The insects lay their eggs in the well

Posted on October 5, 2020

By, Afua Serwah Osei-Bonsu

Master to student, "if he should tell you, it places it there, it happens as though God had placed it." He referred to the Sufi saying, "a mind within a mind." He said to his devotee, "your brain hears it and builds within itself, a thought space." He went on to say, "the next lesson will tell you what to do with your mind room."

She the devotee, combed through her books, in search of wisdom. She said, the devotee, "which of these books in my library, will have wisdom for me?" She scanned each of their pages and upon her desk stacked numerous books, all of which, she in her way, had coded as wise. She, under her master’s tutelage, was she herself, in pursuit of mastership.

In the days that followed, insects infested the exterior well. It was referred to as "the post" and had a kind of pump that filtered clear water in. It was a large square like basin with a pump and lower well. Periodically a local company came in a truck with a huge drum and filled it. Next to it a table like platform made of concrete connected to and part of the well, with rounded grooves where clothes were washed. There was a clothesline and many trees, some bearing fruit in the yard. Normally for bathing and emptying the latrine a bucket is pulled from the well and either dumped into the toilet for manual flushing or boiled on the stove with herbs for a hot bath, then mixed with cool water in a larger bathing bucket. A small plastic container is used to cleanse and pour herbal water over the body. Baths are usually very delicious and fragrant.

"The well is infested" she cries to her master. "I shall solve this matter, or I shall relocate myself to better conditions." "I am afraid," she said, "that even the memory of the insects will harm me." She cried to her master, "I have to maintain the well sterile and should draining the well not be sufficient, perhaps bleach will rid me of this problem."

Her master replied, "what will you do if you drain the well, then bleach, then fill the well and they are still there." The devotee replied, "I do not know master, should I drain the well, bleach the well and they return, I may relocate from desperation." "The insects, master, at this point are effecting my washing and bathing." "My drinking water I fetch either from town or from the local pump."

However, master, the insects for me have presented a problem. "I do not know if the memory of the insects will stay permanently with me." "For now, I can use some of my drinking water to bath and wash." "However, it is not really feasible to wash with the drinking water."

Her master replied, "should the problem be insurmountable where will you go, how will you solve your problems?" "At this time, I don’t know master, I don’t even know what kind of insects they are, or how then will I continue my studies." "I suppose my departure may be near or far."

Days pass, she addresses the well. The devotee drains the well, bleaches the well and cleans the well to sterilize it. She fears they will return as they came before. She heard a story about a woman who had a wasp’s nest on the front of her house. They removed the wasp’s nest but as the nest was their home, they kept returning year after year. She had heard similar things of bees returning to their nest, even a removed nest. This was in fact a case where it appears something had hatched in the well and disrupted her life so severely that she had to haul water for bathing and bathing as well as drinking. She feared her disgust of the swimming insects would provide her with an everlasting memory, a continual potential challenge, and this horrible feeling of uncleanness. She could feel in her soul their movements. It was as if the trust she held for the well was now destroyed. The well became unclean.

"If she should go, to another well, it could perhaps also infest with the same insects. Should she pursue a residence without a well? She should then travel far. She should travel far for new conditions. Will someone else assume life in her place and find a solution for the insects in the well?"

In the days that followed she met repeatedly with her master. The well she drained, bleached and cleaned it, even fearfully. She filled the well and the insects were still there. They swam in place many of them. It may be that time of year. It may be the well this time of year will always be infested with these insects? One local says the insects may come from the lower well? One local has suggested a strainer. An American suggested a pool net. Another local says the well needs a cover and a spigot, but since the lower well has likely been effected, there may be a different solution. One local says they go into the drain and come back out. Another has said they are in the environment and may easily get into an open well. Another local said you can assume the insects have gotten to the lower well. Another local said, the flying insect has lived in there so long it is now fish like. Another local says the only solution is to take apart the well, clean out the insects, apply a cover and drill a spigot. He feels that may be the only solution.

 Isn’t it interesting how an insect may make you feel unclean? How in some houses there are cracks? A small crack, elicits a small insect. A large crack, elicits a large insect. A very large crack or gaping hole may elicit all kinds of vermin. A low hole may elicit mice, a high hole may elicit bats. The insects in the house always let you know about its cracks or its holes. The more the cracks in the house, the more the house fills up with insects and leaves you with this feeling of uncleanness. Maybe the house is clean once all the eggs are removed, but the insects do not leave until all the cracks are filled. To get rid of them you may even need a home inspection to find all of the cracks and fill or seal them. You can even paint the entire house with a kind of sealer, which is done in some areas for infestations, to keep them out. You may even add, baseboards, because at the time of its building, insects may be living in the walls. The state of the home is reflected by its insects. If insects come in, will then water come in, during a heavy rainfall? Insects, are they a sign of vulnerability? Insects, can they detect a problem? Are the insects in the well, like thoughts in the mind?

