



Counter-terrorism in Wilbur Smith's *those in peril*

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Abstract:

Drawing upon Cathy Caruth's trauma theory and Postcolonialism, this paper critically discusses the complex issue of counterterrorism and its psychological burdens on the victims' lives. Actually, Smith's narrative constructs the Western counterterrorist forces as lacking efficient powers in protecting the civilians despite the gilt-edge presence of their security system and intelligence agencies. Yet, this study aims at exposing the State fragility and the responsibility of the Western States in protecting civil lives against the threat of modern terrorism. It also frames the intersection of State efforts and private security forces through Hector Cross, the head of the Bannock security service, in their attempt to definitively curb terrorism and blood foe against the Somalian terrorist cell. The study also reads terrorism and counterterrorism as the continuity of colonial and neo-colonial power struggle between the Middle-East and Western countries. Finally, this paper aims at exploring the mental state of the victims as well as the therapeutic methods used to cure the mental illness.

Keyword: counterterrorism, trauma, healing, Wilbur Smith, terrorism studies, postcolonialism

La lutte contre le terrorisme dans *Ceux qui sont en péril* de Wilbur Smith

Résumé :

S'appuyant sur la théorie du traumatisme de Cathy Caruth et le postcolonialisme, cet article examine de manière critique la question complexe de la lutte contre le terrorisme et son impact psychologique sur la vie des victimes. En réalité, le récit de Smith présente les forces antiterroristes occidentales

comme dépourvues de pouvoirs efficaces pour protéger les civils, malgré la présence prestigieuse de leur système de sécurité et de leurs agences de renseignement. Cette étude vise toutefois à mettre en évidence la fragilité de l'État et la responsabilité des États occidentaux dans la protection des vies civiles contre la menace du terrorisme moderne. Elle examine également l'intersection entre les efforts de l'État et les forces de sécurité privées à travers le personnage d'Hector Cross, chef des services de sécurité de Bannock, dans leur tentative de mettre définitivement fin au terrorisme et à leur ennemi juré, la cellule terroriste somalienne. L'étude considère également le terrorisme et la lutte contre le terrorisme comme la continuation de la lutte pour le pouvoir coloniale et néocoloniale entre le Moyen-Orient et les pays occidentaux. Enfin, cet article vise à explorer l'état mental des victimes ainsi que les méthodes thérapeutiques utilisées pour soigner les maladies mentales.

Mots-clés : *lutte contre le terrorisme, traumatisme, guérison, Wilbur Smith, études sur le terrorisme, postcolonialisme*



Introduction

On the verge of the twenty first century, the world finds itself in the midst of a seismic shift. A series of terrorist attacks has hit a lot of European capital cities in general including London and Washington, often killing hundreds of innocent citizens. To the British Home Secretary's mind, "every death from terrorism is a tragedy. The impact on survivors, witnesses, and loved ones endures. The effects of a terrorist attack for these individuals can be felt in many ways, including life changing injuries, post-traumatic stress and anxiety, and financial hardship" (Contest, 2023: 8).

The dire consequences of these tragedies, on people both individually and collectively, on economy, politics as well as on the cultural realms, visibly demonstrate that no one is safe from terrorism¹. The frenzied terrorist attacks are mounted, planned before being performed from one country to another by individuals or groups of people whose motivations are, most of the time, to retaliate against Western hegemony through their military operations. One of the most recent and deadliest terrorist assault on the U.S

¹ There is still no international standard definition of terrorism. However, some scholars and governmental agencies have tried to formulate their own definitions of the term. As to Samuel Appiah, 'terrorism' may be referred to as "the use or threat of violence by an individual or group, whether acting for or in opposition to an established authority, when such action was designed to create extreme anxiety and /or fear including effect in a target group larger than the immediate victim, with the purpose of coercing that group into acceding to the political demands of the perpetrators." In the same vein, Franck Fanon defines terrorism as "a political violence which involves an international willingness... [though] unfortunately [but] necessary." (Alex Houen, 2002: 7)

territories, for instance, is the 9/11 airlines flight 77 crash into the Pentagon, highlighting the State fragility and failure in protecting the civilians against the terrorist threat. Accordingly, in view of disrupting early or/and late-stage terror plot in the Western States, the governments and law enforcements often rely on private military companies to marshal effective response to counterterrorism.

