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**A human comedy in the modern world:
A critical appraisal of contemporary
mankind through Martin AMIS's
Money:
*A Suicide Note and The Rachel Papers***

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DEDICATION

In the memory of my late mother Sossikindé ATTINSOUKPO AMALY for setting my feet on “the narrow path” of school. I do believe your dream to see me in the opening flower of success is becoming a reality.

And

To my dearest, lovely and courageous wife Claudette AKIN AMALY who has always supported me to face any difficulty, you are richly blessed.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

- T.R.P. : The Rachel Papers
- Money : *Money : A Suicide Note*

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INTRODUCTION

The hallmark of modernity is its radical change vis-à-vis the preceding periods in terms of the world's culture and civilisation. For a better appraisal of this change, it is worth giving a brief account of the perception of the world from its origin to the modern days.

Since the dawn of times, religion has played a predominant role at the heart of human societies to the extent that people in the old days used to strive to give supernatural interpretations to social facts and natural phenomena. In his connection, it goes without saying that the relationship between the supreme forces and man in various cultures can be perceived as that between an omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient master and his subjects who are rewarded or punished depending on whether they obeyed or disobeyed the laws. A very good illustrative example is provided by one of the pioneers of literature, Homer. In his mythological work *The Illiad*¹, he portrays a cruel and tragic world ruled by the whims and passions of gods, and in which human beings are mere playthings in the hands of the gods.

Literature is generally perceived as reflections offered on society. This means that literary works tend to be critiques of everyday life within the community wherein it is produced. It is in this context that Chinua Achebe thinks one of the duties of the writer is to be a commentator on their society's present course. This might be considered as the driving force behind the lots of literary productions on the human condition which looks as vowed to failure in the modern era. Still in the context of this realism, science and capitalism represent a threat to world peace. However, despite those literary productions, the modern man still remains inactive and insensitive. Consequently, the drawbacks of science and the high capitalistic System on the world keep on collecting momentum.

¹Homer, *The Illiad*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin Classics, 1963).

Literary imagination, according to Olalere Oladitan, "is not bound by 'factual accuracy; it may deliberately confuse, distort, invent and even falsify"². This means that creative writing, even at its best, is not a replica of real life situations.

Martin AMIS has skilfully used this liberty given to writers to explore and expose some of the crucial issues of the modern era such as the strong hold of capitalism and its spectrum of problems, the damage the advance in science causes to human lives and the earth, the debasement of moral values, the dehumanising effects the world is confronted to and the moral debasement of the social life.

After scrutinising AMIS's concerns in his creative works where he minutely paints the conditions of the modern man, I can assert that the modern man is in conflict with ethical principles, with the concept of human dignity and humanism, and with his natural environment. In addition to his function of writer, Martin AMIS positions himself not as a dictator who obliges his readership to espouse his vision, but as a mediator.

All these considerations justify the choice of this topic framed: "**A human comedy in the modern world: a critical appraisal of contemporary mankind through Martin AMIS's *Money: A Suicide Note* and *The Rachel Papers***". This research work will concern basically two literary works by AMIS. These main sources are *A Suicide Note* (1994); and *The Rachel Papers* (2003).

The rationale that props up the selection of these two works is that they highlight slightly differently the various aspects of the complexities of the modern man's life. *Money A Suicide Note* offers a mirror of the self, that is, a critique of the personality of the modern man through a tableau attesting of his true nature, how he thinks and some of the reasons that push him to behave in one way or another. As for *The Rachel Papers*, it partially operates as a sequel to *Money: A Suicide Note* by showing how, departing from man's cynicism and the teenage first love, AMIS exposes the way human relations can be fashioned by mutual deception. In addition, it presents marriage as a union which is a short-term perspective in the modern era.

²OlalereOladitan, "The Nigerian Crisis in the Nigerian Novel", in *West African Literature* (London: Heinemann Educational Books Limited, 1979), p. 10.

This research work is an attempt to bring out the vision of the modern man by the English writer with a special emphasis laid on his disparagement and the impact of capitalism on his life.

Every piece of literary production compounds a lot of codes even if it reflects reality to some extent and seems to be true. In order to decode the message being conveyed, to analyse and interpret it, literary theories are necessary. The study I am going to carry out on Martin AMIS's writings will be conducted from the lenses of two theories, namely new historicism and the reader-response criticism.

Stephen Spender has made an edifying point when he declares that: "nowadays the present and the future are too terrifying to be escaped from, and if one 'bothers with history it is in order to find new modern meanings there"³. This quotation entails that history has an important role to play in our understanding of the current realities and it is on this basis that I have decided to approach the analysis of AMIS texts with the barometer of new historicism.

New historicism as a way to use history to understand and evaluate literary works, rejects both the autonomy and individual genius of the author and the autonomy of the literary work and sees literary texts as absolutely inseparable from their historical context.⁴ This suggests that as part and parcel of the community within which they live, the writer is moulded by the culture of their milieu. So, the writer is inspired and influenced in their writings by the daily realities of the life of the community within which they live. This characteristic explains why the work of art is perceived as a mirror of the community in which readers see themselves, especially when it is kept in mind that the work of art is the sum total of integral forms of a given cultural values, ambitions and beliefs. Again, Stephen Greenblatt defines the work of art as "the product of a negotiation between a creator and a class of creators, equipped with a

³Stephen Spender, in "**Introduction** to George **Orwell**", *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 2005), p.viii.

⁴Hans Bertens, *Literary Theory, The Basics*, (New York: Routledge, 2001), p. 179.

complex, communally shared repertoire of conventions, institutions and practices of society."⁵Likewise, Ataféï Pewissi writes (December 2012):

Criticism is not devoid of social preoccupation and so writing cannot eschew the articulation of this existing menu because both writers and critics are humans and ambassadors of social and cultural *data* and *desiderata* of their people. Because codes and meanings are decided upon in the cultural community, neglecting these codes is placing the text beyond its source of inspiration while in the meantime the writer's own world is placed in the text.⁶

From these quotations, I can infer that as Henrik Ibsen once warned a friend that "for him to be understood, one needs to understand the spectacular, severe northern Norwegian landscape"⁷, the grasp of the contours of the cultural, social, political and economic factors of the modern era becomes necessary for a better understanding of Martin AMIS's selected works. This is justified by the fact that "the creative minds of every age both reflect and shape their culture".⁸ The modern era itself is marked by a radical change in all human relations and by "a sort of historical discontinuity [...] a liberation from inherited patterns"⁹. As a result, the reader is compelled to bear this in mind while reading Martin AMIS's works.

As for the reader-response criticism to use, it will be centred on the perception of the concept from the stance of critics such as David Bleich and Norman N. Rolland who think that the meaning of the literary text resides in the interactive space between the text and the reader. Put differently, in their understanding and approach to the Reader-Response, they consider "the reader as the producer of meanings."¹⁰

The reader-response criticism, though an umbrella theory which derives its methodology from other theories namely new criticism, structuralism and post-

⁵Stephen Greenblatt, "Towards a Politics of Culture" in H. Aram Veeseer (ed), *The New Historicism*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 12.

⁶AtafeïPewissi, "Response as a Theory in the Making", in Mosaïque, Revue Inter africaine de Philosophie, Littéraire et Licences humaines, et Sciences (Lomé : ISPSH Don Bosco, December 2012), p. 146

⁷Robert Di Yanni (ed), *Literature Reading Fiction, Poetry, and Drama* Fifth Edition, (Boston: McGraw -Hill Companies, Inc., 2002), p.1508.

⁸Gloria K. Fiero, op. cit., p. x.

⁹Robert Con Davis; Ronald Schleifer, op. cit., p. 17.

¹⁰Norman N. Holland, "Unity **Identity** Text Self, **quoted in** AtaféïPewissi, op. cit., p. 147.

structuralism, rejects their idea according to which the work of art must be studied in isolation from its context. On the contrary, it rather holds that "[c]on text -historical, biographical, cultural, psychoanalytic- is relevant to the understanding of a text [and that] the reading of ... [a text] makes them reflective to the real world."¹¹

In this vein, human beings are said to be linguistic animals due to their ability to make use of human languages as a means of communication. Being a collective human heritage, writers make skilful use of language to create meaning in their works. The level of interpretation of a literary text depends on the reader's background which embraces many factors such as culture, history, experience, opinions and preconceptions. This statement is certified by Ataféi Pewissi who believes that: "affection and creativity that characterize literary or artistic interpretation is subjective because they depend on individuals and, as such, the meanings readers create are their individual responses to the texts."¹² It then becomes clear that a literary work is not supposed to have a single meaning for two readers from two different or even from the same backgrounds or horizons. It rather gives rooms too many interpretations. This is precisely the point the American critic Stanley Fish was making while stating that "the reader's understanding of what 'literature' is and what works of literature mean is formed by interpretive community."¹³

In the light of Norman N. Holland's observation that "interpretation is a function of identity, especially identity conceived as variations upon an identity theme"¹⁴, it becomes obvious that as an African, my traditional and cultural values, my experiences as well as my educational background will have an impact on my evaluation of the selected works by the British writer Martin AMIS who, in turn, is greatly influenced in his writings by the realities of his milieu and the modern era happenings. Thus, the analysis that I am going to conduct on the selected writings by Martin AMIS can simply be reduced to a critical evaluation of a modern British writer through the eyes of someone who is an outsider as far as British culture is concerned.

¹¹Kelley Griffith, *Writing Essays about Literature: A Guide and Style Sheet*, Sixth Edition, (London: Wadsworth,2002), p.136.

¹²AtaféiPewissi, op. cit., p. 146.

¹³Kelley Griffith, op. cit., p. 136.

¹⁴Norman N. Holland, op. cit., p. 147.

In order to dissect the elements characteristic of the modern era in the writings of Martin AMIS, I have divided this work into three chapters.

The first chapter is about Research problem, background and framework.

The second chapter is based on Literature Review. Here I will explain and give some details about opinions of different writers and critics against or upon the topic.

The third chapter of the research work will deal with the modern man who is in search of a soul. In the analysis of the depiction AMIS makes of his fictional characters, I will lay emphasis on some of the characteristics and symbols through which AMIS presents the true nature of the modern man.

The fourth chapter will be concerned with the portrayal AMIS makes of the capitalistic system. At this level, I will focus my analysis on the place money occupies in the modern societies which are highly capitalistic. It will also discuss how I view the relationship between the employee and employer through some of the selected materials. This chapter will end with a discussion on how money contributes to the deterioration of the marriage institution.

CHAPTER ONE

Research problem, background and framework

1-1 Problem statement and purpose of the study

1-1-1 Problem statement

The major problem raised by the topic is the bad influence that money has on the modern man. Indeed the modern man is nowadays influenced by money in every sector: friendship, marriage, profession, economic systems, social behaviors. Martin AMIS through his literary works such as *Money: a suicide note and the Rachel Papers* demonstrated that the modern man under the influence of money has become blind. By intellectual blindness, Martin Amis would mean the lack of interest and motivation of the modern man in craving for knowledge. That is he is no more reading in order to put into practice what he has learnt. Martin Amis has also pointed how money can destroy marriage, friendship and professional relationship between employers and employees.

Furthermore not only money can destroy marriage, but materialism is also a dangerous aspect that seems to be a threat in modern couple. This situation is more eluded in Anderson's saying that follows:

“I saw this firsthand with a former client of mine named Yolanda who unknowingly fell into the materialism trap and nearly destroyed her marriage because of it. She is a first generation American with immigrant parents from Guatemala. She had a misguided notion in her head that if she had a beautiful home nicely decorated with a formal dining room and a landscaped yard for her family to live in then she would be happy. It was almost as if she had a picture of the American Dream and she had to step into that picture and become that person to be happy.

She insisted her husband buy a home they could barely afford along with Ethan Allen furniture and a landscaped backyard – going into debt to do it. This may not seem like materialism because we are not talking diamonds and furs here. We are talking about a dining room table but none-the-less, her focus was on accumulating things instead of on her marriage and family. Fortunately for her, this story doesn't end tragically. When her mother passed away, something triggered in her that completely changed her outlook on her values. She got a much needed wake-up call about

what was really important in life before it was too late”¹⁵.

After analyzing this quotation, I have come to the conclusion that you can avoid a lot of traps with suitable information, better wake up and good advice. That is what happened when Yolanda received her mother’s visit and wake up call; then she changed her mind from materialism to the necessary for a marriage life.

1-1-2 Purpose of the study

The main objective accounting for the choice of this topic is to draw people attention on the general role of literature and the specific task of the writer in sensitizing the readers about their societal problems. I also want to point out that the reading population is decreasing dangerously that is why the degree of the intellectual blindness is increasing. My other objective is to show that money has caused the endemic and pandemic worries of the modern world and so has crucified the modern man. Money can cause divorce between husband and wife, it can also destroy friendship and collaboration between employers and employees. Money can break the natural relation between God and men.

In the same vein, a mastery of the social realities characteristic of the modern times will be of paramount value in the appraisal of *Money: A Suicide Note and The Rachel Papers* which are concerned with our social realities such as the place of money, sex, power and family issues in the modern civilisation. In other words, the mastery of the socio-economic circumstances, the sociological and anthropological concepts such as culture, discourse ideology, the self and history during the modern era will contribute a great deal to my construction of meaning.

1-2 Scope of the study

This research work is conducted to determine all the various impacts that money can have over the modern man and the role played by literature and writers to stop the

¹⁵ <http://www.google.bj/search.moneyandmarriage>

negative influences of money. This research work is not mainly devoted to demonstrate that we can live in a modern society without money. It is also clear that I cannot demonstrate that writers can always help people avoid bad behaviors in the modern society.

In my analysis of AMIS¹⁶ selected writings, I have remarked that he sticks to this moralizing role in a modern world that is falling apart. Therefore, in this research work, I have investigated and dug Martin AMIS's vision upon the modern era in his re-created worlds. In this enterprise, I have realized that the author, through his creative writings, attempts to communicate his vision upon the modern era's realities, a vision directed at impacting on the history of the modern society and changing it positively. My main focus has been on how AMIS has reshaped social, economic and political realities pertaining to our modern world. I have analyzed the way he exposes the evils that undermine the modern society and impede its positive and true progress. By exposing these evils, he implicitly addresses an important message of change and envisions new modern societies, harbinger of peace, morality and positive thinking.

1-3 Significance of the study

In this research work, I have investigated and dug Martin Amis vision upon the modern era. Through his literary works, Martin Amis has shown that the modern man is living in a world of bad and dangerous convictions. This study shows the social dimension of money and the pressure money exercises on the modern man. Due to the search of materialism, the modern man is not more satisfied with the just minimum that can allow him to maintain his body and soul together. Moreover with regards to the marriage institution love is more and more replaced by materialism today.

Martin AMIS, through a plain, direct and sometimes an obscene style of writing, has distinguished himself as one of the prominent modernist writers. In his craftsmanship and throughout his various plots, a wonderful mastery of literary techniques, a deep sense of description and a special selection of diction, the

¹⁶Jean Paul Sartre, "Why Write", in David Lodge (ed), *ibid.*, p. 371.

author has elaborated on topical themes of immorality, sex, money, violence, marriage, fashion, gender issues, scientific materialism, sadism, perversion, lechery, hypocrisy and frustration that gangrene our modern societies. Through these very ideas he communicates in his chef-d'oeuvres, he has shown himself to the readership as a committed writer who believes that a better world is still possible, despite the advanced level of depravity and corruption of the socio economic and political lives that can be witnessed everywhere.

1-4) Theoretical and Methodological Framework

1-4-1) Theoretical Framework

The major theory applied to my research work is psychoanalytic literary criticism. According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, psychoanalysis is defined as a method of treating somebody who is mentally ill by asking him to talk about past experiences and feelings in order to try to find explanation for their present problems. It means that psychoanalysis criticism refers to literary criticism or literary theory which, in method, concept, or form, is influenced by the tradition of psychoanalysis. Psychoanalytic reading has been practiced since the early development of psychoanalysis itself, and has developed into a heterogeneous interpretive tradition. The object of psychoanalytic literary criticism, at its very simplest, can be the psychoanalysis of the author or of a particularly interesting character in a given work.

However, more complex variations of psychoanalytic criticism are possible. For, Jacques Lacan, "the unconscious is structured like a language"¹⁷. So the concept of psychoanalysis can be deployed with reference to the narrative or poetic structure itself, without requiring access to the authorial psyche. The founding texts of psychoanalysis may themselves be treated as literature, and re-read for the light cast by their formal qualities on their theoretical content. In our theoretical frame applied to this research work is to deepen the clarification of certain concepts such as money, marriage and capitalism. Money plays a great role in marriage and serves as the basis of capitalism.

¹⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/psychoanalytic_literary_criticism#overview

Money is a medium that can be exchanged for goods and services and is used as a measure of their values on the market or it can also be defined as any good that is widely used and accepted in transactions involving the transfer of goods and services. Marriage is the relationship that exists between a husband and a wife or a similar relationship between people of the same sex. It can also be defined as a ceremony in which two people are married. Capitalism is a system of economics based on the private ownership of capital and production inputs, and on the production of goods and services for profit.

The production of goods and services is based on supply and demand in the general market (market economy), rather than through central planning (planned economy). Capitalism is generally characterized by competition between producers. Other facets, such as the participation of government in production and regulation, vary across models of capitalism¹⁸.

1-4-2) Methodological Framework

The research method that I selected for my research work is the qualitative approach. Qualitative approach is explained in these terms:

Qualitative research is a method of inquiry employed in many different academic disciplines, traditionally in the social sciences, but also in market research and further contexts. Qualitative researchers aim to gather an in-depth understanding of human behaviors and the reasons that govern such behaviors. The qualitative method investigates the why of decision making, not just what, when, where. Hence, smaller but focused samples are more often needed than large samples. Qualitative researchers may use different approaches in collecting data, such as the grounded theory practice. Narratology, storytelling, classical ethnography, or shadowing. Qualitative methods are also loosely present in other methodological approaches, such as action research or actor-network theory. Forms of the data collected can include interviews and group discussions, observation and reflection field notes, various texts, picture, and other materials.

Qualitative researcher is an exploration of what is assumed to be a dynamic reality. It does not claim that what is discovered in the process is universal and,

18 [http:// www.google.bj/searchfunctionsofmoney](http://www.google.bj/searchfunctionsofmoney)

thus, replicable. It helps to make the writer answer why and how questions related to people minds and behaviors. This qualitative research is the ideal ends continuum along which actual research takes place. It is mainly used in ethnographic research, critical social research, ethical inquiry, historical research philosophical research etc.....

Chapter Two:

Literature Review

The relation between money and human life is a long-run history dating back to the genesis of humanity. Money is a double faceted agent endowed with both positive and negative potentials. So much as it proves indispensable to satisfy human needs, it contributes to spoil human morality as it is demonstrated by Eduardo Porter¹⁹. Money is anything commonly accepted in exchange for goods and services. Before the discovery of money, former men had a system called Barter which is the direct exchange of goods for goods or services.

But the very first problems they met and that led to the discovery of money are: the double coincidence of wants or needs; the rate of exchange and the divisibility. So money was invented to serve humanity, to facilitate business transactions and exchanges. But unfortunately, it is nowadays, money that uses or employs people because money influences every sector in the modern society. Then it is obvious to notice that people worship adore money instead of manipulating, using and handling it as a thing. What then are its potential stakes and drawbacks? What are the relationships between money and capitalism, money and marriage? Finally can we live in the modern society without money?

2-1) Stakes of money in human life¹⁹

Money is often defined in terms of the three functions or services that it provides. Money serves as a medium of exchange, as a store of value, and as a unit of account. Firstly, money's most important function is as a medium of exchange to facilitate transactions. Without money, all transactions would have to be conducted by barter²⁰, which involves direct exchange of one good or service for another. The difficulty with barter system is that in order to obtain a particular good or service from a supplier, one has to possess a good or service of equal value, which the supplier also desires.

In other words, in a barter system, exchange can take place only if there is a double coincidence of wants between two transacting parties. The likelihood of a double

¹⁹ [http:// www.google.bj/searchfunctionsofmoney](http://www.google.bj/searchfunctionsofmoney)

coincidence of wants, however, is small and makes the exchange of goods and services rather difficult. Money effectively eliminates the double coincidence of wants problem by serving as a medium of exchange that is accepted in all transactions, by all parties, regardless of whether they desire each other's goods and services.

Secondly, in order to be a medium of exchange, money must hold its value over time; that is, it must be a store of value. If money could not be stored for some period of time and still remain valuable in exchange, it would not solve the double coincidence of wants problem and therefore would not be adopted as a medium of exchange. As a store of value, money is not unique; many other stores of value exist, such as land, works of art, and even baseball cards and stamps. Money may not even be the best store of value because it depreciates with inflation. However, money is more liquid than most other stores of value because as a medium of exchange, it is readily accepted everywhere.

Furthermore, money is an easily transported store of value that is available in a number of convenient denominations. Finally, money also functions as a unit of account, providing a common measure of the value of goods and services being exchanged. Knowing the value or price of a good, in terms of money, enables both the supplier and the purchaser of the good to make decisions about how much of the good to supply and how much of the good to purchase.

It follows that money 'provides for the enactment of transactions between agents widely separated in time and space. Hence, money proper is independent of the means whereby it is represented, taking the form of pure information lodged as figures in a computer printout. In this way, Giddens claims that it is erroneous to see money, in Parsonian terms, as a circulating medium. Giddens interpretation however, still ignores the fact that 'despite the transferability of money, people make every effort to embed it in particular ties, places, meanings, and social relations. It appears that anthropologists have been more successful than their other colleagues in the social sciences in

proposing accounts that demonstrate the intimate interplay between monetary transactions and the constructions of modern world.

Giddens relates his argument to that of Simmel regarding the spatial implications of money. Simmel contended that ‘the role of money is associated with the spatial distance between the individual and his possession...where the power of money to bridge distances enables the owner and his possessions to exist so far apart that each of them may follow their own precepts to a greater extent than in the period when the owner and his possessions still stood in a direct mutual relationship, when every economic agreement was also a personal one.

The relationship between money and family may vary depending on the ethnic group concerned. For instance, we have many children and one of them was born ‘Chinese’, but was adopted by a ‘Japanese’ family. This respondent married a Japanese man, and their daughter’s identity card shows her as belonging to the Malay ‘race’. As can be seen, the problematic of ‘race’ is very much intrinsic in the makeup of this family. Hence, it is not my intent to test ethnicity (or other social variables for that matter) as a variable in analysing the two cases. Rather, anchoring my study within the cases would aid towards a more holistic understanding of money in the family, where only general comparisons may be drawn where applicable, to show how different families would regard and treat money in similar and contrasting ways.

Speaking of Money and Morality – Filiality and Thrift, it is important to point out that Money influences much within a family. Here, I elucidate how money is employed as a moral token within the familial context, to show that family members regard the act of giving money as a secondary moral imperative, as well as how children are socialised into the virtues of saving and thrift via indirect means. Money is taken to be a Money and Morality intermediary that is negotiated within the familial moral makeup. The link between money and morality is derived from various stances. To begin with, the symbolic significance of money is to be understood within the context in which it is used.

In other words, the ‘meaning of money, like the meaning of words, cannot be reduced to what it represents. Its meaning depends on what people in a particular context do with it²⁰ Given that, a systematic understanding of the meanings of money is further augmented by what we do with money, and with whom we use money. That is to say, my research focused on the act of giving money, on whether such an act between familial members, say for instance, parent and child, would be emblematic of filial piety. The idea of how money is used, and between whom, reveals the moral aspects of money and family, for the familial relationship between a parent and child stands as that which is morally bounded. Hence, the act of giving money between morally bounded familial members is seen as partially constitutive of filiality, where the notion of obligation to give is often eschewed, as expressed by most of my respondents.

The postulate that familial relationships stand as morally bounded is posited by Morgan²¹, who contends that ‘family members routinely have to make choices around matters of considerable importance dealing with questions of sickness, care, human need and sometimes of life and death and, at the same time, use a language of morality in order to evaluate and account for their decisions’ (2001: 238, emphasis mine). As mentioned, most of Morgan respondents do not equate the act of giving parents money with obligation. Rather, their understanding of the way in which ‘moral ideas enter into everyday family decisions rules out a picture of family members simply following rules of obligation. Consequently, what is to be done is actually a matter for negotiation between familial members where a whole range of factors is taken into account.

