Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Studies
ISSN: 2663-7197
DOI: 10.32996/jhsss
Journal Homepage: www.al-kindipublisher.com/index.php/jhsss

JHSSS
AL-KINDI CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

| RESEARCH ARTICLE

George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda*: A Theme-related Anthroponymic Study

Armel MBON
Department of Language and Literature, Université Marien NGOUABI, Brazzaville, Congo
Corresponding Author: Armel MBON, **E-mail**: armelegallois@gmail.com

| ABSTRACT
This paper investigates George Eliot's Daniel Deronda from an anthroponymic angle in establishing the relationship between the eponymous hero and the different themes of the novel. In its first leg, it seeks to show how Daniel Deronda embodies the oppressed Jewish community through historical associations of his two-halved name and in the name of all the Jews who pervade Eliot's novel. In its second leg, the paper focuses on the meanings of this anthroponym and seeks to show how it epitomises the battle waged by the authoress against such cultural barriers as xenophobia and racism in Europe and elsewhere. To do this, recourse to stylistic analysis, especially at its lexico-semantic level, is needed.

| KEYWORDS
Anthroponymy, theme, identity barriers, epitome, struggle.

Cet article explore Daniel Deronda de George Eliot sous un angle anthroponymique, en établissant la relation entre le héros éponyme et les différents thèmes du roman. Dans sa première étape, il cherche à montrer comment Daniel Deronda incarne la communauté juive opprimée à travers des associations historiques de son nom à deux moitiés et au nom de tous les Juifs qui imprègnent le roman d'Eliot. Dans sa deuxième partie, l'article se concentre sur les significations de cet anthroponyme et cherche à montrer comment il incarne la bataille menée par l'auteure contre des barrières culturelles telles que la xénophobie, le racisme en Europe et ailleurs. Pour ce faire, un recours à une analyse stylistique, notamment dans son niveau lexico-sémantique, s'impose.

Mots clés *:* Anthroponymie, thème, barrières culturelles, épitome, lutte.

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

ACCEPTED: 2 0December 2022 **PUBLISHED:** 28 December 2022 **DOI:** 10.32996/jhsss.2022.4.4.41

1. Introduction

Most of George Eliot's novels have eponymous heroes. However, the naming of characters is a topic which has not received much critical attention in the paratextual analysis of her novels in general and *Daniel Deronda* in particular. This liminal device, the title, forms part of the complex mediation between novel, author, publisher, and reader, and which belongs to what Genette (1997) calls "the thresholds of interpretation" or sometimes a "vestibule" or "undefined zone" between the inside and the outside, thereby offering the world at large the possibility of either stepping inside a book or turning back, needs studying.

The purpose of this paper is thus to study the anthroponym 'Daniel Deronda', the proper name of the central character after whom this novel is named, both individually and collectively jointly with such themes as the position of Jews in British and European society and their likely prospects, racism, xenophobia and the struggle against identity barriers in Europe. According to Juraeva (2021, p.20):

> The concept of "anthroponym" in modern linguistics is understood as any proper name that a person (or a group of people) can have, including a personal name, patronymic, surname, nickname, pseudonym, cryptonym, nickname (…) Thus, an anthroponym is a broad concept that implies any way of naming a person in a formal and informal setting. The choice of this or that type of anthroponym depends on a number of different circumstances: national and cultural traditions of the people, age, place of residence, erudition, aesthetic education, social circle and just common sense.

Bringing together recent onomastic investigations developed in Brazil between 2011 and 2018, Seide and Saparas (2020, p.147) on their side, state, "Proper names are part of languages and can be studied from various points of view: phonetic, morphological, syntactic, pragmatic, among others." For this work, the proper name 'Daniel Deronda' is studied from a semantic point of view, especially lexical semantics, concerned with the analysis of word meanings and relations between them. Such endeavour would most likely open new paths for this famous Victorian novelist for her creation of immemorable characters. The character of Daniel Deronda has been abundantly reviewed, but not from an anthroponymic angle, as evidenced by the review of a number of related works.

To start with, Hinson's 'She's beautiful, and she's laughing: Laughter as a subversive discourse in Lady Audley's Secret and Daniel Deronda' (2017) as well as Levine's *The Cambridge Companion to George Eliot* (2001) and Sopher's 'Peripheral sympathies: Gender, ethics, and marginal characters in the novels of George Eliot' (2012) labour the relationships between Deronda and Gwendolen as main characters. Akendengué's paper 'Why do we still read George Eliot ?' (2002), whose object is to attempt to discover the reasons why Eliot's works are still read and enjoyed, has nothing to do with Daniel Deronda. Nevertheless, it also addresses an issue which is topical in this novel, which is religion. Athamneh's and Brandabur's 'Oriental Elements in George Eliot's Daniel Deronda' (2002) though not concerned with the anthroponymic aspect of Eliot's novel, expands on the role played by this eponymous hero in bridging the gap between genders, hemispheres, and religions.