In Britain, the 9/11 attacks urged a lot of security experts, scholars and fiction writers to comprehensively understand whatever threats hurt them and/or break social order or peace. The publication of tens of creative works in poetry and fiction clearly testify to their commitment with society to face terrorism and its effects. Among them, Wilbur Smith's *Those in Peril* explores high-stakes action with geopolitical themes about global terrorism, framing the counterterrorism response not as a government initiative but as a ruthless campaign of vengeance led by Hector Cross's private security forces. The novel presents cases studies of Cayla's double hostage-taking and assassinations plots on the American territories, animadverting its full implication in the protection of its citizens and interests overseas.

Smith's literary text outsources terrorism and counterterrorism as the continuity to a colonial and neo-colonial debt between the Somalian terrorist cell and the Westerners, seeking retaliation of an old blood feud in America. The narrative constructs counterterrorism as personal struggle, suggesting that terrorism is not just a global issue but also as one that invades the intimate spaces of family lives.

As such, this paper intends to analyse the responsibility of the Western States in protecting civil lives against terrorist attacks. It is devoted to the exploration of the intersection of



State efforts and private security forces through Hector Cross, the head of the Bannock security service, in their attempt to definitively curb terrorism and blood foe against the Somalian terrorist cell. Then, this study also explores the mental state of the victims as well as the therapeutic methods used to cure the mental illness.

Therefore, in order to reach these targeted objectives, this study focuses on the following questions: In what way does terrorism and counterterrorism intersect with personal and family lives? How does Smith's novel portrays the role of private security forces in supplementing State counterterrorism efforts? What are the psycho/eco-therapeutic strategies devised to counterterrorism and its effects on the victims' lives?

This paper rests on postcolonialism, as the backbone of the study, to address the opposing cultural and racial ideologies in the context of global terrorism, examining the way terrorism and counterterrorism are framed within global power hierarchy. It helps in investigating the anticolonial stance of the Somalian terrorist to perpetrate kidnapping and murder on the American territories. Then, this study also contends to evaluate and analyse the ways terrorism affects the brain structure and environment of the victims.

1- The Western Implication in the War on Terror

Smith, by vividly recalling the anticolonial discourse of the "demonization" of the western countries, in the narrative, critically assesses the security level of the domestic states. Despite the gilt-edge presence of the security system and intelligence agencies of the Western States, including the United States of America, there still exist threatening

security breaches that jeopardize the lives of the citizens. Terrorism, today, intrudes in the lives of ordinary peoples like a virus, affecting the whole social life. As to Ruth Mayer, another way of looking at the challenge is to view international terrorism as analogous to a terrible, lethal virus. Terrorism lives as part of the environment. Sometime dormant, sometime virulent, it is always present in some form. Like a virus, terrorism respects no boundaries – moving from countries to countries, exploiting globalized commerce and communication to spread. It can be particularly malevolent when it can find a supportive host. We therefore need to take appropriate prophylactic measures at home and abroad to prevent terrorism from multiplying and check it from infecting our societies and damaging our lives (Ruth Mayer, 2007: 5).

The rhetoric of the virology of terrorism in our today's world is persistent, either dormant or virulent, instilling a climate of fear much more alarming than one of the body politic about to be infected by alien pathogens. 'They' [terrorists] live among us, "they are educated, some at universities in the West, "some of them enjoyed [life in the suburbs along with afternoons at the gym, rum and cokes by night, and trips to Las Vegas" – and all of a sudden they turn against "us" and "lash out" (Ruth Mayer, 2007: 6). The United States of America, just like other European countries, remains a potential target for terrorists to thrive. To Gerald Chaliand and Arnaud Blin, "terror remains suspended like a sword in the times of peace over the heads" of all the European citizens" (Gerard Chaliand and Arnaud Blin, 2007: vii).

