

ISSN 1949-8519 (Print)  
ISSN 2154-6711 (Online)

# Forum for World Literature Studies

世界文学研究论坛 Vol.4 No.3 December 2012

✧ ✧ Literature  
— الأَدب —  
Littérature  
— Literatura  
— Литература



Shanghai · Wuhan · West Lafayette

## **Editors in Chief**

Huang Tiechi, Shanghai Normal University, China  
Nie Zhenzhao, Central China Normal University, China  
Charles Ross, Purdue University, U.S.A

## **Editorial Assistants**

Liu Fuli  
Yang Gexin  
Yi Lijun



Shanghai • Wuhan • West Lafayette

## 主编

黄铁池 / 上海师范大学 (中国)

聂珍钊 / 华中师范大学 (中国)

查尔斯·罗斯 / 普渡大学 (美国)

## 编辑助理

刘富丽

杨革新

易立君



上海·武汉·西拉法叶

**Forum for  
World Literature Studies**

Vol.4 No.3 December 2012

**Estonian Literature Studies**

Edited by

Jüri Talvet

**Korean Literature Studies**

Edited by

Rhee Young Suck

**A Perspective of Ethical Literary Criticism on  
Ibsen's Play**

Edited by

Zhang Lianqiao

**Turkish Literature Studies**

Edited by

Nurten Birlik



Shanghai • Wuhan • West Lafayette

# 世界文学研究论坛

爱沙尼亚文学研究  
居里·塔尔维特（栏目主持）

韩国文学研究  
李英石（栏目主持）

易卜生戏剧的文学伦理学批评  
张连桥（栏目主持）

土耳其文学研究  
纳藤·贝里克（栏目主持）



上海·武汉·西拉法叶

## **Editorial Board**

- Valerie Babb**/ University of Georgia, USA  
**Maassimo Bacigalupo**/Universita' di Genova, Italy  
**Elleke Boehmer**/ University of Oxford, UK  
**Ty Buckman**/ Wittenberg University, USA  
**Knut Brynhildsvoll**/ University of Oslo, Norway  
**Arturo Casas**/Universidade de Santiago de Compostela, Spain  
**Chen Zhongyi**/ Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, China  
**Chen Wei**/ Shanghai Normal University, China  
**Fan Pik Wah**/ University of Malaya, Malaysia  
**Fan Xing**/ Wuhan University, China  
**Margot Hillel**/ Australian Catholic University, Australia  
**Martin Humpal**/Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic  
**Koji Kawamoto**/Tokyo University, Japan  
**Hank Lazer**/University of Alabama, USA  
**Lee Nam Ho**/Korea University, Korea  
**Leevi Lehto**/Finland  
**Liao Kebin**/Peking University, China  
**Liu Jianjun**/ Northeast Normal University, China  
**Luo Lianggong**/ Central China Normal University, China  
**Roland Lysell**/ University of Stockholm, Sweden  
**Anne-Marie Mai**/University of Southern Denmark, Denmark  
**Yuri Mineralov**/ Maxim Gorky Literature Institute, Russia  
**Rana Nayar**/ Panjab University, India  
**Jale Parla**/ İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi, Turkey  
**Elizabeth Ramos**/ Universidade Federal da Bahia, Brazil  
**John Rathmell**/ University of Cambridge, UK  
**Derek Parker Royal**/ University of Nebraska at Kearney, USA  
**Stephan Michael Schröder**/University of Cologne Germany  
**RAkesh Mohan Sharma**/ SPN Mahavidyalaya, India  
**Monica Spiridon**/ Bucharest University, Romania  
**Sun Jian** / Fudan University, China  
**Jüri Talvet** / University of Tartu, Estonia  
**Kwok-kan Tam**/ The Open University of Hong Kong, China  
**Jørgen Veisland**/ University of Gdansk, Poland  
**Tatiana Venediktova**/ Lomonosov Moscow State University, Russia  
**Tomo Virk**/ University of Ljubljana, Slovenia  
**Claire Connolly**/ University College Cork, Ireland  
**Wang Xiaoping**/ Tianjin Normal University, China  
**Wang Lixing**/ Nankai University, China  
**Yin Qiping**/ Hangzhou Normal University, China  
**Zheng Kelu**/ Shanghai Normal University, China

## 编委会

- 瓦莱丽·巴布 / 佐治亚大学 (美国)  
马西姆·巴斯加拉珀 / 热那亚大学 (意大利)  
艾雷克·博埃默 / 牛津大学 (英国)  
泰·巴克曼 / 威登堡大学 (美国)  
克努特·布莱恩希尔兹沃 / 奥斯陆大学 (挪威)  
阿图罗·卡萨斯 / 圣地亚哥-德孔波斯特拉大学 (西班牙)  
陈众议 / 中国社会科学院 (中国)  
陈伟 / 上海师范大学 (中国)  
潘碧华 / 马来亚大学 (马来西亚)  
樊星 / 武汉大学 (中国)  
玛格特·希勒尔 / 澳大利亚天主教大学 (澳大利亚)  
马丁·罕帕尔 / 布拉格查理大学 (捷克)  
川本皓嗣 / 东京大学 (日本)  
汉克·雷泽尔 / 阿拉巴马大学 (美国)  
李南浩 / 高丽大学 (韩国)  
利维·利托 / (芬兰)  
廖可斌 / 北京大学 (中国)  
刘建军 / 东北师范大学 (中国)  
罗良功 / 华中师范大学 (中国)  
罗兰·利塞尔 / 斯德哥尔摩大学 (瑞典)  
安妮-玛丽·梅 / 南丹麦大学 (丹麦)  
尤里·米涅拉洛夫 / 高尔基文学院 (俄国)  
瑞那·内亚尔 / 旁遮普大学 (印度)  
基尔·帕拉 / 伊斯坦布尔比尔基大学 (土耳其)  
伊丽莎白·拉莫斯 / 巴赫亚联邦大学 (巴西)  
约翰·拉斯梅尔 / 剑桥大学 (英国)  
德雷克·帕克·罗亚尔 / 内布拉斯加州立大学科尼分校 (美国)  
斯蒂芬·迈克尔·施罗德 (德国)  
瑞凯士·莫汉·夏玛 / S P N 大学 (印度)  
莫里卡·斯普里顿 / 布加勒斯特大学 (罗马尼亚)  
孙建 / 复旦大学 (中国)  
居里·塔尔维特 / 塔尔图大学 (爱沙尼亚)  
谭国根 / 香港公开大学 (中国)  
乔根·维斯兰德 / 哥但斯克大学 (波兰)  
托莫·维尔克 / 卢布尔雅娜大学 (斯洛文尼亚)  
卡莱尔·康纳利 / 科克大学 (爱尔兰)  
王晓平 / 天津师范大学 (中国)  
王立新 / 南开大学 (中国)  
塔吉亚娜·维涅季克托娃 / 国立莫斯科大学 (俄国)  
殷企平 / 杭州师范大学 (中国)  
郑克鲁 / 上海师范大学 (中国)

***Forum for World Literature Studies*** (ISSN 1949-8519) is a peer-reviewed academic journal sponsored by Shanghai Normal University, Purdue University and the Wuhan Institute for Humanities, and co-edited by Professor Huang Tiechi of Shanghai Normal University, Professor Nie Zhenzhao of Central China Normal University and Professor Charles Ross of Purdue University. This journal provides a forum to promote diversity in world literature, with a particular interest in the study of literatures of those neglected countries and regions. With three issues coming out every year, this journal publishes original articles on topics including theoretical studies, literary criticism, literary history, and cultural studies, as well as book review articles.

***Forum for World Literature Studies*** accepts submissions in English or Chinese by authors from all over the world. The manuscript is expected to be of about 8000 words and must follow the MLA style. Submission should be made including an abstract of about 200 words, a short biography of the author, and three to five keywords, as well as the main body of the essay. Manuscripts from America shall be submitted to Charles Ross (Email: [cross@purdue.edu](mailto:cross@purdue.edu); Mailing address: 500 Oval Drive, West Lafayette, IN47907; Phone :765-4943749), and those from outside America shall be submitted to the office in Wuhan: *FWLS* Office, Wuhan Institute for Humanities, #19-2-1-103, Wanke Meilizhicheng, Fourth Gaoxin Road, No.1, Donghu Hi-Tech Development District, Wuhan, 430205, P.R. China. Phone: (86) 2787920279. Email: [fwlstudies@gmail.com](mailto:fwlstudies@gmail.com).

***Forum for World Literature Studies*** was indexed by Scopus and also included in the databases of Ebsco, Gale, MLA(MLA International Bibliography) and ABELL(The Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature).

To subscribe to this journal or purchase any single issue, please contact us at [fwlsmarket@gmail.com](mailto:fwlsmarket@gmail.com) or [fwlstudies@gmail.com](mailto:fwlstudies@gmail.com). Phone: (86) 27 61370847.

This journal is registered under its ISSN with the Copyright Clearance Centre, 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 09123 ([www.copyright.com](http://www.copyright.com)). Copyright ©2009 by ***Forum for World Literature Studies***. All rights reserved. No copy shall be made without the permission of the publisher.

# Contents

## **Estonian Literature Studies**

- 353-357 Literature and Culture of a “Peripheral” Nation, Estonia  
Jüri Talvet
- 358-369 The Shifting Position of German Literature in Estonia: From Adapted  
Literature to Translated Literature  
Liina Lukas
- 370-388 The Grotesque and Estonian Literature  
Anneli Mihkelev
- 389-402 Writing for Theatre: New Developments in Estonian Drama of the 1990s  
and 2000s  
Luule Epner

## **Korean Literature Studies**

- 403-404 Introduction to Korean Literature Studies  
Rhee Young Suck
- 405-420 Kim Chunsoo’s “Choyongdanjang”  
Rhee Young Suck
- 421-430 Inhabiting Local Contradictions, Engaging Global Mandates: In-Hun Choi  
and Sok-Yong Hwang in the Landscape of Contemporary Korean Fiction  
Writing  
Seongho Yoon
- 431-438 The Mystical in Tae-Sok Oh’s Play *My Love DMZ* and Shakespeare  
Beau La Rhee
- 439-452 The Reflective Distance and Its Limits: Kim Hyun’s Reading as a Torture,  
Reverie, and Desire  
Yoon Ilhwan

## **A Perspective of Ethical Literary Criticism on Ibsen’s Plays**

- 453-455 A New Approach to Ibsen's Plays: A Perspective of Ethical Literary  
Criticism

- Zhang Lianqiao  
456-466 Identity Confusion and Ethical Choice: An Analysis on Ellida in *The Lady from the Sea*  
Zhu Lihang  
467-477 Architect of Life: On Pursuing of Ethical Identity and the Solitude of Soul in the Play of *The Master Builder*  
Lim Woan Yin  
478-486 “Which is right — society or I?” : An Analysis of Ethical Identity and Ethical Taboos of Ibsen's *A Doll's House*  
Chung Misun

### **Turkish Literature Studies**

- 487-488 Introduction to Turkish Literature Studies  
Serkan Ertin  
489-500 Treatment of “Death” in the Poems of Thomas Hardy and Cahit Sitki Taranci  
Gül Deniz Demirel Aydemir  
501-509 Lost in the Freeplay of Signifiers: A Derridean Analysis of “Loving Tülsü” by Aziz Nesin  
Seda Örmengül  
510-516 *Lying Down to Die: Breaking the Mould*  
Nurten Birlik  
517-528 Accepted Polyphony: Review and Reflection On Chinese Studies of Baroque Literature  
Jing Qiong  
529-533 The Intersection of History and Future: A Review of *Foreign Literature Studies in Contemporary China: 1949-2009*  
Shang Biwu

# 目 录

## 爱沙尼亚文学研究

- 353-357 爱沙尼亚的文学与文化  
居里·塔尔维特
- 358-369 德国文学在爱沙尼亚地位的转变  
——从改编文学到翻译文学  
丽娜·卢卡斯
- 370-388 怪诞风格与爱沙尼亚文学  
安妮丽·麦克勒夫
- 389-402 为剧场而创作  
——爱沙尼亚戏剧发展二十年  
露·埃普纳

## 韩国文学研究

- 403-404 韩国文学研究导言  
李英石
- 405-420 金春洙的“处容断章”  
李英石
- 421-430 本土矛盾与全球参与  
——论当代韩国小说创作背景中的崔任勋和黄皙瑛  
尹诚浩
- 431-438 吴泰锡戏剧《我爱 DMZ》和莎士比亚戏剧中的神秘色彩  
李宝粒
- 439-452 反视距离及其限度  
——评金炫拷问式、冥想式和欲望式的文学批评  
尹壹焕

## 易卜生戏剧的文学伦理学批评

- 453-455 易卜生戏剧研究的新方法  
——文学伦理学批评的视角  
张连桥

- 456-466 身份困惑与伦理选择  
——《海上夫人》的主人公艾梨达分析  
朱黎航
- 467-477 人生的建筑师  
——论《建筑师》中的身份追寻与心灵孤独  
林宛莹
- 478-486 “究竟社会正确，还是我正确？”  
——论《玩偶之家》的伦理身份与伦理禁忌  
郑美善

## 土耳其文学研究

- 487-488 土耳其文学研究导言  
塞金·艾丁
- 489-500 托马斯·哈代与塔朗吉诗歌中的“死亡”问题  
古尔·丹尼兹·德米雷尔·埃德米尔
- 501-509 迷失于能指的自由游戏  
——阿齐兹·聂辛“爱的符号”之德里达式解读  
塞达·厄曼古尔
- 510-516 《躺下等死》  
——土耳其共和国早期女性身份意识的形成  
纳藤·贝里克
- 517-528 接受的复调  
——中国巴洛克文学研究的回顾与反思  
金琼
- 529-533 在历史与未来的交叉口上  
——评《当代中国外国文学研究（1949—2009）》  
尚必武

# Literature and Culture of a “Peripheral” Nation, Estonia

Jüri Talvet

Department of Comparative Literature, University of Tartu

Ülikooli 18, Tartu 50090, Estonia

Email: jüri.talvet@ut.ee

Following the publication in *FWLS* (Vol. 2, No. 3, 2010) of a first cluster of essays centred on the historical outlines and the projection into English of Estonian poetry, as well as on the reception of French literature in Estonia, the representation of Estonian literature in *FWLS* will now be expanded.

Liina Lukas’s treatment of the historical reception of German literature in Estonia inevitably highlights one of the most crucial facets of the historical past of our small nation in the European North-Eastern “periphery”. It has determined almost exclusively the birth circumstances of our national culture and still, until the present day, is casting shadows on our existence. Since 2004 a member nation of the European Union, the present-day Estonia enjoys all liberties the Western-type market economy and political democracy has been able to conceive and put into practice. However, I believe interiorly we still remain a strongly self-centred and vulnerable community. The historical wounds and scars, caused by the long centuries of slavery and foreign domination, still seem to linger on in our deeper conscience. We have sometimes been compared with our closest Finno-Ugrian kin-nation, the Finns, with whom we certainly share quite a few psychological features. Yet there is a basic difference, as the Finnish people in their past under the Swedes never suffered from the humiliating condition of serfdom, while even as part of the Russian tsarist empire, they enjoyed a considerable social and cultural autonomy.

As a small nation we, Estonians, have been extremely dependent on our mighty historical neighbours. Their long-time domination in Estonia explains our late national “awakening” along the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the belated as well as scarce projection of our literature outside the frontiers of our language. Whereas some of our musicians, like Arvo Pärt, have become world-famous, and also the work of Yuri M. Lotman (1922 – 1993) — the Russian-Jewish semiotic philosopher who lived and taught after WWII

in Tartu —, is widely known in international intellectual circles, Estonian literature still has to be discovered by the broader world community.

Liina Lukas is right in mentioning that until the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and even during the years of our first short political independence (1918 – 1940) Estonians felt the language and culture of the Germans almost as our own (as all our educated people knew well German). It really might be one of the reasons why Goethe's *Faust* — according to Georg Brandes, the “touchstone” of a nation's cultural maturity — was translated in the fully acceptable aesthetic form into Estonian quite late, only in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

However, translation as a means of cultural communication and dialogue can also bear a negative connotation, especially as applied to small national communities. It can easily become a tool of acculturation. Juhan Liiv (1864 – 1913), a major Estonian lyrical poet and thinker whose work after a long delay has recently been introduced in English translation, wrote a poem in which he claimed that translation — “a coffin”, as he called it — breaks down the imaginative force of a young nation and suffocates its creative capacity.

One can often observe in different cultures, not only in Estonia, how in a writer's lifetime he /she is highly acclaimed for bringing into a national literature new trends. However, as soon as his/her work is viewed in a wider European or world literature context, the novelty pales, and there is little ground for hopes that it could catch any special attention beyond a determined language-restricted cultural area.

For that reason it is not surprising at all that, instead, one has to look for some permanent value transcending national frontiers above all in those works whose authors most consciously rebelled in their lifetime against currents and trends reaching from “centres”, or the cultures of big dominant nations. Thus one of the greatest novelties of the main work of the founder of Estonian literature, F. R. Kreutzwald, in his philosophic-patriotic epic *Kalevipoeg* (1861) is that he did not rely on any well-known verse patterns originating from Western Europe, but wrote the epic in the trochaic metre characteristic of Finno-ugric folksong. He had it indeed in common with Elias Lönnrot, the author of the Finnish epic *Kalevala* (1835 – 1849), but in the content Kreutzwald differed substantially from Lönnrot: his epic is not so much a conveyor of ancient folk tradition, but a truly philosophic work, created in the same spiritually fertile romantic atmosphere as Goethe's *Faust* (1808-1833). As the result, one could claim that at least since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Estonians were not in an urgent need of a foreign translated work carrying a major philosophic message: they themselves had a European chef-d'oeuvre created directly in their own language, Kreutzwald's *Kalevipoeg*! They could afford to delay translating *Faust*...

At the same time it is true that without the help of an early translation of

*Kalevipoeg* in a major European language, the fame of the epic could have been deferred for long years, beyond its author’s lifetime. Estonian literature and literary criticism did not exist at that time. Contributions from outside Estonia, duly appreciating the work, were an urgent need. They gradually emerged thanks to the fact that the epic was published first in the proceedings of Estonian Learned Society (*Gelehrte Estnische Gesellschaft*) with a parallel translation in German. A full Russian translation of Kreutzwald’s epic appeared in 1886, while in 1900 a new, more advanced German translation followed. By today, Kreutzwald’s epic, written in twenty songs, has full translations in a dozen of European languages, the most recent being a second English translation (2011). In 2012, its first translation in a non-European language was published — *Kalevputra*, in Hindi.

Passing on to the topic of the grotesque, treated in the article by Anneli Mihkelev, indeed, as she well demonstrates, the grotesque has been a constant feature in Estonian literature. As far as I can conclude from the experience of European literary and artistic history, the grotesque in its most ambivalent and expressive mood has emerged, first and foremost, from existentially conditioned historical circumstances. It has been a form of protest, a radical reaction to some of the most deformed aspects of society. It has never been deprived of existential anguish. This is true of the work of nearly all greatest masters of the grotesque in European culture — François Villon, François Rabelais, Francisco de Quevedo, Francisco Goya, Jonathan Swift, Ramón Marķa del Valle-Inclán.

To all probability also in Estonian literature the most successful examples of the grotesque can be found in works created during the Soviet Russian era, dominated by alienated power. The grotesque emerged from an existential limit situation. Its aim was to oppose social and human alienation. Aesthetically, the grotesque pattern could have been foretold by the work of Franz Kafka and Mikhail Bulgakov (whose novel *Master and Margarita*, with its wittily ambiguous-fantastic images disturbing the rhythm of a rigidly totalitarian society was immensely popular in the late Soviet period in Estonia).

On the contrary, when the grotesque employed by a writer moves apart from existentiality, it easily tends to exhaust its imagery and is likely to degenerate into a mere entertainment. In the case of larger narratives, the final effect of the grotesque hardly escapes other general factors which usually determine a novel’s success. Estonian novel originates from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, dominated in Europe by realism and naturalism. Also in the Soviet period, realism was officially praised in literature, while Western modernist and experimental novel was declared unacceptable. In that background one can observe the poetics of realism still strongly conditioning and maybe also inhibiting Estonian novel. Estonian novels more than

often lack narrative and compositional skills demonstrated by major Western novel writers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. To all probability the best achievements of Estonian authors can be found in short or medium-size fiction. Some of its best examples, including those of the grotesque (like Arvo Valton's short prose) have indeed been translated into some of the international languages.

Finally, I will make some observations about Estonian drama and theatre after the reestablishment of the country's political independence (1991). Their main features have been comprehensively resumed in her article by Luule Epner, the founder of theatrical studies at Tartu University. I feel intrigued by her claim about Madis Kõiv's "highly original thinking" in his dramatic work. A foreign reader of her article might ask: what are the proofs that you have such an original thinker-playwright in Estonia? Can I access some of his work in translation?

Alas, the sad reality is that the bulk of the so called post-dramatic theatre effervescence in Estonia, with all its enthusiastic aspirations and experiments, seems to be destined to remain an exclusively national phenomenon. Not a single work of Madis Kõiv has been translated into foreign languages. The trend of fragmentation and separation is obviously enhanced by postmodern theatre theories, which lay an important accent on detaching theatre performances from written dramatic texts. The key role in conceptualizing theatrical performances, according to these theories, should be played by stage directors. As great philosophers hardly abound among the latter, especially in smaller countries, stage directors inevitably have to look for support in theatrical theories conceived in the "centres". As the result, a vicious circle is formed: everybody is doing more or less the same, with scarce chance for a genuinely original theatre, which, to all probability should still depart from an individual creative and existential experience.

Madis Kõiv's drama indeed reflects existential experience from the author's younger days, coinciding with the last world war and the after-war years in Estonia. However, a fact worth of a serious analysis remains: outside Estonia, the Estonian after-war historical experience is not at all represented by the dramatic work by Kõiv but instead by texts created originally in the Finnish language by a younger writer of a mixed Estonian-Finnish origin, Sofi Oksanen (b. 1977). Since she gained the important Finlandia Prize for her novel *Puhdistus* (*Purge*, 2008) her work has enjoyed a considerable international success. By now *Puhdistus* has been translated into nearly forty languages... Indeed, as formerly a student of Helsinki's Theatre Academy, Oksanen first wrote a play with the same title. Recently, it has been successfully staged in New York and London. Her experience of the Stalinist years in Estonian is not based on a personal experience, as she was not born in 1977, long after that grim period ended. However, presenting the post-war Estonian everyday reality intertwined

with ideological and historical accents, roughly in the manner of social realism, her work has reached a wide international public.

One may ask if “post-dramatic” experiment has not become exhausted, to make theatre once again move closer to its ancient origins, its symbiosis with drama?

责任编辑：杨革新

# The Shifting Position of German Literature in Estonia: From Adapted Literature to Translated Literature

**Liina Lukas**

Institute of Cultural Research and Fine Arts, University of Tartu

Ülikooli 16, Tartu, 51014, Estonia

Email: Liina.Lukas@ut.ee

**Abstract** When speaking about the role of German literature in Estonia we have to take into account the special status of this literature for Estonian culture: for centuries, the German language was the language of power, education and culture as well as of communication in Estonia. Estonian literature was born in the lap of German-language culture, based on the model of German-language literature and, at the beginning; it was even created by the originally German-speaking authors. The leading position of German literature was overrun only by the Soviet regime that politically pushed Russian literature into the forefront to replace German literature. It was basically starting from the Soviet period when German literature became a “translated” literature.

The topic of this article is the shifting position of German literature in Estonia. Translation history of German literature in Estonia is a story of the disappearance of a single cultural dominant. This is a post-colonialist story. In my article, I discuss four episodes of this story: first, I shall outline the historical importance of German literature in Estonia and focus on the adaptation of German classical literature (Goethe and Schiller); second, I am going to emphasise the role of rethinking German cultural heritage in the early 20th century (the period of the “Young Estonia” movement); next, I shall explain the changed conditions for translated literature in Soviet Estonia and finally, I shall examine the new literature curriculum of Estonian schools and analyse the share of German literature in it.

**Key words** reception history; translation history; Estonian-German literary contacts; German literature in Estonia; history of Estonian literature

**German as a Colonial Culture in Estonia**

“The old [critics] should take some trouble to analyse more thoroughly this effect that has in Estonia already become so close that it cannot even be well seen because of its closeness, I mean the German influence. Much of it has already been taken over as our own. It is not without reason that the Germans think of themselves as the bringers of culture; in education, they have truly given us much, although our chauvinist pride does not allow us to acknowledge it” (Oks 291-292).

German literature has had a special role in Estonian literary history — for centuries, the German language was the language of power, education and culture as well as of communication in Estonia. Estonian literature was born in the lap of German-language culture, based on the model of German-language literature and, at the beginning, it was even created by the originally German-speaking authors — the Baltic-Germans.

Baltic-Germans arrived in the Baltic countries in the course of Christianising colonisation, starting from the 13th century. They became the local nobility, obtained lands and manors, held special privileges and formed the cultural and social upper classes up to 1918, when the Estonian Republic was created. Up to that time, the German language had held its position as the leading language of administration and education no matter how often the rulers changed. In the 18th century, when the territories of the present-day Estonia and Latvia politically became provinces of Tsarist Russia, these Baltic provinces, however, represented a culturally and linguistically distinct region that intellectually belonged much more together with Germany than with Russia. The Baltic-German community persisted in the Baltic countries up to their resettlement to occupied Polish areas by Germans in 1939.

Baltic-German literature covers a special chapter in the history of Estonian-German literary relations. It is not easy to specify the boundaries between these two literatures. Up to the second half of the 19th century, Estonian literature can be treated as an “extension” of Baltic-German literature in the Estonian language. Texts written in this area in Estonian belonged together and were the different-style branches of one and the same literature, depending on the addressee (irrespective of their origin) the bilingual authors had in mind.

Together with the rising national self-consciousness of intellectuals of Estonian origin, the Estonian-language literary field was also taking a more distinct shape. It came into being within the Baltic-German literary field, first drawing from its support and later, contrasting with it. Although the newly independent Estonian literary field largely reevaluated its “genteel” colonial heritage, Baltic-German literature was still read and translated even during this period of emancipation. Theodor Hermann Patenius’s (1843-1915) novels about the history of the Baltic countries and Manfred

Kyber's (1880-1933) stories about animals were widely read by the Estonians as well. A collection of short stories by Eduard von Keyserling (1855-1918), a well-known Baltic-German writer, was named the best translated work in 1912 and Keyserling had a wide and positive reception in Estonian newspapers.

Baltic-German literature disappeared from the Estonian literary field during the Soviet period and appeared again in re-independent Estonia, when numerous memoirs once again opened the "heavy gates of Baltic manors" and brought their life to the focus of Estonian readers.

When speaking about the importance of German literature in Estonia we have to take into account the former special status of this literature for Estonian literature and the mediating role of Baltic-German culture in this literary transfer.

The Estonian-German literary relations can be described as colonial relations. Epp Annus, an Estonian literary scholar, claims that the "German culture was not a phenomenon that stood aside or apart from Estonian culture; on the contrary, the German tradition formed the core of Estonian national literature. Characteristic German features entered into and found a place in characteristic Estonian features; positions had gradually shifted during several centuries, German features had got absorbed into Estonian characteristics. A common paradox had again been born — re-establishment of the independence of a colonised land had been supported by the colonisers' culture" (Annus 14).

That is why up to the end of the 19th century, the Estonian-language translated literature was often an adaptation, not a translation at all, and as such, it was an inseparable part of Estonian literature. The fact that the texts adopted by Estonian culture were actually translations was even not noticed at that time. The Estonian literary language was influenced by the syntax, vocabulary and grammar of the German language and the general import of German culture was even more extensive so that we have a reason for speaking about the "deep impact of German spirit" on Estonian culture (Undusk 710).

German literature prevailed in Estonian translations even in the early 20th century, although the cultural elite of the day was then already rebelling against such cultural colonialism and became interested in the cultural heritage of other European countries. But the knowledge of the German language, German culture and German literature was self-evident even in the new Estonian Republic of the early 20th century, and for some time, the German language maintained its position as one of the official languages. The leading position of German literature was broken only by the Soviet regime that politically pushed Russian literature into the forefront to replace German literature. It was only during the Soviet period when German literature became a "translated" literature. Before that, there was no need to translate German

high literature into Estonian because intellectuals read it in the German language.

### **German Classics in Estonia and in the Estonian Translation**

At first, the translated literature in Estonia started with mass production — it was meant for common people, not for the cultural elite. It was not so much translated but adapted literature, and as such, it was an inseparable part of Estonian literature.

Excluding the Bible and the Hymnal, we can say that Estonian translated literature originated from the pietistic and sentimentalist spirit. The clergymen started translating pietistic literature into Estonian in larger numbers. The first works that belong to the Estonian canon of world literature are, besides the Holy Script and hymns, Johann Arndt's *Vier Bücher vom wahren Christenthum* and John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*, translated in 1740-1750.

The first secular Estonian canon of world literature can be found in the first Estonian-language collection of stories — Friedrich Wilhelm Willmann's (1746-1819) *Juttud ja Teggud (Stories and Acts)* (1782). The sources for these stories were mostly German authors C. F. Gellert, M. G. Lichtwer, M. Luther, but there were adaptations from other classics of European literature, starting with classical literature, e.g. *Widow of Ephesus* by Petronius, Voltaire, Bernard de Trevier's chivalric novel about beautiful Magelone, Richard Steele's *Inkle and Yarico* up to *Decameron* and *1001 Nights*. After that, for about a century, Estonian readers were in love with the stories about pious Genevieve (Chris of v. Schmid, G. O. Marbach) and Robinsonades (Chris of v. Schmid, J. H. Campe), based on German examples. In 60 years, eleven different editions of the stories about pious Genevieve were published in the total of 18 prints.

The first canon of world poetry can be found in the Estonian-language poetry anthologies of the late 18th and early 19th centuries — *Monned laulud (Some Songs)* (1796) and Heinrich Johann Rosenplänter's (1782-1846) anthology *Lillikessed (Flowers)* (1814). These books were based on the works of the authors of German Enlightenment, such as Chr. F. Gellert, and more sentimental poets of the group "Heinbund" (L. H. Chr. Hölty, M. Claudius, G. A. Bürger, Chr. Fr. D. Schubart and others).

But where are Goethe and Schiller? It was "the age of Schiller" in the Baltic provinces at that time! Schiller was the favourite poet of Russian rulers of the time — Alexander I and Alexander II — and the idol of Baltic-German public! Schiller had had contacts with Baltic-Germans (e.g. a Baltic-German poet Carl Grass (1767-1814) whose poems Schiller had published in his *Thalia*), but he became even more known there via the students' song books. The students idolised Schiller! For one student from Tallinn this love even proved to be fatal: the young man had to spend several years in Siberia because he had used in his own writing the last strophe of Schiller's

*Ode to Joy (An die Freude)*. Schiller was also the author whose works were most often staged in the theatres of the Baltic provinces. The first professional theatre of the Baltics, the Riga City Theatre, opened its doors in 1782 with Lessing's play *Emilia Galotti*, but Schiller found his way into its permanent repertoire very soon: in 1785, the Riga theatre staged *Kabale und Liebe*, in 1786 *Die Räuber*, and soon after, *Maria Stuart*, *Wilhelm Tell* and others. The world première of *Don Carlos*<sup>1</sup> took place in Riga in 1787, even before the play appeared in print.

In part due to Baltic-German enthusiasm for Schiller, Estonia was the first country in the world to commemorate him: the first monument to Schiller was erected in the year of his death, 1805, in the Helme manor park, followed by a monument on Puhtulaid in 1813. In 1813, the same year when the Puhtulaid monument was erected, Schiller was first translated into Estonian. As expected, the first work to be translated was *Ode to Joy* which was published even in two different translations: by Otto Reinhold von Holtz (1757-1828) and Jakob Wilhelm Reinhold Everth (1775-1837) and in two different editions. *Ode to Joy* has all the time been Schiller's most famous poem in the Baltics and since 1891, it has often been included in the repertoire of song festivals.

After that, there was an almost 50-year break in the translation of Schiller's poetry into Estonian.

When Schiller's 100th anniversary was celebrated in Germany and in the Baltics in 1859, the celebrations, undoubtedly participated also by the Estonian intellectual elite of the time, brought the translation of Schiller's poetry again into the limelight. A new version of *Ode to Joy*, revised by J. W. Jannsen (1819-1890), was published in 1860 (remarkably, without the last lines about escaping the chains of tyranny). Schiller became the cult writer for Estonian national Romanticism. Fr. R. Kreutzwald (1803-1882), the creator of the Estonian national epic *Kalevipoeg*, admired Schiller much and had avidly read his poetry and even translated it into Estonian during his school years.

Among the Baltic-Germans, the cult of Schiller reached its peak in 1905, when the 100th anniversary of Schiller's death that was celebrated in all Baltic countries. Theatres performed all Schiller's plays in their chronological order, and all kinds of meetings were held and presentations were given. For the Baltic-Germans, during this critical time for their existence, Schiller was a model German national poet and the upholder of patriotism.

For the Estonian intellectual elite Schiller was not as much "a national poet" but "a poet of freedom", "the holder of the immortal ideal of freedom and justice", as Gustav Suits stressed in 1905 (Suits 37).

During the years of the first Estonian Republic, Schiller's plays were staged quite

often. Estonian translations of Schiller's works (a collection of ballads, a collection of poetry and all more important plays) were published during Soviet time. During the period of new independence, Schiller's plays have been staged only very seldom.

What about Goethe?

Goethe has fared somewhat better in the newest stage of the Estonian reception of his work, despite the fact that his early reception was much slower, in comparison with Schiller's works. He had little to offer to the growing literature of popular enlightenment besides Reineke Fuchs, the first of his texts to find its way into the Estonian language by Friedrich Reinhold Kreutzwald. In the work of Lydia Koidula (1843-1886), Estonia's "Poet of the Dawn", translations and borrowings from German literature have an important place, but translations of Goethe's poetry are missing altogether, although she did mention him in her correspondence.

Translations of Goethe's poetry, most often his ballads, started to appear in the early 1860s and by the turn of the century, their quality had improved. The first extensive Estonian translation was *Härman ja Doora (Hermann and Dorothea)* by A. Kurrikoff in 1880. The first translation of *Faust* was published in 1897 — it was an unpretentious adaptation made for musical performance. The influential Danish literary critic Georg Brandes has said that the translation of *Faust* was the right criterion for measuring a culture's maturity<sup>2</sup>. In view of this, we should admit that Estonian culture acquired maturity much later than Latvian culture, as Janis Rainis's (1865-1929) exemplary translation of *Faust* into Latvian was published already in 1898. Estonian literary culture gradually matured indeed in the 1920s but one certainly cannot take as a sign of maturity Anton Jürgenstein's translation of *Faust's* First Part (1920).

*Faust's* slow and late coming into the Estonian language was fully compensated after World War II by two different masterful translations — one was made by Ants Oras (1900-1982) and published in Sweden in 1955/1962 (reprint in Tartu in 2007), the other one was made by August Sang (1914-1969) and published in Soviet Estonia in 1946/1967. The latter translation is still used in Estonian schools.

Among other German classic writers, Heinrich Heine rose next to Goethe and Schiller like a shining star. Many renowned Estonian poets, starting from Kreutzwald and Koidula, have tried their hand in translating his works. This "plebeian son of the new century" (as he was called by one of his translators August Sang) was spiritually closer to Estonian culture that was rising from its peasant cradle than the elitist geniuses of Weimar classicism. Baltic-German critics, however, did not acknowledge him.<sup>3</sup> Heine predominated among the poets whose translations were published in Estonian magazines and almanacs in the early 20th century. The first collection of Heine's poetry, translated by Jaan Kärner, was published only in 1934, but even the critics of the time did not think that the translation met "the present development

level of our poetic language” (Oras, 89). Next year, well-known critic and translator Ants Oras published his translation of Heine’s poem *Germany. A Winter’s Tale: A satirical poem* (1935). Heine’s democratic attitude (“I am the people!”), criticism of religion and his fighting mentality made him an acceptable classic even during the Soviet period, when several collections of his poetry (1947, 1956, and 1979) and a voluminous collection of prose (1967) were published. Such gathering of works of many translators between the covers of one and the same book was not simply a filling of a cultural “gap”. Writer Eeva Park has described the significance of these collections for the young authors of that time: “In the literary circles of the time, Heine’s poems were like snowballs that people shower each other with in the first snowball fight of winter, ... and he had an extremely deep effect on our creative work ...” (Park 198). Heine-like tonality really existed in Estonian poetry!

### **German Modernism and Estonian Literature at the Beginning of the 20th Century**

German literature prevailed in Estonian translations even in the early 20th century.<sup>4</sup> In poetry, after Heine, the post-Romantic poets, such as Emanuel Geibel, Ludwig Uhland, Friedrich Rückert, Eduard Mörike and others form the literary taste of Estonian culture. After that came the turn of authors of the Naturalist school (Cäsar Flaischlen, Otto Ernst). The list of prose translations into Estonian between 1901 and 1917 reveals a touch of the “easy Muse” of German family magazines, with some additions of social trivial novels or social dramas that were drawn from the Naturalist school. This was followed by the great favourite of the era of Historicism — the historical novel, also by both the feminine and masculine trend literature (e.g. Nataly Eschstruth, Margarete Böhme), and by a large share of Heimatkunst (Peter Rosegger, Ludwig Ganghofer, Gustav Frenssen, Lulu von Strauss und Torney and others). The generation of Realist prose authors is represented by some works of Paul Heyse, Friedrich Spielhagen and Theodor Fontane. Even in the early 20th century, Estonian theatre remained true to the spirit of its founder August von Kotzebue and the audience loved Austrian and German popular plays (Nestroy, Schönthal, Kadelburg, Blumenthal, Schönherr etc.).

In the early 20th century, the emancipating Estonian literature saw its main task in shedding the “Baltic mindset”, which was thought to be reactionary, in order to “benefit even more from foreign, and especially, from German education” (Luiga 1).

The arrival of German modernism at the Estonian literary field lagged behind and sped up only with the emergence of the new “Young Estonian” generation in Estonian literature. The “Young Estonia” movement initiated an unprecedented polemics about aesthetics in the Estonian literary field and attempted at creating a new literary taste, free from the too close German influence. They wanted to enrich Estonian cultural

scene with impulses from other European cultures, primarily from French, Finnish and Scandinavian literatures and to establish new relations with German literature. Critics from “Young Estonia” found fault in the Estonians’ “unchanging acceptance of the already historical and outdated trends from German literature with all their weaknesses. Concerning the thoughts and trends that rule the present of this nation [the Germans] — we have always been far behind, at least 20 years behind.” (Linde 429) Although the literary “consumer goods” from Germany could still for a long time be found in Estonian newspapers and they shaped the Estonian (petty) bourgeois taste, the influence of “Young Estonia” in the first two decades of the 20th century introduced new directions and names from the German-language literary space to Estonian public: Gerhart Hauptmann, Max Halbe, Dichard Demel, Friedrich Nietzsche (the first translation of *Zarathustra* was published in 1901), Frank Wedekind, Eduard von Keyserling, Thomas Mann and others. The year 1910 marks the breakthrough of Vienna Modernism in Estonian literature: Artur Schnitzler’s collections of short stories were published; several publications contained Peter Altenberg’s miniatures and introduced works of Rainer Maria Rilke, Stefan George and Hugo von Hoffmannsthal. The collection *Valik saksa uuemast lüürikast* (*A Selection of German Newer Lyrics*), translated by Marie Under in 1920, and Under’s own works of this period testify about the extraordinary influence of German Expressionism on Estonian poetry. Such congeniality between German and Estonian literatures was never equalled later, except perhaps Kafka’s unique impact on Estonian literature in the Soviet period.