As indicated by its title, Tromp's edition of *Jewish Space and the English Foreigner in George Eliot's Daniel Deronda; Fear, Loathing, and Victorian Xenophobia* (2013) tackles British bad feelings and expressions owing to their neighbourhood with the Jewish community.

Lord's *The Intimacy of Influence. Narrative and Theoretical fiction in the works of George Eliot, Virginia Woolf and Jeanette Winterson*' (1999) try to discuss the origin of the name Daniel Deronda without really focusing on its semantic aspect. Malcolm's ""Grand and Vague": Why is Daniel Deronda about The Jews?" (1998) tries to prove that there is no major British antisemitism in Eliot's novel, thereby refuting traditional assumptions according to which the protagonist's Zionist ideas would have originated from this xenophobia.

To what extent does the anthroponym 'Daniel Deronda' convey the themes of anti-Semitism and racism and epitomise the battle waged by the authors against these identity barriers in Europe or elsewhere? The choice of a Jewish name for the central character would be a perfect example of people victimised by xenophobia and racism and the struggle against these identity barriers.

A stylistic approach, including its lexico-semantic level, will be of great help in addressing this issue. In its first leg, this study consists in showing how Daniel Deronda mirrors biblical anti-Semitism and racism at large in Europe (especially Germany, the early setting of *Daniel Deronda*), the Czech Republic, Spain…) and elsewhere, then showing the battle waged by the authoress against these identity barriers in the name of 'Daniel Deronda' and finally showing why she mixed masculine and feminine gender in naming her eponymous hero.

2. Daniel Deronda as a Mirror of Biblical and European Anti-Semitism, and racism

A person's first identity is their name, a word, term, or phrase by which they are known and distinguished from other people. In their conversational exchange in Chapter One, Mr. Yandernoodt asked Gwendolen what the name of that gentleman near the door was. "Deronda--Mr. Deronda" was her answer, and Mr. Yandernoodt exclaimed, "What a delightful name! Is he an Englishman?" (p.14). Like Mr. Yandernoodt, in the novel, the broad-chested quoter of Shelley asks, "Is the gentlemen anonymous? Is he a Great 'Unknown?'" and the eponymous hero answers himself, "My name is Daniel Deronda. I am unknown, but not in any sense great" (p.332). Solving this equation to know what Eliot labels as "the mingling of names and images (p.413) or what the "unknown" stands for has not evidently come under any scrutiny. The utterance of 'Daniel Deronda' in its first half calls to our mind biblical images of persecution in Babylon.

It is because Mr. Yandernoodt's exclamation, according to which Daniel Deronda is a delightful name, was only uttered in fictitious life; otherwise, it certainly would have told us many things about this name. Like him, we in real life take delight in hearing it. George Eliot purposely named her hero so. In fact, this anthroponym, Daniel, is a biblical name. Its earliest origins can be traced back to the Old Testament of the Bible, where it was defined as "God is my judge" in Hebrew. Daniel of the Old Testament is known

for remaining loyal to the God of Israel despite persecution and danger. So is Eliot's hero. According to the Bible, he was thrown into a lion's den for refusing to worship the king, but God protected Daniel, and he was not harmed by the lions. Unlike the many Jews that pervade Eliot's novel in its various European settings, Daniel Deronda, an English-born Jew, is not oppressed. However, his Jewish family name 'Deronda' spells a century-long oppression. The name 'Deronda' presumably indicates that his ancestors lived in the Spanish city of Ronda prior to the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492. In the abstract of her thesis, Restaino (2018) explains the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain enacted by the Alhambra Decree in these terms:

> "In 1492, after Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand defeated the last Muslim stronghold on the Iberian Peninsula, they presented the Jewish community throughout their kingdoms with a choice: leaving or converting to Catholicism. The Spanish kingdoms had been anti-Jewish for centuries, forcing the creation of ghettos, the use of identifying clothing, etc., in an effort to isolate and "other" the Jews, who unsuccessfully sought peaceful co-existence.

