

## **Deconstructing the Sensible Poetic Voices of the Fragmented in Lewis Edward Scott's A Woman Called Maasumaa**

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**Abstract:** The present paper applies deconstructive analysis on L. E. Scott's *A Woman Called Maasumaa* (1995)\*, mainly exploring both thematic and suggestive binary oppositions and signifiers/signifieds. Deconstruction addresses a text as an independent entity and looks into the suggestive structures that formulate the sensible poetic discourse and signify its thematized meanings and ideas. Obviously, deconstruction considers any literary text as an open-ended structure with no center of finite analytic signification. Deconstruction builds its views on Ferdinand de Saussure's concepts of binary oppositions, signs (signifiers/signifieds), and difference. Consequently, deconstructionist reading of a text approaches its possible explosive meanings. Scott is one of those modern poets who courageously express their own thoughts and ideas with exciting ambivalences, mysteries, and contradictions of human existence. The fragmented self and the cynical voices towards objects and people offer a chance for a deconstructive anatomy of Scott's *Maasumaa*. In this light, the current paper thematically explores the structural means composed of signifiers, signifieds, and binary oppositions that signify the poet's ideas of escapism, fragmentation, solitude, and instability.

**Keywords:** Deconstruction, Signs, Signifiers, Signifieds, Binary Oppositions, Fragmentation, Poetic Sensibility.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Deconstruction and Poetry**

L. E. Scott is an African American jazz poet who gained a lot of experiences and knowledge from his travels and reading other cultures. He eventually settled in New Zealand to escape his past for personal, social, and financial reasons. Scott's major human themes include love, gender, death, existence, politics, war, exile, and spirituality based on his own life experiences. On his part, John Thomson states that Scott's exile poetics imply "gentle mediations, almost spiritual ... centered on water, trees, and earth, as well as people ... and balance" [9]. Therefore, Scott's poetics are an inspiring source for deconstruction to reveal their deep signs and binary oppositions that bear his human ideas and experiences. Pinpointing the functions of deconstruction, Jacques Derrida states that it "must always aim at a certain relationship, unperceived by the writer, between what he commands and what he does not command of the patterns of the language that he uses" [7]. Similarly, J. Hillis Miller describes deconstruction as "a mode of interpretation [that] works by a careful and circumspect entering of each textual labyrinth ... [and] is not a dismantling of the structure of a text but a demonstration that it has already dismantled itself. [9]. Both critics emphasize the significance of deconstruction in interpreting literary works from within in the light of their language, signs, and oppositions. Accordingly, deconstructive readers

are interested in tensions, gaps, ironies, aporias, silences, paradoxes, contradictions, conflicts, digressions, ambiguities, puns, multiple meanings, and intertextuality. On her part, Lois Tyson emphasizes the significance of deconstruction in literature; she argues that this theory fosters the ability "to think critically and to see more readily the ways in which our experience is determinate by ideologies" of which readers are not aware [5].

Poetic deconstruction has its own aesthetics that are intertwined together to produce a complete poetic textual entity. Accordingly, this paper traces these aesthetics and components as both signifieds and signifiers in Scott's poems of *Maasumaa* for their aesthetical structural paradigms and thematic manifestations. I choose this collection because it presents dynamic poetic expressions, words, and structures, which offer signifiers and signifieds with diverse meanings and interpretations. In this sense, Yoga Permana [1] states that signifieds imply mental concepts that stand for real things, and signifiers suggest "the sound or image" to imply something else. In addition, Scott is the least studied poet for several reasons: first, he comes from "a different literary background," and his subject matters include the US anxieties and the "political polemic ... charismatic and confrontational manners" [2]. Such reasons made him a less-received poet for his poetic career was troubled and

unsecured, provoking readers' interest to investigate his fragmented poetics.

Modernist poetics are concerned with deconstructive aesthetics for they would produce an implied poetic and thematic discourse rife with oppositional signifiers. Further, they resolve a lot of ambiguities that readers may face while reading and appreciating poems. Therefore, deconstruction exposes the contradictory oppositions of language, showing the mode this text deconstructs itself from within. Furthermore, "to deconstruct a discourse is to show how it undermines the philosophy it asserts or the hierarchical oppositions on which it relies" [3]. Thus, the paper addresses a set of suggestive binary oppositions, signifiers, poetic images, artistic intertextualities, narrative techniques, and contextual and intratextual questions and ambiguities that entail deconstruction. To convey its juxtaposed ideas and themes, *Maasumaa* employs a variety of both binary oppositions and signifiers that entail thematically deep and artistic deconstructive explication.