These will be illustrated later, to demonstrate that the transfer of money within a family is performed via moral reasoning and negotiations rather than arising out of obligation. Additionally, the socialisation of children towards the virtue of saving is also related to money and morality, where morality is identified with ‘doing the right thing’, in carrying out the moral imperatives of saving money and of exercising thrift.

²⁰ <http://www.google.bj/search.moneyandmorality>

²¹ <http://www.google.bj/search.moneyandmorality>

Within this moral reasoning of parents lies a more pertinent issue, that of how money does not come easy, and has to be earned in the hard way.

2-2) Drawbacks of money

2-2-1) Impacts of money on ethics and social relations

It “affects morality”. In this respect, Eduardo refers to money as the genuine rationale behind Judas betrayal against Jesus for 30 pieces of silver, to Bernard L. Madoff to the standard member of Congress fighting tirelessly to further the interests of campaign donors, human history is full of examples of money’s ability to weaken even the firmest ethical backbone. Money is at its origin one of the great social and neutral inventions which revolutionised humanity. Its advent is followed by an improvement in productivity, accentuates competition and by so doing, strengthens the bases of the capitalistic System. These resulting economic benefits concomitantly put an end to money's original neutrality and comforts man in exploitative manners of the underprivileged and in looking for possible avenues offered to him to make as much profit as he can without being ever satisfied.

Some social happenings have captivated writers who have been denouncing in their writings social evils money has given birth to such as corruption, embezzlement, armed robbery, exploitation of the mass, prostitution, mischief... It has also contributed to the rise of Marxism which is a doctrine fighting against the exploitation of the lower structure (the poor) by the upper structure (the bourgeoisie) who owns means of production and whose only interest is to make the maximum profit. This situation has also given birth to the industrial novel in the Victorian period with the aim to expose the ill-treatment industrial workers are suffering from and to call upon the humanity's conscience. Some of the prominent writers of such a novel are among many others Victor Hugo in France, Elisabeth C. Gaskell, George Eliot, and Benjamin Disraeli Charles Dickens.²² Despite the denunciation of this social evil, I realise that the problem is becoming epidemic and even pandemic.

²²KomiBafana, "The Industrial Worker in the Victorian Novel: A Study in Four Novels by Elisabeth C. Gaskell, George Eliot, Benjamin Disraeli and Charles Dickens: Romance as Radical Literature", (Lomé: Université de Lomé, 2010). Doctorate research work.

The sociological dimension of money is mainly expressed in modern literature by consumerism, addiction and pornography. Man's search for more means has created favourable conditions for money which, beyond its original role, has earned great importance. Hence, man is ready to go through all kinds of forfeits, to use all avenues in order to possess it. Owing to this, money has unfortunately succeeded in demeaning man. Like an idol, money has put man in trance and at such a stage, he does not show any restraint in most cases but is rather possessed by the thoughts of making as much money as he could.

2-2-1) Impacts of money on professional relations²³

Money sows mistrust. It ends friendships. Experiments have found that it encourages us to lie and cheat. As Karl Marx, the scourge of capitalism, noted, “Money then appears as the enemy of man and social bonds that pretend to self-subsistence. Yet though we clearly understand money’s power to debase character, we have less certain a grasp on what it is about money that corrupts us so. Is it simply greed? Does the appetite for the more comfortable life that money can buy push us over the line? Money in a given enterprise can motivate employees and push them to the performance for a motivated man is an inspired one. In the time, when they are too much accustomed to money, it can spoil their mind and make them be lazy²³.”

Money can also brake the good collaborations between the employer and employees; among employees. One of my British friends asked me at London when attending a seminar: “Why in Africa, most of the time the main and only issue for workers’ strike, is money and not working conditions²⁴?” .His worry was right but I think that things should change because we are being enslaved by money. And from now on people should know that we (workers) stay more at work than at home. So we rather put aside money claim and insist on better working conditions to have a better and long life. Then instead of claiming for salary increase, workers should rather ask for clean

²³ Adam, a lecturer of Trinity University of Leeds at a seminar, October 2009 at a seminar

offices, soft and comfortable chairs to avoid diseases and pains such as back hurting. This is important because we don't live on only money and whatever the situation no one has enough money to solve all his problems. As a whole money seems to be a solution but not the solution. Money is nowadays so harmful; Money is causing so many troubles, worries that some people wonder whether we should abolish money to have a modern society more peaceful, fair and balanced with justice.

2-2-3) Money and religious faith in the modern world²⁴

What does the Bible say about money? Is it good? Is it bad? Should we aspire to make more? It seems there are many thoughts on this, but there's only one that counts. Money is something that we made, it isn't divine. It's a part of life, but we need to treat it as we treat other parts of life as Christians: it is only temporary, and it shouldn't be more important than our relationship with God²⁵. It's true that having money can greatly change our lives, but we shouldn't worship money. It is important for us to do well in life... and that means making more money most of the time.

Desiring to be successful is a good thing and we shouldn't avoid hard work and its rewards. We just need to remember that money alone will not make someone happy, it doesn't give him deeper meaning. God should always be at the center of your life. The more you trust God and are happy with your life, the better your life will be. If you are a person of Faith and you have a strong character and positive attitude about life, it's possible that it will help you succeed in life.

Money has also been studied in 'Islam'. Islamic scholar El-Zein for instance, begins by comparing Islamic laws with ideologies common in the West, and attempts to fill in the lacunae of substantial information concerning Islam in the West. The central Confucian values are equilibrium and harmony; though the meanings of these terms are rather particular...Money is one of the stimuli that can upset

²⁴ <http://www.google.bj/search.moneyandchurches>

²⁵ <http://www.google.bj/search.moneyandchurches>

equilibrium and defeat harmony. Wealth, for Confucius, is associated with 'unrighteousness' and 'shame'.

Conversely, the Islamic system 'represents the only principle which may be capable of safeguarding the rights and dignity of all individuals and of providing for all their needs and protection'. The author goes on to locate Islamic laws with reference to other socioeconomic dimensions of society such as that of banks, economic planning, capitalist corporations, insurance, and usury and exchange, etc. El-Zein highlights that Islam prohibits the hoarding of money. Specifically, prohibition focuses solely on the monetary means of exchange, and thus, the hoarding of gold and silver in essence is illegal, be it forged or unforged.

Also, he points out that where transfer of debt is concerned, the reality of the transfer and the content of the Prophet's tradition indicate that in the transfer of the debt it is necessary to have a person who owes a debt, a person to whom the debt is owed, and a person to whom the debt is transferred. Additionally, the person to whom the debt is transferred should not show any ingratitude or procrastination'. There exist also, Islamic rulings where pawning is concerned. For example, the Prophet asserts that a pawned item is not to be taken away from its owner, and instead will remain the property of the debtor and the benefit from such property will likewise be the debtor's property.

In sum, El-Zein posits that material (such as pecuniary) matters are to blend with spiritual ones, where 'Allah's decrees and prohibitions provide the motivation for a Muslim's actions, actions which are subject to such decrees and prohibitions'. Other extant studies about money run the gamut from marriage money, people's individual money styles and attitudes about money, money and morality, to the meanings of money, and electronic money. In contributing to existing studies therefore, this paper puts up a case for money as a social medium in signifying the negotiation and hence, the meanings and practice of the religion must be comprehended and analysed within the context in which they arise.

The translator of El-Zein's book, Elsayed M.H. Omran, points out that where the capitalist system allows 'absolute ownership of means of production to individuals...the communist socialist system calls for collective ownership of the means of production'. In this manner, 'neither the capitalist nor communist ideologies, contrary to the Islamic principle, constitute a humane and viable ideology capable of safeguarding justice, equality and dignity in society'. Doyle highlights: 'Islam teaches that wealth is a gift from God and that enjoying it is good, provided it always remains secondary to respect for Allah' (1999: 83). Additionally, wealth, according to Mohammed, is a form of labour and hence holy. From this prohibitions encompass gambling, renting out land, begging, and charging interest.

2-3) Money and Capitalism²⁶

Capitalism²⁶ is not an economical system, it's a political one for Deng Xiaoping and his Eight Elders capitalism is first all a social class tool to exploit and dominate other social classes in any society, and by extension it's the perfect tools for Western imperialist countries to exploit less developed countries and erect themselves as a class of noble and privileged countries. The main conclusion the Chinese made by the years 1980s is this: Our priority if first to free our country from foreign domination, therefore we have to understand capitalism and like in the perfect Chinese philosophy "use the force of the enemy to beat him".

Capitalism is not possible without money, therefore we have first to accumulate money, the most important insight the Chinese leaders got at this early stage is that in "undeveloped" countries only the state has the means and power to accumulate rapidly enough money to kick start a capitalist society. Therefore the government became the first provider of capital for world class state companies. The main purpose of the State in that direction was to accumulate enough money to incentive factories building, infrastructure constructions, etc. trough free market enterprise and special zones

²⁶<http://www.google.bj/search.moneyandcapitalism>

initiatives. Side note to the naive Africans: Regardless of what you think about capitalism, in Israel, the Jews' state, the government controls directly and indirectly about 75% of the whole country economy assets through state investment. Startups get 85% of their seed fund from the government and the remainder 25% comes from private funds. Israel situation is very similar to Finland where the state is heavily involved in startups funding, and surprisingly Finnish Tech sector exports now represents 21% of Finland export.

Capitalism is not possible without stealing, so we have to learn how to steal. China didn't have all the technology needed to jump start its industrialization. So stealing western technology through a sophisticated network of state sponsored technology theft was put into place. And it worked successfully. According Gen. Keith B. Alexander, the director of the National Security Agency, the Chinese theft of proprietary data from United States companies in sectors including defense, technology, aerospace, oil and gas, represents the "greatest transfer of wealth in history. There is a lesson for African countries here: Don't expect other nations to transfer their technology and knowledge to you though humanitarian programs. It won't happen. Before Chinese, Russian and Japanese paved their way to high technology through organized economical and industrial espionage. The myth of friendly transfer of technology is still holding Africans in the starting block.

Capitalism is not a private system, it's an extension of the State power, disguised as privateCapitalism is a state instrument. It's by default a nationalist tool for capturing and redistributing limited resource. Without a state, there is no capitalism. So the state has to take a first role in its emergence, or it'll never emerge. Like in the USA, in Israel, in Finland, the Chinese government plays a hand holding role for its national champions providing education, network, access to technology, diplomacy, money, but furthermore in defining the overall National economic policy.

Capitalism prosper with wars, so let's spare ourselves by lending to the most dominant world powerWorld powers need money mainly for wars. And when they need money

they go to war. Chinese has learned it the hard way from the Mongols and the Europeans. They know that the only thing that could stop them from becoming a strong nation is another western war against them, so following Genghis Khan Words “Europeans love more Money than their God”, Chinese in the most pragmatic way go put their money in the United States treasure buying up to 1.1 trillion of American debt. This very tactical move gave enough time to Chinese to build themselves up, and now they stand tall. Foreign Aggression and predation is enemy number one of the development of any Nation.

2-4) Money and Marriage²⁷

Money is very important for a good collaboration in couple of marriage however there are some rules to be respected by a couple in order to last for long otherwise there will be a divorce.

Do you ever find yourself fighting with your spouse over the money he or she spends? Do you frequently spend money yourself, in excess, to spite your spouse because you are angry?

To clarify all this different aspects, I can assert that managing marriage and money's problems is a very complex matter. For a couple for instance, not knowing exactly where your money is going each month can spark resentment. It's rather necessary to have an honest conversation with your partner where you both down the spending in your household.

According to Kris hanke, it advisable to discuss your priorities and decide together if you need to cut back or add to a specific category.

In general there's no right way for married couples to manage their money, but there are plenty of wrong ways .So, money seems to be a weapon in the couple to pay attention to.

To illustrate that, I quote: “John Thyden: “Financial issues are the primary reason for 90 percent of divorce cases, I handle.”

From this quotation, I notice that money is both important and dangerous for a married couple. In such a difficult situation, John Thyden proposes: “but it isn’t necessarily the amount of money a couple has that tends to trip them up. It is the differences in their spending habits and especially their lack of communication.”

However husbands and wives with differing financial habits and attitudes can make things work, if they are willing to be honest with each other and to bend a bit.

Moreover, I refer this problem to Nancy Anderson who says in one of his articles:

“When I was a child, my father used to joke with me saying, Nancy, remember, it is just as easy to fall in love with a rich guy as a poor one.” There is always some truth in a joke and looking back on this saying as an adult, it is obvious that he was steering me toward what he hoped was a happy life rather than a life of what he perceived would be a struggle. He is old fashioned and didn’t think that a girl could create her own financial security (that is fodder for another blog) but his intentions were good. In my career as a financial adviser turned financial educator, I have worked with hundreds of couples and have seen firsthand how money problems, worries and other financial issues can lead to unhappy marriages. If left unchecked, financial problems can ultimately destroy a marriage”²⁸

After analysis of this quotation, Nancy would mention that his father was meaning that there is no wealthy woman in marriage. Then I have come to identify that communication is the key to most marital financial challenges. Dealing with debt is often the first issue on the agenda. Knowing what you are about to get yourself into can help you decide how to deal with it. If you just can’t come to an agreement, but your heart won’t let you walk away, a prenuptial agreement may be an option. Considering all that precedes, I wonder whether the modern man is not behaving as a lost; so he must search for the way to keep his mind and soul together.

²⁸ <http://www.google.bj/search.moneyandmarriage>

Chapter Three:

The Modern Man in search of a Soul

Our world is characterized by high technological advances which have greatly contributed to supply man's various needs. Edward Bond, like his predecessors who were concerned with the patterns of our modern world, defines post-modernity -a hybrid variation of modernism, an extension of modernism into contemporary time²⁹- as "the result of the exponentially increasing productivity of technology on goods and in the passing of information."²⁸ To put this assertion into context, the modern world has been transformed into a consumer society where man is overwhelmed and submerged by advertisement on a great range of manufactured goods.

In the light of Bond's statement, it can be taken for granted that the modern world greatly benefits from its industrial and technological revolutions. It is in this spirit that Mamadou Hamady Camara, while pondering on post-modernism as despite in Edward Bond's works, writes "les progrès scientifiques du post-modernisme ont transformé cette civilisation de l'universalité [la civilisation post-moderne] ... en un paradis terrestre".²⁹On the basis of the image of the paradise used, man may quickly assume that modernity enables him to live an easy and wonderful life in which he is provided all he wants. A skimming through some modern writings such as *Brave New World*, *Erewhon* and *Jackets* confirms that.

However, all the assumptions and deductions that can be projected in mind through this image of heaven have been in real facts drowned into the sea of imagination, making of the modern world a paradox. That is why the article by Mamadou Camara is quick to stress on the fact that:

“Le paradis du post-modernisme souffre d'autres tares. Il a «ses imperfections» -son «Satan»- de la même manière que le paradis de Dieu avait les siennes. Mais à la différence de Dieu, nous ne pouvons pas nous débarrasser de notre Satan. Vouloir

²⁸Edward Bond, *Jackets*, quoted in MamadouHamady Camara, "Le Post-Modernisme en question: *Jackets* d'Edward Bond", in Mamadou Gaye (ed), *Occasional Papers on English Literature, Number 1*, (Dakar: UniversitéCheikh Anta Diop, December 1996), p. 122.

*"The scientific progress of the post-modern period has transformed this civilization of universality into a Paradise on earth" (My translation).

²⁹Mamadou Camara, "Le post-modernisme en question: *Jacket*d'Edward Bond", in Mamadou Gaye (ed), op. cit., p, 123.

extirper celui-ci de notre civilisation équivaudrait à essayer «de changer notre peau en changeant nos habits»,³⁰

“The postmodern paradise suffers from other flaws. It has its "the own imperfections" -its "Satan" -the same way as God's paradise had its own. However, contrary to God, we cannot get rid of our Satan. To pull up the latter from our civilization would be equated to trying "to change our skin while changing our clothes." (My own translation)”³¹.

In a nutshell, Camara means that science which is supposed to transform our world into a dreamland also houses, as it has been the case of the biblical heaven, its own Satan man cannot get rid of. Being the actor at the heart of all the revolutions the world is undergoing, it is a fact that the modern man's way of life, his civilisation, can only be concomitantly affected by these technological factors of modernity. The latter has succeeded in putting to ridicule the life of the modern man in making the modern world "hollow", "broken" and "lost" as depicted through the sad picture T. S. Eliot makes of the modern life through his poem "Hollow Men."³²

This conception of the modern world almost all critics, reformers and artists concur to, is also what Martin AMIS has strived to elucidate in the following concrete terms: "we check the accurate quotation pretty much agree that the twentieth century is an ironic age -downward-looking".³³ In the quotation, the adjective "ironic" encapsulates, as said above, the paradox between what the modern world is supposed to be -"heaven"- due to all its assets and what it is really -a sad view picture-. The idea of downward looking which is expressive of regression and that really characterises the modern era in all aspects is also reiterated in the shame Martin AMIS makes the elements constitutive of nature as well as some of the products of man's own labour feel. This is what is inferred from the following image:

³⁰Mamadou Camara, op. cit., p. 124.

³¹The postmodern paradise suffers from other flaws. It has its "the own imperfections" -its "Satan" -the same way as God's paradise had its own. However, contrary to God, we cannot get rid of our Satan. To pull up the latter from our civilization would be equated to trying "to change our skin while changing our clothes." (My own translation)

³²T. S. Eliot, *The Waste Land and other Writings*, (Broadway: The Modern Library, 2002).

³³Martin AMIS, *Money: A Suicide Note*, (London: Penguin Books, 1994), p.19. (Subsequent quotations from *Money: A Suicide Note* are parenthetically included within the text as *Money* followed by the page number (*Money*, p. 231).

“The skies are so ashamed. The trees in the squares hang their heads, and the awnings of the street are careral to conceal the wet red faces of the shop fronts. The evening paper in its case is ashamed. The clock above the door where the old man speaks is ashamed. Even the drum is so ashamed. (*Money*, p. 151)”.

In this chapter of the work, I intend to read the life of the modern man through the eyes of Martin AMIS. While analysing the depiction AMIS has made of the modern man, I have come to notice that he is typically portrayed as an individual who is in search of a soul. By this, I mean the modern man's world has fallen apart with regards to morality and the quality of the life he lives. This moral emptiness and the decay of his life have been wrapped-up in several imageries. However, I am particularly interested in three main aspects that really shatter the modern man's world.

The first aspect concerns how AMIS codifies the symbolic of the decayed world. The second aspect deals with AMIS's attempt to demonstrate the illusionary happiness the modern man pretends to enjoy. Finally, the third aspect looks at how man's propensity to loneliness adds to his misfortune.

Before discussing Ami's concern for the modern man in search of a soul, it is necessary to point it out that like the character, “the Man” in Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Beautiful Ones are not yet Born*, or *Every man in the religions allegoric play to be reshuffled* which bears the same title, the character John Self in *Money: A Suicide Note* is the prototype of the modern man. I understand that the name Self given to the protagonist of *Money: A Suicide Note* is a clear allusion made to the modern man in the sense that his name recalls the noun “self” which is the type of person you are, your character, your typical behaviour.³⁴Evidently, the author made him confirm unambiguously this opinion in the following quote: “I'm called John Self but who isn't?” (*Money*, p. 97). That is why I partially agree with Brian Finney who says that Self's “ubiquitous last name makes him representative of a new construction of

³⁴Adam Gadsby (ed), *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, third edition, (London: **Longman**, 1995), p. 1292.

selfhood in the West."³⁵ However, the little complement that is worth adding is that in a world going global, the attributes of self are not typical to Western countries. They are rather symptomatic to the whole humanity at various degrees.

3-1) The Symbolic of a Decayed World

In AMIS's works, it is quite obvious that the concept of a decayed world has been discussed at three levels. First of all, it is underscored among many other depictions in the symbols of Self's car, the fiasco and the decayed teeth. Secondly, it is embedded in the illusionary happiness the modern man enjoys and finally in the lack of self-discipline.

Let us first of all consider the symbolic of fiasco. In this era of great industrialisation, transports are undergoing great changes. Walking which was the first and natural way of moving has been progressively replaced by powerful engines which keep on being sophisticated in order to reduce more and more distances at the same time as it minds comfort. Car, therefore, is one of the most used means of transports. In the case of John Self, the car that takes him almost everywhere he wants to go has been baptised Fiasco: "Alec Llewellyn drove me to Heathrow Airport at the wheel of my powerful Fiasco" (*Money*, p. 15).

Beyond any idea of haphazard, I read in the name given to the car a bad omen for the modern man. I consider it as a device that is used to transmit a message according to which, modernity has embarked the modern man on its board and directs its steer wheel which has undoubtedly taken the ways leading him to a fiasco, a chaos. The idea of chaos is hidden by the author in the irony he creates when he attributes to John Self the lack of control over himself and over his car. Consequently, the poor modern man has been led downhill and it has become relatively impossible for him to get back on his feet again.

³⁵Brian Finney, *Martin AMIS*, (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 48.

This idea of downhill fall of the modern man is scattered throughout the novel but I would like to mention just one passage which reads: "I sometimes think I'm controlled by someone. Some space invader is invading my inner space, some fucking joker. ... But he's not from out there. He is from in here" (*Money*, p. 305).

Having lost any control over his destination, man stays powerless before the "powerful Fiasco", and the worst is that though his life causes him misfortune, his state of enslavement by the modern era forces him to blindly get stuck to his modern life and be still fond of the disasters life brings to him. This is the conclusion I have come to when I consider the following quotation:

"The Fiasco, it's my pride and joy. Acting like a pal, I lend the motor to Alec Llewellyn while I'm in New York. And what do I return to? An igloo of parking-tickets and birdcrap, with a ripped spare, a bad grinding noise, and every single gauge resignedly flashing ... You should see the way the boys at the garage simply cover their faces with envy and admiration when the Fiasco is driven -or pushed or towed or, on one occasion, practically coptered- into their trash-strewn mews. It is temperamental, my Fiasco, like all the best racehorses, poets and chiefs. You can't expect it to behave like any old Mistral or Alibi. I bought it last year for an enormous amount of money. There are some ... who believe that the Fiasco errs on the side of ostentation that the Fiasco is in questionable state. But what do they know? (*Money*, p. 93)".

In the quotation above, there is a series of elements that summarise in a wonderful way the incongruity of the modern man's life. In the first instance I wonder how this car and indirectly the modern era which is in a disgusting way can force admiration of mechanics who are supposed to repair it and who are used here as a symbol of the supposed-wise men whose duty is to repair, to reorient the modern man's life. It somewhere means that before the gleaming assortments of our time, wisdom and ethics seem to give up. Clearly put, the moral codes and precepts have become in the modern days a highly intricate matter and the integrity of the majority of those who overtly argue for any such codes or principles is doubtful.

In the second instance, I question myself upon how a sensible man can afford spending an enormous amount of money on a "temperamental" engine, that is, an engine which does not work properly or which operates according to its whims and caprices and still be proud of it as I infer from the rhetorical question that ends the quotation: "what do they know?"

The idea according to which the *Fiasco* does not work properly is well known to self as he informs the readership:

"I drove home in my Fiasco, which apart from the faulty cooling System, the recurring malfunction with the brakes, and power steering, and a tendency to list violently to the left, seems to be running fairly reliably at present. At least it starts more often than not, on the whole. (*Money*, p. 141)".

In the last instance, the fragility of the car which is demonstrated not only through the working of its engine but also through the state in which it is brought back after a ride prompts me to agree with the idea that "the Fiasco errs on the side of ostentation, that the Fiasco is in questionable state" (*Money*, p. 144). Briefly, the word ostentation which is defined as a situation in which "you deliberately try to show people how rich and clever you are, in order to make them admire you"³⁶ and the other questions I have raised are simply reminiscent of the lavishness that marks with stamps the modern civilisation. They are as well evocative of the modern man who, through his actions and thoughts depicts a man devoid of meticulous and Cartesian principles. Consequently, this state of affairs makes free ground for failure, chaos, and disappointment. Put in simple words, the attitude of self towards his car is evocative of how the modern man leaves way for the fiasco to dominate over his life.