Both Daniel and Deronda can be used interchangeably as names, with the exception that Daniel is also used as a first name. The delight in this name expressed in Yandernoodt's exclamation certainly lies in the utterance of its two halves, which conveys a certain alliterative euphony. Lord (1999, p.180) has this to say about this duality:

> *Daniel Deronda* enacts two halves. The Victorian half bearing the father's name is pitted against the maternal signifier in that of the Jewish part. As the two textually interlink with each other, they draw out otherwise camouflaged meanings. In *Daniel Deronda,* opposing worlds in a collision between modernism and realism become a metaphor for the struggle between what Chase has termed the two types of transference.

The exploration of Eliot's *Daniel Deronda* reveals the nature of human relationships in general and those of different Victorian communities in particular, as where human beings live, differences and dissensions always exist. What the authoress claims are enlightening enough to justify the point, "And one man differs from another, as we all differ from the Bosjesman, in a sensibility to checks that come from a variety of needs, spiritual or other" (p.332). Some people often take advantage of those differences and of their hosting positions to oppress others. Notice should be given here that the Jewish community since they were dispersed throughout the globe, had been victimised by their hosts, especially Europeans. This anti-Semitism is one of the issues Eliot addresses in her novel, a novel with such Jewish characters as Daniel Deronda, Mirah Lapidoth, Ezra Lapidoth, Mordecai, to cite only a few.

In his 1998 essay ""Grand and Vague" Why is Daniel Deronda about The Jews?", David Malcolm seems to underestimate the importance of the Jewish question in these terms:

> Before I do so, however, I wish to consider another possible explanation and interpretation of the Jewish-Zionist material in *Daniel Deronda*. Was it a topic as such with strong contemporary associations, for example, electoral reform in *Felix Holt* and *Middlemarch?* Did a concern with Zionism in itself imply a specific position vis-a-vis the contemporary *status quo?* The answer is no. There is no substantial Jewish question in Britain in the 1860s and early 1870s, let alone any widespread discussion of Zionism. The topics per se are almost without any direct contexts within the contemporary British system of discourse.

In fact, these traditional interpretations of the Zionist subject matter in Eliot's *Daniel Deronda* have been convincingly refuted by Malcolm, but he unconvincingly refuted the Jewish question in the various settings of Eliot's novel. There is, indeed, a substantial Jewish question. Fortunately, Malcolm (1998, p.34) writes guardedly using the adjectives 'barely' and 'prominent', ''A Jewish 'question' barely exists in contemporary British political and social discourse. It does not become a prominent issue until the huge influx of Eastern European immigrants in the wake of the Russian pogroms of 1881.'' This means that it may be discussed as a minor issue in Britain but as a major one in Europe as *Daniel Deronda* is set for the most part in England, but some of the most important scenes of the novel take place on the European continent in such countries as Germany and Italy, where Jews were foreigners.

The concept of 'foreignness' often conveys fear with its unusualness. However, such fears should be appeased as a foreigner in Victorian England is neither a stranger nor an alien. To this effect, many reviewers of Eliot's *Daniel Deronda* have agreed wholeheartedly with Malcom. Such is the case of Kaufman (2013, pp.2-3), who has his viewpoint on what he terms as Victorian xenophobia:

> With this point in mind, we see Victorian xenophobia as a way of interpreting the perceived foreignness of people, objects, and locations as a threat to English culture and identity. It is the possibilities—the contingencies—that drive this vision and its attendant fears, and that ultimately reflect Victorian anxieties about its own identity in a moment when it was

> being reshaped by powerful new forces (…) Xenophobia circulates around and is produced by an ambiguous and elusive concept of "foreignness." Foreignness becomes problematic in the popular British consciousness, in part because it cannot be fixed; its boundaries are constantly shifting. While concepts such as "race" may be biologically empty, they often have definable and relatively stable material markers, and this perceived stability permits us to believe we can name, identify, and often manage it. "Foreignness" resists clarity and categorization.

The arrival of Jews in Europe did not go unremarked: they were intelligent, prosperous merchants and took advantage of the opportunities offered to them to the detriment of their hosts, to whom the saying "no one is a prophet at home" could be applied. Strangers are not, as it were, welcomed due to stereotypes and their cultural and religious beliefs and nature. Kaufman (2013, p.249) thinks, "Deronda's assumption is that all of the Jewish people in this bookstore are alike; and all are marked by their grisly nature, their tendency to shout, and their chosen noses." Evidently, it occurred that some people on European soil could not tolerate such a Jewish nature as it causes horror and disgust; hence their European hosts could get into those inhuman practices against them.

Moreover, Charles Small upholds Malcolm's opinion, according to which there is no prominent English antisemitic feeling. On the contrary, Small (2015, p.187) acknowledges British philo Semitism arguing, in his footnote, that the Victorian period also:

> Saw the emergence of a small but prominent philo Semitic element in English literature, as illustrated in some of the work of George Eliot, particularly *Daniel Deronda*, published in 1873. This positive view of Jews co-existed with the persistence of virulently negative images, like Dickens' Fagin in *Oliver Twist* (1838), within English literary culture of the nineteenth century.

