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DEPARTAMENT DE FILOLOGIA ANGLES A I DE GERMANÍSTICA

Social Inequality and Marginalization

Boo Radley's Agency towards Scout in Harper Lee's *To Kill A Mockingbird*

Treball de Fi de Grau/ BA dissertation

Author: Yraya Oliver López

Supervisor: Anna Casablanques Cervantes

Departament de Filologia Anglesa i de Germanística

Grau d'Estudis Anglesos

February 2023

Statement of Intellectual Honesty

Your name: Yraya Oliver López

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Abstract

Harper Lee's novel *To Kill A Mockingbird* shows a variety of issues, including the examination of societal concerns such as the marginalization and discrimination of certain races or other groups of individuals. Lee was able to write a novel that cultivated empathy and moral principles within the historical and cultural framework of the Southern States in the 1930s. Additionally, by focusing on Scout's development throughout the narration, it effectively exposed the historical context through the lives and growth of its characters.

This dissertation analyses and exposes to what extent Boo Radley is a needed agent in Scout's life. Despite Boo Radley being marginalized by a society built on inequality, his agency is the one that helps Scout's mindset to mature. Conclusions are drawn on Scout's reinterpretation of Boo's attitude and her recognition of his kindness and protection. Radley's influence on her process towards maturity and a different perception of the world and people around is also tackled.

I demonstrated this through the analysis of certain literary techniques as well as connections between *To Kill A Mockingbird* and *Go Set A Watchman* to acquire a wider context of information. The whole issue is analysed under the context of social inequality and the Great Depression of the 1930s. Finally, I used some critic's articles concerning the novel and the figure of Boo Radley, which helped me to create an idea of other parties' opinions about the importance of the narration as regards the development and understanding of the novel and of Radley itself.

Keywords: *To Kill A Mockingbird*, Harper Lee, Scout, Boo Radley, American South 1930s, Agency.

0. Introduction

Harper Lee's novel *To Kill A Mockingbird* was released in 1960, examining issues related to racism, integrity, education, maturity, and injustice. The novel focuses on the figure of Scout Finch – the young narrator – and her older brother Jem. It follows their lives as they grow up in the 1930s Maycomb, and as the protagonists get older, they get a sense of their surroundings and the racially divided Southern society they are living in, which is plenty of injustices and discrimination. Besides that, an important major figure called Boo Radley is introduced in the story as a character that could be considered secondary. However, as the story develops, the reader can easily detect the importance of this character for both the development of the story and the children's lives. Throughout the novel, the children have to struggle with several different issues related to the archaic mentality of the society they live in such as racism, and the poor educational system of their city. Eventually, Scout grows up and she builds a mind of her own with plenty of upgraded ideas and alternative points of view, but all of this personal growth comes in hand with Boo Radley. He is present in Scout's life and plays a big part in her development since he is always helping her and the children, even though his presence is not always spotted at the moment. He accomplishes that through his innocent but also helpful actions throughout the book, which might be apparent given that he spends the majority of his time hiding from view and avoiding confrontation.

The main character, Scout, portrays a number of various issues in *To Kill A Mockingbird*, all of which are present in a particular setting and circumstances. She is a daughter of a single dad, who is passionate about his work. Atticus Finch is a determined lawyer full of integrity, and those values are the ones that he continuously tries to pass on to his children. The way the father treats and educates his daughter and son is what eventually makes them realize the importance of kindness and decide to treat and perceive Boo Radley in a

different way from how society sees him. However, Scout is the one who really gets to investigate and understand Radley, which is shown in the way she is either directly or indirectly influenced by the actions of the boy. As a consequence of what Scout learns about Boo and what she acknowledges of his actions, she develops a different insight of life and of people, and how to interpret them. Thus, despite Boo Radley being marginalized by the Maycomb society, he still manages to have enough agency in Scout to be relevant in the story. He is – unconsciously for both the protagonist and Boo - Scout's guide throughout the whole story but stays in the shadows for the reader. This statement will be demonstrated later on with a number of examples, but the reader must keep in mind all of the significant turning points in Scout's development and how Boo plays a part, either directly or indirectly, in each of them.