Smith, in the narrative, places special emphasis on the case story of the kidnapping of Cayla Bannock, an American heiress of the Bannock's family, as a material witness of the



weakness of the security policy. Cayla's predicament in the Indian Ocean potentially reveals the lack of protection of the American citizens in the international sphere. Colonel Robert, even, ironizes on the insidious threat she may confront with when he emphasizes, without any expertise, that the family yacht may have sunk, a caustic remark that plunges her family in despair. Even if she does not believe in that plausible hypothesis, as her maternal instinct is dictating the opposite feeling, she harbours the doubts on her cherished daughter's disappearance.

Hazel's alternative choice to refer to her private security, Hector Cross security, provides a strong signal to the failure of the American government to ensure a real sense of protection to Cayla. Hector Cross, even, goes further in sustaining that:

They will declare policy is never to negotiate with terrorists. When it comes down to the use of force they have burned their fingers too often already. Remember the seizure of the U.S embassy in Teheran and *Black Hawk Down*, the film about the helicopter attack on the terror base in Mogadishu. They have learned bitter lessons. They won't negotiate and they cannot and will not use force. You can thank God for that. If the marines go storming in it will be the end of Cayla Bannock (*T.P.85*).

To Cross's mind, the repetitive failures of the American forces in the war on terror can readily denote the deep shame or their inability to counter the jihadist threat. From a geopolitical perspective, this narrative sequence comes to pinpoint their lack of interest in placing a high priority on Cayla's rescue in the Somalian waters. Carrying out a full engagement, to them may have potentially proven a risky operation that would complicate the diplomatic relations

between both antagonist forces. Yet, by proscribing any diplomatic negotiation with terrorists, the American government would have found some pretext to hide their failure in their fight against the Middle East.

Cayla's second kidnapping at the Vet School in Denver heavily illustrates the lack of insecurity of the American's citizens. Her sudden loss, even, alerts her relatives and especially her boyfriend who was unable to situate her position for days. He presumably asserts that she was with her parents in Houston for the holiday weekend. Undoubtedly, Hazel's parents' homicides deeply affect her psyche. This state of mind increases with the presence of a mysterious object with an enclosed envelop she found in her bedroom. The discovering of the strange objects threatens her to death as while screaming, "she began to urinate in a hot gush down her legs. She opened her mouth to scream again, but a powerful projectile stream of yellow vomit shot out to her mouth and cascaded halfway across the tiled floor (*T.P.*325). The same diagnostic can be done for Hector Cross when he bursts into the room, alerted by her scream. He is terribly shocked by the sight of the content of the two jars,

It took him a moment to understand what he was looking at. A disembodied human head floated in each jar filled with colourless preservative spirit. In the left-hand one was the head of Grace Nelson. Her eyes were closed and her skin yellow with age, bagging and pouched [...] she looked very old, as if she had been dead a hundred years. In the right-hand jar was the head of Cayla Bannock. Her eyes were open. They seemed to be looking at him [...] Her skin was pale, but smooth and flawless. Her hair floated around her face in a golden cloud. It seemed as though she had just woken from a deep sleep. He knew if he looked



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upon her loveliness for another instant his heart would break (*T.P.326*).

The gruesome sight of the “disembodied human head floated in each jar” generates deep emotional trauma in his inner. He did not feel ready to burst onto such a dread until he swallows his ego to take notice of the letter behind the jars. He soon discovers that the anonymous letters are issued from the Tippoo clan in renewal for the blood feud, revealing that “the blood debt is four. Two heads taken and two more to take before the debt is paid in full” (*T.P.327*).

Even worst, the sense of insecurity of the American citizens becomes more pronounced in the novel with the homicide of Grace Nelson, Hazel’s mother, and Cayla’s second case of kidnapping. According to Uncle John, Grace’s husband, “there was an intruder. He poisoned the dog, and somehow managed to short-circuit the alarm system. Then, he murders her. Her corpse is decapitated and her head is taken by the killer (*T.P.319*). This barbaric murder is attributed to the “beast”, an allegorical expression used to refer to the terrorists (*T.P.320*). The symbolic representation of Grace’s murder suggests an ideological antagonism between the west and the Middle East.