Another mechanism Martin AMIS uses to discuss the corrupt nature of the modern man is through the figurative image of teeth. With regard to *Money: A Suicide Note*

³⁶David Rattray, *Reader's Digest Elnstraied Encyclopedic Dictionary, Volume Two L-Z*, op. cit., p. 1164.

and *The Rachel Papers*, the misfortunes the blind search for money and the corrupt morality bring to man are identifiable in the state of the respective protagonists' teeth. It is not specified in the texts which teeth are aching both of the protagonists but a close look at the molar reflects the picture of a crown which is among many definitions said to be "a circle ... worn by someone who has won a special honour."³⁷ In the light of this definition, I could say that the state of their teeth is the symbolic of the reward, the footprint of the modern era on the modern man. First of all, the decay of Self's teeth is evidenced by the dentist Roger during his consultation:

"I already have a trio of gurgling gimmicks in my mouth . . . 'Have you had any discomfort there?' 'Pain, you mean? Pain? Yeah, lots. That's why I'm here'. 'Yes, well you would. Hello, seems to be some mobility ...I must just check the vitality of that one' ... 'Can you feel anything?'
On the tooth? No!
'Discomfort? ... minimal vitality' he murmured... 'What are You talking about? Talk right, okay? It's loose and it's dead and it's coming out. Yes? No?
'I don't do extractions,' he said primly. You'll have to see Mrs Mc Gilchrist about that,'
'Then just clean them', I said . . .
'The gum's been traumatized by the shape of the root,' he mused...
'Traumatized?' I sipped the fizzy liquid and expelled its tactful pink. Now you're talking'.
'Well the shape of the root is very unusual.' (*Money*, pp. 75-76)".

In my analysis of the novel, I have realised that not only are three of Self's teeth rotten when he was rich but also AMIS is quick in informing the readership far ahead about the reasons of this rottenness through an extract of a chat he created between Self and Dawn: "I gave her all my face, and it's a face ... usually full of adolescent archaeology and cheap food and junk money, the face of a fat snake, bearing all the things of its sins." (*Money*, p. 14).

³⁷David Rattray, *Reader's Digest Elnstraied Encyclopedic Dictionary, Volume Two L-Z*, op. cit., p. 1092.

I denote in this extract the use of synecdoche, a figure of speech where the part of an object or idea is mentioned to represent the whole. Face is used in the present context to signify the mouth. This is suggested by the snake which bears "all the things of its sins", that is, its venom not on its face but rather in its teeth. The association of teeth and snake serve in the quote to connote the poisoning of the modern man's life.

Likewise in *The Rachel Papers*, AMIS provides Charles Highway who is an educated young man but depraved by his sexual attitudes with rotten teeth.

Take, for example, my mouth -literally a shambles. My milk-teeth wouldn't go away; they just curdled, although politely moving over to accommodate my grown-up ones. At the age of ten I must have had more teeth in my head than the average dentist's waiting room. Soon, I used to think, they'll be coming out of my nose. Then months of high-powered surgery involving metal strips, nuts, clips, bolts ... you name it. For two years I went about the place with a mouth like a Meccano set.³⁸

It stands out from this extract that nothing can be done by the doctor in order to remove the rotten teeth, nor to cure them or even to replace them by fake ones. That is also stipulated in *Money: A Suicide Note* by the fact that Self has not taken in consideration, the dentist Roger's advice to go and see Mrs Mc Gilchrist for an extraction. He rather opted for a cleaning of the rotten teeth. These show the difficulty to take the modern man off the wrong and perilous way he has been walking on and the vain attempt to change his corrupt ways.

The quotation also conveys the idea according to which there is not much hope of healing the modern man who has been polluted and mind-infested by the perversion of the modern days.

Secondly and still with regards to the idea of modern man in search of a soul, Martin AMIS, in his portrayal of the modern era, caricatures the modern man through the illusionary happiness the latter derives from the inventions of his epoch. After scrutinising Martin AMIS's writings as well as many other modern literary

³⁸ Martin AMIS, *The Rachel Papers*, (London: Vintage, 2003), p.29. (Subsequent quotations from *The Rachel Papers* are parenthetically included within the text as *T.R.P.* followed by the page number (*T.R.P.P.*- 29).

productions, I apprehend the fact that the happiness the modern man thinks he is swimming in is merely an illusion.

From AMIS's works, it can be surmised that the illusionary happiness is embedded in many illustrations.

First of all, let us consider the character Doris in his first book, a collection of short stories which is entitled *The Ironic High Style*. The title given to this work of art is highly telling and I could deduce from it the idea that the high style, the comfort life presents in the modern days is merely an irony. The modern life thus is simply a trompe l'oeil.

Still, since the common modern man often lacks the expertise to establish a link between literature and his real world, the meaning escapes self. Because his concern is largely focused on the vices of these days, I understand why, instead of reading for meaning and social implications of the artistic work, Self "had mainly yawned and blinked [his] way through several pages of these tales, late at night, looking for this off beat erotic power" (*Money*, p-60).

At one instance, I read: "What's a life, eh? What a joke life" (*Money*, p. 249). This is the conclusion John Self comes to after he contemplates the panorama of life in this modern era. Such a conclusion allows me to say that the life of the modern man with all the facial aspects of glamour it presents cannot be taken for force value. Owing to this realisation, I could make a deduction according to which any sign of happiness shown by the modern man is in actual fact an act of fortitude, for self and alongside the modern man is not inwardly happy at all.

This idea of illusionary happiness the modern man derives from all what he can find as best in his civilisation is expressly formulated as follow:

[We] all seem to make lots of money. Man, do we seem to be coining it here. Even the chicks live like kings. The car is free. The car is on the house. The house is on mortgage. The mortgage is on the firm -without interest. The interest thing is: how long can this last? For me, that question carries an awful lot of anxiety - ... are we greedy! Are we shameless! I once saw Terry Linex. That fat madman, take a grand out of petty cash for a weekend in Dieppe. ... We estimate that Keith Carburton spent £17,000 on lunch in fiscal '80, service and VAT *non compris*. You should see their freehold

townhouses and bijou Cotswold cottages. You should see their cars -the Tomahawks, the Farragoes', and Boomerangs. I've been ripping off the firm and the government too, for five years now, and what have I got? A hired sock, a Fiasco and the prohibitive Selina.(*Money*, p.78).

The verb 'seem' used in the first sentence of the quotation is a forceful one that supports the opinion according to which, the fact of making lots of money and enjoy all things it can offer such as expensive cars, a memorable expensive weekend, expensive meal in the most comfortable restaurants and beautiful houses, are mere appearance.

The same idea is reiterated in the question 'How long can this last?' And to such question, I could answer by saying the period of time a sensible person needs to realise that he is being deceived by the mirage of the age.

Also in this question which without doubt puts self in the shoes of an uncompromising critic of our society, I read the importance AMIS put on self-awareness as the right step towards righting the wrong of the modern world.

However, because the modern man is slow to come to such realisation, the writer, in order to express his state of utter distraught, makes Self state that such a question carries an awful lot of anxiety. It is finally the awareness of this that leads John Self to withdraw two important conclusions in which he seriously depicts the modern man: "We are greedy! Are we shameless?" The same idea is also showed through a conversation Birkin has with Ursula in *Women in Love*. To the question why there is "no flowering, no dignity of human life now", Birkin replies:

Humanity itself is dry-rotten really. There are myriads of human beings hanging on the bush -and they look very nice and rosy, your healthy young men and women. But they are apples of Sodom, as a matter of fact. Dead Sea Fruit, gall-apples. It isn't true they have any significance -their insides are full of bitter, corrupt ash ... [Mankind is a dead tree, covered with fine brilliant galls of people.³⁹

The contrast AMIS makes between appearance and reality is also demonstrated in this quotation by D. H. Lawrence through the distinction the latter -makes between the

³⁹D. H. Lawrence, *Women in Love*, (New Delhi: UBSPD, 2010), p. 37.

rosy, nice and healthy appearance which contrasts with the dry-rotten, bitter and corrupt nature of contemporary humanity.

This apprehension of the ephemeral impression and exciting quality of modern life is reached by Self by the time he notices that the fruits he fields from this way of living and conceiving happiness culminate into a "sock", that is, a "hard hit"⁴⁰ and "a Fiasco". These conclusions joined the ones self reached and which have been introduced to the reader at the early stages of *Money: A Suicide Note* when Martin AMIS makes him paint his own life and implicitly the life of the modern man in two main colours. On the one hand, he is made to be conscious about the fact that "[r]ecently [his] life feels like a bloodcurdling joke" (*Money*, p. 09). Joke, this is the word that best qualifies the life of the modern man who thinks he is swimming in a stream of happiness, devoid of any want and worry. However, when I consider the informal meaning of 'joke' which is absurdity and associate it with the descriptive adjective 'bloodcurdling' Self uses and which is synonymous of horrify, I reach the following result. The modern man is leading a type of life which is not good enough and which is highly terrifying. This simply means that the type of life the modern man leads lodges factors that contribute in the ruin of his life. On the other hand, the readership hears AMIS murmur:

“Deep down, I’m a pretty happy guy. Happiness is the relief of pain, they say, and so I guess I’m a pretty happy guy. The relief of pain happens to me frequently. But so does pain. That’s why I get lots of that relief they talk about, and all that happiness (*Money*, p. 74)”.

The illusionary happiness John Self talks about and that the modern man thinks he enjoys is made explicit in this quotation. By analogy, it can be compared to a wrapper which covers the unhappiness of the modern man life and which gives it a glittering image. The quotation draws the reader's attention on the fact that the modern man is cocooned into a perverse and illusory glamour and from this standpoint, he cannot really talk about happiness. Even if John Self deems himself content, the reader, through the subtle narrative ability of Martin AMIS and the tragic irony he uses,

⁴⁰ Adam Gadsby (ed), p. 1571.

notices that John Self is not happy and has not experienced true happiness as such. This idea is inferred from the assertion according to which "the relief of pain happens to me very frequently [through drinking most of the time] ... but so does pain". These bring me to redefine the life of the modern man as a string of rosary of pain that is intermittently mixed up with periods of fake relieves provided by either drinks, drugs or games.

It is finally this disgust for the modern man's life that forces John Self to end up acknowledging, despite all the material possessions the author endowed him with, that "I live like an animal -eating and drinking, dumping and sleeping, fucking and fighting -and that are it. It's survival. It's not enough" (*Money*, p. 257). From this quotation, I note that something is missing to make life fully enjoyable for self. He will acknowledge this lack during one of the periods of serious thoughts he experiences during his stay with Martina Twain.

“Something is missing from the present too. Wouldn't you say? Mobile, spangled and glamorous, my life looks good on paper anyhow but I think we all agree that I have a problem. Not so?

Then what is it? Brother, sister, do the right thing here and let me on it. Help me out. You'll tell me it's the booze ... the booze isn't brill, I warrant, but the booze is nothing new. Something else is new. I feel invaded, duped, fucked around. I hear strange voices and speak in strange tongues. I get thoughts that are over my head. I feel violated ... inner cities crackle with the money chaos -but I've got money, plenty of it, I'm due to make lots more. What's missing? What the hell else is mere? ... (*Money*, p. 67)”.

I notice here a stream of consciousness which might be a deliberate way the writer chooses to let the reader also reflect upon the source of true happiness. Living in this era of consumerism, man struggles by all means in order to have lots of money in order to satisfy his material addiction. John Self who stands for each and every one of us has been best owed with all the attributes of modern life -lots of money, carnal pleasure, food and drinks, material property- and still he is not genuinely happy. Resultantly, I assume that this is a call of Martin AMIS to each and every one of us to reflect deeply and to consider the fact that all the things that surrender us mainly provide us an illusionary happiness if we do not use them in the right way.

Thirdly and finally, the concept of the modern man in search of a soul is embedded in his failure to observe discipline. The study in this section seeks to visit how in the absence of self-discipline, the life of the modern man is meaningless and empty. In the process, he has chosen to make the readers see how important self-discipline is and how it sets up order in man's life. In his role of teacher, Martin AMIS uses the medium of one of his characters, namely the Prince of Wales who succinctly presents his childhood and youth which prepare the ground of his successful adulthood. It is written:

“He [the Prince of Wales] was ... profoundly grateful that he had been taught self-discipline at an early stage in his life. Self-discipline, said the Prince, seemed to him absolutely essential to any kind of civilised existence. ... I [Self] wish someone had taught me self-discipline -when I was young, when you learn things without really trying. They could have taught me pride, dignity, and French while they were at it. I wouldn't have had to lift a finger. But no one ever did teach me all that stuff. I've endeavoured to teach it to myself. I sit around trying to teach myself self-discipline. I can't be doing with it, though (it just isn't enough fun, self-discipline), and I always end up going out for a good time instead. (*Money*, pp. 72-73)”.

The Prince in the quote is grateful towards his parents for teaching him self-discipline. It is worth insisting on the fact that the word "discipline" is polysemic. For example, if we turn to the dictionary, we have as possible definitions the observance of rules, teaching the ability to control one's own behaviour and punishment for not obeying the rules. However, in the analysis of this quotation, I would rather give to the word discipline, the alternative of training proposed by Doctor Fitzhugh Dodson in his work *Tout se joue avant 6 ans*: «'Entrainment.' Le mot *discipline* contient le mot *disciple*. Quand vous disciplinez votre enfant, vous l'entraînez vraiment à devenir votre disciple, à vous d'être son professeur.”⁴¹This quotation revives in our mind William Wordsworth's famous quote according to which "the child is the father of man."⁴²

Childhood is an important stage in the life of all human beings. It is a period during which each human being forges his personality by imitating a role model, a personality

⁴¹Dr. Fitzhugh Dodson, *Tout se joue avant 6 ans*, (Paris: Nouvelles Editions Marabout, Mars 2009, p. 181.

⁴²William Wordsworth, *My Ecart Leaps when I Behold*, in *The New International Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary of the English Language*, (London: Trident Press International, 1996), p. 1851.

on which top other values will be encrusted. It is also important to stress that this role model should be a morally and intellectually sound person, for even if Dodson is recommending parents to be their children's coaches, he is alluding to responsible ones. It is in this vein of idea that he writes earlier: "la première chose à faire avec un enfant en période de «première adolescence» est de l'aider à imposer des limites raisonnables à ses actions."⁴³In a similar vein, while reflecting upon the origins of a child's good personality, *the Watch Tower* comes to the following answer after asking a series of questions:

“Comment l'être humain apprend t-il à aimer? En étudiant la psychologie? En lisant des guides pratiques? En regardant des films d'amour? C'est avant tout grâce à l'exemple et à la formation que lui donnent ses parents. L'enfant qui voit ses parents le nourrir et le protéger, communiquer avec lui, le tout dans une atmosphère pleine d'affection, comprend ce qu'est l'amour. Il apprend aussi à aimer si ses parents lui enseignent à observer les principes salutaires du bien et du mal.”⁴⁴

“How does human being come to love? Is it by reading psychology? By reading practical guides? By watching romantic films? It is first of all thanks to the good example their parents give them. The child who sees his parents feed and protect them, communicate with them, all these in a caring atmosphere, knows what love means. They also learn how to love if their parents teach them how to observe benefic principles of good and evil. (My translation)”.

In the light of the afore-mentioned quotations, I reduce discipline to love because with reference to several literary works, man is composed of flesh and soul, the latter which in turn accommodates good and evil. However, human nature has the propensity to let the pig in him⁴⁵ dominates over the good manners, and by so doing man gets involved in vices, making of his life a misery, a tragedy. If we could liberate good manners and allow ethics to transpire throughout our human actions, I do believe that the quality the world will see in us is love which embodies ethics and good virtues, in other words the

⁴³ Dr. Fitzhugh Dodson, op. cit., p.93.

* "The first thing to do to a child while they are still in their 'first adolescence' is to help them set up reasonable limits to their actions " (My translation)

⁴⁴ *La Tour de garde Vol 124, N. 13: Comment apprendre à aimer*, (France : Editions les Témoins de Jéhovah de France, 1^{er} Juillet 2003), p. 4.

⁴⁵ William Golding, *The Lord of the Flies*, (Lagos: Spectrum Books Limited, 2003).

humanity in man. These are the fruits of discipline Dodson and AMIS are aiming at in their respective reflections.

From the above analyses, I deduce that besides the fact that the Prince's educators' have the wit to dissociate what is right from what is wrong, they fully play their role by teaching him the right thing to do. They help him draw sensible borders to his actions and behaviours when it was still time. This is the reason why the Prince, once a grown-up person, can better appreciate the great role played by his mentors in his tender age after comparing himself to several people he encounters.

As a result, he is grateful for being taught the right thing at the right time which is 'at the early stage of life; that is, when he was a child. If the education of a person is missed during this crucial period in man's development, it is his whole life which is disoriented. He may try hard, but at the image of a grown-up tree to which it will be difficult to dictate a shape, it will be highly hard to such a man to acquire new values. In this order of idea, though self-realises how important self-discipline is and no matter how hard he tries to re-educate himself, to teach it to himself, he never succeeds. He always finishes realising that he is in fact struggling with values which seem more powerful than his good will. This clearly explains why, though John Self has reached the epiphany in the company of Martina Twain who plays in his life the role of the dedicated mother and the lovely sister, the former ends up stepping back to his old habits. This idea has been summed up in the following quote:

At sickening speed I have roared and clattered, I have rocketed through my time, breaking all the limits, time limits, speed limits, city limits, jumping lights and cutting comers, guzzling gas and burning rubber, staring through the foul screen with my feet on the horn. I am that fleeting train that goes screaming past you in the night. Though travelling nowhere I have hurled with blind purpose to the very end of my time. I have lived head long at a desperate rhythm. I want to slow down now, and check out the scenery, and put in a stop or two. I want some semi-colons. Maybe Martina will be my big brake ... I can't change, but maybe I can just sit 'back, with a drink, and let my life do all the work. (*Money*, p.288).

In the search for happiness, the modern man whose maxim often is "the end justifies the means" thinks everything is allowed and he lives without any respect, without setting any limit that should delineate and safeguard human actions. He finally entraps

himself in a civilisation which submerges him completely and in front of which he becomes really powerless, reason why he had "lived headlong at a desperate rhythm". When he realises at long last the type of miserable life he was living and wants 'to slow down and check out the scenery', it becomes impossible for him to change.

At some point, I think that AMIS through this description might be drawing the readers' attention to the point that if we fail to orient our lives today, it is partly the responsibility of our parents. That is why he brings self to point the accusatory finger at his parents when saying in the last but one quotation that "[they] could have taught me pride, dignity, and French while they were at it." (*Money*, p. 72) The reprehensible carelessness the modern man is victim of is denounced in the following quotation:

I grew up -or got bigger - out here in the USA. Between the ages of seven and fifteen I was a resident of Trenton, New Jersey. I did all the stuff American kids did ... Cars, refrigerators, houses -pinched, derisory. Out here I collected 'many subliminal tips on wealth and gratification. I did the groundwork for my addictions to junk food, sweet drinks, strong cigarettes, advertising, all-day-television -and perhaps, to pornography and fighting. But I don't hold mat against America. I don't blame America. I blame my father, who shipped me out here soon after my mother died. I blame my mother. (*Money*, p. 192).

Here is a call for the responsibility of parents or tutors who have in charge the education of children. As it is raised by self, parents should not hold our chaos of world with all its immoralities responsible for our misfortunes, rather their negligence in teaching their children moral values at the right moment. Parents should know that there is still a hope to set up order and transform our world into a better one if they, as torch bearers, have their head on their shoulders and teach the right thing to do. This is the greatest sacrifice parents have to make if they really want to right to some extent the wrongs, if they want to enforce ethics and humanity; if they want to shed lights and grant optimism in this world which is fast leading to perdition. This observation joins Diana Neill's comment on Haldous Huxley's *Point Counter Point* that: "if industrial civilisation could be inoculated with vitalism and people could be freed from

meaningless moral inhibitions and allowed to live fully the life of the senses all would be well."⁴⁶

It is commonly admitted that the ability to think is characteristic of human beings and differs them from animals. I do believe that a proper use of this special faculty in addition to care, tenderness and love can be used by parents as a recipe in order to teach their children what real happiness means. Once they acknowledge it, they can set up a distinction between the true happiness and the glittering one rampant in every corner of our world. To neglect this sacred role; to allow children, because of parents' irresponsibility, to forge their own role model in life is reducible to "ruin a life" as Telephone Frank, who appears as the voice of moral, keeps on telling Self every time he does wrong.

As a conclusion, I can say that self is a specific product of a specific time and place. He is embedded in the capitalistic and consumerist culture. So, everybody can easily understand why he falls. However, owing to his experience, his words carry universal and timeless meanings in the sense that he can be considered as the sacrificial lamb whose sacrifice echoes a call upon parents and the readership to example on his failure and save what could be saved.

3.2 The Solitary nature of the Modern Man

Another ingredient that crucially misses in the life of the modern man and the lack of which renders it hollow is a communal life which shadows solidarity and altruism. Literature which serves as a mirror of human societies has proven that with the advent of industrialisation which gave birth to capitalism, the western world has completely turned to an individualistic society. For instance, Yulisa Amadu Maddy's *No Past No Present No Future*⁴⁷ narrates the story of three typical African friends who, owing to the culture of brotherhood prevailing in Africa, tie up their bonds to the point whereby they consider themselves in their adolescence as brothers. Once in Great Britain where they are introduced to western values, they break their relationship and each of them

⁴⁶Diana Neill, *op. cit.*, p. 354.

⁴⁷Yulisa Amadu Maddy, *No Past No Present No Future*, (London: Heinemann, 1977).

defines his own way of surviving. The relevance of this book is that it gives an account of the spirit of individualism and the self that prevails in Europe.

In connection with this individualistic aspect of western life, many western writers and critics have tried hard to demonstrate that selfishness is the key to real happiness. Among those people stands Ayn Rand. She argues that selfishness is a virtue and altruism a vice, a totally destructive idea that leads to the undermining of individual worth⁴⁸. Summarising her viewpoint in one of her essays, Louis Pojman writes:

Her argument seems to go something like this.

1. The perfection of one's abilities in the state of happiness is the highest goal for humans. We have a moral duty to attempt to reach this goal.
2. The ethics of altruism prescribes that we sacrifice our interests and lives for the good of others.
3. Therefore the ethics of altruism is incompatible with the goal of happiness.
4. Ethical egoism prescribes that we seek our own happiness exclusively, and as such it is consistent with the happiness goal.
5. Therefore ethical egoism is the correct moral theory.⁴⁹

She is right with regard to some considerations but if I consider the highest recommendation of almost all religions which is the love of the neighbour, I have to admit lots of reserve. Human beings are social and sociable beings and owing to these characteristics, they can neither live in the margin of human community as it has been the case of Robinson Crusoe on the Island⁵⁰ before being joined later by Friday nor in autarchy, that is, limiting their world to their personality. The importance of having somebody with who to exchange is rightly expressed by Mary Shelley through Walton the narrator of her novel *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus* in a letter he sends to his sister Margaret:

I have one want which I have never yet been able to satisfy, and the absence of the object of which I now feel as a most severe evil. I have no friend ... When I am glowing with the enthusiasm of success, there will be none to participate my joy; if I am assailed by disappointment, no one will

⁴⁸Ayn Rand, *The Virtue of Selfishness*, (USA: New American Library, 1964), p. iii.

⁴⁹ Louis Pojman, "Egoism, Self-Interest, and Altruism", in Christiana Sommers; Fred Sommers (eds), *Vice & Virtue in Everyday Life: Introductory Readings in Ethics*, Sixth Edition (Belmont; Thomson Wadsworth, 2004), p. 346.

⁵⁰Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, (London: Wordsworth Classics, 1995).

endeavour to sustain me in dejection ... I need the company of a man who could sympathise with me, whose eyes would reply me.⁵¹

This excerpt demonstrates that it is only in the company of the members of this species that man can fully experience happiness. This is also the conclusion I have come to after considering the following quotation:

After all we are human beings down here and we could do with a lot more praise and comfort we actually get. Earthly praise and comfort we actually get. Earthly reassurance, it is in permanently short supply, don't you think? Be honest brother, lady, now tell me the truth. When was the last time a fellow-Earther let you rest your head on their heart, caressed your cheek, and said things designed to make you feel deeply okay? It doesn't happen often that it does. Can we do a deal? Oh boy ... that head-on-heart stuff, when, could I use a little of that? (*Money*, p.95)

As said above, individualism which promotes and advocates the self is the antithesis of a communal life which alone gives you the possibility to "rest your head on their heart, [to] caress your cheek, and [to say] things designed to make you feel okay". The emphasis in this quotation is put on the importance of solidarity, the concern for one another in society to make life pleasant. As we can notice it, in order to reach his ends, Martin AMIS has set up a contrast between the human touch often neglected and the comfort as well as the earthly praise which are thought to be the grains of individualistic unremitting hard work.