This dissertation intends, first, to provide the historical context and background of both the novel and the author. The figure of both Scout and Boo Radley will next be described and explained. Therefore, an explanation of Scout's upbringing, goals, and relation with Boo Radley will be examined. Additionally, the narrative techniques, such as symbolism or foreshadows present in the novel will be taken into consideration since these are vital to comprehend the author's narrative. Because of this, I also intend to discuss the symbolism together with the main character's growth throughout the plot. Finally, I plan on describing the parallelisms between the growth of both Scout and Boo Radley and comparing them in a way that demonstrates their influences on one another. My own interest in further exploring the role of a marginalized character who still manages to have a positive agency in someone's life – such as in the case of Boo Radley – is what led to the theme of my dissertation. Additionally, it is fascinating to examine the growth of someone such as a young girl – as is Scout – and how her own personality is developed throughout time within an archaic historical context with such negative mentalities and ideas. Thus, Boo Radley's agency is what makes Scout develop a fair,

critical and judicious criteria, representing the starting point of the mind shift of the southern era.

1. Background and Context

1.1. Social Segregation in the 1930s Southern States

Social segregation was prevalent during the 1930s, particularly in the Southern States. Racial segregation between African Americans and White Americans was particularly enforced because, at the time, slavery and its abolition were hotly debated subjects. The Jim Crow Laws were another significant legal historical event that greatly affected the Southern States. Additionally, discrimination against individuals suffering from mental illnesses was a significant contributing factor to systematic segregation, extending the segregation beyond racism to include mental health issues among other variables such as social classes, for instance. Many instances of segregation in society are shown in *To Kill A Mockingbird*, illustrating not only racial segregation but also all other kinds of segregation that take place.

Segregation emerged as a system of discrimination that divided people of colour's access to housing, education, and other services. Given that it was considered that Black and White people could not coexist, attempts were made on numerous occasions in both the 19th and 20th centuries to enact laws reinstating segregation in America. Discussions about what to do with freed slaves resulted in the controversy of colonization during the era of the Thirteenth Amendment's abolition and subsequent freedom from slavery. This included either establishing a nation for the former slaves or sending the slaves back to Africa.

The "Black Codes," a collection of regulations that were enacted throughout the South about 1865, severely restricted many facets of Black people's lives, including where they could live and work. In addition, the codes were designed to guarantee that Black labour would be affordable to hire after slavery was abolished. Later, segregation became an official policy,

enacted by a set of Southern laws that came to be known as Jim Crow Laws—a term that was originally used to disparagingly refer to Black people. Jim Crow laws were used by legislators to segregate a wide range of everyday places. Professional offices went so far as to provide separate waiting areas for Black and White people. Colleges adopted similar segregation policies, which resulted in the establishment of unique Black universities. The Hampton Institute in Virginia was founded in 1869 with the intention of teaching Black youth, but it ended up perpetuating a system in which White instructors taught skills to restrict Black people to positions of service beneath Whites.

Segregation was not limited to issues of race; it could also be applied to issues of class, economic status, religious convictions, or even mental health concerns, as in the case of Boo in *To Kill A Mockingbird*. Issues concerning mental illness in the 1930s were impacted by cultural norms, a lack of knowledge about mental health, and ineffective treatment options. People with mental disorders faced many difficulties during this time, and mental health care was frequently stigmatized. Furthermore, none of the individuals who experienced mental health problems benefited at all from challenges like financial instability brought on by the Great Depression, the inability to pay for medical care, a lack of social support, or stigma and marginalization. Accordingly, Boo's social marginalization is depicted in the novel as a result of accusations that may arise from a stigmatization of his mental condition. I consider that without the presence of Boo in Scout's life, she would have grown up surrounded by the ignorance that Maycomb and its context provide.

1.2. The American Bildungsroman

In its classic form, the bildungsroman is a particular kind of genre that centres on the moral and psychological development of the main character. In other words, it chronicles a character's life and growth from childhood to maturity. Since this German term usually refers to a coming-

of-age story and most of the time shows the protagonist searching for their identity as well as their role and place in the world, it can also be translated as "novel of education."