In *Daniel Deronda*, especially in this context of persecution, the Jewish community is embodied by Mirah Lapidoth, who wanders in quest of her family. After being rescued and brought to the Meyricks by Deronda, she gives an account of herself:

> "I am a stranger. I am a Jewess. You might have thought I was wicked." (…)
> "My name is Mirah Lapidoth. I am come a long way, all the way from Prague by myself. I made my escape. I ran away from dreadful things. I came to find my mother and brother in London. I had been taken from my mother when I was little, but I thought I could find her again. I had trouble--the houses were all gone--I could not find her. It has been a long while, and I had not much money. That is why I am in distress." (pp. 206-207)

A lot can be inferred and said from this girl's personal account. In our time, her running away from dreadful things could be interpreted as a kind of 'prison break' or an escape from Nazi concentration camps. However, anti-Semitism is older than Hitlerian Germany. In her account, she mentions the Czech Republic, from which her distress can be traced. Eliot uses the term "poor weary thing" (p. 206) to show how distressed she is and demonstrates how the fact of undergoing social discrimination results in alienation. The discriminated subject develops a kind of psychosis which is a real burden on their psyche. The alter ego is consequently a hell rather than a fellow, whereas according to Eliot, society should normally be a great family. Identity barriers like xenophobia and racism are plagues that do not strike a community for a while. They are too dangerous and impacting insofar as they may persist from generation to generation. Till now, there has been anti-Semitism in many countries of the world. In this regard, Eliot writes:

> Scorn flung at a Jew as such would have roused all his sympathy in griefs of inheritance, but the indiscriminate scorn of a race will often strike a specimen who has well-earned it on his own account and might fairly be gibbeted as a rascally son of Adam. (p.212)

In the passage above, Eliot wants to prove that we are sons and daughters of God as we are begotten by the same ancestor. Biblically speaking, Adam and Eve are our ancestors, and we are ipso facto related by the unicity and originality of the universal lineage. In the Victorian era, just as nowadays, racism affects all social strata and all categories of people. It stresses social exclusion sharply. For instance, in *Daniel Deronda*, Eliot writes, "It is naturally a Christian feeling that a Jew ought not to be conceited" (p.401). This is a piece of evidence of loathing for Judaism. The Jew is, by the way, lowered and downgraded, whatever his or her social status or gender. And this can just inspire bitterness in the people who are excluded, not love. The society is then broken into parallel spheres, and each community lives to its own custom. Through the portrayal of Jewish issues, Eliot means to show the difficulties of segregated minorities and how they manage hard to live among the dominating majorities.
Eliot's eponymous novel also raises the Negro problem, the problem of Black people who have suffered from racism since they were taken from Africa, as well as showing the wickedness of the White man, who claims to be perfect and superior to other races. According to the authoress,

> "Grandcourt held that the Jamaica negro was a beastly sort of Baptist Caliban (…) Mrs. Davilow observed that her father had an estate in Barbadoes, but that she herself had never been in the West Indies; Mrs. Torrington was sure she should never sleep in her bed if she lived among blacks. (p.338)

Such characters as Grandcourt, Mrs. Davilow and Mrs. Torrington are visibly prejudiced against the black race. In fact, Caliban, son of the witch Sycorax, is an important character in William Shakespeare's play The Tempest. He is half human, half monster. After his island becomes occupied by Prospero and his daughter Miranda, Caliban is forced into slavery. Grandcourt is such a white supremacist who, at all costs, wants to maintain the Blacks in bondage. Treating the Jamaican Negro as a beast simply means that he is an adamant supporter of slavery and fiercely against abolition. An allusion can be made here to the Baptist War, also known as the Sam Sharp Rebellion, the Christmas Rebellion, the Christmas Uprising and the Great Jamaican Slave Revolt of 1831–32, a topic recently raised by Andrea Levy in *The Long Song* (2010).

Eliot does not justify the prejudiced Mrs. Davilow's loathing for sleeping among the Blacks in the West Indies; it is a mere aversion that she develops for Black people. Here, the authoress wants to attest that when we, above all, believe that anything or anyone is odd and repulsive, it is difficult to live in harmony with them. Moreover, if repugnance is the first ideal, racism is only a manifestation of premeditated hatred. It is just like a burst of hatred and bitterness that lie in the very depth of us. Racism is a dreadful flaw as it can entirely control the mind of a whole community. It irreversibly hinders every possibility of coexistence and union. Assuredly, with such illusions that white men have about the black race, it is most difficult to live in harmony. With such prejudices, one can believe that a Black is a scary monster. Johnson (1990, p.65) wants his readers "(…) to remember that nobody on earth likes Negroes. Not even Negroes. We're outcasts. And outcasts can never create a community. I have been to a lot of places, and it's the same everywhere. We're despised worldwide."