It is highly significant that the author has used the medium of self who has experienced all that the modern world can offer to come to the conclusion that more than comfort, human touch and the concern for one another procure pleasant life. This is at the same time an invitation for each and every one to be conscious of the fact that money can only give "earthly reassurance" which is different from human affection that can never be bought. Thus, beyond money and as beings condemned to live in society, mankind has to care for one another for a genuine happiness. This conclusion I

⁵¹Mary M. Shelley, *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus*, op. cit.

reach is similar to that of a medical doctor quoted in Jehovah Witnesses' *The Watch Tour*:

L'amour et l'intimité sont quelques-uns des facteurs qui déterminent la maladie ou la santé, la tristesse ou le bonheur, la souffrance ou la guérison. Si l'on découvrait un médicament ayant les mêmes vertus, quasiment tous les médecins du pays le recommanderaient à leurs patients. Ce serait une négligence professionnelle de ne pas le prescrire.⁵²

Love and intimacy are some of the factors which condition illness or health, sadness or happiness, suffering or healing. In case a medicine possessing the same virtue was discovered, almost all the doctors of the world would have recommended it to their patients. It would be a professional flaw not to prescribe it. (My translation).

The analysis conducted helps me say that there are several ways to look at the problem of happiness. The modern world with its media and celebrities lays emphasis on wealth, power, notoriety and sex as sources of happiness rather than on love and affection. But in the light of what has been demonstrated, these foundations can insure fame and riches but can never provide alone genuine happiness. Thus, a rich the modern man who strongly believes in these sources as a harbinger of happiness is merely "a noisy gong or a clanging metal"⁵³; that is, a dreamer. Thus, for a sensible man, one of the meanings of happiness and possibly the best one is love which is without contest reducible to a successful life.

3-3) The Modern Man's intellectual blindness

One of the endemic and pandemic realities characteristic of the modern world and which crucifies the modern man in his state of degeneracy is his self-satisfied illiteracy. Accordingly, like in many modern writings, one of the greatest achievements of Martin AMIS in his masterpieces is to bring the reader through the magic of his creative art to become concerned with one of the main worries of our era: the intellectual blindness the modern man suffers from.

⁵²*La Tour de garde, Vol 124, N. 13: Comment apprendre à aimer, op. cit., p.3.*

⁵³Lockman Foundation, *Holy Bible, Amplified Version, (Zondervan Publishing House, 1965)*, Corinthians 13, 1;2.

By intellectual blindness, I mean the lack of interest and motivation of the modern man in craving for knowledge. It is also synonymous of what Mamadou Camara calls anti-intellectualism. This decrease of the reading population is stated in *Time's Arrow, or, The Nature of the Offence* through an observation Tod made:

During his lunch break, in the AMS commissary, Mikio will sit over a book. I've watched him, from a distance. He reads the way I read -or would read, if I ever got a chance. He turns the pages from right to left. He begins at the beginning and ends at the end ... but Mikio and I are definitely the minority here.⁵⁴

One thing which is very important to high light in this quotation is that in AMIS's opinion, people who do not flip books but read works of art from cover to cover represent nowadays a minority.

The exploration of some literary works reveals that many modern creative writers find the justification of the modern man's intellectual blindness in a deliberately promotion of an anti-literacy and an anti-intellectual policy designed by authorities to keep the masses in ignorance in order to fulfil their ideological purposes. These leaders by so doing express their strong belief in the third slogan of Big Brother's party that stipulates that "ignorance is strength."⁵⁵ Through their strategies, they demonstrate their conviction in the fact that the education of the masses will jeopardise their position, for information is power. That is why James Stockdale, a former American senior naval wing commander writes:

Education in the classics teaches you that all organizations since the beginning of time have used the power of guilt; that cycles are repetitive; and that this is the way of the world ... I believe a good classical education and an understanding of history can help determine the rules you should live by. They also give you the power to analyse reasons for these rules and guide you as to how to apply them to your own situation.⁵⁶

⁵⁴Martin AMIS, *Time's Arrow, or, The Nature of Offence*, (London: Vintage Books, 2003), p.51. (Subsequent quotations from *Time's Arrow or, The Nature of Offence* are parenthetically included within the text as T.A., followed by the page number (T. A., p. 51).

⁵⁵George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, op. cit., p.8.

⁵⁶James Stockdle, "The World of Epictetus", In Christiana Sommers; Fred Sommers, op. cit., p. 380.

In this quotation, Stockdale is convinced that literacy that allows free access to information grants people a capacity to analyse and scrutinise their lots as well as the opportunity to critique their conditions. Such a situation is not in favour of the so-called leaders whose hidden agenda is to brainwash their population to adhere to their policies. Thus, by maintaining their population in a pronounced state of illiteracy, the leaders are almost sure that the latter will be misinformed and consequently, could not think properly or critique their policies and political systems.

As a matter of illustration, in *Fahrenheit 451*, Ray Bradbury presents a future society in which critical thought reading is outlawed by technology, mass exploitation and the minority pressure. In such a society, it is well known that books enlighten people and thus, must be burned to prevent people from becoming critiques. This explains the metaphor of the temperature Fahrenheit 451 which is a picture projecting the temperature at which a book or paper auto-ignites.⁵⁷ The anti-intellectualism is also shown through the burning of a woman with her thousands of books that are compared to a mountain. In *Nineteen Eighty Four*, Orwell depicts a modern world in which the authorities put a ban on book to deprive the mass of information and by so doing; the truth can easily be concealed from them. Huxley by his side views the reasons of the sleep-learning in the infliction of pleasure to the mass. According to his *Brave New World*, there is no reason to put a ban on a book, for there is nobody willing to read. People are given so much consumerist goods that they are reduced to passivity and egoism. Thus, the truth becomes drowned in a sea of irrelevance. In *A Clockwork Orange*, Anthony Burgess has depicted this intellectual blindness through the way books are ill-treated and readers labelled as readers of filth and nastiness. The lack of interest in reading is explicitly stated through the remark of the protagonist Alex addressed to a man they meet in the street that: "I see, you have books under your arm, brother. It is indeed a rare pleasure these days to come across somebody that still reads."⁵⁸ The general opinion that I have formed in my mind after looking thoughtfully at the above-mentioned work is that it is the central government which is mainly

⁵⁷Mamadou Camara, "Contemporary Anglo-American Dystopian Fiction: Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*: Thèmes and Aesthetics", in Charles Robert Dimi (ed), *Intel' Actuel N° 4*, (Dschang: Université de Dschang, 2005), p. 24.

⁵⁸Anthony Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, (London: **Penguin Books**, 1972), p. 08.

responsible for this situation of illiteracy. In order to divert the citizens' attention from reading and writing, the leaders appeal to mass media which operates as a spell cast on their population. These leaders do not hesitate to call for power and brutality when necessary in order to discourage and annihilate those who will not adhere to their plan. It is the case of Montag in *Fahrenheit 451* and Winston Smith in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

However, contrary to such authors, Martin AMIS in the treatment of the modern man's anti-intellectual attitudes at the expense of television, dope, gambling, drinks, sex, pornography, magazines and above all money has remained creative, outstanding and more conventional. Opening the eyes of the modern man on the role he plays in the stimulation of his own illiteracy, AMIS has better chance when compared to many writers, to bring man revisit this bad attitude and correct it.

Dealing with the intellectual blindness of the modern man, I realise through AMIS's works that the modern civilisation offers fertile ground to render man lazy vis-à-vis reading.

In fact, the society portrayed by Martin AMIS in his creative work is the archetype of the modern society made up of outrageous television commercials, sex, booze, pornography and money. In this society, the majority of characters such as Selina and "her fate pale lover [John Self] never read a book" (*Money*, p. 19). John Self is all the time busy flipping men's magazines. His observation that "pornography is habit forming ... oh yes it is. I am a pornography addict" (*Money*, p.44) is the expression of one of the realities of our modern era, a situation -favoured by technological progresses that result in the invention of VCD and DVD players, MP4 players, internet and other sophisticated means of entertainment. This observation brings Mamadou Camara to opine that:

Mass media leisure beings the chief consumer goods ..., people's obsessive consumption of it is another cause of the decline of the book. The picture culture offers forms of entertainment outshining reading ... [The] side effects of excessive immersion in audio-visual virtual world are highly

devastating - people are not enthusiastic about devoting to reading the required concentration.⁵⁹

Sex and pornography have become part and parcel of the daily life and together with audio-visual virtual world, they represent the main areas of interest of the modern man. The society itself seems to tolerate and even to promote such behaviours. This is what the author might be attempting to illustrate while in the novel, he creates a situation whereby after a lunch Self:

crossed the road to the news agents, and took [his] place at the walling wall of the pornography section. As in a library, the material is arranged to suit the specialist ... You'd think the punters could get by with a mere half dozen of these monthly publications, but no, they need more. (*Money*, 149).

This passage underlines how much magazines related to sex drive away the attention of the modern man, how much he is possessed and these are done through a careful choice of words. Firstly, "the walling wall of the pornography section" suggests that the wall is not satisfied with the fate reserved to it. It is in pain and its walling seems to indicate an elegiac mood, evoking a sense of loss of the modern generation with the complicity of the society. Secondly, Self remarked that when considering the volume of the monthly publications, one could think that the customers will be satisfied with "a mere half-dozen" is a clue which allows any reader to guess the great number of those magazines which are edited on a monthly basis. Finally, "they need more" comes as a paradox to contradict the former statement and strengthens the idea of dependency, the state of addiction of the modern man by those publications.

Another predisposition of Martin AMIS world which is not to promote the interest for reading literary works is the waste of great names. References which should serve to motivate the younger generations are forgotten and at the worse are wrongly used. Actually, like Moliere in French literature, William Shakespeare remains a great

⁵⁹Mamadou Camara. "Contemporary Anglo-American Dystopian Fiction: Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*: Themes and Aesthetics", op. cit., p. 26.

reference in British literature not only for his number of publications -thirty-nine plays and five collections of poems according to *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*⁶⁰- but also for the richness of his language. Thus, such a name instead of being immortalised for the future generations in the best way and be introduced to them as a role model, I am astonished to realise that Shakespeare is rather a style of a pub, a place where alcohol is bought and drank. By the same way, it might be a means AMIS has chosen to address the deviation of the modern man's curiosity from reading to consumerism.

All these illustrations bring us to foresee a society in decadence vis-à-vis the intellectual growth of its inhabitants because man, they say, is a cultural product after all.

Still, in order to explain why there is nowadays this lack of interest in reading, Martin AMIS has cleverly and in a dialogue between his characters Martin AMIS the novelist and John Self given more reasons:

'I went all the way up the Charing Cross road the other day and not one of the bookshops had your stuff...
Only one of the guys had heard of you and he said you were sick in the head'
'You know how I account for the blackness of modern writing?'
'Martin asked? 'Like everyone else these days, writers have to get by without servants. They have to take in washing all do all their own. No wonder they're morbid. No wonder they are bushed.'
(*Money*, p. 252).

It is a fact that in order to make profit, dealers do sell items that quickly general profit. Since books, especially literary materials when compared to the ones dealing with love and sex are no more among the attractions of modern men; it is no wonder that Self falls to find any of Martin AMIS's books in bookshops he visited. He does not even come across many people who know who he is. This pitiful reality explains why writers typified by Martin AMIS whose earnings derive from their sales, are "bushed", living a "morbid" life. AMIS's state of poverty hidden in his inability to employ a servant and to do the washing by himself serves in this quotation as a metaphor laying emphasis on

⁶⁰William Shakespeare, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, (New Lanark: Geddes & Grosset 2004).

the lack of interest of the modern man in reading. This lack of interest in reading implies in concrete terms implies the slump in writers' sales and consequently explains their poor living conditions.

In this world where technology has indoctrinated man, I clearly understand why factors such as movement and reading which among many others are expressions of intellectual growth, are not of great help to Self. It is generally believed that movement exposes man to other forces and helps him promote changes in his environment, for different places are charged with different values. In other words, man acquires knowledge and grows up intellectually when he is exposed to external forces as Fiawoo asserts at the beginning of one travel tale that: "to travel is to see wonders and the child who has never left home always boast that his mother cooks the tastiest soup."⁶¹ In the light of the afore-mentioned analysis, I am expecting Self to grow up intellectually owing to his constant travel between Great Britain and USA. Yet, the realities of all the societies which almost share the same flaws of materialism and sex explain his infertile intellectual state.

As far as reading is concerned, we can echo Marie-Leontine Tsibinda that:

L'écrivain et l'artiste sont les meilleurs porte-parole dans la société. Ils n'ont pas de fauteuils à briguer mais ils visent l'excellence pour une indépendance et une liberté d'esprit, ce que l'on ne retrouve pas ailleurs. De ce fait, l'écrivain devient la mémoire d'un peuple. Il s'adresse au sens et au Cœur pour que chaque être devienne responsable.⁶²

This quotation echoes the didactic and educative role of literature. However, the types of publications the characters in *Money: A Suicide Note* are interested in reading are "*Lovedolls*", "*Plaything International*", "*Jangler*", "*Mouth Crazy*", "*Brabursts*", "*Lothario*", "*Flair*" and "*Sugar*" which are pornographic magazines. It appears without

⁶¹Kofi Awoonor, *The Breast of The Earth*(Enugu: NOK Publishers Limited, 1975), p. 137.

⁶²Marie-Léontine Tsibinda, quoted in Thomas H. Edea, *Apprendre à philosopher*, tome 2, (Cotonou: Imprimerie COPEF, Juillet 2007).

My translation: The writer and the artist are the best spoken-persons in our society. They do not have posts to solicit but they target the culture of excellence and a freedom of mind, what you do not find elsewhere. By so doing, the writer becomes the collective memory of a given community. S/He addresses the common sense and the Heart to make each and everyone responsible.

any doubt that these are not referenced books and consequently, they cannot bring in positive changes to the one reading them since they can neither affect the common sense nor the heart of the one reading them. AMIS has made Self aware of this fact and during his time of epiphany, he recognises it that only "practice makes perfect":

There is only one way to get good at fighting: you have to do it a lot. The reason why most people are not good at fighting is that they do it so seldom, and in these days of high specialization, no one really expects to be good at anything unless they work out at it and put in some time. (*Money*, p. 38)

From the afore-mentioned quotation, I can draw a parallel with reading and say that the only way to get good at reading is to read. To allow John Self to train himself at reading, AMIS has seen to it to create conditions for him to be saved from the chaos the world is taking him into. To reach this end, the author has succeeded in inserting within the circle of the protagonist's friends two intellectuals namely Martin AMIS who duplicates himself into the character Martin AMIS and Martina Twain whose name sounds like the twin sister of Martin maybe in order to catch the attention of John Self who likes women. Both have in charge the intellectual growth of the protagonist.

Martina Twain starts providing John Self with creative writings which are literary references that cannot help catching the reader's attention. The first one he has been given is *Animal Farm*. The first two times, Self has stopped at the first sentence of the novel that reads "*Mr Jones of the Manor Farm had locked the hen-houses for the night... but was too drunk to remember to shut the pop-holes*" (Mey, p.185). In the process of reading, the reader is informed that Self's limitation on this sentence is due to his failure to understand the meaning of "pop holes". The first evidence of Self misunderstanding of the sentence is that he lacks concentration though he knows that "the big thing about reading and all that is -you have to be in a fit state for it", that is, be concentrated (*Money*, p. 189). Before starting reading, he drinks too much coffee and in the process he reports "my head is full of interference. I need glasses. I need a hand job" (*Money*, p. 189). Sometimes he puts the book aside to "hit [his] can, clip [his] nails, shave, throw up, clean [his] teeth, brush [his] rug, have a hand job, take an aspirin, light a

cigarette, order for more coffee, scratch [his] ear and look out of the window" (*Money*, p. 190). This description shows that Self feels uncomfortable with reading. In these conditions, it is not surprising that he fails to learn anything from the novel, to interpret the actions of the pigs since he cannot get detached from the realities surrounding him and get involved in the fictional world.

The thing which needs a serious consideration at this very place is the kind of similarities that exist between Self and Mr Jones in *Animal Farm*. I notice that if Mr Jones of the Manor Farm had forgotten to shut the pop-holes, it is owing to the fact that he was too drunk to remember to do it. As a result, alcohol is the first factor that favours the animals' revolution which leads to his deposition. Self cannot learn this lesson and draw the conclusion that too much alcohol can lead to his own perdition. Ironically, after reading the sentence several times, he is still convinced that his theory is that whisky helps.

Whisky is the secret of trouble-free reading" (*Money*, p.191). In the words of Tamas Benyei:

[Even] after he has got through the book, Self does not understand it: he does not get the allegorical meaning, unable to recreate a higher level above the literal meaning of the words. ... He is incapable of switching over into the different (say aesthetic) mode of appropriation, called for by a text that insists on its otherness from the reader in the sense that it sets up obstacles in the way of the interpretation, i.e., it demands work, interpretive investment to bring to what it fields: surplus meaning, deeper (or higher) meaning, an immediately inaccessible level of meaning.⁶³

Self's inability to interpret a book the significance of which eludes him completely and his failure to be transformed by this first book he reads may be the reasons why AMIS brings Self to identify himself and subsequently the modern man with "a dog at the seaside tethered to a fence while my master and mistress romp on the sands" (*Money*,

⁶³TamasBényei, "Allegory and Allegoresis in Martin AMIS's *Money*", 2001 consulted on 3rd December, 2009 on http://www.martinAMISweb.com/scholarship_files/benyei_allegory.doc.

* "The best books never leave the reader in the situation in which he is before reading them, they better him" (My translation).

p. 193). Thus, the reason behind his master and mistress tethering him is to keep him under their control. His master and mistress in our context could be identified in alcohol, fast food, pornography and money which are the powerful masters of this modern era.

Addressing the importance of creative works, André Maurois asserts: "les plus beaux livres ne laissent jamais le lecteur tel qu'il était avant de les connaître, ils le rendent meilleur."⁶⁴

From this quotation I realise that one of the reasons of the intellectual blindness is the intolerably demanding nature of the capitalistic System symbolised by money which consists of the accumulation of property and wealth.

To reinforce the work started by Martina, the character Martin AMIS has been introduced into the plot. Apart from his duty which consists of rewriting the screenplay Self wants to produce, he also initiates the latter to the basics of literature. But the depiction of the intellectual down-fall of the modern man, the highlighting of his failure to be cured from such an evil resides in Self's uneasiness at Martina's house. Though he has progressed a little, he is unable to understand *Othello*, a play Martina takes him to an opera to watch. The play still evokes a world that is patently inaccessible to Self. While watching the play, Self congratulates himself for knowing the plot from having seen the TV spin-off. His understanding of the story however is a hilarious misinterpretation that stems from the media stereotypes into which he automatically turns the major figures:

The flash spade general arrives to take up a position on some island in the olden days there, bringing with him the Lady Di figure as his bride. Then she starts diddling one of his lieutenants, a fun loving kind of guy whom I took to immediately (*Money*, p. 277).

⁶⁴ André Maurois, in *Revue «Le courrier de l'UNESCO»*, quoted in Thomas H. Edea, op. cit., p. 216.

This is highlighted in Self's life when after discussing the content of *Animal Farm* with Martina at the end of his reading, he realises that "perhaps there are other bits of my life that could take on content, take on shadow, if only I read more and thought less about money" (*Money*, p. 207).

His getting astray with regards to the interpretation of the play is demonstrated when he identifies himself with Cassio and assumes that Desdemona must be sleeping around like the rest of the women in his life, especially Selina.

The question I ask myself is how does Self not show any sign of progress despite all the sacrifices of Martina who proposes him to read authors such as Freud, Marx, Darwin, Einstein, Hitler? I wonder how he could be insensible to *Money* which is his own story, the mirror of his own life. To these questions, I draw the answer from his own explanations he offers on two different occasions. On the one hand, he states that there is "a little man living inside me who acts as minister or propagandists or concessionaire for hand jobs" (*Money*, p. 290). On the other hand, he confesses "I sometimes think I am controlled by someone. Some space invader is invading my inner space, some fucking joker. But he's not from out there. He is from in here". (*Money*, p. 311)

I have inferred from these assertions that this man living inside him and that virtually takes possession of him is the norms imposed by the modern days. The latter do not adhere to the new standards Self would like to inculcate to himself after reaching epiphany in the company of Martin AMIS and Martina Twain. His natural habits are not developed towards reading or literacy, so the new habits Martina is attempting to make him acquire might set a conflict between his consciousness and his self. This situation explains in my opinion the trouble the modern man feels with intellectual growth.

Another conclusion I have come to after the analysis of the novel is that a serious reading seems not to be a motivation in our contemporary society. This is expressed in the attitudes of John Self's friend Alec Llewellyn who only thinks of reading after being kept in custody. He reports to John Self: "what do you think I do all day for Christ's sake? All they've got in here is a little heap of Westerns and thrillers ... I've been reading the fucking Bible for the last few days" (*Money*, p. 155). He requests for novels, history, travel book, poetry and amazingly not for any nude magazine. The prison is a brutality and instinct controlled environment. That is why James Stockdale discovers that: when a person is

alone in his cell and sees the door open only once or twice a day for a bowl of soup, he realizes after a period of weeks in isolation and darkness that he has to build a sort of ritual into his life if he wants to avoid becoming an animal.⁶⁵ It results from this quotation that the prison stands as the symbol of deprivation, of a world far away from the daily routine of the modern life and helps put sense in man's mind and order in his life. It appears then that prison constitutes one of the conditions that could favour self-awareness about the moral weaknesses of the modern world and upon the necessity of literacy. Unfortunately, because the modern man is not ready to create this atmosphere of prison, of want in his society characterised by high specialisation where science and technology are creating facilities and are enslaving people, I am a bit pessimistic about a better future for literacy in the modern society.

What is also enthralling and which seems to stress the modern man's refractory nature in the discussion over his intellectual growth in *Money: A Suicide Note* is the logical connection Martin AMIS establishes between the modern man and dogs who cannot be prevented from going back to rubbish tip when they are brought from there to be tamed, this because habit is said to be a second nature. Martina brings home the dog she later calls Shadow almost at the same time as she meets Self to train them to good manners. It appears to me that Shadow is the shadow of Self, his alter ego in this context. This explains why when Shadow runs away after a short stay with Martina for a weak cyclone of detritus, Martin AMIS brings Self to view "certainly that [his] fate was closely bound up with the dog's, that with Shadow gone [he] too would go back on Twenty-Third Street among the human canines" (*Money*, p. 311).

If the author has brought Self to leave Martina Twain for his Street, it is in my sense to show that the modern man is a non-responsive person with regards to acquiring good manners. Therefore, it becomes almost impossible to retrieve him from the cocoons he locks himself in to show him the right way, which actually is another sets of habits he is supposed to acquire at the expense of his own corrupt values.

⁶⁵James Stockdale, op. cit., p. 379.

Highly important also, the use of an animal image to represent the modern man makes sense if I see animal from the perspective according to which "the animal is used in metaphor and parable as the primary representative of those natural impulses entrapped by social convention."⁶⁶ This is a prophecy foretelling that Self cannot feel at ease in the new world Martina would like to create for him and consequently translates the difficulty of the modern man to scorn the realities of the world surrounding him in order to be educated. It also hides the observation that the modern world realities have succeeded in making man behave more by instincts than by reason when it comes to acquire moral and intellectual qualities. That is why the model Martina Twain proposes to Self appears difficult to him to follow. By analogy, it is difficult for rational beings to make good decisions, and raise themselves against some established traditions handed down through centuries. This justifies why the character Dr Browsky says in *A Clockwork Orange* that the modern world is suffering from "the heresy of an age of reason ... i.e. see what is right and approve, but do what is wrong."⁶⁷

Once again, to show that the society with all its idols crowned by money cannot conciliate with intellectual brightness, it is only after losing all his properties that Self comes to know that: "my life was serious for about ten minutes and now it is a joke all over again" (*Money*, p. 321). These ten minutes can be compared to the times he spent with Martina Twain but he did not succeed in valuing those times when he has at his disposal money that allows him to satisfy all his carnal needs.