As Graham claims, "an adolescent on the journey to maturity is the perfect metaphor for the United States: young, adventurous, and optimistic. This accounts of the enormous popularity of the Bildungsroman, with its central motif of personal transformation, amongst American writers and readers" (Graham, 2019,117). It is important to take into account that the novel in question follows the American, not the English, tradition, and development of the original bildungsroman genre. The American Bildungsroman considers that its characters are consistently burdened by their past—be it national, private, or familial. One of the differences between genres is that, generally, while the American one places more emphasis on individualism, diversity, and historical and cultural context, most of the times, the English one places more emphasis on culture, tradition, and social class. This is the case with this novel, as the narrative takes place in a difficult historical setting that exhibits a culture of anti-diversity about matters like racism, xenophobia, intolerance, etc. One important fact that makes the Bildungsroman such an important genre in the contemporary American literature, according to Bubíková, is that while:

"the concern with the individual's emergence from an immature state of childhood to adult maturity, and with individual's socialization remaining the core focus of the Bildungsroman, studies of the form have latterly become involved in the discussions of ethnic and racial identification, of biculturalism, of the situation of an individual in a liminal position" (Bubíková, 2011,116).

In *To Kill a Mockingbird*, the genre of the bildungsroman can be exemplified in the character of Scout, the protagonist. Throughout the novel, the reader can follow the path of the girl and how her personality develops and shapes according to the events in her life. However, this novel does not follow the traditional structure of a bildungsroman since it does not go from Scout's childhood to adulthood, but it only covers a part of Scout's younger years. In this novel, the structure of the bildungsroman is modified, portrayed, and adapted differently since we can see her growth within no more than three or four years, taking into account that Scout is six

when the novel starts and at the end of the book she is about nine years old. The novel does not coincide with the British tradition of the bildungsroman, but rather with a number of other American novels which follow a character's evolution in a more specific period of time, such as is the case in J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951) or S.E. Hinton's *The Outsiders* (1967). The narrative techniques used in the narration help the reader - despite the brief period covered - to acknowledge and realize all the major and most highlighted changes and events in Scout's life. Susanne Howe defines the genre as "having a straightforward sequencing, a generally optimistic form of development and informal educational objectives achieved by selected mentors, through a narrative mapping of the process from inexperience to experience" (Howe qtd. in Bubíková, 2011,120). In this novel, Boo could be considered a selected mentor – despite acting unconsciously – for Scout, given that many of his actions play a big part in Scout's life. Thus, the narrative strategies used are helpful to emphasize the key moments that will help the protagonist to develop.

1.3. The American Gothic Influence in *To Kill a Mockingbird*

The term "gothic" applies to an important genre in English literature which is typified by mysteries, dangerous situations, gloomy scenery, and supernatural occurrences. However, the Gothic mode developed specific features in the American setting, showing significant themes in the American culture and adapting the genre to the characteristics of this civilization. These themes include the clash between rationalism and the irrational, religion, conflicts over race, and the more outrageous parts of nature. However, although the story in *To Kill A Mockingbird* does not fall under the Gothic genre category, it does exhibit elements of this genre throughout the narrative. As Manson claims, "at some point or another in the first half of the novel, we encounter a range of gothic effects, from horror to decay and from the perverse to the grotesque. The most poignant and central gothic scenes, however, feature the uncanny" (Manson,

1988,310-311). In this novel, the uncanny is something that indirectly establishes the connection between Boo and Scout. This term is represented by the figure of Arthur Radley, - Scout's weird neighbour -, and this mysterious aura is what eventually catches the attention of Scout and creates the beginning of their story.

In the novel, the Gothic soon softens as Scout develops a fondness for Arthur's humanity under the guidance of Atticus, an adult. Gothic elements first appear in the novel's opening chapters, when the protagonist presents the reader to the neighbourhood and the Radley place. Both the neighbourhood and the house are portrayed as having a mysterious quality that is subsequently extended to its occupants, - in the case of the Radley house - one of whom is Boo Radley. This character is worth paying attention to since he ultimately fits the description of a mysterious and hidden figure typical of the gothic genre. This impact demonstrates to the story feelings that go beyond enigmas and fear of the unknown. Furthermore, the theme of mysteries and the unravelling of enigmas is another feature shared by Gothic literature. The way that Maycomb conceals secrets and prejudices—like racial prejudices or social dysfunctions—that are subsequently made public is an illustration of the Gothic movement's profound influence. After all, “the Gothic is one phase of Scout's education, one that she must reject in order to grow in insight” (Michael L, 1988,309).

This tradition adopted an alternate evolutionary direction which ultimately gave rise to the Southern Gothic. This was a distinctive Gothic fiction subgenre based on the American South, which explores Southern society's dominant principles and delves into social issues. Ruling class decline, tensions over race, physical and ethical deterioration, and the hideous are among the major themes. Within this subgenre, Flannery O'Connor, Harper Lee, and William Faulkner are notable writers.