### **German-Language Literature as a Translated Literature in Soviet Estonia**

The Soviet regime that was established in Estonia in 1940 attempted to disrupt cultural continuity and erase cultural memory and it started to shape ideologically controlled Soviet people. A large number of books were destroyed or put into closed archives. Publishing was submitted to censorship. The first blows were aimed at “hostile” translated literature — first, “fascist” literature, later also “bourgeois-capitalist” literature. In 1944-1955, literary fiction formed only 14% of Soviet Estonian book production, where the share of western literatures was extremely small. The Soviet “policy of quotas” prescribed that of the bulk of translated literature, Russian literature had to fill 45%, literatures of other Soviet republics 15%, and literatures of Socialist countries 13%.

The already narrowing “translation space” was used to the fullest. For many poets whose works were held in contempt for ideological reasons at that time (e.g. August Sang, Betti Alver), translating was the only means of support. This is why the translation of great works of German literary classics (as ideologically less dangerous) was started right after the end of WWII, and Goethe’s *Faust*, his tragedies and a

collection of poetry, Schiller's plays and poetry collections, Heine's poetry, and works of many other authors reached Estonian readers.

The position of German-language literature was somewhat more fortunate, as it had its socialist counterpart — literature of the German Democratic Republic, where a part of older history of German literature had already been selected and accepted. In this way, such antifascist and anti-war authors as Erich Maria Remarque, Anna Seghers, Lion Feuchtwanger, Leonhard Frank, Willi Bredel, Arnold Zweig, Johannes Becher and others were introduced to Estonian readers. Contacts with the literature of East Germany, which had had more breathing space compared with Estonian literature that was under Stalinist totalitarian pressure, had a great effect in Estonia. Works of East German authors introduced free verse to Estonian poetry, which was also officially held in contempt as it had no analogues in Russian poetry. Bertold Brecht holds a special place in Estonian theatre history — his plays were repeatedly translated and staged during the Soviet period (Brecht's book of theatre theory was published in 1972). Brecht's influence initiated the Estonian theatre innovation in the 1960s, or as the main innovator of Estonian theatre. Brecht seemed to be an alternative to the overwhelming Russian influence and Stanislavski's "pathetic and sentimental style of Russian theatre" (Kaalep 104). Translator and poet Ain Kaalep, an enthusiastic promoter of Brecht's theatre in the 1960s, wrote, "I felt that by engaging Brecht's smart (or maybe even sincere) Marxist arguments we can do something for defending the good old European culture in the country that has fallen under an alien power, but whose cultural tradition originates from Europe, and is, anyway, much nearer to the ideas of Brecht's theatre than Stanislavski's theatre" (106).

A new era started with the launching of a book series *Loomingu Raamatukogu* in 1957. It was specially created for publishing translated literature. The official status of a magazine of this series helped it to evade the strictly controlled planned economy. The censorship was somewhat eased in the years of ideological thaw in the 1960s and Estonian readers had finally access to the works of German literature, the translation of which could not have been possible earlier (e.g. by Heinrich Böll, Robert Musil, Werner Bergengruen, Martin Walser, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Friedrich Dürrenmatt, Max Frisch, Peter Handke, Elias Canetti, Heimito von Doderer). However, the greatest impressions on Estonian literature have been left by Hermann Hesse (translations of *Steppenwolf* in 1973, *Glasperlenspiel* in 1976, *Siddhartha* in 1986) and Franz Kafka (translations of *Ein Bericht für eine Akademie* in 1962, *Der Prozess* in 1966, *Amerika. Der Prozess. Das Schloss* in 1987).

Hesse's works arrived in Estonia in the aftermath of the hippie movement, when the thaw period of the 1960s had aroused hope for personal freedom and intellectual and moral independence. The reception of Hesse in Estonia was undoubtedly

helped by his indirect Estonian (Baltic-German) origin. Kafka's text-creation and understanding mechanisms had an important effect on Estonian literature and its readers in the 1970s and 1980s. The "kafkaesque" traits like dreamlikeness, irrationality, allegorization, metaphoricity became poetic means of expression behind the frontlines of the official and obligatory socialist realism.

Fortunately, the Estonian-German cultural exchange could to a certain extent be continued by Estonian exiles in the free world and through private secret channels information reached also the Estonians behind the Iron Curtain. (Close contacts between a writer and translator Ain Kaalep (b.1926) in Estonia and an exile-Estonian writer, translator and interpreter of German literature Ivar Ivask (1927-1992), who lived in the USA, were especially fruitful.)

### **The Share of German-Language Literature in Translated Literature in Estonia**

A breakthrough in the translation of German literature occurred in 1987, when the control of censorship was loosened and many new publishing houses were created. The share of translated literature among book production rose sharply. Publishers tried to compensate for all that had been prohibited during the Soviet period. During that time, mainly Russian books had been translated, but having regained independence, Estonian society turned to Anglo-American culture and the number of books translated from English many times exceeds translations from other languages.<sup>5</sup>

The German language that had been the predominant foreign language in Estonia up to World War II lost more of its importance when compared to even the Soviet period. However, due to cultural closeness, translations from German still occupy the second place after English in the bulk of all translated literature, replacing Russian. The percentage of translations from German (9% in 1992-1998) in all translated literature is still higher than the percentage of translations from Finnish, French or Russian.<sup>6</sup>

During the Soviet period, it was mostly possible to translate literary classics and the modern literature of "capitalist countries" was held contempt. After regaining independence, publishers attempted to fill this gap, as well as to compensate for the biased selection of works of German literary classics. Already in 1987, in the very end of the Soviet regime, appeared such masterworks of German literature as Kafka's novels and Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus*, followed by a long list of masterpieces from classics (Günther Grass' novels one by one, Robert Musil, Heimito von Doderer, Heinrich Mann, Elias Canetti, Hermann Broch, George Saiko, Franz Kafka, Rainer Maria Rilke, Georg Trakl, Max Frisch, Joseph Roth, Ingeborg Bachmann, Friedrich Hölderlin, Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach, Stefan Zweig and others), as well as from modern authors (Christa Wolf, Elfriede Jelinek, W. G. Sebald, Karsten Dümmel,

Christoph Hein, Herta Müller, Christoph Ransmayr, Bernhard Schlink, Daniel Kehlmann and others). All these were possible thanks to enthusiastic translators among whom we should mention Ain Kaalep, Rita Tasa and Mati Sirkel. The Estonian state is also supporting the promotion of German culture: Goethe-Institut is working in Estonia, special reading rooms of Austrian and Swiss literature have been established at the Estonian National Library with the support of the embassies of these countries, etc. Estonian publishers participate in the Frankfurt Book Fair.

Still another important indicator of “adopting” the culture and literature of other countries is the school curriculum. In addition to Estonian literature, Estonian school curricula contain a large number of important works from world literature. This demonstrates that in small cultures like Estonian culture, translated literature plays an important role and small cultures cannot afford to forget the existence of other cultures.

It is interesting to examine the share of German literature in the Estonian curricula.<sup>7</sup> We have to admit that German classics have disappeared from the school curricula: Schiller’s name is even not mentioned and Goethe is known only as the author of the first part of *Faust*. The number of German authors included in the curriculum is rather small — only Kafka’s *Die Verwandlung* has a firm place there, together with some optional short stories by Thomas Mann. As a remnant of the preferences from the Soviet period, Erich Maria Remarque has maintained his position in the curriculum — he is the most translated German author in the Estonian language. All Estonians have read his novels *Im Westen nichts* and *Arc de Triomphe*. The inclusion of Hermann Hesse in the canon can be explained by his great influence on Estonian literature. The curriculum does not include any other authors of Baltic-German origin. Modern German literature is not represented by a winner of the Nobel Literature Prize Herta Müller, whose subjects could be close and understandable for Estonian readers, but Daniel Kehlmann’s easily readable and humorous *Die Vermessung der Welt*, which has even twice been mentioned in the curriculum.

In conclusion we have to say that German literature has lost its previous leading role in the Estonian canon of world literature. Although German literature is quite often translated into Estonian, these books only rarely reach the lists of bestsellers, which are ruled by Estonian and Anglo-American popular authors. In Estonia, German translations are made by specialists for readers who are truly interested in them. This is elitist literature — excellently translated and annotated and meant for knowledgeable readers. If we think about it, this is not a bad position at all.

## Notes

1. There are two versions of this play — a prose version and a jambic version. The Riga City Theatre

bought the prose version.

2. For more information, see Georg Brandes, *Goethe* (Berlin: Erich Reiss, 1922).

3. See Jeannot Emil von Grotthuss, Heinrich Heine als Lyriker. Stuttgart, 1894.

4. For the period 1901-1917, Estonian national bibliography lists the total of 417 works of fiction translated from German (incl. Austrian, Swiss and Baltic-German literatures). In comparison: during the same period, there were published, in book format, 559 Estonian original works, and 168 translations from Russian, 88 from English and American, 68 from French and Belgian and 25 from Finnish literatures. If we consider the texts of fiction published in newspapers, the share of German literature would be even larger.

5. About translations from the German language after the regaining of independence in Estonia see Triin Pappel, *Saksakeelse tõlkekirjanduse vahendamise ja vastuvõtt Eestis aastatel 1990-2000*. (manuscript, M.A.-thesis). Tallinn, 2007.

6. For more information, see Aile Möldre, *Kirjastustegevus ja raamatulevi Eestis aastail 1940-2000* (Tallinn: TLÜ Kirjastus, 2005).

7. For more information, see [https://www.riigiteataja.ee/aktiisa/1140/1201/1002/VV2\\_lisa1.pdf](https://www.riigiteataja.ee/aktiisa/1140/1201/1002/VV2_lisa1.pdf)

## Works Cited

- Annus, Epp. "Kirjanduskaanon ja rahvuslik identiteet." *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 1 (2000): 10-17.
- Kaalep, Ain. "ENSV ja DDR. Isiklikku." – *Teise peeglis. Im Spiegel des Anderen*. Ed. J. Kronberg, L. Lukas, O. Triebel. Tartu: Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus, 2006. 96-115.
- Linde, Bernhard. "Esteetiline maitsmine." *Noor-Eesti*, 5/6 (1911): 429-440.
- Luiga, Juhan. "Baltlased ja meie." *Päevaleht*, 23. XII, No. 297 (1908): 1.
- Oks, Jaan. "Kriitilised tundmused. Eesti vanemat ja uuemat kirjandust lugedes." *Noor-Eesti* III (1909). Tartu: Noor-Eesti: 268-293.
- Oras, Ants. "Heinrich Heine lüürika." (1934) - Ants Oras, *Ilus, haljas. Luulekool III*. Tartu: Ilmamaa, 2007: 89-93.
- Park, Eeva. "Die Ritter` von dem heiligen Geist. Bergidylle von Heinrich Heine." – *Teise peeglis. Im Spiegel des Anderen*. Ed. J. Kronberg, L. Lukas, O. Triebel. Tartu: Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus, 2006: 192-203.
- Suits, Gustav. "Meie Schiller!" (1905) - Gustav Suits, *Vabaduse väraval*. Tartu: Ilmamaa, 2002: 36-45.
- Undusk, Jaan. "Eesti-saksa kirjandussuhete tüpologia." *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 10-12 (1995): 577-587, 669-679, 746-756.

# The Grotesque and Estonian Literature

**Anneli Mihkelev**

Comparative Literature, Estonian Institute of Humanities, Tallinn University

Narva mnt 25, 10120 Tallinn, Estonia

Email: [anneli.mihkelev@tlu.ee](mailto:anneli.mihkelev@tlu.ee)

**Abstract** The roots of the grotesque exist in a very old tradition of culture and folklore. Thinking of Estonian national epic *Kalevipoeg*, it is possible to find several motifs and elements which may work as the grotesque, or which may inspire literature and art. The grotesque has existed in Estonian literature in different periods, and the grotesque may convey social and political meaning (e.g. F. Tuglas' and A. Gailit's works). The grotesque indicates the deformations of the real world, and the grotesque also creates a new world which has a deformed structure. The grotesque and absurdity in literature became tools of rebellion against the Soviet regime (e.g. A. Valton's, V. Vahing's works) . The grotesque in Soviet literature also included political and social criticism, although sometimes it was disguised: the grotesque as an ambivalent and polysemic phenomenon made it possible to play with several meanings, including meanings which may have been forbidden. Grotesque motifs and images give Estonian poetry a more playful character, and represent the grotesque as a phenomenon of play (I. Laaban's and A. Ehin's surrealist poetry). The most important thing that grotesque images tell us in contemporary times is that something is wrong, that people do not feel comfortable in a situation, and that is a grotesque situation which combines tragedy and laughter.

**Key words** grotesque; myth; surrealism; absurd; Estonian literature

The grotesque is an old and complicated phenomenon or category which unites things which are seemingly impossible to unite: the comic and horrible, real and fantastic etc. The grotesque as a phenomenon is older than the literary term “grotesque”, and the meaning of the term has changed over the centuries.<sup>1</sup> The Estonian researcher Harald Peep believed that the grotesque connects both fantasy and reality and that is the reason why the grotesque exists in romanticism, realism and other literary styles.<sup>2</sup>

The grotesque can exist anywhere. Jüri Talvet has pointed out the cues which characterize the complex and vital phenomenon of the grotesque: laughter, irony, satire, the body, lowering, ugliness, ambiguity, relativity, alienation, contrast, paradox,

contraposition, deformation, exaggeration, aberration, the fantastic, the unnatural, the bizarre etc.<sup>3</sup> He designated the grotesque as “the polyglot grotesque”, because “The language of the grotesque is in perpetual modification. Whatever its codes in different epochs, it has always been a powerful means of art and literature in revealing the ‘other’ side of reality, both in time and space” (Talvet 62).

The works of Mikhail Bakhtin indicate that the roots of the grotesque exist in a very old tradition of culture and folklore. Thinking of national epics, it is really possible to find several motifs and elements which may also work as the grotesque, or which may inspire literature and art, e.g. the monster Grendel in the long Anglo-Saxon poem *Beowulf*. Beowulf represents the great hero; he is Beowulf the Great, who fights against evil and becomes the new king. Grendel “began to encompass evil, an enemy from hell” (Alexander 11-12). It is also significant that *Beowulf* contains several events which are historical, as well as some that are fantasy. The story of Beowulf circulated and developed orally for a long time before it was set down in its present arrangement and ultimate literary form<sup>4</sup>

So oral myths and literary myths are mixed in national epics which are written texts and which we can read at present. Concerning the Estonian epic *Kalevipoeg*, the folk tales about Kalevipoeg were collected in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and then formed the basis of the Estonian epic by Friedrich Reinhold Kreutzwald (c.f. Latvian epic *Lāčplēsis*). If we speak of Estonian and Latvian epics, we are actually speaking of literary works which expressed the authors’, Kreutzwald’s and Pumpurs’, intentions and their time: “a literary work of art, which combines a multitude of folklore elements” (Valk 408), as well as the signs of the time when they were written: “Friedrich Reinhold Kreutzwald composed the epic *Kalevipoeg* in the middle of the nineteenth century, when the rationalism of the Enlightenment and the romanticism of Herderian ideas were blended by the leading thinkers of Estonia into the ideology of the National Awakening” (Valk 407). According to Ülo Valk, “Kreutzwald modified folklore sources to compose a work comparable with other European epics, such as Homeric poems and the *Nibelungenlied*” (Valk 408), and similar to an epic about a great hero, as in *Beowulf*.

Speaking of great heroes, it is possible to find several specific characteristics which are common to all of them, or at least most of them. Usually all these heroes are extremely strong and they have extraordinary destinies. Although they have very big and strong bodies, they are not grotesque bodies. Even the Latvian hero Lāčplēsis, who has the ears of a bear, because his mother was a female bear, is not a grotesque man; on the contrary, he is a very handsome man. The grotesque appears in situations in which the heroes fight with enemies or against evil. Usually the evil characters are represented as grotesque and horrible monsters, e.g. Grendel and the dragon in

*Beowulf*, the witches in *Lāčplēsis*, and the warlocks in *Kalevipoeg*.

But the best motifs for creating or inspiring grotesque elements in literature and art are motifs of reproduction and fertility (how Kalevipoeg's mother Linda was born from the egg of a black grouse, several visits to Hell etc.). However, these motifs are not usually represented as the grotesque in Kreutzwald's *Kalevipoeg*; originally these motifs expressed the positive meaning of rebirth and nature in folklore, but the meaning of fertility has been changed to the negative in modern history.<sup>5</sup> These motifs and symbols have changed in literature, but they appear in literary texts in different ways and in different contexts again and again, e.g. in Enn Vetemaa's travesties *Kalevipoja mälestused* (*The Memoirs of Kalevipoeg*, 1971) and *Eesti näkiliste välimäärāja* (*A Guide to the Estonian Water Sprites*, 1980), or in the postmodernist poetry of Contra (b. 1974).

The grotesque may appear in different ways, and it may have different cultural aims in different periods. The grotesque may be a style in the literary work or the grotesque may appear as a stylistic element or character or situation in a text. The grotesque indicates the deformations of the real world, and the grotesque also creates a new world which has a deformed structure.

This article analyses the grotesque in Estonian literature in different periods: why and how the grotesque has existed in Estonian literature, and what the message of a grotesque literary work is.

### **The Grotesque at the Beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

Friedebert Tuglas (1886 – 1971) was an Estonian prose writer, literary critic, editor, and one of the leaders of the “Young Estonia” movement at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He searched for new aesthetic ideals and, although he started out writing realistic short stories, his following collections displayed neoromantic and impressionist styles. In his mature period between the two World Wars, the stories of Tuglas are “marked by intensely symbolic diction, the mixing of reality and the fantastic, a search for a mathematically balanced composition, and the interfacing of literature with myth” (Undusk 8). Tuglas's short story “Maailma lõpus” (“At the End of the World”, 1915) is one of the best examples from that period. Tuglas himself said that the idea of that story had been inspired by Kreutzwald's epic *Kalevipoeg* (1857–1861), in which the hero travels to a Nordic country across the sea.<sup>6</sup> Vilmos Voigt has noted similarities with several European literary works, e.g. the *Odyssey*, Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), Edgar Allan Poe's *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* (1838) etc.<sup>7</sup> All of these works contain extraordinary sea journeys and meetings with fantastic beings, such as female giants or monsters who have deformed bodies, and who live on faraway islands. In my opinion there are not only similarities with the

literary works mentioned above, but Tuglas's story also interprets these older literary works.

Tuglas's story is about a young seaman who is on his first journey at sea. The trip begins with adventures when the ship encounters a realm of emptiness and after that the seamen find an island with rich vegetation. Unfortunately, other seamen inadvertently leave the young sailor on the island because he is sleeping deeply at the top of a big tree. When he is alone on the island, he meets a female giant: "I sprang aside but the giant woman made the same move and stretched out her hands for me. I dodged to the other side, but with a few steps she overtook me. [- - -] She tried to catch me, her arms spread, as if I were a lamb. I did not know how to use my sword nor did I dare use it. She suddenly seized me by the shoulders and lifted me up to her face just as if I were a little child. She held me there for some moments while I flailed about with my arms and legs. It was only then that I saw she was laughing, laughing wildly. And I also saw that she was young and pretty" (Tuglas 26; trans. O. Mutt).

It is a curious island where curious people or beings which look like humans live among rich nature: "But one thing astonished me most of all: they did not speak. [- - -] They only seemed to look at each other in order to comprehend. And strangely enough they also understood my thoughts whenever they saw my eyes. [- - -] They were simply wise — wise in a special sense unknown to us. They seemed to merge with nature and their consciousness seemed to be that of nature itself. And that is why I believe they understood animals and trees as well as they understood me" (Tuglas 37).

The protagonist of the story feels fear and at first he shies away from the giants, and he does not understand the situation: "I lay between two soft cushions and considered my situation without, however, being able to understand it. Everything was as it is in real human life; nevertheless, everything was preternatural, entirely improbable. But the whole voyage had confused the real and the preternatural. I could no longer marvel properly at anything" (Tuglas 32).

Tuglas presents odd moments and situations in this story, and he also combines fantasy, beauty and ugliness. It is very significant how beauty and the love story with the giant maiden change during the story and ugliness becomes the dominant factor. The language of Tuglas's story expresses passion, and this motif is very similar to the old grotesque pictures and sculptures: "Our love became awesome like the midnight sun: it was around us and yet dazzlingly bright. [- - -] Lush grass was like her hair, I was enmeshed in wisps of mist as in her plaits, I trembled on quaggy bogs as on her breast. [- - -] It was terrible. A woman's passion is terrible" (Tuglas 49 – 51).

The next pages present a different picture of that woman and of passionate love: "But how different she now looked! Her face was ashen, there was a deep frown on

her brow and her eyes were cold. [- - -] Her hair streamed in all directions like flaming vines. And the claws of an unknown beast like the talons of a ghastly monster were fixed to the toes of her sandals” (Tuglas 54 – 55).

All the nature and plants are very important, because they express the feeling of fear, and Tuglas presents a really grotesque picture in his story: “But it was ghastly vegetation. [- - -] Disgusting plants appeared. [- - -] Flowers, with giant blooms the colour of human skin, grew in large patches, they snapped underfoot and the content that oozed out was bloody like raw meat and stank of carrion. [- - -] But the maiden hurried on, crushing the plants with the claws and making them bleed like live creatures” (Tuglas 56).

Finally the young sailor kills the giant maiden, and escapes from the island, but he is not a happy man among other people, because he constantly dreams of the nameless island.

In this story, Tuglas uses fantasy in the same way as Edgar Allan Poe, Gustave Flaubert and Jonathan Swift, and he uses several images which represent the grotesque; he combines nature and fantasy in this story, as well as ugliness and beauty etc.

Vilmos Voigt has stated that “Tuglas combined two traditions in “At the End of the World”: oral stories of extraordinary sea voyages and a literary pattern of the 'island of love and happiness'. He could have followed both patterns in various ways: using Romantic, Realistic, fantastic, philosophical, or even adventurous discourses. But his method was different: an allegorico-symbolic undertone is perceived throughout the story. [- - -] But Tuglas does not want to write a new myth; he is using the discourse of the myth for his literary purpose” (Voigt 77 – 78).

Consequently, “At the End of the World” is an example of how positive laughter is combined with social criticism and romantic ideas of a better world.

August Gailit (1891 – 1960) was another writer who used grotesque motifs in his short stories at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Gailit was an exceptional figure in Estonian literature. He belonged to the literary group “Siuru”, together with Friedebert Tuglas and others. Jaanus Vaiksoo has written that “Gailit’s work of that period suffered the impact of the grim era, *i.e.* the First World War and the years that followed. Or, sticking to the writer’s main axis of beauty versus ugliness; ugliness transformed into the aesthetic clearly prevailed” (Vaiksoo 5). One of the main figures in Gailit’s works after World War I was the Devil “who lures people to the path of sin and turns a convent into the vilest of brothels. [- - -] In his novel Purple Death, the mysterious disease destroys only men. The women remain alone and lose their meaning in life. The few surviving men perish amidst frenzied hordes of women who wage bloody battles to get them. The dreadful disease destroys whole nations. The

world is doomed” (Vaiksoo 5). World War I inspired Gailit with its horrors, and he presented extremely grotesque situations in his stories.

In 1944 the Soviet Army occupied Estonia, and Gailit and his family escaped to Sweden. There he continued with his pessimistic philosophy of life due to the occupation of Estonia and exile. But the writer’s style remained much the same: “It is still playful, grotesque, instantly recognisable. His work is still based on opposition: beautiful/ugly, good/evil, warm/cold, nature/civilisation and God/Devil. Gailit’s works thus resemble fairy tales” (Vaiksoo 9). So Gailit’s stories balance on the border between grotesque and fairy tales.

### **The Grotesque in the Soviet Time**

The political and literary situations after World War II were both complicated and paradoxical in Estonia. It was a time when the Soviet period was adapted to and a new culture under the new ideology was formed.

After the 1960s, and especially after 1968, Estonian society and literature both underwent profound changes. Although the 1960s generation of writers continued their literary work, they approached it differently than even a few years earlier. It was also a time when the grotesque became one of the favourite techniques, because “At the end of the 1960s Estonian literature began to use a system of images which did not pretend to recreate reality in the forms of reality itself” (Tootmaa 313). The grotesque “...allowing life and man to be as if “found anew”, getting closer to the substance of things and occurrences, and at the same time rejecting and mocking the enemies of the ideal and warning against dangers to the individual produces by the development of mass-oriented society” (Tootmaa 313). The grotesque and absurdity in literature became tools of rebellion against the Soviet regime.

Arvo Valton (b.1935) was one of the writers of the 1960s generation. He was a young man who systematically undermined the Soviet regime in his works.<sup>8</sup> According to Harald Peep, Arvo Valton used grotesque as a style in his short stories.<sup>9</sup> And Janika Kronberg has pointed out that in the 1960s Valton “first made his mark as a writer of short stories with grotesque and strangeness as leitmotifs. Valton criticises absurd aspects of the technological revolution and its deleterious effects on beauty and art. The author is a master at suggesting a link between the bureaucracy of totalitarian regimes and examines the borders of existential concerns” (Kronberg 16). This indicates that the grotesque in Soviet literature also included political and social criticism, although sometimes it was disguised: the grotesque as an ambivalent and polysemic phenomenon made it possible to play with several meanings, including meanings which may have been forbidden. For example, one of Valton’s best short stories is “Kaheksa jaapanlannat” (“Eight Japanese Women”, 1968), in which delicate

dancers visit a very big and non-human, mechanical and terrible chemistry factory. The delicate dancers and the factory form an obvious contrast between the human and nonhuman, the mechanical and natural, and that opposition also carries criticism of the Soviet system and the propaganda of progress.

It is significant that most of the works of Arvo Valton were written without any noticeable plot, but in his short story “Rohelise seljakotiga mees” (“The Man With the Green Rucksack”, 1968), the gradual forming of the grotesque appears. The plot of the short story is the following: “Suddenly a man appears from nowhere and begins to read a book out loud in a railway station. As this activity is not directly dangerous to society, the man cannot be prohibited from doing so. However, his action receives the attention of the corresponding authorities of a totalitarian state; committees are formed to deal with the phenomenon, to struggle against spontaneous reading of books in railway stations; reading out loud is intended to be continued on an organized basis with trained readers, etc. But the man disappears as unexpectedly as he came. With him disappears the phenomenon to be struggled against; the trained readers have to find other jobs, the rostra built especially for reading books out loud will stand useless, etc.; the dumb machinery grounds to a halt, because everything is peaceful again. Thus, by hyperbolizing the mechanical reaction of officials to an unknown phenomenon, a grotesque plot is achieved” (Tootmaa 320).

Valton’s short story “Salmonella” (1968) has an analogous structure. Hasso Krull has stated that these Valton works are similar to the works of Franz Kafka, because although Valton represents reality in his works, that reality still looks unreal.<sup>10</sup>

Valton has used dreams as a model of reality in his works: “The structure of the dream landscapes is complex: dream-like situations are blended with real ones, the plot is intertwined with long deliberations, there is a pictorial flow of consciousness, action and humour” (Tootmaa 318). Even the mystic and ghostly elements in his works stress grotesque style and metaphor. “In fact, his stories about reality are very similar to his dream stories” (324), e.g. “Kummituste maja” (“The House of Ghosts”) and “The Dolls” from the collection *Mustamäe armastus* (*The Love of Mustamäe*, 1978).

The excerpt from the collection of miniatures *Mina, mina, mina* (*Me, me, me*, 1988) demonstrates the style of Valton, how he uses the grotesque, and language to make grotesque images. It is an astonishing text in which the real world and non-real worlds are mixed:

I drew an animal once.

I didn’t know what animal it was.

None of the friends I showed the drawing to knew it either.

That animal made us all anxious.

One day it took pity on me and began to live.

I put a collar round its neck and we went for a walk out the back.

People said, 'Oh!' when they saw it and several of them said, 'Ah!' So apparently, they didn't know what animal it was either.

I took my animal to see the scientist. He put his glasses on and studied his book. He said nothing and just shook his head.

I offered my enigma to the zoo. They wouldn't take it because they didn't know what notice to put on the door of its cage.

I came home knowing that I'm a dreadful artist.

[...]

I carry my love as if it were a small porcupine in my hand.

Suddenly it begins to talk in a human voice and says, 'No!'  
'Why?' I ask.

But try as it might, it is no longer able to produce human speech to explain what it means.

Maybe it doesn't even know itself. Although I don't detect any astonishment in the porcupine, it appears altogether proud of its lack of knowledge. Or maybe it is proud that it made such a heroic effort and said 'no'.

What can you do with it? It's lovely, true enough, this prickly existence. Really special straight away.

But when you think about it in depth and absolute honesty, would I want it to dandle in my hand for life? It's needling me already.

For the present my hands are hardened but what about in years to come?

Perhaps I'll be less thick-skinned and want to let the needler go? But in the end it is mine to pledge!

There's no escaping it. It's true, love is always complicated.

(Valton 82, trans. S. Wilson and A. Alari)

There are similar tendencies in the works of another Estonian prose writer, Vaino Vahing (1940 – 2008). Vahing was a psychiatrist and a writer, and he used dreams in his works mostly as a source. He transformed the stuff of dreams into the actual, and thus Vahing's dream-like stories can be "reduced to reality as the background that gives birth to dreams" (Tootmaa 318), e.g. in the collection *Näitleja (An Actor)* (1976). Consequently, "Vahing discovered disorder and lack of motivation in this world most people think of as ordered and motivated; he showed that reality itself is contradictory and grotesque" (315). Comparing Valton and Vahing, Rein Tootmaa concludes, that "One sees moments of grotesque in life, the other thinks life itself so grotesque. Depending on the differences in perceiving reality, the grotesque of exaggeration prevails in Valton and that of reality in Vahing" (319).

There were also other writers who used more or less grotesque motifs and stylistic elements of the grotesque in their works in the Soviet time, e.g. Enn Vetemaa (b. 1936), Mati Unt (1944 – 2005), Paul-Eerik Rummo (b. 1942) and Juhan Smuul (1922 – 1971). The grotesque as a literary element served comic, tragic, social, political and aesthetic purposes in the Soviet time. The social meaning of the grotesque connected it with the romantic literary tradition, and also with such authors as Swift, Hoffmann, Gogol and Poe.

### **The Grotesque and Surrealism**

It is only one small step from grotesque motifs and stylistic elements to surrealism, which is connected more with language, and with playing with language. According to the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan (1901 – 1981), language expresses the structures of the unconscious. Francis de Goya's (1746 – 1828) *capricho "El sueño de la razón produce monstruos"* (*The reason's dream producing monsters*) is a very good illustration of Lacan's and surrealist ideas, because Goya's work stresses "the obscure side of reality", where the human conscience is deeply intertwined with the sexual and the telluric" (Talvet 60 – 61). Grotesque motifs and images also exist in Estonian literature, and they give Estonian poetry a more playful character, and represent the grotesque as a phenomenon of play.

The avant-garde movement surrealism came to Estonian literature in the 1930 - 1940s. The first surrealist poetry book was Ilmar Laaban's (1921 – 2000) *Ankruketi*

*lõpp on laulu algus* (*The End of the Anchor Chain is the Beginning of Songs*, 1946), published in Sweden. Laaban was influenced by French poets and he also translated French literature into Swedish.

Laaban was the first innovative Estonian poet in exile. The influence of his poetry was also very strong in the homeland because its surrealist liberty brought metaphor and freedom to poetic language. To celebrate the 20th anniversary of the first manifesto of surrealism, Laaban published the article “The perspectives of Surrealism” in 1944. He wrote that surrealism was a new world-view, not only aesthetic, but also ethical and moral.<sup>11</sup> Laaban’s texts are sometimes ironic, and that aspect is revealed in sound and intonation when these texts are read. Irony and surrealism are actually problematic phenomena: the question arises as to whether it is possible to write automatically if the text must be ironic. Laaban’s surrealist liberty gave freedom to poetic language and metaphor. His surrealism was more a liberation of language than a liberation of the mind from logic.

For example, the poem “Vaikus ja vägivald” (“Silence and Violence”) from the collection mentioned above, begins with a grotesque picture of a landscape and sky with “clouds tightening into meat and skinning over with fur”:

### **Silence and Violence**

Long ago on a windy hunt  
 a horrible happiness abruptly bloomed in me  
 and the landscape congealed only its pungent  
 blood rustling through my veins the gun smoked  
 incessantly the hound did not bark  
 as it gazed at the clouds tightening  
 into meat and skinning over with fur  
 streaming tangled by despair

Because on the horizon a stout tower appeared  
 which swayed slowly between emptiness  
 and the overflowing clamor of hideous joy  
 like a gigantic latrine  
 the sweaty sun mottled Earth and Welkin  
 until suddenly it was eclipsed by cold  
 ravens of freedom who carried my eyes  
 and fresh images like flags in their bills

At twilight which was only flashes

as the sea is but the triumph of the drowned  
 my hunting jacket was freed of its heavy  
 web of lust I simply ran forward  
 along the mute moor coming across  
 animals with shining coals for hearts  
 I shot them so many that the road home  
 was finally choked with grass

Long ago I seized the empty beaker  
 and faced its inflexible challenge  
 and ever since this endless draught rinses -  
 my gun-barrel mouth which sparkles  
 in the starry sky and when it sees  
 some too-warm nebula defiling cosmic night  
 it proclaims ponderously and clearly  
 I DENY DEATH BUT AFFIRM ICE  
 (Laaban 8; Trans. R. Adang and A. Ehin)

The first part of the poem expresses fear and despair, which are connected with that strange landscape. The last strophe sounds more positive and self-confident, and there are no further grotesque images; only the effect of astonishment remains.

In 1945 the poem “Elada vabana vői surra” (“To Live Free or Die”) was published and it is very similar to Paul Éluard’s (1895 – 1952) poem *Liberté*. Laaban remained close to French surrealism till 1944; after that his style became more distanced from French surrealism. French surrealism was connected with political movements and the Communist Party. Laaban’s surrealism was against the Communist Party after 1944, because he had escaped from his homeland when the Soviet occupation began. But the idea of freedom was still one of Laaban’s main ideas and most probably this was due to the influence of French surrealism.

The poem “To Live Free or Die” is very optimistic, exalted and full of the pathos of freedom. There are not very many grotesque images and motifs in this poem, and those which may be grotesque are represented as an evil which has lost its frightening aspect: the message of Laaban’s poem is that the evil is defeated and there is no need to fear it. For example, the verses in the fourth strophe represent a grotesque picture of decayed eyes, but the next verse connects it with hope:

To know that the decayed eyes of traitors  
 become the spawn of the fish of hope

And the last strophe is about a murderer's grave, but it is possible to live there as grass, holding a rock and joy:

To live as grass on the murderer's grave  
to live a rock in one hand and joy in the other

Laaban's poetry expresses freedom on every level, and when he uses grotesque, ugly or terrible images, they have a comic and positive function in his poetry. Laaban's surrealism works like the grotesque did in the medieval carnival, according to Bakhtin.

### **To Live Free or Die**

To weigh the sun on the scales of leaves  
to proclaim truth to each gust of wind  
to bear on the brow the reflection of wells  
to live free or die

To kiss stones kiss the keys of azure sky  
kiss animals amid thunder and oblivion  
to sing in the desert in a snowy voice  
to live free or die

To gather up all lost words  
to sway in the orgasm of flowers  
which shatter the opaque sky  
to live free or die

To listen to the fountain of fair blood  
declaiming in the garden of terrifying grass  
to know vengeance and the value of stars  
to live free or die

To know that the decayed eyes of traitors  
become the spawn of the fish of hope  
without dreams of ferns and iron  
to live free or die

To bemoan the petrified bees  
 to find the crack where the moon will be reborn  
 to smile in the face of the swirling storm  
 to live free or die

To see the black cloud blossoming  
 above the barren landscape's gaudiness  
 to embrace the translucent sculpture of madness  
 to live free or die

To recall the shame to recall the sea  
 to understand a child's earthy question  
 to remain faithful to a melted ice floe  
 to live free or die

To watch the dawn growing in the valley like a tree  
 to watch it from the ridge of the sierra of abomination  
 to unite hail and a butterfly in a human face  
 to live free or die

To live as flying fish live  
 to live in wintry fires and in the night of benevolence  
 to live endlessly vanishing  
 to live free or die

To live as grass on the murderer's grave  
 to live a rock in one hand and joy in the other  
 to live to discover the heart of waves  
 to live free or die

(Laaban 8-9; Trans. R. Adang and A. Ehin)

Andres Ehin (1940 – 2011) was one of the few surrealist poets in Estonia. According to Janika Kronberg “Ehin naturally synthesises undogmaticalness and the profusion of free associations, unexpected connections and imagination, freed from consciousness and opposed to common logic” (Kronberg 36). Ehin was a poet who enjoyed word play, unexpected associations and absurd images. His poetry was humorous and individual. There are not many grotesque images in his poetry, but if some fragment works as the grotesque it usually has a positive meaning. It is the

surrealist carnival with polysemic word play, laughter and ambivalence, e.g. the poem “Olla koerkorter” (“Dog Apartment”, 2001), which plays with two worlds: the world of human beings and the world of animals, and it unites things which seem to be impossible to unite. The result is astonishing and fun as a real carnival.

### **Dog Apartment**

Imagine an apartment made of dog  
 three rooms of bark, a bathroom of snout  
 the cold tap dribbles, the hot tap slobbers  
 an apartment made of dog with floors  
 which howl at ceiling lamps at night as if they were moons

imagine an apartment made of dog  
 which detests the very scent of cat  
 an apartment made of dog  
 whose sofa hairs bristle  
 at the sprayings of even distant moggies.

(Ehin 2005) (Trans. P. Cotter)

### **The Grotesque in Recent Estonian Culture**

Andrus Kivirähk (b. 1970) is one of the most popular prose writers today. His novel *Rehepapp (Old Barny, 2000)* is about Estonians and Estonian identity; it is a self-ironic novel, but at the same time it works as a positive grotesque carnival. Kivirähk uses “elements of folklore and mythology in his work, deforming them into the absurd and grotesque” (Kronberg 37). Kivirähk combines different elements of national mythology, and treats them playfully and freely.<sup>12</sup> There is also postmodernist play, but at the same time it is positive and includes relieving laughter, which expresses the positive aspect of the grotesque. It is also significant that Kivirähk writes about some none-specified time when Estonians were controlled by foreign landlords; this historical past is simpler to understand and interpret now, and at the same time people recognize themselves in some ways. Actually, Kivirähk speaks through national mythology and history about contemporary people.