Blacks were considered objects of exploitation in colonial estates rather than normal thinking and valuable human beings. It was a shame, a dishonour to collaborate effectively with Negroes. Their social integration was almost an impossibility. This situation is similar to the one which occurred in the United States; the complaining of Martin L. King as a Negro in *Dreamer* (1990, pp.99-100; p.138) is touching, to this effect:

> Wherever I go, I'm a nigger. Oh, and I have been to Mother Africa. Over there, where people looked like me. I didn't fit either. I don't belong to a tribe… that meant I didn't belong anywhere (…) In this regard, we understand that Negroes were severely victimized and almost banned from society. They could afford to approach the white man for social integration, but as they were rejected due to the negative image they were coined, they were lost and bound in their own world. They did not know where to turn, where to go and what to do in order to be accepted.

These statements obviously lay claim that the life of Black people in the Western world or elsewhere spells ruin and disaster. Coupled with this hatred for the Blacks, *Daniel Deronda* establishes itself as a mirror of Biblical and European anti-Semitism, xenophobia and racism in Europe and elsewhere. Additionally, the eponymous novel establishes itself as a perfect example of the struggle against identity barriers in Europe and elsewhere.

3. Daniel Deronda the epitome of the struggle against identity barriers

An adopted child himself by the wealthy Sir Hugo Mallinger, Deronda has a tendency to help others at a cost to himself. At the start of the novel, he has failed to win a scholarship at Cambridge because of his focus on helping a friend, has been travelling abroad and has just started studying law. He often wonders about his birth and whether or not he is a gentleman. As he moves more and more among the world-within-a-world of the Jews of the novel, he begins to identify with their cause in direct proportion to the unfolding revelations of his ancestry. Eliot used the story of Moses as part of her inspiration for Deronda. As Moses was a Jew brought up as an Egyptian who ultimately led his people to the Promised Land, Deronda is a Jew brought up as an Englishman who ends the novel with a plan to do the same. Hence, we understand why Deronda means 'Good spear'. The name 'Deronda' that Eliot chose for her protagonist consists of 7 letters and 3 syllables, which are numerologically a perfect weapon to break cultural barriers.

Although Eliot is an English writer, she opens her vision and consideration to other people of the world, whatever their race, religion or gender. In *Daniel Deronda*, we notice that instead of bounding herself to a certain originality of her own sources, she intends to allude to the human race in general. The one unique race is made up of various civilisations, and each civilisation is valuable in time and space. Besides, whatever the diversity of communities and geographical areas, we all share one planet, we breathe the same air, we are topped by the same sky, and above all, we are products of the same Creator, who is the Almighty God. Akendengué's paper 'Why do we still read George Eliot' is not concerned with Daniel Deronda. Yet, he (2002, p.176) acknowledges all the same:

> Religion has strongly influenced George Eliot during her childhood. That link to religion has orientated a lot of her philosophy or doctrine of «sympathy», pity and love for the neighbour. She develops that principle in many of her novels and her collection of short stories.

Eliot symbolises human convergence and union through an emblematic portrayal of "Round two long tables" where men from diverse horizons gathered. She states, "Round two long tables were gathered two serried crowds of human beings, all save one having their faces and attention bent on the tables" (1876, p.8). Here, Eliot wants to show that human beings all over the world constitute a great big family. The "Round two long tables" where people gather symbolizes the pedestal of the union. People in the world should therefore cultivate peace, love and concordance instead of division and hatred. Love brings harmony and progress, while hatred brings conflicts and social regressions.

In the same way as Charles Dickens (1844, p.335), the most widely read Victorian novelist, included in his 1844 serialised novel, *The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit*, these words of wisdom, ''charity begins at home, and justice begins next door'', Eliot eminently portrays the kindness and altruism of her own community. She paints England as a very benign land where everyone can find the place, even when he or she has been forsaken bitterly by the whole world. In *Daniel Deronda*, the altruism of the English people is expressed through the eponymous hero, who took the homeless and despaired stranger Mirah Lapidoth to the hotly welcoming Meyricks, following this offer. ''I have brought to some of the kindest people in the world; there are daughters like you. It is a happy home. Will you let me take you to them?'' (p.205)

Assuredly, in the above passage, Eliot wants to show that England does not belong only to the English people; it is a universal land. England is a home for everybody, a happy home where the residents are cheerful and boiling with enthusiasm, as well as hospitality. Also, it is accurate that the English people share the same social issues as other communities in the world, given that they are human beings too. There is, thus, in Eliot's novel, a culture of hospitality. In Christ's day, hospitality to visitors among the Jews was essential, based on biblical examples and law. In Deuteronomy 10:19, God told the Israelites to "love the stranger." And Leviticus 19:33 states, "If a stranger dwells with you in your land, you shall not mistreat him."