The double murder of Grace Nelson and Cayla Bannock comes to raise some interrogations: how can Adam succeed in reaching them from Africa to America, two continents separated by thousands of miles? Or else, why do the police forces have not been able to arrest the perpetrators of that horrible attacks? The narrator, through the British protagonist, Hector Cross, pieces together the puzzles of the manoeuvrability of the terrorist operation into two causative factors. One is closely tied to “conspiracy”. To Hector, the

terrorists are represented in almost all the domain of human life. "there are literally hundreds of service people who have access: contract gardening service teams, delivery people bringing supplies, daily hired hands, meter readers, plumbers, painters, electricians and all the other" (T.P.329). The huge body of Hazel's workforce in her Houston Ranch possibly offers considerable opportunities to the terrorists to infiltrate her space. Accordingly, anyone can be suspected to be a terrorist agent working for the Tip clan.

Hector Cross, in his discourse, also advances on the theory of "dual identity" to elucidate the hideous crime. He emphasizes on the discrimination of the foreigners in the American territories as feeding the hatred against America. In Hector's words, a great majority of the American citizenries conceal a secret identity. "These peoples are all Americans. Plus, Latinos, Europeans, Asians, Africans and other immigrants of twenty different nationalities [...] including Somalian from Puntland" (T.P.329). Reading from this perspective, Smith problematizes the partisanship of the Somalian people as something having a firm affinity with terrorist sleeper cell in the Western countries. He also raises the difficulty of the security experts in distinguishing ordinary people from the real partisans of terrorism. The narrative points at the issues of citizenship and nationalism of the second-generation immigrants as one of the structural problem of insecurity in America.

The second-generation immigrants often identified as "in between" people, belonging to neither heritage culture nor the culture of the host country within which they are living in, feel marginalized. The blatant racial discrimination misdirects them into the radicalization of terrorism. Building



on it, this was meant to guarantee and offer them a sense of love and life purpose.

Recruiters of the sleeper cells, most of the time, directly target second-generation immigrants to embark on their Jihadist projects. This, indeed, is due to the fact that potential recruits are on the search for a sense of belonging. As for Sarah Lyons-Padilla *et al.*, “frustration, humiliation, discrimination, marginalization and personal trauma of the first-and-second generation of migrants trigger a feeling of loss of self-worth, which may be designated as “significance loss” (Sarah Lyons-Padilla *et al.*, 2015:2). Having experienced such feeling of loss of significance, those individuals are inclined to opportunities so that to restore and renew their sense of significance in the society, finding solutions to their identity crisis.

The identity crisis combined with the economic situation of Somalia greatly participate to the radicalization of those marginalized immigrants. The regulatory restriction to the second-generation of immigrant to the citizen status sets up condition for partisanship. The claiming to membership for terrorist cells is strongly generated by strong negative sentiments of individuals toward foreigners under the conception of xenophobia. These states of fact pose a concern for the perception of national identity and ethnic national identity as opposed to civic national identity.

Hector Cross offers a visual representation of the flow of refugees in the Western countries as potential explanation for understanding the Somalians’ implication in the terrorist operation in America. To Hector,

Canada alone has over a quarter of a million Somalians who have entered that country legally, and the US-Canadian border is wide open. Your mother’s

country, South Africa, is flooded with refugees from the north of the continent. Not only Zimbabweans and Malawians but huge numbers of Nigerians and Somalians. Most of the Somalians are from Puntland and they are still under the sway of Tippoo Tip. If the police ever catch those involved in the murder of Grace and Cayla, they will be very small fish who will not even know who it was that ordered the killing (*T.P.330*).

The whole body of the Somalian refugees, in this passage, constitutes a strong community to be exploited by the terrorists from recruitment. Those refugees, mostly younger, are exclusively employed as “Trojan horses” to carry out their operations. This, so to speak, can partly be explained by the fact that those desperate people are emotionally vulnerable to be served as sleeper agents. “The arrival of large refugee populations, when not properly handled increases the risk of attacks in the recipient country by both domestic and transnational terrorists” (Alex P. Schmid, 2016: 4). In the narrative, Somalian refugees symbolically represent high-value target of the terrorist networks working under Adam Tippoo’s orders. Hector Cross, even, acknowledges that,

Adam has placed a price on the heads of my wife and myself and sworn an oath before Allah that he will have us killed, just as he killed the other innocent members of our families. We seek retribution for the dead, and we seek safety for ourselves and for all other law-abiding men and women who ply the oceans. We have been lulled into a false sense of security, believing that we were protected by distance from his little empire in Puntland, and protected also by the law enforcement of this land in which we live. Adam has shown us that he has the power to strike at us wherever we may be (*T.P.336*).