Ervin Õunapuu (b. 1956) is a prose writer and an artist well-known for his theatre scenery and surrealist water-colours. He published his first novel, *Olivia meistrikläss (Olivia’s Master Class)* in 1996, and that novel put the author at the center of the Estonian literary life. The titles of his other works are also very significant and sometimes grotesque: *Teie mälestuseks, kes iganes te olete ja kus asute (In Your*

*Memory, Whoever You Are and Wherever You Are*, 1999), and *Surmaminejad lasevad tervitada* (*Suicides Send Their Greetings*, 2000).

Õunapuu uses strong grotesque images in his short stories, and his stories contrast with traditional realism. He describes ugly events in life, but these stories are actually very poetic, full of contrasts and impressive images. He uses intertextual relations, and combines verbal and pictorial images in his stories and books, as well as historical motifs from Estonian and European history. Religious motifs are very important in his works. The key words characterising Õunapuu's work are archetype, myth, absurd and dislocation.<sup>13</sup>

The collection *Eesti gootika. Lauavestlused* (*Estonian Gothic. Table Talks*, 2010) is the last book from the series *Estonian Gothic*. The grotesque protagonist of the book is Martin Maria Kull, who is a radical Christian and the first administrator of the country which he has named The Land of Holy Mary (in Latin, *Terra Mariana*). The protagonist's first name suggests Martin Luther, but the name Maria provides a connection to the European Catholic tradition. The last name Kull is Estonian, and it is significant that the protagonist has changed his original German noble name von Habicht to the Estonian name Kull ("hawk" in English). This is a reference to Estonian history in the 1930s, when many people took new, more Estonian names. Every sentence in Õunapuu's text contains references to history and to religion.

The title *Estonian Gothic. Table Talks* alludes to Martin Luther's speeches. Luther was a reformist and he protested against the claim that freedom from God's punishment for sin could be purchased with money, but Luther was also a man of contradictions (e.g. he became antisemitic in his later years). Martin Kull is not Luther, but there is something which connects him with Luther and other rebels. Õunapuu's book is written as Martin Kull's diary. The beginning of the diary is similar to the first chapter of the Gospel of John: "In the beginning was the Word (*Logos* in Latin – A.M.), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (Jh 1:1). Martin Kull begins with "In the beginning was the thought".<sup>14</sup> And he continues: "I arrived today in the State which was named the Estonian Socialist Republic this morning, but now it is changed. I made it thanks to God" (Õunapuu 5). And then he describes how he has changed the name of that state to *Terra Mariana*. This shows that the only thing that has changed is the name of the State, nothing more. All other things are the same. Soviet Estonia has a new name, but still the old content.

At the same time, the name *Terra Mariana* refers to the old official name for Medieval Livonia, given by Bishop Albert in 1201, and to the 13<sup>th</sup> century, when the Teutonic Order conquered Latvia and Estonia. The first page of Martin Kull's diary refers to all of Estonian history. And the last sentence on this page is also very significant: it is the Gospel of Apostle Martin (5). He is a false prophet in the religious

sense, of course, but if we think about the literary and social contexts, the message conveyed by this false prophet is very important, and it is actually a secular message rather than a religious message.

*The Table Talks* contains more than a written text. There are very high-quality photos to illustrate the text. And every picture has its own meaning. Under the portrait of Martin Kull, it is written that he was born in Germany in a nunnery, and he is missing.

The illustrative photo under the first chapter is also very significant and grotesque. There are three things side by side in the picture which do not belong together: a crucifix, a Soviet passport, and an American dollar. The Soviet passport is in the middle, and it also refers to history: Christianity was not accepted in the Soviet time, but it is a well-known fact that many pastors also worked as KGB agents. Religion and politics were connected and mixed in the Soviet time as it was also in the Russian Empire. Perhaps that is one of the main reasons why Õunapuu is very critical of the Church.

The American dollar is also very significant. It is money which people admire, but it is the enemy's money in the Soviet context. It was forbidden for common people. All these things are very symbolic, and together they reflect ideology, power and politics. And all these symbols are also very strong in our cultural collective memory, as well as in our personal memories. Õunapuu deforms these meanings in his book to demonstrate that these symbols are negative if they are in a negative context, or if they represent a reality which is grotesque.

But on another page there is a picture of a crucifix and 10-cent Euro coin in a small change purse. Although 10 cents is not much money, and the cultural memory is not very long in this context, that picture points to the same combination as the crucifix and dollar, but now it is not the Soviet context, but the context of the European Union.

The last chapter of Õunapuu's book is titled "Missing". It refers to the first chapter, and to history, more precisely to Stalin's acts of repression, in which many people went missing. The last chapter presents the arrest of Martin Kull, and it presents a picture very similar to how the KGB arrested people in Stalin's time. The men who come to arrest Martin wear civilian clothes, but military boots. And Õunapuu's text is very ambivalent: although he plays with tragic history and with religious motifs (Judas and the Bible, which inspires the protagonist), there is still suspicion that Martin Kull is a criminal. He has not paid his taxes and he is deeply in debt, according to the officers. This seems to be the reason for his arrest.

Martin Kull's last words "I have waited for this moment for over fifty years" (78) are very significant, and ambivalent. The question of who Martin Kull is arises again.

Why has he been waiting for that moment, the moment of arrest, for more than 50 years? Or perhaps he has not been waiting for the moment of arrest, but for another moment, the moment when he can disappear.

We can also read Õunapuu's text as an optimistic text: Martin Kull, the false prophet, lawyer, radical *etc.* disappears, and hopefully he takes his hypocrisy, lies and Soviet burden with him. There is only a very strong light in this place where he stood before he disappears.

Mehis Heinsaar's (b. 1973) stories are not as tragic, and he uses many intertextual relations in his stories. Janika Kronberg has written that Heinsaar's stories are "light and airy, with the imaginary dimension introduced in realistic scenes, sometimes in an absurd or surrealist way" (Kronberg 58). The term "magical realism" characterizes Heinsaar's style very well. While Õunapuu's stories use very strong deformations and there are also strong social and critical messages, Heinsaar's typical character is a funny and kind-hearted man who does strange things, and all his life is full of mystical adventures which are melancholy and humorous, not malevolent and ironic. Heinsaar's typical character is a strange man who has physical deformations and/or mystical abilities. Such people are usually reclusive and other people shy away from them, because they are very strange, e.g. Anselm in the story "Liblikmees" ("Butterfly Man", 2001), whose body gives off butterflies if he is excited: "It's always the same, every time I experience a strong emotion, these creatures start flying off my body. I was bullied at school for it, and my relatives, even my parents, saw me as some kind of freak, although I've always been of perfectly sound mind" (Heinsaar 27). Anselm meets other people who are similar to him; they are heroes in the circus, but freaks in real life: "he saw a man with a transparent body surrounded by gorgeous women with non-transparent bodies who seemed to form his harem; he saw an old wrinkled woman with a long white horn growing out of her forehead and whose sweet breath reminded Anselm of a long-forgotten world. Two children with wings for arms were floating near the ceiling and their flight resembled that of bats" (Heinsaar 28).

A deformed body also occurs at the end of Heinsaar's collection of short stories *Härri Pauli kroonikad* (*The Chronicles of Mr. Paul*, 2001), whose last story is titled "Veidi peale maailma lõppu" ("A Bit of Time After the End of the World"). Everyone else has left, but Mr Paul still remains; actually his shoe, mouth and left eye remain, and all these parts try to find each other and their surroundings, but there is nothing there.

## Conclusion

The grotesque can appear in different ways in literature. It may be positive and comic word play, as it was in old cultural traditions and medieval carnivals. The grotesque

may also convey social and political meaning, as during the Romantic period and the Soviet time. But the most important thing that grotesque images tell us in contemporary times is that something is wrong, that people do not feel comfortable in a situation, and that is a grotesque situation which combines tragedy and laughter. Laughter is good, but not if you are a laughing stock.

## Notes

1. Q.v. Wolfgang Kayser. *The Grotesque in Art and Literature*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1981; and Ülar Ploom. *Grotesque Images in Dante's Inferno*. – *Interlitteraria* 2, 1997: 84 – 85.
2. Harald Peep. *Tähtraamat*. Tallinn: Eesti Raamat, 1978: 49.
3. Jüri. Talvet. “The Polyglot Grotesque”, *Interlitteraria* 2, 1997: 51.
4. Michael Alexander. *Beowulf*. London: Penguin Books, 1988: 11-12.
5. Mihhail Bahtin. *Valitud töid (Selected Works)*. Tallinn: Eesti Raamat, 1987: 199.
6. Friedebert Tuglas. *Teoste sünnilood*. Tallinn: Eesti Raamat, 1966: 177 – 217.
7. Vilmos Voigt. “Tuglas’ Early Mythopoeitics”, *At the End of the World. Text, Motif, Culture. Collegium litterarum* 18, ed. Rein Undusk. Tallinn: The Under and Tuglas Literature Centre, 2005: 68.
8. Ain Kaalep. “Tervitades uut generatsiooni”, *Taasleitud aeg. Eesti ja some kirjanduse muutumine 1950. – 1960. aastatel. Kadonnen ajan arvoitus. Viron ja Suomen kirjallisuuden muuttuminen 1950- ja 1960-luvulla*. Tartu: Tartu Ülikool, 2000: 11 - 17.
9. Harald Peep. *Tähtraamat*. Tallinn: Eesti Raamat, 1978: 57.
10. Hasso Krull. *Millimallikas. Kirjutised 1996 – 2000*. Tallinn: Vagabund, 2000: 81.
11. Q.v. Ilmar Laaban. “Surrealismis perspektiive”, *Eesti Looming* II. Helsinki, 1944: 82; Sirje Olesk. Tõdede vankuval müüril. Artikleid ajast ja luulest. Tartu: Eesti Kirjandusmuuseum, 2002: 114.
12. Janika Kronberg. “Review of Andrus Kivirähk’s *The Barn-keeper*”, *Estonian Literary Magazine* 12 (Spring, Tallinn, 2001): 37 – 38.
13. Rutt Hinrikus. “Review of Ervin Õunapuu’s *Eesti gootika (Estonian Gothic)*”, *Estonian Literary Magazine* 10 (Spring, Tallinn, 2000): 42 – 43.
14. Here and in the following the translation of Õunapuu’s text from Estonian is mine. A.M.

## Works Cited

- Alexander, Michael, *Beowulf*. London: Penguin Books, 1988, 11-12.
- Ehin, Andres. “Dog Apartment”, *A Sharp Cut. Contemporary Estonian Literature*. Tallinn: Estonian Literature Information Centre, 2005: 13.

- Heinsaar, Mehis. "Butterfly Man", *Estonian Literary Magazine* 15 (Autumn, Tallinn, 2002): 26 – 33.
- Kronberg, Janika. "Arvo Valton", *Estonian Literary Magazine* 22 (Spring, Tallinn, 2006): 16 – 17.
- . "Review of *Alateadvus on alati purjus* (The Subconscious Is Always Drunk)", *Estonian Literary Magazine* 11 (Autumn, Tallinn, 2000): 36 – 37.
- . "Review of Andrus Kivirähk's *The Barn-keeper*", *Estonian Literary Magazine* 12 (Spring, Tallinn, 2001): 37 – 38.
- Laaban, Ilmar. "Silence and Violence", *Estonian Literary Magazine* 8 (Spring, Tallinn, 1999): 8.
- . "To Live Free or Die", *Estonian Literary Magazine* 8 (Spring, Tallinn, 1999): 8-9.
- Malin, Jaan. "Laabani maatu ilm", Ilmar Laaban, *Sõnade sülemid, sülemite süsteemid*. Tartu: Ilmamaa, 2004. 379 - 398.
- Õunapuu, Ervin. *Eesti Gootika. Lauavestlused*. Tallinn: Eesti Ajalookirjastus, 2010.
- Talvet, Jüri. "The Polyglot Grottesque", *Interlitteraria* 2, 1997: 51 – 63.
- Tootmaa, Rein. "Fixing Anti-Values and Creating Alienated Illusions. The Grottesque in the Work of Estonian Writers Arvo Valton and Vaino Vahing from the Sixties to the Eighties", *Interlitteraria* 2, 1997: 40 – 326.
- Undusk, Rein. "Preface", *At the End of the World. Text, Motif, Culture. Collegium litterarum* 18, ed. Rein Undusk (Tallinn, The Under and Tuglas Literature Centre, 2005. 7 – 10).
- Vaiksoo, Jaanus. "August Gailit", *Estonian Literary Magazine* 14 (Spring, Tallinn, 2002): 4 – 9.
- Valk, Ülo. „Authorship and textuality. The Kalevipoeg as epic landscape”, *The Kalevala and the World's Traditional Epics. Studia Fennica Folkloristica* 12, ed. Lauri Honko, (Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2002): 405 – 417.
- Valton, Arvo. "Me, me, me", *A Sharp Cut. Contemporary Estonian Literature*. Tallinn: Estonian Literature Information Centre, 2005: 83.
- Voigt, Vilmos. "Tuglas' Early Mythopoetics", *At the End of the World. Text, Motif, Culture. Collegium litterarum* 18, ed. Rein Undusk. (Tallinn, The Under and Tuglas Literature Centre, 2005. 67 – 81).

责任编辑：杨革新

# Writing for Theatre: New Developments in Estonian Drama of the 1990s and 2000s

**Luule Epner**

Institute of Cultural Research and Fine Arts, University of Tartu

Ülikooli 16, Tartu, 51014, Estonia

Email: luule.epner@ut.ee

**Abstract** The article examines the new developments in Estonian playwriting of the 1990s and 2000s in the context of Western postdramatic theatre. Democratization of Estonian theatre system (first of all, the appearance of small privately-managed theatres as an institutional alternative to state theatres) and the abolition of Soviet-time censorship created the necessary makings of artistic changes both in the field of theatre and playwriting. The changes, supported by lively exchange of influences and ideas between Estonian and Western theatre, have been rather gradual than radical. The spread of new writing practices like so-called directors' dramaturgy and collective devising of performances have given rise to substantial changes in the poetics of playtexts, based to a great extent on postdramatic aesthetics. The documentary theatre of Merle Karusoo and the post-modernist playwriting of Mati Unt are observed more closely in the article, as well as particular modes of devising performance and textual strategies, used by the Theatre NO99. The new playwriting practices, most closely intertwined with the processes of creating theatre performances, put forward a range of questions related to the definition and status of drama as a literary genre.

**Keywords** postdramatic theatre; Estonian drama and theatre; collective creation; devising performance

## **General Background: Theatre System in the 1990s**

The aim of the present article is to discuss the new developments in Estonian drama of the 1990s and the 2000s. Needless to say, that drama as a literary genre has always been strongly affected by and has developed together with the art of theatre. Most contemporary theoretical definitions of "drama" include one way or another the dimension of theatre, instead of contrasting the dramatic genre only or mainly with its literary neighbours, i.e. drama is understood as being shaped by the presence and/or absence of theatrical elements.<sup>1</sup> First,<sup>1</sup> a play as a text written for the stage

is (in)formed by an implicit conception or vision of theatrical performance. Anne Ubersfeld argues that on a deep level, both (dramatic) text and theatre performance have a common coded genotext (*g no-text cod *); the dominant theatrical code of an age plays the role of a matrix “informing” the text. She says: “One writes for, with or against the pre-existent theatrical code” (Ubersfeld 14). Secondly, the available theatrical codes depend to a greater or lesser extent on theatre system and practices of making a performance of a particular age or national culture. Therefore it is necessary to introduce discussion of Estonian drama with a brief overview of how the Estonian theatre landscape has changed since regaining of independence in 1991, under the influence of major economic restructuring and political democratization.

Unlike most post-socialist countries, the fundamental political reforms of the early 1990s affected Estonian theatrical structure and practices of theatre-making only marginally. The Estonian theatre system — about ten state-supported professional repertory theatres, scattered over the whole country — remained largely intact. Though the first small privately-managed theatre groups made their appearance already in the late 1980s, they had little impact on theatre processes until the mid-1990s. However, this institutional novelty turned out to be of crucial importance in the long-term perspective. Whereas the Soviet regime absolutely excluded the idea of any “free troupes”, in the newly independent Estonia these troupes (often operating as flexible project-based theatres) gradually developed into an institutional and to a great extent also an artistic alternative to big repertory theatres. The most influential were (and still are) the experimental and multimedia-oriented Von Krahl Theatre (founded in 1992), and the minimalist and traditionalist *Theatrum* (founded in 1994). Together with the abolition of Soviet-time censorship that kind of institutional diversification contributed to a general switch-over to the Western model of culture and created the necessary makings of artistic changes both in the field of theatre and playwriting.

Re-orientation was supported by now free communication with Western countries: a lot of guest productions were brought to Estonia, and Estonian theatres participated at various festivals abroad, not to speak of frequent travels and studies abroad which became a normal part of life experience for artists, critics, scholars, etc. One must accentuate the role of the international festival of alternative theatre, called *Baltoscandal* (founded in 1990 and held every other year), in both introducing new international trends to Estonia and Estonian theatre companies to foreign artists and critics. There has been an intense exchange of ideas and influences between Estonia and Western world over the last decades.

As regards the artistic changes, they have been rather gradual than radical, i.e. manifesting themselves by lots of minor shifts and novelties. There was no sharp stylistic change in the 1990s; instead, the Estonian theatre seemed to have settled

for a period of relative stabilization.<sup>2</sup> The leading stage directors of the period, working almost exclusively in professional state theatres, remained relatively close to traditional (psychological and realistic or modernist) modes. Somewhat unexpectedly the interest of theatres in original Estonian playwriting even dropped in comparison with the Soviet period — throughout the decade only about 25% of new productions were based on Estonian material — instead, the repertoire was dominated by translations, especially of modern Anglo-American authors.

### **Drama in the 1990s**

The change of generations was much less evident in playwriting than in Estonian poetry and fiction. The most prominent and most unconventional newcomer of the 1990s Madis Kõiv (b. 1929), a physician by profession, belongs to the older generation. As a matter of fact, many of his plays were written in the Soviet period, but they were “discovered” by the theatres only in 1990s — before, they were largely regarded as technically unstageable and untheatrical. Kõiv’s work has been deeply affected by his keen interest in classical Western philosophy, from Kant to Wittgenstein. His themes range from the history of European philosophical and cultural thought (dramas involving Spinoza, Leibniz, Kant, or Beethoven and Hölderlin as main characters) over ordinary Estonian peasant life to the traumas of national history. Kõiv’s plays combine a highly original thinking with visionary quality, often manifested by a rather wild and vivid surrealistic imagery. Their visionary form was likewise a serious challenge for the Estonian theatre of the time; at the same time it proved to be the basis of their strong theatricality, once they were put on stage.<sup>3</sup> Kõiv’s work clearly demonstrates that a drama text which is innovative and even risky, regarding current theatre conventions, could have a fertile impact on theatre aesthetics and become a driving force of artistic development because it requires the invention of new theatrical means for expressing the playwright’s intentions and for representing the fictional world of the play on stage.<sup>4</sup>

Among notable young playwrights, Andrus Kivirähk (b. 1970) and Jaan Tätt (b. 1964), both an actor and singer should be mentioned in the first place. No doubt Kivirähk is the most popular present-day playwright in Estonia: the stage production of his *Eesti matus* (*Estonian Funeral*, 2002) has enjoyed the largest audiences in Estonian drama theatre of the start of the 21st century, and his other comedies, such as *Jalutuskäik vikerkaarel* (*A Walk on the Rainbow*) (1997), *Aabitsakukk* (*The Cock of ABC-Book*) (2006) and *Voldemar* (2007), has caught attention of the audiences and the critics as well. Kivirähk is mainly preoccupied with Estonian national history and mentality, often deconstructing old national myths in an ironic manner. His technique that could be called post-modernist, involves mixing of documentary and fictional,

representation of everyday life through the poetics of fairy-tale, pastiche and parody, and he intertwines joyful playing with bold irony.

Kivirähk's work has powerfully contributed to the shift in processing the issues of national identity and collective memory that could be observed in literature as well as in theatre during the 1990s: the nationalist pathos characteristic of Soviet time has largely been replaced by a more ambivalent, often self-ironic and/or tragi-comic approaches.<sup>5</sup> Recently, Kivirähk has been one of the initiators of the wave of pseudo-historical plays, treating the real persons and events from Estonian history (notably from theatre history) with effervescent fantasy.

In contrast to Kõiv and Kivirähk, generally seen as deeply national writers whose work is not easily translatable, Jaan Tätte's main subject matter is more universal and his plays, usually coloured by warm humour, manifest traditional humanist values. It might be the reason why his plays quickly found their way to the international stage. Tätte's first and best-known play *Ristumine peateega ehk Muinasjutt kuldsest kalakesest* (*The Highway Crossing or a Tale of a Golden Fish*) (1998) has been staged in more than 30 different theatres abroad, in the first place in Germany. This rather "well-made" play re-uses an old fairy-tale plot to put to the test the young characters' values — their love versus really big money. Though some of Tätte's plays stand out by experimental formal solutions (such as utterly long monologue and sophisticated game with time levels in *Sild* (*The Bridge*) (2000)), his work on the whole could be well interpreted in the framework of "new sincerity" or "new simplicity" as one of the post-post-modernist trends in present-day literature.<sup>6</sup>

As regards the (inner) theatricality of a drama text, Tätte's excellent knowledge of theatre practices (as said before, he is a recognized actor) and conformity with actual stage conditions contrast sharply with Madis Kõiv's work — untheatrical at first glance, though revealing interest in the deepest essence of theatre, understood as an universal phenomenological framework for human perception of the world.

I would stress that apart from some innovations in the dramatic form, the Estonian drama of the 1990s remained rather traditional (perhaps with the exception of some plays by Madis Kõiv). The same could be said of the drama of other Baltic nations — in the 1990s, the rhythms of development in Estonian drama writing resembled much to that of the closest neighbours of Estonia with whom Estonia is more closely connected through a similar past and sociopolitical situation than with the West European theatre and drama. One has to agree with Latvian literary scholar Benedikts Kalnačs: Baltic drama of the turn of the centuries is marked "by ... the co-existence of both modernist and post-modernist elements, the deconstruction of social and national myths, and the still preserved close connections to the traditions of drama writing" (Kalnačs 214).

### **Changes in the Theatre of the 2000s**

By today both the theatrical context and stylistic look of Estonian drama has changed, when compared to the theatre landscape twenty years earlier — largely thanks to the changes in theatre practices, promoted and supported in its turn by lively interaction with the European theatre which is characteristic of the period after the re-establishment of an independent democratic state.

Among the most recent developments one should mention the emerging of a new wave of little and/or project-based privately managed theatres. This type of theatre had not been a widespread and artistically influential phenomenon in Estonia before, but since 2004 its position and reputation have started to rise and they have firmly rooted themselves in Estonian theatre system.<sup>7</sup> Their number has increased remarkably; for instance, in 2010 the state supported financially 17 private theatres and 12 state and municipal theatres. At present, about one third of the Estonian theatre performances are given by the private theatres. In view of these facts one could claim that the Estonian theatre system has become increasingly similar to that of Nordic countries like Finland or Sweden, well in line with the democratization and europeanization of the whole cultural field. The growing impact of German theatre that can be observed today, is explicable by the historical background (the long-lasting overlordship of Germans, resulting in strong cultural influences up to the Soviet occupation), as well as by the attractiveness of (post)modern German theatre for the younger generation of Estonian theatremakers.

The Estonian theatre landscape has become more fragmented year by year, and new troupes emerge constantly. The spread of small troupes is related to and partly caused by the differentiation of tastes and expectations of theatre audiences which in its turn reflects the structural changes in the participation of Estonian people in the cultural field over last decades, notably multiplication (or splitting) of cultural attitudes and interests. New theatres are expected to produce novelty or at least variety, and it seems that smaller troupes are able to operate more dynamically in artistic matters. Their artistic innovations range from combining live acting with modern audiovisual media (technological theatre) to the attempts to revive ancient ethnic heritage (folklore-based theatre).

As to the repertoire, the rise of small troupes runs parallel to the renewed interest in original Estonian dramaturgy. In recent seasons performances based on Estonian material have already taken up about 40-45% of the total number of new productions — against 25% in the 1990s. It appears that this increasing diversity of theatre system could have promoted original playwriting. However, it must be admitted that the mentioned revival is only in (smaller) part evinced by the appearance of new talented

playwrights creating new dramas. Certainly there are some young playwrights, like Urmas Vadi (b. 1977), Martin Algu (b. 1973), Urmas Lennuk (b. 1971) — it is worth noting that all of them have an educational background in theatre (acting or directing). Besides them, a literary scholar and fiction writer Jaan Undusk (b. 1958) made his debut in drama with *Good-bye, Vienna* in 1999; later he has written plays about writers of wide renown, such as *Boulgakoff* (2008) about Russian Mikhail Bulgakov and *Quevedo* (2003) based on Spanish writer of the Baroque era Francisco de Quevedo, focusing on complicated interrelations between political authorities and intellectuals. But more importantly, the “explosion” of original dramaturgy occurred thanks to considerable shifts in how and by whom playtexts are created. The spread of new writing practices, labelled as “new authorship” in recent Estonian theatre criticism, to a great extent evidences the vigorous emergence of the aesthetic paradigm of postdramatic theatre (as opposed to traditional text-based or dramatic theatre) since the start of the present century.

The notion of postdramatic theatre introduced by Professor Hans-Thies Lehmann in his seminal book *Postdramatisches Theater* (1999) covers a wide range of artistic phenomena in contemporary theatre. Their common ground consists of leaving traditional drama (i.e. conventions that govern a dramatic text) as the artistic basis and model for theatre performance, and sometimes reducing verbal text to merely one of the many elements of theatrical production. Postdramatic theatre does not aim at illustrating a pre-written literary text but rather equalizes the text to other, non-verbal theatrical means (visual images, actors’ performance, music, etc.) and uses it as material to create a performance. Ideas about postdramatic theatre definitely can be (and have been) applied to plays, i.e. to texts written for theatre and addressing this new paradigm. According to Malgorzata Sugiera, the basic structural principle of texts written for contemporary theatre often turns out to be their immanent theatricality which is understood more as a reflection upon theatre as a medium (addressing cognitive and perceptive processes of spectators) than upon theatre as a domain of artistic activity.<sup>8</sup>

Stephen Chinna has noted: “The a-priori text, whether written or visual, remains a part of performance. However, and importantly, it is not necessarily the starting point for performance. Texts, as a record rather than a recipe, can be assembled during the preparation time of a performance, during the ‘actual’ performance, as well as after the ‘event’” (Chinna 138). This claim clearly draws attention to the new ways of creating texts for theatre and, respectively, to the shifts in the manifestation of the authorial function.

### **Stage Directors as Playwrights**

In the present-day theatre, stage directors themselves frequently write or compile texts for their productions (or, in fewer cases, playwrights prefer and are able to stage their plays themselves). The reciprocal impact of writing for the stage and staging written texts can obviously not be overlooked in these cases — the processes of writing and staging tend to fuse. Of course, “directors’ dramaturgy” does not necessarily produce postdramatic type of theatre, but usually it does so. Some well-known examples are American playwright and stage director Richard Foreman, the founder of Ontological-Hysteric Theatre, American artist Robert Wilson, Robert Lepage in Canada, or René Pollesch, a theatremaker of younger generation in Germany. All of them have made performances out of texts compiled or written by themselves, and they have quite often based their stage productions predominantly on powerful theatrical imagery, created with the help of non-verbal means of expression.

In Estonia, directors-playwrights have emerged since the mid-1980s, when the earlier censorship first weakened and then disappeared. The institutional framework is in some cases the traditional state theatre but mostly it is preferred to work with a smaller circle of kindred spirits or to stage the so-called project-performances. From the aspect of aesthetics the dramaturgic output of stage directors is variable although mostly the postdramatic textual strategies are preferred. The most important stage directors, who have prepared the ground for the present-day “new authorship” in Estonia, are Merle Karusoo and Mati Unt.

The creative work of female stage director Merle Karusoo (b. 1944) is quite unique in both Estonian and European theatrical context. In criticism, her stage productions have been called now documentary theatre, now memory theatre or theatre of biographies. She prefers to name it sociological theatre herself, and to describe it as *Not Belonging to the Mainstream* — which was the title of her M.A. thesis (1999). Karusoo started her projects in sociological dramaturgy and theatre already in the early eighties, and in 1987 she founded one of the first alternative theatre groups called Pirgu’s Memory Department. Later she has worked also with amateur actors and theatre students. She has been called an outsider on the general landscape of contemporary Estonian theatre on the part of the critics<sup>9</sup>, and this applies even more to her position on our literary landscape — nonetheless she has deserved a number of literary and theatre awards.

Karusoo has always taken a keen interest in socio-political processes in Estonia, but she could not find any relevant original dramas, and therefore she started to compile texts herself. She has focused on the risk groups of the Estonian society (e.g. teenagers, immigrants, children in orphanages), and has produced documentary plays on topics such as drugs, HIV, teenage problems, homicide, etc. In preparing her stage productions, Karusoo uses data from sociological research, and makes use of

questionnaires, polls, interviews, school essays, etc.

Over time, Karusoo became convinced that the trouble spots of a society are most clearly revealed through the life experience of people in risk groups. (She has stated that the entire Estonian nation could be classified as a risk group because of experiencing numerous social traumas during national history.) Life story becomes the central entity of her theatre, while she remains aware of and is influenced by conceptions of life stories derived from the social sciences. A constant theme of life stories theatre developed from the end of the 1980s closely associated with the life stories collection campaigns started under the auspices of the Estonian Literary Museum during that same period. The political situation of the period was the restoration of independence, and the primary purpose of collecting life stories was to use collective memories to fill in the gaps in the nation's history, and to make public the social groups marginalized and silenced during the Soviet period. Alongside restoring true national history ("giving the Estonians back their history" in popular rhetoric), hidden personal biographies were re-discovered — "giving the people back their life stories" in the words of Karusoo (70).

Thus Karusoo staged life stories of those who, in 1944, failed in their attempts to escape to the West [*Sügis 1944 (Fall 1944)* (1997)], people deported to the Siberia [*Aruanne (The Report)* (1987)]— based on the diary of an elderly farm mistress) and those who assisted the deporters [*Küüdipoisid (The Deportation Men)* (1999)], conscripts of the Soviet army who fought in Afghanistan in the 1970s-1980s [*Misjonärid (The Missionaries)* (2005)], etc. Even in *Kured läinud, kurjad ilmad (The Cranes Gone, Bad Weather)* (1997), based on Estonians' stories about their love relations and sexual experience, Karusoo continued talking about the historical fate of our nation, as she put emphasis on contradictory interrelations between private and public spheres of life. Karusoo believes that revealing "hidden" life stories has a therapeutic impact, helping to cure individual and national traumas (Karusoo 55).

In texts compiled by herself or in some cases co-authored by the actors of her troupe, Karusoo employs predominantly the form of monologue. This could be explained by the fact that texts are created on the basis of long and detailed interviews with people, or written life-stories of "ordinary" Estonians. Thus, Karusoo builds her text from authentic, mostly oral speech, carefully preserving individual manners of speaking, idiolects, and intonations. On the part of theatre scholars, parallels have been drawn with directors-playwrights like Ariane Mnouchkine, leader of Théâtre du Soleil, American solo-performer Anna Deavere Smith, or Latvian director Alvis Hermanis.<sup>10</sup> Similarly to Karusoo, the latter's *Latviešu stāsti (Latvian Stories)* (2004), *Latviešu mīlestība (Latvian Love)* (2006) and *Kapusvētki (Graveyard Party)* (2010) use documentary material, gathered by the actors, portraying real characters and

celebrating “ordinary” people’s life experience.

Another outstanding director, whose artistic handwriting was in many ways an opposite to that of Karusoo, was Mati Unt (1944–2005). He started his career in the early 1960s as a fiction writer and came into notice as one of the leaders of the generation of the “golden sixties”. Unt’s novels and short stories of the 1960s and 1970s represent the Estonian literary modernism of the highest degree, while the novels *Sügisball (The Autumn Ball)* (1979) and *Õös on asju (Things in the Night)* (1990)<sup>11</sup> mark the breakthrough of postmodernism in Estonian literature. At the same time, Unt had strong ties with theatre: from 1966 to 1981, he worked in theatres as a dramaturge; in the 1980s he developed into a notable stage director and occupied one of the centre positions of Estonian theatre landscape in the 1990s.

Unt held an opinion that one should not overvalue the authorship in contemporary theatre: neither a playwright nor a stage director is the sole author. In his words, the latter’s proper function is to organise a kind of cluster consisting of his own as well as the writer’s, scenographer’s, actors’ and others’ intentions. However, in his own work Unt very often fulfilled simultaneously the tasks of a dramatist, a director and a stage designer, creating a kind of “auteur theatre”, in order to express his personal creative vision. As a rule, Unt rewrote in depth the literary texts his performances were based on (often the world and Estonian literary classics or myths), using intertextual strategies and giving an ironic turn to classical texts. One can mention a few examples like *Hot* (the modernised version of Shakespeare’s *Othello*, staged in 2002), *Kärbeste saar (The Island of Flies)*, an assembly of texts with island motifs, William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies* and Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* as dominant texts, staged in 2003), *Vend Antigone, ema Oidipus (Brother Antigone, Mother Oedipus)*, staged in 2003) on the basis of tragedies by Sophocles and Aeschylus. Quite a number of these rewritings and adaptations were published under Mati Unt’s name — he has been viewed as an excellent dramatist in his own right.

Unt has also departed from texts that lack any dramaturgical potential and are hard to adapt to theatre. For instance, the base text for *Vaimude tund Kadrioru lossis (An Hour of Ghosts in the Castle Kadriorg)* (2000) is Gaston Bachelard’s *La poétique de l’espace* (1957, translated into Estonian in 1999), i.e. the sophisticated philosophical essay. Unt added some similarly themed quotes from other texts (for instance, from the article “Language” by Martin Heidegger, and a poem by Estonian poet and actor Juhan Viiding), and re-structured fragments from Bachelard into a refined and poetic dialogue between Lord and Lady. *Stiil (Style)* (2003) is based on Peet Vallak’s three-page short story *Maanaine (Country Woman)* (1921) that has practically no events at all; in Unt’s play text this story is presented in more than 40 stylistic variations, inspired by Raymond Queneau’s *Exercices de style* (1947).<sup>12</sup>

Both as a writer and as a stage director Unt was fascinated by playfulness and bright theatricality. Whereas Karusoo places above all a high value on authenticity, Unt used (or reused, to be more precise) abundant cultural material from “the archives” of Western culture. Special features of his dramaturgy are, in the first place, rich intertextuality, metatheatricality and postmodern cool irony.

### **New Practices of the Playwriting in the 2000s: Devised Theatre**

Even a more important novelty among the recent developments in the Estonian theatre is the appearance of a “collective creation”. This term refers to a collaborative method of both playwriting and producing that has been widely practiced in Western countries since the artistically tumultuous 1960s. It has been propelled by a wish to democratize the creative process in the theatre, and generally regarded as an alternative mode outside of mainstream theatre. The movement of collective creation that developed in Europe and the United States included well-known companies like Living Theatre, Open Theatre, Joan Littlewood and Theatre Workshop, Ariane Mnouchkine and Théâtre du Soleil etc., which are by now already part of the canon of alternative theatre. As to the Estonian theatre, one should emphasize that under the Soviet regime this kind of playwriting was strictly outlawed because of censorship: each play text had to receive the censor’s permission to be staged early before the beginning of rehearsals, so, any attempts to compile or create text during the rehearsal period were excluded. Once the Soviet censorship was abolished (in the late 1980s), the new practices could make their appearance.

Collaborative theatre largely uses the method of devising performance. Devising could be defined as “a process for creating performance from scratch, by the group, without a pre-existing script”, i.e. the process of writing or compiling the text is simultaneous to and most closely intertwined with the process of making a particular production (Heddon 3). Devising as a collaborative method typically produces a non-dramatic text: fragmented, non-linear, displaying multiple perspectives and viewpoints.

To give an example, I will briefly describe the particular modes of devising performance, used by the troupe of the small state-subsided Theatre NO99 (founded in 2004), the most internationally recognized present-day Estonian theatre: their stage productions have been performed at numerous festivals in Germany, Russia, Finland, Poland, etc. This company clearly represents a departure from mainstream style and practices.

NO99 moves between working on pre-existing play texts and devising performances. The starting point for the latter is some problem or conception (artistic and/or social); all of them tackle topical problems of Estonian society and mentality,

and therefore function as political theatre. Their devised performances include, for instance, *Nafta! (Oil!)* (2006), concerned with problems arising from the assumable end of the oil resources and critical of the capitalist over-consuming society; *GEP (Hot Estonian Guys)* (2007), dealing with the demographic crisis and the possible extinction of Estonians; *Kuidas seletada pilte surnud jänesele (How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare)* (2009) about the marginalization of the arts in the present-day society, but also about the essence of theatre; and *The Rise and Fall of Estonia* (2011), aimed at providing an overall picture of Estonia's contemporary history and the present day. In the case of NO99, the authorship is attributed, first and foremost, to the artistic director Tiit Ojasoo (b. 1977) and the scenographer Ene-Liis Semper (b. 1969) who usually are the authors of the original idea and control the whole process of making a production rather firmly, although the dramaturge's and the actors' contribution should not be underestimated.

The scripts are compiled mostly by bricolage: during the preparation time various texts, stories, and ideas more or less relevant to the topic of the production are collected, including autobiographical material (personal experiences) drawn from the performers' lives. The special characteristic of the work of NO99 is quite extensive and long-lasting "fieldwork": interviews with experts in the given field, carried out by the theatre's dramaturge and directors. *Nafta!* was compiled on the basis of conversations with the leader of the Estonian Green Party; for GEP population scientists were interviewed; *Kuidas seletada pilte surnud jänesele* includes a video-lecture of prominent art historian on Joseph Beuys (whose famous performance gave the title to the production) and avant-garde art in general. Relevant research results as well as various cultural and media texts are used, too. This very heterogeneous material, partly purposefully collected, partly "found", is then directly quoted in the production or used as a basis for dialogues and scenes, which take shape through improvisations of the actors. The verbal texts of these devised stage productions function rather as a script or a score: they do not dominate the performance but work together with the non-verbal means of expression, more often than not only scarcely referred to in the written text. The textual and performative strategies, devices and solutions intertwine and affect each other already during the process of preparing the production.