To show her beauty, her charm and the soberness of her motherhood, she (Mother England) adds some care to her receptivity. She feeds and comforts strangers so that they keep her in their hearts forever as an indelible mark. It is evident that positive remembrances scarcely vanish in the conscious mind of the very grateful and sensitive stranger. In *Daniel Deronda,* the words of Mrs. Meyrick to the stranger Mirah are touching and anaphoric on the kind of hospitality she will receive, "You must be a weary poor child. We will take care of you – we will comfort you – we will love you" (p.205).

Through this comforting declaration of Mrs. Meyrick, who embodies the English people, Eliot intends to vigorously demonstrate that England tries hard to show a better image of her, despite the fact that vices are ineluctable. In the profound sense of Britishness, England always means to treat people with evenness, whatever the origin or obedience. Daniel Deronda's answers to the worries of the Jewess stranger Mirah Lapidoth when the latter was hesitating to avow her origins and obedience can illustrate the English hospitality:

> " Yes, I will tell you. I am English - born. But I am a Jewess." (…)
> " Do you despise me for it?" she said, presently, in low tones, which had a sadness that pierced like a cry from a small dumb creature in fear.
> " Why should I?" said Deronda. '' I am not so foolish."
> " I know many Jews are bad."
> " So are many Christians. But I should not think it fair for you to despise me because of that." (p.199)

A meticulously analysis of this conversation shows that though any society may have its seamy side of life, like a field that grows weeds and seeds at once, it would be rather judicious to focus on the positive side in order to see and feel its beauty and charm. Eliot claims that fear and negative illusions over England should therefore be abandoned. The English land and nationality belong to all its residents, whether native or not, and whatever their varieties.

In addition to the portrayal of the universality and hospitality of her motherland, Eliot confirms her universality by an affirmation of her European identity and personality. In doing so, she breaks the borders of her native land and opens herself to Europe in particular, notwithstanding the recent Brexit, which has, instead, more economical reasons, and to the world in general. That is why she mentions the most notable European countries gathered around the "Roulette-table" as an obvious affirmation of the European Union despite the diversity of nations making it. A suitable illustration in *Daniel Deronda* could be the following:

> About this table, fifty or sixty persons were assembled, many in the outer rows, where there was occasionally a deposit of new-comers, being mere spectators, only that one of them, usually a woman, might now and then be observed putting down a five-franc piece with a simpering air, just to see what the passion of gambling really was. Those who were taking their pleasure at a higher strength, and were absorbed in play, showed very distant varieties of European type: Livonian and Spanish, Graeco-Italian and miscellaneous German, English aristocratic and English plebeian. (p.8)

In the above passage, Eliot shows her double identity. Seen through Daniel Deronda, her hero, she attests that she is both English and European. On the one hand, when she affirms her European identity, she appears more extended and international; on the other hand, when she remains rooted in her Britishness, she seems more original. She admits, "We English are a miscellaneous people, and any chance fifty of us will present wide varieties of animal architecture or facial ornament" (p.104). Hence, there is a complementary ambivalence of her own identity. To substantiate this point, Athamneh and Brandabur (2000, p.11) state, "Eliot's protagonist is a kind of secular Christ figure, an androgynous, highly cultured Jew designed to bridge the gap between male and female, east and west, Christian and Jew." When Eliot maintains that Gwendolen ''had gone to the roulette-table not because of passion, but in search of it'' (p.17), the roulette-table takes another dimension, that of a stepping stone to meeting Daniel Deronda, who, throughout her ordeals, acts as a moral guide or simply the fountain of the European Union, to start with.