In addition, various thematic binary opposites such as birth and death, and love and hatred, winner and loser among others dominate *Maasumaa*. Through its multi-layered semantic binaries, *Maasumaa* offers a sensible human tone of pains and passions. In this respect, Peter Mitchell [4] describes Scott's poetics as "embedded in earth tones and dwell in the tortured spirit of a man looking for meaning in difficult times." Moreover, Scott's poetics are lamentative with dark tone of human inevitable absurd mortality. Obviously, the dynamic thematic imagist components in Scott's poetic discourse constitute a structural phenomenon of both signifiers and signifieds that require interpretive deconstruction. Moreover, Scott's poetry is "associated with the New Black poetry" of the 1960s with strong authentic voices that make him "part of the rich heritage of African-American writers' contributing much to the American culture and legacy [2]. Therefore, such dynamic poetic voices establish their thematic implications of vitality and performative structure, suggested by the signifying concepts of absence and presence.

#### **VOICING THE THEMATIC BINARY OPPOSITES OF THE POETIC SELF**

Thematically, binary oppositions constitute a major means to communicate with the other and express the individual thoughts based on the relationships among the components of human existence. Such binary oppositions construct an extended textual drama that feeds the poems with tension, depth, excitement, and dialectique. These oppositions result in cognitive conflicts among the poetic signifiers. Defining a binary opposition as a literary critical term, Paul Inns states that a binary opposition implies "[a] relationship of

opposition and mutual exclusion between two elements: [...] masculine/feminine, cold/heat, or up/down" [10]. Pinpointing its structuralist significance, the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure indicates that "[t]he binary opposition is the means by which the units of language have value or meaning; each unit is defined against what it is not" [11]. Such definite binary oppositions ignite diversified tensions and anxieties in both the readers' and poet's psyches in any human society. Scott's poetic tensions imply his sense of alienation and fragmentation. Moreover, Scott's poetics signify that human life, individually or collectively, is a dramatic conflict between oppositional structures, in which the binary oppositions depict the world as again alienated, subversive, conflicting, grimy, and anarchic. In this respect, Scott's poetry follows "oral-based style" fused with Black jazz and blues, folk cadences, African chants, gospel rhythms, dramatic forms, and the spiritual teachings of the Black church [2].

From this definition, a binary opposition thematically implies a pair of words that suggest two opposed ideas, and readers can realize the significance of each word by the virtue of its opposition/s. For example, readers can conceive the meaning of words such as tall, absence, white, faith, and man by the means of their opposites, short, presence, black, reason, and woman respectively. In this regard, Jonathan Culler affirms, "Deconstruction seeks to undo all oppositions that, in the name of unity, purity, order, and hierarchy, try to eliminate difference" [3].

In poetry, a binary opposition determines the thematic meaning of a word in the light of its opposites, creating a poetic significant tension that entails deconstruction. Thus, in deconstruction, analytically reading a poem "rests on a binary opposition in which one member of the pair is privileged over the other" [5]. In this sense, *Maasumaa* presents self-deconstructive poems that bring sensibly suggestive common binary oppositions such as good/bad; past/present; absent/present; good/corrupt; love/hate; love/lust; hopefulness/hopelessness among others. Furthermore, Scott presents his ideology by evoking significant words like life, voices, mouths, sunlight, warmth, shadows, and jailer as signifiers that evoke meaningful and suggestive oppositions that bear multiple signifieds. Such semantic mobility creates Scott's poetic world of confusion, fragmentation, and alienation. Certainly, Scott's binary opposites signify "real life absurdities - a sort of ironic satire of both language and behavior" [6]. In this respect, "Reading ... can't legitimately transgress the text toward something other than it ... or toward a signified outside the text whose content could take place could have taken place, outside of language ... in the sense that we give here to that word, outside of writing in general ... There is nothing outside of the text" [7]. In this light, deconstructing a text means

exploring its signification system of oppositions and tensions from within, as a text is a unique informative entity.

