds up a knife and cuts a piece of his own throat, then he kills an Englishman, then he tries to kill Tuscan. He was saved and treated for seven days. Then he was trialed and sentenced to death where the excusioner tortured him cutting pieces of his body before he excuted him. (76-77)

Throughout these situations and sacrifices, Mrs. Behn shows the extent to which she is sympathetic with the slaves whether men or women. In the heat of slave markets and many other social and political atmospheres, and at a time when – to borrow Edward Said's words – "Europeans performing acts of imperial mastery and will in (or about) Africa,"21 unpreced-ently, Mrs. Behn takes the advantage to speak out herself in defence of the enslaved people.

Eighth: In the twentieth century, I see that the gender implications of the plot of Oroonoko are quieting, especially because culture has changed since Mrs. Behn started doing this – gender has been absorbed into popular culture. She attempts to convince the reader that she dealt straightforw-ardly with felt experience that has emotional effect on the people. In the end, Oroonoko stands angainst colonialism by all means.

Nineth: Oroonoko represents a staire of the sevent-eenth century politico-socio-economic life where human beings were commodities for sale; they were subject to bargain in slave markets. Oroonoko is also a work of sensibi-lity, in defence of the rights of man and woman alike. It is earlier than several literary works advocating the rights of woman.22 Once more, this is a criticism of colonization and its practices. Woman is shown as an object. The majority of women consent to the de facto social situation, however, Imoinda refuses her enslavement in the seraglio. In the night of the dance at the Court of the King's Palace, Imoinda's apperance has more than one meaning. She is woman showing her physical abilities in a dance in front of the king and his entourage. She has been brought in, to dance for the king, but on seeing Oroonoko, her preformance became something for him.(16-17) In those two situations, Imoinda is a dancer displaying her body in front of many a man. The scene exp-lains how woman is used as a commodity. She is an example of the oppressed women. Her refusal to consent to the king's desire is a rejection of woman's enslavement, and an example of woman's rights for freedom.

Though Imoinda obeyed the Royal Veil, she refused to surrender herself to the desire of the king; she refused to submit to the king's attempts to rape her. This is an obvious brave message that woman has the right to choose her espouse or partner, and to say no whenever no is needed. The Royal Veil is a tool used by the king to enslave women for his desires. Mrs Behn stands against those colonialist tools, methods, and practices.

Tenth: In Oroonoko, Mrs. Behn sets an example for the women of upcoming generations to fight for their right of freedom of will. She left them a legacy that remains essential until today, and proved herself an early example of the anti-colonialist writers. In this framework, she also introduced herself as an early feminist, and a literary authority.23

In some situations, Aphra Behn seems quite willing to take her readers into the minds of her characters, especially those with whom she is sympathetic. This, of course, comes as a supportive evidence of the writer's genuine sympathy with the enslaved people. For the exposition of her themes, Mrs. Behn focuses upon Oroonoko more than the other characters. Mrs Behn also calls for the freedom of woman represented by Imoinda (Clemene) through an honest and sincere lover. Oroonoko (Ceaser) is the one most likely to capture the sympathy and affection of the reader. Under the presence of

his personality the plot takes more than one turn, and with one of the crucial turns was the logical conclusion of his marriage with Clemene. But Mrs. Behn takes her readers back into question of slavery.

Mrs. Behn succeeds in attracting the attention of her readers and gaining their respect for her mastery in portraying the theme of woman's liberty interwoven with the behaviour of a rebellious hero, Ceaser. Clemene's need of freedom is the need of all women in life. Fighting for your freedom aginst slavery means fighting against colonialism.

Aphra Behn portrayed some minor characters to reflect images dissimilar to those of the major characters. For example, not all the white people are bad. Trefry is someone with moral decision and good social upbringing, away from the atrocities and horrors of slavery per se.

Aphra Behn voices out a cry in the face of all types of enslvement. She introduces a clear statement in sympathy with and support of the enslaved people. She declares her anti-colonialist position, making herself a social hero, a giant of the enlightenment, and a humanistic writer.

In Oroonoko, Aphra Behn has achieved success in presenting human experience. She wrote down a trustworthy record of past manners and opinions. I consider Oroonoko an authentic document in the fight for humanity against esatab-lished negative traditions and solid politico-socio-economic system. The end of the game is that Aphra Behn teaches her generation and others to seek the promotion of ideas of anti-slavery versus slavery; anti-colonialism versus colonialism. Undoubtedly, she left a permanent mark on English novel, one which this moment is a subject of intense debate among novelists and scholars in Europe, USA, and elsewhere. With Oroonoko and other writings, Aphra Behn has brought the conversation virtually wholesale into a discourse of fiction worldwide. For that, novelists and readers ought to be especially grateful.

Endnotes

1. All references to Oroonoko, have been exerpted from Aphra Behn's Oroonoko; or, The Royal Slave. Introduction by Lore Mitzger. New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1973. Page numbers are refered to between brackets.
2. Woolf, Virginia. A Room of One's Own (1929, Rept; London: Grafton, 1977), 1.
3. Margaret Drabble, ed. The Oxford Companion to English Literature (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 81.
4. Cheryl Turner. Living by her Pen: Women Writers in the Eighteenth Century (1992, Rept; London and New York: Routledge, 1992), 6.
5. Josephine Donovan. Feminist Theory: The Intellectual Tradition of American Feminism (New York: UNGAR, 1987), 3.
6. Jane Spencer. The Rise of the Woman Novelist: From Aphra Behn to Jane Austen. (1986, Rept; London: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 51.
7. Dale Spender. Mothers of the Novel: 100 good women writers before Jane Austen (London and New York: Panadora Press, 1986), 62-3.
8. See, Montague, Summers, ed. The Works of Aphra Behn. 6 vols. London: William Heinemann; Stratford-On-Avon: A. H. Bullen, 1915.
9. Jane Spencer, "The Rover and the eighteenth century," in Aphra Behn's Studies, Edited by Janet Todd. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 84.
10. Janet Todd. The Critical Fortunes of Aphra Behn. (Columbia, SC. : Camden House, 1998), 44-5.
11. Among those scholars who paid attention to Aphra Behn's life and work were Montague Summers (1915), Virginia Woolf (1924), Victorian Sacville-West (1927), Goerge Woodcock (1948), Wibur L. Cross (1961), Fredrick Link (1968), S. D. Neil (1971), Maureen Duffy (1977), Angeline Goreau (1980), Jane Spencer (1986), and