She met with her master, "oh master, the well I have drained, bleached and cleaned." I refilled it using the pump with water, and oh master, the insects were still there.

"I have come to inform you master, that in pursuit of a clear feeling, I will depart from this house." "I will not move close by; I need to change my circumstance." "The remedy for this problem may reach beyond the local area." "I fear master, that every well here has this insect." "My mind master has become plagued with the sensation of the swimming of the insects and how it connected to my bathing and I can’t feel clean physically or emotionally anymore."

The master said, "So something you use for cleansing has become sullied in a way you have no ability to remedy in this moment." "Beyond the physical problem, you are disturbed mentally by this reality in your memory." "Further, the insects have connected to your bathing, to your washing, to your feeling of cleanliness as if on a string, where they may always live."

"I understand now in this moment that you choose to relocate and leave your lessons with me," said the master. "I may also face similar challenges." "In this moment cannot solve your problem." "Let us engage some final lessons before your departure, if you can endure it." "Let us discuss your next steps in the world and your next intellectual steps." "Let us not close our communication of lessons permanently." "I will remain your master, but our lessons will move to writings." "This doesn't represent the end; this represents a change in context." "I wish for you in your new surroundings a feeling of cleanliness." "We have found the first solution! Hopefully, in the future we will use this situation and find yet still more solutions." "I will think deeply about your memory and its strings." "Perhaps, in the future we will reopen this memory to heal it further, then reseal it." "Perhaps, in the future we will change adversity into opportunity, and apply completely this occurrence to the service of knowledge."
"Go where you have a teacher
Live where you have the most teachers
Follow if you have a master"

On her last day there south of the border with the USA in the mountains, on her way North to Michigan, she, the student, and devotee meets with her master. Her master says, "I want to talk to you about writing." He said proudly, "I think you are both a writer and a teacher." "I think what you need now is something really personal to me." "You can view a writing in many ways." "You may use a structuralist theory to compare literature." "I recommend to you" said the master, "that you write with 'value and service.'" He said, "gauge your writing by it's value or its ability to serve in myriad ways." "I will work on this lesson and send it to you in a poetic format, I ask that you respond to me with your writing that addresses that lesson." "I will give you this tip, you must first assess how to achieve value." "Start with even proverbs." "Proverbs help you to build power." "Think about condensing research into poetry, think about using key points in a letter to make it unfold, to give it power." "Remember the word condense." "Never forget the word precise."

A few moments later she arrived Michigan, of cold winter months with low light, with clean white snow. The light she said is reduced to maintain enough cold to keep the snow. You can feel when the weather drops to freezing temperatures and the snow has its proper climate, then it comes. A poem arrives from her master and it reads:

Value

Writing he feels is value and service
Myriad ways of value
He judges writing by its value or by its service
You can condense research then write a poem
Take the key points in a letter to condense it
Proverb teaches power
Program the buttons in a poem
Think over them
A poem like a bomb
A consolidation of programs
Hire the picketers
An on-page revolution
The main protagonist hangs a poster
Condense it, stage it, serve
Ultimate power

Dear Master,
I have assimilated to this old/new place, my home. I am sewing now. I will enclose a poem that deals with how I condensed some of my knowledge to include a teaching.

Devotee

Dear Student:
It is with great pleasure that I share with you another solution. How to clean the well and rid the well of an infestation. Directions:

Empty the well completely. The bugs are identified as water bugs. Some will go down the drain. They live on the surface and lay their eggs and eventually assimilate to be a fish like insect. Once you have emptied the well, let it dry out. They are then a fish without water. They are not in the lower well or drum. If you add bleach to water they do not die. You were correct to use bleach though. Bleach is sterile and can be used in the well to clean it out. Set aside a few buckets of the old water for flushing etc. After the well has dried out and baked in the sun. Add two-gallon bottles of bleach. Leave it for three days. The insects cannot live in the pure bleach. Keep watching for any swimmers. Drain it and use a broom scrub brush to scrub all the eggs off the sides, the bottom, then outsides and clean the well. Drain it again, let it dry. Then repeat. Fill the well with two-gallon bottles of bleach, let sit for three days and watch for any swimmers. Fill it again, let it dry. Then repeat. Fill the well with two-gallon bottles of bleach, let sit for three days and watch for any swimmers. Let them die. Then scrub again. Drain. Rinse. Then let dry and air out from the bleach. Then fill the drum with clean water after you have drained it. Then fill the basin with clean water. The bleach is a repellent and the treatment should last about 2 years to be free of them. The bleach will eventually wear off from filling the basin over and over. Now you have a clean well, a fresh bath and are able to wash. The one who comes after you will too. Now you can feel clean. The well is clean.