2. The Figure of Scout in *To Kill a Mockingbird*

The protagonist in *To Kill a Mockingbird* is Jean Louis Finch, who is also referred to as Scout by her elder brother. She is the daughter of Atticus Finch, a lawyer who plays a significant role in Scout's life as well as in the plot of the novel. The story is told from Scout's point of view about her early years in Maycomb, a made-up Alabama town in the 1930s. Scout is the one telling the tale in this book. She is a very inquisitive and daring young girl who, during the Great Depression in the American South, is exposed to many challenges pertaining to morality, racial injustice, and social injustice from a young age.

2.1. Scout's Raising and Education

Scout's analysis of her education from both her family – consisting of her father, her brother, and her cook/nanny Calpurnia – and her environment is of paramount importance. By examining how Scout is raised and which type of education she is exposed to, readers can extract lots of conclusions on why Scout develops the way she does throughout the novel. Taking into account that at the beginning of the novel Scout is already a really adventurous and brave young girl, it is interesting to highlight which other aspects she develops because of her experiences in life. As Bubíková states:

“Traditionally, childhood is seen as a” significant site of analysis because children are primary seen as passive receptors of culture” and thus children “function as the scavengers and inheritors of an eviscerated culture.” In such a view, a child grows up simply by realizing a culturally inherited potential, then becomes an adult by replicating the norms, roles, modes of behaviour, as well as cultural expressions of previous generations” (Bubíková, 2011:116).

To start with, the protagonist's raising comes from her father's style of raising a child. Atticus Finch provides his children values concerning the importance of the family, He is an involved parent that raises his children in a very intelligent way, in which by not saying things directly he forces the siblings' relationship to stretch. One example in the novel is how Atticus asks Jem – her older son – to walk Scout to school, instead of doing it by herself, as traditionally

parents do. As is read in the book, “Jem condescended to take me to school the first day, a job usually done by one’s parents, but Atticus had said Jem would be delighted to show me where my room was” (Lee, 1960,17). Atticus is aware of the age gap difference between his two children and indirectly creates situations to intensify their bond. Thus, Scout and Jem’s relationship throughout the novel is seen to be really close, and Jem is a figure in which Scout seeks supports and can trust in every moment. As it can be seen, Atticus is portrayed as a modern father, who not only takes care of the bonding of his children but is also present in the teaching of values such as respect, tolerance, and the awareness of social injustice. These topics are very controversial at the time, since the historical context of the novel is the opposite of all those terms. However, Atticus is firm on teaching his children the importance of being a good person and not judging anyone without a proper knowledge of their situation or context.

Regarding Scout’s education, the educational system is obviously portrayed as being inefficient and archaic, with inadequate and useless teachers such as Miss Caroline, who is not able to teach Scout properly. Not only that, but this teacher also threatens Scout and forbids her to be taught anything more by her father as soon as she spots that the girl is way advanced at school than her classmates. “Miss Caroline told me to tell my father not to teach me anymore, it would interfere with my reading.” (Lee, 1960,19). This fact only shows how poorly constructed the educational system of the time was.

Calpurnia is also a central character in Scout’s raising and education since she is one of the closest people in the girl’s life. She is in charge of taking care of both children and is a literate black woman who also raises and educates the children. Scout says:

“Calpurnia was to blame for this. It kept me from driving her crazy on rainy days, I guess. She would set me a writing task by scrawling the alphabet firmly across the top of a tablet, then copying out a chapter of the Bible beneath. If I reproduced her penmanship satisfactorily, she rewarded me with an open-faced sandwich of bread and butter and sugar.” (Lee, 1960,21)

This statement shows the progressive mind Atticus had back at the time because of letting his daughter to be taught by a woman of colour. Not only that, but it demonstrates that both Finch

children are exposed to the idea of a woman of colour that is not illiterate, but actually is really smart and can teach them proper things if given the chance. This idea is crucial since it provides the reader in a very discrete way the liberal values that Atticus promotes to his children in his household.