Moreover, through the depiction of the jovial and enthusiastic meetings of Europeans around the "Round tables", Eliot means to portray the obvious climate of peace and harmony which pervades Europe throughout its space. And this is also due to the maturity of its civilisations, as Europeans are known to be well elevated and polished. Thus, Europe is even an example that other continents in the world, sometimes divided by hatred and frivolous interests, should follow. Though discordances are ineluctable, we should afford to live hand in hand and resolve our problems pacifically. Being aware of this striking matter, Eliot stipulates:

> It will hardly be denied that even in this frail and corrupted world, we sometimes meet persons who, in their very mien and aspect as well as in the whole habit of life, manifest such a signature and stamp of virtue as to make our judgment of them a matter of intuition rather than the result of the continued examination. (p.214)

In this regard, Europe can be, to some extent, a model for other continents if we take its good side. Through its scientific and democratic progress, it could be an example and a source of inspiration for other continents. The proof is that through world exploration and colonisation, it had educated and elevated many communities all over the world which have emerged. It is hardly deniable that Africa, America, Oceania and Asia have developed thanks to Europe as the mother continent.

Besides, the affirmation of Eliot's European personality and identity can be determined by the usage of various European languages in her works in general and in *Daniel Deronda* in particular. Though she chiefly uses English in her novels, she sometimes flashes some French, Italian, German palavers and so on, in *Daniel Deronda*. As an example, such passages in other varied languages as: "…die kraft ist schwach, allein die lust is gross" in German, "ensemble; tête-à-tête" (p.13; p.230) in French, as well as the quoted immortal words of Dante in Italian: "Nessun maggior dolore//Chee recordarai del tempo felice//Nella miseria" (p.192). As a matter of fact, the passages quoted above sufficiently prove Eliot's linguistic background. She was a polyglot. This usage of various languages also shows her proficiency in matters of communication. And it is a great skill to the extent that the language is the code through which the message is delivered. As languages represent communities, she can therefore attract and touch diverse public readers. This could be one factor of her fame in Europe in particular and in the world at large.

Furthermore, as language embodies culture and civilisation, it is important to note that those languages are not mere tools. Indeed, European languages embody the values of Europe. They are the identities of communities. In this connection, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o (p.59) writes:

> One aspect is its role as an agent that enables us to communicate with one another in our struggle to find the means for survival. The other is its role as a carrier of the history and culture built into the process of that communication.

So, as language is a carrier of history and culture, European languages are vehicles of the historical and cultural background. Each language is an emblem of a whole community or nation, and each prominent nation is a power. Such European languages as English, French, Spanish and Portuguese are nowadays spread all over the world and are great tools for communication and education. Those languages have mostly been spread during colonisation, but learning them today is a must in the framework of business as an impact of globalisation.

Even beyond the confines of Europe, Deronda establishes himself as that good spear against social injustices that could be felt here and there during the British Empire. In those colonial estates like Barbadoes where Blacks faced racism with Grandcourt, Mrs. Davilow, Mrs. Torrington and suchlike characters in real life, people of the same type as Deronda did not appreciate that inhuman behaviour; otherwise, Eliot would not have mentioned their reactions. In fact, after hearing their loathing for the Blacks, Mrs.

Torrington's husband "corrected her by saying that the blacks would be manageable enough if it were not for the half-breeds; and Deronda remarked that the whites had to thank themselves for the half-breeds" (p.338).

4. Eliot's paratextual diction

One of the first thresholds of Genette's *Paratexts* (1997) is the title, in the text under scrutiny, Daniel Deronda, whose second half is generally used as a girl's name. One would assuredly wonder why Eliot chose such a female-sounding name for her eponymous hero. According to Levine (2001, p.62), Daniel's story "is for the most part gendered female." When she invokes Leslie Fiedler's remarks that "Deronda is one of the most impressive heroines in English fiction," it becomes obvious that it was Eliot's own battle against inhuman practices and cultural barriers. She merely used a male protagonist as her battle-axe, the masculine gender being fit for such battles. Similarly, Amanda Anderson (2001, p.139) argues, "Deronda and Mordecai are feminized so as to interfuse their intellectual quests with dimensions of romantic and familial love."

The fact that Eliot mixed masculine and feminine genders in naming her eponymous hero owes much to her own pen name, George Eliot. Mary Anne Evans is the name she was given at birth on 22 November 1819. Throughout her life, she was known by a number of names (Polly, Clematis, Pollian, Deutera, Minie**…**). Some were nicknames or variants of her birth name. Others reflected her relationship status or were chosen specially by her. In 1857 Eliot chose her pen name because she said: 'George was Mr Lewes's Christian name, and Eliot was a good mouth-filling, the easily-pronounced word'. She chose to write under a pen name, as she felt women writers were not taken seriously. Her pen name also gave her protection from the scandal her relationship with Lewes had caused. Although this is her most famous name, nobody addressed her personally by it. Therefore, although Eliot names the novel after Daniel, it is Gwendolen and her "musical laugh" that Hinson (2017, p.44) finds most captivating. If we are to believe Sopher (2012, p.144),

> *Daniel Deronda has* troubles with concepts of periphery and sympathy along the axis of gender. While Gwendolen is at first absolutely central, she becomes marginalized within the novel, which Daniel Deronda eventually usurps. Some critics have even argued that Daniel himself is the central feminine character.