Master

Posted in Fiction  Tagged Fiction, Master and Student, Wisdom Writing  Leave a comment

Value and Service

Posted on October 4, 2020

By, Afua Serwah Osei-Bonsu

Value

Writing she feels is value and service
Myriad ways of value
She judges writing by its value or by its service
You can condense research then write a poem
Take the key points in a letter to condense it
Proverb teaches power
Program the buttons in poem
Think over them
A poem like a nuclear bomb
A consolidation of programs
Hire the picketers
An on page revolution
The main protagonist hangs a poster
Condense it, stage it, serve
Ultimate power

Excerpt From "Sago Palm"


By, Afua Serwah Osei-Bonsu

In Euripides IV, “The Suppliant Women,” of The Complete Greek Tragedies, a female narrator in third person is caught in the aftermath of war and goes about much like as in "Antigone," with a desperation over the future of the subsequent dead and whether or not they will have a proper burial. The tone is regal, medieval, desperate, however romanticized and wise. It is as if all forthcoming action in such a context would elicit rape. For every query, in every context perhaps the women keep falling from "suppliance."

I would like to address a dramatic backdrop and create a romanticized context. I appreciate the plot, the tone and setting within the aftermath of war. What to do with all these dead? Perhaps in this case the women go around hoping to solicit the burial and are raped. Perhaps that is a proper description of what the aftermath of war could be like. I appreciated the narrator’s language, storytelling, use of the introduction for introspection and the chorus to enhance the storytelling with perspectives. The tragedy reads like a play, crossed with a poem, crossed with fiction. The characters are cited.

Works Cited:

Book Review: Confucius, aim for morals and political betterment then consequently elevate mankind, but aim there for a trickledown

By, Afua Serwah Osei-Bonsu

I read some of Confucius. Looking through a Chinese cultural lens, the book uses dialog between Confucius and several masters via maxims and questions. They are essentially engaged in a high caliber Q & A, where the results bring about knowledge, or wisdom or dignity or the acquisition of a station in life. For example, one may be in pursuit of the role of a Prince and pursue Confucius for such related noble ideology. Looking deeper into this cultural phenomenon where knowledge is chief, where advice is sage, where one may pursue the path of a sage. It may be more if not most often in Chinese culture that one pursues mastership in general. In some circles the word mastership may be scarcely heard or valued. It may be valued for this cultural perspective, as a whisper in one’s ear, what one may pursue and perhaps what was their scaffolding of questions.

I chose this particular theory to read to look at a spiritual style. I read in the introduction about how Confucius was looking at moral and political teachings-as if to establish leaders and consequently mankind. Could it be through this door that a writer could impact the plight of man, should he align with morals, should he connect to politics for its betterment. Will that save us? Does one need such an aim?

Works Cited:
Confucius, Harvard Classics Sacred Writings, P.F. Collier & son, New York, 1910, pp. 5-69

The Acquisition of Devotion

By, Afua Serwah Osei-Bonsu
Swami so and so has moved to California. He has a dark coffee brown, shoulder length, wavy, fluffy hair, parted in the middle and warm, thoughtful, and caring brown eyes that sparkle, as if a tear were imminent. The Swami has set up a spiritual center in the middle of town, including yoga instruction and within a few years has acquired many disciples.

The context for devotion is said to develop from three things: 1) when one gives good advice, 2) the quality of one’s teachings and or 3) one’s ideas, research, or writings. There may be other cases where one acquires Beatle-like mania, or Rockstar status or immense fame and acquires a great many fans, but this story speaks exclusively to the acquisition of devotion.

There are multicolored fast-paced changing traffic signals that run the tempo of New York City. With great desperation for peace, New York City could be the Yoga capital of the world. There existed a popular small yoga center on the upper east side, where one teacher emerged as superior. His ascension could be documented. Each student that arrived one of his yoga classes, ended as one of his disciples. So much so, that when he moved to a new nearby yoga center, a few blocks north, his students as they heard of his departure and relocation, like a wave followed their teacher.