3. The Figure of Boo Radley in *To Kill a Mockingbird*

3.1. Boo Radley's Myth

In the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Arthur Radley, also known as Boo, is a secondary character. This man, who first appears in Scout's life as his neighbour and inhabitant of the Radley house, is distinguished by his enigmatic and mysterious aura. Boo is portrayed for the most part of the book as a person who never leaves his house and is never seen anywhere else. This makes the man a source of fascination for the entire community of Maycomb, but particularly for the younger members: the siblings Scout and Jem as well as their friend Dill, who is the one who keeps trying to make Boo leave his home. Such is the fascination for this man that many speculations are told about him such as that:

“Inside the house lived a malevolent phantom. People said he existed, but Jem and I had never seen him. People said he went out at night when the moon was high and peeped in windows. When people's azaleas froze in a cold snap, it was because he had breathed on them. Any stealthy crimes committed in Maycomb were his work” (Lee, 1960,9).

As the narrative goes on, Boo begins to take on the mythical status in the neighbourhood due to the numerous rumours and conjectures surrounding the character and the Boo Radley story. The Radley family's negative reputation, enigmatic aura, and local gossip all contribute to the idea that he is an evil figure, which is how he is portrayed most of the time. Boo is frequently described by the kids as an eerie figure:

“Jem gave a reasonable description of Boo: Boo was about six-and-a-half feet tall, judging from his tracks; he dined on raw squirrels and any cats he could catch, that's why his hands were blood-stained – if you ate an animal raw, you could never wash the blood off. There was a long-jagged scar that ran across his face; what teeth he had were yellow and rotten; his eyes popped, and he drooled most of the time” (Lee, 1988,14).

This horrifying—and juvenile—description sums up exactly how kids and the people of Maycomb saw Boo Radley. The reader's curiosity about learning more about Boo is piqued by these unsettling and unfavourable descriptions of the young Radley figure. This makes it easier for the reader to appreciate and understand the children's desire to force Boo to leave his house so they can determine whether or not he is a real monster. The uncanny aura that has been created around Boo and his story by the Maycomb society is what makes the children to create fantasy stories about him, and therefore, such unreal descriptions about him. After all, children take as example what older people say and create their own childish version of it, be it in this case an uncanny description of their neighbour.

The real persona of Boo Radley comes to light as the story goes on. Boo proves to be a warm and empathetic person in spite of the stories and initial fear. He is a major character in the plot, particularly during the last parts of the narrative. Unexpectedly showing bravery, Boo comes out of his hiding to shield and save Scout and Jem from harm. The portrayal of Boo Radley provides an insightful criticism on the perils of bigotry and the value of comprehension and compassion. The novel's main themes of justice and moral development are highlighted by the initial fear and misunderstanding surrounding Boo, which are similar to the racial prejudices that are pervasive in the town. Boo Radley, in *To Kill a Mockingbird* turns into a metaphor for the invisible and misinterpreted components of society. The book forces the reader to reevaluate assumptions and face the fallout from rash decisions through Scout's shifts in point of view and the disclosure of Boo's actual nature. Boo Radley's metamorphosis from an enigmatic character to a compassionate symbol plays a major role in the novel's examination of community problems and human behaviour.

3.2. Prejudice and Marginalization

In the fictional town of Maycomb, the novel depicts life in a 1930s prejudiced and segregated society that targets people according to their race, skin colour, or even mental disorders. Scout's quiet neighbour, Boo Radley, is a kind and unoffensive person who has been severely damaged by his father's abuse of power. Additionally, the isolation and deeply reserved behaviour of the character is what inspires both apprehension and interest in the people of Maycomb. "According to neighbourhood legend, when the younger Radley boy was in his teens ..." (Lee, 1960,10). This quotation exemplifies the gossip and many mysterious assumptions about Boo, created by the society throughout the novel. Moreover, this legend that revolves around the character of Boo shows – once again – his connection with the gothic and how the children make up a fairy tale like story to try to understand Boo's story. However, Atticus - Scout, and Jem's father – helps the children to develop a more critical thinking based on comprehension and empathy. Eventually, Scout ends up moving on from her childish stories about Boo and by understanding the real message behind every story, she gets to develop a more mature point of view on her neighbour. Furthermore, Atticus is against the many prejudices and the marginalization that Boo suffers from, and these ideals are the ones that the father transmits to his children. Life lessons about this are shown in quotes such as the ones related to the trial of the white woman against the black man that Atticus is defending. In this situation, Atticus explains to his children why he does what he does, and how things work in life.

"When summer comes, you will have to keep your head about far worse things... It is not fair for you and Jem... but sometimes we have to make the best of things, and the way we conduct ourselves when the chips are down... when you and Jem are grown, may you will look on this with some compassion and some feeling that I didn't let you down... Tom Robinson's case is something that goes to the essence of a man's conscience Scout, I couldn't go to church and worship God if I didn't try to help that man" (Lee, 1988,104).