### THE DYNAMICITY OF THE POETIC BINARY OPPOSITIONS IN *MAASUMAA*

The dynamicity of the poetic binary oppositions in *Maasumaa* seems a consistent form of the poetic expectational tone. For example, the speaker presents poetic structures based on the present and past verbs as opposites,

There is this early morning hurt  
That has nothing to do with the day before  
But it gives birth to the coming one (*Wake - Day by Day*: 5)

This implied themato-poetic discourse does not refer to the present content with specific chronotropic significance. Rather, it signifies temporal facets that involve textual signifying perspectives, manifested in the opposition-bearing metaphorical words of “early morning, hurt, the day before, birth, and the coming one.” Evoking binary oppositions, Scott centers his poetics on themes of “a memoir about family, friends, and love,” among other ideas [6]. Also, such oppositional words signify the fragmented psyche of the poet who becomes a representative of modern man who experiences similar pains and passions. In this sense, Scott condenses his binary oppositions to reflect daily human life thematically poeticized in *Maasumaa*. Moreover, Scott’s binary oppositions create a deep transformation in his poetic structures of oppositional dynamicity that suggests the poetic self’s mental and intellectual instability. Positively, Scott makes his poetry speak loud to convey his sense of being and of self-realization. Therefore, Scott gives deeper insights about human realities, concerns, and dreams. In this concern, Scott reflects on “Personal poetic realities [that] are artifices constructed out of pieces of the truth [which] the poetic deconstruction of reality allows us to better see its essences” [4]. Thus, Scott represents modern man who loses faith in reality, truth, self, other, and future.

Moreover, the thematic semantics proliferation in Scott’s poetics indicates that there are certain aesthetic pauses of stability resulting from the diachronically poetic moment manifested in “there/this/pain/since morning.” Accordingly, the thematic content of the binary chronotope refers to the suggestive coupling of both time and place in the poem, “present/absent/time/manual” in their oppositional tone. However, these tempo-spatial tools exist in the poetic spirit of the perspectival communication with textual explicit implications. As a result, the dynamicity of the oppositional poetic semantics fuses the diversified flashbacks and the expected relationships of proximity

and remoteness to expose the poetic fragmented self and the painful presentism of the text itself. In this light, Scott offers poems of a human mental and emotional dynamicity composed of words as signifiers that reflect the way of thinking and the nature of feelings.

In *Maasumaa*, Scott presents diverse binary oppositions to express his sensible thoughts, using words like “morning, day, night, tomorrow, memories, amnesia.” Such suggestive words highlight a human conflict that manifests the oppositional pattern in rejecting modern life details and contradictions. In *Memories of You Maasumaa*, Scott cries,

Morning, day, night, kiss each other  
Exchanging memories  
If tomorrow comes with amnesia  
I shall be free of you (p. 39)

These contextual contradictions highlight the concepts of (past/present), which Scott illustrates in two contradictory images. One image, “memories,” signifies the mode of sarcasm, and the other image, “kiss each other,” suggests the appraised. Here, the poet presents his good character “I” as an antithesis of the other “you,” a mechanism that dominates *Maasumaa*. Such presentation of despair arises from the intersection between past and present, which apparently collide and mock each other. In this sense, binary oppositions create an internal tension that intensifies feelings of fragmentation. In “*Ownership*,” Scott mentions, “a taste from yesterday” and “a living grave with flesh” to suggest the antitheses of “grave” as life-after-death and of “yesterday” as everyday/immortality. Thus, the poetic center revolves around the binaries of life/death and strength/weakness [8]. Similarly, in “*Picture*,” Scott centers his poetics on the binary oppositions of “you were once a dream” and “now you are a shadow” to reveal a binary opposition that creates a tension between virtuous past and wicked present or reality and illusion [8].