Most of the above-mentioned NO99's performances could be viewed against the background of the tradition of political theatre, first of all, that of German theatre innovators Erwin Piscator and Bertolt Brecht. Some critics have also drawn parallels with the work of the contemporary German dramatist and stage director René Pollesch, who is interested in great political and economical questions: globalization, neo-liberal capitalism, power relations in the present-day world, etc. Creating texts

really resembles along general lines. Pollesch writes his own texts and does it before and during the rehearsals, not formulating them as dramas. The text is in both cases taken as a component of the production, not as an independent work of literature. Radical stage productions of Pollesch definitely fall into the category of postdramatic theatre. There are no narrative and almost no real dialogue in his performances; instead, texts are composed of excerpts from theoretical and philosophical essays, newspaper articles, sociological and economical studies, etc. The Pollesch theatre has been called a “culture theory theatre” and a “discourse theatre”, as it researches critically the discursive and medial practices of today. Massive quotation of non-fiction texts could create an impression of documentality and authenticity but the result of combining the academic discourse with mass media and pop culture is that they estrange and abolish one another.<sup>13</sup>

In a similar vein, NO99 has been working across different discourses, as well as different art forms, resulting at times in blurring of borders between theatre and other artistic and cultural practices. Their main textual and performative strategies (as claimed, they intertwine most closely) are inter- and metadiscursivity, intermediality, recycling (a broader concept than all too familiar intertextuality) and authentication (creating an effect of authenticity). Recycling is quite characteristic of postdramatic theatre that reuses lots of cultural material. We can see self-reflexive use of “the archives” also in the productions by NO99. Two opposite examples are recycling of the modern classics of visual and performance art (*Kuidas seletada pilte surnud jänesele*), and, on the other hand, of formats of popular entertainment and advertising industries (*Nafta!*), not to speak of “recycled speech” — abundant quotation of documentary and literary texts.

The use of documentary material and of quotes from different sources most likely creates expectations about the high authenticity of the text and its performance. However, the closer analysis demonstrates that NO99’s postdramatic theatre is not so much aimed at breaking illusions and revealing the “very truth”, but rather mixes the authentic and the fictitious. Authenticity is revealed being produced by textual strategies, as well as staging and acting techniques, and also as something depending on the disposition of the spectator.

Finally, inter- and metadiscursivity is in a sense an umbrella term for the most typical strategies of NO99. The discourse can be defined as a certain manner of linguistic performance which also encompasses creating and interpreting texts and typical patterns of socio-cultural behaviour. In a wider sense we could talk of discursive practices constructing social reality. In the texts and productions of NO99 elements from different discourses are combined and related to each other, in order to reflect critically current modes of speech and thought, to explore their inner

mechanisms and dominant rules. For example, in *Nafta!* social criticism, scientific discourse (lots of data and figures used to illustrate the claim about the exhaustion of oil supplies) and popular entertainment (forms of cabaret and musical) were combined. Thus the production worked at two levels: it dealt critically with the topical social problems but demonstrated also the ways of camouflaging the troubling problems with the help of mass media. In *GEP* the national discourse (mediated with a great emotional force with songs from the period of new national awakening and poems of beloved Estonian writers) collided with the postmodernist academic discussion about a nation as only an “imagined community” (to use the concept coined by Benedict Anderson).

### Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, I would accentuate the interrelatedness of playwriting and theatre, both in its institutional and artistic aspect. Recent developments in Estonian drama clearly demonstrate such mutual influence: one could observe how the democratization and diversification of theatre system together with the spread of postdramatic aesthetics have brought about the emergence of new playwriting practices like directors' dramaturgy and collective devising of performances which in their turn have given rise to substantial changes in the poetics of playtexts. It seems that playwriting is more than ever intertwined with the processes of creating theatre performances. This puts certainly forward a range of questions related to the literary status and estimation of these texts. The genre of drama, as we can see, needs constant definition and re-definition.

### Notes

1. About definitions of drama as literary genre, see, for instance, Manfred Pfister, *Das Drama: Theorie und Analyse* (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1977); Benjamin Bennett, *Theater as Problem: Modern Drama and its Place in Literature* (Ithaca, London: Cornell University Press, 1990). Cf. also Gerda Poschmann, *Der nicht mehr dramatische Theatertext. Aktuelle Bühnenstücke und ihre dramaturgische Analyse* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1997).
2. See Jaak Rähesoo, *Estonian Theatre* (Tallinn: Estonian Theatre Union, 2008) 83.
3. See Jaak Rähesoo, *Estonian Theatre*, 87.
4. For further reading about Kõiv, see Aare Pilv, “Madis Kõiv – Writer to an Ideal Reader?” *Estonian Literary Magazine* 19 (Autumn 2004): 10 – 15.
5. For further reading about the topic, see Piret Kruuspere, “The Role of National Theatre at the Turn of the Millennium: Estonian Theatre Interpreting Estonian Literature in the 1990s.” *Interlitteraria* 5 (2000): 186 – 199.

6. Tätte's plays have been translated into English by Krista Kaer and Triin Sinissaar: *Jaan Tätte, Plays* (Tallinn: Tallinn City Theatre, 2003).
7. About changes in theatre system, see Anneli Saro, "The Dynamics of the Estonian Theatre System: in Defence of Repertoire Theatre." *Methis 3* (2009): 93 – 107.
8. See Małgorzata Sugiera, "Beyond Drama: Writing for Postdramatic Theatre." *Theatre Research International 29.1* (2004): 26.
9. See Piret Kruuspere "Merle Karusoo's Memory Theatre." *Interlitteraria 7.2* (2002): 280.
10. For comparative analysis of Karusoo and Anna Deavere Smith, see Pamela Monaco and Leena Kurvet-Käosaar, "Investigating Wor(l)ds: The Personal Is Political in the Drama of Merle Karusoo and Anna Deavere Smith." *Interlitteraria, 7*, Vol. II (2002): 290 – 304.
11. Translated into English by Mart Aru (*The Autumn Ball*) in 1985 and Eric Dickens (*Things in the Night*) in 2006.
12. For further reading, see my article "Director as Playwright in Postdramatic Theatre." *Interlitteraria 12* (2007): 210 – 224.
13. About René Pollesch, see Birgit Lengers, "Ein PS im Medienzeitalter: Mediale Mittel, Masken und Metaphern im Theater von René Pollesch." *Text + Kritik XI. Sonderband: Theater fürs 21. Jahrhundert*. München: edition text + kritik, 2004. 143 – 155.

## Works Cited

- Chinna, Stephen. *Performance: Recasting the Political in Theatre and Beyond*. Oxford: Peter Lang, 2003.
- Heddon, Deirdre, and Jane Milling. *Devising Performance: A Critical History*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.
- Kalnačs, Benedicts. "Images of Home in Inga Ābele's and Jaan Tätte's Plays." *Turns in the Centuries, Turns in Literature*. Ed. Anneli Mihkelev. Tallinn: The Under and Tuglas Centre of the Estonian Academy of Sciences, 2009. 214 – 223.
- Karusoo, Merle. "Põhisuunda mittekuuluv." MA thesis, University of Tallinn, 1999.
- Ubersfeld, Anne. *L'école du spectateur: Lire le théâtre 2*. Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1981.

责任编辑：邹 晶

# Introduction to Korean Literature Studies

**Young Suck Rhee**

Department of English, Hanyang University, Seoul  
222 Wangsimni-ro, Seongdong-gu, Seoul 133-791, Korea  
Email: yrshee@hanyang.ac.kr

When the editors of *Forum for World Literature Studies* invited me to edit a special issue on “Korean Literature,” I instantly thought about four genres of literature: poetry, novel, play, and criticism. But the problem was that most of the scholars who specialize in Korean literature are not bilingual. Of the four submissions, I had to translate three into English. Another problem was how to deal with each genre, and I have decided to let each scholar choose his or her own authors of interest. The result is not that bad.

The essay “Kim Chunsoo’s ‘Choyongdanjang’” by Rhee Young Suck is a good example of Modernist Korean poetry, in which the readers can enjoy the essence of a very good Korean poet. Yoon Seongho’s essay “Inhabiting Local Contradictions, Engaging Global Mandates: In-Hun Choi and Sok-Yong Hwang in the Landscape of Contemporary Korean Fiction Writing” is a fine analysis of two good contemporary novelists of Korea, Choi and Hwang, and puts them in the perspective of the world literature. Compared with a host of young novelists, their concerns have been uniquely Korean. This article will help the readers outside Korea get interested in their novels in translations, including English and French.

Oh Tae-Sok is one of the representative Korean playwrights today. He is also interested in Shakespeare and adapted a couple of his plays and put them on stage at home and abroad. Rhee Beau La’s article “The Mystical in Tae-Sok Oh’s Play *My Love DMZ* and Shakespeare” discusses Oh’s play *My Love DMZ* in comparison with Shakespeare’s. It is interesting that Oh Tae-Sok, Hwang Sok-Yong, and Shakespeare are interested in “shamans” or magicians.

In Korea there is a unique genre, which is “literary essays”: it is considered a literary genre, and treated as importantly as novels and poems. We call them essayists. Yoon Ilhwan’s article “The Reflective Distance and Its Limits: Kim Hyun’s Reading as a Torture, Reverie, and Desire” discusses Kim Hyun, who is the best literary critic in the late 1900’s. He lived under the long military dictatorship of Park Jung-Hee and of two other military leader presidents. Kim’s writing shares something with Hwang

Sok-Yong's.

The essays in this issue cover problems of Korea in times of difficulties: the eighteenth-century governance of the people, life of Koreans under the Japanese Imperial Rule, the Korean War and the ideological warfare among intellectuals, the subsequent division of the peninsula, and the dark period of military dictatorship. The oldest and newest form of poetry is outside the influence of political conflicts or ideologies: Zen poetry and pure poetry of Kim Chunsoo. It is surprising that literature has always flourished regardless of what condition it has been laid.

In closing, let me say a few words of gratitude to the editors of *Forum for World Literatures*, and in particular to Prof. Lianggong Luo for his deep interest in Korean literature and his great help with this special issue.

责任编辑：杨革新

# Kim Chunsoo's "Choyongdanjang"

**Rhee Young Suck**

Department of English, Hanyang University, Seoul  
222 Wangsimni-ro, Seongdong-gu, Seoul 133-791, Korea  
Email: yrshee@hanyang.ac.kr

**Abstract** Kim Chunsoo was one of the best poets in Modernist Korea. And "Choyongdanjang" is his masterpiece. This poem is, however, problematic, because it does not open up if the readers approach it in a traditional way. So, I suggest we see each poem as a tableau, with beautiful images. That is, it is a picture-poem, which is symbolic, allegorical, psychological, biographical, as well as Modernistic and Postmodernistic in form. I analyze it beginning with Kim Hyun's reading, and suggest how to better read it.

**Key words** Kim Chunsoo; Choyongdanjang; Kim Hyun; Tongyoung; dream; Stein; Yeats

## I

In this essay I would like to read Kim Chunsoo's "Choyongdanjang Part I" — "The Songs of Choyong"<sup>1</sup> — and understand what it is, because when you read this poem for the first time, it is not easy to understand what the poet intends to say. An eminent critic Kim Hyun succeeds in reading much of the poem. In fact, he is one of the first and best critics who have attempted to deal with it fully. Kim Hyun was well versed in Freud's theory. Much of the reading of this poem Kim Hyun did is insightful. But the fact that Kim is in the main looking for meaning in the poem must have been a little problematic. No matter how hard he has worked on it, some essential part of the poem always remains closed. The poem is more than he thinks it pure: it is *purier* than he has thought and analyzed.

Thus, the significance of the poem lies not only in the poetic diction. It is in something else. I offer a suggestion of how to read it, in my conclusion, because, for better or worse, we, compared with Kim Hyun, live in a new age, with newer arts and theories. I think the theory and practice of a new art trend, nonfigurative painting, is applicable to reading Kim Chunsoo's "Choyongdanjang Part I."

## II

To give you a whole picture of the poem, I translate it — two prelude pieces and 13 poem sequences — into English, and give it to you. The poem, "Choyongdanjang," consists of two prelude pieces and 13 poem sequences titled 1/1 to 1/13:

**Two Prelude Pieces:****“Two Dogs”**

One dog barks. The other barks in another place. The two bark, clash, bleed, beneath the low night sky. One dies; the other barely survives. The survivor’s sudden cry from his vocal cord leaves a long, sad trace behind, and helplessly follows the one he’s killed.

**“Tears”**

The lower part  
of a man and of a woman  
wet. An *Aralia elata*,  
the lower part of an *Aralia elata*,  
wets nightly.  
The man, who walked on the sea barefoot,  
is a bird.  
Only his feet were wet, they say.

**Choyongdanjang Part I<sup>2</sup>****13 Poem Sequences:****“1/1”**

All day  
the sea  
kept its eyes open, like a mouse.  
From time to time  
winds blew from *Hanryosudo* – the Water Way amid Leisurely Islands -  
and the young leaves of an *Aralia elata*  
thinly shook bodies.

As the sun set  
I heard a leech cry making burrows  
between my ribs.  
The red, red begonia  
was shedding its petals.

But then the morning came,  
the sea  
reopening its eyes, like a mouse.  
Fall, fall, fall - a thousand apples

were falling deep into the sky.

Autumn gone, night come,  
 The year's new snow came,  
 sitting on my sleepy shoulder.  
 With part of the dark kept open ajar,  
 Fruits of red camellias ripened.  
 I saw the  
 white  
 snow fall asleep.

**“1/2”**

I saw snow, falling in March,  
 wet new lilac buds  
 and the flowering camellias on the mountain.  
 The southern sea awakened early  
 in the furry winter coat I could not take off.  
 Before I fell asleep that night  
 I heard a male seal cry out.  
 March come,  
 big snow flakes  
 wet the white neck of a flowering camellia  
 in a deep furrow.

**“1/3”**

The wall walked to me.  
 The old Pagoda Tree walked toward me.  
 In the middle of night  
 I awakened to see the bronze corridor clock, in a long black mantle,  
 walk toward me.  
 Beside me  
 the sea was asleep.  
 And I saw the sleeping sea, with  
 a fry of a grey mullet sleeping in her arm.

To go back to sleep, I would enter  
 the mantle of night, long and dark.  
 With the sea in my arm,

I would fall asleep again, with  
the fry of a grey mullet.

\*

They also had the sun and the wind brought from Australia,  
at the missionary's.

Through the fence of trifoliate orange shrubs

I saw Japanese yellow roses in winter.

On the night Christ was born  
snow fell;

In the invisible sky between my eyebrows  
flew one butterfly; or two,

**“1/4”**

In advance of the snow  
a winter rain was falling.

The sea had sunk:

where there had been the sea,  
a warship was letting go of an anchor;  
the sea bird I had seen  
lay dead.

The bird was singing after he died.  
He was singing in a bit older voice.

In advance of the snow  
the winter rain was falling.

The sea had sunk:

a man was coming  
along the coastline without the sea,  
with the dead sea in one hand.

**“1/5”**

The snow fell this morning  
for a child's happiness and for a child's longevity:

It became two golden calves  
and went up to heavens;

at dusk they came home on Father's cart  
with a single wheel,

which makes sound as from a broken bell.

The snow fell again at midnight

for a child's happiness and for a child's longevity,  
 sprinkling warm water on my sleepy eyelids;  
 before sunrise  
 they went back on Father's cart,  
 which makes sound as from a broken bell.

\*

The snow was falling.  
 The snow calmed the morning  
 and the sea.  
 A camellia flower, which had blossomed,  
 withered.  
 The snow was falling.  
 A few kids made a fire  
 in a circle.  
 The snow was falling  
 into the fire,  
 onto the necks of the kids.

**"1/6"**

The shadow of a Chinese quince  
 thickened in the dusk.  
 On a little slope  
 lighted by twilight  
 some boxthorn fruits were burning in olive green.  
 The immense sea  
 sojourned in the fish basin, in which  
 the fins of a gold fish resting.  
 "Vou!" whistled a ship twice.  
 The shadow of a Chinese quince  
 thickened in the dusk.  
 A jet of water  
 from a toy fountain shot up  
 and fell broken white.

**"1/7"**

In a cage  
 the birds' droppings smelled rather fragrant at dusk,

The eyes of a bird caught from the mountain  
 were dreaming.  
 The winter fruits in snow  
 ripened tasting snow,  
 turning red;  
 Spring cherry blossom petals fell one after another.  
 One boy was running through the water front  
 holding a toy vane in his mouth;  
 One girl was fading in the dusk  
 spread in the barley field beyond the copse,  
 singing "Hare! Hare! Where are you going?"  
 She was fading, like a lie.

**"1/8"**

The sea caught in my palm,  
 it was night, and the sea was very, very young.  
 the chicks of an adjutant bird flapped their feathers.  
 Spring had receded, and summer was coming:  
 The sea grew up to my wait and  
 breast, washing off the thick motley on my flesh.  
 When I was running along  
 the white sand bar washed by the sea,  
 I was singing  
 a happy, sad, brilliant song alone.  
 On a day after summer  
 I saw, at the thickest edge of the full grown sea,  
 a big sunflower cover up the sea bit by bit.

**"1/9"**

A crab, most of its legs pulled off,  
 shuffled sluggish along a long furrow.  
 In the shaded long furrow under the forsythia flowers  
 the crab moved its body grotesquely:  
 the two eyes, which looked as if on its back,  
 were too heavy to carry.

**"1/10"**

The silver paper angel

was crying.  
 because some attached a mustache on her face.  
 By the weight of her tears  
 one shoulder was tipped a bit.  
 Over the angel's tipped shoulder  
 a cow with spots were giving birth to a calf.  
 While giving birth to a calf, she cried till dawn.  
 That winter  
 snow fell at the edge of the ground.

**"1/11"**

We shouldn't have cried  
 though a camellia petal was falling to the sea from the cliff.  
 The sea was covered with that petal. Then finally,  
 the sea revealed its flesh as on a sunny day.  
 Looking down upon the naked sea -  
 it was neither winter nor spring;  
 it was a snow-white sky –  
 we shouldn't have cried  
 though a camellia petal was falling to the sea from the cliff.

**"1/12"**

All winter long at the corner of the playground  
 the short sturdy legs of a long chair had been rocking.  
 All winter long all the necks of children  
 were steep slopes covered with snow.  
 Idiot! You were singing "Hare! Hare! Where are you going?"  
 You died, like a lie,  
 with a streak of blood on your knee.  
 Spring came round; winds were blowing again;  
 The sea washed the blood of the knee shed last year.  
 Idiot! You died to go see the sea and became brilliant sunlight,  
 and became the little wrinkles around my smiling eyes.

**"1/13"**

Spring passed;  
 Summer on a completely vacant garden,  
 four-leaf clover filled the sea of oak leaves,

bit by bit.  
 As usual, from there  
 the slow sun began to set.  
 There used to be a fence of trifoliate orange shrubs;  
 The bleeding western sky pricked by the thorns of the shrubs  
 left a bird's claw scratch on my side, sore and painful.

### III

What is the poem about, though it may look illogical and surreal because of the characteristics of the poem itself? It is not possible to make a story out of it, as the sequences unfurl, like a dream, "like a lie." But it is possible to construct a story based on the glimpses of images: as Kim Hyun does, in his essay "Kim Chunsoo's Poetic Transformation." It is a fairly long essay discussing not only this poem but also the whole of Kim Chunsoo's poetry.<sup>3</sup> According to Kim Hyun, the poet has been interested in Choyong, an ancient personality, for almost seven years, since he published a novel *Choyong* in 1963. After the novel, the poet published "Sleeping Choyong" in 1965, "Choyong" and "Choyongsamjang" in 1966. And the poet ran a series of the poem sequences "Choyongdanjang" in the literary magazine *Hyundaisihak (Modernist Poetics)* for one and a half years (Kim Chunsoo, 308-400). About the poem, Kim Hyun says "Choyongdanjang" is a different poem from "Choyongsamjang." In the latter poem there appear the lines that resemble Paul Valery's lines "Le vent se leve. . . . Il faut tenter de vivre! (The wind blows; We must live.)"<sup>4</sup> However, "Choyongdanjang" is stripped of any of Valery's influence.

Kim Hyun points out two things: Kim Chunsoo's poem is a pure poem, which makes the outer landscapes represent the poet's inner feelings. In addition, it is more than that: the poem has in it something that can't be replaced by the depiction of outer landscapes; it has something absolute and pure. The latter observation is of great importance, but instead of elaborating it, Kim Hyun has spent most of his space applying only the former observation to reading the poem.

### IV

The title of the poem is Choyong, but nowhere in the poem is the character Choyong found. In the prelude we see two titles, "Two Dogs" and "Tears." In "Two Dogs" we see two dogs fight: they "bark, clash, bleed." As a result, one dies but the other one also dies leaving "a long, sad trace behind." In the second poem "Tears" we can guess a third man, "who walked on the sea barefoot," must be Choyong. If we combine the two poems into one, the two dogs may represent two men who struggle to gain supremacy; in this case to win the love of a woman. In the second poem, it is clear that the third man is sad, because the lower parts of the other man

and the woman wet. Why did the third man walk "on the sea barefoot," like a bird? Choyong came by sea from another country, according to a legend of Silla Kingdom. He was one of the merchants from Arabia, who settled down; one day when he came home, he found four legs under the quilt in his bed. He sings "The Song of Choyong" to drive him away. The man who is with his wife is said to be the god of diseases. Choyong is to disappear suddenly, like a bird, one day.

After the prelude pieces, we have 13 poem sequences. The poet has spent one and a half years to keep writing the sequences. It is not a straightforward story, easy to understand, nor is it a narrative poem nor a traditional poem that is unfolded logically. It's like the state of mind of a person who has just had 13 dreams last night, which do not hold together. They don't tell a story or one story after another in a logical way. Still, there is some explanation as offered by Kim Hyun, who focuses on four images, of the missionary from Australia, of the crab, of the warship, and of the dying boy shedding blood on his knee (Kim 402). Kim Hyun reads this poem as the poet's biography. That is, the poem looks back to the poet's past, which makes sense. Notice the tense of the poem: all the verbs are in the past tense, except in the first two prelude poems; in fact the two are not included in "Choyongdanjang Part I." The missionary is from Australia and his teacher's husband, and all the images are recollected from what he saw, felt, and experienced: the clock, a long chair, a fence of trifoliolate orange shrubs, the Japanese yellow roses. These originate from his vast poetic reservoir of images, which he uses all through the poem. In the sequence "1/3," for instance:

The wall walked to me.  
 The old Pagoda Tree walked toward me.  
 In the middle of night  
 I awakened to see the bronze corridor clock, in a long black mantle,  
 walk toward me.

They also had the sun and the wind brought from Australia,  
 at the missionary's.  
 Through the fence of trifoliolate orange shrubs  
 I saw Japanese yellow roses in winter. ("1/3")

Not only that, but the crab, the warship, and the boy killed are from his poetic reservoir of images. He spent his childhood in Tongyoung, which is a beautiful port in southern Korea. It is surrounded by mountains, and in the sea outside the port, there are many islands scattered. In winter and early spring camellia flowers are in bloom. Two of his friends appear in the poem. One is a girl who killed a crab by pulling its legs, though she is not mentioned in the poem; the other is a boy who will play a game: he runs into the street where cars are running,

and when a car screeches to a stop just before him, he sticks his tongue out and runs away. But finally a truck runs him over, killing him with his knee shedding a streak of blood. First, there is an image of a crab crawling in the shadow of the forsythia flowers. It is the crab that his friend had killed by pulling its legs in his childhood. According to Kim Hyun, who makes a comparison between this poem and the poet's novel *Choyong*, the incidence has remained in his subconscious, which finds an expression of his castration anxiety in the poem:

A crab, most of its legs pulled off,  
 shuffled sluggish along a long furrow.  
 In the shaded long furrow under the forsythia flowers  
 the crab moved its body grotesquely:  
 the two eyes, which looked as if on its back,  
 were too heavy to carry. ("1/9")

The other incident, in which his friend was run over by a truck, is also described in the novel; and in the poem, the image of the boy is fleeting but strong:

Idiot! You were singing "Hare! Hare! Where are you going?"  
 You died, like a lie,  
 with a streak of blood on your knee. ("1/12")

## V

Kim Chunsoo wanted to write pure poetry by saying that he sought for "a state beyond being human," or "a state of being in a dream." That is to say, he wants his poetry to be stripped of things human; to be free of ethics; to make outer scenes represent inner feelings. But the poet cannot define his poetry as pure, because there is a continuous struggle in his mind between an effort to overcome his inner complexes and another effort to free those complexes.

As Kim Hyun points it out, the poet depicts what lies between the conscious and the subconscious, as in Marcel Proust's beginning in his novel *A la recherche du temps perdu* (*In Search of Lost Time*): the young leaves of an *Aralia elata*/ thinly shook bodies ("1/1"); The red, red begonia/ was shedding its petals ("1/1"); Fall, fall, fall - a thousand apples/ were falling deep into the sky ("1/1"); With part of the dark kept open ajar/ Fruits of red camellias ripened ("1/1"). This is the key images of the plants in the poem, and with these central images, the poet externalizes all kinds of his childhood's memories: the sun and the wind brought from Australia ("1/3"); where there had been the sea,/ a warship was letting go of an anchor. ("1/4"); A jet of water/ from a toy fountain shot up/ and fell broken white. ("1/6"); One boy was running through the water front/ holding a toy vane in his mouth ("1/7"); One girl was fading

in the dusk/ spread in the barley field beyond the copse,/ singing "Hare! Hare! Where are you going?"/ She was fading, like a lie. ("1/7"); A crab, most of its legs pulled off/ ("1/9"); a cow with spots were giving birth to a calf. ("1/10"); You died, like a lie,/ with a streak of blood on your knee ("1/12").

The concluding poem sequence "1/13" is synoptic, a summation of all in the subconscious externalized in this poem and of his poetics as well:

Spring passed;  
 Summer on a completely vacant garden,  
 four-leaf clover filled the sea of oak leaves,  
 bit by bit.  
 As usual, from there  
 the slow sun began to set.  
 There used to be a fence of trifoliate orange shrubs;  
 The bleeding western sky pricked by the thorns of the shrubs  
 left a bird's claw scratch on my side, sore and painful.

Another important image is that of sea, the south sea off the port Tongyoung, his hometown. It is connotative. It is symbolic ("1/4") and allegorical, which represents Mother. Kim Hyun comments on the different images of sea as follows:

First, look at "1/1":

All day  
 the sea  
 kept its eyes open, like a mouse.

The sea here is compared with a mouse, revealing his unconscious expression of his attitude toward life. It is an object of contemplation as in the poetry of Valery, Rimbaud, and Marlariné. So, the sea represents sweet traces of life, instead of hard life on the sea.

The sea also represents the poet's consciousness. It is symbolic of what's on his mind:

The sea had sunk:  
 a man was coming  
 along the coastline without the sea,  
 with the dead sea in one hand. ("1/4")

Third, the sea is an entity and Mother is also a being. The sea has many attributes of Mother;

the sea, like Mother, feels like fine things to the poet, which find subtle variations as in the following stanzas:

With the sea in my arm,  
I would fall asleep again, with  
the fry of a grey mullet. (“1/3”)

The sea caught in my palm,  
it was night, and the sea was very, very young.  
the chicks of an adjutant bird flapped their feathers.  
Spring had receded, and summer was coming:  
The sea grew up to my wait and  
breast, washing off the thick motley on my flesh. (“1/8”)

The sea was covered with that petal. Then finally,  
the sea revealed its flesh as on a sunny day. (“1/11”)

## VI

Now let me focus on some of the most beautiful poems – I call the poem sequences poems now. Instead of interpreting them, I will just look at each poem as a tableau. A dream is a dream whether it makes sense or not. Each imitates a state of mind being in flux, with the interplay of the subconscious and conscious, just as, for instance, water flows and mixes, or the wind blows and circles and dances like dead leaves on the ground. Each poem is independent from or loosely dependent on what follows. There is a conclusion, as there is an end to a dream.

I see poem “1/2” as one of the most beautiful and most important poems as well:

I saw snow, falling in March,  
wet new lilac buds  
and the flowering camellias on the mountain.  
The southern sea awakened early  
in the furry winter coat I could not take off.  
Before I fell asleep that night  
I heard a male seal cry out.  
March come,  
big snow flakes  
wet the white neck of a flowering camellia  
in a deep furrow.

The key image is to "wet," which has been repeated in the prelude poem, "Tears." The snow in this poem feels refreshing, giving life to lilacs and camellias, making them flower. When it falls on the "white neck of a flowering camellia" it even feels sensual or at least lovely; the image reappears in poem "1/6": "The snow was falling/ into the fire,/ onto the necks of the kids." and in poem "1/12": "All winter long all the necks of children/ were steep slopes covered with snow." Maybe, Kim Chunsoo is a Freudian, who thinks that to *wet* is a basic condition for both man and nature. He often gives the image of sea as well in the same vein. The poet seems to be involved in the human affairs in the prelude poem, "Tears," but the next 13 poems he is neither involved nor so sad; he is a step away from the world, and observes it and smiles, though life gives him pain, as in the concluding poem:

You died, like a lie,  
 with a streak of blood on your knee.  
 Spring came round; winds were blowing again;  
 The sea washed the blood of the knee shed last year.  
 Idiot! You died to go see the sea and became brilliant sunlight,  
 and became the little wrinkles around my smiling eyes. ("1/12")

Or

As usual, from there  
 the slow sun began to set.  
 There used to be a fence of trifoliate orange shrubs;  
 The bleeding western sky pricked by the thorns of the shrubs  
 left a bird's claw scratch on my side, sore and painful. ("1/13")

Another poem is a tableau that is a strikingly beautiful dreaming in a state of flux. Look at poem "1/3." It is the dreamiest of the poems. He is dreaming back of his kindergarten days: the old Pagoda Tree, the bronze corridor clock, the fence of trifoliate orange shrubs, Japanese yellow roses, butterflies.

In the midst of all those recollected, the sea is a central image: the sea is near him near the coastline, sleeping there, with "a fry of a grey mullet sleeping in her arm," but then the sea is in his arm, when he falls asleep again, with "the fry of a grey mullet." The dreaming process is thus described:

Beside me  
 the sea was asleep.

And I saw the sleeping sea, with  
a fry of a grey mullet sleeping in her arm.

To go back to sleep, I would enter  
the mantle of night, long and dark.  
With the sea in my arm,  
I would fall asleep again, with  
the fry of a grey mullet.

In the middle of “Choyongdanjang” poem “1/17” has all the major images that appear neatly but not very coherently; yet it is a very beautiful surreal tableau: a bird in a cage is dreaming; it’s snowing on fruits; cherry blossoms are in bloom; one boy is running with a vane in his mouth along the waterfront; one girl is fading in the dusk, like a lie:

In a cage  
the birds’ droppings smelled rather fragrant at dusk,  
The eyes of a bird caught from the mountain  
were dreaming.  
The winter fruits in snow  
ripened tasting snow,  
turning red;  
Spring cherry blossom petals fell one after another.  
One boy was running through the water front  
holding a toy vane in his mouth;  
One girl was fading in the dusk  
spread in the barley field beyond the copse,  
singing “Hare! Hare! Where are you going?”  
She was fading, like a lie.

The poet keeps dreaming, and in one moment, he feels as if he were a crab (“1/9”). Despite this, the whole poem is not that sad, for the poet is an objective observer and speaker. He remembers and externalizes in this poem many things he had experienced in his childhood. The poem has not cheapened all his childhood experiences, by not making it sentimental; he just keeps collecting key images and put them in tableaux in such a way that all of them sound and look surreal and vivid. If he tried to tell us about his story in a logical way, it would become a very boring narrative. This had been a necessary practice for Kim Chunsoo to develop a new kind of poetry; as a result, as we know from literary history of Korea, he could create better poetry in his later poetic career.

## VII

Despite the above analysis, how can we read "Choyongdanjang" the Poem? The moment we begin an analysis, the individual poem sequences – I call them poems now - of the Poem disappear: we can't see the beauty of each poem.

I think we should see each poem as a tableau, with beautiful images. It is a picture-poem, which is symbolic, allegorical, psychological, biological, cultural, ecological, as well as Modernistic and Postmodernistic in form. Unlike painting, a poem's medium is words; each word has a meaning. So, eventually, a sentence must have a meaning, but each poem here makes something we can't make sense of. It is like an abstract painting: a painting that uses the medium of colors that do not make a form. So, the analogy of "Choyongdanjang" and an abstract picture is established.

Should we focus on the signifier and significant in the poem to form an image, tasting and feeling the texture of each sentence-image in each poem, we could be one with the poem, as if in a dream. It is a poem that is pure and absolute. This kind of poetry is rare, as Shakespeare's "Phoenix and the Turtle" is one of the rare poems that are pure. In the last century, Gertrude Stein has begun to do it again by writing a long poem "Tender Buttons," which revolutionizes American poetry. In Korea Kim Chunsoo is one of the poets who have done it, along with Lee Sang.

Kim Chunsoo is seen as one of the best poets in Modernist poetry of Korea, and could compare well with W. B. Yeats in English poetry.<sup>5</sup> Kim has experimented in *nonsense* poetry for almost 30 years, as seen above, while Yeats has experimented in automatic writing for almost 40 years, resulting in *A Vision*. It is a remarkable corollary that both represent the best of Korean and English poetry of the last century.

## Notes

1. The poem's title is taken from legend: Choyong was a figure who lived in the Silla Kingdom (BC 57-AD 935) in the Korean peninsula. One day he returns home after work to find the four legs under the sheet in his bed; his wife is in bed with a stranger — a god of diseases—, about which he is singing. It is believed that Choyong was one of the merchants or nobles from the West who settled in Silla, which was engaged with trading with Arabians. Despite the poem's title, the poem's content has nothing to do with Choyong, the man in the legend. The poem is about the poet himself.
2. This is the first part of the poem, and it took the poet about 30 years to finish the whole poem that has four parts. This is the first English translation of the whole poem, "Choyongdanjang Part I."
3. See Kim Hyun, "Kim Chunsoo's Poetic Transformation," *The Complete Poems of Kim Chunsoo* (Seoul: Somundang, 1986) 373-422. And using most of his space, in pages 399-422, in his essay, the critic discusses "Choyongdanjoong Part I" under a subtitle, "The Poetic Transformation of Kim

Chunsoo's 'Choyongdanjang.'" *The Complete Poems* was the latest in 1986, which collected all the books up to the 14<sup>th</sup> book, and the poem "Choyongdanjang Part I" was the ninth book; before this, the poem had been run as a series in a literary magazine *Hyundaisihak* for one and a half years. In fact, Kim Chunsoo was to work on the poem from 1966 on, and added three more parts until 1999; before this poem he had written on a novel *Choyong* in 1963. That is to say, the poet spent more than 30 years on this single topic.

4. See Paul Valery's closing lines in *Le Cimetiere Marin*. trans. Kim Hyun(Seoul: Mineumsa, 1991, 4<sup>th</sup> Printing) 104.

5. See my essay: Rhee, Young Suck. "Korean Poetry Through W. B. Yeats: Kim Chunsoo and Kim Jonggil." *The Yeats Journal of Korea* 30(2008):245-265.

### Works Cited

Kim, Chunsoo. *The Collected Poems of Kim Chunsoo*. Seoul: Somundang, 1986. [『김춘수시전집』. 서울: 서문당, 1986.]

Rhee Young Suck. "Korean Poetry Trough W.B. Yeats: Kim Chunsoo and Kim Jonggil," *The Yeats Journal of Korea*. Vol. 30, December 2008, 245-265.

责任编辑：郭雯

# Inhabiting Local Contradictions, Engaging Global Mandates: In-Hun Choi and Sok-Yong Hwang in the Landscape of Contemporary Korean Fiction Writing

**Seongho Yoon**

Department of English Language and Literature, Hanyang University

17 Haengdang-dong, Seongdong-gu, Seoul 133-791, Korea

Email: iamyam@hanyang.ac.kr

**Abstract** This article examines the oeuvres of In-Hun Choi and Sok-Yong Hwang, the two magnates in contemporary Korean fiction writing through the lens of the local, national, and global intersections by juxtaposing various political and historical contexts with their formal innovations. By explicating a space wherein a contingent local configuration appears in relation to multiple identifications in a larger context, I put forth an argument that Choi and Hwang chart a vexed but counterhegemonic space to illustrate what “inhabiting local contradictions” and “engaging global mandates” simultaneously entail.

**Key words** In-Hun Choi; Sok-Yong Hwang; Korean novelists; local; global

## **I. Introduction: National Allegories and Global Imaginaries**

My aim to introduce two magnates in contemporary Korean fiction writing, In-Hun Choi (崔仁勳) and Sok-Yong Hwang (黃皙暎) in this article is not an attempt to make any inclusiveness in my selection of the two novelists that is meant to render obsolete any possible alternative lists of such a kind. Rather, it is settled on primarily for the range of concerns it is most likely to demonstrate about the development of Korean fiction writing to provide compelling entries into the issues which the act of reading the two prominent Korean novelists' oeuvre brings to light. As a point of departure, I will demonstrate how to locate Choi and Hwang against the backdrop of the turbulence and complexities of modern Korean history deeply embedded within global power dynamics, particularly after the liberation from the Japanese colonial rule (1910-45), the ensuing national division, the Korean War (1950-53), and a long period of dictatorial regime of Park Chung-Hee (1961-79) alongside the rapid

industrial growth and Korean masses' struggle for democratization.

Since the post-liberation period, Koreans have been confronted with a double task—"to recover national sovereignty" and, simultaneously, "to build a new nation" (Kim 4). In tandem with such a nation-building effort, what is most notable in the emergence and development of modern Korean literature are conflicting bids to define Korean "national," if not downright "nationalist," literature. The definition is *always already* inextricably linked with an ever-renewed recognition and negotiation of Koreans' national predicaments in the wake of the shared experience of colonization and the partitioning of the Korean peninsula as long as it remains as the last site of Cold War politics and an intersection of the political maneuvers of world powers. It is precisely in this context that modern Korean literature even into this 21<sup>st</sup> century can be read as a "national allegory" in Fredric Jameson's words in the sense that the personal in Korean literature is "to be read in primarily political and social terms" (72) whereas the personal and the political cannot be reconciled mainly due to an epistemic fracture between the two in the First World.<sup>1</sup>

Regardless of whether or not concurring with Jameson's arguments in his controversial article, "Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism," I do not need to reiterate here the long genealogy of debates, particularly revolving around the problematic nature of the term "Third World" and the essentialist vein in his broad use of the term by defining the Third World "purely in terms of an 'experience' of externally inserted phenomena" (Ahmad 6). Instead, what I would like to emphasize is that Jameson's critical angle provides an entrée into an enabling counter-reading of Korean contemporary fiction writing to reconsider its complexity and bring into sharp relief the metropole's control over the representation of the periphery. It is important to stress this dialectical relation between the metropole and the Korean Peninsula.

A blueprint for outlining the First World as private versus public and the Third World as allegorical is likely to reproduce a developmental discourse in which the Third World is supposed to occupy a backward place not yet sufficiently established to allow for the creative spirit of the subject to come up with its own voice without resorting to the public, the communal, and the national.<sup>2</sup> The Third-World subject thereby ends up only as *l'écrivain engagé* who may be discouraged from writing in less overtly politico-allegorical styles and, as a result, the cultural production of the Third World is defined as not yet mature. To illustrate the unconscious ways in which these allegorical expectations are enacted, it is urgent to note that it is always the First World that has an investment in reconsolidating the Third World association with allegory to secure its own first-world representational superiority.