The children – and society – must understand that they are surrounded by a toxic environment full of gossip and segregation that comes from racism and bigotry towards what is different and does not fit.

Boo's character is misunderstood in most of the novel because of the fake accusations against him from the Maycomb society. The gossip and speculations about him is what makes him a character that even the reader perceives negatively. However, "Boo Radley appears at crucial moments to rescue the children, whenever they are in trouble. Boo Radley is another character in the novel who becomes a victim of assumptions and is looked upon with fear and suspicion by his fellow compatriots" (Nair and Nila N, 2017,90). He is also a victim of racial profiling, which according to Ms. Deepa Nair and Nila N, is a term that applies to "when a person is assumed to have committed a crime on the basis of stereotypical assumptions associated with that person's colour, race, religion, caste, community, ethnicity or place of origin, he or she is a victim of racial profiling" (Nair and Nila N, 2017,84). The term applies to Boo in that he is accused of committing crimes during his earlier years. Even though these are only rumours, the Maycomb community unfairly marginalises him because of these conjectures. His strange, mysterious behaviours, and his seclusion is what consequently makes him become vulnerable to prejudice and marginalisation in a quaint town from the 1930s.

Therefore, as it is stated in the narrative, Scout eventually realizes that "Boo doesn't mean anybody any harm..." (Lee, 1988,280). This realization of who Boo Radley truly is as a person is the result of all the discrete and indirect actions that he – throughout the story – does for the children. By the end of the novel, Scout uses a more mature point of view, analysing all the situations where Boo has helped her and her friends, not only by giving them presents, but also by protecting them as in the case of Mr. Ewells attack. After all of these stressful satiations, Boo keeps on being a shy and introverted person. "...Will you take me home?' He almost whispered it, in the voice of a child afraid of the dark" (Lee, 1988,306). Boo asking Scout to lead him to his house after the attack is another proof that he is a pure soul and is harmless. Therefore, prejudice and marginalization acts against the figure of this character are a matter of perspectives: "...if Miss Stephanie Crawford was watching from her upstairs window, she

would see Arthur Radley escorting me down the sidewalk, as any gentleman would do” (Lee, 1988,306). This is Miss Stephanie’s interpretation when the reality is that Scout is the one escorting Boo back home. This is a moment where Scout is no longer judging Boo but helping him back after all his help and what she has learned from him.

4. Narrative Approaches

The narrative style used in the work of Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* is full of various devices, including symbolism, foreshadowing, and the way the story is told itself, which compels the reader to keep reading and take in the depth of the story. Upon initially reading this book, one gets the idea that Scout, the main character, is also the narrator. This fact introduces the term of child narration, and according to Abdulhaleem & Hyder, “If a child narrates the events of a novel, he/she will definitely simplify the topics he/she narrates. Hence, Lee’s *To Kill a Mockingbird* portrays a world that is exotic to the reader” (Abdulhaleem & Hayder, 2020,150). That is, by using Scout as the narrator, it enhances the plot and makes it become more appealing and interesting. The way the story is narrated illustrates the gradual development of Scout’s mentality, going from childish descriptions about legends and mysterious rumour about a neighbour, to a later understanding of the back story and motivations of the very same character. Also, “Lee uses multiple ways to enlighten the child narration in her novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*, by illustrating the childhood’s innocence and naiveté” (Abdulhaleem & Hayder, 2020,151). It is important to take into account that the simplicity of children’s language and innocence are a key element for the receptors of the narrative to understand and develop alternative aspects of life.

It is crucial to discuss the novel's approaches to narrative techniques such as symbolism and foreshadowing. The attack on Jem and his broken arm, which will occur at the end of the novel, is mentioned at the beginning of the narrative. That establishes the tone for the plot right

away and also enables the author to use more sophisticated language because Scout has grown and matured by then. As the story progresses, Scout becomes recognised as a symbol:

“She tries to embody a symbol of a child’s attitude towards a sacrificing father, at the same time, she uses her own language as a child to show reader, in an innocent way, her capacity to tolerate with others and resist her anger for her father’s sake despite her age” (Abdulhaleem & Hayder, 2020,153).