### THE POETICS OF SIGNIFIERS AND SIGNIFIEDS OF THE FRAGMENTED SELF

Modern poetics heavily rely on metaphorical signs in human languages. In this sense, Saussure emphasizes that any language consists of a system of signs that “are in first instance arbitrary---after which they have become conventions--- and have not taken their specific form because of what they mean, but to be different from other signs” [11]. Meanwhile, Derrida divides the sign into a signifier (sound) and a signified (meaning). Every signified becomes a signifier in an infinite chain of signifiers. The sign, which exists for Derrida under “erasure,” derives meanings through its “trace” in relation to other signs [7]. Apparently, the concern of both critics is the semantic signs of language that have a binary body of signifiers and signifieds.

Meanwhile, the French literary theorist Ronald Barthes defines the signified as “the mental representation of a thing . . . a concept” that entails deconstruction [12].

Based on this ground, the point of delivering such poetic anecdotal components starts through a rhetorical trope of implicit reflections; the poet says,

Every sound has something to do with you  
Waking  
Wind shaking the door  
Window curtains slightly moving  
Water running somewhere (*Sounds*, p. 10)

Such reflections result from thematic dynamics of signifiers as poetic cognitive suppositions that provide suggestive poetic structures. These poetic structures yield distinct communicative poetics that are aesthetically rhetorical and eloquent. Meantime, Scott condenses his metaphorical signifiers of “water, sound, wind, door, window, moving, and shaking,” signifying the sensible poetic discourse of a fragmented soul. Significantly, Scott creates his masculine/gender poetics that generate a mysterious scope between the poetic signifiers and signifieds. For Barthes, poetic texts usually practice “infinite deferment of the signified,” for signifiers are not “the first stage of meaning” [12]. Such mysterious scope creates a tension between chaos and stability that juxtapose both night/day and past/present. Thus, Scott fuses feelings of instability and uncertainty in his poetics. In this regard, Tyson argues that for deconstruction, “language is dynamic, ambiguous, and unstable, continually disseminating possible meanings” with competing ideologies that people choose to believe [5]. For instance, Scott moves from questioning his objectivity to questioning his premises and human beliefs,

With human love  
Grief and happiness often walk together  
Unfriendly dream  
Wayward thoughts  
Ugly memories about the future (*And the Sun Went down before Night*, p. 32)

Based on the dynamicity of the significant binary oppositions, Scott objectively juxtaposes human concepts of grief and happiness, as two oppositional signifiers that reflect his internalized feelings of chaos and fragmentation. Moreover, he juxtaposes “ugly memories and future” that represent another binary opposition of the past and present or presence and absence to emphasize his feelings of loss, uncertainty, and instability.

In fact, *Maasumaa* enables readers to contemplate the bifunctional signifying poetic discourse, which signifies the core idea of the text based

on the rhythmic spirit of language, discourse, and imagery. *Maasumaa* involves poetical controversial language, antithetical indicative words, and tempo-spatial relationships that constitute the semantic poetic discourse. To exemplify, Scott addresses his other,

There is anger too, in love  
I try to see your face  
Turning the lights off  
Sitting in the darkest corner (*Sucking on Your Face in the Dark*, p. 16)

Accordingly, the lines offer thematic content and poetic structure that signify textual aesthetics. Such aesthetics arise from the conflicting aspects of place, time, metatext, and pragmatic verbs that disclose the centers of the poetic binary oppositions of love/anger, lights/darkest, and I/you.” Moreover, the poetic spontaneous flow of signifiers as thematic and aesthetic components are embodied in,

Good news travels slowly  
And bad news ain’t got no family  
they spoke of me  
as if it were they I had hurt  
And not you  
In between the voices  
Are reasons why (*Voices in the Dark*, p. 1)

These lines imply a sensible voice of the poetic self that occupies a virtual space in the binary polarities of the poetic hierarchal and anticipatory pronouns in the poetic signifiers that imply the thematic performance of objects. For instance, the poetic self refers to integrated spatial character and psychological qualities within the communicative imagist structures as signifiers. All of which signify the poetic themes like love, hatred, union, humanization, and dehumanization as signifieds. In this sense, Saussure states that there are referential forces which control the relationship between the signifieds and signifiers [11]. In addition, the realistic signifier of “news” constitutes a self-tactical performance towards the oppositional signified of the adjective “good,” a process that results in the displacement of the signified in “travels slowly.” Then, the poem moves to the realistic exploration of the antithesis, “bad news,” and to the inevitable metaphorical signifiers epitomized by the signifier “no family.” This instance substantiates the poetic signification of the signifier in “good news,” which is not but a descriptive image manifested in “no family.”

