

The Ghost of Windrush Past: Intertextuality in Sam Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* (1956)**Mohammed Amine Belaid**Department of English
Abou Bekr Belkaid University
Tlemcen, Algeria**Wassila Hamza Reguig-Mouro**Department of English
Abou Bekr Belkaid University
Tlemcen, Algeria**Abstract**

The relationships between the literary texts have recently occupied the center of debate and discovery in the literary sphere. With a so ancient a practice as intertextuality; influence, allusion and quotation seem to smolder the old assumptions about originality and creativity. Therefore, this paper attempts to explore the utilization of intertextuality in the novel entitled *The Lonely Londoners* (1956) by the Trinidadian postcolonial writer Sam Selvon (1923-1994). To do so, a survey on the provenance of intertextuality is displayed, with reference to its pioneers who claimed that the text is a heterogeneous combination of texts, namely Kristeva and Bakhtin. Additionally, the article introduces several models of the concept that are relevant to the analysis of the aforementioned novel along with a brief overview on the cultural and social parameters leading to its creation. This inquiry shows that *The Lonely Londoners* textually intertwines with a few works of the literary canon, biblical characters and eminent legal cases via some names of its characters, in addition to other direct quotations. As this paper submits, the audience should reach a rational stance on the use of intertextuality in the postcolonial novel to relate to universally shared images about racial prejudice and alienation.

Keywords: alienation, allusion, intertextuality, literary canon, quotation, racial prejudice, Sam Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners*

Cites as: Belaid, M. A., & Reguig-Mouro, W. H. (2019). The Ghost of Windrush Past: Intertextuality in Sam Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* (1956). *Arab World English Journal for Translation & Literary Studies*, 3 (1) 219-231.

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awejtls/vol3no1.17>

The Ghost of Windrush Past: Intertextuality in Sam Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* (1956)

Throughout the long history of literary marvels, the notions of originality and innovation were always debatable and controversial: Hints were thrown to trigger remembrance of a certain magnum opus; Characters' names were employed to resuscitate scenes from glorious plays and poems followed the ancient Greek tradition to honor and allude to the very first poets. All of the above contributed to the belief that was mainly endorsed by the poststructuralists, declaring that "the literary word is an intersection of textual surfaces rather than a point (a fixed meaning), as a dialogue among several writings" (Kristeva, 1986, p. 36). The aforementioned claim led to the coinage of a new term which denotes that no text can exist as a self-sufficient whole, namely intertextuality. The features of this supposedly new concept were in the good company of a plethora of allusions and absolute resemblances in some elements of the literary works, and the theory of intertextuality gained considerable momentum as it found its niche in the contemporary literary milieu.

As far as postcolonial literature is concerned, renowned literary figures attempted to write in the colonizer's language, thus writing to the western canon. Therefore, cases of allusions and references to the pillars of British literature are omnipresent in the postcolonial writing sphere, not as mere imitations but rather disguised shapes, especially after some of these writers migrated to Britain by dint of the latter's need for its Commonwealth subjects, as it was in the post-war reconstruction phase. The marking point of the proverbial migration is the arrival of the SS Windrush Empire to Essex, England in 1948, carrying a large number of Caribbean people who formed their own community in Britain afterwards, and were the main inspiration and topic for the Trinidadian writer Sam Selvon in his novel *The Lonely Londoners* (1956). This paper aims to give an overview of intertextuality and its use and utility in *The Lonely Londoners* by examining some of the linguistic and semantic features of the literary text.