Nevertheless, when Boo Radley gets into her and her friend's lives, her innocence is gone. She begins to learn how to put up with anything that is different from what society has conditioned her to accept as different. Her neighbour’s interventions in her life handed her more insight into how to evaluate people and made her more critical of herself. By the end of the narration, Scout fully realizes the type of person Boo really is. Arthur Radley becomes a character with a new perception from Scout, she even reckons the time after Jem’s attack and remembers how “He was still leaning against the wall. He had been leaning against the wall when I came into the room, his arms folded across his chest” (Lee, 1988,297). Here, the main character identifies Boo as the person who rescued her and her brother from Mr. Ewell's assault. Boo is leaning against the wall to symbolise his shyness and loneliness while subtly showcasing his bravery.

Boo serves as a symbolic guidance throughout the novel for Scout to realize how people can be totally misjudged by what they are really not. “Boo had drifted to a corner of the room, where he stood with his chin up, peering from a distance at Jem. I took him by the hand, a hand surprisingly warm for its whiteness. I tugged him a little, and he allowed me to lead him to Jem’s bed” (Lee, 1988,305). Boo is guided by Scout into Jem’s bed to see him after the attack. The whiteness of his hand represents his innocence as well as the length of time he hasn't been out. The warmth of his hand reflects how he is a warm person despite the rumours. All of this helps to encourage the reader to have hope and consider how a person can remain pure and impart life lessons despite being shunned and condemned by many.

4.1. Scout and Radley's Parallel Character Development

Nair and Nila N claim that "Scout Finch, the narrator, is actually Harper Lee herself" (Nair and Nila N, 2017,87). This statement can be justified by both - the author and the character – ideas and values, not to mention the development of their way of thinking. Lee tries to display the role of an innocent woman who – because of the intervention of an important figure, in this case Boo – develops herself into a better and fairer version. The authors connect Scout and Boo's stories to exhibit how totally different people can learn from one another in crucial ways. In this novel, Scout is just a kid when Boo is first introduced in her life as the figure of a monster – typical for children -. However, eventually she realizes how pure and innocent Boo also is. "His lips parted into a timid smile, and our neighbour's image blurred with my sudden tears. 'Hey Boo,' I said) (Lee, 1988,298). Scout acknowledges the goodness of him and realizes how harmful she and her brother have been to him by judging him unfairly.

As for Arthur Radley, his agency is more than taken into account in Scout's life, however his development is not that clear. While Scout grows and matures – with Boo's help through his interactions with her – he still maintains his isolative and reserved behaviour. "People have a habit of doing everyday things even under the oddest conditions. I was no exception: 'Come alone, Mr Arthur,' I heard myself saying, 'you don't know the house really well. I'll just take you to the porch, sir'" (Lee, 1988,299). The fact that he is taken to the porch and not the living room because the lights of the latter are very strong, and Boo might not be used to that, is a very thoughtful act from Scout. Also, this quote shows how reclusive and separated from the real-world Boo really is. Thus, Scout is the one that develops the conclusion of why his father directs Boo to the porch and not the living room, which is a sign of empathy and comprehension from the protagonist because of Boo.

Eventually, Scout is the one who matures and changes, assisted by both Boo and his family. Boo serves as Scout's guardian angel, remaining hidden in his home while supporting Scout in

becoming a more perceptive and equitable person. Alongside Scout, he grows, but in a way that shapes how other people perceive him, even though his reserved demeanour does not change.

At the very end of the novel, there is a potent and symbolic scene that serves as a representation of closure:

“We came to the streetlight on the corner, and I wondered how many times Dill had stood there hugging the fat pole, watching, waiting, hoping. I wondered how many times Jem and I had made this journey, but I entered the Radley front gate for the second time in my life. Boo and I walked up the steps to the porch. His fingers found the doorknob. He gently released my hand, opened the door, went inside, and shut the door behind him. I never saw him again” (Lee, 1988,306).

The moment when Scout returns Boo to his house is very significant because it marks the breakup of a cycle. Now that Boo has assisted Scout in gaining fresh viewpoints and moral principles, both Boo and Scout are able to let go of each other. The fact that Scout is the one to guide him back home represents Boo’s naiveness and innocence. All this time he had unconsciously helped Scout, and she had also been guarded by him without even realizing about it. It is in this point of the novel that Scout is fully aware of Boo’s agency on her and how because of him she has been able to grow and overcome her prejudices and childish stories. Finally, the novel shows Scout’s point of view on Boo, a gentle and kind person who had been horribly treated by the prejudices of an intolerant and close-minded society.