Furthermore, Scott’s poetics suggest that his loneliness arises from the hollowness of human soul with which he cannot communicate. Such poetics embody “typographical experimentation and free and associative structure . . . with black idioms” [2]. Structurally, Scotts uses binary opposites of good

news/bad news as signifiers; the first travels slowly, while the second travels quickly. This action creates a deep communicative gap between the self and the other and leaves both in hollowness, which creates a heinous image in the poet's psyche. Obviously, Scott's poetic mask is absent-minded and alienated; the state of loneliness makes it lost between the poetic voices, for he, eventually, experiences death-in-life [8]. Such signification yields a communicative implication that signifies phonocentric events and evokes the common language of inspiration.

Moreover, the process of the poetic anticipation is embodied in the spirit of the experimental space of the signifier pronoun "I" that signifies the metaphorical and referential value of the signifier, "the voices." Yet, despite the multifaceted referentiality of "I," the poetic self thematically relies on cause-effect equation, "travels...slowly ... bad news ... got no family ... why." In this light, the poem offers a set of binary oppositions to suggest the fragmented poetic self, who consumes the binary pronouns of "I," as the self, and you, as the other, embodying the poetic experience. This experience evokes a variety of dialectical semantics of the poetic signifiers controlled by the poetic self. In other words, the pronoun "you" is supplemented to the pronoun "I." However, both "I" and "you" fuse into one entity of "we" or "they" when the speaker invites the addressee to change and reunite: "I called and thanked them for their concern/ showing you that I could change" (*Rent on Changing*, p. 6). Significantly, both "I" and "you" reunite as a major source of change for better.

The poetic structures of *Maasumaa* generate unstable meanings of the poetic diction, signifiers/signifieds, and binary oppositions. Such a vision implies that language with its displacements and dynamic verbs seem temporal constructors and mental absences manifested in semantic scenes of prisons, loss, torment, and hallucinations. These thematic scenes are narratively suggestive to the speaker's prestigious and concrete poetic character,

So this face  
mine  
acts like a stranger  
changing  
Without my knowing  
It's only what I see  
on yours  
What you've seen (*See You See Me*, p. 21)

Here, readers find fused signs or referents of nominal and object-oriented implications of sounds and objects, supported by the sounds of the textual dominant emotional metaphors and symbols. Such implications form paradoxical stances that reflect the sensitivity and

sensibility of reading and poetic familiarization. Then, the soul of the poetic discourse in *Maasumaa* seems predisposed to analytical procedures that most likely signify a thematic play on adjectival signifiers and signifieds that identify the poetic meanings. These meanings arise with no fixed codified limits or immediate actualization of the poetic speech. For example, in the previous lines, the poet distributes the descriptive structures in the pivotal common relations of objects as signifiers such as "face, mine, yours, stranger, I see, you've seen, and my knowing." These structures form analogous and submissive modes of deep meanings. Stylistically, Scott's poems "lack sentence structure and seem, like babies perhaps, to cry for one's attention" [6]. Hence, Scott's poetic structures reflect the thematic and artistic content of the text, manifested in the poetic fragmented self.

Furthermore, the mechanisms of the poetic disclosure express the speaker's suggestive thoughts of resistance of oppression, imprisonment, injustice, and self-realization as signifieds. Such mechanisms extend the effectiveness of patience as another set of signifieds; a probability that signifies the mental influence full of poetic moments of suspense. In this regard, Scott uses indicative signifiers to reshape his own experience,

It's almost like you are a dream  
Yesterday, today, and tomorrow  
Being made of dreaded voices  
...  
Being chased by grown-up ghost stories  
(*Circles*, p. 27)

Here, the poet evokes certain signifiers that summon their binary oppositions, making his poetics dynamic and sensible. Such signifiers include "you, dream, yesterday, today, tomorrow, dreaded voices, ghost" that necessitate the presence of their opposites I, reality, present, past, delighted voices, and being respectively. These binary oppositions reflect the speaker's internalized feelings of torture, alienation, and fragmentation. Therefore, Scott's binary oppositions develop "the suggestive power of poetry ... its distinction lies in the way it develops and explores tricks of style proper to prose and its syntax" [6].