Intertextuality: Axioms and Originators

Before digging deeply in analyzing the novel and the occurrences of intertextuality, it would be necessary to define the term and its revolutionary aspect. It has been mentioned, by formalists who embraced the theory of textual autonomy, that the literary text is considered as an autonomous entity, and that its component elements were interdependent without having an extra-textual layer. In the same vein, Eichenbaum (1925), one of the exponents of New Criticism, mentions: "The school of thought on the theory and history of literature known as the Formal method derived from efforts to secure autonomy and concreteness for the discipline of literary studies" (p. 308). However, this view was opposed by one of his contemporaries, namely Mikhail Bakhtin. The latter was recognized, albeit lately, as the founder of the first grounds of intertextuality. One cannot fail to mention that Bakhtin was not directly implicated in the genesis of intertextuality but his revolutionary ideas contributed to the articulation of intertextual theories of others. For Bakhtin, it is the dialogic part of a language which "frontal areas class, ideological and different clashes, divisions and chains of importance inside society" (as cited in Allen, 2000, p. 21). Bakhtin emphasizes the idea of 'otherness' in words. Since the words we select in both discourse and composing have an otherness about them and in light of the fact that they have a

place with explicit discourse classes, it is unavoidable for the words to shoulder the hints of past articulations. Bakhtin's emphasis on 'otherness' is connected with the hypothesis of intertextuality under the assumption that the significance of each word or articulation is framed through the speaker's connection to other individuals, other individuals' words and articulations and the explicit culture experienced in an explicit time and place. This leads us to his dialogism which is straightforwardly related with intertextuality. Bakhtin points out the dialogic idea of language, alluding to Dostoyevski's books:

Thus, at the very beginning of the novel the leading voices in the great dialogue have already begun to sound. These voices are not self-enclosed or deaf to one another. They hear each other constantly, call back and forth to each other, and are reflected in one another (especially in the microdialogues). And outside this dialogue of "conflicting truths" not a single essential act is realized, nor a single essential thought of the major characters (1984, p. 47).

What Bakhtin wanted to assert is that the words – that represent the 'voices' - carry a layer of their social and cultural dimensions, as it was argued by Terry Eagleton that "Bakhtin shifted attention from the abstract system of language to the concrete utterances of individuals in particular social contexts" and that "language was seen as inherently 'dialogic': it could be grasped only in terms of its inevitable orientation towards another" (2008, p. 101). In Bakhtin's study of language, the pivotal point is the "addressivity" of the word and utterance. As he states: "[a] characteristic feature of the letter is an acute awareness of the interlocutor, the addressee to whom it is directed. The letter, like a rejoinder in a dialogue, is addressed to a specific person, and it takes into account the other's possible reactions, the other's possible reply" (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 97). In this line of thought, the total of the utterances is a set of "responses to previous utterances and are addressed to specific addressees" (Allen, 2000, p. 21).

Dostoevsky's 'dialogical standard' is counterposed to the 'monologism' (single-thought talk; additionally named 'homophony' – single-voice) normal for customary composition and thought. In monologism, one transcendental standpoint or awareness dominates the whole field, and in this way incorporates all the meaning practices, belief systems, qualities and wants that are highly regarded. Anything immaterial to this viewpoint is considered unnecessary or excessive in general.

In the chapter entitled "Discourse in the Novel" of his abovementioned book, Bakhtin sheds light on the contrast between the novel – representing prose – which is dialogical, and poetry, which is not. In verse, language is imagined as unitary and, consequently, the articulation shows up as independent, with no connection to different expressions outer to it. The artist completely accepts his/her discourse demonstration and sees each word as his/her own, as an unadulterated and direct articulation of his/her expectations. The author, then again, does not reject the expectations of others as they are available in each expression, and permits heteroglossia to enter his/her work, subsequently making an interesting aesthetic item out of such a decent variety of voices (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 297-98). Composition and verse are, at that point, the aftereffect of

contradicted inclinations: one is outward and prompts majority and variety (the novel), the other is centripetal and is related with the unitary and the single (the wonderful sorts). This de-concentrating drive that portrays the novel records, from the earliest starting point, for its parodic quality and its restriction to any sort of power. While poetry adds to the social and political centralization of the verbal and ideological universes, the novel has, from its starting points, a de-stabilizing capacity that restricts it to the official language. Contemptuous, same as the carnival, the novel ends up being the incendiary and freeing sort of the highest order.