What he had that was so special for students that made him so insanely popular in the city, he gave precise advice, his descriptions were precise and connected, he gives you exactly what you need in a moment. You ask, he answers. He had minimal work for maximum result. He had a style where the students held their poses for a specific amount of time to maximize the impact of the pose. Even after some time, one realized that he had reshaped and sculpted their bodies, he had lifted their buttocks, he had aligned their spines. In the new yoga center where the yoga teacher taught his students, they left drenched in sweat, feeling elated, limber and purified. It became an ecstatic yoga feeling of elation, even one associated to him. He came to have many followers of his teachings and their subsequent devotion. Even other teachers fond of his style, became his disciples.

He often wore a simple divine looking handkerchief or scarf tied to his balding head. It came to spiritualize the way a turban or headwrap would. Perhaps it placed emphasis on his head, and in some strange way on God, it may have comforted him or placed him within the spiritual context. He looked like a gypsy or a pirate. Souls waited for his words. He was energetic and magnetic.

Some students say, "the whole class had reached a plateau." He struggled to make sure everyone of his students graduated to an advanced level. What could be deduced from this description is that devotion is not necessarily given to preachers or ministers casually, but is actually a thing of "teachers.” Most often, one comes to "worship" when someone has touched their soul or imparted a great teaching, one may then be their master. It is for masters, or for teachers-devotion.

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**Down is the Tightrope**

Posted on September 18, 2020

Down is the tightrope my friend

Down is the tightrope!

Oh fortunate one,

You left me on the side of the road

Down is the tightrope my friend

Down is the tightrope!

Oh fortunate one,

The storm has kept me from work

Down is the tightrope my friend

Down is the tightrope!

Oh fortunate one,

The rain has come inside

Down is the tightrope my friend

Down is the tightrope!

Oh fortunate one,

My back has gone out again

Down is the tightrope my friend

Down is the tightrope!

Oh fortunate one,

The doctor has not called me back

Down is the tightrope my friend

Down is the tightrope!

Oh fortunate one,

I slept off my pain today

By, Afua Serwah Osei-Bonsu

Excerpt from upcoming book, "Value to Man" collected poems due out in November 2020

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Closet Study

By, Afua Serwah Osei-Bonsu

A white knit ladies' cardigan
A fashion jacket with gold and lilac hibiscus print with green fronds
A red and black wool tartan jacket
A sherbet cardigan with white argyle, large squared collar
A wine-colored tartan and Sherpa vest, heavy weight
A red and tan tweed fall overcoat
A red ground and black ethnic print quilted Chinese Jacket
A waffle embossed cotton jacket, olive, with polished rectangular coconut shell buttons
A green, white, and black Mexican blanket poncho
A structured blue and grey woven castle style jacket, affluent
A German or Ukraine style quilted vest, mainly blue with stylized baby floral, floral striped borders, tailored, favorite, blue bias tape around arms
Blue, green, white, and brown "bear" soft snuggie pullover fleece
Blue handkerchief print jacket with white sequins and beading
Warmest day wool sweater with earth striped gradations: brown, olive, forest, ochre, plum
Seersucker pants capri, baby blue and white
Grey or silver pin-striped sharkskin pants
Red stretch with tan rope print horizontal stripe, nautical shirt with ¾ sleeves
Brown tunic with lighter tan and orange embroidered neckline and bust with contrasting blanket stitch trim, Indian, and has matching pants
Blue metallic long sleeve New Year's sweater
Black, white and silver fair isle sweater
Blue with medium floral secretary's dress, delicate collar, shapely and cinched at waist
Red and blue west African wax print dress
Moroccan caftan, black, with fine red embroidery

Book Review: Solmaz Sharif, “From Reading Guantanamo” and Edgar Allan Poe, “Tell Tale Heart”

Solmaz Sharif, in “From Reading Guantanamo,” in Paper Bag Number One Summer 2010, writes in a style that is reflective of the theory “reader-response.” It is as if the writer is beside himself, maybe a torture case, he wishes for a part of his words, to leave a blank and elicit them from me as the reader or another. Perhaps to elicit his words from a stranger, perhaps from a lover, perhaps anyone. Perhaps it is the day following torture. He speaks in partial sentences, in every line there is a blank and your ability to fill that void will bring you closer to him, perhaps you know or knew and can feel for him this tragedy or this closeness. Perhaps, he has reached a juncture that is his end, and all his blanks will be filled by you or others.