Still, as a moralist and in his endeavour to present to the readership some advantages of instruction and possibly to demonstrate how the modern man can be genuinely happy in a corrupted society, AMIS has painted both characters Martin AMIS and Martina Twain live a blossomed life.

⁶⁶Kurt Leutgeb, "Cynicism as an Ethic and Aesthetic Principle: A Study of Martin AMIS's Fiction with Special Emphasis on *Dead Babies*, *Time's Arrow*, and *Career Move*": (Vienna, 2001) retrieved on 10th August, 2011 from www.v.martinAMISweb.com/documents/Leutgeb_Cynicistn.doc

⁶⁷Anthony Burgess, *Clockwork Orange*, op. cit., p. 98.

On the one hand, talking of Self, the writer after allowing him to live the life of plenty and then after allowing him to mix with both the characters Martin AMIS and Martina Twain, realises that:

The world of money, the world of enough. I saw all this but I didn't see its shine. Me, I liked the fool-the-eye stuff, the drinks, the bars, the grub, the bim and the picnic, the well-hung blonde, familiar, erotic. I saw all this. I didn't see its shine. But I saw Martina's shine. It filled her eyes, her mouth, her flesh, everything.
(*Money*, p. 306)

Everything considered, I can draw a parallel between the word shine and either Prometheus's light he stole from gods for human beings or again the rays which surrounds the eye culminating the pyramid in the illuminates symbol and which stands for knowledge. Then, riches without knowledge can only procure misery and desolation. That is why Socrates argued that wealth does not produce excellence.⁶⁸ This situation of Self which is that of the majority of people reminds me of the following words from the South-African reggae singer Lucky Dube that:

[s]omebody told me about it
When I was still a little boy
[...]
He said to me, education is the key, yeah as a
little boy I thought I know what I was doing,
yeah man, but today here I am in jail⁶⁹

Like the persona in Lucky Dube's song, Self neglected the instruction both Martin AMIS and Martina Twain wanted to inculcate to him and thought he was living to finally but realised that he has imprisoned himself in 'the fool-the-eye stuff, the drinks, the bars, the grub, the bim and the picnic, the well-hung blonde, familiar, erotic' things of the modern life.

It is true that throughout Martin AMIS's writings, the beams of lights the modern man has received have always faded at the end. Despite some awareness raising from the

⁶⁸⁷²Gloria K. Fiera, op. cit. p. 85.

⁶⁹ Lucky Dube, "Prisoner", (Johanesburg: January 2, 1991).

*"Education is the passport for the future, there is hope for those who are getting prepared today" (My translation).

modern man, he ends up stepping back to his jeopardising habits. All these help understand Malcolm X's words according to which⁷⁰.

This pessimism I foresee for the future through my analysis must not however be a note of despair for the readership and the intellectuals who can identify themselves mainly with the characters Martin AMIS and Martina Twain. It only translates the real aspect of literature, that of being the replica of real life situations. Despite all the sensations of philosophers from all horizons on the need of associating wisdom and enlightenment to our culture to live better, the modern civilisation with all its vices completely submerges the modern man to the state where modernity by itself becomes a hindrance to this call.

However, through Martina Twain who never feels disgusted in her enterprise, I view a call and a boosting by Martin AMIS for the readership to keep on sensitising mankind on the evils of our modern times and do their best to bring them back on the right path. Even if at the end, they realise that their efforts are not crowned and as in the case of Self, if they notice that the very people they have sensitised are caught up by their old evil habits, they will at least be comforted by the idea that they have tried their best. The few enlightened and intellectuals should avoid some of the pre-conceived idea that mankind, as it is epitomised in the case of Self, can't change and therefore remain inactive while the world and mankind are fast speeding to destruction.

⁷⁰Malcolm X, quoted in Lilian Thuram, *Mes étoiles noires: De Lucy à Barack Obama*, (Paris: Editions Philippe Rey, 2010), p. 281, "L'éducation est le passeport pour le future, car demain appartient à ceux qui s'y préparent aujourd'hui."

Chapter Four:

AMIS's Critique of Modern Capitalism

Originally, human societies operated largely along the principles of gift economics in terms of exchange. Later on, man adopted the barter as economic System which consists in the exchange of goods, work or services for other goods or services. However, with time, this System revealed its shortcomings. In the words of Chris Lind:

Money exists as a convenience tool to solve the main problem associated with barter. This problem is that not everybody is going to want to trade with you. This problem has a name. It is called the "Double Coincidence of Wants". This problem can be generalized as the problem of finding someone who both happens to have what you want and also happens to want what you have.⁷¹

To elaborate on the fore-mentioned quotation, the two partners' needs, for the efficiency of the barter System, must coincide before the exchange takes place. But the remark was that the capacity to carry out business deals was often severely restricted since one did not systematically find at the crucial time he needed some goods or a service the partner is ready to exchange with him. I deduce that this System could not truly answer the aspirations and the expectations of man, mainly in time of crucial needs. As a result, the person in need was obliged to spend lots of time searching for partners, time he could put at good use.

In order to solve that "double coincidence of wants" problem, man had to find a palliative. This is the reason that motivated the creation and the introduction of money in the economic System. Viewed from this angle, money which has evolved from its primitive forms Manillas and cowry in Africa, whales teeth in

⁷¹Chris Lind, *The Origin of Money*, consulted! On April, 10 2009 from <http://www.christopherlind.com/OriginOfMoney.aspx>. (05/12/2005).

Fijian society, silver bowls in Greece⁷²- to the fiduciary one can be said to be simply an intermediary of exchange that serves either to measure or to set up the equivalence of goods, works or services rendered. Endowed with such qualities, its duty is to facilitate exchanges and promote productivity since it helps save time formerly wasted at the search for potential exchange partners.

Money is at its origin one of the great social and neutral inventions which revolutionised humanity. Its advent is followed by an improvement in productivity, accentuates competition and by so doing, strengthens the bases of the capitalistic System. These resulting economic benefits concomitantly put an end to money's original neutrality and comforts man in exploitative manners of the underprivileged and in looking for possible avenues offered to him to make as much profit as he can without being ever satisfied.

These social happenings have captivated writers who have been denouncing in their writings social evils money has given birth to such as corruption, embezzlement, armed robbery, exploitation of the mass, prostitution, mischief... It has also contributed to the rise of Marxism which is a doctrine fighting against the exploitation of the lower structure (the poor) by the upper structure (the bourgeoisie) who owns means of production and whose only interest is to make the maximum profit. This situation has also given birth to the industrial novel in the Victorian period with the aim to expose the ill-treatment industrial workers are suffering from and to call upon the humanity's conscience. Some of the prominent writers of such a novel are among many others Victor Hugo in France, Elisabeth C. Gaskell, George Eliot, Benjamin Disraeli Charles Dickens.⁷³ Despite the denunciation of this social evil, I realise that the problem is becoming epidemic and even pandemic.

⁷²Glyn Davies, *A History of Money*, retrieved on April, 10th 2009 from <http://www.projects.exeter.uk/RDavies/arian/origins.html>.

⁷³KomiBafana, "The Industrial Worker in the Victorian Novel: A Study in Four Novels by Elisabeth C. Gaskell, George Eliot, Benjamin Disraeli and Charles Dickens: Romance as Radical Literature", (Lomé: Université de Lomé, 2010). Doctorate research work.

The sociological dimension of money is mainly expressed in modern literature by consumerism, addiction and pornography. Man's search for more means has created favourable conditions for money which, beyond its original role, has earned great importance. Hence, man is ready to go through all kinds of forfeits, to use all avenues in order to possess it. Owing to this, money has unfortunately succeeded in demeaning man. Like an idol, money has put man in trance and at such a stage, he does not show any restraint in most cases but is rather possessed by the thoughts of making as much money as he could

This chapter which aims to look at the sociological dimension of man in *Money: A Suicide Note* is motivated by my observation according to which money has been used metaphorically by Martin AMIS in order to explore the destructive capacity of modern capitalism.

4-1) The Treatment of Money in *Money: A Suicide Note*

With the advent of industrialisation which promotes the civilisation of means, man has developed a tendency for an extremely strong desire for means. Thus, owners of means who are itching to gain as much possession as he can do not always earn it through hard work. On the contrary, they exploit the mass and fend only for themselves in order to be comfortable, successful and secure more than necessary.

It is true that with regard to history, this craving nature of man for money which often leads to the subjugation of the employees to a heavy diet of exploitation has called for some forms of reforms which took the shape of revolutions. The target of the latter is to build a more balanced society where men will be equal and riches shared. In the eyes of the revolutionists, these social revolts can be considered as the antechamber of joy and happiness to the greatest number of people. These characteristics of the dreamed society where there will be no more exploitation of man by man are the hallmarks of socialism and communism incarnated in leaders such as Karl Marx, Mao Setung, and Malcolm X.

Unfortunately, as we are instructed by the fable and allegorical novel *Animal Farm*, these ideas are a giant with fragile legs and therefore cannot stand long. Their Achilles' heel is

their own ideology. As we read it, after the pigs take the control of the animal farm, the latter realise with time passing that things are not changing as planned originally. Instead, the illuminated leaders, once in power come quickly to step into the shoes of Mr Jones, the epitome of the capitalistic System. This is proved to be true when we go back to history where we realise that the fanaticism instilled by these brilliant social and communist ideas lasted for a few period of time. A close appreciation of the policy applied in China which still is claiming to be a communist country shows that the latter is, in reality, a capitalistic one.

The works under study allow me to assert that with the upper hand capitalism has over the whole world, man has been completely overwhelmed and submitted himself entirely before the power of money. This opinion is well summarised in the following quotation:

All the people in the Street, these extras and bit-part players, they all cost long money to keep on the read. There are taxi-meters, money-clocks, on the ambulances in the city: that's the sort of place I'm dealing with. I can feel another pain starting business in the slopes of my eyes. Hello there and welcome.
(*Money*, p. 10)

The quotation demonstrates that all spheres of life are infested by money and nothing is possible without it. To show how evil money is and yet the impossibility of the modern man to get away from it, the writer has established a contrast between the word "pain" which depicts the spoilage of the modern era and the unrestrainedness of the modern man before the power and influence of money translated in the word "welcome". Still the writer seems to be telling his readers that it is not possible to step back and go away from such a System. This idea is also well captured in the quotation according to which "you cannot beat the money conspiracy. You can only join it." (*Money*, p. 267). The same thought is highlighted by Tamas Benyei in the following words:

when ... the alive individual loses his feeling of identity with the living continuum of the universe [after his fall], he falls into a state of fear where his only conceivable reaction is the striving to protect himself against the world⁷⁴ "to ensure himself with

⁷⁴TamasBenyei, "Allegory and Allegoresis in Martin AMIS's *Money*", op. cit.

wealth ... Money, material salvation is the only salvation. What is salvation is God. Hence money is God".⁷⁵

As everybody clings perpetually to salvation, that is, anything which offers protection from or prevents danger, loss, failure etc., it is now clear why money guides the modern man's thoughts and actions to such an extent where he does not question the means he calls for in his search for it. His only target is money. "You know, the thing I want more than anything else -you could call it my dream in life- is to make lots of money. I would cheerfully go into the alchemy business, if it existed and made lots of money (*Money*, p. 90)". The last sentence of this quotation might be deliberately put by the author in the mouth of John Self to inform the reader that the modern man in an excited, hurried and sometimes confused search for money, is ready to undergo any kind of sacrifice, to call upon any means from the honourable to the most incredible and insane ones to make money.

From this development, there proceeds that since money is the ultimate goal, many people, be it employers or employees overlook the moral aspect that should command the means to reach it. AMIS illustrates this aspect on the employee's side through two trivial but highly illustrative examples. In the first passage, self-reports: "I've driven in New-York. Five blocks and you are reduced to tears of barbary nausea. So what happens to these throwbacks they hire to do it all day for money?" (*Money*, p.8). The second example is presented in the form of a dialogue between John Self and the driver on board of whose taxi he was when he came for the first time in New-York.

'Twenty-two dollars,' he said. 'There the *dock*
I'm not giving you anything, scumbag.
With no shift in the angle of his gaze he reached beneath the
dashboard and tugged the special catch. All four door locks
clunked shut with an oily chockfull sound.

'Listen to me, you fat fuck,' he began. 'This is the Ninety-Ninth
and Second. The money. Give me the money.' He said he would
drive me uptown twenty blocks and kick me out on the street,

⁷⁵David Herbert Lawrence, "John Galsworthy" in *Selected Essays* quoted from TamasBenyei, *ibid*.

high there. He said that by the time the niggers were done, there'd be nothing left of me but a hank of hair and teeth.

I had some notes in my back pocket, from my last trip. I passed a twenty through the smeared screen. He sprang the locks and out I climbed. There was nothing more to say. (*Money*, pp. 8-9).

Very often when talking of exploitation, people's critiques are addressed towards the upper class who possess the means of production. The interest of these passages resides in the fact that they open the eyes of the readership on the fact that capitalism has corrupted all minds. The cheating capitalism institute is rampant in the middle as well as in the lower classes. In the first quotation that focalizes on the lower class, I realise that the cleaning up duty which is assigned to the unnamed characters and for which they are paid is done in a slapdash way.

As for the dialogue, it typifies how a middle class abuses of his power in order to make profit. The refusal of John Self at the first instance to pay the twenty-two dollars he has been charged is the proof that he has been overtaxed. But when confronted to the threat of the taxi driver, he is reduced to pay in order to save his life. Another importance of the dialogue is that it unveils one aspect of capitalism which is often ignored. In a word, money has become a household word. Through the driver's unprofessional behaviour when viewed from moral angle, AMIS successfully illustrates the fact that everybody exercises power in his own corner and sees to it that he can make the greatest profit.

Martin AMIS addresses the same issue of cheating and abuse more profusely in *London Fields* in of which the seventh chapter is entitled cheating. The first passage reads:

Keith works as a *cheat* ... Keith cheated people with his limousine service at airports and train stations; he cheated people with his fake scents (his two main lines are Scandal and Outrage); he cheated the people with non-pornographic pornography in the back rooms of short-lease stores; and he cheated people on the street everywhere with the upturned cupboard box or milk crate (London Field, p. 6).

Though a cheat, Keith will also be cheated.

"The other morning Keith had bought five hundred vanity sachets of Outrage, his staple perfume.' At lunchtime he discovered that they all contained water, a substance not much less expensive than Outrage but harder to sell" (London Field, p. 113).

Besides these passages, another excerpt that portrays the modern man's: swindle is that concerning misfortune of Lady Barnaby.

Keith guided Lady Barnaby to the check-in stall at Terminal 2. Here the computer pronounced Lady Barnaby's ticket near-worthless. Keith took the news with cold resignation: the *cheat* at the bucket-shop had cheated him. What he didn't yet know was the *cheat* who had cheated him had been cheated by the *cheat* who supplied the bucket-shop (London Field, p. 103).

As it is the case with *Money: A Suicide Note*, *London Fields* presents a modern world in which there is no trust. Everybody cheats everybody in order to make money.

Another critique I notice is that the race towards money has rendered the modern man almost brainless. Through the bewitched action money exercises on man, he does not care about the quality of the service provided but only aims at how much money he can earn at the end. Such attitude is demonstrated through the character John Self. The purpose of the latter's arrival in America is to produce a film on the one hand and, throughout the novel, the writer makes the reader see how instable is the plot of the film. Actors even often disagree with the role they are called to play. Such instability translates the non-qualification of Self as a film producer and his non-connoisseur of the movie world. In front of such a dilemma and uneasiness, I am astonished to hear John Self plainly states that: "I must keep a grip of my priorities here. A good film didn't matter. *Good Money* didn't matter. *Money* mattered. Money mattered"-(Money, p. 173).

Another sin in which money leads man is the greedy nature he has almost adopted. If one thing is the modern man's search for money, another one is the fact that man is never

satisfied with what he possesses, no matter the amount. Let us look at the following quotation:

He [Fielding] took me to an old gangster Steakhouse in the heights ... We talked money ... Fielding's father is called Bary Goodney and owns half of Virginia. Maybe his muni is called Beryl too and owns the other half. Fielding never talks about his own dough, but I've yet to meet a more spectacular hovel. He's got a lot already and he wants a lot more. (*Money*, p. 27).

Here, information is provided on how wealthy Goodney's family is and yet, he has an insatiable appetite for more money. I am not condemning the fructification of his parents' investments but the exaggerated and perpetual hunt for more avenues to explore. This depiction arises in me the question to know why man does behave in such way vis-à-vis money. The answer to such a question has been found in some passages. However, I will quote the following one:

I'm pussy-whipped by money, but then so is the United States. So is Russia. We all are stomped and roughed up and peed on and slammed against the wall by money. Should the earth enter turnaround tomorrow, nuke out, commit suicide, pain notes, dolour bills -money is freedom. That's true. But freedom is money. You still need money. We ought to shake money like a dog shakes a rat. (*Money*, p. 250).

From the above quotation, I infer the following conclusions. First of all, money has completely subjugated and enslaved man who does not have any escape exit, for he is rendered powerless before money. This powerlessness is expressed by his being "slammed against the wall" by money. Secondly, I have general the idea according to which man's body and soul completely surrenders to money because for him, the latter means freedom. And as all men are aspiring to peace, it is unquestionable man has to getinvolved in the race for money.

Thirdly, in the understanding of the modern man, money confers power. This is, in my viewpoint, what is encapsulated in the metaphor of a dog terrorising a rat. The dog

standing for a person, who has money, derives his power, that is, his authority from the latter and which he uses to trample on the rat that is the underprivileged.

Besides all what is said above, no one can deny the fact that money is a good thing. Even the characters Martin AMIS and Martina Twain, the educators of John Self have acquired their various belongings thanks to money. Nevertheless, the difference between the latter and the majority of the modern men resides in the fact that the former have a control over it and know at which use to put it. Whereas the latter, obsessed by materialism, cannot resist the charm and dominance of money as it is illustrated in the following quote:

There are some primitive creatures driving around with money in their Torpedoes and Boomerangs, or sitting down with money bat the Mahatma or the Assissi, or just standing there with money, in the shops, in the pubs, in the streets. They are all shapes and colours, innocent beneficiaries of the global joke which money keeps cracking. They don't do anything: it's their currencies that do things. Last year, the pubs were filled of incredibly spendthrift Irishmen: they didn't have money in their pocket any longer -they have Euro money, which is much more powerful stiff. There's some bundle in the Middle East, and a new squad of fiscal space invaders starts plundering the West ... There are white moneymen, too, - English, native. They must be criminals ... I am one of them ... I have money but I can't control it: Fielding keeps supplying me more. Money, I think, is uncontrollable. Even those of us who have it, we can't control it. Life gets poor-mouthed all the time, yet you seldom hear an unkind word about money. Money, now this has to be some good shit (*Money*, p.145).

This quotation, despite its length, is a rich excavation site which needs a scrutiny for its horde of information. The mentioning of "pretty primitive creature", "all shapes and colours" people, "Irishmen", "some bundle in the Middle East", "white", "English", "mature" is the proof that money has extended its domination in all the comers of the world, to all communities, all races. Almost all the inhabitants of the earth are suffering from the craziness, disease money has introduced in their body. Like an adept of a spiritual force who once is in trance is controlled by the latter, mankind is also described as playthings of money, of currencies which keep on becoming stronger and stronger. The control money has over man, according to the quotation, is making of him a criminal. In this, I read money turning man into a serious threat. The allusion to

criminality is explained by the fact that a man having money is compared to someone who has authority and yet does not know how to use it, or better, has a tendency to use it in a wrong way. His state of a rich yet a subjugated being can be compared to a loaded gun in the hands of a drunkard.

This brings me to revisit of concept of power. The dictionary proposes the definition that power is: "the ability or right to control people or events."⁷⁶ However, I believe that power, at the first instance does not confer any control. It is rather neutral and depending on how man uses it, it can serve either to control and influence those who do not possess it or to do good to people by enlightening them. Man is a dual being inhabited by good and evil, that is, humanity and animalistic tendencies as it has been portrayed in *The Lord of the Flies*. In the case of the modern man, I realise that he is having baser instincts. Hence, he is predisposed to be corrupted by the power money confers to him. It is now clear why money which is a good thing is at the source of man's perverted logic. Man prefers money to the law of love that all morals prescribe to put an end to all iniquities on the earth. This might be the own convictions of AMIS he cleverly put in the rough of Self: "Selina says I'm not capable of true love. It isn't true. I truly love money. Truly I do. Oh, money I love you. You're democratic: you've got no favourites. You even things out for me and my kind (Money, p. 221)."

The interest of Martin AMIS's writings also resides in the fact that, as a way of enlightening the readership, he makes his character Self become conscious that the modern man is merely: "the new kind, the kind who has money but can never use it for anything but ugliness" (Money, p.59).

Being rich is about acting too, isn't it? A style, a pose, an interpretation that you force upon the world? Whether or not you've made the stuff yourself, you have to set about pretending that you merit it, that money chose right in choosing you, and that you'll do right by money in your turn. Money mad or money smug, you have to pretend it's the

⁷⁶David Rattray, *Reader's Digest Illustrated Encyclopedic Dictionary, Volume Two L-Z, op. cit., p. 1329.*

natural thing I never felt I deserved it, money, for what I did (it was a big embarrassment), and that's probably why I pissed it all away, though there isn't a can deep enough, and there's simply too much money then I'll have to join them, the money artists (*Money*, p. 307).

This quotation is highly important because it draws attention to the words of a character that spends a good part of his life lavishing money, experiencing lots of the evil things money can help afford. The two rhetorical questions which start the quotation reflect how people define being rich nowadays, especially taking into consideration all the pleasures money can offer. From the quotation, I deduce that to be rich means to the stupid modern man to show off, to get involved in sumptuous life for the world to know that you have riches.

In the same quotation, Self is proposing a new definition; a new attitude man should adopt vis-à-vis money. It is the sensible use of money, to spend money on good things without exaggeration in order to live conveniently. Man has to show through his rational use of money that he deserves it, for man is careful in spending what he toils hard to earn whereas he unwisely spend what he does not merit as suggested through the biblical story of the prodigal son. Once man merits something, it becomes useless for him to shout it to the world, to fall in the trap of displaying. In the same order of idea, he is telling the readership that the attitude of many people nowadays is highly telling that they do not merit it. What is also interesting in the quotation is the words addressed to both those who do or do not "made the stuff themselves, that is those who sweat to earn their money as well as those who get it easily by chance to take it naturally. Money should be used reasonably at the service of good.

It is however disappointing that the quotation ends on a pessimistic note about the fulfilment of this wise wish. It is also useful to point it out that the pessimistic note on which Martin AMIS's work ends seems to be revelatory of the fact that the majority of the modern men who have turned irrational easily fall in the traps of money. Self's assertion that he has to join ... the money artists", that is, people turned crazy in their lust

for money might be a deceptive realisation of the writer for the fact that nothing can be done to rescue man from the way money holds over him.

The ending of this quotation could also be seen as Martin AMIS's effort to make his fictional work truthful to life situation instead of idealising his created world. When I turn to the book of revelation, I discover that it is insisting on the world heading to its end, and with time going on, the majority of people will let the animosity in them take the ascendancy over their humanity. The appreciation of the social facts nowadays proves right this prophecy and before such a remark, the pessimism of AMIS is justified. This conviction in man's irredeemable nature is well spelt out in this extract from one of Tamas Benyei's articles in which he starts his analysis on some passages from D. H. Laurence's essay on John Galsworthy. In this analytical work, D. H. Laurence posits a clear and fundamental distinction between the two concepts of "true human individual" and the "social being".

While a man remains a man, a true human individual, there is at the core of him a certain innocence of naivete which defies all analysis. A division -and eventually a split between man's subjective and objective consciousness led from the fall from the original state. [After the fall, man is degraded to the status of]⁷⁷ social being," [subordinated to the reign of money]. Money ... of course, which every man living goes a long way. With the alive of human being it may go far as his pen ultimate feeling.⁷⁸

In a nutshell, I do believe that what Martin AMIS is striving to let his readers know through *Self* is that man has to struggle hard in order to dominate money even if it seems admitted that man cannot do otherwise, "entrenching himself in the layers of the outside world"⁷⁹ which are money and materialism. This is one of the exits which can allow man to recover his real self, to deliver himself from the powers of the fruits of his own imagination. This is the process that will make of man a real master and conqueror of the world. Let us again dissect the following quotation which reinforces the idea reiterated this time by Spunk.