Bakhtin's philosophy is said to be the basic building block of intertextuality, and his works were, conveniently, interpreted by the Bulgarian-born French semiotician Julia Kristeva, who had the highest esteem for Bakhtin's ideas for their revolutionary value. The former wanted to employ the latter's ideas denouncing the supposedly faulty belief about the self-contained meaning of texts – what he called “monologism” – against the bourgeois credo of autonomy of individual consciousness. For Kristeva, Bakhtin speaks to the likelihood of introducing and opening linguistics to society: “Bakhtin situates the text within history and society, which are seen as texts read by the writer, and into which he inserts himself by rewriting them” (Kristeva, 1986, p. 36). It is this process of “rewriting” – as Kristeva Claims – that increases the deniability of the existence of an original text. In other words, Kristeva proposes – in her concept of intertextuality - the text as a dynamic site in which social procedures and practices are the focal point of examination rather than static structures and items. Furthermore, she argues that “each word (text) is an inter section of other words (texts) where at least one other word (text) can be read” (1980, 66).

There are always different words in a word, different messages in texts. The idea of intertextuality requires, along these lines, that we comprehend writings not as independent frameworks but rather as differential and authentic, as a process that follows and inherits tracings of otherness, since they are molded by the reiteration and change of other literary structures. In the same vein, Kristeva (1986) introduces the concept of intertextuality: “any text is a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another” (p.37). To put it in simple terms, intertextuality is a term to show that all writings, regardless of whether composed or talked, whether formal or informal, whether aesthetic or mundane, are in some ways identified with one another.

Intertextuality is, quintessentially, a method for representing the role of literary and extra-literary materials without response to conventional thoughts of creation. It subverts the idea of the content as an independent, hermetic totality, foregrounding, in its stead, the way that all abstract generation happens within sight of different writings; they are, essentially, palimpsests. Kristeva's ideas find an echo in the works of Roland Barthes, who announced “the death of the author”. For the latter; it is the reality of intertextuality that enables the text to appear:

Any text is a new tissue of past citations. Bits of code, formulae, rhythmic models, fragments of social languages, etc., pass into the text and are redistributed within it, for there is always language before and around the text. Intertextuality, the condition of any

text whatsoever, cannot, of course, be reduced to a problem of sources or influences; the intertext is a general field of anonymous formulae whose origin can scarcely ever be located; of unconscious or automatic quotations, given without quotation marks (Barthes, 1981, p. 39)

Along Barthes' lines, writing is dependably a cycle which is likewise a re-emphasis, a re-composing which frontal areas cover the hint of the different writings in both intentionally and unwittingly places and displaces.

Though it saw the light in the Old World, the concept of intertextuality found fertile grounds in the American literary circle. The eighteenth century carried with it a reevaluation of creativity as the main genuine indication of a writer's virtuoso. It was then that the idea of influence emerged, consequently bearing, from the earliest starting point, the seeds of a methodology identified with, at the end of the day not the same as that of intertextuality. From an intertextual point of view, there is no chance to get of viewing inventiveness as an attribute as appreciated by either writers or readers. T. S. Eliot was maybe the first to indicate that the most individual parts of a writer's work might be those in which his/her predecessors are all the more vigorously present (1971, p. 784). While the idea of convention had regularly prompted interpreting a writer's work based on the opinions of those that had gone before it, it was likewise Eliot's development to affirm that impact moves in two ways: when contemplating a work one must think about what has preceded it, however, one should similarly know about the way that was crafted by the dead artists changes, and enhances its significance in the light of what has been composed by later writers. Despite his certain effect on the thoughts of the New Criticism, T. S. Eliot, an exceptional figure with regards to innovator verse, qualified along these lines the New Critics' perspective of art as an independent entity, a total framework dependent on the connection between pictures, rhythm, sounds, and so forth., which decide its structure. Such a methodology, which returns to the sentimental people and is identified with the thoughts clarified by Symbolism and Modernism, embodies the position that later hypotheses of intertextuality have endeavored to undermine. It can thusly be said that Eliot's semi-intertextual thoughts regarding the concurrence of all works of writing and the ceaseless procedure of re-altering the relations among them are shockingly avant-garde.