Edgar Allan Poe’s, “The Tell-Tale Heart,” in a close reading could be compared to other texts of that period within a structuralist lens that illustrates the hearing of sounds or voices or the “over acuteness of the senses,” or generally texts that look at ideas around madness (Poe 319). “The evil eye” could also be looked at as if a common cultural phenomenon which could be searched in literature. The evil eye could be a downcast eye that presents itself as a motive when crossed with madness. The acute senses were described as hearing “all things in heaven….all things in hell” (Poe 319). From such texts one may arrive at theories about social constructs born in literature that may exist in many works. Perhaps, there is the second suggestion to remove the downcast eye. In Poe’s work, the mad man hears with his acute hearing the heart still beating, the beating heart that reveals him to the police, “The Tell-Tale Heart,” after this elaborate scheme plays out and the madman has removed the evil eye.

Works Cited:

Poe, Edgar Allan, "The Tell-Tale Heart," Tales of Mystery and Imagination Barnes and Noble, 2011, pp 319-324
Sharif, Solmaz. "From Reading Guantanamo," Paper Bag Number One, Summer 2010
Up to Snuff #128: Book List Mostly with Literary Theory Orientation

Posted on September 12, 2020

By, Afua Serwah Osei-Bonsu

Literary Theory: A Practical Introduction
Mikhail Bakhtin
Wordsworth
Logical Fallacies
Keats
The Knowledge Creating Company Ikujiro Nonaku
Enabling Knowledge George Von Krogh
The Innovators Dilemma When New Technologies Clayton M. Christensen
Hanon
Chopin
The Seminar Jacques Lacan
Foucault
Jane Austen
Julie Rivkin
Portrait in Georgia
Cane
Norton Anthology of Theory & Criticism Vincent Leitch
Tracy Whiting
Metamorphosis Franz Kafka
Think like a monk, train your mind for peace Jay Shetty
The Seagull Book of Poems
Literary Theory An Anthology Julie Rivkin
The Craft of Research Wayne C. Booth
Professing Literature Gerald Graff
Mary Klages, Literary Theory, A Guide for the Perplexed
Mary Klages, Key Terms in Literary Theory
Tacit Learning
Literary Review
Emily Dickinson
Biocentric Worldview Ludwig Klages
Cosmogenic Reflections Ludwig Klages
Pygmalion George Bernard Shaw
Pratchett's Women Unauthorized Essays on Female Characters of the Discworld
Billy Budd, Bartleby and Other Stories Herman Melville
Leaves of Grass The Original 1855 Edition Walt Whitman
The Essential Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson
Literature Unit A guide for Where the Red Fern Grows Patty Carratello
Literary Theory Jerry Engleton
Book Review: Franz Kafka, The Metamorphosis

Posted on September 11, 2020
Franz Kafka's Metamorphosis emerges, almost completely from the photo he describes on pg. 6 where he has "cut out of an illustrated magazine, a picture of a women in a fur hat and fur boa" (Kafka 6). The crux of the story is then described as this woman in a "gilt frame" when her "forearm disappears into a fur muff," as man himself turns into an animal. Perhaps it was this vision, this disappearing arm into a fur muff that leads man to arrive at an idea that man in many ways transforms, sexually or in his work or with his desires-he transforms into an animal-as simple as the forearm slipping into the muff.

From a Formalist perspective, one can extract from this text minutiae a paradox to defamiliarize man with common man's identity to hold a mirror for man that he is in all, if not many forms, an animal. It was both paradoxical and defamiliarizing. Why did Kafka choose this juncture, the muff, the slipping away, the becoming an animal, a species, a kind of subcategory for his being that regardless of how hard man tries to get up, to get out of bed and go to work a man, he lays there feet "wringling." Metamorphosis has to do with the social entrapment of gender, of being. Perhaps the advantage of this story was to delicately shine a light on man's social entrapment in terms of his gender and being. To delve into man's psychology. To unveil emotions, and modus operandi for the uncraying man, for the high achieving man, for the consumed by desire. Metamorphosis presents man with a context to freely be man and have a discourse with the world-free of tears-about his plight. A man and not a man, was a man, will always be a man, needs to be a man, but is an animal.

Works cited:

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The insects lay their eggs in the well.

Value and Service


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Book Review: Solmaz Sharif, "From Reading Guantanamo" and Edgar Allan Poe, "Tell Tale Heart"