Given such problematic nature of national allegories and taking issue with

Jameson's claim that "*the story of the private individual destiny is always an allegory of the embattled situation of the public third-world culture and society*" (69, emphasis in original), I consider it more productive to build upon and extend Jameson's argument by surveying contemporary Korean fiction writing through the lens of its local, national, global intersections in order to interrogate the nature of national allegories themselves, their political implications, and their social functions in Korean literature. Recognizing such a double trajectory of modern Korean literature within the framework of "the national within the global" helps one understand the ways in which Korean contemporary novelists inhabit local contradictions and engage global mandates. This is the first step one has to take to locate In-Hun Choi and Sok-Yong Hwang in the landscape of contemporary Korean fiction writing.

## II. In-Hun Choi: Beyond the Binary of Open Square and Private Room

In-Hun Choi (1936 ~) has brought a new trend to the landscape of Korean literature in the 1960s by establishing a new tradition of intellectual novels alongside his innovation of literary techniques and experiment with various narrative forms. His novels heralds a break with the Korean literature of the preceding chapter which was preoccupied, if not obsessed, with the chaos and moral collapse after the independence from the Japanese colonial rule in 1945, subsequent national division, and the Korean War. Choi, a novelist of ideas, however, has never remained in the realm of metaphysics. Instead, he seeks to mediate tensions between individual freedom and the burden of history by exploring both inward realities of human psychology and concrete, social contexts.

Choi was born in a well-to-do merchant family in a northern region of Korea under the rule of Japanese colonialism. When the communist government supported by the Soviet Union began to wield its power after the independence, his "bourgeoisie" family, branded as "an enemy of the people," was forced to move, ending up in a refugee camp in South Korea. This experience of displacement from his native soil and his keen awareness of his country's tragic history deeply embroiled in the political maneuvers of world powers after World War Two profoundly affected his literary imagination.

At age 24, Choi gained instant recognition with the publication of *The Open Square* (1960). What the "open square" in the title signifies is a kind of "open space" where solidarity and collectivity prevail as a historical momentum. In contrast to the "square," Choi presents another space, a "private room," where individuals, drawing back a few steps from a tumultuous crowd in the square, pursue freedom and happiness. Pitting these two disparate spaces against each other, Choi subtly casts doubts on the conflicting ideologies of the two Koreas. The protagonist, Myungjun Yi,

is a Hamlet-like, sensitive college student caught between the “square” and the “private room.” Amid the political upheaval and ideological clash after the partitioning of the Korean peninsula, Yi is disappointed with the social milieu of the South and decides to go to the North. To his dismay, what he finds in the North is a square overflowing with meaningless political slogans and propagandas. While serving in the North Korean army during the Korean War, he is captured and held at a prison camp. In the POW negotiations after the war, he chooses to go to a neutral country, India. It is not clear whether or not Yi finally finds a third place to transcend the binary of the square and the private room since Choi ends the novel with his protagonist jumping into the sea on his voyage to India. However, *The Square* provides avenues to reinterpret the national division and ideological conflicts from a new perspective, thereby prophetically prefiguring a brief utopian moment envisioned in the Civil Uprising of April 19 in 1960 (the April Revolution) and the shattering of the dream by the Military Coup D'état of May 16 in 1961.<sup>3</sup>

Through this novel, which criticized the ideological stance of South Korea as well as that of North Korea, one can grasp the historical meaning of the Civil Uprising of April 19, 1960. Seen from the historical viewpoint, the Civil Uprising of April 19, 1960 was an eruption of the people's will to freedom. As implied by fact that Yi, the hero of *The Open Square*, was forced to commit suicide, however, freedom was yet no more than a dream to come true. Indeed, through the Civil Uprising of April 19, 1960 was an event of enormous historical meaning, it was not a successful course of event, the sense of frustration and despair came to grip the mind of Korean people. In a sense, the Korean literature of the 1960s was a series of writers' (and people's) attempts to face and counter this sense of frustration and despair. (Kim 9-10)

A unifying characteristic that underlies Choi's earlier novels is his examination of individuals' interior world. Choi opens up a space to investigate his characters' innermost consciousness by reducing narrative time frame. The actual events in *The Open Square* take place in a day when Yi is on a voyage to India and the story of his life around the Korean War is narrated retrospectively in the form of the character's memory. *Dream of Nine Clouds* (1962) treats an hour's nightmare and death of a character. *A Journey to the Western Countries* (1966) transforms a brief moment of going down from the second floor to the first into a fantastic journey to the city of W and the Sokwang Temple in North Korea. *The Daily Life of Ku-poh the Novelist* (1972), as noted by the title itself, also reflects Choi's interest in the compression of time. Evoking modernist novelists in the early twentieth century, particularly James

Joyce, this exploration into individuals' interior worlds added a new dimension to the modernity of Korean literature.

The turn to inner realities demands new narrative forms and techniques. "Life of Nolbu" (1966) and "Life of Ongojip" (1969) illustrate the ways in which Choi creatively engages and revises a Korean folklore tradition. In "The Voice of the Governor-General" (1967), Choi comes up with nuanced commentaries on the political situation of Korea by employing an imaginary historical period in the form of allegory. *The Daily Life of Ku-poh the Novelist* is a rewriting and reinventing of Taewon Park's novel already published several decades ago. Finally, his unflagging efforts to search new narrative forms led him to completely abandon fiction writing and to dedicate himself to writing plays.

After publishing critically acclaimed dramas such as *Moon Moon Bright Moon* and *Away, Away, Long Long Time Ago* in the 1970s, Choi returned to novel writing with *The Topic* in 1993. The meaning of the title is a subject for meditation in Buddhism. The "topic" Choi poses to himself in this novel is how to locate an individual's destiny not only in a national context but also from a larger, global perspective. Choi even attempts to transcend the genre of fiction itself by combining fiction, poetry, drama, essay, and criticism in *The Topic*. Based upon his childhood memories in North Korea, a stay in the United States in the 1970s, and a trip to Russia in the early 1990s, Choi embarks on an Odyssean voyage to the twentieth-century world history. Both in the United States, the very heartland of capitalism and in Russia which was once the center of communism, the narrator "I" as a persona of the author feels himself a refugee just as Choi (and his character Yi in *The Open Square*) does in his partitioned country.

Delineating how the destiny of Choi himself, his family, and his country bears the imprint of the world history, Choi broadens the parameters of national literature. Furthermore, challenging conventional patterns of historical and autobiographical writing, the novel gives accounts of a number of monumental moments in history that exist only in fragments, thereby confounding rather than confirming the narrator's privileged status as an "original." Choi's doubt as to an official history in parallel with his experiment with diverse narrative forms is bound up with the untold stories of colonization, displacement, and the incessantly disrupted attempt of retrieving forgotten memories. It is precisely in this fashion that Choi puts readers in a conversation with the narrator over a "topic" rather than merely reclaims or recovers history itself. He never translates or explains but leaves readers continuously pondering over the intended meanings of a "topic." This strategy ironically brings home to readers how the Korean people's voice has been silenced in the name of writing a "universal history." Through fragmented stories and fuzzy sketches of

historical events, Choi is enabled to articulate effectively the fact that the history of Korean silence ironically can be transformed into a space wherein a repressed voice can be heard.

It is at this point that his life-long struggle with the divide of an open square and a private room, and his central themes of separation and displacement meet up with his surreptitious desire for reunification and recovery. At the same time, Choi's thematically and structurally well-crafted narrative provides a reminder of difficulty undercutting such a utopian vision of bridging the two conflicting desires. *The Topic* can be thus considered a landmark novel ever written in Korean serving as a doorway to world history.

### III. Sok-Yong Hwang: Inviting Uninvited Guests

Leading his life as a migrant laborer, social activist, Vietnam War veteran, and political exile besides his career as a prolific novelist, Sok-Yong Hwang has undauntedly confronted the history of modern Korea through the lens of his probing realism with deep compassion for the socially underrepresented and marginalized people. Critically acclaimed and gaining worldwide attention, his novels have been translated in several languages. Hwang not only pinpoints crucial moments in modern Korean history in his novels but also persistently delves into the roots of social contradictions of Korean society—forcibly transplanted Western cultures since the late nineteenth century, thirty-five years of Japanese colonial rule, the partitioning of the Korean peninsula, and the political struggle in present-day Korea as a continuation of the larger dynamics of the Cold War.

Hwang's early novels vividly depict uprooted and isolated lives of lower and working class masses in the 1970s, when South Korea was engrossed in industrialization and modernization. As “a literary reaction to the industrialized society that was achieved during the 1970s” (Kim 12), *Strange Land* (1971) and *The Road to Sampo* (1973) squarely deal with the increasing distinction of classes amid the rapid economic development when the victimization of the people excluded from the process of growth was a taboo for writers under the dictatorial leadership of that era. Through his portrayal of migrant laborers drifting from one place to another in the two novels and the poverty-stricken life of the poor living on the outskirts of a city in *A Dream of Good Fortune* (1973), Hwang revealed the other side of the economic growth and development of the era—a wretched condition of uprootedness sweeping over the whole country. Alongside his critique of the nationalist rhetoric of industrial development, Hwang delicately wove his belief in the life-force of the lower, working class people into his gritty portrayal of the people's suffering and tribulation when “the ‘big push’ that created Korean's big firms, now known by their names or logos all

over the world” was domineering over Koreans (Cumings 323).

Despite his consistent interest in everyday life of the masses and social problems, Hwang hardly remains within the confines of realism and social engagement. He continues to adopt different narrative techniques and place his novels in a variety of spatiotemporal settings to gain more comprehensive and critical perspectives on the “now” and “here” contexts of Korea. In his multi-volume saga *Jang Gilsan*, originally published in serial form in a newspaper between 1974 and 1984, Hwang made a subtle charge against the politically oppressive situation of Korean society in the form of a historical novel. Displaying Hwang’s mastery of rich vernacular expressivity and ingenious reinvention of folklore tradition, *Jang Gilsan* captures both the actual conditions of the oppressed and their indomitable spirit of resistance against the ruling class through the life of the Robin-Hood-like title character in the late seventeenth century. *The Shadow of Arms* (1987) reflects Hwang’s Vietnam War experience, in which he served as a Korean marine. At the heart of this first Korean novel about the Vietnam War are Hwang’s scathing comments on the intervention of Western powers in Vietnam and his remorse for his country’s complicity in the “dirty” war. Drawing a parallel between the history of Korea and that of Vietnam, *The Shadow of Arms* prefigures Hwang’s broadening range of vision and global outlook in his recent novels.

The most formative event in Hwang’s career as a writer is his 1989 visit to North Korea. This “unauthorized” visit resulted in his exile in Germany, his arrest and five-year imprisonment. Released in 1998, he published *An Old Garden* (2000) and *The Guest* (2001). As a revised version of the “Sampo” in *The Road to Sampo*, which is not so much a geographical location but a place densely fraught with ideological investments of the 1970s, a “garden” is sought out in *An Old Garden* to bridge the gap between the haunting past and an uncertain future after Hwang witnessed the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the Soviet Union. *An Old Garden* treats the turbulent political events in South Korea in the 1980s through the prism of the years right before a new millennium. The beginning of the 1980s in Korea is marked by the Kwangju Uprising, later redefined as a “Democratization Movement” (May 1980).<sup>4</sup> A military group seized power through a coup d’état and crushed the people’s demand for democratization by ruthlessly killing hundreds of civilians in Kwangju.

The main character of *An Old Garden* is a student activist who dedicates himself to the democratization of his country in that era. When he is released from the eighteen years’ imprisonment, what awaits him are enervated “fighters” of the 1980s now disillusioned with their own utopian dreams and a still vague outlook for the future. The anguish of disillusionment predominant in the novel is symbolized by the death of his lover, who supported his political activism with selfless devotion. Only a

diary she left and their 18-year-old daughter bear the marks of her traces. Ending the novel with the main character waiting to see his daughter he has never seen before, Hwang poses a question of what should be done now and how to grope for a way to come to terms with both the achievement and limitation of the generation who strived to realize their utopian visions.

*The Guest* revolves around the massacre in Sincheon, Hwanghae Province in North Korea during the Korean War. Based upon Hwang's research and interviews during his stay in present-day North Korea, the novel discloses through mosaic-like multiple points of view the secret that innocent people were killed by Christians rather than by the U.S. army as the North Korean authorities propagate. Defining the enforced modernity on his country such as Marxism and Christianity as "guests," Hwang seeks to resolve the enmity in the Korean Peninsula—the last site still teeming with the contradictions of the Cold War politics. *The Guest* ends with Reverend Ruy's visit to North Korea, who settled in the United States after the war. Describing Reverend Ryu performing a shamanistic ritual for the dead in the final page, Hwang implies that he will continue to grapple with the social and historical issues in and about the Korean Peninsula by playing a role of "shaman" through his literary creation.

A long line of people, hunched over at the waist, all move in one direction. They look as if they are each dragging something extremely heavy behind them. The endless parade has no visible beginning or end. A winding path passes through the field, leading up into a faraway lavender mountain ridge. They do not speak. From here, only their backs are visible. [...]

Like a bird, he soars up and over the scene. Below him a series of hill and a thin stream race by. He hears the cows moo in the distance and hears the hens cackle as they lay their eggs. He hears the people in the paddies, singing as they plant next year's rice crop. The fast beating of drums is superimposed on the buoyant, metallic sound of cymbals. He hears the mother call to her children.

Kids, time to eat. (231-32)

When Ryu digs a hole in the ground and places a piece of his brother's bone in it, it becomes an archeological act of excavating a site of past. It is also an act of "remembering" against "dis-remembering" by redesignating history in a given place, time, and circumstance. This archeological act in its turn enables the dead to locate their neglected and forgotten bodies that have been pegged as historically "unspeakable things unspoken."<sup>5</sup> It is only after carrying out this archeological act that "the return of repressed" is enacted in a dream scene in the quoted passage. Reverend Ryu as well

as the reader begins to come to terms with their festering wounds by learning how to relate to their lives. Along tortuous paths of disavowal, recognition, and repossession, they *undo* the accusations directed to the dead and long gone. It is a mnemonic ritual of Hwang's literature to cope with, though not completely, the painful memories of the past.

#### **IV. Inhating Local Contradictions, Engaging Global Mandates**

The two Korean novelists, In-Hun Choi and Sok-Yong Hwang, engage in a kind of historiography. They have neither written historical fictions in any established sense nor exclusively oriented toward issues of aesthetic innovation. If "the internal politics of style" and "its external politics" are inextricably interconnected in Bakhtin's words (284), the two novelists share an interest in common in bringing to the fore such correlation by paying attention both to historical themes and to the innovative strategies of representation. While haunted by historical and political pressures that usually appear in the form of a nightmare, they are not merely "obsessed with the question of how we can come to know the past today" (Hutcheon 47). Instead, they have succeeded in juggling simultaneously the epistemological question of the "how" and the ontological question of the "what" by juxtaposing the past, present, and intertwined moments of history from both a local and global perspective.

Ironically, it may be said from the same critical angle that both Choi and Hwang betray the strains of being radically "caught between." They are caught between commitment to ideas and the forging of an aesthetic *avant-garde*. They struggle between the pressure to move forward and an impulse to look backward. However, juxtaposing various political and historical contexts with their formal innovations as discussed so far leads me to propose that their works can best be understood as evolving attempts to enact the conflicts and multiple binds of history and representation without ending up with the vapid question of if art could be both "engaged" and formally innovative. In other words, their liminality of being "caught between" is both symptomatic and determining of their textual intervention to work through the anxieties arising from at once inhabiting local contradictions and engaging global mandates. Given such an urgent task confronting them, the limited cultural space allowed for them becomes rather a space wherein a contingent local configuration appears in relation to multiple identifications which are themselves driven by specific contingencies in a larger global context. Choi and Hwang thus maneuver to circumvent those contingencies by charting a vexed but counter-hegemonic space where readers are enabled to recognize what "inhabiting local contradictions" and "engaging global mandates" simultaneously entail.

## Notes

1. In an interview with Nak-Chung Paik, Jameson defines South Korea as “both an advanced and a Third World country” and Korea, both North and South, as “both First, Second, and Third World” due to the partition of the Korean Peninsula (364, emphasis in original).
2. Jameson shows deep concerns over this kind of possibility of misinterpretation in his discussion of third-world literature: “The third-world novel will not offer the satisfactions of Proust or Joyce; what is more damaging than that, perhaps, is its tendency to remind us of outmoded stages of our own first-world cultural development and to cause us to conclude that ‘they are still writing novels like Dreiser or Sherwood Anderson’” (65).
3. See Cumings for those watershed moments in Korean history in 1960 and 1961, especially 344-61.
4. See Han for a detailed account of the Kwangju Democratization Movement and its aftermaths in Korean society.
5. I borrowed this phrase, “unspeakable things unspoken,” from the title of Toni Morrison’s well-known essay, “Unspeakable Things Unspoken: The Afro-American Presence in American Literature.”

## Works Cited

- Ahmad, Aijaz. “Jameson’s Rhetoric of Otherness and the ‘National Allegory.’” *Social Text* 17 (1987): 3-25.
- Bakhtin, Mikhail M. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. Trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981.
- Cumings, Bruce. *Korea’s Place in the Sun: A Modern History*. N.Y.: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997.
- Han, In Sup. “Kwangju and Beyond: Coping with Past State Atrocities in South Korea.” *Human Rights Quarterly* 27 (2005): 998-1045.
- Hutcheon, Linda. *The Politics of Postmodernism*. London: Routledge, 1989.
- Hwang, Sok-Yong. *The Guest*. Trans. Kyung-Ja Chun and Maya West. N.Y.: Seven Stories Press, 2001.
- Jameson, Fredric. “Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism.” *Social Text* 15 (1986): 65-88.
- . “South Korea as Social Space.” Interview with Nak-Chung Paik. *Global/ Local: Cultural Production and the Transnational Imaginary*. Eds. Rob Wilson and Wimal Dissanayake. Durham: Duke University Press, 1996.
- Kim, Yoon-Shik. *Understanding Modern Korean Literature*. Trans. Gyung-Ryul Jang. Seoul: Jipmoondang, 1998.
- Morrison, Toni. “Unspeakable Things Unspoken: The Afro-American Presence in American Literature.” *Michigan Quarterly Review* 28.1 (1989): 1-34.

责任编辑：王晓兰

# The Mystical in Tae-Sok Oh's Play *My Love DMZ* and Shakespeare

**Beau La Rhee**

Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Seoul  
107, Imun-ro, Dongdaemun-gu, Seoul, 130-791, Korea  
Email: beaularhee@gmail.com

**Abstract** *My Love DMZ* is a carefully crafted play using Korean mysticism, which points to history and pollution. Though its theme is grave, the play presents it in such a pleasant and delightful way. Oh borrows magic, just as Shakespeare treats his serious themes of betrayal and revenge lightly with magic in *The Tempest*.

**Key words** Tae-Sok Oh; Shakespeare; *My Love DMZ*; *The Tempest*; Mysticism; magic

Tae-Sok Oh was one of the best playwrights in Korea. His representative plays include *Chun-pung's Wife* (1976), *Bicycle* (1984), and *Why Did Shim-Chung Plunge into the Sea Twice?* (1990). His latest play *My Love DMZ* (2002) is concerned with the environments of the planet Earth with a backdrop of a divided country, Korea. It is basically a comedy and has a milieu of the mystical and fantastical that can also be found in William Shakespeare; in fact, Oh is also renowned for his adaptations of Shakespeare's plays. More than thirty of Oh's plays are continually being staged in Korea, and he also stages his own plays, in his own theater Aroong Theatre run by Mokwha Repertory Company, which he founded in 1984. His recent play *My Love DMZ* has been staged repeatedly since its first successful performance in 2002. His adaptations of Shakespeare's plays have been received enthusiastically in Korea and in neighboring countries including China and Japan, and reviewed favorably also in England. His first adaptation of Shakespeare *Romeo and Juliet* was performed in 1995, and this continued to evolve every time it was staged until it reached its final version in 2005. He only concerned himself with this one play of Shakespeare while he continued to focus on his own plays during that time. His adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet* finally got invited to be performed in London's Barbican Centre in 2006, which turned out to be a great success. Adapting the western play *Romeo and Juliet* to his own culture, and taking it back to its birth place to be judged and critiqued by the London audience were a challenging and daunting task for the Korean director

writer. However, his bold adaptation of the play captured the attention and interest of the Western audience and took his reputation to another level nationally and internationally. This in turn seemed to have made director Oh motivated to work on other plays of Shakespeare. Oh staged *Macbeth* in the following year in 2007 and *The Tempest* in 2010.

Even before Oh worked on his adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* in which sorcery and magic serve as the driving force moving the action forward, Oh uses a similar motif of fantasy in his play *My Love DMZ*. Both are fantastical comedies with a mixture of seriousness, but with a cheerful, festival ending. *My Love DMZ* is about animals living in the DMZ (Demilitarized Zone) trying to prevent humans from building Kyongwon Railway in their territory. They are afraid that as soon as humans remove all the mines in the minefield in the DMZ, they will build the railway, which will pollute their environment; human footsteps on the land in turn will bring a catastrophic ending to their peaceful lives. However, they are powerless to defend themselves against the humans. They decide to resurrect the dead soldiers killed during the Korean War. This can only be done through the help of a Shaman; with her help they bring the soldiers alive. Upon accomplishing their mission to protect the DMZ, however, they should return to the world of the dead, but before they disappear we get to hear what they had suffered from during the Korean War. Although the play has a different storyline from that of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* in which Prospero the protagonist takes revenge on his brother Antonio, who usurped his rightful place 12 years before, and in recompense and in the attempt to marry his daughter off, who has come of age, to the son of Alonso being attendant with Antonio, Prospero creates a tempest with his magic to bring them to his island. The romance culminating in fruitful love and the revenge changed to forgiveness in *The Tempest* are the parts that differ from the storyline of *My Love DMZ*. However, both plays, set in natural environments separated from human touch, render similar moods. Such settings create a perfect atmosphere and mood for illusion and fantasy. Influenced by tragicomedy, the two plays — one from the West and the other from the East — deal with illusion rather seriously. They each create an aura of magical illusions similarly.

The way spirituality, fantasy, and the supernatural in *The Tempest* work is very much based on the idea that man can control the supernatural with learned magic. Prospero explains to Miranda that he had been deeply engaged in occultism and paid less attention to the government, which led his brother to have complete control over the government and to usurp his dukedom. He spent most of his time studying magic while he was duke of Milan and even after he survived his brother's plan to kill him, he continued to study magical arts through the books that were retained and given to him by Gonzalo a nobleman from Naples before he and his daughter were sailed away

from Milan. When Prospero and his three-year old daughter landed on an island and discovered Ariel trapped in a tree, he freed it. In the opening of the play, Prospero is able to wield the weather so as to create a tempest as well as conjure up spirits. At first, the spirit Ariel seems to follow all of Prospero's orders willingly: "All hail, great master! Grave sir, hail! I come/ To answer thy best pleasure, be't to fly,/ To swim, to dive into the fire, to ride/ On the curled clouds. To thy strong bidding, task/ Ariel and all his quality" (I.ii.189-193). Ariel has followed Prospero's command to take care of the tempest and business following it, but upon his giving another mission, Ariel protests: "Is there more toil? Since thou dost give me pains/ Let me remember thee what thou hast promised, / Which is not yet performed me" (I.ii. 242-43).

Ariel begs for freedom that Prospero promised him, but Prospero says he should speak no more of it until he accomplishes the mission. Prospero also threateningly reminds him of the fact that he saved him from the torture of being stuck in a pine tree in which Sycorax the evil witch had trapped him. He then says,

Prospero . . . . . It was mine art,  
 When I arrived and heard thee, that made gape  
 The pine and let thee out.  
 Ariel I thank thee, master.  
 Prospero If thou more murmur'st, I will rend an oak  
 And peg thee in his knotty entrails till  
 Thou has howled away twelve winters. (I.ii. 291-96)

Prospero does tell Ariel that he will set him free in two days, but it is only through threats and manipulation that he lets him have his own way. Ariel in some theatrical film productions of *The Tempest* has been performed with bitterness. One example of this is Ariel played by the middle-aged, portly Simon Russell Beale in 1993: "This Ariel was unsprightly, resentful of Prospero to the point of, famously, spitting in his master's face at the moment he was freed . . ." (Brokaw 25). Ariel as a servant is loyal to Prospero not from his heart but from the pressure that he should be grateful for his master's action of generosity offered in the past. He is a good spirit because he believes that he owes Prospero as much. In truth it would not terribly hurt the soundness of his morale even if he escapes from him without carrying out his orders at this point of the play because he has paid off his debt by doing him a favor of creating the tempest and bringing the people boarded on the ship to the island safe and sound. Ariel, however, obediently follows Prospero's next orders regardless of his threatening and condescending words. Though Prospero tells Ariel that he loves him as he says, "Dearly my delicate Ariel" to Ariel's question, "Do you love me master,

no?” (IV.i. 48-49), Prospero’s treatment of his servant is not always pleasing.

It is interesting to see the difference in the treatment of servants by magicians between *The Tempest* and *My Love DMZ*. Maybe, the difference lies deep in us the eastern people and the western. That is, the way the magician treats his servant in Shakespeare is greatly different from the way the Shaman treats hers in Tae-Sok Oh’s *My Love DMZ*.

In *My Love DMZ*<sup>1</sup>, the Shaman, the mediator of this world and the other, is sought out by the senior member of the animal world the Goat. The Goat is wise and tries to be in control of the precarious situation the animals are facing. Yet, the magic can only be performed by the Shaman to resurrect the dead soldiers. As soon as the Shaman comes into view, she demands the animals to get her garlic, ginger, mug-wort, acorn curd, two bags of corn, three bowls of chestnuts, and so forth to perform the ceremony for reincarnation. She exclaims with charisma, “Go get fire from the Eight Provinces of the Korean peninsula” (Kiln).<sup>2</sup> What is interesting about the scene is that her demands for the ceremony are rather detailed, asking for all the ingredients and contents necessary for the spell to work. Traditionally, the Shaman is female in Korea, and the Shaman in this scene acts and speaks with much authority as she commands the animals to prepare for the ceremony. Although her voice shows her authority, she comes across more as a messenger offering guidance to the animals. She can wield her magic, but in cooperation with the animals that she asked to run errands. One of the humorous scenes in the play is when she asks for a gallbladder from a bear. To this, the Badger says, “Well not quite. We didn’t know what you wanted—either the gallbladder from a bear or from a rabbit—so, we have whispered into the ear of the rabbit to pull out his gallbladder and hang it in the wind” (Kiln). But the Shaman insists that it should be one from a bear. Oh creates some complication in this scene for intensity by telling the animals that “The four-footed animals’ bladders should be taken out after the 15th, when the tide is full. If not, the bladder rots, and can’t be put back” (Kiln). Of course, there are no sacrifices or deaths in the play as there is none in *The Tempest*. The shaman is very specific about her demands concerning how the animals should obtain the materials and the attitude they should have as they perform the ceremony. Part of her commands is delivered by singing. Oh also draws on mystical elements about Shamshin Goddess, who is responsible for enabling women to conceive, and when dealing with getting the bladder out from the bear, the Shaman evokes the image of a woman giving birth to a child by making the bear thrust the bladder out from his body. The stage direction says, “The gallbladder is coming out at length. Ox wraps it up with the leaves of plaintain” (Kiln). The fire imagery that Oh uses in the scene also adds to the atmosphere of the mystical; the Stork was responsible for getting fire from the eight provinces in Korea. Shaman

chants consistently to arouse the dead souls, and at last, the Shaman says, “ Samshin Goddess,/ Sit behind the top of the kiln and help it force them out/ With as much power as a volcano eruption/ Or with the power of hauling up the buckets of water from the well/ In a nine-year drought” (Kiln). Oh relies on the audience’s knowledge of mysticism, and the whole business of reincarnating dead soldiers invokes the traditional belief in supernatural power in the Korean audience. Shakespeare also does this in *The Tempest* in Act 4 scene 1: Prospero calls forth spirits to bless the love between Miranda and Ferdinand. Iris enters the scene and describes the beautiful landscape of the groves which Ceres has inhabited and asks Ceres to come and join them to celebrate their marriage. Iris, Ceres, and Juno speak briefly about their own affairs, but soon sing together to wish the couple a happy marriage. The singing and dancing of nymphs and spirits creates a festival mood, which is visible to the young couple and Prospero .

The supernatural interacts with humans physically and psychologically affecting each other. The audience interested in the interaction between humans and mythological figures would be fascinated by the festive aura the spirits create in *The Tempest*, and Oh’s *My Love DMZ* is quite Shakespearean in this sense. Oh is also a director who is very much interested in the ways in which our beliefs in the myths affect our lives. It makes sense that he would turn his attention to *The Tempest* for his third adaptation of Shakespeare in 2010 after numerous staging of the tragicomedy *My Love DMZ* since 2002. A lot of his own plays deal with Korean mythology and spirituality, but it is also important to note that the recurring themes in his plays have a lot to do with his personal life.

Tae-Sok Oh has always been writing his plays in terms of the Korean past: ghosts and spirits of the tragic history of Korea continually haunt him. Born in 1940, Oh is the generation of the Japanese Imperial Rule of Korea, who experienced the Korean War that followed it. This is why many of his plays are interspersed with his tragic recollections in Korean history. His family was torn apart because of the Korean War during which he lost his father. Just like many families during that time, they had to seek refuge abandoning their home and possessions to escape from the attack by the North. The clash between the North and the South became a painful collective memory; following the Korean War, political upheavals and the dictatorship continued to wreck people’s lives. Oh often deals with this theme in conjunction with mythology in his plays. As Jeong points out, “Oh’s plays reflect Korean history in combination with modern daily life and culture” (172). Jeong writes that he is much like Brian Friel in that the past is always in the present (172). He is a playwright director who makes full use of what he knows about his own country and heritage, and this is not limited to the themes.

What is noteworthy is that Tae-Sok Oh as a Korean playwright director makes full and effective use of the dramaturgy of traditional drama such as *kamyunkuk* (mask drama) and *pansori* (musical). These dramatic forms employ a great deal of traditional choreographic movements<sup>3</sup> and the musical that involves traditional string instruments and drums. Kim claims that “Oh is often regarded as a playwright who can best express Korean sentiment through music and body language on the stage” (172). Oh’s plays are very Korean in that they often contain Korean heritage. However, as Ah-jeong Kim observes, “Oh breaks down traditions and reconstructs them in a new theatrical form that challenges both old and current conventions alike” (19). This can be seen in *My Love DMZ*. The Shaman sings in the form of *pansori* (musical), but it is in loose form to suit modern theater.<sup>4</sup>

*My Love DMZ* has all the qualities that can be defined as Korean. It touches on the sorrows of the Korean past; it uses traditional dramatic forms to draw the audience into the play; and it uses folk instruments and forms of traditional musical for Korean sentiments. However, it also deals with themes that concern the modern people such as environmental issues. One of them is the problem of pesticides: the bees are being killed off as a result, and the animals worry that the humans will have to pollinate but that they will never be able to recover the ecosystem that has once been destroyed. We encounter this problem at the beginning the play in which the D-Bee speaks of the mass destructions of bees affected by insecticide and of many bees fleeing over to the DMZ. During the discussion of the phenomena, the Daddy Cow-Dung Roller asks, “When bees are all gone, who will pollinate flowers?”:

D-Bee: Humans, of course!

Daddy Cow-Dung Roller: Are you crazy? How could humans be bees?

D-Bee: Climbing up a tree with a brush, they point the tip of brush with the pollen (gesturing the act of pointing the brush) from a stamen to a pistil. It is the artificial pollination. (One Night Before a Great Storm)

The dialogue gives us the frightening picture of the future from the perspective of the animals; but it raises the audience’s awareness of the current environmental issues. Over the course of the play, Oh continually brings our attention to such issue and to the fact that Korea is a divided nation through the setting and resurrected soldiers. However, these are consistently interrupted by occasional humor provoked by ridiculous behaviors of the animals and the comical Shaman.

*My Love DMZ* is a reflection of Korea’s past and present, and a culturally crafted play using Korean mysticism. This play points to one of the biggest issues we humans face today; though the theme is grave, the play entertains us in such a pleasant and

delightful way with the aid of a Shaman and her magic, with the supernatural power she borrows. Just as Shakespeare wraps up his serious themes of betrayal and revenge with the story of spirits and nymphs and Prospero's magic in *The Tempest*, so does Oh in a very successful way.

## Notes

1. The playbook I used for this paper is one used for the 2010 performance. The translation is based on Oh, Tae-Sok's revised version of the play *My Love DMZ*. The first version of *My Love DMZ* had first been performed at Aroong Theatre from July 16 through August 31 in 2002. This play was radically revised in the later version, with additions of new characters, particularly the main characters, who are a family of cow dung-rollers, and the chorus.
2. Tae-Sok Oh does not divide *My Love DMZ* into Acts and Scenes; it is divided into titled sections and this section is entitled "Kiln." Such division of scenes is typical of his plays. In addition, there is no English translation in publication as of yet, so I have translated the original lines into English.
3. Yang mentions that the aesthetic characteristic of the language Oh uses on stage is "the emotionally comfortable rhythm and body language in accordance with it" (42). Another characteristic of Oh's stage is, according to Lee, that he often uses the elements of *madangnori* (yard play). One aspect of it is that "the audience is regarded as potential actors as the actors approach the audience in the yard and strike up a conversation with its members during the performance of the play" (523).
4. In his early career as a playwright director, Oh thought he should just try to learn the practice of Western theater before he realized Korea had its own dramatic archetypes and theatrical forms. This is because, as Oh says in an interview with So, "The form of Korea's modern theater came from the west. The theater itself, the concept of drama [came from the west] . . ." (95).

## Works Cited

- Brokaw, Katherine Steele. "Ariel's Liberty." *Shakespeare Bulletin*, 26.1 (2008): 23-42.
- Jeong, Youn-Gil. "A Comparative Study on Historical Representation in the Plays of Brian Friel and Oh Tae-Seok." *Journal of East-West Comparative Literature* [ 동서비교문학저널 ] 25 (2011): 171-196
- Kim, Ah-jeong and R.B. Graves. trans. *The Metacultural Theater of Oh Tae-Sok Five Plays from the Avant-Garde* by Tae-Sok Oh. Honolulu: U of Hawaii P, 1999.
- Lee, Hyon-u. "Shakespeare, Yard, and the Style of Traditional Korean Theatre." *Shakespeare Review* 43.3 (2007): 519-546.
- My Love DMZ*. By Tae-Sok Oh. Dir Tae-Sok Oh. Haneul Theater, National Theater of Korea, Seoul. 2010. "Playbook." Mokwha, 2010.

Shakespeare, Williams. *The Tempest. The Riverside Shakespeare*. Ed. Evans, G. Blakemore. Boston: Houghton, 1974.

So, Yun-Ho. *Tae-Sok Oh's Plays: Forty Years of Experiment and Challenge* [ 오태석 연극 : 실험과 도전의 40 년 ]. Seoul: Yunkukkwa Inkan [ 연극과 인간 ],2002.

Yang, Sei-ra, "Oh Tae Suk[?]s] [T]heatrical [P]erformativity [in] *Bukcheong Lion Dance ...* [And] the creation of the musical language-." *Studies in Korean Drama* [ 한국연극학 ] 44 (2011): 32-63.

责任编辑：郭 雯

# Reflective Distance and Its Limits: Kim Hyun's Reading as a Torture, Reverie, and Desire

**Yoon Ilhwan**

Department of English Language & Literature, Pusan National University  
63-2 Busandaehag-Ro (Jangjeong-Dong), Gumjeon-Gu, Pusan, 609-735, South Korea  
Email: iyoona@pusan.ac.kr

**Abstract** Much of Kim Hyun's work is an attempt to find a way out in literature that moves us beyond the social and mental repression to a sense of transcendence. Literature for him plays a key role in forging a space for providing a reader with the specific differentiating attainment of the recognized subject. Kim Hyun articulates the dimension of reflective distance in the form of reading as a torture and reverie. In so doing, he elaborates on how a reader is able to avoid not only debilitating contentment with the pleasure of reality reflected in the text but also the danger of yielding to fascination with the ideal he desires in reading.

**Key words** Kim Hyun; reading; the reflective distance; torture, reverie; desire

Kim Hyun (1942-1990) was one of the greatest literary critics and theorists in Korea. He has been a major and enduring influence on literary criticism since the 1960s. He as professor of French literature elaborated a distinct philosophically-oriented literary criticism of Korean and French literature with particular attention to contemporary Korean poets and novelists, and European intellectuals like Sartre, Bachelard, and Foucault. His criticism spreads from ancient Korean poetry to postmodernism, and extends the literary and theoretical horizon from René Descartes to Michel Foucault. Kim Hyun does not see any separation between his study of Korean and French literature; between his attempt to posit the general trends and history of Korean Literature and his attempt to appropriate European intellectuals. The wide range of his interest has enhanced studies of Korean literature.

Kim Hyun's influence on literary criticism has been considerable for many years. Ji Woo Hwang claims that Korean literature has been gratified by Kim Hyun's criticism from 1962 to 1990 (454). Another critic Seong Woo Kwon also said of him that "his criticism still has brilliant glows of light around Korean literature even after he passed away in June 26, 1990. His myth continues to grow even after death, and

his critical screens surround the Korean literary circle like the ribs of a fan. It is not an exaggeration to say that his literary criticism is one of the brightest stars among recent history of literary criticism in Korea” (Kwon: 1996, 352). Kim Hyun’s reading is made at the unique sympathetic encounter of readers with meanings of texts. It revolves the dynamics of the images and imagination, analyzing their rhythms and meanings.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed Kim Hyun develops one of the most powerful and sophisticated versions of the textual criticism, which explores the interrelationship between the text’s production of meaning and the role of the reader. By focusing on the relationship among the text’s themes and statements and its imagery, he exposes the reflective distance between the meaning of the text and the reading in order to reveal the disjunctive structure of signification. With this disjunction, Kim Hyun in his career “continues to emphasize the self-examination and self-reflection as the proper virtue of literature” (Kwon: 1999, 14). He carries out a challenge to an advocate for engaged literature who attempts to give priority to the outside world as the solid and unshakable ground of all possible knowledge. Though Kim Hyun believes in the role of literature that should help change the repressive reality, he puts his discourse against the criticism that has been devoted to the question of how faithfully the text reflects the outside world. Instead of developing the textual criticism based upon complex dialectic between the text and outside world or upon choosing one over the other, Kim Hyun addresses that there is in the text a radical discontinuity between the text and the outside world; the text does not coincide with things but rather consists in the reader’s reading that seeks a space beyond a given reality.