Elaine Hobby (1988).
12. Some critics read Oroonoko as a novel of veracity and originality. For some of those see, Robert L. Chibka. "'Oh! Do Not Fear a Woman's Invention:' Truth, Falsehood, and Fiction in Aphra Behn's Oroonoko." Chibka mentions G. H. Platt, Wiley Sypher, J. A. Ramsaran, J. M. Cameron, H. A. Hargreaves, Donald J. Davis. To this I can add Bernbaum. See, Bernbaum, Ernest "Mrs. Behn's Oroonoko," in Anniversary Papers by Colleagues and Pupils of George Layman Kittredge (Boston: Ginn, 1913), 419-35. Other critics read it as an autobiography. For some of those critics, see, Jacqueline Pearson, "Gender and Narrative in the Fiction of Aphra Behn" in RES New Series, vol. XLII, No. 165. Oxford: Oxford University Press (1991): 40-50. She mentions Dale Spender, Lennard J. Davis, Robert Adams Day, and Maureen Duffy. In her introduction to Aphra Behn's Oroonoko, Lore Metzger considers the novel as a semi-autobiographical novel. See, Aphra Behn's Oroonoko; or, The Royal Slave. Ed. with Introd. by Lore Mitzger, New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1973. A fourth group of scholars sees it as a political novel in which Aphra Behn shows Republican prejudice. See W. J. Cameron. New Light on Aphra Behn, (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1961), 20. A fourth group sees it as a novel of masculinity. See Kathrine M. Rogers, Feminism in Eighteenth Century England (Brighton, 1983). A fifth group including Walter Allen, consider Orooononko as a philosophical novel. A sixth group describes it as a social novel. See, Wilbur L. Cross, The Development of the Englishh Novel. (London: The Macmillan Company, 1961), 20. S. D. Neil, A Short History of the English Novel (Ludhiana: Kalyani Pyblishers, 1971), 46; K. C. Shrivastava, Mrs. Gaskell as a Novelist (Salzburg: Salzburg University Press, 1977), 17. And a seventh group go with Virginia Woolf in giving Oroonoko a feminist reading. This group includes Donald Bruce, and Jane Spencer. For feminist readings of Oroonoko, see, Virginia Woolf, A Room of One's Own, 1929; Rept, London: Grafton, 1977; Jane Spencer, The Rise of the Woman Novelist: From Aphra Behn to Jane Austen. 1986; Rept., London: Basil Blackwood, 1988.
13. Janet Todd, The Critical Fortunes of Aphra Behn, 24.
14.Aphra Behn, Oroonoko and Other Stories. Edited by Maureen Duffy (London: Methuen Books), 8.
15. Maureen Duffy. The Passionate Shepherdess: Aphra Behn 1640-89. (London: Jonathan Cape, 1977), 37-8. Also, Duffy introduces a likehood to Aphra Behn's allegation as Mrs. Behn in 1688 was disguising her age. See, n.6, 295.
16. Ibid. 38.
17. Aphra Behn's biographers are still uncertain about her origin and parentage. All following books disagree on Mrs. Behn's origin and parentage. Janet Todd, The Critical Fortunes of Aphra Behn. Columbia, SC.: Camden House, 1998. Janet Todd, Aphra Behn Studies. Cambridge: Cambridge Univerity Press, 1996. Angeline Goreau. Reconstructing Aphra: A Social Biography of Aphra Behn. New York: Dial Press, 1980. Maureen Duffy. The Passionate Shepherdess: Aphra Behn 1640-89. London: Jonathan Cap., 1977. Victoria Sacville-West. Aphra Behn: The Incomparable Astrea. London: Gerald House, 1972. W. L. Cameron. New Light on Aphra Behn. Auckland, 1961. George Woodcock. The Incomparable Aphra. 1915; Rept, London: T.V. Boardman & Co., 1948. Monague Summers, ed. The Works of Aphra Behn. London: William Heinemann; Stratford-On-Avon: A. H. Bullen, 1915.
18. Wilbur L. Cross, The Development of the English Novel (London: The Macmillan Company, 1961), 20.
19. Margaret Drabble, ed. The Oxford Companion to English Literature, 81-2.
20. Edward Said, Culture and Imperialism (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 25.
21. Fatima Mirnissi, Beyond the Veil: Male Female Dynamics in Muslim Society (1975, Rept; London: Al Saqi Books, 1983), 143.
22. Those works include Lady Mary Wortley Montague, Turkish Embassy Letters (ed.

1965-67) in which she defends the social rights of the Turkish woman. The English Women's Journal (1858-1864), Mary Wolstonecraft, Wrongs of Woman (1788), Vindications of the Rights of Women (1792), where she stands firmly for the woman's cause, Jane Austen, Pride and Prejudice (1813) as it defends woman's freedom of choice. Also, it is much earlier than Henrik Ibesn, A Doll's House (1884).
23. Jane Spencer, The Rise of the Woman Novelist: From Aphra Behn to Jane Austen(1986, Rept; Oxford and New York: Basil Blackwood, 1989), 42-52.

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