⁷⁷The words in square brackets are TamasBenyei's.

⁷⁸David Herbert Laurence, "John Galsworthy" op. Cit.

⁷⁹TamasBenyei, "Allegory and Allegoresis in Martin AMIS's *Money* ", op. cit.

She [Butch Beausoleil, one of the Concubines of Spunk] is teaching me how to live. He looked terrible. By his standards he seemed debauched to the point of imbecility. God, with the dope and the Champagne and the high-tech playbacks and whatever else Butch had in her larder, imagine what these two youth users were getting up to in the cot I near, she's always had money right?' he said 'She knows how to use it. Money, she's taught me that money is just something you use. So, this philosopher had frowned his way to a conclusion. The pity was that the whole of tabloid and letterhead America had reached it before him. (*Money*, pp. 315-316)

The analysis of this quotation minding the attributes of our modern societies, reveal that money is spent on the new rulers of the modern era among which "dope, Champagne, high-tech playbacks". The fact that Butch Beausoleil puts them in a larder is an image used to say that these are not put at the heart of her life. Because of this, her life looks "debauched to the point of imbecility", that is, immoral and stupid to the modern man. This judgement recalls the upside-down world Edgar Allan Poe⁸⁰ portrays in his where in the eyes of the fool; sane people are insane and therefore need a treatment. Still, to a sensible man, life deprived of all addiction and enslavement is what is really meant to be lived.

Here again, I denote the expression of the writer's regret that the modern man cannot understand that money is a mere medium which should be used in a good way and on things which are beneficial. It is irrefutable that the products of consumerism ranging from drinks to food which are often junk food, from drugs to sex are detrimental to man's health. In my understanding, America which stands as the cradle of capitalism and therefore as the archetype of all capitalistic societies, is not ready to grasp the philosophers preaching. The lover of wisdom or better a thoughtful person can only pity the modern man full of tabloids scenes of sex and immorality rich people are being blindly led to.

The consumerist aspect is also present in *Time's Arrow, or, The Nature of the Offence*.

⁸⁰Edgar Allan Poe, *Le système du docteur Goudron et du professeur Plume*, (*Paris: Folio Junior*, 2003).

We're picking up new habits all the time. Bad habits, I'm assuming: solitary, anyway. Tod sins singly ... He has acquired a taste for alcohol and tobacco. He starts the day with these vices - the quiet glass of red wine, the thoughtful cigar - and isn't that meant to be especially bad? The other thing is this. Not very enthusiastically, and not at all successfully either, so far as I can ascertain, we have begun doing a sexual thing with ourselves. (T. A., p. 22).

These new habits related to consumerism and namely in this quotation alcohol, tobacco, and sex are qualified as a vice and worse, a sin.

As it has been noticed throughout his writings, one of Martin AMIS's ploys has been to juxtapose our modern society with all its abominations with the dreamed values he would like to see blossom in the world. Thus, in order to restate this wish to see man control money, Martin AMIS has exemplified some possible right ways to use it. This has been done through the characters of Gordon Highway, Martin AMIS and Martina Twain with the latter standing as "the female agent of the author in the novel, the woman representing the only hope of genuine human emotions, the very tentative initiator of rewriting Self's life as a redemption story."⁸¹ With regard to Gordon Highway, I realise that concomitantly as he is getting rich, he is taking better care of himself.

He gets fitter as he gets older. The minute he started to get rich (a mysterious process this, dating back some eight or nine years) he started also to take an increasingly lively interest in his health. He played tennis at weekends and squash three times a weekend at the Hurling ham. He gave up smoking and abstained from whisky and other harmful liquors. ... A few months ago I [Charles Highway] caught the old surd doing press-ups in his room. (T.R.P., p. 12)

From this quotation, I observe that John Self and the wealthy modern people's attitude as described in *Money: A Suicide Note* and that of Gordon Highway as described in the above quotation are at antipodes. While money serves Self to become a drunkard, an addict and a junk food lover and therefore stand as a ruin

⁸¹TamasBenyei, op. cit.

for life, it allows on the opposite Gordon to ensure for himself health and vigour. From this quotation, I can argue that the author is advising the readership to avoid spending money on some consumerist goods such as cigarettes and liquors which are harmful to health. This is why nowadays; it is made compulsory for cigarette producers to write on the packages "dangerous for health". In some countries such as France, the state recommends to add on the packages a dreadful picture of diseases smokers risk when smoking.

However, all these efforts reveal themselves to have no dissuasive effect. By the same token, the author reminds the readership on the benefit man earns from lots of sport activities. In *Money: A Suicide Note* for instance, it is only once that I have seen John Self and Fielding Goodney play tennis. This scarcity can never yield fruit for health. From my analysis, it resorts that the author does not have anything against taking alcohol if taken on some rare occasions as he made his readers observe it in a gifted way: "It was on the Thursday that my father [Gordon Highway] drinks spirits for the first time in years" (*T.R.P.*, p. 9). I also have the belief that at the place of too much alcohol, AMIS prescribes natural fruit juice. This is carefully suggested in the extract: "my father ... leaning over to empty the two-pint jug of real orange-juice, his dally which he usually tucked away before eleven a.m." (*T.R.P.*, p. 10).

From my viewpoint, the adjective real is of crucial importance, for nowadays, artificial juice are produced with aroma sweeteners and other chemical ingredients which are not known to the public. They could possibly be harmful to health, in most cases. In order to instil in the readership, the desire to opt for real fruit juice and sports, he skilfully enumerates some of their impacts on Gordon Highway, namely getting fitter and staying healthy while getting old Martina Twain is held in high esteem because she has been a good adviser. She has been given the opportunity to help John Self cleanse himself from the bad habits of the modern days. Even if at the end, she does not succeed her initiative, it is because the modern man is looked at as a sinner beyond redemption. This failure of Martin AMIS and Martina Twain can also be interpreted as the exteriorisation of an inner struggle taking place within John Self. This is the

conflicts between the realities of our modern era and the reform both Martin AMIS and Martina Twain try to inculcate to him. This can also be seen from another perspective as the author's prophetic vision according to which the modern man has reached a point of no return, so all trials to bring him to reason could only be submerged by the tantalizing civilisation of the modern period. This depiction of Self corresponds to the characteristic of the hero of modern age who is described as:

A new character, a generic hero of mournful or roguish mien, fulfils his destiny by mediating the contradictions to which we are heir, and mediates them, particularly, in the process of his initiation, his discovery which often leads him to the brink of defeat...

Whatever he may be, the new hero is not created like his classic predecessors; in a social image ... It is an altered apprehension of the Self... bourgeois society.⁸²

This message, in my opinion, does not condemn man to failure or preconditions him to act as a scape goat of the modern days. On the contrary, it addresses a message according to which man should be mentally sapped before resisting the strongly rooted values of a whole civilisation. Because he does not want to end his novel on a note of despair, but rather to see this dream become a reality, Martin AMIS has designed an alternative strategy. He makes John Self become poor but still happy. This depiction connotes that poverty constitutes the alternative, the remedy for the modern man's ailments. It is still important to stress that poverty here is not synonymous with the state of inability to take care of the basic needs. It rather evokes the situation of someone who is not under the dependence of modern era's addiction.

Through the poverty of Self, AMIS emphasises the absurdity of the modern life and parallels the idea developed by D. H. Lawrence in "The Rocking-Horse Winner"⁸³ in which the author uses the symbol of an expensive toy, the rocking horse that looks like a

⁸²Ihab Hassan, *Radical Innocence*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press), pp. 111-112.

⁸³D. H. Lawrence, "The Rocking Horse Winner", retrieved on June, 15th 2012 from <http://www.bu.edu/academy/files/2011/01/The-Rocking-Horse-Winner.pdf>.

real horse but cannot go anywhere and whose only possible movements are to rock back and forth to illustrate the futility of our material civilisation governed by money. The horse as well as the junk food, too much sex, pornography, brief the items that Self can afford with money may look good like the toy but the final results they lead to in the best case is that it does not get the rider anywhere and in the worse gives him sickness, frenzy, spiritual and moral emptiness as epitomised in the protagonist's getting harmed in the process. Consequently, John Self's smile and happiness consecutive to his poverty at the end of the novel underscores the idea according to which the blind pursuit of money is often self-destructive. This ending is a way of sticking to real life situation, for "chance and absurdity rule human actions. The hero recognizes this and knows that reality is but another name for chaos."⁸⁴

4-2) Employer - Employee Relationship

Capitalism which is a System of production and trade advocating for the private property and ownership plays an important role in the evolvement of the modern culture. It has inaugurated a pitiless System in which the employer who is in a situation of power is ready to exploit his fellow human beings with the sole purpose to make the maximum profit possible. In *Money: A Suicide Note*, the exploitation takes three forms: the first one is the exploitation of the partner in business. The second form consists in the sexual exploitation of females at work place and the third one is procurement.

Exploitation which stands as the hallmark of capitalism is well illustrated in the relationship between Fielding Goodney and the naive Self. For Kurt Leutgeb, "John Self is the victim of a frame-up devised by Fielding Goodney."⁸⁵ The statement implies that in his desire to make lots of money, Self has become the victim of Goodney's capitalism impulse to exploit. Brian Finney well summarises the salient points of Goodney's exploitation as follows:

⁸⁴Ihab Hassan, op. cit., p. 116.

⁸⁵ Kurt Leutgeb, op. cit.

Fielding Goodney in America skillfully fools Self ... Goodney makes Self believe that he is being paid enormous sums of money to direct a film, when, in fact, Goodney hires actors to impersonate financial backers of the film and has Self sign documents that make him wholly responsible for all the money being lavishly spent on the film.⁸⁶

The passage attests that there is no fairness in the capitalistic system. Driven by the only motive of making profit, the employer is ready to go through all alchemy to reach his goal. In such a System cunning is cherished at the expense of morality and humanism. Goodney does not mind the ruin and probably the imprisonment that his evil and dishonest plot will have on a fellow human being. Only the end justifies the means.

With regards to the second form of exploitation, it is a fact that ladies in the professional field are especially being more and more pushed to secure a work in counterpart with sex. In this framework, AMIS, like Obi Egbuna, has addressed the issue through the movie factory. In the short story "Da Vinci's Curtain"⁸⁷, Obi Egbuna has illustrated the social concern through two male characters. He depicts the protagonist Omar who, in the search for a job in the world of movie, is asked by the manager for sodomy before giving him employment. But contrary to Obi Egbuna who discusses the sexual harassment from a homosexual angle, AMIS is preoccupied with a hetero-sexual negotiation that occurs at work places. It is of an assault men often exercise on females. In order to well conduct his enterprise, AMIS delves the readership into how actors are recruited in John Self and Fielding Goodney's movie enterprise.

Across the floor they came, each with her special details of - shape and shadow, of torque and thrust. We sat there in down and gave them a drink and asked them the usual stuff.... Fielding would let the drawl or quack away for five minutes, before asking, with a strategic glint: '-And Shakespeare?' Well, even I got a few laughs from their replies to that one. 'Yeh, I really wanna do Mrs Macbeth. Or *Anthony and Cleopatra*. Or *The Comedy of Errs*' One girl, I swear, thought for some reason that *Pericles* was about a manufacturer. Another evidently believed that *The Merchant of Venice* was set in greater Los Angeles.

That's very interesting, Veronica, or Enid, or Serendipity,' Fielding would say.

⁸⁶Brian Finney, *Martin AMIS*, (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 47.

⁸⁷Obi Benue Egbuna, *Black Candie for Christmas*, (Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishing Co, Ltd., 1980).

After presenting the first part of the casting test which consists in the check-up of how much cultivated the candidates are, the passage continues with the control of the know-how of the candidates.

'Now. We'd like you to take your clothes off please.

'To music?' ... I'm not really dressed for it.

'Come on. Mauren, or Euphoria, or Accidia. You're an actress, right?'

And revealing their teeth first, the girls would go through their hoops ... I watched through my pornographic sheen. And the girls submitted to it, to the pornography. Professional city-dwellers, they were experienced in the twentieth century ...

They took most of their clothes off and gave you a lesson of their personal anatomy. One of them simply lifted her skirt, lay on the floor, and had a hand job. She was the best...

Every now and then I wondered whether Fielding was promoting these girls in the other sense...

So you see, over these last few days ... I've been too busy *auditioning*. (*Money*. pp. 184-185).

Indisputably, this quotation, though long, shows that the casting the prime role of which is to detect the talented actors and addresses has been turned into a pornographic performance. In such a case, the mark of genius required from the quotation the mastery of the science of pornography. Accordingly, Self defines the verb "to audition" not as to judge the actors proficiency and expertise after a short performance but relatively as to have sexual intercourse with the prospective candidates. Thus, the best candidate in the quote is the one who has demonstrated the best her aptitude and promptitude to masturbate their auditors.

The most regretful aspect of the casting is that at the reading of the quotation, I have the feeling that the educational background is no more important and a sensible reader must be dead-stricken by the way the characters here exhibit, without any trouble, their ignorance over basic literary productions.

In my opinion, at the same time that he denounces this form of exploitation ladies are often victims of at work places, ceases the opportunity to draw the attention of ladies especially on the importance of academic excellence and a good training. I suspect that

these ladies have accepted the humiliating scenes they are asked to perform because they do not have anything to offer besides a lesson on their anatomy, that is, pornographic practices. Self saying that "Professional city-dwellers [referring to the candidates], they were experienced in the twentieth century" is a way of addressing the shift of interest from educational background to sexuality. One way of lessening this form of exploitation passes forcibly by academic performances.

The last form of exploitation employers impose on the mass and especially ladies is procurement. With the modern day's civilisation centred on money and material properties, sex has transcended its original secular consideration to become a commodity and by so doing, it takes the form of prostitution. I do not however mean that prostitution is the product of the decadence in moral values. On the contrary, it has been in existence formillennia, going back to the Byzantine, Roman, Greek, and Egyptian empires. It is for this reason that it has been considered in all cultures and civilizations as the oldest trade. The particularity nowadays is that the rate of prostitution is skyrocketing.

In my understanding, prostitution consists in the consideration of sex as a service traded for goods, services, relationships, or for any kind of favours and mainly for money. In the remote past, this activity was considered as an illegal one. Prostitutes were therefore closed within brothels which were hidden places and anyone found guilty of such activity was sentenced to death. These statement concords with the idea in Encyclopaedia Britannica Ready Reference, 2003 which reads:

Prostitution is a very old and universal phenomenon, also universal is the condemnation of the prostitute... Prostitutes are often set apart in some way. In ancient Rome they were required to wear distinctive dress; under Hebrew law only foreign women could be prostitutes; in pre-war Japan they were required to live in special sections of the city. In the European Middle Ages prostitution was first curtailed by the Mann Act (1910), and by 1915 most states had banned brothels.⁸⁸

⁸⁸Encyclopaedia Britannica Ready Reference, (Australia : Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc, 2003), (A software)

With time going on and thanks to the perpetual downhill slide of the original standards of civic morals which proclaimed sex sacred, the latter is being gradually allowed and even legalized within civilized societies. Nowadays, we realize that the underground prostitution has made room for the one which occurs in the open and becomes a common place. This is what Martin AMIS might be alluding to in the following description: “everything was on offer outside. Boylesk, assisted showers, live sex, a we-never-close porn emporium bristling in its static” (Money, p. 15). More than that, prostitution, this trade lurking at the edge of the society has turned endemic and here and there, the streets are being invaded by prostitutes.

Whores have recently been introduced to my neighbourhood. I don't know who or what introduced them, but here they are: hello girls, and welcome. They stand in ones, twos, threes. They are made of nerves. Guys come in cars. You see these girls bent haggling over the door jambs. These girls are home-grown but the johns are foreign-there is often a language problem. Actually, there is always a language problem. ‘That's right, No! Twenty pounds.’ One is redhead, not yet a woman but dresses like a burger's wife black rat stole and patent handbag, with sharp, arched, shiny face. I have watched her pushy rump as she closes deals through open windows, then slips inside for her lucrative fear. One is a fat blonde in pauper's shapeless winter coat... the chick does useful business, I've got to admit. More than once I have seen her singled out from the group by a wagging dark finger under the yellow lights. One is Persian (I think) and swanks the strip in baby-blue split skirt and filmy top. Now she looks as though she is worth twenty pounds of anybody's money. (*Money*, p. 215).

The portrayal of the prostitutes in this quotation with regards to their attire and garments is not far from the prostitutes trotting roads in cities especially in the night in search for clients. Apart from this, AMIS also lays emphasis on how prostitution is an activity attracting foreigners who do not hesitate to go on tourism for it if necessary. The sex-tourists are associated in the quotation to the foreign johns, that is, foreign customers of prostitutes.

Moreover, the existence of language barrier between the prostitutes and their clients comes to back this presence of sex tourists. The quotation also stresses on the fact that ladies of all shapes and from all horizons are involved in the sex business through a reference

to a "redhead" lady, a "fat blonde" prostitute and a "Persian". However, the most warning aspect of prostitution is the fact that teenagers are swept up into it. In the present quotation, this type of prostitution is alluded through the lady "not yet a woman". The same case is visible in *London Fields* through the character Debbiee.

And Debbiee? Little Debbiee? Well, Debbiee was *special* Dark, rounded, pouting, everything circular, ovoid, Debbiee was special. Debbiee was special because Keith had been sleeping with her since she was twelve years old. On the other hand, so had several other people. All completely kosher and Bristol-fashion because she'd had her tubes done and you just gave cash gifts of seventy-five quid to her mum (*L.F.*, p. 51)

Though presented as one of Keith's girlfriends, the quotation evokes an astounding reality. It is the realisation that Debbiee is exploited as a child prostitute by her own mother. And to serve this purpose, she has undergone a tubal ligation surely to avoid pregnancy.

It is worth underscoring that in the case of prostitution and unlike the rare case of Debbiee's mother, the employers are often behind-the-scenes people. Only the prostitutes and sometimes the managers of the brothels are seen. This secrecy of the owners should not elude people and push them not to see in prostitution an exploitative enterprise. In this framework, AMIS has portrayed prostitutes in their concrete nature of exploited and lower class people. The pitiful condition of sex workers is identifiable in the following quotation: "The chicks are on the ramp ... none of them wore any pants. At first I assumed that they got paid a lot more for this. Looking at the state of the place, though, and at the state of the chicks, I ended up deciding that they got paid a lot less." (*Money*, p. 29) This quotation comes to unveil an equivocal which is in the mind of many people. In fact, people think that prostitution is always a lucrative business but a little thought upon the business shows that apart from being at the mercy of their clients who can do anything they want with the prostitutes up to their aggression, the sex workers are not better than parasite. And this is not a good living. AMIS stresses some of the backdrops of this business. The first one is to be found in the following description.

I hit a topless bar on the Forty-Fourth ... They just have a few chicks in knickers dancing on a ramp behind the bar: you sit and drink when they strut their stuff...

There were three girls working the ramp, spaced out along its mirrored length. The girl dancing topless for my benefit, well, let's take a look here. Her skin showed pale in the light, waning sorely to the eye, as if she were given to rashes, allergies. She had large woeful breasts, puckered at the heart, and an eave of loose flesh climbed over the high rim of her pants ... Yes, the upper grips of her breasts bore soft crenulations, even whiter than the rest of her. Stretch marks at twenty, at nineteen: something was wrong there, the form showing fatigue, showing error; at a very early stage ... She smiled in my direction every now and then. The smile was so helpless and uncertain. Yes, the smile was ashamed (*Money*, pp.12-13).

The first remarkable element in this text is that another form of exploitation is being encountered nowadays. This form is the striptease which is a performance in which, ladies especially take-off their clothes in a sexually exciting way. From the depiction of the teenager prostitute, I have the feeling that the narrator feels uneasy with her profession. Also, the tiring aspect of this young prostitute's body in AMIS's above quotation shows that she does not really earn a lot from the "ashamed" business she is compelled to among thousands. He also denounces the lots of cosmetics and surgery they use in order to beautify their body with the aim to seduce men. This use of cosmetics as a bait to attract men is exposed on by Chinweizu:

Male susceptibility to female beauty gives women a great leverage in their dealings with men; this leverage is further increased by women's artifice. Their determination to make the female body even more provocative has led to women's preoccupation with the delusive self-beautification which is commonly known as glamour.

Glamour bathes the body with an illusionary beauty; its purpose is erotic provocativeness; its function ... is to arouse a man's aesthetic appetites, and there by lure him into a trap a woman has set to catch a nest slave. The sexiness of her own body, as enhanced by glamour's tricks, is a woman's frontline weapon...

Glamour -the artificial beautification of the body for erotic provocativeness - is serious business ... The aim of glamour, like all magic and enchantment, is to confuse the senses of the

onlookers, to dull their reason, to induce in them beliefs which the sober mind would dismiss.⁸⁹

Chinweizu observes that ladies often use cosmetics to seduce men and it becomes more than necessary for prostitutes to attract clients and by so doing increase the revenue of their employers. Still, at the same time that they are their employers' breadwinner, the prostitutes themselves are treated as sexual object. They undergo several forms of humiliation and inhuman treatment as described below by Self:

First I sampled an S/M item in booth 4A. They got the chick on her back, bent her triple, and wedged a baseball bat in the tuck behind her knees. Then they gave her electric shocks. It was realistic. Was it real? You saw a writhing line of white static, and the girl certainly screamed and bounced. I split before they gave her an enema, which they were billed to do in the scabrous hate-sheet tacked to the door ... In the next booth along I caught a quarter's worth of film with a sylvan setting: the romantic interest of the piece focused on the love that flowers between a girl and a donkey there she was, smiling, as she prepared to go down on this beast of burden. Ay! The donkey doesn't look too thrilled about it either. (*Money*, p. 48)

The sadomasochism, in normal circumstances, is natural and consists in gaining sexual gratification by alternately or simultaneously enduring pain and causing pain to somebody else. However, in the present case which highlights a prostitute and her more than one client, the expected effect is not mainly to bring the sadomasochists derive pleasure from the inflicted pain. Rather, because she is paid and has to satisfy the clients, the prostitute is brought to endure those suffering and by so doing, undergoes a form of humiliation. Therefore, the bouncing and screaming are far more the expression of suffering than of an orgasm. The cruelty is expressed through the introduction of the baseball bat in the vagina of the lady and more cruelly, its electrocution.

Worse, the disparagement of the female is shown through the lady who is having sex with a donkey. From the uneasiness observed in the attitude of the donkey, I can infer that the lady is shown as being less morally sound than the animal.

⁸⁹Chinweizu, *Anatomy of Female Power: A Masculinist Dissection of Matriarchy, 2nd Edition*, (Lagos: Pero Press, 2005), pp. 36-37.

I reach this conviction after I bring side by side the above episode with a scene of sexual intercourse between dogs the narrator reports:

This afternoon, as I passed the square, I saw two dogs skewered together, back to back. Their owners stood around, waiting. The dogs were waiting too: they looked embarrassed, foolish but stoical. They had been through all this before, or at least their genes had. It is dangerous if you try to separate them (*Money*, p. 162).

Here, I note that animals who react instinctively, feel ill at ease and ashamed to have sex at the sight of their owners. Probably because the writer is more preoccupied by the treatment females endure, no man is shown naked in the emporium. Women who are endowed with the superego that possesses the knowledge of what is acceptable and good demonstrate all kinds of sexual practices openly. This depiction draws attention on the employers' heartlessness capitalism imposes on them and calls for the sympathy of the humanity on the treatment of the prostitutes. It might also be a warning addressed to people who, in search of easy means to earn a living or become rich, are lured into prostitution.

4-3) Money as a dehumanizing agent of marriage

One of the most important social issues in man's life is love. Among the different types of love which is characterised by a strong feeling towards a person or a thing, I can list friendship whose importance is highlighted by Mary Shelley through Walton the narrator of her novel *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus*. There is the love parents have for their children and vice versa that is largely elaborated on in *King Lear* by the great William Shakespeare, especially through the characters of King Lear and one of his three daughters, namely Cordelia. Furthermore, there is also a dedication to a person or a thing which takes the form of odes. Finally, there is the exclusive love between a man and a woman. It is the latter which will be analysed through the spectrum of *Money: A Suicide Note*.