As the concept of intertextuality flew over the Atlantic, it provided explanation and brought to the light some ambiguous cases in American literature. For instance, Walt Whitman's poem "I Hear America Singing" (1867) is alluded to in Langston Hughes' poem "I, Too" (1926). These two writings are interlinked by the reference to America, and Langston Hughes' poem can be comprehended as a straightforward reply to Walt Whitman's. Besides, one cannot completely understand why Langston Hughes utilizes the word "too" in the event that they have not perused Walt Whitman's poem:

I, too, sing America.

I am the darker brother.
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes,

But I laugh,
And eat well,
And grow strong.

Tomorrow,
I'll sit at the table
When company comes.
Nobody'll dare
Say to me,
"Eat in the kitchen,"
Then.
Besides,
They'll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed--

I, too, am America.

"I, Too" (1926)

Last but not least, it is noteworthy that the usage of intertextuality transcends the horizons of literary studies to find some currency in other fields such as media psychology, and it was imported in the discipline of critical media to examine popular genres. Furthermore, other theorists such as Umberto Eco, Jacques Derrida, Harold Bloom, Michael Riffaterre and Gérard Genette have their own intertextual theories.

To sum up, it is safe to say that Kristeva adopted Bakhtin's ideas and redeployed them over the universal literary circles, though the practice of intertextuality existed decades if not centuries before their breakthrough, and the amalgam of the aforementioned scholars' findings and theories contributed to the construction of most postmodern literature as one that requires intertextual readings. Yet, Kristeva's proverbial "mosaic" took many forms and shapes that modeled intertextuality in an abundance of types.

Models and Types of Intertextuality

After Kristeva's assumption that no text is self-born became the currency of the literary realm, a compatriot of her own, namely Gerard Genette, widened the study area of Kristeva, refining that belief by calling it "transtextuality" and defining it as the connection between a text and different writings, and he subdivided this type into five categories where intertextuality was only one kind. Intertextuality includes quotation, collage, and allusion, and it is divided by Genette into three large categories: implicit or explicit; covert or overt; hidden or open: "intertextuality as a stylistic device reflects "the transtextual relations a text may have with others. This interrelation is realized by means of quotation and allusion" (Genette, 1997, p. 434). The upcoming entries explore the three main facets of Genette's "transtextuality".

1. Quotation

Genette argues that “intertextuality is a device that lets one text be rewritten in another text; intertext is a whole set of texts that appear in a work, regardless of whether it relates to a work in absentia (in the case of allusions) or include it in praesentia (in the case of quotations) (1997, p. 9). One can infer from the above extract that quotation is a subtle form of intertextuality that showcases the “mosaic of texts” in its clearest manifestation. In addition to that, Piegay-Gros (2008) calls quotation “the emblematic form of intertextuality, as it best shows the process of incorporating one text with another one” (p. 9). Quotation as intertextual means is typical of the texts that are described by collision and fragmentation. As the reader dives into the text, quotation immediately sparks their attention, but its interpretation may be harder and requires the reader’s erudition. She states: “Indeed, the choice of the quoted text, its volume, implementation methods and the meaning that it acquires when incorporated into a new context are extremely important components of quotation decoding” (p. 12). Despite the explicit nature of quotation, it still goes far past its customary functions; it has “to be authoritative and ornamental. Entering a novel, quotation fully integrates into written structure and themes of the work” (2008, p. 86)

On a different stream of thought, quotation and allusion differ not only in their recognition, but also in their use by the writer. Nodier (1828) emphasizes that “quotation itself only indicates the average erudition; though successful allusion bears the stamp of a genius” (p. 50). In a similar vein, Fateeva (2007) believes that by resorting to quotation, the author appeals to the reconstructive intertextuality, registering the unity of “own” and “alien” texts; in case of allusion constructive intertextuality is implemented, which organizes borrowed items in the single semantic and compositional structure of a new text (p. 129).