Kim Hyun starts work as a critic in “Narcissist Poetics” (1962), an essay that shows, in retrospect, the germ of structural category that composes a “prophetic” overview of his career to come. Much of his work is an attempt to find a way out in literature that moves us beyond the social and mental repression to a sense of transcendence. For him what is essential to literature is to liberate us from literal perception and from having to adjust to a given reality. Based on French symbolist poetics and Atheist-Existentialism, “Narcissist Poetics” expresses his desire to establish innovative literary criticism and shows his great interest in subversive aspects of surrealism and Freudian psychoanalysis. In the essay, he desires to maintain his critical and reflective distance from the reflected object of reality. For him the reflected world is outside reality from which he wants to keep the distance required for genuine freedom.

Kim Hyun begins the essay by saying that Narcissus is driven by the thirst in his heart to seek an object equal to his desire. The only object in reality to quench his thirst he finds is the well where he sees his own reflected image in the water. In

contrast to Greek mythology, what he sees there is not an ideal but anguished image of himself. The image is the other-himself that exists in a given reality. Kim Hyun writes:

When Narcissus sees his anguished face in the well (the anguish comes from his thirst. He begins to feel the being of desire he has never seen before), he begins to see his anguish, that is, the shadow of his desire. To find the anguished face is to see his own being beyond the surface of water. He is thinking now. 'Whose face is it? The anguished face is not mine. My face is beautiful and nothing less.' Narcissus begins to crave his beautiful face and identity. His face appears double to him now. ("Narcissus" 14)

There is a split between the beautiful face of Narcissus (imaginary face) and his anguished face (face in reality); he is divided between being in thinking and being in existence. According to Kim Hyun, the split is caused by his encounter with the 'evil', which prevents him from keeping the beautiful face. "Narcissus finds in his face an image of anguish, a face of death, and an evil being" ("Narcissus" 19). The split is between the immortal and beautiful self and the mortal and anguished self. The immortal self stores all knowledge and all experiences that it goes through during life, while the mortal self is ignorant, and mostly unaware of its true spiritual nature.

Kim Hyun analyzes the split of Narcissus much in accordance with Descartes. The reality Narcissus thinks real is mere figments of a vivid illusion. There is nothing certain about the world, the sky, the earth, minds, and bodies. He can doubt everything until he cannot deny his thinking activity in doubt. Since only thinking provides him with certainty, he as a subject can exist only in thinking. In so doing, however, the thinking being requires the reflective distance. As Seung Eun Lee points out, "Narcissus is at the same time he who recognizes his split in seeing his reflected image in the well" (341). Narcissus is thus a split between the real and ideal face and the reflective distance. In analysis of Narcissus, Kim Hyun reveals his desires to get freedom from the evil, if he cannot overcome it, as it constantly reminds us of human limits. The problematic for him in this period is already how to get the reflective distance from the inevitable limits for human reality, because "self", as Kim Hyun puts it, "is the distance for its other being, and without the distance, the individual cannot be established" ("Conventionalization of Korean Literature" 20). Kim Hyun in 1960s explores the reflective distance in Cartesian perspective in his early works like "A History of Love Affairs," "A Letter from Andre Breton to Seo Jung-joo," "The Reasons of that Light tells," and "Consideration on Criticism".

In the 1970s, Kim Hyun elaborates the reflective distance further when the South

Korean government militantly reinforces the category of the national subject and subsumes other forms of group identification such as class. Kim Hyun adopts ideas of Sartre and other European intellectuals in order to argue for an aesthetic of social commitment in contemporary South Korea; he emphasizes the role of literature and a reader as a project of rescuing literature from the state. For him literature becomes the site of exposure of economic inequality and political injustice. Literature plays a key role in forging a space for providing a reader with the specific differentiating attainment of the recognized 'subject' insofar as he articulates the dimension of reflective distance in reading. Without the distance, the reader would remain a simple being, seeking only sensitive pleasure in reading. He would be concrete, passive and inert in 'a being-in-itself', to use Sartrean terms; he would lack the ability to reflect and change, being unaware of 'a being-for-itself' which is conscious of its own consciousness. Seeing in literature his dream, which does not exist in reality, the reader finds himself and the world undefined and undetermined. Since the reader as 'a being-for-itself' lacks a predetermined essence, he is forced to create himself and actuate his own being. He corresponds to a lack that always resists full inscription into the mandates prescribed to individuals by hegemonic regimes. Reading for Kim Hyun thus is a way out from repression.

It is not easy, however, for the reader to articulate himself being free from social and mental repression, and to hold the reflective distance from the repression. Kim Hyun specifies the duty of reading as a break from the simple pleasure of the text. On a similar note of Kantian disinterestedness in art, he claims that the true nature of literature lies in its uselessness that is free from sensational pleasure encouraged in capitalism:

Useful things generally repress a human being. Just imagine a stifled knot in your stomach when useful things are nowhere near your side. The repressed desire comes to work more in a negative way as it is repressed stronger. But literature, which is not useful, does not repress a human being. Non-repressive literature testifies us that everything repressive functions negatively to a human being. ("What can Literature Do?" 50)

Literature does not depend on its serving some purposes of simple pleasing sensation. It should not be judged by the fact that a reader likes something or finds it pleasing in the text. Instead of perceiving the text as useful or pleasing, the reader should respond to it in a reflective distance, sufficiently recognizing, exploring, and articulating it. Reflection for Kim Hyun thus means an attempt to think of and articulate social and mental repression in the non-repressive literature.

Literature for Kim Hyun thus is not a means of securing pleasure, but a revelation of a space in which the reader continuously comes to know himself and the world. The reader should move to a self-recognizing state away from indulgence in pleasure or from confirmation of the familiar morality. To keep distance from sensational pleasure is an ethical obligation of recognizing the true value of literature. Only with the disinterestedness in usefulness and pleasure of the text, the reader can set himself up as a self-conscious critic, liberating himself from a given reality and moral ends. Kim Hyun uses the strong terms 'torture' to indicate the cost the reader should pay for his liberation.

Art is self-consciousness and torture in a sense. It confirms a variety of human possibilities one by one, and criticizes taking one possibility over the others. Art is not securing a temporal pleasure but a constant self-awakening. It is because of this demand that a *bildungsroman* is less popular than a martial arts novel. What the heroes in the latter novel demonstrate is not the individual potentials but the extension of established morality and success.... The martial arts novel destroys a concept of human being by expanding its abstraction, and anaesthetizes the reader's consciousness. The martial arts novel is nothing but obliteration of everything. What remains in that novel is the typical structure, and the reader gives up reflection in advance, only to be lost in there comfortably for several hours. His body does not have any trace of the novel before and after entering its structure, for the novel does not torture the reader... No torture means no existence. ("Martial Arts Novel" 235-36)

Reading experience to Kim Hyun is equivalent to becoming a tortured reader. The ethical order "Do not pursue sensational pleasure" tortures the reader, who is created by the split between the tortured and the one who is conscious of it. The split is inevitable, because for the reader to reflect upon himself as the tortured would require its own split between the tortured reader and reflecting upon the torture. The split itself presupposes the difference between them. The difference has a disruptive effect on the illusory continuity of the text and its pleasure.

The reader is tortured not only by his ethical duty but more importantly by his shame for the previous ignorant state. Not until he is aware of being tortured does he become aware of his own presence as a reader. While the tortured reader is in the passive state, the 'he' who sees it is a result from his construction of himself through differentiating himself from the tortured 'he'. Reading is the constant attempt to plot borders between the passively tortured reader and his active construction of it, seeking out moments in the text where reflective forces tie themselves into a knot which

captures process of understanding.

For Kim Hyun in the 1970s, reading as a torture makes the reader's consciousness active and liberated from the repression. The liberated 'he' here does not mean that he is totally free of repression; it rather implies that he comes to know his previous slavery to pleasure, recognizing himself as a being with a lack. Undefined and undetermined, the reader as a lack does not contain any regulations or contents that may restrain his freedom. He is a pursuer of freedom as absolute negativity. This negative freedom becomes essential for Kim Hyun's reflection on 'how to get out of all types of repression' in the 1970s.

Kim Hyun finds another liberating force of reading: a reverie in a Bachelardian sense. As Gil Young Oh demonstrates, Kim Hyun, following Bachelard's main issues and thoughts (48-57), makes use of reading as a reverie for the reader's dream of a society without repression. Reverie is a state of attention between waking consciousness and sleep, and is the kind of attention in which the imagination occurs. Kim Hyun writes about reverie in "What can Literature do?":

Only a human being is able to fall into a reverie. Reverie does not repress him, for it is not useful... Literature is the product of such a reverie. It reveals the unrealizable distance between dream and reality. The distance is the yardstick for how much a human being is repressed. The more beautiful the impossible dream is, the lower and uglier life is... However impossible it may be, the dream enables a man to keep distance from himself, that is, to reflect upon himself. Without a dream, a man cannot differentiate himself and thus locks himself within himself. ("What can Literature Do?" 52-3)

Reading as a reverie is a process of seeking a truth as it ought to be. Its truth lies in the seeking process. While reading, the reader constantly dreams of the ideal world which does not exist in reality. Poetic reverie is not an object, but it is a process, or a way of participating in a truth. Reading as a reverie is an active process that perceives and generates a truth as it ought to be.

In analysis of Cheongjun Lee's novel "Discharged from the Hospital" and "Our own Heaven", Kim Hyun develops his idea of reverie which will be taken to mean the active process of creating a truth to the extent of a larger mythic horizon. Reading as a reverie is not mere representations of reality but an active process which is a lively, full act, and the desire to make a truth. A role of literature, Kim Hyun believes, is to remind the reader that society is originally built on a dream which in turn reminds the society of its lack:

A literary understanding of society means that it re-reflects an institutionalized dream for a man's orderly life, based on pleasure principle. Literary man is a wanderer in a sense, for he dreams the outside of the institution while remaining inside. In the light of dream and happiness does literature reveal in what form a dream is institutionalized, what holes and inconsistencies the institutionalization is riddled with, and how they can be overcome. The specific nature of literature lies in its revelation of a lack; literature does not reveal dream in itself, which may perhaps be the duty of a prophetic philosopher. The greatest achievement by the literary autonomy is the negative presentation of reality in which society inversely learns to recognize its lack and dream. ("Literary Sociology" 199-200)

Literature delineates a space in which we reflect the dream of society and its lack, and we escape boundaries and constraints of its oppressive realities, however temporal the escape may be. Literature speaks our dream in us, exteriorizes the dream's fundamental will, and manifests our essential need of creativity for our dream of none-repression.

Kim Hyun traces the archetypal dream of non-repressive society in childhood memories.<sup>2</sup> Evoked by literature, we often return to the childlike state in which we experience the happiness of dreaming in a tranquil reverie. In happy childhood memories, we feel existence with no boundaries and this gives us freedom from the opposition between pain and pleasure, law and desire. Among numerous memories of his childhood, Kim Hyun ultimately comes down to the memories of his mother as the happiest moment. Her memories are to him so soft, deep, and enveloping that they rid him of repression and liberate him from alienation in modern society. As his description of the memories of his mother is illustrated, reverie for him stays in borders between consciousness and unconsciousness, which can be evoked by a single fragrance of low light, comfort, and rest. Reverie is not our possession and abducts us, and we become elusive to ourselves and take flight from being in reality.

Kim Hyun's consciousness in his childhood memories frequently heads out to his mother's voice, which with the aid of delicious potatoes and persimmon, creates an atmosphere to change the scary story she told to a pleasing story. With the atmosphere that her voice makes, scary things in the story become imaginatively pleasing. Fear in reality is too real and close to the sensation, while fear told in the soft voice makes room for the imagination. The sad and scary contents in story lose their negative hues, turning to the positive. Kim Hyun in childhood falls into sleep comfortably in her voice that hovers on the borders of waking consciousness and sleep. The borders are where binary opposition between reality principle and pleasure principle no longer holds, the hidden desire actively works, and a prohibition is violated. The opposition

is present but not in effect in her story, which is carried along by the atmosphere.

Mother's voice evokes the imagination that enables us to go beyond fear in reality. As Kim Hyun's descent into childhood memories implies, the imagination is tied up with our desire and will, which may be evoked by literature. In "Beloved and Love: Yongun Han's 'After Awakening from a Dream'", Kim Hyun gives us a vivid illustration of the interrelation between pure imagination and will:

Beautiful images are not produced without our will or desire to see the world beautiful. The will and desire of imagination to produce beautiful images are equivalent to the desire to make the world livable. In order to exclaim in delight 'the world is beautiful', we must think of it beautiful. This thought is quite astonishing, for it constantly awakens us from sleep of the enclosed and useful world. Yongun Han's imagination is striking: recognizing her beloved's footprint and waking up from the dream, the speaker sees the cloud in the sky while his dream riding on the same cloud goes to see his beloved. ("Beloved and Love" 96)

Imagination and will are not separate things but interpenetrate into each other in the form of will to imagination and of imagination to enlighten the will. Dynamic images do not represent a given reality but transfigure it into the inner depth. They forge the bond which unites the dreamer and the world; they impose our reverie on the world, making it livable. The adequate expression of images depends on the effective use of language. In his poem "After Awakening from a Dream", as Kim Hyun analyzes, Han uses cloud as an image to effectively express the way the lover thinks and images, and to show how the image can provoke or enhance our thoughts and feelings. In the poem, after his beloved has left him, the hero does not sit bemoaning but lets his "Dream, / Looking for the beloved, / [Ride] cloud". The poetic images create another reality, changing the ordinary world to the beautiful one. As images emerge, the reader's attention moves toward the beautiful world where dream and reality are mysteriously united; poetic images move beyond ordinary to new language. The creative imagination seeks to transcend what is and to transform reality into poetry.

The poetic world without usefulness surprises us with fresh emotions. The surprise is the emotion that comes from our recognition of the object as it ought to be. The world imprisoned in the usefulness breaks loose, bringing about the emotional surprise to the reader. Neither the familiar nor some transcendent world amazes soul in the reader. The surprise is sprung only between the real and unreal world and in borders where the inside and outside hover in balance.

Poetry for Kim Hyun is free of any other ideal commitment, whether to moral

good, religious belief, truth to life or nature. It cannot assimilate itself to science or morality. It has not a truth for its object except itself. Kim Hyun comes to realize, however, that the full autonomy of poetry has to pay the price for its 'groundlessness'; it can be at the risk for having a hollow ring to it, since the autonomy remains only as it ought to be. Poetry's refusal of society and of its values can always degrade into an innocent linguistic game. Moreover, its cry for autonomy secretly depends upon the society from which it desires to escape; if poetry cannot designate its autonomy except through the negation of society, it needs society as its negative moment. Without society that poetry refuses, it cannot maintain its autonomy; the absence of society means the absence of its autonomy. The freedom of poetry from fetishism and alienation in society cannot be achieved insofar as it relies on them as a moment of its negation.

There is also another limitation of the autonomy in relation to the ideal to which the dream desire to reach. Paradoxically the ideal must remain unreachable; as soon as poetry fills up the ideal space with some concrete contents, it loses its form and falls into its pathological object. After referring to Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, Kim Hyun adds that the utopia in the novel to him seems too boring and meaningless that he even wants some repression. He wonders about the virtue of the utopia: "the more terrifying fact is that the brave new world does not have any literature, for suffering cannot exist there. The non-repressive world is caught up with uniformity, which is the worst repression" ("Why do We Do with Literature Here" 187). Utopian image can become a repressive power as soon as it gets its concrete form; it regulates every aspect of other meanings wherever feasible. It may penetrate into the deep reaches of signification structure, seeking control the thoughts and actions of its reading. As Lae-Hee Han puts it, "as soon as thought becomes uniformed and fixed to take only its conceptualization as true, it becomes repressive" (342). The autonomy of poetry thus is tied up with the attitude of keeping distance from the ideal space as well as from a given reality. Though the wings of salvation that comes from poetic images may be a moment of transcendence, the pure transcendence through a beautiful semblance hardly absolves poetry of blame for escapism. Despite these, however, poetry cannot give up the desire for transcendence which supports and sustains our life; it is not possible to give up the desire because desire is the root of human life. Insofar as Kim Hyun takes literature as a privileged space to criticize the given society, he has to conceptualize literary images without society; he cannot put literature outside of the society, and cannot free poetry from the effect of the formulation of signification, the communication or interpretation in the society.

In the face of the dilemma, Kim Hyun seeks his way out to conceptualization of literary image by keep his balance between the real and the ideal. He desires to keep

the distance from both the phenomenal and the ideal. For him neither must poetry remain in the given reality nor must it trespass the limitation of its desire, stopping short of the lethal domain, the dream of direct contact with the ideal. In order to sustain its autonomy, poetry thus must avoid not only debilitating contentment with the pleasure provided by the objects of phenomenal reality but also the danger of yielding to fascination with the ideal.

Kim Hyun's desire to seek his way out is poignantly expressed: "I'd like to remain a reader of poetry". He constantly desires reading, for he longs for dismantling and disrupting the mystical enmeshment in the ideal, producing a meaning newly every time he reads. He wants each reading to mark the difference it makes—a difference that shows everything created to have its truth in its process. His desire is sustained only between the ideal itself and its absence. The disruptive power of his reading would be what makes possible the perpetual substitutes for the ideal. The project of his reading thus would endlessly remain suspended in the promise to reach the ideal. He wants his reading to transpose the ideal into the unattainable beyond, turning it into a transcendent realm. Reading for Kim Hyun is thus an endless substitution of the ideal whose total grasp can never be brought about; the substitution endlessly slides from one reading to the other without its coincidence with the ideal. The ethical imperative of reading for him is to keep the lack alive at any price: whenever his reading finds every object which could satisfy it phenomenally or transcendently and thus threatens to extinguish it, it must set its desire again in motion.

Kim Hyun's desire to keep the distance from the ideal, however, faces the serious challenge in the 1980s. After witnessing that the democratization movement in Gwangju in 1980 is cruelly and savagely crushed by the army, he begins to question the nature of desire seriously. In response to the violence and suffering in Gwangju and to consequent repressive authoritarian regime, Kim Hyun delves deeper into his research for what causes such a brutal violence and comes to the conclusion that violence is tied up with one's failure to control his desire. In "Violence and Distortion", he takes a mythology of Jeju island 'Bonpuri King of Heaven and Earth' as an example of violent nature of desire. When the king of heaven and earth, according to the mythology, tries to assign this world to his older son and the next world to his younger son, the latter makes a deal with the former about who gets this world. He wants to place bets with his brother on who does better at a riddle and a flowering. Defeated at each game by his brother, he finally deceives his brother while in sleep by switching flowers. He ends up with getting his brother's consent of letting him rule this world. Kim Hyun writes about the bet between the brothers:

Good men yield and bad men win, for the former cannot hang tough for strong

desires of the latter. It is bad men who have strong desires, and good men who control their desires. ("Violence and Distortion" 199)

Since desire is an inherent tendency, which cannot be eliminated but can be diverted or controlled, Kim Hyun judges men good and bad based on their attitude to desires. Although there is no question of getting rid entirely of human desire, we can control it via sublimation, transforming unacceptable desire into acceptable actions or behavior. There are no objective criteria for judgment of how strong one's desire is, for each man takes it differently. No matter how strongly he feels about his desire, he has to control it as ethical demands. In this sense the ethical question for desire is not whether aggression can be abolished from the human being, but rather how this desire can be channeled to non-destructive activities and turned into a positive energy source. Kim Hyun rejects desire's insistence as a cause of bad violence which fails to stop short of the fatal domain. He comes to admit, however, that his demand not to transgress the limit of desire cannot be sustained. While discussing *Jangkilsan* by Suckyoung Hwang, a novel about a heroic outlaw, he writes:

Bad violence gives rise to deep resentment in Nietzsche's sense, and the resentment is internalized and converted to aggressiveness. When it is brought to the fore, a pervert or normal mentality for destruction is followed. . . . Bad violence is not total but partial, not permanent but temporal. Departure from it can be obtained by entering the transcendental world where bad violence does not exist. Where is the world? It is in your mind that desires to build it in the earth. . . . But is the desire producing bad violence the very desire engendering the transcendental world? My answer must be a yes. The desire to rob others of their property, it is terrifying, is the same desire for the transcendental world. Put it in Suckyoung Hwang's fashion, the lowest man desires the strongest. ("Violence and Distortion" 221)

Kim Hyun is horrified by sudden realization that desire to keep the distance from the ideal and to go right to the end are two faces of the same desire. Once in motion, desire cannot stop in the middle of its desire; it moves beyond the happy medium into extremes by compulsion to go all the way to the site of the ideal. Desire sticks to unconditional insistence which follows its course irrespective of all pathological considerations. As the source of negativity and destructiveness, it compels the subject to go right to the end beyond every measure, and to turn outward and externalize his dangerous desire for aggression.

Kim Hyun before has tried to remove the negative and violent nature of

repression and to keep the reflective distance between the reader's negative desire and the repressive reality. His project of literature has been to find a space for liberation and a wanderer's freedom. After facing the horrible truth of uncontrollable desire in Gwangju, however, he seriously questions the possibility of reading as a reverie. His attempt to put a name on the ideal and thus to realize it can be achieved only temporarily if not in vain. After seeing the abyss of desire, he comes to know that it is no longer possible for him to remove or deny the terrible truth of desire. The desire that enables the reader to keep the reflective distance is the same desire that brings about such a horrible violence in Gwangju; the desire is the source of both beauty and social violence. In response to the two faces of desire, Kim Hyun's criticism in the 1980s oscillates between two desires, in an attempt to obliterate or avoid the abyss of desire. He torments himself by such questions as 'how should we treat the desire?' and 'what could be possible ways of re-directing the urge to destroy?'

His final answers to the questions are to confront the abyss of desire and admit it in all honesty. While discussing In-Hoon Choi's novels, he confesses his unhappy consciousness:

One thing clear is that the world is not as clear as the one in a book. We cannot live clearly in the unclear world. We, at least I, do nothing but wander. But can we denigrate the wander as an intellectual play in the desk? Since I take such a question as a fundamental one, I am close to an opportunist in Choi's sense. I am unhappiness and a lack. ("Pain of Reading" 233)

Calling himself an opportunist, he poignantly acknowledges his failure in dealing with the abysmal desire. He frankly accepts the dark side of desire that he cannot tame. In the essays in 1980s, he continues to tackle the abysmal desire and at the same time to name his failure in all honesty. He poignantly accepts his failure in project of reading as a reverie and speculates deeply on the limits of the project. In an essay on Si Young Lee's poem, he asks himself: "Why do I do literature here? As written in Si Young Lee's poem, the difficult questions whip me to name them" ("Why do We Do Literature Here" 188). He does not hope to solve them; rather all he can do is to give a name to them, even though he continuously fails to capture the questions firmly. Ironically his failure to name the abysmal desire in language offers him the gap that he needs for the reflection. It turns out that the reflection cannot come to itself, for the linguistic representation of the abyss of desire is beyond the linguistic order that carries with it the index of its being inadequate and being unrealizable. The distance between the abyss and its representation is an abysmal distance that cannot find any equivalence between them. The linguistic representation is destined to be perpetually

unstable, flowing, and changing, which asks the reader to reconstruct the abyss once more.

Kim Hyun's final answer thus misses and hits the target at the same time. His failure is the possibility and impossibility of his reverie's fulfillment and is full of ambiguity. He continues to attempt at representing the abyss, even though he knows that he is going to fail. Now his earlier project of 'I'd like to remain a reader of poetry' takes a totally different meaning. It no longer depends on his will to keep the distance from the object of desire; it rather demands to accept its failure and articulate it in language. Kim Hyun's constant articulation ironically serves as a pattern for ethical reading. His ethical response to the abyss of desire suggests to the reader that he should re-read the abyss of meaning in the text, even though he knows he is going to fail. 'Remaining a reader' orders us to read the text again. The order for Kim Hyun is a kind of categorical imperative in Kantian sense, which denotes an absolute, unconditional requirement that asserts its authority in all circumstances. Insofar as the reader follows the order, the reading itself cannot be fixed. Though the abyss cannot be filled up and thus must be failed, we respond to as an ethical order the conviction that reading can produce a reverie, even though the conviction is only a negative one and though the reverie can also be a source of a horrible violence. Because of the nature of desire, reading cannot but running into dark, chaotic, and indeterminable meanings; the reader has to read the text again under the order. The text is never going to close itself because of the abyss, demanding another reading. Kim Hyun's desire 'I'd like to remain a reader of poetry' is thus ultimately nothing but his ethical response to the invitation of the abyss of the text.

## Notes

1. For the brief sketch of Kim Hyun's life as a literary critic, see Young-Bong Lim 328-335.
2. For the detailed analysis of Kim Hyun's childhood, see Myung-Won Lee 175-206.

## Works Cited

- Han, Lae-Hee. "A Study on Reading and Reflective Subject in Kim Hyun's Criticism". *Korean Language and Literature* 153(2009): 313-348.
- Hwang, Ji Woo. "The Deceased Who Read Everything in the World". *Insight on the Whole*. Kim Hyun. Seoul: Nanam, 1990.
- Kim, Hyun. "Beloved and Love: Yongun Han's 'After Awakening from a Dream'". *Literature and Utopia. Complete Works of Kim Hyun*, Vol. 4. Seoul: Moonji Publishing, 1991.
- . "Narcissist Poetics". *Existence and Language: In Search for Modern French Literature*.

*Complete Works of Kim Hyun*, Vol. 12. Seoul: Moonji Publishing, 1991.

---. "Pain of Reading". *Pain of Reading. Complete Works of Kim Hyun*. Vol. 4. Seoul: Moonji Publishing, 1991.

---. "The Literary Sociology: In Place of a Preface". *The Status of Korean Literature. Complete Works of Kim Hyun*, Vol.1. Seoul: Moonji Publishing, 1991.

---. "Violence and Distortion". *Analysis and Interpretation. Complete Works of Kim Hyun*, Vol. 7. Seoul: Moonji Publishing, 1991.

---. "What can Literature Do?" *The Status of Korean Literature. Complete Works of Kim Hyun*, Vol.1. Seoul: Moonji Publishing, 1991.

---. "Why do We Do Literature Here". *The Status of Korean Literature. Complete Works of Kim Hyun*, Vol.1. Seoul: Moonji Publishing, 1991.

---. "Why do We Read a Martial Art Novel?" *Society and Ethics. Complete Works of Kim Hyun*, Vol. 2. Seoul: Moonji Publishing, 1991.

Kwon, Seong Woo and *at al.* "A Study on the 'Modernity' in the 1960's Criticism". *Korean Studies* 25: 3(1999): 2-29.

---. "Between Attraction and Criticism: Kim Hyun's Criticism on Popular Literature", *Modern Korean Criticism*. Seoul: Kang, 1996.

Lee, Myung-Won. "Kim Hyun's Childhood and Christian Thought: His Origin of Literary Criticism". *Theses on Korean Literature* 57(2011):175-206.

Lee, Seung Eun. "Kim Hyun's Oblivion and Desire". *Modern Literature Studies* 35(2008): 335-373.

Lim, Young-Bong. "The Life and Literature of Critic Kim Hyun: An Essay on a Critical Biography of Kim Hyun". *Korean Language and Literature Studies*. 44(2010): 321-339.

Oh, Gil Young. "Reading the Critical Texts of Our Time: Toward the Criticism of Deep Subjectivity". *In/Outside: English studies in Korea* 25(2008): 143-168.

责任编辑：王晓兰

# 易卜生戏剧研究的新方法

——文学伦理学批评的视角

张连桥

School of Chinese Language and Literature, Central China Normal University

NO.152 Luoyu Road, Wuhan, Hubei, P.R.China, 430079

Email: lianqiaozh@yahoo.com.cn

亨利克·约翰·易卜生（Henrik Johan Ibsen, 1828-1906）对于世界戏剧的巨大贡献获得批评界的普遍认同，被称作“现代戏剧之父”：他“一方面运用人道主义的思想武器来批判封建残余和大资产阶级，另一方面又凭借个人的精神反叛去追求个性彻底解放的理想”（王忠祥 86）。百十年来，易卜生批评主要集中在两个阶段：“易卜生主义”（Ibsenism）<sup>①</sup>与“易卜生化”（Ibsenization）<sup>②</sup>。学者们对易卜生戏剧的结构、内容、语言、人物、舞台演出等展开了多维研究，理论视角涉及象征主义、现实主义、女性主义、心理主义、生态批评、道德批评等诸多方面，取得了丰硕的成果<sup>③</sup>。

纵观易卜生所有剧作，无论是早期的“浪漫主义系列”、中期的“现实主义系列”还是后期的“象征主义系列”，都体现了剧作家对伦理与道德的深度关怀，以及对现代社会视野下伦理与道德方面所折射的问题的批判与反思。易卜生之所以被称为“挪威民族的良心”，这与其作品中的道德诉求有着不可分割的联系。“易卜生之所以引人喜爱，是因为他的道德的忧虑，他对良心问题的关心，他的说教的道德性质”<sup>④</sup>。文学伦理学批评倡导文学批评“回到历史的伦理现场，站在当时的伦理立场上解读和阐释文学作品，寻找文学产生的客观伦理原因并解释其何以成立，分析作品中导致社会事件和影响人物命运的伦理因素，用伦理的观点对事件、人物、文学问题等给予解释，并从历史的角度作出道德评价”（聂珍钊 14）。易卜生戏剧创作所介入的伦理与道德问题，是挪威在十八、十九世纪宗教伦理思想转变、开拓精神遗失、家庭伦理受到颠覆的文学再现。易卜生戏剧主要从现代家庭关系出发，关注戏剧人物的道德境遇、以内外双重聚焦的方式展示戏剧人物的道德诉求，从而实现生存理念的拷问、关系维系的反思、生态价值的探索。

本期“易卜生戏剧的文学伦理学批评”专栏力图运用文学伦理学批评对易卜生戏剧进行重读，旨在体现文学伦理学批评所倡导的回归文本、回到伦理现场，从具体问题入手，分析易卜生戏剧中的伦理难题。笔者认为重点从易卜生戏剧中的伦理身份问题入手，在特定的社会背景下，易卜生戏剧中的人物因为其伦

理身份的缺失、错位和不确定性等，从而导致他们道德的失衡和理性的迷失。易卜生戏剧中所讨论的伦理问题都和伦理身份有着紧密的联系，且伦理身份构成了易卜生戏剧中最基本的伦理因素。

本期专栏共选择了3篇论文，重点探讨易卜生的三部作品：《海上夫人》（*The Lady from the Sea*, 1888）、《建筑师》（*The Master Builder*, 1892）和《玩偶之家》（*A Doll's House*, 1879）。

第一篇论文“身份困惑与伦理选择——《海上夫人》的主人公艾梨达分析”，作者朱黎航选择“自由伦理”和“伦理选择”作为核心命题，围绕着剧中“海婚”、“俗婚”、“怪胎”三个主要伦理结，也是剧中主人公艾梨达的三个心结而展开，阐释造成艾梨达伦理身份混乱和困惑的原因，进而探讨剧中人物所面临的伦理困境及其伦理选择。作者认为，如何打开艾梨达的心结，成为全剧的焦点。实质上，艾梨达面临的选择是两种生存模式的选择，一种是陌生人所代表的审美的生存模式，一种是房格尔所代表的伦理的生存模式。艾梨达回到起点，认识到自己必须做出自己的自由选择，唯有负责任的选择才是理想的选择，最终艾梨达做出了自己的伦理选择。艾梨达的选择不仅体现了她个人对不同生存模式的选择，也象征了人类在进化发展的关键时刻所做出的关系人类前途命运的重大伦理选择。

第二篇论文“人生的建筑师——论《建筑师》中的身份追寻与心灵孤独”，作者林宛莹来自马来西亚。作为马来西亚华人，宛莹求学于台湾省台南和湖北省武汉，中文功底较好。此篇论文选择以“建筑师”的身份及其孤独而展开。作为颇有名气的建筑师，无论是在身份上、情感上和话语上，索尔尼斯却倍感孤独，为了摆脱这种孤独带来的痛苦，他克服人生的困惑，不断寻找自我、超越自我，并最终在建造自己的“空中楼阁”时丧生。作者认为，索尔尼斯建筑“空中楼阁”的目的就是要为自己的心灵找到归宿，同时，另一方面他要站在高处，站在靠近上帝的地方，向上帝争取作为一个人所应该有的心灵自由。由此告诉我们，每个人都是自己心灵的建筑师，在通往心灵与精神安宁的路上，须用“人性因子”去克制和控制从野兽进化所遗留下来的“兽性因子”，才能获得人生的幸福。

第三篇论文“‘究竟社会正确，还是我正确？’——论《玩偶之家》的伦理身份与伦理禁忌”，紧紧抓住伦理身份与伦理禁忌这两大命题，试图突破《玩偶之家》在中国长期被解读为女性主义文学的范式。作者认为，《玩偶之家》的故事冲突来自于伪造签字借债时间的暴露，娜拉在乎的是家庭的幸福与和睦，只为扮演好她在家庭中妻子和母亲的伦理身份；然而无视社会的伦理禁忌，作为一个银行家的妻子却伪造签名，尽管她的伦理动机是为拯救自己丈夫的生命。与此同时，十分重视社会秩序、伦理法则的海尔茂，由于妻子的犯罪行为而无法忍受，不顾夫妻感情对其妻子痛加辱骂，他所信奉的社会伦理信念使他无法理解妻子以“爱”之名的伦理犯罪。作者郑美善来自韩国，分别在台湾台南、广东深圳和湖北武汉攻读学位，作为一个韩国学者，此篇论文的撰写体现了作

者的学术判断力和驾驭中文的能力。

通过简要介绍上述三篇论文及其选题，相信读者能从她们的论文读出她们富有才气的思想与灵感。各国学者频繁地将易卜生的戏剧与古希腊悲剧、莎士比亚戏剧相提并论。易卜生戏剧在中国百年来更是产生了持续不断的影响，正如萧乾所说：“‘五四’以来介绍到中国的众多西方剧作家中，名气属莎士比亚的最大，而影响最为深远的，无疑则是挪威的易卜生。所有旁的剧作家主要都在舞台技巧和表现方法上给我们以启迪，而易卜生则除了戏剧艺术之外，更重要的是教我们通过戏剧来剖析人生，直面人生”<sup>⑤</sup>。毫无疑问，重读易卜生戏剧，探究其剧作中所呈现的伦理与道德问题对处在转型时期的中国社会具有重要的警示意义。

### 注解【Notes】

①关于“易卜生主义”主要参见 Shaw, George Bernard: *The Quintessence of Ibsenism*(Boston: Benjamin R. Tucker,1891); 以及胡适对“易卜生主义”的阐释：“易卜生主义”（详见《胡适文集：读书与胡说》，北京：北京燕山出版社，1995年版）；王忠祥对“易卜生主义”的再定义（详见《关于易卜生主义的再思考》等论文，外国文学研究，2005年第5期）。

②关于“易卜生化”，王宁在“‘作为艺术家易卜生研究的美学原则’：易卜生化”、“易卜生剧作的意义重构”等论文中指出易卜生戏剧研究的这一美学转向；相关论述同时可详见 Erika Fischer-Lichte, Barbara Gronau, Christel Weiler ed.: *Global Ibsen: Performing Multiple Modernities*(New York: Routledge, 2011)。

③详见 Errol Durbach: “A century of Ibsen criticism” form James McFarlane ed.: *The Cambridge Companion to Ibsen*. New York:Cambridge University Press,2005, p233-252.

④详见《易卜生文集》（第八卷）所收集的研究论文：（俄）普列汉诺夫：“亨利克·易卜生”，吕荧译，北京：人民文学出版社，1995年版，第331页。

⑤详见萧乾：“提起易卜生”。引自孟胜德，（挪）阿斯特里德·萨瑟（Astrid Saether）主编：《易卜生研究论文集》。北京：中国文学出版社，1995。

### 引用作品【Works Cited】

王忠祥：《易卜生》。北京：华夏出版社，2003。

[Wang Zhongxiang. *Ibsen*. Beijing: Huaxia Publishing House, 2003.]

聂珍钊：“文学伦理学批评：基本理论与术语”，《外国文学研究》1(2010):12—22。

[Nie Zhenzhao. “Ethical Literary Criticism: Its Fundaments and Terms.” *Foreign Literature Studies* 1 (2010):12—22.]

责任编辑：尚必武

# 身份困惑与伦理选择

——《海上夫人》的主人公艾梨达分析

朱黎航

**内容提要：**易卜生的《海上夫人》是一部有关自由伦理和伦理选择的戏剧。“海婚”、“俗婚”、“怪胎”依次成为艾梨达心头的三个心结，造成了她伦理身份的混乱和困惑。只有重新回到起点进行独立、自由的选择才能解开她的心结。陌生人和房格尔代表了两种不同的生存模式，同时还象征了人类文明的不同发展阶段。艾梨达的选择不仅是她个人对不同生存模式的选择，还隐喻了人类在进化发展的关键时刻所做出的关系人类前途命运的重大伦理选择。

**关键词：**亨利·易卜生；《海上夫人》；身份困惑；伦理选择

**作者简介：**朱黎航，浙江工商大学国际教育学院副教授，华中师范大学文学院博士生，主要从事欧美文学及比较文学研究。

**Title:** Identity Confusion and Ethical Choice: An Analysis on Ellida in *The Lady from the Sea*

**Abstract:** Henrik Ibsen's *The Lady from the Sea* is a drama about ethics of freedom and choice. "Sea marriage", "secular marriage" and "abnormal child" are three knots in Ellida's mind, forcing her into identity confusion and perplexity. Only by returning to the starting point to make an independent and free choice can she untie the knots in her mind. The stranger and Wangel not only represent two different modes of existence, but also symbolize different developmental stages of human civilization. Ellida's choice does not only reflect a personal choice between different modes of existence, but also implies an ethical choice at the critical moment of human evolution, which exerts a great impact on the future and fate of human beings.