Eliot wrote in the Victorian period when a woman's name on the cover resulted in assumptions that a novel was a gothic or a frivolous love story, which appealed almost exclusively to women seeking diversion. Writers' diction invariably represents their responses to the culture in which they live and work. Nowadays, some writers choose various reasons to use cross-gender or gender-ambiguous pseudonyms; others choose a pseudonym to conceal or assert a particular ethnicity. If they do this to shape readers' or editors' perceptions, Eliot did it to be taken seriously by both male and female readership.

5. Conclusion

This paper has been written on the premise that Eliot did not create the eponymous hero Daniel Deronda at random. It was a significant creation in that the anthroponym 'Daniel Deronda' is, at a time, passive and active in front of oppression. In fact, through the novel, this Jewish protagonist indirectly undergoes a kind of anti-Semitism in the name of his Jewish community. But on the other hand, Eliot uses him as a mighty weapon to fight and break cultural barriers in Europe and elsewhere.

Eliot's choice of a woman-like hero in the name of Deronda obviously betrays her intentions of having a character who could, at the same time, embody the oppressed, the oppression fighter, and above all, the feminised protagonist. Indeed, a big portion of the novel contains Gwendolen's story and the challenges she faces and tries to take, albeit the novel s named after Daniel Deronda.

The round table and roulette-table are characteristic of negotiating tables, which means that there is no violence in Eliot's resolution of conflicts if we are to consider her plot, notwithstanding the fact that Deronda means 'good spear'. Goodness here means efficiency and not a fatality.

Funding: This research received no external funding.
Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

[1] Akendengué, R. D. (2002). Why do we still read George Eliot? *Rev. CAMES* - Série B, 004, .174-181.
[2] Anderson, A (2001). *The powers of distance: Cosmopolitanism and the cultivation of detachment*. Princeton: Princeton UP.
[3] Athamneh, N. H. & A. Brandabur, C. (2000). Oriental elements in George Eliot's Daniel Deronda, *Abhath Al-Yarmouk: "li. & ling"*.9-37.
[4] Dickens, C. (1844). *The life and adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit*. London: Chapman and Hall.
[5] Eliot, G. (1877). *Daniel Deronda*. New York: Harper & Brothers.
[6] Genette G. (1997). *Paratexts: Thresholds of interpretation*. Trans. Jane E. Lewin. New York: Cambridge University Press.
[7] Hinson. L. P. (2017). She's beautiful, and she's laughing: Laughter as a subversive discourse in Lady Audley's Secret and Daniel Deronda. Unpublished Thesis.
[8] Johnson, C. (1990). *Dreamer*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
[9] Juraeva, I. A. (2021). Lexical-semantic Features of Anthroponyms in the English Language. *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Business and Government*.19-23.
[10] Levine, G., ed. (2001). *The Cambridge Companion to George Eliot*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge UP.
[11] Lord, C. M. (1999). *The Intimacy of Influence. Narrative and theoretical fiction in the works of George Eliot, Virginia Woolf and Jeanette Winterson*. [Thesis, fully internal, Universiteit van Amsterdam]. ASCA Press.
[12] Malcolm, D. (1998). ""Grand and Vague" Why is Daniel Deronda about The Jews?" *The George Eliot Review* 29. 313. https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/ger/313.
[13] Restaino, M. (2018). The 1492 Jewish Expulsion from Spain: How Identity Politics and Economics Converged'. *University Honors Program Theses*. 325. https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/honors-theses/325.
[14] Seide, M. S. & Saparas, M. (2020). Trends in onomastic research in Brazil. *Linguistik online* 101, 1/20– http://dx.doi.org/10.13092/lo.101.6681.139-155.
[15] Small, C. A., ed. (2015). *The Yale Papers: Antisemitism in comparative perspective*. New York: ISGAP.
[16] Sopher, R. (2012). Peripheral sympathies: Gender, ethics, and marginal characters in the novels of George Eliot. Unpublished thesis.
[17] Tromp, M. (2013). Jewish Space and the English Foreigner in George Eliot's Daniel Deronda. *Fear, Loathing, and Victorian Xenophobia*. Columbus: The Ohio State University.
[18] Wa Thiong'o. (2006). *Devil on the Cross*, London, Heinemann.