“The price placed” on the American citizens, from remote area, reflects the imminent danger that jeopardize their lives. That sense of deep-seated insecurity is backed up by the complicity of some of the police forces in the Western countries. They certainly know that they lives are not safe until they have shed the snake’s neck in the strict tradition of the blood feud settled between them and the Tippoo’s clan. Adam’s partisans living in America would seek to threaten their lives to death. Hector recognizes that “this is not the end of the business. Adam has only just begun. He has thousands of underlings to send against us. It is useless to cut off the tentacles of the Beast. They grow back swiftly. I have to cut off its head” (*T.P.330*). He is fully aware of the fact that they are now in mortal danger. Yet, one of the best option to survive is to take the struggle to his own hands.

Smith, by plotting the awful predicament of the protagonists tends to draw decision makers’ attention to take step to enforce effective anti-terrorism laws and measures to secure individual liberties in the Western worlds. The narrative advocates deeper implication of the Western nations in the fight against terror, pushing the readers to side with and valorise counterterrorist actions. Yet, what are the effective psychological devices suggested by the author to cope with terrorism?

2. Healing Trauma and Terrorism

The concern of the coping mechanism of traumatic experiences of terrorism has always been the concern of lot of literary canons in link with medical field. According to Rita Charon,

The relation between literature and science has fuelled impassioned debate since the Victorian era. This historical conversation continues today [...] literature has joined science in the curriculum. Using literary methods and texts, literary scholars have been teaching medical students and physicians how to listen more fully to patient's narratives of illness and how to better comprehend illness and treatment from patient's point of views" (Rita Charon et al, 1995: 599).

The interconnectedness between literature and sciences suggests a practical tool to teach doctors to pay attention not only to patients' disease but also to their experience of suffering and healing. It deals with the prevention of physical and psychosomatic diseases and maintenance of health by healthcare professional. When a person is sick or does not feel well, for instance, he naturally relies on physicians and human recognition of their suffering to provide them medical treatments.

Cayla Bannock's admission to the hospital following the sexual trauma she experienced through her gang rape by the hands of the terrorists during her captivity provides a sound illustration to the legitimacy of the medical treatment. In the narrative, Cayla is immediately submitted to a medical check after being rescued from captivity. She is, automatically taken in charge by the Bannock Oil Company doctor, declaring that, 'Physically she is doing well enough' he pronounced. 'The antibiotics that Mr Cross administered seem to have taken care of the food poisoning during her captivity. Her psychological state seems much more precarious (*T.P.265*).

At the great expense of Cayla, her physical state seems to be acceptable, except her psychological condition. They are urged to go for a top specialist as soon as possible. The doctor's



reaction, here, comes to demonstrate that in time of warfare, the psychological state seem to be capital in the therapy of the traumatised victim. While her body is healing, her mind seems to be unstable. The trauma of her captivity deeply left emotional and psychological wounds on her psyche. The persistent return of Cayla's experiences from the Posttraumatic Stress Disorder through nightmare, bring her mother to rely on the expertise of a therapist.

The deliberate choice of Doctor Thelma Henderson, one of the most trusted aid, is closely guided by some reasons. It is meant to create emotional attachment with her patient through sympathy and effective care. As a young and lovely psychotherapist, Henderson's personality meshes well with Cayla's. Doctor Henderson is a lovely lady. The very best there is. "She got me back on track after Henry died. She has taken Cayla into her sanatorium where she can see her as many times a day as is necessary. While she's there Cayla will have a full medical check-up and I will make time to spend at least a couple of hours with her every day" (*T.P.* 274).

Cayla's full medical check-up reveals a presence of a viral infection. She is suffering from a vaginal fistula which has even required a surgical intervention. In Hazel's words, "The doctor has repaired it surgically. But while they were doing so, they discovered that she was in the very early stage of pregnancy. They fixed that also. Cayla was under total anaesthetic and she doesn't know anything about that part of it. We must never tell her" (*T.P.*277). The narrator, even, ironizes on her incapacity in suspecting that part of it until the diagnosis of the doctor. This indicates a strong sense of innocence in which the only alternative she was offered is "abortion".