Love is normally the bedrock that sustains the relationship between two doves and generally ends up with marriage. In human experience, falling in love and being in love are nice and wonderful feelings. Different artists from various periods in their various ways have done their best to capture such a feeling in their artistic creations. After considering Tristan and Isolde, Theseus and Pyrrhus in the Greek mythology, Romeo and Juliet in English literature, the poems by Verlaine and Ronsard in French literature, the lyrics of love songs within all communities, I cannot but simply say that the best thing that could happen to man in his life is to be pierced by the cupid arrow. Love is so sacred and important to man that he sometimes acts crazily once he finds himself in the claws of love. By a way of illustration, I can cite the play *Twelfth Night* in which characters are brought to act temporarily as mad people.

It is obvious that most of their weirdness comes from their falling in love. The study of John Keats's poetry among many other writings demonstrates that strong power of love. This pushes Hilaire Bouka to comment that "Keats' love affair with Fanny Brawne caused him to value love as a super sensual experience without which life has no meaning."⁹⁰ This quotation implies that love gives to life its essence and a world without love is absurd. It is this conception about love that will push Keats's to write in one of his letters: "Love is my religion. I could die for that; I could die for you."⁹¹ Besides him, Queen Victoria states that "there is great happiness ... in devoting oneself to another who is worthy of one's affection."⁹² Samson Young by his side states in *London Fields* that: love can make a woman pick up a bus, or it can crush a man under the weight of a feather (*L.F.*, p. 324). This implies that through love, what seems impossible becomes possible. Alfred de Musset by his side is persuaded that despite man's flaws, love is what really gives sense to the existence on earth. He beautifully expresses these thoughts in the following quotation:

Tous les hommes sont menteurs, inconstants, faux, bavards, -
hypocrites, orgueilleux ou lâches, méprisables et sensuels ;
toutes les femmes sont perfides, artificieuses, vaniteuses,
curieuses et dépravées ; le monde n'est qu'un égout sans fond où

⁹⁰Hilaire Bouka, "The Erotic Motive in John Keats's Poetry" in *Occasional Papers on English Literature Number 1, December 1996*, op. cit., p. 43.

⁹¹John Keats, *The Letters of John Keats*, quoted in Hilaire Bouka, op. cit., p. 44.

⁹²M. H. Abrams (éd.), "The Woman Question" in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature, Sixth Edition, Volume 2*, (London: Norton & Company, Inc, 1993), p. 101,

les phoques les plus informes rampent et se tordent sur des montagnes de fange, mais il y a au monde une chose sainte et sublime, c'est l'union de deux de ces êtres si imparfaits et si affreux. On est souvent trompé en amour, souvent blessé et souvent malheureux mais on aime, et quand on est sur le bord de sa tombe, on se retourne pour regarder en arrière, et on se dit: j'ai souffert souvent, je me suis trompé quelques fois, mais j'ai aimé. C'est moi qui ai vécu, et non pas un être factice créé par mon orgueil et mon ennui.⁹³

It proceeds from the above development that a person who, owing to one reason another, does not have the opportunity to experience love is worse than the damned described in the Holy Bible. According to a view borne out of a number of studies between 1971 and 1975.

Marriage emerged as by far the greatest source of satisfaction -ahead of family life, health, standard of living, house, job and much more. The obvious inference that marriage makes you happy, is widely accepted among those who specialise in marital studies ... Few sociologists, doctors or statisticians would dispute the statement that married people live an average of five years longer than the unmarried and are significantly less susceptible to strokes, ulcers, cancer, heart attacks, depression, mental illness and high blood pressure.⁹⁴

Here, it is blatant that if marriage can perform the listed wonders, it is thanks to the magic of love which constitutes its cement. Thus, I deduce from the quotation that love is at the core of true happiness, prolongs life as well and represents the antidote against certain diseases.

With time going on, I realise that true love as described by the various artists, as praised and honoured by various scientific publications, as sung by wonderful lyrics and which is conceived to be the harbinger of happiness even in needy times, that authentic love that equals to the reduction of the two lovers into a single and indivisible unit is being progressively reduced to an idealistic world, to fairy tales. Relationships have undergone fundamental changes. Already in the sixteenth century, when I consider the plays *Romeo*

⁹³ Alfred de Musset, *On ne badine pas avec l'amour*, (Bordas : Larousse-Bordas, 1992), pp. 77-78.

*My translation :All men are liars, fickle, insincere, talkative, hypocritical, proud or coward, contemptible and sensual; all women aredeceptive, cunning, vain, curious and depraved; the world is only a bottomless sewer where the most formless seals crawl and twist themselves on mountains of mud, but there is in the world a holy and sublime thing, it is the union of two of these beings so imperfect and so hideous. We are often deceived in love, often hurt and often unfortunate but we do love, and when we are on the edge of our grave, we tum around to look behind, and we tell ourselves: I often suffered, I occasionally made some mistakes, but I loved. It is me who lived, and not an artificial being created by my pride and my boredom.

⁹⁴ John Madge, *The Origins ofScientificSociology*, (New York: The Free Press, 1967), p. 41.

and Juliet and *The Taming of the Shrew*, I notice that marriage was already stimulated by interest and not love. It was already a business deal which served to bring more money and power into a family. In addition, a complicated, chaotic, and constantly readjusted web of economic, social and moral values have distorted the understanding the modern man grasps of family as well as the sacredness of sexual relationship. This idea is encapsulated by Herbert W. Armstrong:

In no area of human life has there been such drastic social change as in that of sex. The so-called "New Morality," first unleashed by World War I, intensified by World War II, ' completely KO'd Western civilization during the decades of the '50s , '60s .and '70s. Prior to the First World War, it was illegal in the United States to publish, sell or distribute a book of instruction on the subject of sex. After World War I an avalanche of books, pamphlets, magazine and newspaper articles, teachings on sex, descended on the public. Yet in all this, the most vitally needed dimension of knowledge was missing. During the '50s, '60s, and '70s and into the '80s, sex has been hurled at the public in every manner—in movies, in television, in all advertising, in TV commercials. Everywhere sex came to be freely talked about. Morals relaxed. The "New Morality" became accepted by society. Divorces escalated. Family and home life became almost non-existent."⁹⁵

This quotation is full of useful information about how the concept of sex has evolved drastically through time from its sacred and taboo nature to that of free and permissive one. A scrutiny of some behaviour in the modern world allows me to confirm without any hesitation that human societies seem to be more flexible nowadays on sexual matters and by the same token tend to advocate for prostitution.

By the way of illustration, I can allude to the treatments reserved to Charles Baudelaire and Gustave Flaubert after the publications of their respective provocative works *Les fleurs du mal* and *Madame Bauvary*. These treatments went from ill-treatment to imprisonment. D. H. Lawrence does not have a different lot. The explicitness with which he describes sexual intercourse and orgasm in *The Rainbow*, *Women in Love* and

⁹⁵Herbert W. Armstrong, *The Missing Dimension in Sex, Second Edition*: (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Church of God; 2009), p. ix.

Lady Chatterley's Lover will earn him the sinking of his reputation and his labelling as a pornographer and purveyor of dirty ideas⁹⁶. Against this background, when I pay a close attention to the realities of our modern era, I notice that sexual mores are almost free from moral judgements. This leads to the subsidence of what John Madge calls "the emotional importance of sex, that is, the strong taboos against any open expression of interest in the subject of sex"⁹⁷ formerly maintained by religious values, rituals and social mores. By the same token, modern civilisation encourages every form of sexual deviation with as consequence the loss of its original sacredness.

These days, sex is mainly considered as a means of wealth and a tool of satisfying one's fantasies without any pre-defined rules. This state of affairs unfortunately leads to the scramble of the marriage institution. Henceforth, the room is open for free love, the unconventional types of sexual relationship which has mono-parental families, homosexuality as by-products. It has become habitual to see people connive to have either a child or just to have a love affair for just some period of time at the expense of a serious marital engagement. Worse, there is a slackening of the legislations governing divorce, abortion, all kinds of obscene sexual practices, homosexuality, and the whole is crowned by the massive advertisement on contraceptive methods. These methods have the merits of dissipating all worries to have undesirable babies after sex, and therefore contribute a great deal to make of sex a common place thing.

In the light of such an analysis, it becomes palpable that the changes the modern era has brought have ramifications in the moral as well as in the psychological states of the modern man who, after all, is in search of his soul.

Commenting on the French anthropologist O. Manoni's observation of the Merina of Malagasy, Chinua Achebe writes that there is "disharmony almost amounting to conflict between the social being and the inner personality in western culture and, we may add, increasingly among its newly "civilized" and "civilizing" surrogates".⁹⁸ This

⁹⁶D. H. Lawrence, Author's Note in *Women in Love*, op. cit., p. xii.

⁹⁷John Madge, op. cit., p. 334.

⁹⁸O. Manoni, **quoted in Chinua** Achebe, op. cit., p. 54.

psychological disharmony, if not exactly desirable, was the inevitable price to be paid for the enormous advances made by the west in material wealth, in technology, in medicine, etc.

In the same respect, what does seem striking about modern marriages is their tolerance of infidelity. This issue is raised in *Time's Arrow or, The Nature of the Offence* when AMIS writes:

All our love affairs come to an end in the consulting rooms of Associated Medical Services. A professional formality prevails as we stand there with one or other of our girlfriends ...Our girlfriends seem to enjoy the charade, at least to begin with; they are flirtatious and collusive ... How long have you been married? Is your husband an active man? 'Do you lead a full life? Our girlfriends never led full lives. They all claim, rather hurtfully, to lead empty ones (*T.A.*, p. 65).

The girlfriends concerned here are married and by allowing them to have extra-relationship, the writer alludes to their unfaithfulness. Possibly to insist on the recurrence of their infidelity, they state they live empty lives. This hides the meaning of their repetitive adultery.

In this web of unfaithfulness, many people do not miss the opportunity of making of love, a source of wealth. It is in this respect that Jeff D. Opdyke, thinks it is a deception to say that "love never measures any of us by the size of our wallets. Love just happens, regardless of money"⁹⁹. He corrects such a statement by a wonderful remark he makes in the framework of love when he writes:

'I love you'
Those three words promise to have the most dramatic effect on your personal finances. ... The point is that most of us never consider money to begin with when it comes to falling in love. That's a problem.¹⁰⁰

He continues warning those who at the first time overlook the financial aspect on the fact that:

⁹⁹Jeff D. Opdyke, *Love & Money: A Life Guide for Financial Success*, (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc), p.44.

¹⁰⁰*ibid.*, p. 44.

[They] rush headlong in a relation when [they] fall in love. In doing so, love blinds [them] to many things, and money is one of them. Fall to address it, sweep it under the rug, and assume everything will work out in the end- and there's a fair chance money will gnaw at the bonds of [their] relationship.¹⁰¹

Clearly put, Jeff D. Opdyke is certain that love cannot survive without financial means. This supposes that the philosophy which consists in basing the union between two people on love and nothing else works in most cases only for a while. As a result, I can nowadays assert without hesitation but still leaving a margin for rare cases that gone are the times when Romeo and Juliet can take tremendous risks and even sacrifice their lives for the sake of love. Gone are the times when love can blind people up to the extremes where lovers simply justify some of their acts that sensible people will judge foolish in the following terms: love is a mystery and we cannot really explain it. Or again justify their acts with Pascal's famous quotation according to which the heart has its reasons which reason cannot understand.

Out-dated is the conception of love as represented in 1 Corinthians 13: 1-8 according to which love is above all the desire of the happiness of the other, the dedication of one's life for the well-being of the other. Archaic is the belief according to which "love is as strong as death; its flashes are flashes of fire, a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it".¹⁰²

This makes sense when keeping it in mind that every human society at a particular time in its history provides specific system of values and ways of life within which lives of individuals are designed. Since the modern man is living in the modern era with its characteristics, it is noticed that a certain type of biased information, behaviour and interests in undated our daily life. We are heirs and heiresses of a time when man is motivated in everything they undertake by the profit they will get at the end. Unfortunately, love and marriage institutions are not exempt of such attitudes.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 46.

¹⁰²Lockman Foundation, *Holy Bible, Amplified Version*, op. cit., Songs of Solomon 8: 6.

Before such a situation, Justin McCarthy in the nineteenth century makes the following remark:

The great social difficulty in England today is the relationship between men and women. The principal difference between ourselves and our ancestors is that they took society as they found it while we are self-conscious and perplexed. The institution of marriage might also seem just now to be upon trial.¹⁰³

In the light of the quotation, it is clear that marriage in modern days is not exempted from calculations. In addition, the awareness of such a state of affairs will lead Chinweizu to write:

When a woman tells a man "I love you", she means "I want you to feed me, house me, clothe me, fuck me, get me great with child, and take me as your burden until I catch a better slave a reference to a richer man who will declare his love to her"¹⁰⁴

This type of union is what Jane Austen¹⁰⁵ denounces when she appeals to her niece Fanny to carefully think before accepting any marriage proposal and there by avoid a marriage of convenience or to get married for the sake of money. Austen's text is mostly evocative when she points it out that there is nothing worse than marriage without mutual affection and respect. In the same vein, D. H. Lawrence makes Birkin asserts that:

Humanity is a huge aggregate lie ... humanity is a tree of lies. And they say that love is the greatest thing: they persist in *saying* this, the fool liais, and just look at what they do! Look at the millions of people who repeat every minute that love is the greatest... and see what they are doing all the time ... It's alie to say that love is the greatest.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ M. H. Abrahams (ed.), "The woman Question", op. Cit..., p. 1595.

¹⁰⁴ Chinweizu, op. cit., pp. 42-43.

¹⁰⁵ Jane Austen- "On Making an Agreeable Marriage", retrieved 9*June, 2013 from <http://www.pemberley.com/janeinfo/brabltf5.html>.

¹⁰⁶ D. H. Lawrence, *Women in Love*, op. cit., p. 38.

In this quotation, D. H. Lawrence confirms Chinweizu and Jeff D. Opdyke's opinion that a disinterested love is a pure hypocrisy and that the choice of one's partner is motivated by one's egoism.

The worry of writers on the insecurity of love and by extension the forms marriage in modern days is taking is also one of the concerns of Martin AMIS in his works. In *Money: A Suicide Note*, he underscores this social reality in the form of jigsaws. In this respect, my aim at this level of my work is to collect these jigsaws one by one and exhibit what is the real aim of marriage nowadays.

It is commonly admitted that because the two lovers who have made the decision to "become one flesh" are coming from different families with different realities, different education, different ways of perceiving things, different tastes and judgements, love must be motivated by the identification in one's partner of the mobiles that makes him be attracted towards his lover and vice versa. However, the world is witness of a situation whereby very often the motivations of the so-called love resides in a vested interest, money or an egoistic reason which does not necessarily take into account the interest of the other. It is in this respect that the American critique Emma Goldman asserts that "marriage is primarily an economic arrangement, an insurance pact"¹⁰⁷ in which one gets involved for benefits and nothing else.

In the same vein, D. H. Lawrence also, through Ursula asserts that marriage is mutual union in separateness.¹⁰⁸

Thus, the dimension of truth that should normally sustain true love has almost disappeared. It has been unfortunately replaced in most cases by cunning. I can therefore, without any risk of deception, say that the majority of marriages nowadays are façade unions, for as Cupid tells Psyche, "love cannot live where there is no trust"¹⁰⁹. This attitude is highlighted by Martin AMIS in the following snapshot. After Self decided to have a joint-account with Selina and received his bank statement that covers three pages

¹⁰⁷Emma Goldman, "Marriage and Love", 1917, retrieved on 10* April, 2007 from http://www.dwardraac.pit2er.edu/anarchist_Archives/goldman/aando/marriageandlove.html

¹⁰⁸D. H. Lawrence, *Women in Love*, **op. cit.**

¹⁰⁹Lucius Apuleius, "Cupid and Psyche", in Kathleen McCormick (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 232.

long, he realises that Selina is spending too much without contributing any penny. But as their marriage is rooted on interest, he resigned to blame her or to remonstrate with her or again to expostulate with regard to her silly expenses. Instead, Self simply declares: "I can't complain, I suppose. Such is our deal. Such is our gentleman's agreement. But that's the whole trouble with dignity and self-respect: they cost you so much fucking *money*"(*Money*, p. 144).

Before any further elaboration, it is worth noting that the word marriage has never been mentioned in the novel. The stay together of two people of opposite sex that can be viewed as marriage is simply described as their coming together simply to satisfy their carnal pleasure or to obtain a frenzy of sexual satisfaction. I now understand why the terms arrangement or the "deal" to use Martin AMIS's words or again the "economic arrangement" to quote Emma Goldman are used to connote what can be viewed as marriage. The deal which is defined as an agreement or arrangement, especially in business ... that helps both sides involved"¹¹⁰ better summarises what marriage has been reduced to nowadays and explains why many marriages nowadays flounder. This idea of business is also encapsulated in the name of Selina Street who, together with John Self, forms what can be referred to as a couple. A linguistic approach to the name demonstrates that the name has been formed on the process of blinding. In my analysis, the development of the name gives: Selfs] [herself]¹¹¹ +in +a +Street. This demonstration is credited when I turn to John Self's reference to Selina as "my High-Street Selina" (*Money*, p. 71). In my opinion, besides being a surname, of Selina, Street helps build a compound adjective that alludes to where Selina belongs to. And this place is "High-Street". From all that have been said so far, I come to the conclusion that John Self mirrors every single the modern man and Selina, a possible, or sample of the type of lady the modern man often unites himself with.

¹¹⁰Adam Gadsby (ed), op. cit., p. 401.

¹¹¹The Words in square brackets are the one deleted in the process.

Also, as the woman is reduced to a commodity exhibited in the street, getting marriage with her is like buying her from the street for one's house. As the act of selling and buying require economic transaction, I without any doubt agree with John Self that being with Selina is merely a matter of deal.

The same idea according to which marriage is conditioned nowadays by material possession or wealth is also put into message as code in other parts of the novel as. I will mention three additional passages. The first one says "it is amazing; you know what big earning bergs can get these days. If you're heterosexual, and you happen to have a couple of bobs, you can score with the top chicks" (*Money*, p. 189). This quotation means that nowadays, a stupid bastard of man can have a love affair with ladies that are naturally endowed with what the society has defined as the canons of beauty. What is remarkable with this quotation is that it exposes the pre-requisites for a typical union nowadays. It highlights the fact that not any type of lady is accessible to any kind of man. The richer a man is, the more he can pretend to have an affair with beautifully appealing ladies. It is a fact that this criterion of selection does not stem from the modern societies. Dieng Gorgui, in his study of popular ballads from the medieval period, comes to the conclusion according to which: "*L'unique- critère d'appréciation qui pousse à aimer est la beauté physique de la blonde. Pas ses qualités morales ou intellectuelles. Pas non plus son rang social*".¹¹² However, at that very time, men were in the majority of cases sincerely attached to the ladies they targeted as their prospective wives if I believe the Senegalese scholar's words are anything to go by.

Unfortunately nowadays, the hidden agenda of most men is in most cases to have carnal pleasures with these ladies endowed with sensuous beauty. In such relationships, neither the sincerity nor the man's morality matters. The only condition that is crucial is the weight of his wallet. Thus, it still reinforces the conception according to which love nowadays has become a commodity or a barter System in which a lady exchanges

¹¹²*The only criterion of appreciation which pushes man to love is the physical beauty of the blonde and not her moral or intellectual qualities. Not neither her social class. (My translation) "⁶Dieng Gorgui, op. cit., p. 88.

her beauty with the means of the man. And in such a deal, feelings can be said to be sacrificed on the altar of interest.

The second quotation which is highly representative is the following one in which John Self ponders over the faithfulness of Selina to him.

Is Alec fucking her? Well, what do you think? Is she doing him all those nice favours? Could be no? Here's my theory. I don't think she is. I don't think Selina Street is fucking Alec Llewellyn. Why? Because he hasn't got any money. I have. Come on, why do you reckon Selina had soldiered it out with me? For my pot belly, my bad rug, my personality? She is not in this for her health, now is she? ... I tell you, these reflections really cheered me up. You know where you are with economic necessity. When I make all these money I'm going to make, my position will be even stronger. Then I can kick Selina out and get someone even better. (*Money*, p. 28).

What is in ordinary life considered as marriage but which is alluded to in *Money* as a period of sexual intercourse is still in this quotation said to be motivated by money and nothing else. Neither John Self's pot belly nor his bad rug matters. Even the verb "to soldier" which is used to mean the choice of Selina Street to stay with John Self hides the belief according to which Selina is not, from the viewpoint of Self, engaged in the relationship with her heart but with her materialistic mind. As shown in the last demonstration, here also the writer is showing that for men, a woman is a commodity and the more beautiful she is, the more she seems destined for only men who have means to take good care of her. This is evocative of the Igbo proverb "beauty is woman's wealth".¹¹³ This explains also the confidence of John Self in the fact that when he makes all the money he is going to make, he can kick Selina out and get someone even better. The use of the verb to kick to mean to divorce also explicitly denotes the lack of consideration and respect for one's partner who is as a result objectified. This mentality is materialised in the epilogue when Self after

¹¹³An Igbo proverb quoted by Chinweizu.*op.cit.*, p. 88.

becoming penniless, has to content himself with Georgina. Though she is portrayed as a caring girl friend to Self, she is unglamorous.

The last quotation that I think should be regarded with particular attention is the following passage which is an observation John Self made.

As I strolled along [Bank Street] I watched an elasticated black kid ..., gangle past with his pretty little friend. Negligently he reached a front garden and yanked a flower from its tree. He offered the pink blossom to his chick, which whirled it in front of her briefly lit face before dropping it to the ground. (*Money*, p. 113).

In matter of love flowers are highly symbolic. They are colourful and beautiful plants that epitomise the beauty of love. This might be the reason why we often see people, especially the bride carrying flowers on their wedding day, or again why men in love like sending lots of flowers to their lovers. There are several flowers with different connotations.

In the extract above, the writer has made the lover man pick not any flower but a "pink and blossom" one for his lover. No one can deny that in most cultures and cases, the pink colour stands for love. Thus, by picking a pink flower for his lover, the man intends to express all his love and affection for his lover, for the expression of one love for another being is not simply materialised in the repetition of the three words "I love you" but also in every act that one poses. In the light of the development made above, I understand why the lady's face briefly lit to express her disappointment and anger.

In fact, in the attitude of the lady, I could decrypt that in the state of mind of the modern man, a flower does not serve any purpose when put side by side with materials that become the credo. It does not serve any real interest but rather can become embarrassing. Its fate is that it is a short lived plant in the sense that its fate is to be wilted quickly and gives additional task for the lady who will spend time and energy throwing it away. This comes also strengthen the idea according to wish good intention or strong feelings do no more keep the flames of love burning. This also clarifies the common saying according to which when poverty enters by the door, love flies away through the Windows. Laying emphasis on the fact that this scene depicting a "black kid" and his "pretty little friend" is a way of mentioning that money at the centre of

love is not only the concern of Whites but that Blacks who are seriously affected by poverty are also concerned.

Owing to the fact that money exercises a psychological pressure in the choice of the partner, I form an opinion according to which in the absence of money, the couple will simply give way to a break. It is also in this line that all the developments made above confirm Doan's observation that Martin AMIS's female characters are "mere playthings for male sexual gratification."¹¹⁴

Everything considered, it appears nowadays that the institution of marriage is in a situation of an outstanding decadence. Men and women who decide to stay together no more have any respect for each other. Only the profit -carnal for men and material or money for the ladies- sets up the rules of the game. The altruism that should govern such an institution is progressively replaced by outspoken sadism. In the relationship, instead of having it as aim to discover one's partner in the plenitude of their personality including their corporal, spiritual, emotional, and intellectual dimensions, man becomes set on a single pursuit: the sensual indulgence.

However, in order to be truthful to reality in the rendition of his real world observation, Martin AMIS in his novel *The Rachel Papers* seems to say that there still exist in our chaotic world, some exceptions besides the majority who are not impressed by material possession when they are on the field of marital relationship. This view point is presented through the medium of Charles Highway's father.