In fact, deconstruction looks at texts as crucibles of a word play with signs through differences. However, the act of deconstructive reading of the subsequent poems of *Maasumaa* guides readers to the keys of interpretive understanding and thematic semantics. For instance, the speaker says, "so dark, grey/white like ... you didn't answer/He did" (*We Can Get Beyond this Other Bedroom*, 1995, p. 35). Here, the poetic discourse provides its hypothetical content of thematic signifiers because of the sensible poetic voices of the ego. These voices violate the scheme of the

poetic privacy of the suggestive referentiality of binary oppositions of colors, “dark” and white.” The first is a signifier of the signifieds fear, confusion, and alienation, the second is a signifier of the signifieds purity, purgation, perfection, and equality. In Scott’s symbolic significance, the colors grey and black replace the color white in “So dark, Grey/white like/It’s way past the midday sun” (*We Can Get Beyond this Other Bedroom*, p. 35). To Pirie, these colors as signifiers suggest the speaker’s internalized protest against “white America and the American dream.” The color black works against the American dream based on racial conflict and oppression. Likewise, the color red signifies the poet’s rejection of wars and destruction. Meanwhile, the color grey suggests the “seeds of doubt,” manifesting “aspects of creation, birth, life” [2].

Similarly, “you didn’t answer/He did” implies suggestive binary opposites that signify two dynamic behaviors “did” and “didn’t” as signifiers of both obedience and compliance of the first act and indifference and ignorance of the second. Accordingly, both examples of binary oppositions and sensible voices signify the contradictory entities of presence and absence, loss, and imperfection. Scott’s poetry has a voice that is “harsh, angry, aggressive, and lurid in its depiction of Black life and human behavior” [2]. Accordingly, through its signification of the juxtaposed binary oppositions, *Maasumaa* manifests a conflict between the hopeful and the hopeless, the good and the bad, the lifeful and the lifeless, the delighted and the fragmented, and the repressed and the repressor.

In their significant structural sense, Scott’s poetics anticipate the meaning within the possible semantics and modes of narration, interpretation, questioning, and referentiality. In this concern, Pirie describes Scott as “a man with a distinctive spiritual and political message” through using techniques of “rhythmic voice intonations and ... the voice as a jazz instrument” that call for human independence, freedom, peace of mind and body [2]. For instance, Scott says,

So you left me  
For reasons that had nothing to do  
With the coming of Jesus Christ  
you opened your legs  
Another man touched you (*Changing Crosses*,  
p. 36)

Here, the speaker evokes binary opposites of pronouns you/me and of dynamic verbs left/coming, suggesting loss of faith, split, and both mental and physical instability. However, the poetic imagery always evokes an implied level of functional binary opposites as signifiers manifested in the speaker’s poetic monologue,

The music is missing in my life  
Voices without mouths  
Sunlight without warming and shadows  
Thoughts walking in a circle of one  
Bumping into themselves (*Why Am I Pointing at Me*, p. 12)

Here, the speaker recalls dynamic images that offer binary opposites of motion, light, shadow, and loss. In this regard, Barthes argues that poetic images are “polysemous;” they have signifiers that allude “a floating chain of signifieds” which may appeal to the public readers for deconstruction [12]. By way of illustration, words like missing and without mouths signify themes of loss and silencing as signifieds that the poetic self endures.

As a poetic mural of modernist sense, *Maasumaa* presents intimate communicative signifiers that contain various binary oppositions of different reflections. Clearly, it involves many binary oppositions like male/female, I/you, walk/sleep, life/death, peace/turmoil, order/chaos, civilized/uncivilized, and present/absent. Cognately, the first term of each opposition is the privileged one, presented as the center. Through these signifying oppositions, Scott’s poetics suggest a human functionality in life and simulation of modern reality full of fragmentation and disappointment. In general, the textual relationships in *Maasumaa* remain a source of the convergence of the self, the world, and the other, as opposing signifiers of certain realistic signifieds. Accordingly, Scott’s thematic selectivity of the stimuli of the text’s voices relies heavily on realistic components of time, place, discourse, and the other. They prove that *Maasumaa* has imagist acts of semantic cloning between objects as signifiers and the productivity of the semantics of the emotive tension and self-repressiveness as signifieds. For instance, in *Wings*, Scott uses words like “love,” “grief,” and “rage” to describe his human feelings of repression and fragmentation [8]. He evokes such words as signifiers to present a variety of signifieds, which include hatred, alienation, depression, and frustration.