**Key words:** Henrik Ibsen; *The Lady from the Sea*; identity confusion; ethical choice

**Author:** Zhu Lihang is associate professor at International Education School, Zhejiang Gongshang University(Hangzhou 310018, China), and a Ph.D. candidate of Comparative Literature and World Literature at Central China Normal University(Wuhan 430079,China). Her academic interests are European and American literature, Comparative literature. Email:lihazhu@hotmail.com

在易卜生的后期剧作中，《海上夫人》（*The Lady from the Sea*, 1888）是一部象征主义手法与精神探索完美结合，极具神秘色彩和伦理意蕴的戏剧。拔

开笼罩在戏剧中的神秘主义迷雾，透射出的是作家对个体生命存在和整个人类文明进程的深刻关切和深层次思考：当一个人的自我得不到自身的真切感受时，是怎样一种生存状态？当一桩婚姻被感受为是一场交易时，该如何继续？面对非此即彼的生存境况，如何进行真正自由的选择？人类进化和文明的发展是否遵循着绝对正确的方向？易卜生曾说他的任务只是提出问题，但在这部戏剧中易卜生不仅提出了问题，而且给出了肯定的答案，使《海上夫人》成为易卜生后期创作中唯一一部结局圆满的戏剧。

### 一、艾梨达的身份困惑和三个心结

主人公艾梨达 (Ellida) 出生于海上人家，五六年前嫁给了峡湾小镇的房格尔医生 (Doctor Wangel) 做续弦妻子，与丈夫以及两个继女生活在一起。但是近年来艾梨达却患上了精神方面的疾病，她终日思念大海，再也不愿意和丈夫过夫妻生活。房格尔身为医生，却对妻子的病症束手无策。戏剧正是围绕着艾梨达的精神疾病展开的。

剧本通过回溯的手法，一点一点地挖掘艾梨达精神病症的根源。艾梨达十年来的生活和精神历程与两个男人紧密相关，她和这两个男人的情感纠葛成为本剧最主要的一条伦理线。沿着这条伦理线追根溯源，不难发现编织在线上的三个伦理结，这三个伦理结正是艾梨达的三个心结，它们缠绕在一起，无法解开，成为艾梨达生病的缘由。三个伦理结均是预设的，也就是说在戏剧开始时，艾梨达的精神已经陷入了困境，成为巴利斯泰口中“半死的美人鱼”。

前两个伦理结均是婚姻结。艾梨达的第一个婚姻结来自于她和一位陌生海员的一种异教式的“海婚”，这场“婚姻”除两位当事人外无人知晓。原来十年前，还是少女的艾梨达曾经与一个陌生海员有过一段莫名其妙的恋情。说他陌生是因为连艾梨达也不清楚他的真实名字和背景。当时这个陌生人是一艘船上的二副，因一起杀人事件而不得不亡命天涯。在逃亡前和艾梨达最后一次见面的时候，他将自己的戒指和艾梨达的戒指用一个钥匙圈圈起，奋力扔进大海宣布他俩双双已和大海成婚。在陌生人看来，这无异于正式的婚姻，艾梨达当时亦无异议。事后清醒过来的艾梨达多次写信给这个海员要求中断两人的关系，但那个海员置之不理，仍然表示将来有一天他会回来接她。从此这件事就成为艾梨达的一个心结，成为控制艾梨达心灵的一股神秘力量。正是由于这个心结的存在，艾梨达才拒绝了自己好友阿恩霍姆的求婚。显然，在相当长的一段时间里，艾梨达自觉接受着“海婚”对其灵魂和肉体的束缚，实践着对这个婚姻承诺的伦理遵守。

“海婚”的怪异并不在于这个事件本身，而是在于为何那个陌生人能对艾梨达有着巨大的控制力？为什么艾梨达一和他在一起就会丧失自身理智？这一方面源于艾梨达的自我特性，另一方面也与这个陌生人奇特的个性特点紧密相关。他们二人都有着异于常人的显著特征，像“海婚”这样的荒唐事也只能在他们俩身上发生，并对他俩产生作用。

艾梨达的特别来自于她从小与常人不同的生长环境，她的生命与宽广自由的大海相伴共生，这种特殊的生长经历造成了其特殊的生命感觉和处世态度。作为一个海上灯塔管理员的女儿，她的名字都显得与众不同，因为她父亲竟然摒弃传统，用一艘旧船的名字而非基督徒的名字为她命名！当地老牧师因此称呼她为“异教徒”。这个戏称显然预示了长大成人后的艾梨达与基督教传统伦理社会的格格不入。从小远离人类群居社会，在海边自由自在地成长的艾梨达像她的名字一样依恋着大海。对她来说，海既是神秘的又是可怕的，既能孕育一切又能毁灭一切，它总是变幻莫测，时而风平浪静时而掀起惊涛骇浪，充满了原始的野性冲动，没有任何力量能够束缚住它。海就是自由的象征，而这种无羁的自由也正是海洋与艾梨达以及那位陌生人的精神契合之处。

陌生人在整出剧中一直处在一种晦暗不明的状况之中。他并非是一个虚幻的人物，但却始终身份不明，面目不清。易卜生在指导这出剧的舞台演出时，特别强调要保持陌生人身份的不确定性。“谁也不应该知道他是干什么的，同样也不必知道他是谁、他的真名是什么。他的这种不确定性正是我有意选择的创作方法中的本质要素”（易卜生 288）。正是这种不确定性将陌生人与海洋象征的无拘无束、神秘莫测的自由精神联系在了一起，也正是这种不确定性将艾梨达引入一种既害怕又向往的精神状态之中。

“那个人像海洋”，艾梨达在剧中胆战心惊地说，“里头有一股诱惑力量”（330）。<sup>1</sup>这个在精神上控制了艾梨达十年之久的陌生人正是凭借着与海洋的相似与亲密走进她的生活。艾梨达初识陌生人时，他自称弗里曼（Friman），请注意这个名字的发音与 freeman 一模一样。据说他很年轻时就做了水手，海洋是他和艾梨达在一起时谈论的唯一话题。对于艾梨达来说陌生人就是“自由”这一抽象概念的具体化身，陌生人 = 大海 = 自由。值得注意的是，这种无羁的自由带给艾梨达的不仅仅是诱惑与吸引，还伴随着一种说不清道不明但却是极其强烈的害怕，因为这种自由也意味着不确定性、意味着某种未知的风险。艾梨达将引发其产生这种复杂精神感受的对象视为又可怕又迷人的东西，“我所谓可怕的东西是又使我害怕又能把我迷住的东西。”“我觉得它把我迷住的时候特别可怕”（367）。艾梨达的这种又感到害怕又觉得被其吸引的复杂精神状态正是丹麦哲人克尔凯郭尔笔下的恐惧概念！

克尔凯郭尔认为，恐惧是个体的人在追求自我的过程中形成的一种复杂的精神状态。在克氏看来，生活中随波逐流的人并不是真正意义上的生存者，真正的生存者是一个行动者，必须要追求作为自己命运的自我。克氏将自我视为一个实践必须终生去完成的任务，个体就是在对自我永无止境的追求中获得真正意义上的生存。而要实现对自己的追求，必须经历恐惧这种特殊的精神状态。恐惧不同于一般的害怕，害怕总有一个明确的对象，而恐惧却没有明确的对象，它本身和对象都具有一种不确定性，“恐惧是对所怕之物的欲求，是一种有好感的反感”（Kierkegaard 38）。所谓有好感的反感其实就是一种想要又不敢要，想摆脱又摆脱不掉的矛盾心理。面对恐惧的对象，个体之人可以选择走向它，

也可以选择逃离它。这种选择的状态，正是自由的原始状态。恐惧意味着自由的可能性，是自由的开端。人的自我意识正是在这种恐惧的状态中得以产生。

艾梨达天性向往自由，正因为如此，作为自由化身的陌生人才拥有了控制她精神的神秘力量。所以恐惧的真正原因其实来自于她自己的心灵内部，正如艾梨达所说：“威胁我的并不是外来的暴力。房格尔，可怕的东西在内部。可怕的是我自己心里感到的那股迷人力量”（368-369）。所以当十年后陌生人再次出现时，惊慌失措的她起先对丈夫说：“亲爱的、忠实的房格尔——你务必把我从那人手里救出来！”（327）后来又改口：“房格尔，把我从我自己手里救出来吧”（330）。艾梨达的恐惧实际上是对真正自我的召唤。正是在愈来愈强的恐惧之中，艾梨达强烈地意识到自我，意识到自由对于有意义之生存的重要性，当然自由也是可怕的，因为其中充满了未知的风险。艾梨达追求自由的过程就是其努力实践自我的过程！其实，一心渴求自由的艾梨达自身也具有类似大海的神秘而又可怕的特点，这也正是前面所说的艾梨达与陌生人的精神相契之处。

“你跟海很相似。”“你又能迷人又能使人害怕”（367）。房格尔深深地感受到了这一点，他眼中的艾梨达，正如艾梨达眼中的陌生人。

“海婚”给艾梨达造成的精神后果是严重的，这个心结成为艾梨达后来一切不幸的源头，直接影响并导致了其第二、第三个心结的产生。它并没有随着艾梨达正式结婚而解开，只是暂时隐匿了。世俗婚姻给艾梨达带来了“房格尔夫人”以及“两个孩子的继母”这样的生存位置和伦理身份。但不论是夫人的身份还是继母的角色，均使艾梨达无所适从。结婚多年之后她还是游离在整个家庭之外，找不到自己的真正位置。她开始认真审视自己与房格尔的婚姻，痛苦地发现他们的婚姻只是一场交易。当初，一个是刚死了太太，急于续弦；一个是孤苦伶仃，急需找个依靠。因此这场婚姻并非建立在双方真正自愿的基础上，在艾梨达看来，这就是他们婚姻不幸的症结所在。她暗暗将这场婚姻与当年那场荒唐的“海婚”进行比较，认为与陌生人的“海婚”是建立在双方自愿盟誓的基础上，与房格尔的婚姻却纯属交易。两次婚姻那次才是真正的婚姻逐渐成为艾梨达心中的一个巨大的问题，日益逼迫着她，使她一天比一天更深地陷入伦理混乱之中，导致了极大的身份困惑。因此，这桩在艾梨达看来以交易方式达成的世俗婚姻非但没有解开她的第一个心结，反而又重重地打上了一个结。这两个打在艾梨达心头的婚姻结给她带来的是伦理身份的混乱与困惑，它们纠结在一起直接促成了其第三个心结的形成。这第三个心结最终成为艾梨达精神成疾的直接酵母。

第三个伦理结是前两个婚姻结缠绕在一起诞下的“怪胎”。它随着艾梨达的怀孕生子一步步地织就，它的形成正是艾梨达陷入伦理混乱的悲剧境况的明证。艾梨达与房格尔结婚一年后怀孕了，但怀孕给艾梨达带来的不是喜悦而是惊恐，一种极深的且又是难以向任何人启齿的惊恐。伴随着腹中胎儿的孕育成长，那个似乎已被艾梨达遗忘的陌生海员又出现在了艾梨达的幻觉之中，“有时候，一点预兆都没有，我突然看见他亲身站在我面前，或者稍微偏一点。他从来不瞧我。他只是待着不走”（294）。显然，艾梨达将胎儿与陌生人联系在了一起，

因为在她的潜意识里，她一直是在和他做夫妻。这一点，在《海上夫人》的初稿中表露得清楚无疑：“实际上，她本能地认为，她一直是和他过夫妻生活的”（Ibsen, Vol. XII 332）。这正是艾梨达不可告人的婚姻秘密。正因为如此，艾梨达才会因自己怀孕而焦虑不安，她混乱的伦理意识使她无法分辨谁是腹中胎儿真正的父亲。对这位潜意识中认定自己犯有重婚罪的女人而言，不管谁是孩子的父亲都意味着自己对其中一段婚姻的背叛！婚后的艾梨达其实一直是以一种身心分裂的姿态过夫妻生活，她的身和心分别在和不同的男人做爱，这无疑是一种婚姻性爱上的伦理混乱。怀孕使艾梨达意识到了这一点，她害怕这个新生命，因为这个新生命是其精神乱伦的产物，孩子的身上将打上乱伦的印记。果然，孩子出生后，艾梨达在这个小生命的脸上看到了一双和陌生人一样的眼睛。当然，这其实是艾梨达因极度的精神紧张造成的一种幻觉，是她主观上刻意在孩子身上寻找陌生人影像的后果。孩子不久就夭折了，可那双古怪的眼睛却再也无法从艾梨达的记忆中抹去。显然艾梨达把孩子当作了她和两个男人的两段混乱的婚姻联合产下的“怪胎”，这样的“怪胎”自然无法存活。艾梨达将孩子之怪、孩子之死视为对自己混乱的伦理行为的暴露和惩罚，伴随孩子而生的第三个心结的形成使艾梨达从此再也无法和房格尔过夫妻生活。艾梨达就是这样一步步地跌落进精神疾病的深渊。

## 二、两种生存模式与伦理选择

陌生人一去十年，然而就是在艾梨达精神危机的紧要关头，他突然出现，要履行自己当年的诺言。陌生人的出现，使艾梨达即刻面临着克尔凯郭尔式的非此即彼的选择：是和陌生人一起远走高飞，在茫茫的海上过一种未知的随意人生，还是继续和房格尔一起坚守脚下的这片陆地，过一种正常而平凡的家庭生活？一个是十年前神秘而浪漫的“海婚”，这是一种充分体现了人类的原始欲望和自由意志的自然婚姻，艾梨达对此既神往又害怕；一个是受法律保护，并已经历多年共同生活、有着深厚感情基础体现人类理性意志的现实伦理婚姻，艾梨达游离其外却又难以割舍，她究竟会选择遵守那一种婚姻伦理呢？

艾梨达，这个异教徒的名字已经显明了她的特殊，她不拘泥于寻常的婚姻伦理和外在的法律形式。这一点剧本中表达得非常清楚，当第四幕中房格尔以为妻子想按照法律手续跟他正式离婚时，艾梨达这样回答：“亲爱的，你完全不了解我。我不计较形式。这些外表的事情我觉得无关紧要。我希望的是，咱们俩应该出于彼此的自由意志解除相互间的束缚”（364）。不管是结婚还是离婚，艾梨达计较的都只是是否出于自由意志。因此她承认“海婚”的有效性，“一个自愿的盟誓具有与婚姻完全相同的效力”（362）。同样，由于自己当初嫁给房格尔不是完全出于自己的自由意志，艾梨达认为她的现实婚姻并不是真正的婚姻，相反“那第一次（指“海婚”——引者注）——倒可能是真正的婚姻”（362）。

可见，艾梨达并不依照普遍的伦理法则来生活，而是依据自己的自然生命感觉来编织自己认同的伦理体系。她强调的是自由的生命伦理，这种伦理只能

建立在自由意志的基础之上。只有回归自由意志，重新回到起点进行独立、自由的选择才能解开致使她生病的心结。这样的选择，艾梨达其实已经等待了多年。从她生病的第一天起，她就从心底里惧怕并企盼着这一天的到来。这是她必须做出的选择。因此，当房格尔死死抓住她不放时，她的心自然偏向了陌生人，尤其是当她听到陌生人强调自己若要跟他，必须出于自己的自由意志之后。问题是，当后来房格尔放弃夫权，艾梨达能够以完全独立、自由的身份重新选择时，她的自由意志将指向哪个男人呢？艾梨达面临的实质是两种生存模式的选择，一种是陌生人所代表的审美的生存模式，一种是房格尔所代表的伦理的生存模式。这也正是克尔凯郭尔笔下人的两种互不相容的生存状态。处于这两种模式中的人对自由有着截然不同的认识。

在审美模式中生存的人，追求的是一种绝对的自由，这种自由不受任何伦理道德和章法的约束，自然也和责任无关。陌生人就犯下了杀人的滔天大罪，当受到房格尔的威胁时，又扬言要自杀，声称自己“活着要自由，死也要死得自由”（406）。审美之人的生活受制于随意性极强的瞬间，缺乏稳定性和目标，追求的只是当下的快活与刺激。这类人的生活的时间上没有延续，在空间上不追求与他人建立普遍的联系，永远是一个孤独的人。陌生人对艾梨达的执着既非出自爱也非出自责任，只是受一种说不清道不明的自然本性驱使。当艾梨达质问他为什么死缠着她不放，是否因为他们有过诺言？他这样回答：“诺言不能约束人，男人也罢，女人也罢。如果你说我死盯着你，那是因为我没法松手”（404）。这句话一方面说明了他的归来并非出自一个“丈夫”对“妻子”的责任，另一方面也暴露出他本身实际上也是不自由的，他的自由意志完全受控于自己的自然天性，行为完全受自己的本能驱使。因此，虽然他坚称“海婚”的有效性，对艾梨达的背信弃义感到愤怒，但并没有认为艾梨达有责任和义务必须跟他走，而是强调艾梨达必须根据自己的自由意志来做出选择。当艾梨达拒绝他后，他也并无半点伤心，扔下一句“从今以后，想起你的事情，我只当是在生活里翻过一次船罢了”（409），便扬长而去。人类原始的自然野性在陌生人身上得到了充分的体现，他的人生是一种审美式的感性人生。

在伦理模式中生存的人则对人生的意义有清楚的认识，他们的人生有着明确的原则。伦理之人认为，幸福的根源不在于外部的那个变化不定的世界，而来自于人的内心。伦理之人在生活中按照自己的道德原则来行事，他们将善良、正义、宽容、节制、仁爱等美德视为人生的意义，认为自己的行为应该是这些美德的体现。当然伦理的人生会让人失去一些自然的天性，但这是他们的自由选择。房格尔作为陌生人的对立面，显然是一个伦理之人的代表。他所认识的自由必须受到社会伦理法则的约束。面对陌生人对自己妻子的荒唐行为，他认为自己完全有责任 and 权利去阻止它。这不仅是一个丈夫对妻子的保护，同时也是对自己权利的维护。但是最后当他看清艾梨达的精神症结所在，不得已痛苦地放手让艾梨达自由选择时，他实际上已经做好了将要失去她的准备。凭着对艾梨达的爱和责任，他甘愿做出自我牺牲，正像他原来为了缓释艾梨达的思乡

病，打算举家搬迁一样。当然这次的牺牲来得更大，更令他痛苦，但是对他来说，爱能战胜一切，正是爱，让他逐渐理解艾梨达、走近艾梨达，最后赢得了艾梨达的心。房格尔体现了基督教伦理道德所要求的仁爱、谦虚、宽容和牺牲精神。

艾梨达是一个矛盾的结合体，挣扎在审美模式与伦理模式之间。作为来自大海的“美人鱼”，陌生人身上洋溢的那种放浪不羁的自由精神和原始野性深深地吸引着她。她向往审美的自由感性生活，但对传统的基督教伦理生活也有认同的一面。少女时代的她就常去牧师那儿，基督教宣扬的伦理道德对她有着潜移默化的影响。正因为她性格中的这种矛盾，所以她才会和陌生人“海婚”，过后又觉得荒唐无比。同样，当房格尔表示不允许她自由选择时，她一方面承认房格尔的夫权，另一方面又表示自己的精神是自由的：“房格尔！——我知道你可以抓住我不放手！你有这权利。并且确实还想使用这权利！可是我的心，我的思想，我的压制不住的冲动和欲望——这些东西你都没法控制！”（406）作为一直沉浸在丧失自由、丧失自我的痛苦中的人，这次的选择让她看到了实践自我、追求自由的可能性，这也是多年来一直压抑在她心底的企盼。艾梨达的三个心结归根到底是关于自由的心结，她必须完全凭着自己的自由意志做出不可回头的选择才能解开自己的心结。也就是说，她必须摆脱世俗婚姻的捆绑，以完全自由的独立人的身份重做选择。“我不愿意拿我是别人的老婆或者我自己无权选择这一类的话当做护身符，因为不自由的决定不能解决问题”（365）。

房格尔终于明白赋予艾梨达自由是拯救她的唯一办法。面对艾梨达对自由选择权的强烈要求，他不得已先于艾梨达做出了自己人生中最痛苦的选择——放手，虽然这个选择有可能使他永远失去心爱的人。他痛苦地宣布：“艾梨达，现在你可以自由选择，自己负责了”（407）。在给予艾梨达自由的同时，房格尔强调了责任与自由的不可分割，提醒艾梨达要为自己的人生负起责任来。房格尔以自己的选择为艾梨达接下来的选择做出了表率。他的选择说明了真正的爱情还意味着责任，甚至意味着自我牺牲。房格尔为有责任的爱做出了很好的诠释。艾梨达一下子觉得两个人的心贴近了。“自由选择——自己负责？自己负责？这么一来，局面就完全变了”（407-408）。此刻的艾梨达顿时觉得自己回到了独立、自由的起点，她可以完全凭自己的自由意志对自己的人生做出选择，同时，这种自由意志还意味着在伦理上她要对自己的行为负责任。

房格尔对艾梨达的真爱使他终于真正理解了妻子，他对婚姻态度的变化不仅留住了艾梨达的人，也留住了她的心。其实，艾梨达的精神危机原本就与房格尔不无关系。艾梨达婚后多年始终保持原来的样子，成为自己家中的局外人，一方面固然是艾梨达本身不作为，另一方面房格尔也要负相当的责任。在心灵深处，房格尔并不想让妻子做任何改变，他坦承：“实际上，我宁愿她保持原来的样子”（347）。因为吸引他的正是那样的艾梨达！一个与他不同，也与他周围所有其他女性不同，拥有独特的海洋般异质的艾梨达。当初，正是这些神秘的类似海洋的异质，使房格尔对她一见倾心。艾梨达被陌生人吸引是因为陌生人与她有精神契合点，而房格尔被艾梨达吸引的原因却恰恰相反，是因为艾

梨达与他完全不同！所以，房格尔从心底里不要艾梨达改变，不愿艾梨达沾染上丝毫的世俗气，何况他的长女博列得已经将家庭主妇的角色扮演得很好。作为一个男人，他更愿意永远用一种审美的眼光欣赏这个特别的女人，而不是真正去理解她，并且帮助她去适应这个新环境。这其实是一种自私的爱。因此，虽然他娶了她，却没有将家庭的责任赋予她，而是让她维持原状。艾梨达在这个新家表面上似乎过得轻松自由，但这种不需承担任何责任和义务的自由令艾梨达成了无根的浮萍，无法在这个家中扎下根来。后来艾梨达的精神状态越来越糟，房格尔才逐渐意识到了这一点，他后悔地向阿恩霍姆剖析自己：“你知道，我一向那么爱艾梨达！久而久之，我只知道先给自己打算。老实说，我是异乎寻常地自私”（347）。正因为家庭生活缺乏凝聚力和吸引力，艾梨达心无所托，陌生人对艾梨达的牵引才会越来越大。所以，陌生人在艾梨达的意识深处始终阴魂不散，这种不正常的婚姻生活也要承担相当的责任。婚姻虽然使艾梨达衣食无忧，但并没有给她的灵魂提供安居的寓所。艾梨达始终没有在这个新家承担任何的责任和义务，也不曾为建立和家人之间正常的伦理关系付出积极的努力，她在家中的伦理位置和伦理身份必然是虚空的。幸运的是，房格尔并没有因妻子的离心而打算放弃这场婚姻。他意识到了自己的错误，不管是作为丈夫还是作为医生，他都觉得自己有责任治愈妻子，他展开了拯救艾梨达的行动，甚至甘愿为她放弃事业，准备移居到大海边。他的这种仁爱、宽容、忍耐正是传统的基督教伦理精神的体现，他以自己富有牺牲精神的行为向艾梨达诠释了什么是真爱、什么是责任。艾梨达最终选择和他在一起，不是没有理由的。

总之，对于影响自己人生的两个男人，艾梨达有着完全不同的伦理感觉。一个基于审美构想，是令她恐惧的一个既实在又虚幻的不确定对象；一个基于生活事实，是值得信赖并可依靠的伴侣。处于独立自由状态中的艾梨达坚定地选择了后者，她终于摆脱了陌生人的控制，解开了困扰自己多年的心结，实现了对自我、对自由的追求。艾梨达的选择代表了一种精神的飞跃，代表着她彻底地从人生的审美阶段飞跃到了伦理阶段。克尔凯郭尔认为，要从一种生存模式过渡到另一种生存模式，只能凭借个人在不同的选择中做出不受限制的、无法回头的决定才能达到。正是在这种非此即彼的选择中，艾梨达实现了自我的生命价值。这样的选择无疑具有最高的伦理正当性。

### 三、伦理选择与人类的文明进程

作为一个思想复杂深邃的剧作家，易卜生的《海上夫人》关切的绝不仅仅只是一个名叫艾梨达的女子的个体命运，通过这个特殊的个体生命，易卜生还表达了他对整个人类文明进程的关切与思考。这个戏剧也绝非仅仅是对自由伦理的探讨，艾梨达的身份困惑和伦理选择还隐喻了人类在进化发展的关键时刻对自我的认识和做出的重大选择，以及由此选择决定的整个人类文明的发展方向，反映了在达尔文进化论思想影响之下的易卜生对人类已有的发展轨迹和未来的前途命运的独特思考。

诚如艾伊文德·熊内兰德所言，易卜生的《海上夫人》“是对达尔文进化论的富有诗意的改写”（Tjønneland 324）。对人类的进化发展，易卜生怀有一种奇特的诗人式的忧虑，这种忧虑在艾梨达与阿恩霍姆的对话中表达得非常清楚。艾梨达伤感地表示人类最终没有成为海洋生物也许是走错了方向，她甚至觉得“人类自己在本能上也有这种感觉——这种感觉又像忧愁，又像悔恨，在暗中跟人类纠缠。人类悲哀的根本原因就在这里”（310）。当阿恩霍姆反驳说大多数人的日子都过得轻松快乐时，艾梨达饶有深意地回答：“你说的那种快乐正像我们在悠长光明的夏季享受的快乐，里头已经埋伏了就要到来的黑暗的预感。这种预感在人类的快乐心情上投下了黑影，正如天空浮云在海峡上投下它的黑影一样”（310）。这不正是本剧结局的写照？看来虽然易卜生肯定艾梨达的最终选择，但对她的未来是否从此就阳光灿烂还是怀有疑虑的。难怪法兰西斯·费格生如此评价艾梨达：“这个人物的本性是个哀伤、美丽的肖像，她体现了每人心中难言的悲怆”（费格生 389）。虽然《海上夫人》结局圆满，但萦绕在剧中的那股令人惆怅的忧郁气息却始终挥之不去。1897年，易卜生在给一个友人的题词中再次表达了他在本剧中流露过的有关人类发展的悲观论调：“人类的发展从一开始就行进在错误的轨道上。尊贵的人类后代应该进化成海洋动物”（qtd. in Tjønneland 324）。这说明对于人类的进化和文明的发展，易卜生一直抱有一种怀疑批判的态度，有自己的独特理解与思考。

沿着易卜生的这一思路再次审视作品中的三个主要人物，不难发现陌生人、艾梨达、房格尔分别象征着人类进化发展的三个阶段。<sup>2</sup> 陌生人以海为家，保持着人类全部的自然野性，没有任何能够区分善恶的伦理意识，代表着人类最初的原始状态，这时候的人与海洋动物别无二致，可以说就是一种海洋动物，全然处于一种感性的生存模式之中，只是徒具人形而已。房格尔医生显然是人类发展到高级阶段的样本，是现代人的典型形象，拥有知识和美德，是伦理之人的典范，但是这一形象也并非十全十美，由于丧失了人类的某些自然天性，他的性格显得拘谨而懦弱，连自己的女儿也觉得他缺乏魄力。与陌生人相比，善良的房格尔显然魅力不足。而艾梨达，易卜生用“美人鱼”来象征她，美人鱼的半人半鱼形象隐喻了艾梨达正代表着人类从海洋动物进化到陆居人类的过渡阶段，因此艾梨达的身份困惑不仅仅是来自于前文所说的由两种不同性质的婚姻造成的伦理身份混乱，还隐喻了人类在进化发展的过渡阶段对自己究竟是鱼还是人的困惑。艾梨达对两个男人的选择从表层上看是两个道德选项间的两难选择，深层则隐喻了人类在进化和文明发展的关键时刻对海洋和陆地的选择，过审美生活还是伦理生活的选择。简言之，是做海洋动物还是真正的人的选择。

艾梨达最终选择了房格尔、选择了陆地、选择了遵循人类已然的发展而不是回到过去。剧终时的艾梨达对自己的选择是坚定乐观的。但这种转折来得如此突兀也使人不免怀疑这种乐观与坚定能持续多久。马丁·艾思林就认为“艾梨达最后在充分的自由中决定委身于房格尔，看似实现了一个真实合法、和谐完整的自我，但这个自我仍然是不稳定的、有问题的”（艾思林 35）。值得

注意的是，易卜生本人也显得对此并非全然乐观，他在剧中多处理下了阴郁的伏笔，令人对艾梨达的未来不免产生一丝忧虑，同时也对人类的整体命运和前途增添了一份惆怅。剧终时艾梨达的心结已全然解开，但伴随着艾梨达精神上的痊愈，挪威明媚的夏天也将过去，海峡又要封冻，笼罩小镇的将是漫长的冬夜。艾梨达以后的命运将会如何？她的精神疾病还会再复发吗？这一切似乎都令人担忧。易卜生显然为此剧制造了一个开放性的结局。

业余画家巴利斯泰看似不起眼，但却是易卜生用来提挈剧意的关键人物，把艾梨达与“半死的美人鱼”意象联系起来的是他，在“适者生存”理论上与艾梨达相对照的还是他。“适者生存”是当时风靡欧洲的达尔文进化论的精髓，巴利斯泰正是本剧中环境适应者的典型。这个人总把“适应”一词挂在嘴边，为了适应新的环境，他掌握了好几行手艺。但值得深思的是，巴利斯泰的多才多艺显然流于平庸，绝对不是一个特别值得崇敬和效仿的杰出人物，更缺乏个性魅力。易卜生塑造这一人物时，明显带着几分调侃和反讽，让他一说“适应”就结巴，使这个环境适应者总也有不能适应的地方。人类漫长的进化过程是一个不断适应新环境的过程，但适应和进化并不能完全等同，最适应者不一定就是最佳者。巴利斯泰的平庸使人不得不反思在“适者生存”中行进的人类是否也因此丧失了一些本应延续的天性和能力？人类的某些特性就在不断的适应中退化。看来适应既包括了进化也包括了退化。易卜生在本剧中流露的关于人类进化的矛盾思想可以在布林尼的话中找到共鸣：“进化经常被与进步的概念联系起来，并被认为是向着特定的目标发展的。但是这些表面上的趋向都是假象。实际上并不存在固定的方向，每个物种的进化历程都没有预定的持续时间，也没有最终的目的地”（布林尼 24）。易卜生在一些作品中对原本是海盗后代的现代挪威人的懦弱和奴性的批判尤其体现了这一思想，在他看来，基督教的伦理道德虽然使野蛮的挪威人走向了文明，但也软化了挪威人的意志和个性，使挪威人原始的骁勇野性丧失殆尽，剧中的房格尔不就是这样的一个现代挪威人？作为一个对人类个体及整体命运和前途均有深入思考的作家，易卜生将自己对这些问题的不同思考呈现在作品中，从而使作品显得更为立体复杂，更富有深意。

《海上夫人》是一部有关自由伦理和伦理选择的戏剧。它关注个体生命的存在，但又不仅仅只是局限于人类的单一个体；艾梨达的选择也不仅仅只是她个人对不同生存模式的选择，还隐喻了人类在进化发展的关键时刻所做出的关系人类前途命运的重大伦理选择。在人类文明的发展进程中，人类的个体生存始终与自由紧密相连，只有可以进行自由选择的存在才是真正意义上的存在，负责任的自由才是真正的自由，这就是易卜生所要强调的自由伦理。在《海上夫人》中，易卜生对人类个体生命存在的关切令人想到克尔凯郭尔的生存哲学，而他对整个人类文明进程的思考又使人联想到达尔文的生物进化理论。虽然易卜生并不喜欢研究者在他的作品中寻找他人的影响，但易卜生却在《海上夫人》中对克尔凯郭尔的生存哲学和达尔文的进化论做出了积极的艺术回应和思考。

**注解【Notes】**

1. 本文所引《海上夫人》原文出自 Mrs. Frances E. Archer 的英译文: Ibsen, Henrik, "The Lady from the Sea." *The Works of Henrik Ibsen*, The Viking Edition, Vol. IX. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912). 汉译采用潘家洵译文(《易卜生文集》第6卷,北京:人民文学出版社,1995年),略有改动。以下仅标注英译本页码,不再一一说明。
2. 此处借鉴了 David Rosengarten 的观点。David Rosengarten 认为陌生人与海洋紧密相连,是生命发展最早期的代表,房格尔代表了人类进化的高级阶段。艾梨达位于人类的过去和未来之间,代表了人类进化过程中具有代表性的决定性时刻,她必须做出选择,她的选择意味着生命的进化。See David Rosengarten, "The Lady from the Sea": Ibsen's Submerged Allegory, *Educational Theatre Journal*, 29.4 (1977):463-76.

**引用作品【Works Cited】**

- 马丁·艾思林:“易卜生与现代戏剧”,汪余礼译。《戏剧》1(2008):30-38。  
[Esslin, Martin. "Ibsen and Modern Drama." Trans. Wang Yuli. *Drama* 1(2008):30-38.]
- 大卫·布林尼:《进化论》,李阳译。北京:三联书店,2003年。  
[Burnie, David. *Evolution*, Trans. Li Yang, Beijing: The Joint Publishing Company, 2003.]
- 法兰西斯·费格生:“论《海上夫人》”,《易卜生评论集》,高中甫编选。北京:外语教学与研究出版社,1982年。384-394。  
[Fergusson, Francis. "On *The Lady from the Sea*." *Critical Essays on Ibsen*. Ed. Gao Zhongfu. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, 1982. 384-94.]
- Ibsen, Henrik. "The Lady from the Sea." *The Works of Henrik Ibsen*. The Viking Edition, Vol. IX, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912. 211-413.
- Ibsen, Henrik. "The Lady from the Sea." *The Works of Henrik Ibsen*. The Viking Edition, Vol. XII, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912. 327-77.
- Kierkegaard, Soren. *The Concept of Dread*, Trans. Walter Lowrie. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957.
- 艾伊文德·熊内兰德:“易卜生与达尔文”,《易卜生创作的生态价值研究:绿色易卜生国际学术研讨会论文集》,聂珍钊周昕主编。武汉:华中师范大学出版社,2011年。319-328。
- [Tjønneland, Eivind. "Ibsen and Darwin". *The Ecological Values of Ibsen's Works: Proceedings of Green Ibsen International Symposium*. Eds. Nie Zhenzhao and Zhou Xin. Wuhan: Huazhong Normal University Press, 2011. 319-28.]
- 易卜生:《易卜生书信演讲集》,汪余礼戴丹妮译。北京:人民文学出版社,2012年。  
[Ibsen, Henrik. *The Collection of Ibsen's Letters and Speeches*, Trans. Wang Yuli and Dai Danni. Beijing: People's Literature Publishing House, 2012.]

责任编辑:杨革新

# 人生的建筑师

——论《建筑师》中的身份追寻与心灵孤独

林宛莹

**内容提要：**《建筑师》所展现的是伦理身份的主题，而心灵孤独则是人类处在伦理关系中不可避免的问题。索尔尼斯对于“伦理身份”不同于常人的理解造成了他的心灵孤独，所以他需要为自己寻获一个明确的身份，从孤独中解脱出来，为灵魂找到归宿。本文集中探讨主人公索尔尼斯孤独感的来源，以他追求建筑师的伦理身份作为主线，探讨他在获取建筑师身份之前和之后的身心状态。索尔尼斯从追求、体验到自我评价的过程中领悟到自己的失败全在于一颗不健全的良心，所以确立身份之路即是他解开心灵孤独之路。

**关键词：**《建筑师》；孤独；伦理身份；斯芬克斯因子

**作者简介：**林宛莹（马来西亚），华中师范大学比较文学与世界文学专业博士研究生，主要研究方向为比较文学和文学批评研究。

**Title:** Architect of Life : On Pursuing of Ethical Identity and the Solitude of Soul in the Play of *The Master Builder*

**Abstract:** *The Master Builder* discusses about ethical identity issue. Solitude is an inevitable problem in between all the ethical relationship in this play and our society as well. As a Master Builder, Solness always confuses about his own ethical identity, because his definition on Master Builder is quite different from the others' definition. In order to extricate from the solitude of soul, he is struggling to pursue a clear ethical identity. This paper tries to find out the main source of Solness's confusion by using the pursuing of ethical identity as the main route. The physically and mentally condition of Solness before he becomes an architect is totally different those that after he becomes an architect. Eventually, he realized that the suffering comes from a crisis of conscience on the coursing of pursuing, experience and self-evaluation. The way to verify his ethical identity is also the way to unfasten his suffering from solitude of mind.