The first tests show that Cayla is not infested with HIV or any other sexually transmitted disease, and she is recovering well from the surgery. Thelma Henderson is working her special brand of miracle over her. Cayla trusts her. Apart from the terrible traumatic events that my baby has suffered, she is also consumed by guilt. According to Thelma, Cayla believes that she has betrayed both my trust and her father's memory [...] However, Thelma has made significant progress with her. No more nightmares for a while. She says that Cayla will soon be fit enough to group to the ranch in Colorado with us (*T.P.277*).

On top of the psychotropic medication, Cayla also benefits from her parents' assistance, providing her love and a safe environment for her mental well-being. Andrew Powel notes that,

all good therapy works by offering a safe environment in which the client or patient is helped to become aware of how their defence mechanisms have taken over, and how to begin dismantling them. As this takes place, emotional sensibility is heightened for the underlying pain has to be faced. This is done for the support and concern of the therapist much as a mother will attend to her child in distress (Andrew Powell, 2003:3).

He emphasises on love as a potent feeling to ensure her maternal security. During the term of her recovery, she was taken to pay a visit to her father's mausoleum and of course all the horses of the ranch (*T.P.285*). They also initiate some leisure-time activities including "fishing" and "horsing" so that to create in her cheerful mood. The narrator reflects on "fishing and horsing" as therapeutic tool especially designed to cure the mental illness of Cayla and restore her state of mind.



The fishing activity consists in catching beforehand fished and then release them into the river. The imagery of fish, in the narrative, comes to be taken as a symbol of profound life representing life-force. It is heavily rich in religious/spiritual symbolism. The fish is a spiritual and psychic being, or a “penetrative motion” endowed with a “heightening” power concerning base matters- that is, in the unconscious. Because of the close relationship between the sea and the *Magna Mater*, some people have held the fish to be sacred (J.E. Cirlot, 1962: 106). Fishing game is meant to purify the unconscious of Cayla from the deep-lying sources and teaching her pearls of wisdom as it is illuminated through her change of behavioural pattern.

“Horse”, in the same way, represents a symbol of cosmic force that surge out the mind of the patient. Reading from a bio-psychological perspective, “horsing” game denotes intense desires and instincts, in accordance with the general symbolism of the steed-and the vehicle. The horse game symbolism, especially in the form of a pair of horse: white and black, used as a vehicle indicates the impression of life and death as it is endowed with power of divination. It provides a spiritual connection with the horse rider, giving him/her a sense of well-being and magical aspect. “Horsing” game, therefore, plays a fundamental role in the metamorphosis of Cayla’s subconscious. Hazel Bannock notices that metamorphosis on the back of the great animal, looking at the expression of her face totally transformed “with an almost palpable ecstasy [...] Her hands on the reins were quick and strong. Her abused body seemed whole again. She is totally transformed (*T.P.286*).

The 'horsing' game also seems to confer a spiritual power to her mind. The allegory of Cayla's many-levelled transformation of illness accrues with her strong freedom of decision-taking in learning veterinary medicine. She is now granted the free latitude to take all the decision concerning her life, which was not the case in the recent past. Cayla's ethos for the horse develops through her sensibility to study animals, a decision which contrasts with her mother's conception to learn artistic field at the Université des Beaux-art. Her motivation to register herself at Colorado State University College of Veterinary Medicine to specialize in the field of "large animals" is meaningful. Extremely renowned for its extraordinary rocky mountain and natural landscape, the Colorado State provides ample ammunition to Cayla to re-connect herself with the ecological diversity of the country which infuses a sense of psychological well-being to her mind. Cayla's connection to the ecosystem heavily contribute to her healing process.

Cayla's results came in at the end of her penultimate year of Vet School. She finished third out of a class of thirty-six. Thelma Henderson, her psychiatrist, pronounced that Cayla was completely healed. She had put on a little weight and the flesh healthy young blood gave her skin a glow again. Hazel's happiness was complete" (*T.P.297*).