Furthermore, the signifier pronoun “I” is problematic because it is contradictory to the pronoun “you,” a thing that creates deep tension between them by means of authoritative (or gender) power. Scott addresses his woman,

I would like to cleanse your heart  
To wash this new man  
Out of your life  
So you see  
I’m still at the funeral (*Stages: Denial, Grief*,  
p. 20)

Here, there are two suggestive sets of words; the first set manifests Scott's problematic signifiers of "you" and "I," which signify the other and the self in a competitive manner. The second set manifests Scott's problematic signifier of gender in "woman" and "man," which signify gender conflict and unstable power relationship. In this sense, the British literary critic Catherine Belsey argues that there are two oppositional poles to the signifier pronoun "I": the omniscient and the omnipotent. This "I" is privileged as it experiences human life at a loftier level of potency than ordinary characters. It also gets dissolved in selfhood which "the phenomenal world, perceived as external and antithetical, either nourishes or constrains" [13]. Thus, this antithetical "I" immunizes itself against "you." Moreover, such binaries imply a positive tension in the poetic context that condenses its signifiers and deepens its signifieds. For instance, the poet mentions the word denial as a signifier for self-confession of weakness to generate a poetic energy that transcends and creates its aesthetic contextual dynamicity.

## CONCLUSION

In *Maasumaa*, Scott fuses the ordinary intimate with the humanly bewildering in order to suggest that his poetics imply that human treasures of happiness, independence, and stability are engulfed in the multi-folded mystic life. *Maasumaa* poetically expresses contemporary human experience, which is imbued with realistic events, artistically charged with irony and irrationality, sarcasm and fantasy, and daily details that represent modernist characteristics. Scott's contradictory structures constitute suggestive binary oppositions manifested by good and evil, women and men, white and black, the self and the other, justice and injustice, death and life, center and margin, and love and hatred that haunt modern man.

Scott's pattern of oppositions deepens in the textual space, creating signifiers that structure the binary oppositions that intersect and collide to enrich his poetics with signifiers and signifieds. Scott's binary oppositions of presence/absence and distant and proximate suggest a sort of homogeneity of opposites, which dominate his sensible poetic discourse. Binary oppositions constitute a natural phenomenon in human life; they become a part of human vision towards the self and the other. In this sense, *Maasumaa* presents Scott's self based on external conflicts with the surrounding society.

Moreover, Scott's binary oppositions expresses his human conceptual contradictions which include heaven and earth, night and day, masculinity and femininity, east and west, north and south, and attendance and absence. They create cosmic oppositional binaries of the individual self and the other which stand in a constant conflict between presence and

absence. Binary oppositions, as signifiers, have an indicative effective role in the construction of *Maasumaa*, based on the relationship of poet's self with the other. Scott's self is representative of other selves. These poetic selves are defied with unstable anxiety that pushes the poetic self to oppose love, freedom, pleasure, and tranquility, which imply, for the poet, expressions of an existential feeling of life and a genuine hatred of its annoyances. Accordingly, Scott constructs his poetics in the light of oppositional pairs of signifiers and signifieds to expose these multiple unstable themes.

Furthermore, *Maasumaa* is poetically and thematically structured on binary oppositions that express human drama, which arouses readers' desire to read and contemplate it. Such poetic mechanism creates intersections and overlap between the object and its opposite/s as both signifiers and signifieds. Also, these signifying oppositions are suggestive traces that dominate *Maasumaa* and create thematic indeterminacies and instabilities. Therefore, *Maasumaa* is full of contradictions, paradoxes, questions, and controversies, which create questionable texts. However, *Maasumaa* needs further multiple appreciative readings, for it embodies a very profound poetic imagination, which is creative, cultural, artistic, and impressive. Such qualities entail further creative explorations in the light of other critical theories and assumptions.

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