Gordon Highway ... was still a healthy and vigorous man; his wife on the other hand, was ... what a heap. The skin had shrunken over her skull, to accentuate her jaw and to provide commodious cellarage for the gloomy pools that were her eyes; her breasts had long forsaken their native homes and now flanked her navel; and her buttocks, when she wore stretch-slacks, would dance behind her knees like punch-balls. The gnomonic literature she was reading empowered her to give up on her appearance. Off came her hair; on came the butch

¹¹⁴Robert Martinez II, "The Satirical Theater of the Female Body: the Role of Women in Martin AMIS's *The Rachel Papers*, *Dead Babies*, and *Money: A Suicide Note*, 1996 retrieved on 19* August, 2008 from http://www.martinAMISweb.conVscholarship_files/martinez_women_1998.doc.

jeans and fisherman's jerseys. In her gardening clothes she resembled a slightly effeminate, though perfectly lusty, farm labourer. (*T.R.P.*, p. 13)

From the depiction made of Charles and Mark Highway, I note that Gordon is endowed with a modern mind. I can assert that he bases his interest in women on their beauty. Once his mother looks not all that beautiful, he cannot understand why his father has still kept her as a wife. By the same token, through the couple Gordon Highway and his wife, the author is instructing the reader that love must not be based on the beauty of the woman or the means of the man alone, otherwise, Gordon Highway will never accept to take such a woman as a wife. If the writer has not elucidated this enigma, it maybe to instruct the readers on the fact that even if a man or a woman is firstly guided in their interest on a person of the opposite sex by only love, the relationship has a chance to last, no matter -the physical deformities that will occur with time.

Man is, from the view point of Ronsard a rose which quickly gets fade. Therefore, if man loves because the partner is so beautiful at his eyes at a certain time, it is sure that once this artifice disappears, he will find no interest in her and will be looking for other pretty creatures of the moments. At the same time, it is also important to add that, in order to cope with the realities of our time, women should make it their duty to render themselves always beautiful for their husbands.

My opinion that AMIS does not share these new rules governing most marriages nowadays is given credit by his 'making Gordon Highway disapprove of Jenny's marriage.

'My God', cries my mother, 'Jenny's going to be married.'
Gordon Highway: 'Jenny?'
'Jennifer. To a businessman. Thirtyish. "Norman Entwistle"
'What kind of businessman?'
'Household "appliances" she reads on, Second-hand appliances.
'My God'
'In a fortnight. She is giving up Bristol!...

The following weekend the young couple motored down -for tea. I diluted it. My Walium-ed mother fluttered between them on the sofa. My father paced

the hearth. When Norman gave voice to such idioms as settee, 'pardon and at one point toile, my father could be seen to wince as a man who is in pain will wince. He was a bit thrown by the opulence of Norman's car and accoutrements -but he wasn't a man to be gulled by the mere tokens of privilege. ... My mother and sister convened their tech-in on babies, honeymoons and pre-menstrual tension ... (*T.R.P.*, pp. 21-22)

The quotation casts an insight on the joy of both the mother and her daughter in knowing that Jennifer is about to get married. Jennifer's decision to sacrifice her education in Bristol for a man seems not to bother them and their reaction can be compared to that of Mrs Bennet and her daughters when they learn that Jenny is about to get married with Mr Darcy.¹¹⁵ However, this attitude contrasts with that of Gordon Highway in whom I denote a certain frustration and disapproval shown through the use of the verb "wince". Above all, he distinguishes himself from the majority of the modern characters in knowing that money is not a guarantee for a happy home. Knowing this reality must probably be the mastermind behind not allowing himself to be impressed by "the mere tokens of privilege." Highly important is the use of the adjective "mere" to qualify the material properties the modern man values much. In my understanding, it might be a medium to emphasise how unimportant or inadequate material properties are besides love which should normally be the bedrock on which any promising marriage should be based.

Still, the merits of Martin AMIS resides in the fact that instead of limiting himself to how male-female relationship or the concept of marriage is perceived nowadays through the eyes of the modern man, he has subtly provided a sample of value and behaviour our society must take into account to preserve to some extent marriage and decrease the rate of divorce which is sky-rocketing nowadays. This high rate of break-up is exemplified in this testimony is made by Charles Highway:

I am a member of that sad, ever-dwindling minority ... the child of an unbroken home. ... Not a day would pass without somebody I knew turning out to be adopted or illegitimate, or to have mothers who were about to hare off

¹¹⁵Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, (New Delhi: UBS Publishers, 2004).

with some bloke, or to have dead fathers and shabby stepfathers. (*T.R.P.*, p. 11)

In my analysis, I have reached the conclusion according to which in a world where adultery is a philosophy, fornication a religion and sexual intercourse an art, Martin AMIS certainly believes that nothing could replace a true and genuine the marriage. This picture is offered mainly through the confessions of John Self.

If there's one thing I think I'm sure of, it's the fact that I must marry Selina. I'm pretty sure about this, I think. Yes, it's time I settled down, grew up. There's no choice really: not settling down and not growing up are killing me. I've got to quit it, being young, before it's too late. I must marry Selina and settle down and raise a family. I must be safe. Christ, safe sounds frightening. Settling down that seems adventurous, a bit precipitate to me. Having kids! That's what takes real balls. To become a husband and a father: no you can't get much butcher than that. Yet, nearly everyone shapes up to it in the end. I bet you have or will soon. I want it too, I think, in a way. Of course, something is missing. Ah, you noticed. You are not blind. But it is missing in me, in her, it is missing, it will never be there. Selina and I are well suited. We get along like nobody's business. I must marry Selina. If I don't, I'll just die. If I don't, no one else will, and I'll ruin another life. (*Money*, pp. 162-163).

This quotation sorts out the advantages of marriage. The first one is that marriage helps partners to grow up, that is, to become responsible while lessening the degree of debauchery in the way that it brings the man to "settle down". It is true that the choice of phrases such as "safe sounds frightening", "adventurous", "takes real balls" translate all the fears of responsibility and consequently explain partly the unwillingness of the modern man to venture on the arena of engagement. This fear of responsibility is also discernible in Gordon Highway's attitude when after the birth of his second son Charles, he "got after a couple of hours" (*T.R.P.*, p. 8).

But being a man is not only having the physiological and biological constitution of a male, it also amounts to challenge potential difficulties and one's worries. This is why Self views marriage as an opportunity for growth.

The quotation is also reminiscent of Telephone Frank who can be assimilated to the voice of consciousness which reminds Self about the necessity of respecting others and treating them well. From him, falling to do so is to ruin a life as Self repeats it here.

When I turn to *Time's Arrow, or, The Nature of the Offence*, AMIS defines marriage as one of the remedy against boredom, solitude and depression as highlighted in the following quotation:

It wasn't the belt-tightening that depressed me, nor Tod's refractory and sinister cheer, which in any case didn't last long. After all, I am stuck with the old bastard whatever the lifestyle. It was the solitude growing around me, growing under me: this I couldn't take ... As for the women -well, thanks, ladies. One by one they stepped out on me. Only Irene persists. (*T.A.*, p. 69)

The positive point in this quotation is that besides being an antidote to loneliness, AMIS also believes that even if the majority of the modern men do not give to marriage much importance, there are some exceptions who do not want to make of sex the centre of their lives. On the contrary, like Irene, some still want to get married and bring a beam of light in the couple.

In *London Fields*, marriage has also impacted positively the life of Keith:

In his bachelor days Keith had been a regular Romeo. He had been a real lady killer. In truth, he had been quite a one ... Then came change and responsibilities: Kath, his wife, and their baby girl, little Kim. And now it was all different ... These days Keith kept a leash on his restless nature, restricting himself to the kind of evanescent romance that might come the way of any modern young businessman on his travels ..., plus the occasional indiscretion rather closer to home ..., plus three regular and longstanding girlfriends (*L.F.*, p. 48).

Though this passage shows that Keith is unfaithful to his wife, it also stresses the change his marriage with Kath has brought in his life. The Romeo that he was, that is, someone who has sexual relationships with different women, coupled with his being a lady killer; Keith after his marriage has in some ways disciplined his sexual life.

In "Insight at Flame Lake", AMIS lets Ned see parenthood as a blessing.

I have to say that she [Harriet his daughter] is just the dream baby. Corning to parenthood late in life -well, I count my blessings. A while ago I had nothing. Now here are these two little honeys [his wife and daughter]. Parental love is strange, and so fearful. I love Fran for her qualities. I love Hattie for her life. I don't want anything from her, except her life. I just want her to be. I would die for that. I just want her to be¹¹⁶.

Like in the previous quotation, I notice that all parents are afraid of the responsibility they put on themselves with the founding of a family. However, the author, through Ned, is presenting to the readership all the advantages of founding a family. It appears that life, riches, man's activities are useless and vain efforts without the presence of one's nuclear family that represents in all communities, the most important possession in life. This justifies why Ned opines that he "had nothing" before but from the time he has his "two little honeys", he has started counting his blessings for which he is ready to sacrifice his life. This simply means that the founding of a family stands as a possible way to give meaning to the modern disgusted life. This idea is made explicit by AMIS in an interview he granted to Susan Morrison in 1990; an interview in which he openly affirms that having kids "changes you so completely that you lose your point of comparison. It's relaxing for the ego somewhat, to have something that you'd so gladly die for."¹¹⁷

Another good example about the importance of a woman in the life of a man is her role of a caring partner proposed by the author through the changes Selina Street brings in the life of John Self.

Now with Selina Street here the texture of my life has already changed or chided. With a moan of effort the unloved flat slowly responds to the female presence. Heavily, it straightens up and tries to look courtly, attentive and willing ... Yes, the smell of the place, even to my clotted nostrils, has definitely improved. ... The flat feels better, better run... Selina is efficient, is practical, she is cost-effective.

¹¹⁶Martin AMIS, "Insight at Flame Lake", in *Einstein's Monsters*, (London: Vintage Books, 1987), p. 66. (Subsequent quotations from "Insight at Flame Lake" are parenthetically included within the text as "I.F.L.", followed by the page number ("I.F.L.", p. 66).

¹¹⁷Susan Morrison, "The Wit and Fury of Martin AMIS" quoted by David Moyle, "Beyond the Black Hole: The Emergence of Science Fiction Themes in the Recent Work of Martin AMIS", (USA: Kent State University Press, Winter 1995), retrieved from *Academic OneFile*. <http://go.galegroup.com.vlib.interchange.at/ps/i.do?id-GALE%7CA17884823&v=2.1&u-wash89460&it->

And with a chick on the premises you just cannot live the old life. You just cannot live it. I know: I checked. The hangover hand job a thwart the unmade bed -you can't just do it. Blowing your nose into a coffee filter -there isn't the opportunity. Peeing in the basin -they just won't stand for it. No woman worth the name would let it happen. Women have pretty ways. Without women, life is a pub, a reptile bar at a quarter to three ... Have you noticed, you guys, the way black or blue or red underpants stay clean for days on end, whereas white underpants ... Anyway, with Selina here, my life is being lived in white underpants. They're better, really. (*Money*, p. 161)

It is crucial to say before any comment that though Selina appears as a manipulator whose chief goal is to fool Self and ruin him, some of her statements reveal her quality of a good and caring wife. What the readership can learn from this quotation is first of all the fact that women are really skilful in rendering house neat and beautiful by being meticulous about ordering things in their place, imposing an order to the disorder men often create. The same idea transpires in *Time's Arrow, or, The Nature of the Offence* through the deeds of the character Irene. "Irene still comes to the apartment... Twice a week she vengefully looks in here to dust the place, and dirty all the dishes, and worry the bed. She leaves like four bucks on the kitchen counter." ("T.I.", p. 102).

The first impression I have from this quotation is that Irene comes to transform the house into a chaos. However, bearing in mind that everything in *Einstein's Monsters* should be seen in a reverse order, the actions of dirtying, worrying and leaving the bucks on the kitchen counter become in the normal order: to hover the rooms around, to wash the dishes, tidying the bed and cleaning the counter.

Coming back to the above quotation from *Money: A Suicide Noise*, the narrator is convinced that good women have the knot to transform positively their man, making of them new beings by helping them avoid some of their bad habits. This feature is exemplified through Self's abandon of things such as "hand jobs", "blowing one's nose in a coffee filter", and «peeing in a basin". The contrasting nature of the chaos and disorder attitude of a man with the careful one of a woman is illustrated through the polarity AMIS sets up between the black, red blue underpants and the white ones. In the depiction I read a language which implies the colour white is highly demanding of

hygiene and care. Thus the colour white is often the colour of laborious people, for it gets quickly dirty and above all its dirt is quickly visible whereas the blue, red and black conceal their dirt and is characteristic of lazy people because the outside world cannot quickly set up a difference between their dirty and clean states. In such case, the life of Self lived in white underpants is a strategy AMIS uses to stress the advantage and the positive impact of marriage in man's life.

The importance of a woman besides a man is also highlighted when the writer makes Self assert in the quote that 'without women, life is a pub, a reptile bar at a quarter to three', that is the life of a drunkard who loses all controls of himself. Finally, in the statement "no woman worth the name would not let it the disorder] happen" lets me foresee a certain belief of the writer in womanism which, unlike radical feminism, advocates for a mutual respect of the man and the woman in a world where both are complementary. It also offers man an important clue in the recognition of a marriageable woman which transpires in her attitude towards her interest on the one hand in keeping her house clean and on the other hand, in being a good support and adviser for her husband.

Through the depiction and analysis made above, I probably see an invitation of the writer to the modern man to abandon some of his misconceptions upon male-female relationships and bring him to the observation according to which pornography and sex that have become household words should not elude him from the fact that true marriage deprived of any lucrative or interest mind is still possible in our world. Even if the money and the satisfaction of carnal pleasure seem to be the real motive for many people, the concept of family still rings a bell in many modern men and continues to occupy a relatively important place in societies.

To exemplify the mistake the modern man often makes, Martin AMIS has created a situation whereby Selina Street who appears as a sexual object for John Self stands in fact as the archetype of a woman who really wants to build a family. As the underlining assumptions in the fairy tales "Cupid and Psyche"¹¹⁸, and "The Lady and

¹¹⁸Lucius Apuleius, "Cupid and Psyche" in Kathleen McCormick (éd.), op. cit.

the Lion"¹¹⁹ I also see in AMIS's writings a special call addressed to ladies to let them know that men are under their power. However, in order to transform the house of their men in peaceful homes, they should not use their power as an armament to sneer at their husbands or cheat on them. On the contrary, they should imitate the youngest daughter of the unnamed man who, in order to keep the promise her father made to the Lion, an animal which better reflects the image the modern man has of himself, decided to go and soften its heart.

Though it is true that love cannot live where there is no trust¹²⁰, women can still take example on Selina Street and strive to reassure men who, far from being as powerful as they pretend it to be, are merely coward who refuse to admit the true power of females. One way and in my opinion the best way to seduce men is still to keep an eye on the traditional role the society has assigned to men. The accomplishment of such duties should not be considered as a means of enslavement. Rather, women must consider it as maintenance of their couple. But still, men also must from time to time help their wives as a way of pleasing them, the same way they strive by all means to satisfy them sexually.

Finally, I read in AMIS's artistic work an invitation to the mankind should adhere to Armstrong's opinion that: "a solid family structure is the very foundation of a stable and enduring society"¹²¹ and work towards the reaching of such a goal. However, before all these could be possible, men and women should be bold enough to take the right decision. AMIS enlightens Selina and uses her as her spokesperson in a conversation she has with John Self: "Face the facts,' she said later still. Grow up, for God's sake. I'd settle for you. Settle for me. I'd look after you. Look after me. Give me children. Marry me. Make a commitment. Make me feel I have some .kind of base to my life." (*Money*, p.152). These nice words sound a pious wish to the modern man. However, it is high time mankind considered these words as a vow that must be taken and respected. By so doing, I strongly believe that our days painted in black by the modern days realities will be brighten and the marriage institution will be saved.

¹¹⁹Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, "The Lady and the Lion" in Kathleen McCormick (ed.), *ibid.*, p. 224.

¹²⁰*Ibid.*, 224.

¹²¹Herbert W. Armstrong, Author's Note in *The Missing Dimension in Sex, Second Edition*: op. cit., p. ix.

CONCLUSION

According to D. h. Lawrence, "the business of art is to reveal the relationship between man and his circumambient universe, at the living moment"¹²² in order to improve on the flaws and evils which gangrene these relationships. This role assigned to the writer is made more explicit by Jean-Paul Sartre when he writes:

Thanks to us [writers], that star which has been dead for millennia, that quarter moon, and that dark river are disclosed in the unity of the landscape. It is the speed of our auto and our airplane which organizes the great masses of the earth. With each of our acts, the world reveals to us a new face ... If we turn away from this landscape; it will sink back into its dark permanence.

¹²²D. H. Lawrence, "Morality and the Novel", in David Lodge (ed), *20th Century Literary Criticism*, (London: Longman, 1972), p. 127.

In my handling of the topic "**A human comedy in the modern world: a critical appraisal of contemporary mankind through Martin AMIS's Money: A Suicide Note and The Rachel Papers**". Which is the reason of being of this research work, I have been brought to scrutinise as on the slides of a microscope important thematic issues blatant in AMIS's work. For a good conduct of my analyses, I have structured my research work around five main axes. In the first chapter of the first axes, the modern man and some poignant aspects of his civilisation that makes of him a disoriented, and a 'hollow' man has held my attention. My objective has been at this first stage to bring out the lots of the modern man and by the same token, to highlight what are the characters' characters which stand as obsessive and common denominator to the modern man. With regards to the characters who serve as a medium for his artistic creation and depiction of the modern man, I have realised that Martin AMIS has invited on the scene characters, the majority of whom that are plagued by the evils and vices of our modern era, surely a strategy to help him be more realistic in his portrayals.

The first chapter about Research problem, background and framework.

The second chapter of my research work is entitled Literature Review. It has dealt with the viewpoints of different writers or critics who have told about the same topic. It also concerns the previous articles, research works which have a link with main ideas of my topic.

At the end of the third chapter, I have come out with the following results: the modern man is swimming in the pool of a bitter disillusionment maintained by a dangerously attractive doctrine of hedonism that the modern era advocates for. In this respect, when one considers the modern life as it has been depicted, he at

first falls under the desirability of such a life which reflects abundance. However, when he takes off the veil of the modern civilisation as presented by modern writers and more specifically Martin AMIS, it becomes blatant that this apparent glittering picture shadows sufferings, depression and disillusionment. The only way off is to

be endowed with a keen analytic mind in order to elude from the traps of such a civilisation in which unfortunately, deviances are transformed into norms.

In the fourth chapter, I have studied the social dimension of money. My objectives there have been twofold: on the one hand, I have attempted to show the impact money exercises on the modern man and on the other hand, its influence on the relationship between employers and employees and on the marriage institution nowadays. The obtained results are that firstly, money exercises a great pressure on the mind of the modern man. The latter under the trance of the former, seeks it and most often through either unorthodox or immoral ways. In other words, this part of the research work has allowed me to come to the conclusion that money has become one of the new idols of the modern era man cannot do without This analysis has particularly been backed by some relevant anthropological issues.

Owing to his craving nature for materialism, man is no more satisfied with the bare minimum which can allow him to keep his body and soul together. Mentalities have evolved from a means of survival to that of exaggerative piling of money which finally serves no good purpose but on the contrary is wasted in lavishness. I have also realised that man, in his search for facilities, seems no more ready to sweat before earning a living. On the contrary, he has a penchant for exploitation or abuse of his fellow man by any way, provided it can make him become rich overnight. Employers also who have means of production that confer to them power exploit the employees and often in unacceptable and humiliating conditions.

Moreover, with regard to the marriage institution, the interest of both partners at the expense of love is often the foundation on which the marriage institution is built. In the majority of cases, materialism is the ball that attracts ladies into marriage. As for men, the beauty of the lady and / or their craving interest for sex stands often for the enticement that lures them into such an institution. The shift of marriage motives from love to selfishness has transformed this sacred institution into a plaything. For this reason, true and

life-lasting marriage has given room to short-lived ones and the rise of the rate of divorce in the modern societies.

It is because we really focus on economic reasons that human relationships or better marriages nowadays are proved imperfect and scramble very often. It is because love is rooted in materialism that nowadays, partners do not have any respect for each other or attempt to provide care and happiness for the so-called lover. Because it becomes an issue of means and not of strong feeling, we assist to the destruction of the marriage institution. Men see women as mere objects to be used to satisfy their carnal pleasure, in compensation of their spending huge money on them. Women by their side treat men in their majority as cash cows that they can barter with sex. It is rightly in this order of idea that instead of discovering the fiancé or spouse in the fullness of their personality including their corporal, emotional and intellectual dimensions, and the modern man is set on the single pursuit, namely sensual indulgence. This can also explain the reason why modern couples are no more determined to stay together "until death do them apart". This indifference which characterises the partners' stay together represents also a temptation that leads to unfaithfulness.

At the end of this study, I have reached the conclusions that: males, in order to preserve the power vested in them by patriarchal societies, are naturally violent. Besides the violence conditioning, the majority of the male characters lose their senses under the spell of a lady in general and of a beautiful one in particular. This lack of control of the modern man over his libido leads him to be addicted to sex and in some extreme cases to rape. To crown these, I have noticed a misogynist attitude from some male characters. This behaviour appears contradictory to me because, besides the fact that they were born from a mother and potentially have sisters, when it comes to sex they still go to ladies they pretend to hate.

As far as the majority of female characters are concerned, I have realised that Omolara Ogundipe-Leslie's observation of the female's portrayal as phallic receptacle¹²³ is

¹²³OmolaraOgundipe-Leslie, "The Female Writer and her Commitment'.In *Re-Creating Ourselves*, (Lagos: Guardian December21, 1983), p. 57.

confirmed in AMIS's writings. Females are in fact shown as creatures who are predisposed to conduct all forms of sexual practices, from the growing sexual appetites to those that can be viewed as bestial ones. After pointing out the depiction of characters, I have presented the philosophical orientations I infer from literary works. Unlike many critiques, scholars and researchers who view in some humiliating and abusive portrayal of one or the other gender, an end that aims to present men as tyrants, opportunists and abusers, or the trend that reads in female stereotypes a conspiracy to maintain them in their traditional roles, I consider them as a means. I deeply believe that if only a good exploitation is made of the various depictions, literary works will become the mirror of consciousness in which each gender will really appreciate itself and correct what is to be corrected. Through this avenue, each will contribute to the advent of a fair society.

At the end of this research work, I come out with the following results. First of all, I have noticed that the modern society is suffering from social evils. These embody the modern man's adherence to all forms of addiction, his domination by his own criminal instincts, his immoral behaviours and propensity to obey the norms of the modern world without deep thinking. Unfortunately, the modern man is reluctant to change.

Secondly, I have come to the conclusion that the majority of modern men are "consumed by consumerism"¹²⁴ and are completely weighed down by the products of their own creations, be it money or scientific discoveries.

Finally, I have realised that both genders do not yet experience a true blooming and that the true emancipation still has a long way to go.

Besides AMIS's painted tableaux that look sometimes apocalyptic, he has also created characters and situations which, when observed, state his optimistic vision for the future. However, this optimism is possible through a total re-education and an effective mass sensitisation of the modern man. To serve this purpose, he has brought into contact with the

¹²⁴ Brian Finney, Martin AMIS, p. 47

readership an archetype of each and every one of us who is at least aware of his own misfortune and engulfment by the modern era. Through the experiences and advice of these mediums, he is opening the modern man's eyes on some of the realities of his civilisation. By this way, AMIS warns us not to fall into the same traps. By the same token, he calls upon the sense of responsibility of the modern man. Thus, like the South-African icon Nelson Mandela, each and every one must be able to tell himself with a total conviction that: "not my creation but "I am the master of my fate: I am the captain of my soul".¹²⁵

As a concluding note, I will cite Hermione in D. H. Lawrence's *Women in Love* who, like AMIS, appeals on the good will of each one of us: "If only we could learn how to use our will ... we could do anything, and put anything right. That I'm convinced of -if only we use the will properly, intelligently".¹²⁶

This sense of good will be backed by ethics and a high degree of awareness-raising; and which is deprived of any form of hypocrisy, pessimism and cunning should be the credo of each and every one if we want to offer our offspring a better future.

¹²⁵ Nelson Mandela, quoted by Barack Obama in his "Speech at Mandela Memorial Service", op. cit.

¹²⁶ D.H. Lawrence, *Women in love*, op. cit., p. 43.

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