2. Allusion

The allusion is one of the most widely discussed forms of textual interrelations; it can be of paramount importance, indeed cardinal, in the construction of comic writings. Furthermore, it has been stated that “wherever allusions occur some excursion into parody is possible; the parodic line often begins with the allusive point” (Simpson, 2014, p. 247). As far as imitation is concerned, parody copies the style of a specific writer or type with conscious extravagance for comic impact. The parodic allusion is then “a stylistic device in which one text incorporates a caricature of another, most often, popular cultural text...that seeks to amuse through juxtaposition” (Walter, 2000, p. 12). Pasco (2002) states that allusion is not a genre, but is rather a mode, a strategy, a device that occurs in all genres. He adds: “Allusion is a metaphorical relationship created when an alluding text evokes and uses another, independent text” (p. 247).

A simple example of an allusion might be to mention someone who “flew too close to the sun” and not providing any more detail. A few perusers realize this must be an implication to the legend of Daedalus and his child Icarus. Daedalus was a supernaturally talented craftsman who, at one event, fabricated two arrangements of wings out of plumes stuck together with wax, so he and his child could escape imprisonment. In spite of being cautioned not to fly excessively high, Icarus, normally energized by his new-won capacity, went too close to the sun, the wax softened, his wings broke down, and he dove to his demise in the sea.

3. Collage

Endorsing the belief that the text is a “mosaic of quotations” denotes the existence of collage in postmodern poetics of intertextuality. It is defined as a “purposeful reassembly of fragments to form a new whole and it is, undoubtedly, an active element in many postmodern texts” (Kundu, 2008, p. 448).

As Bakhtin's very first ideas of intertextuality were deemed revolutionary, the practice of collage is of no lesser esteem. In his essay “The Object of Post-Criticism”, Olmer (2008) states: “By most accounts collage is the single most revolutionary formal innovation in artistic representation to occur in our century” (p. 2). It diminishes the narrative expectations, astonishes the reader while requiring him/her to fill in the gaps, make determinations, and perform associations just from the ramifications of connection between regularly unique components.

Having contacted upon the idea of intertextuality regarding postmodern style, one singled out quotation and allusion for their linguostylistic appearance. Engaging the reader's recognition, the post-structuralist idea of intertextuality significantly stands to decipher postmodern composition. The growing extent of collage and allusion joined by a mixing system of composition underscores the intertextual structure as a distinctive trait of postmodern writings. Consequently, one can safely mention that those techniques inspired postcolonial writers, especially the ones who endeavored to excel in the colonizer's language and to exploit every single linguistic/stylistic feature to write back to the canon as a manner of assuming one's place as an independent, yet influenced entity in the literary sphere.

***The Lonely Londoners*: Background and overview**

To understand the messages and visionary aspect of *The Lonely Londoners*, one needs to shed light on the social and cultural parameters of the era. In June 1948 the SS Empire Windrush touched base at Tilbury Docks in England toward the finish of a venture from Jamaica that conveyed around 500 West Indians to Britain. The British Nationality Act prior that year had conceded free access to Britain for all Commonwealth subjects, as the administration attempted to select additional work to encourage national recreation after the Second World War. This prompted a huge increment in the settler populace of England, for the most part from the Caribbean, India and Pakistan. In spite of the fact that the Windrush brought the principal significant vagrant flood from the Caribbean, it was not until the mid-1950s that others followed in vast numbers, with more than 100,000 vagrants touching base between 1954 and 1958.

Amid the war, somewhere in the range of 10,000 West Indian servicemen were situated in Britain. As Robert Winder has stated, the gathering offered to these servicemen was commonly friendly; those West Indian fighters presented on RAF bases, for instance, “were embraced as friends by their neighbours; some even resolved to come back once the fighting was over” (2004, p. 330). The story was altogether different, however, for some, who came back and other people who made their first adventure to Britain in the early post-war period. They encountered separation. Customary work and average lodging were frequently elusive, leading observers to say that the living standards for the Caribbean immigrants were very low at that time.