Hazel is particularly delighted on the fact that her daughter is now safe from those horrors far away in distance and time. The praiseworthiness of the change of attitude is greatly attributed to the medical assistance, and sense of moral assistance and love provided by her parents. She, even, succeeds in re-building a new relationship from the same academic field of medicine. Cayla's erotic transference symbolically consists in repressing from her mind the traumatic effects related to the gang rape she



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has terribly suffered from. Medical care just like love therapy hammer out a great deal of importance in the mental cure of the survivors of the terrorist victims or political violence.

Smith, in the narrative, also fosters intercultural exchange communication as a crucial peace building initiative to counterterrorism. To Smith's mind, those exclusive prerogative greatly contribute to reinforce peaceful resolution and reconciliation of the antagonistic forces in the war on terror. The narrator formally initiates a discursive narrative exchange between Hector Cross and his traditional enemy, Adam Tippoo, a way to establish an inter-cultural exchange between both dialectic forces. This platform of inter-cultural exchange intervenes at the end of the novel to unveil the motivation of the terrorists. The narrator tries to reconcile belligerent forces through the ideal of polite requests and public apologizes from the part of the aggressors.

By initiating dialogue between Hazel Bannock, who terribly suffered from the double loss of her sibling, and her hangmen tries to raise the readers' awareness on the necessity to promote dialogue as a prerequisite to resolve conflicts. To Adam's words, "it was my duty. I only did what was my duty to Allah and my ancestors. Please understand. Please have mercy" (*T.P.452*). The religious leader, Adam Tippoo, entirely disclaimed the responsibility for all the countless atrocities and acts of piracy, rape and gruesome murder he committed against the numerous families. In his own view, what he has done was just to keep alive the centuries-old tradition that has been transferred from generation to generations. This is why he is begging the audience's indulgence for a mercy.

Smith, in the novel, also postulates on military effectiveness as one of the optimal solution to counter-attack terrorism, enhanced through the role of media and transatlantic alliance. To James D. Fearon, "International institutions might serve to extend the shadow of the future by regularizing interactions and to facilitate the information flows and monitoring necessary to make mechanism of conditional retaliations work" (James D. Fearon, 1998: 270). The fictionalization of the international cooperation is crystallized through Hector Cross and the Emir Abu Zahara, showing the capital importance of the close relationship in sharing reliable intelligence.

As the leader of the Bannock Oil Security in Abu Zara, Hector Cross, for instance is the one who builds strong reputation in establishing a nationwide network of cooperation useful for preventing a potential terrorist attack in the Gulf of Aden. He succeeds to bargain a privileged relationship with the local authorities of the nations including the Emir of Abu Zara, Prince Farid al-Mazra, a trustworthy associate of the Bannock Oil. Additionally, he also succeeds in forging strong alliance with "the head of the Abu Zara force, Prince Muhammad, who was the brother in law of the Emir. Prince Muhammad's intelligence was strong and three years previously he had alerted Hector to an impending seaborne attack" (*T.P.*9).

They conjointly work together to preserve peace and stability in the region as proven by the codified military manoeuvre under the cryptogram of "Operation Lampos" launched by Hector and his men. Ideology, "Operation Lampos", from Greek meaning "shining Light", was not only the name of "Hector's warhorse in the classical mythology of



Virgil Homer, but it was also the name that Cayla has chosen for her favourite palomino mare" (*T.P.332*).

Hector's counterterrorist assault symbolically functions as a repressive apparatus deployed to ensure peacebuilding security to the world. It does not only suggest a full-scale engagement on the "war on terror", but rather an elaboration of a proactive strategy put in place to distract his enemies. Hector clearly explains that, "Lamos, becomes the Trojan Horse! [They] are going to send Adam a little bit more than just a billion-dollar ship and a million cubic metres of natural gas (*T.P.339*).

By plotting the "Lamos Operation" as a Trojan Horse, the narrator obviously seeks to draw an analogy with the Greek mythology of the downfall of Troy, in which he idealized Hector Cross as a Greek hero character to mean "holding fast" or to "have". "Trojan Horse" comes to be visualized as a crafty contraption built up to defeat Adam's bastion by cunningly inviting a foe into his territories on board of the *Golden Goose*. It is one of the largest super tanker of the Bannock Oil meant to be served as a valuable commodity to bait an irresistible honey-trap for Adam (*T.P.337*). Hector's plan of attack consists in hiding on board of that board, a selected force of men inside the Arab world. Using this first-hand evidence, they have come to believe for certainty that Adam would have sought to take possession of that super tanker in the ultimate goal to increase the extent of his wealth.