5. *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Go Set a Watchman*

The original draft of Harper Lee's best-known work, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, was published posthumously as *Go Set a Watchman* (2015). Given that she was not convinced it was an adequate novel to publish, the author was unwilling to have her previous draft published. She eventually decided to publish *To Kill a Mockingbird*, a much-improved version of the narrative in which she could finally express her ideas more clearly. But her earlier draft of the book was discovered and published after she passed away. The reason this draft was not intended for

publication was that Lee believed it failed to adequately convey her ideals and principles. As a result, she included some new characters, like Arthur Radley, in her eventually rewritten novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

As said, *Go Set a Watchman* did not include the figure of Boo Radley. However, it did include the figures of Atticus, Maude, and Calpurnia, - characters that play a part in *To Kill a Mockingbird* -, but with some slight changes of values. For example, in Lee's draft, Atticus is discovered to be a white supremacist. Despite this fact, Scout still manages to develop her ideals aside from her father's. As Manson claims:

“From Atticus, Maudie, and Calpurnia, Scout learns the tenets of Southern liberal segregationist, but she also develops her own critical assessment of her society, discarding the racialism she has learned from Atticus and paving the way for the mature Jean Louis met in *Go Set a Watchman*, who believes in integration and can now turn a more critical eye on her father's politics” (Manson, 1988, 310).

That is, *Go Set a Watchman* provides – not a sequel of the main novel – but a different insight on how Scout develops in an alternative environment, especially without the figure of Boo, a much needed one to fully fulfil Lee's expectations on her own novel: be able to track down Scout's development through the figure of Arthur.

Boo Radley works as the missing piece that Lee's first draft lacked to conclude her ideas. This character had a reason of being and of existing, and the author introduced him in such a wisely way in which he would serve as a symbolic figure in which many aspects of Scout's life would be represented. From Scout's childhood and the mysteries of the Radley house to the more mature point of view in which the protagonist perceives Boo not as a legendary creature, but as a person to learn from. Thus, Boo and his story can be perceived as a fantasy that Scout created in her mind in order to cope with everything that was going on in her life, including a tense historical context with lots of prejudices and a toxic society. His agency goes beyond the tangible acts that can be spotted in the novel, because his figure symbolizes a guidance from Scout's childhood era – daydreaming about Boo's myth - to her more adult one – trying to understand Boo. After all, children need a guidance, someone to

provide hope in a society that lacks it. Boo Radley is the ultimate proof that there is good in what may look bad at first.

6. Conclusion and Further Research

After carefully examining the primary and secondary sources, I have been able to substantiate my thesis statement. I have successfully argued my point that Scout's character development is greatly aided by Boo Radley's unconscious agency in *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

I previously started by providing a context in which I explained the historical context the novel was inspired in, by contextualizing, a much better understanding of the plot and the actions of the characters of the novel is earned. I then analysed both Scout and Boo's characters individually, examining their background and how they are perceived in the narrative, therefore I was able to later establish connections between them. Through these links I have been able to interpret the actions of both characters and the impact they have to one another throughout the novel, which is a huge one, since they complement each other. Moreover, I have been able to provide quotations from both the novel and secondary sources that successfully helped me back up my arguments to defend my thesis statement.

With this research, through Boo Radley and Scout I have learned the power of the mass, and how a society can ruin someone's life by judging and creating false rumours. Also, how easily manipulated children can be, and how Scout redirects this manipulation and overcomes her judgements to understand and sympathise with Boo. I have learned about the situation in the 1930s Southern States and how toxic and dangerous it was for those who were different and outcasted. I would have liked to investigate more about other aspects that I considered to be important in the novel, such as mental disorders and how Boo could also be a representation of them. Despite not having been able to further investigate about other many topics that were overlooked, I considered I provided a clear explanation on the analysis of this novel.

In conclusion, *To Kill a Mockingbird* is a novel that talks about growth and the overcoming of injustices and prejudice. Thanks to the figure of Boo Radley, Lee gets a chance to display how innocence and kindness are more than enough to change someone's life and path of life. Boo is the agent figure in Scout's life, from the beginning to the end. Moreover, not only he displays his agency on Scout without even realizing he is mentally developing her, but also serves to her in all stages of her life, from childhood to a more adult age. Thus, he is his guidance.

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