In the midst of such tribulations, Sam Selvon migrated to England. The child of an Indian father and a Scottish-Indian mother, Selvon had a generally agreeable white-collar class childhood. In the wake of serving in the Trinidadian Navy, Selvon was employed at newspapers and scholarly magazines in Port of Spain, Trinidad. He moved to England in 1950, he justifies his migration by his avoidance of “being lulled into complacency and acceptance of the carefree and apathetic life around me” (Selvon, 1995, p. 58). The renowned Trinidadian writer’s encounter with West Indian migrants rendered him aware of the cultural and linguistic diversity and richness of the Caribbean people on the one hand, and of the disjunction between their illusionist expectations and real experience on the other.

When Selvon was asked about the process of writing his novel, his reply was really fascinating. He uttered: “I had written the narrative in English and most of the dialogues in dialect. Then I started both narrative and dialogue in dialect and the novel just shot along.” (1973, p.2). The meaning of the expression “shot along” is quite literal as he finished the novel in six months, thus heralding the genesis of a milestone in English literature, one that incorporated vernacular language and Standard English in a very subtle and artistic fashion.

The Lonely Londoners reflects the life of the Caribbean community in London in post-war Britain. It is, indeed, a novel throughout which the reader gets accustomed to the other side of London, one that was hidden from the daydreaming people of the Commonwealth. After right around thirty years, developing disappointment with England drove Selvon to immigrate to Canada in 1978. His literary fame presented to him various honors and scholarly posts in England, the West Indies and Canada. Selvon came back to Trinidad in 1993, to die the following year of lung ailment (Ramchand, 1985, p. 21). The renowned Trinidadian writer employs a variety of techniques that made his novel a marvel, and textual interrelations with the western literary canon are discernible in his lines.

Intertextuality in Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners*

Selvon's novel does not orbit around one proper protagonist but rather a set of thoroughly distinct characters: Moses Aloetta is a Trinidadian veteran who lived for ten years in London, and he helps new immigrants out. He is regarded as the glue that holds the group of characters together. On a bleak winter evening, Moses goes to Waterloo's gate to meet a newly arrived immigrant from their native Trinidad, one Henry Oliver, who was later baptized by Moses as “Sir Galahad”. The encounter between the two characters appeals to the reader by invoking a typical image of London, and summons, conveniently for this entry, a remarkable literary figure that was previously mentioned in these lines for its contributions to the practice of intertextuality.

Selvon greets the reader with an allusion to T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* while describing Moses' meeting with Henry Oliver, his statement: “One grim winter evening, when it had a kind of unrealness about London, with a fog sleeping restlessly over the city”, it evokes remembrance of Eliot's “Unreal city, / Under the brown fog of a winter dawn” (Selvon, 2010, p. 23, Eliot, 1971, p. 60-1). The purposes of such encapsulation are striking; the similitude does not only lie in the fact that both texts are fragmentary and attempting to twist the voices across the works, but also

to their experiment with language: Eliot employed a multitude of languages in his poem while Selvon harnesses a variant of the Trinidadian dialect. Moreover, Selvon's evocation of *The Waste Land* recalls the latter's exploration of alienation of the western metropole, using it as a means to appropriate the sentiment of alienation amongst the West Indian characters of his novel. The textual relation with a so eloquent a work as *The Waste Land* has inevitably stimulated an intelligent appreciation of the novel among its readership, as it triggered universally shared images of estrangement.

On a distinct line of thought, Selvon alludes to the Bible and the Arthurian legend by the very appellations of his characters: Moses and Sir Galahad. Through artful allusions, Samuel Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* grapples Moses' portrayal in scriptural history and Henry Oliver's portrayal in the Legend of the Round Table. Subsequently, the novel builds a piercing outline of how the abusive condition of 1950s London influences Moses' and Henry Oliver's lives.