On top of that, Media also plays a great role in the operationalisation of the agenda as a vehicle of propaganda. In the word of Lee Artz's mind,

Propaganda can best be understood as a systematic campaign of persuasion through the control of information. It is more than the expression of an ideological perspective. Propaganda is coordinated, organised communication. It may be desired or opposed, but as a form of persuasion, propaganda always attempts to control the flow of information. In the mass mediated, technologically-rich 21st century, control of information means propaganda cannot be successful without media participation (Lee Artz, 2011: 2).

Often overlooked as the “fourth power of a state”, media is a powerful network of information. Hector relies on media coverage, in his plan, to prepare the grounds for war. Using Al-Jazeera TV channel as an ideological weapon to arrange massive publicity, Hector intentionally seeks to persuade the leader of the terrorist faction, to see the *Golden Goose* as an easy prey. As such, a public campaign of propaganda was mounted in the presence of the allying media coverage and personalities of the Middle-East to give some bias information to attract their enemies. The few nuggets of information on the content of the cargo, its itinerary, and identities of the passengers, including both Hazel and his husband, was publicly divulged. The operation also take into account the incorporation of a concealed sophisticated weapon composed of battery of artillery, AAVS-Amphibious Assault Vehicles and Hydraulic cranes on travelling and human resource from different parts of the world.

Definitively, Hector’s military campaign results in the killing of Uthmann Waddah, Adam’s prime commander in chief. His death resonates in the novel as a retribution to all the wrong things he did to them. Uthmann Waddah was given a ghastly burial as his mangled corpse was dragged



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into the sea to be offered to the sharks (*T.P.430*). The tasty smell of the blood from his wounds attracted the sharks.

The shark did not rush in it at once, but it followed Uthmann cautiously until another larger shark rose out of the green waters. The one goaded the other and together they charged in. The larger opened its jaws in a cavernous gape and then bit down into Uthmann's shattered ankle [...] The sharks dragged under [...] It didn't take very long. Each time Uthmann came to the surface his struggles were weaker and his screams feebler. The water around him darkened with his blood (*T.P. 430-431*).

Uthmann's grisly scene of shark attack in the sea betokens the devastating of Hector's military operation in Somalia. His body has been completely dissembled by the shark attack. As far as the Sheik Adam Tippoo, the leader of the Islamic movement, is concerned he was rather kept unconscious in one of the compartments of the CO₂ gas especially managed for his captivity (*T.P.441*). He was then killed by the own hands of Hazel Bannock following a throughout discussion that they held. "She lowered the pistol and aimed at the back of Adam's head. Her hands were suddenly rock steady and she was no longer sobbing. She fired a single shot. Afterward, there was no sound except the throbbing beat of the engines" (*T.P.453*). To Hector, "vengeance is a tasteless dish" (*T.P.431*).

The narrator, through Hector Cross, provides a warning message to the readers on the fact that there is no glory in exacting vengeance against one's enemy. This, indeed, may generate a never-ending cycle of violence which may be handed down from one generation to another. From this perspective, the practice of love remains an alternative solution to cure political violence in the world. The rhetoric of love, in the construction of peace-building, denotes an array of actions which reinforce

social relations characterized by values of non-violence. It remains a reliable stimulator for bridging social capital.

Conclusion

All in all, this study aims at discussing the failure of the Western countries with particular focus on the United States of America in protecting their citizens, and therefore, proposing some alternative to counterterrorism. This survey finds at the following results: terrorism, from a geopolitical perspective, emerges as a product of colonial and neo-colonial power struggle between the Middle East and the Westerners. Smith, by blending the terrorist actions of Cayla's kidnapping in the Indian Ocean and the diplomatic relationship, in the novel, seeks to remind the international community on the necessity to prevent attacks and reduce loss of life in the homeland. This study also unearths a clear truth: law enforcement, military operation and love therapy remain potent measures to heal terrorism and cure long-standing animosity existing between human beings from different cultural ideologies.

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