Like his scriptural partner, Moses' unselfishness and his definitive voice add to his portrayal as a visionary. As indicated by the Abrahamic religions, Moses (PBUH) valiantly drove the Exodus of Israelites from four hundred years of subjugation in Egypt over the Red Sea to Mount Sinai where the Ten Commandments were revealed to him from God. Correspondingly, Selvon's Moses drives outsiders who gotten away from the financial subjugation of the West Indies for the Mother Country. In this specific story, "it is the equivalent delicate heart that have [Moses] now on the transport to Waterloo to meet a fellow name Henry Oliver. He doesn't know how he was continually getting in position this way, making a difference individuals out" (p. 25). Selvon's Moses communicates hesitance like what the scriptural Moses (PBUH) felt at the point when God approached him through the consuming shrubbery to lead the Israelites.

While Moses' portrayal represents the fallout of foundational segregation, Henry Oliver's character improvement in *The Lonely Londoners* demonstrates the procedure through which London's threatening condition decreases foreigners' defiant resolve. After meeting Henry Oliver, Moses names him "Sir Galahad" (Selvon, p. 35). In Arthurian legend, Sir Galahad was the child of Lancelot and was known as "the most perfect and noblest knight in King Arthur's court" (Currin, 2004, p. 12). The possibility of knighthood alone implies the Middle Age standards of gallantry, as Henry's relationship with the most noteworthy portrayal of these goals coaxes the readers to reason its significance. From Moses' perspective, this unexpected moniker features Henry's rashness instead of his fortitude. He considers Henry to be the "sort of fellow who does never like individuals to think they unaccustomed to anything, or that they are outsiders in a place, or that they don't know where they going" (Selvon, p. 38). At the end of the day, Henry's excitement strikes Moses as presumption given his numbness of the societal complexities in London. Then again, Henry bears a few likenesses to Sir Galahad when he tells Moses: "I know you mean well telling me all of these things, but papa, I want to find out for myself" (p. 41). Despite the fact that reckless, Henry's determination displays his courageous want for experience. Like an Arthurian knight, Henry declines to enable the chances to debilitate him.

Nevertheless, Henry's Holy Grail does not transcend the borders of his long-awaited city; once he ventures out into London, his courage dissipates. Hence, Sir Galahad's social noteworthiness gives an advising complexity to Henry's character. On his approach to anchor a vocation, Henry ends up overpowered by the remote condition that he was unprepared to face. Around him, Henry saw "a kind of fog hovering...sun shining, but Galahad never see the sun look like how it looking now. No heat from it, it just there in the sky like a force-ripe orange. When he look up, the colour of the sky so desolate it make him more frighten" (p. 42). The inclusion of 'Galahad' here instead of Henry's genuine name builds up further how Henry dreads the direct opposite of Sir Galahad's legacy, as his mind was crowded with the fateful yet metaphorical question: Has Galahad met his Waterloo? While Henry Oliver may not show Arthurian dauntlessness, his warm acknowledgment of Moses' direction after this occurrence exhibits his valiant nature. All things considered, Henry's communication with London's hostility molds him into an increasingly open disciple of Moses' tutelage.

Sam Selvon did not allude only to individuals from the religious or folkloric corpora, but he also mediated his ideas of social injustice and discrimination by referring to the legal field, namely by the character Bart. The latter tries to pass himself off as a "Latin-American" (p. 46) due to his lighter skin. His name hints to one Bartolomeo "Bart" Vanzetti, the companion of Nicola Sacco, with whom he was controversially sentenced to death and executed in 1927, after an awry armed robbery in the early roaring twenties of America, thus becoming the core of one of the largest causes célèbres in modern history.

Bart always attempted to identify with Southern Americans and avoided his black companions, he does look around as much as to say: "I here with these boys, but I not one of them, look at the colour of my skin" (p. 47). The moderately amusing tone offers a path to a darker state of mind as Bart experiences racial prejudice, ironically depicted as "the old diplomacy" (p. 48). Similarly, historians claim that anti-immigrant bias and the spirit of anti-Italianism are the main reasons behind Sacco and Vanzetti's indictment. Furthermore, Bart's increased exposure to discrimination is joined by a physical decay for he refused to eat, expressing a manner of protesting against that wrongful practice. This may be a juxtaposition of his Italian-born American counterpart's deeds, as Bart Vanzetti and Nicola Sacco initiated a hunger strike in their last year of incarceration.

There is another shift of tone once Bart recoups from his illness, and the focal point of the account moves to his fixation on his white girlfriend, Beatrice. The latter disappeared and Bart plunged into a desperate search for her. His pointless scan is rendered movingly, with elevated feeling and diction, while maintaining the Caribbean colloquial story voice:

He must be comb the whole of London, looking in the millions of white faces walking down Oxford Street, peering into buses, taking tube ride on the Inner Circle just in the hope that he might see she. For weeks the old Bart hunt, until he become haggard and haunted (p. 51). Beatrice symbolizes Bart Vanzetti's lost freedom; Both Bart and Vanzetti are in agony and lost what they desired the most, but that agony – as the revolutionary singer Joan Baez chanted in her song "Here's to You" in 1971 – is their triumph.

Additionally, the character of Beatrice may speak to a case of the significance of naming in the novel in connection to the canonical literary tradition with which it allures. Beatrice imparts her name to Dante's (1265– 1321) guide through Paradise in the last book of his epic poem "Divine Comedy" (1307– 21). The effect on Bart of his Beatrice's vanishing could be regarded as a disruption of Dante's Beatrice job, in that Bart descends into an individual hellfire as a result of losing her.

Last but not least, it is noteworthy to indicate that one can observe Selvon's novel in a complex intertextual negotiation with more canonical forms of literature; it encompasses various allusions and quotes that hint to famous cases or characters in a variety of fields. Such abundance of signs adorned the novel with an extra aesthetic layer; the very same signs are stated by Eco in his debut novel *The Name of the Rose* (1980):

The good of a book lies in its being read. A book is made up of signs that speak of other signs, which in their turn speak of things. Without an eye to read them, a book contains signs that produce no concepts; therefore it is dumb (p. 255).

An appropriate interpretation of those intertwining signs has shown that Selvon skillfully conveyed the themes of alienation, illusion and racial prejudice via the techniques of intertextuality.

Conclusion

This paper provided a survey about intertextuality and attempted to explore the intertextual dimensions between *The Lonely Londoners* and other canonical works using allusion and quotation. With that said, one cannot help but assert that Sam Selvon, with his Dickensian style and crafty use of both language and dialect, has successfully used the textual correlations in *The Lonely Londoners* as the frisson that kindled the fire of appreciation among his readers. It is also worthwhile to mention that just two years after *The Lonely Londoners* first appeared, racial tensions erupted into violence in both Notting Hill in London, and Nottingham; a disturbing aspect of the British society that sounds as distant in time as Scrooge's Ghost of Christmas Past, yet, the British people, natives and immigrants, never ceased to have Great Expectations for their future.

About the Authors:

Mohammed Amine Belaid is a doctoral student at Abou Bekr Belkaid University of Tlemcen majoring in comparative literature. He holds a master degree in Anglo-Saxon literature and civilization from the same university. He worked as an ESP (English for specific purposes) teacher at his alma mater and he currently works as an assistant teacher of English literary studies at the department of English, Abou Bekr Belkaid University of Tlemcen, Algeria.

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1318-1034>

Wassila Hamza Reguig-Mouro is assistant professor at the department of English, University of AbouBekr Belakid Tlemcen. She holds a PhD in Literature and Civilization as well as a

habilitation. Her research interests are mostly literary and turn around Postmodernism (metafiction, intertextuality, dialogism and narration...), Women's Writing, Postcolonial literature and the Victorian era.: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5011-3551>

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