**Key words:** *The Master Builder*; Solitude; Ethical Identity; Sphinx factor

**Author:** Lim Woan Yin(Malaysian) is a Ph. D. candidate at Central China Normal University (Wuhan 430079,China). Her major research area is Comparative Literature and Literary Criticism. Email: woanyin71@gmail.com

《建筑师》(*The Master Builder*, 1892)在易卜生后期创作中占据着非常重

要的地位。按照学术界的通识，易卜生晚年的世界观转向悲观主义和虚无主义，又受到19世纪下半叶在欧洲盛行的象征主义和萌芽状态中的现代分析心理学的影响，因此，他的后期创作明显转向了象征主义和神秘主义。所以，包括《建筑师》在内的很多易卜生晚期作品都被解读为象征剧。然而，易卜生本人却并不承认这一点。他认为，“人们硬加给我的什么奥秘和象征一类的东西真是千奇百怪”（转引自 吴奕 24）。同时，在给勃兰克斯（Georg Morris Cohen Brandes）的一封信中，易卜生明确指出，“希望人们能够理解他在晚年的深思”，“正确地领悟和阐释他笔下的人物形象，要把他们的特性作为现实的人予以强调”（转引自 王忠祥 154）。在与尤勒斯·克拉莱蒂的一次谈话中，他还明确表示：“我不寻找象征，我描写人”（转引自 高中甫 396）。易卜生反复强调他的作品重点在于写“人”而非象征，这也提示我们，《建筑师》固然具有浓厚的象征色彩，但这并不妨碍我们为这个剧本寻找另一种解读角度，从而更加深入地去探讨作者所要传达的更伟大、更具有世界性的意义。

文学伦理学批评的目的“不仅在于说明作品的伦理和道德方面的特点，更在于从伦理和道德的角度研究作品以及文学与社会、文学与作家、文学与读者等关系的诸多问题，其目的在于倡导文学的道德价值观念并建立其道德评价体系”（聂珍钊，“文学伦理学批评：文学批评方法新探索”20）。聂珍钊在文学伦理学批评方法中提到，人之所以为人，即在于人有“伦理意识”。同时，人从生物性选择进化而来，还具有“斯芬克斯因子”，所以当人类经过生物性选择而获得人的外形的时候，也同时发现自己身上仍然保留了许多兽的特性。所谓“斯芬克斯因子”，其实是由两部分组成的一人性因子（human factor）与兽性因子（animal factor）。“这两种因子有机地组合在一起，其中人性因子是高级因子，兽性因子是低级因子，因此前者能够控制后者，从而使人成为有伦理意识的人”（聂珍钊，“文学伦理学批评：伦理选择与斯芬克斯因子”5）。按照这一理论，人性因子即伦理意识，兽性因子则与人性因子相对，是人的动物性本能。《建筑师》里不断出现的“山精”意象即是兽性因子，索尔尼斯（Harvard Solness）所产生的“恶念”，正是受人身上的“兽性因子”的驱使与召唤，而他又经常面对“人性因子”的理性意识控制。他的所有怪异行为源于人性因子被兽性因子所控制，所以每每当他在对自身进行道德批判的时候，就出现了内心的荒凉与心灵的不安。这种荒凉与不安使索尔尼斯无法自处于现实的社会中，变成一个“孤独”的人。他需要为自己寻获一个明确的身份，从而把自己从孤独中解脱出来，为灵魂找到归宿。因此，索尔尼斯对于身份的追寻过程也就是他解除心灵孤独过程，同时也是他不断地进行道德反省和追求自我道德完善的过程。正如有学者指出的，虽然易卜生的晚期作品喜欢“透过大量的浪漫手法去展现出一个尖锐的社会”，但其最终目的仍然是“提出大量的社会问题，同时也提出许多对社会的道德批评与反省”（Crow 203）。本文集中探讨主人公索尔尼斯孤独感的来源，以索尔尼斯追求建筑师的伦理身份作为主线，探讨他在获取建筑师身份之前和之后的身心状态，指出索尔尼斯人生失败的根

源全在于一颗不健全的心。

### 一、孤独的体现：身份、情感和语言

Solitude（孤独）的字根是 Sol，即 Solar（太阳）的简写。太阳是宇宙中独一无二的伟大存在，然而也是孤独的存在，所以也可引申为“孤独的太阳”。建筑师索尔尼斯是整部戏剧的中心人物，他的西文原名是 Solness，如果按照象征意义把这个字拆开来解读的话，正是“Sol”加上“ness”。“ness”又是什么呢？正是针对前面的名词性质所做的强调。从这个主人公的名字建构看来，我们有理由相信易卜生强调的是一个关于“孤独”的故事。过去也有人注意到这个主人公名字的象征意义，由于索尔尼斯 Solness，Sol 在挪威文意味太阳，Nes 挪威文为“樵入海洋的狭长陆地”之意而把索尔尼斯解读成“杰出的人”，而本人则认为将之解读成“孤独的人”是更为贴切的。

戏剧的主题是围绕着主人翁的心灵孤独层层展开的。自古以来，文学的主题从来就不曾离开孤独。每个人都是孤独的自己，我们是在成长的过程中不断与孤独对话才得以寻找到一个内在的自己、不被了解的自己，也只有勇敢地去面对孤独才能够为心灵找到一个安顿的家。索尔尼斯身份追寻的过程正是为解决心灵孤独的困惑，也是他自己与孤独的对话。“孤独”是人类文学的一个母题。面对孤独的自己的过程，其实正是一段完成自我的过程，也是一个治疗心灵的过程。易卜生借着索尔尼斯这个人物来提醒现代人面临的孤独处境，而解决这个问题关键还是得回归到人与人之间的伦理问题上。

不自由的心灵与孤独感是生活在现代社会里的人群普遍存在的现象。人类的生活离不开伦理关系，在这些互相牵绊的伦理关系中，人们原不该感到孤独，但是人们却依然无可避免地会面对孤独，害怕孤独。这些孤独体现在《建筑师》剧本中就是人物内心的荒凉与不安，渐而形成所谓的“心结”，这些心结的形成主要原因在于当事人与其所处环境的人、事、物之间的伦理关系有欠妥善，造成长期的情绪积压。索尔尼斯的心灵长期以来处于不安与孤独，因此，即便是他拥有金钱与社会地位，幸福感却与他背道而驰，相去甚远。事实上，索尔尼斯所面对的是名誉地位无法替代的“身份孤独”、内心情感无处可诉的“情感孤独”以及字句无法沟通的“语言孤独”。这三种孤独都是人跟人之间的伦理关系失调所造成，因此，要解决这些问题，只有回到人与人之间的伦理关系上。

“身份孤独”指的是他在获得建筑师的荣誉身份之后，不但没有受到同行业者的认同，就连他自己也不认同自己作为建筑师的身份，而且他从来不以建筑师自称。最主要的原因，本人认为是因为他本身对“建筑师”这个身份的概念有别于其他人，他要成为一个“真正的建筑师”。尤其，自从那一场大火灾之后，他就不再建筑教堂了，只盖“人住的房子（348）<sup>①</sup>，而偏偏他又发现人们所要的不过是一个容身之地，并不是一个名符其实的家（249）。他对自己作为建筑师这个身份是有要求的，他期许自己能为人盖一个安乐、舒适、光明的家宅，父母带着儿女住在里头，平平安安，快快乐乐过日子，觉得只有这样才

能在世界上活得快乐。但是这一切最终都遗憾地没有办法透过建筑师的身份去实现。由此可见，他要为人们建筑的不只是宏伟的建筑物，而是健全的心灵。

“情感孤独”体现在索尔尼斯跟三个女性的关系上。他与妻子艾琳 (Aline Solness) 自从两个孩子夭折之后，彼此之间就失去了真正的夫妻关系；他跟开雅 (Kaia Fosli) 的暧昧关系也是一种出于功利的占有，因为不想瑞格纳 (Ragnar Brovik) 的离开，不愿意事业被超越，他企图欺骗少女开雅单纯的爱情来交换事业上的稳定；至于希尔达 (Miss Hilde Wangel) 的出现，尽管我们并不能确定他们之间在十年前是否真有过那种超越伦理的暧昧关系，但是在他们之间的谈话中也处处显示出不正常的人伦关系。索尔尼斯的情感始终没有找到真正的靠岸，也没有获得真正的爱情。

至于索尔尼斯的“语言孤独”则更明显地表现在他跟剧中几个人的对话上。由于他的语言无法达到沟通的作用，使得他的内心世界没有办法让别人理解，他甚至认为自己在妻子和医生的眼中是一个精神病患者，因为他跟别人的语言是没有交集的。后来少女希尔达的出现，他才感觉到希尔达是唯一可以说话的人，唯一听得懂他的语言的人。然而那些话语之中，哪句真哪句假，哪些事情曾经真的发生过，索尔尼斯其实是不能确定也半信半疑的。

索尔尼斯的伦理孤独体现在身份、情感和语言中，而整部戏剧的人物关系网围绕着他而展开，所以他的孤独感也体现在他跟每一个人物的关系中。从他跟这些人的关系中，我们都不难体会到深深的疏离感与孤独感。他们之间其实谁也不了解谁在想什么，甚至是彼此活在互相猜疑之中。他们之间虽然有语言作为沟通的工具，但是彼此却是互不了解的。丈夫听不懂妻子的话，妻子也不了解丈夫的所作所为，连家庭医生也帮不了他解决身心的问题。丈夫认为自己在那场火灾之后所获得的成就是无形中剥夺了妻子成为“贤妻良母”的权利，因而对妻子感到内疚，企图重新建一栋新的房子以及育婴室来弥补他的过错。而妻子却并不那么想，相反地，她也觉得自己因为太在乎那九个没来得及抢救的玩偶娃娃，因伤心过度影响奶汁酿成双生儿子夭折的悲剧。我们可以发现剧中的人物彼此之间总是乌云密布，误会重重，思想和感情都没有办法得到很适当的抒发，虽然住在同一屋檐下，每个人却都是孤独的个体。这些孤独，在少女希尔达看来都是“不健全的良心”所引起的，因此她总是说索尔尼斯和太太都有“多病的良心”。“良心”是作为人类有别于兽类的特质，也就是聂教授所提出的“人性因子”，但是这颗“良心”却是有病的。为什么呢？因为“人性因子”被“兽性因子”束缚了。

《建筑师》中的人物都是孤独的个体。主人公是孤独的，他的妻子是孤独的，后来出现的少女希尔达其实也是孤独的。剧本中的这些重要人物各自活在孤独的阴影中，长期造成心灵的不安。如果抽离了剧本题目《建筑师》的重要性去反观剧本的其他人物，不难发现每一个人的孤独都是剧本形成的元素之一，这情形尤其反映在主人公索尔尼斯的身上。因为他自身伦理身份不同于常人的理解造成了他的孤独，所以他需要为自己寻获一个明确的身份，从孤独中解脱出来，

为灵魂找到归宿。

## 二、“建筑师”身份的追寻

作为极具道德自省力、宗教叛逆精神和哲理探索意识的易卜生，在晚年重返祖国后出版的第一部戏中，塑造了索尔尼斯这位带有自传色彩的主人公，正预示着他对自己的人生总结已经开始，其自我反思是深刻的<sup>②</sup>。索尔尼斯所象征的不但是一个精神探索者的象征，同时也是勇于面对道德批评的象征。在索尔尼斯的三种孤独中，身份的困惑无疑造成他最大的孤独感。人们在现实生活中所追求的“身份”，其实更大的意义在于其伦理意义，即被伦理环境所认同的身份。然而索尔尼斯作为一名建筑师，他的身份是不被认同的，他不但不被建筑同业认同，就连他自己也从来不称自己是建筑师。主要原因在于索尔尼斯对“建筑师”的定位有别于世俗。他在获取建筑师身份之前和之后的身心状态实际上是天渊之别的，在追求、体验和自我评价的过程中充满了自己对“建筑师”身份的困惑。他不断改变建筑物的形式，其实就是企图借此为自己的身份定位。

作为一名建筑师，他一直以来其实并不快乐。他曾经清楚地对希尔达说出自己的感想：“我是完全亏得那场火灾才能给人盖家宅—安乐、舒适、光明的家宅，父母带着儿女住在里头，平平安安、快快乐乐过日子，世界上活着真快乐—尤其快乐的是，无论大事小事谁都离不开谁”（350）。从这样的叙述看来，我们知道索尔尼斯对自己身份的期许，他希望自己所建筑的家宅是可以排除并解决人们的孤独，打破人与人之间的隔膜，拉近人与人之间的距离。这不但是他对自己的期许，同时他也把这个使命寄托在“建筑师”这个身份上。由此可见，他对自己的身份是有要求的，他想给人们盖的是一个名符其实的家，而偏偏却发现人们所要的不过是一个“容身之处”的住所。他发现自己作为一名建筑师却无能为力，不能为他人带来幸福，就连自己的幸福也因为一场火灾而失去了。

索尔尼斯在第一幕就表明了他自己作为建筑师的立场，当那对年轻夫妇要求他在勒务斯川盖别墅的时候，他气愤地说：“与其胡乱盖房子，我宁愿不做这笔生意”（250）。他的困惑在于自己要建的是“家”，而人们往往要的只是一栋有屋顶，有明确地址的“房子”。在还没有成为建筑师之前，他认为自己可以给人盖“家”，但是当他在一场火灾之后靠旧有的土地重新规划建立别墅时，才恍然大悟自己不但付出了幸福快乐的代价，同时也让妻子艾琳付出了她作为贤妻良母的代价。文中，他对希尔达说到：“为了给别人盖家宅，我不得不牺牲—永远牺牲—一个否则可能是我自己的家宅。我说的是给一群孩子—也是给父母—安排的家宅”（350）。于是他开始对自己所创造的一切东西感到寒心，为了这些成就，他都得偿付代价，代价不是金钱，而是人的幸福——不仅是他自己的幸福，并且还包括别人的幸福。于是，他开始否定自己的成就，尤其是对妻子艾琳。他认为妻子原本可以是孩子灵魂的建筑师，她可以把孩子们的灵魂培养得平衡、崇高优美，使它们昂扬上升，得到充分发展，但是这一切都随着火灾的发生而没有发挥作用。索尔尼斯一直认为火灾的发生是自己的过错，

建筑师这个身份正是他的一个伦理困惑，而房子则成为了他的“结”，这个“结”在文学伦理学批评方法中即是“伦理结”。

试图建筑各式房子是索尔尼斯寻获身份的动力，他甚至还企图重建被火灾烧毁的家园，以为这样就能够向妻子赎罪，改善他和妻子的关系，并让妻子能够做回一个真正的妻子和母亲的身份。他用尽种种方法，改变建筑的房子，在教堂甚至房子的阁楼顶端加上风向。最终他认为只有一个地方可以容纳人生的幸福，那就是空中楼阁。他不断地变化所建筑的房子，从开始建立教堂，到完全不建设教堂，并在家宅的顶端建立高耸的塔楼。这些看来莫名其妙的举动，都是因为他一直无法为自己“建筑师”这个身份找到定位。他所建的每一栋房子，其实目的都是企图为自己的身份找到定位，为自己打开心结，为自己的身份进行道德批评。

### 三、“山精”与“兽性因子”

索尔尼斯对建筑师身份的困惑，源自于他领悟到自己心灵的孤独和不自由，他的所作所为是受到“斯芬克斯因子”中的“兽性因子”所控制的，由于他是一个勇于面对道德批判并具有伦理意识的人，他才会不断地为心灵追寻正途。“斯芬克斯因子”体现为人的理性意志和自由意志。“自由意志又称自然意志(natural will)，是兽性因子的意志体现。自由意志主要产生于人的动物性本能，其主要表现形式为人的不同欲望，如性欲、食欲等人的基本生理要求和心理动态。理性意志是人性因子的意志体现，也是理性的意志体现。自由意志和理性意志是相互对立的两种力量，文学作品常常描写这两种力量怎样影响人的道德行为，并通过这两种力量的不同变化描写形形色色的人”(聂珍钊，“文学伦理学批评：伦理选择与斯芬克斯因子” 8)。索尔尼斯正是受到自由意志的支配才一步步走上困惑的道路。他在发生了种种事情之后，用理性意志来审判自己时，即是希尔达所谓的“多病的良心”。

索尔尼斯从一开始就觉得自己的一切成就是靠所谓的“交好运”，但是事实上这些“好运”的发生，都源自于心中的“恶念”。这个“恶念”像是妖魔，会召唤一些助手来使他的恶念发生。这种“恶念”在他自己和希尔达口中，既是“山精”。作者易卜生利用这些不断重复出现的“山精”意象来告诉我们每个人身上的两种妖魔。这两种妖魔按照文学伦理学批评即是“人性因子”和“兽性因子”，同时这两种因子的组合被称为“斯芬克斯因子”。人类从生物性进化而来，身上还保留着非理性的兽性因子，因此索尔尼斯恶念的产生正是非理性意志作用的发挥。这种意志通常缺乏伦理道德的判断，一旦挣脱了理性意志的束缚，就会导致恶果，导致悲剧的人生。索尔尼斯一直徘徊在身上的“人性因子”和“兽性因子”之间，他在追寻身份的过程中不断受到两种力量的驱使，当他获得了一切成就之后，他的理性意志告诉他自己是靠着“山精”的召唤和作祟才获得成功。他不断谴责自己，事实上就是“人性因子”的苏醒，他认为自己的灵魂是不自由的，他总是被身上的“山精”所控制。

那一场火灾的发生据他自己说来起因来自衣柜，但是烟囱里的那一条裂缝他早发现却迟迟没有修补，更糟的是他曾经幻想透过那条裂缝能够让他出人头地，后来火灾就完全按照他本人的幻想发生了。他把两个孩子的夭折看成是一种救赎和惩罚，是他为成为“建筑师”所付出的代价。后来发生的几件事情，按照他自己的看法也是“恶念”的召唤，是山精的推动和协助才使得他心里所发生的事情发生。开雅的出现是一个例子，他对医生说明自己并不是存心想欺骗感情，而且他并没有付诸于行动，只是开雅自己爱上他，而且不愿意离开他。还有少女希尔达出现的时候向她提及十年前的暧昧关系，以及对希尔达的承诺，这些过去的种种于索尔尼斯是完全想不起的，他没办法承认确实有那些事，只是他却坦然地说出那些也曾经是他心里所盼望的事。他不敢肯定后来是否有对希尔达做出不轨的行为，但是他承认曾经有过那样的想法。这些种种都一再地告诉读者人们终其一生总是被身上的“兽性因子”束缚着，只有挣脱之，让“人性因子”战胜之，才能有一颗健全的心灵，也才能成为一个真正的“人”。当他心里所盼望的事情一件件发生了，这使到他感到良心与精神上的不安。别人羡慕他“交好运”，而他却觉得这些好运完全是“山精”对他的控制，“单靠自己一个人，做不成这些大事情”（363）。索尔尼斯强调那批被召唤而来的助手和仆从不断地把别人身上的皮一块一块撕下来，给他补伤口，然而他的伤口并没有完全治好，永远都不会好！

在剧本中，我们可以看到主要的三个人：索尔尼斯、希尔达还有艾琳。他们三个面对自己生活的态度是不一样的。索尔尼斯对自己的身份有所期待和要求，希望自己能够为人类建立安顿心灵的家宅，可以说他是一个有道德意识的人。正是因为道德意识太强烈而导致他走上心灵孤独，不但没有人能理解他，而且他也不断评判自己；艾琳也是一个道德感比较强的人，她一直为自己不能对家庭和孩子负责任而耿耿于怀，甚至还受到自己精神上的折磨，她的生活态度就是履行责任，包括她在家里的存在，以及对身边人物的存在，都只是一个“义务”；至于希尔达，相对来说她完全是一个任由“兽性因子”自由在她身上发挥的人，包括她离家出走，以及怂恿索尔尼斯为她建筑“王国”。她讨厌艾琳经常挂在嘴边的所谓“责任”，她对于“健全良心”的理解是跟其他人不一样的。在剧本第二幕中索尔尼斯谈到海盗抢东西、杀人、放火时，希尔达表达了令我们感到惊异的价值观。按照她的理解，那些被海盗抢走的女人是快活的，因为那才是真我与自由，任“自由意志”随心所欲地发挥才能获得快乐。然后她还说“一个人爱谁不爱谁，自己都做不了主”（370），那完全是一个人身体内部的山精在做主的。这三个人同时都受到“人性因子”和“兽性因子”的束缚，但是所作出的选择都不一样，而只有索尔尼斯才是一个真正的“人”，因为他勇于面对自己的困惑，并企图为自己解开。

#### 四、“空中楼阁”与征服“山精”

我们可以看到索尔尼斯不断变换他所建筑的房子，其实是跟他自己对建筑

师身份的定位联系在一起。那些看似怪异的建筑行为，是为寻找自己的身份。为此，他已经建了无数的房子，后来他恍然大悟地说道：“这些年一直竭力折磨自己为的是搜索一桩已经忘记的经验”（595），这经验指的既是幸福。为了给别人盖家宅，他不得不牺牲自己的幸福，失去自己快乐的代价。包括少女希尔达，“当她刚来到索尔尼斯的家的时候，对于艾琳是不削一顾的，甚至觉得这个家庭里的成员都是良心生病了，但是后来，她渐渐明白自己再不能忍心伤害这个家庭任何一个成员。她当初的冲动、鲁莽、怪异的、缺乏人性的行为都马上被自己领悟，使她马上与周边的人、事、物回归到正常的关系。”（Roberts 162），希尔达于是成了剧本中第一个解开心结的人。

他曾经认为至少教堂是一个可以存放心灵的地方，能够为人类的心灵找到安身之所，可以让人们寄托孤独的心灵。可是他后来发现，命运似乎在作弄他。当他努力为上帝盖了宏伟高耸的教堂，看起来这一切都是上帝的关照，是人们所谓的好运气才提供了他成为建筑界的领袖，其实却是因为那一场火灾。人们只是羡慕他有好运气，却不知道他是付出了巨大的代价才有此成就的。由于他自己并没有受到正统的建筑训练，因此他认为运气随时会离开他，下一代人就会有取代他的可能。一场火灾烧毁了原来的家园，却使索尔尼斯成为一名建筑师。使他获得建筑师这个身份的原因是在火灾之后，在旧屋的空地上重新划分土地，划成一块一块的别墅地基，然后按照自己的意思动起手来，于是，他就成名了。就一般人对他的身份评价皆认为是命运照顾他，是那场火灾成全了他的建筑事业，因此他总是孤独地自我进行审判，从盖住宅到盖教堂，还在上面加塔楼和风向，这些行为让我们读者读来倍感怪异，其实这一路不断转换建筑的主体正体现出他的矛盾与追求，是和他个人对身份的追寻结合在一起的。自从孩子死后，他就没有心情盖教堂了，于是他开始与自己的心灵展开对话，想为自己的身份找一条出路，另寻一个定位。他其实是一个十分理性的人，唯有理性的人才会时时审查自己的行为，审查自己的身份。他知道一名成功的“建筑师”要建筑的是幸福的人生而非只是建筑物的成就，幸福的人生体现在家庭幸福和心灵安宁，而不是体现在世俗的名誉、金钱和地位上。

他曾经费尽心思到处建筑教堂，他以为盖教堂是他所能做的最崇高的事业。当他盖那些教堂的时候，是抱着虔诚的心意，可是后来他才发现上帝对他的感谢竟然使他失去了道德意识，纵容他身上的山精作威作福，吩咐那些妖魔日夜伺候他。上帝所提供给他所谓“交好运”就是让他成为建筑界的高手，好让他可以为上帝盖出更壮丽的教堂。他认为两个孩子的夭折是被上帝抢走的，上帝不许他拥有爱情和幸福，派定他一生一世给上帝盖教堂。当他想通了这一切时他决定对上帝当仁不让。他要在教堂上面建塔楼，目的是让自己站在高处，俯视一切，一边还把花圈挂在风标上，一边对上帝宣言说，从此以后他要当一个“自由的建筑师”（425），向上帝宣言说不再盖教堂，而只给世间凡人盖住宅。这就是为什么索尔尼斯在孩子死去之后坚持不盖教堂的真正原因，他其实是对自己人性的一种反抗，他不想被身上的“兽性因子”所控制，他要自己的

心灵自由。至于为什么他后来连凡人的房子都不愿意盖，则是因为他发现人们用不着这种住宅，因为他们不能住在里面快乐过活，人们的心灵一样被两种妖魔控制着，所以他认为自己并没有真正盖过什么房子，作为一名建筑师，他完全是一场空！从教堂到民宅，最后他打算盖的是“空中楼阁”，这个“空中楼阁”是什么呢？是唯一可以容纳人生幸福的地方。而这个“空中楼阁”就是希尔达所要的“王国”。曾经，在十年前在莱桑格区给那座老教堂盖塔楼的时候，他克服了惧高症爬到塔楼顶，还拿着花圈把它挂在风标上。那是他第一次挑战自己，挑战上帝。可是，后来就改成将塔楼建在自己的新房子上，他把自己房子顶上的塔楼称为“空中楼阁”，因为他认为只有那个楼阁才是可以容纳幸福的地方。他终于找到了自己作为“建筑师”身份的定位，以及最值得他去建筑的房子，也因为这样，他最终不顾惧高症而坚持自己爬上顶楼把花圈挂在风标上，最后摔下来，结束生命。

## 五、身份的回归与伦理结

由于索尔尼斯自身对于“伦理身份”的理解不同于常人的理解造成了他的心灵孤独，所以他需要为自己寻获一个明确的身份，从孤独中解脱出来，才能为灵魂找到归宿。索尔尼斯对自己身份的困惑其实就是一个“伦理结”，他不断为建筑师的身份寻找定位，其实是整个剧本的“伦理线”，循着这条伦理线的发展，最后，他终于透过建筑“空中楼阁”为自己的身份找到了定位。简而言之，他是先获取了“建筑师”这个身份，然后按照自己对“建筑师”这个身份的理解去为自己定位。在这个过程中，他面对了作为“人”身上所具有的“兽性因子”的驱使而做出种种怪异的行为，包括不去修补墙上裂缝的恶念，利用开雅的爱情以留住得力助手在身边，以及多年前对无知少女的爱情欺骗，这些都显示了他深受“兽性因子”的驱使。然而，他最后还是通过“人性因子”去战胜了“兽性因子”，从而找到了自己的身份，同时获得了心灵的安宁。

如文章的前面所言，剧本中的每一个人都面对了自己的心灵孤独，尤其是索尔尼斯。从一开始他建筑教堂，后来改建教堂塔楼和凡人的住宅，以至将塔楼建在家宅上，这些怪异的举动如果不从他的伦理立场使用文学伦理学批评方法来解读是无法体会的。聂珍钊所提出的文学伦理学批评方法“主要用于从伦理的立场解读、分析和阐释文学作品、研究作家以及与文学有关的问题。文学伦理学批评同传统的道德批评不同，它不是从今天的道德立场简单地对历史的文学进行好与坏的道德价值判断，而是强调回到历史的伦理现场，站在当时的伦理立场上解读和阐释文学作品，寻找文学产生的客观伦理原因并解释其何以成立，分析作品中导致社会事件和影响人物命运的伦理因素，用伦理的观点对事件、人物、文学等给以解释，并从历史的角度作出道德批评”（聂珍钊，“文学伦理学批评：基本理论与术语”14）。而聂珍钊所提出的“斯芬克斯因子”则完全体现在主人翁索尔尼斯的身上。“斯芬克斯因子是由人性因子和兽性因子构成的，并通过理性意志和自由意志发挥作用。两种意志之间的力量消长，

导致文学作品中人物性格的变化和故事情节的发展”（聂珍钊，“文学伦理学批评：伦理选择与斯芬克斯因子”13）。当我们认识到人类身上还具有“斯芬克斯因子”的时候，我们就不难明白文中所提到的“山精”意象。“山精”在这个剧本中形同“斯芬克斯因子”，索尔尼斯的一切怪异行为皆源自于此因子所导致的伦理选择和判断，从而引起他的伦理困惑。少女希尔达的出现唤起了他多年遗忘的“结”，希尔达一针见血地说他的心灵不健全。为解开这个“结”，为建立一颗健全的心灵，他必须以检查自身为起点，于是他开始向希尔达倾吐多年以来隐藏的心灵世界，即是他那介于人性因子与兽性因子之间的心灵搏斗于是开始。世界上只有高于兽类的“人”才会追求“伦理身份”，也只有当人们在生活中将自己的“伦理身份”扮演好之后，才能获得幸福的人生，而幸福的人生则体现在心灵与精神的安宁。

易卜生的《建筑师》要告诉读者每个人都是自己心灵的建筑师，在通往心灵与精神安宁的路上，我们必须用“人性因子”去克制和控制从人物在生物性选择过程中所遗留下来的“兽性因子”，才能获得幸福的人生。索尔尼斯的人生虽然以结束自己的生命为收场，但是他所传达的隐喻却是伟大的，世界的，同时更是作为一个“人”不可忽视的伦理命题。正如有学者指出的，“易卜生的努力不单是争取个人的心灵自由，同时他更致力于透过作品去争取作为人类的心灵自由”（Victoire 256）。透过这个剧本，使我们更加认识了一个人只有对自己的伦理身份进行正确的定位，才能摆脱困惑于孤独，才能拥有幸福的人生，而这也正是易卜生在《建筑师》中要传达的最重要的道德训示。

### 注解【Notes】

①文中所有《建筑师》的引文均引自 *The works of Henrik Ibsen*, Vol.10. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912). 译文为作者自译，以下只随文注明页码。

②参见杨建：“《建筑师》中的象征新论”，《易卜生戏剧的自由观念：中国第三届易卜生国际学术研讨会论文集》（北京：外语教学与研究出版社，2007年），第224-230页。

### 引用作品【Works Cited】

吴奕：“《海达·高布乐》中的象征主义”，《浙江万里学院学报》1（2003）：24—26。

[Wu Yi. "Symbolism in Hedda Gabier". *Journal of Zhejiang Wanli College* 1(2003): 24-26.]

王忠祥：《易卜生》。北京：华夏出版社，2002年。

[Wang Zhongxiang. *Ibsen*. Beijing: Huaxia Press, 2002.]

高中甫选编：《易卜生评论集》。北京：外语教学与研究出版社，1982。

[Gao Zhongfu, ed. *Collected Essays on Ibsen*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, 1982.]

聂珍钊：“文学伦理学批评：文学批评方法新探索”，《外国文学研究》5（2004）：18-

24.

[Nie Zhenzhao. "Ethical Approach to Literary Studies: A New Perspective." *Foreign Literature Studies* 5 (2004):18 – 24.]

——: “文学伦理学批评：伦理选择与斯芬克斯因子”，《外国文学研究》6（2011）：1—13。

[---. "Ethical Literary Criticism: Ethical Choice and Sphinx Factor." *Foreign Literature Studies* 6 (2011):1 – 13.]

Brian,Crow. "Romantic Ambivalence in The Master Builder", *Studies in Romanticism* 2 (1981): 203-223.

聂珍钊：“文学伦理学批评：基本理论与术语”，《外国文学研究》1(2010):12—22。

[Nie Zhenzhao. "Ethical Literary Criticism: Its Fundaments and Terms." *Foreign Literature Studies* 1 (2010):12 – 22.]

R, Ellis Roberts. *Henry Ibsen, a Critical Study*. London: Martin Secker,1912.

AlmaL,La Victoire."The Message of *the Master Builder*", *The North American Review* 8 (1912): 254-263.

责任编辑：李纲

# “究竟社会正确，还是我正确？”

——论《玩偶之家》的伦理身份与伦理禁忌

郑美善

**内容摘要：**《玩偶之家》是一部关于人与人、人与社会之间伦理冲突的戏剧。本文从文学伦理学批评角度重新审视该部作品，旨在挖掘其中蕴含的伦理价值。文章认为，《玩偶之家》通过伪造签字借债事件而引发的夫妻冲突，巧妙地反映了社会伦理及家庭伦理的矛盾：女主人公娜拉无视社会伦理禁忌，维护家庭的幸福和睦；其丈夫海尔茂重视社会伦理秩序，坚守社会伦理，不解妻子以“爱”之名的犯罪行为。剧中人物因伦理信念不同，导致彼此的矛盾与冲突，乃至家庭破碎的凄惨结局，引发诸多关于伦理的思考。

**关键词：**《玩偶之家》；伦理身份；伦理禁忌；伦理选择

**作者简介：**郑美善（韩国），深圳大学外语学院副教授，华中师范大学比较文学与世界文学博士研究生，主要从事比较文学和文学批评研究。

**Title:** “Which is right — society or I?” : An Analysis of Ethical Identity and Ethical Taboos of Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House*

**Abstract:** Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House* is a play about the ethical conflicts between man and man, or man and society. From the perspective of ethical literary criticism, this paper re-examines the work in order to find the ethical values embedded in it. By the plot of marital conflict triggered by borrowing money with the forged signature, *A Doll’s House* displays the contradictions of social ethics and family ethics: Nora cares about the happiness and harmony of the family, ignoring the social and ethical taboo; her husband Helmer values the social ethical order and adheres to social ethics, yet he has never been able to understand his wife’s crime in the name of “love”. Due to different ethical beliefs, characters stand inevitably opposite to each other and cause the fall of the family.

**Key words:** *A Doll’s House*; ethical identity; ethical taboo; ethical choice

**Author:** Chung Misun(Korean) is an associate professor at the College of Foreign Languages, Shenzhen University(Shenzhen 518061, China) and a Ph. D. candidate of Comparative Literature and World Literature at Central China Normal University (Wuhan 430079, China). Her Major research area is comparative literature and literary criticism. Email:misun567@hotmail.com

亨利克·易卜生 (Henrik Ibsen, 1828-1906) 是 19 世纪挪威杰出的戏剧家，他一生创作了 20 多部剧作。后世对《玩偶之家》(*A Doll’s House*, 1879) 的研究

颇为广泛，学者们运用不同研究方法、从各个角度对该作品进行了阐释。如，运用社会历史学批评方法，从“社会问题剧”入手分析作品所蕴含的社会问题；运用女性主义批评方法，从父权、两性角度审视作品所体现的性别问题；运用精神分析批评方法，阐释作品所包含的困惑与疏远的精神隔阂；运用新历史主义批评方法，通过家庭因素，分析作品所反映的历史意识形态；运用现代语言学批评方法，通过戏剧语言，分析作品所体现的语言结构和魅力等。

有评论家认为：“《玩偶之家》使诗人的艺术创作达到了高峰，也使他的伦理信念最终得以澄清。以一个现实事件为引子，诗人再现了家庭生活这一贯的基本主题，并制造了一场新的、更为深刻的冲突”（布拉姆 31）。实际上，《玩偶之家》是一部关于人与人、人与社会之间伦理冲突的戏剧，描述了因伪造签字借债事件而引发的夫妻间的冲突，而他们的冲突来自于各自信奉的不同伦理信念：女主人公娜拉·海尔茂（Nora Helmer）极力维护家庭的幸福与和睦，为了扮演好她在家庭中妻子和母亲的伦理身份，甚至不惜触犯社会伦理禁忌——伪造签名的违法行为；其丈夫托伐·海尔茂（Torvald Helmer）则非常重视社会伦理秩序，他所信奉的社会伦理信念使他无法理解妻子以“爱”之名的犯罪行为。本文试图从文学伦理学批评角度对该剧进行剖析，旨在挖掘作品所蕴含的伦理价值。“文学伦理学批评重在文学作品本身进行客观的伦理阐释，而不是进行抽象或者主观的道德评价”（聂珍钊 12）。本文的重点不在于探究及评价孰是孰非，而是从不同视角重新阐释这部经典戏剧，认识其所隐含的伦理价值。

## 一、伦理身份的僭越与消失

《玩偶之家》讲述了一个看似和谐的家庭因其背后所隐藏的伦理问题而最终破裂的故事。剧情从一个幸福的家庭正准备迎接圣诞节，舞台上弥漫着喜悦的气氛开始。主人公娜拉对她目前的生活颇为满意，其丈夫海尔茂即将升任银行经理，他们的三个孩子健康、活泼、可爱。然而，这种幸福的生活却因她在八年前为救丈夫而犯下的错误举动破灭了。八年前，海尔茂得了重病，为了到南方治好丈夫，娜拉假冒父亲之名，通过当时在银行任职的柯洛克斯泰（Krogstad）借贷了一笔钱，从此她独自一人背负着还债的责任。不料，海尔茂一上任银行经理就要辞退柯洛克斯泰。而此时，娜拉的昔日同窗林丹太太（Mrs. Linden）远道而来请她帮忙介绍工作，海尔茂便答应了林丹太太在银行为其谋求一个职位，刚好可以顶替柯洛克斯泰的位子。气急败坏的柯洛克斯泰，要求娜拉帮忙求情，要海尔茂收回成命，还拿娜拉以前伪造签字借债一事来要挟，并最终写信给海尔茂揭发了这一事实。海尔茂知道此事，对娜拉极度失望，情绪激动地严厉责备娜拉。与此同时，柯洛克斯泰在昔日恋人林丹太太的劝导之下决定不再纠缠娜拉与海尔茂，把娜拉的借据退回给娜拉。收到退回的借据后，海尔茂的态度马上转变，表示他能宽恕娜拉，与之重修旧好。然而此时的娜拉已对丈夫的表现心灰意冷，意识到海尔茂并非她理想中的丈夫，更意识到彼此都应该有所改变的必要性。因此摔门而去，一个原本幸福的家庭就此破碎了。

《玩偶之家》中娜拉的伦理身份是家庭中的妻子与母亲。在表面幸福完美的家庭里，娜拉一直履行着她所信奉的伦理原则：维护家庭幸福、挽救丈夫生命是她作为母亲和妻子的责任，是家庭伦理的基本要求。在娜拉的心中，有一幅爱的美好图画：男女之间相互欣赏、理解、尊重、为了所爱的人勇于舍弃一切，甚至生命。她把自己与海尔茂的相爱想象成这一理想的实现，她只知道自己爱丈夫，别的都故作视而不见。同时也深信丈夫对自己的爱是一样的，认为海尔茂为了她“会毫不踌躇地牺牲自己的性命”（116）<sup>①</sup>。正因为这种精神力量的支撑，才使得她能乐观地面对艰苦生活。

娜拉的一切伦理选择都是基于这一伦理身份而来。她伪造签字借债是出于家庭的责任，她的家庭伦理信念使她坚信事后的任何后果丈夫将会和他一同承担。因为她相信夫妻应当共度危难，她心中的伦理信念使她确认自己行为的正确性。在娜拉看来，她伦理身份的职责是维护家庭的幸福，保护丈夫的名誉，即便因此触犯社会伦理秩序、甚至牺牲性命也在所不惜。因此对自己为了家庭的幸福和丈夫的生命而做出的违法行为感到自豪。认为自己的这一犯法行为是为了尽家庭的义务与责任，应该被谅解与认可，只要还清债务，罪责也就此消失。

然而，娜拉在履行家庭伦理身份时，从小事到大事都违背了夫妻之间的基本伦理法则——坦诚相待、相互尊重。娜拉不顾丈夫的劝阻，背地里偷吃杏仁饼干，并为此多次撒谎；为了救丈夫的命，从冒名签字借债到工作赚钱还债，也一直背着丈夫进行。用娜拉自己的话说，为了维护家庭的幸福她一直靠着要把戏过日子。这里所指的“把戏”并不只局限于字面意义所指的唱歌、跳舞，而是她在整个婚姻生活中都在演戏。为了演好父亲、海尔茂和整个社会所期望的角色，同时为了履行她内心所认定的家庭伦理信念，娜拉一直饰演着一个与自我不同的人物。“你爱什么我也爱什么，或者假装爱什么……我靠着给你要把戏过日子”（178）。娜拉始终履行着自己心目中神圣的伦理义务与责任——维护丈夫的尊严，确保家庭的和睦。她私自借贷也是出于无私的目的才会欺瞒丈夫，因为她了解海尔茂的性格不能容忍妻子帮助他度过生活的难关，“……像托伐那么个好胜、要面子的男子汉，要是知道受了我的恩惠，那得多惭愧，多难受呀！”（133）。娜拉为丈夫、为家庭的名义欺瞒了丈夫。

从娜拉的社会伦理身份来分析也能发现全新的观点。从剧情来看娜拉假冒签字借债时的身份是律师夫人，然而无论是当时律师夫人的伦理环境还是现在银行经理夫人的伦理环境，娜拉对社会禁忌的漠视与破坏都是缺乏理性的表现。再说，娜拉的行为已超越了她的家庭伦理身份，她瞒着丈夫挑起了生活的重担，虽然我们可以理解她的行为，但是在剧中，在当时的伦理环境下，她的行为注定不会得到丈夫与社会的认可。

最终娜拉选择了走出家门，砰地一声关上大门，解除夫妻对彼此的义务，“你不受我的拘束，我也不受你的拘束，双方都有绝对的自由”（188-189），给彼此留下改变的空间。娜拉要到家庭以外的世界去学习做“一个人”，除了对丈夫和儿女的责任外，也要学会对自己负责，也要去了解这个社会。娜拉的这一

举动被许多评论家认为是对父权社会的一次警钟，是女性觉醒、女性解放的象征。然而从文学伦理学的角度看，娜拉放弃自己的伦理身份，就意味着她放弃了自己的伦理责任和义务，意味着对社会认同的伦理秩序的破坏。

海尔茂的角色是一个秉公守法、富有责任心的模范公民。他一直宣扬做人不该说谎，应该遵守社会伦理准则，他憎恨任何违法行为。海尔茂曾经是名律师，他的经验告诉他“一个人干了那种亏心事就不能不成天撒谎、作假、欺骗”（86）。海尔茂深刻认识到触犯了社会伦理禁忌的后果，也很明白遵守社会伦理规则的重要性。违背了社会伦理规则，不仅会危害社会秩序，也会殃及家庭幸福。海尔茂拒绝把对自己不敬的科洛克斯泰留下来是怕银行里的人取笑他。他渴望赢得属下、朋友和妻子的尊重，在他的人生准则里，名誉和地位是至关重要的，也是在社会上和家庭生活中坚决捍卫的。他对娜拉瞒着自己冒名签字借债一事的反应体现了他对违法行为的憎恨，同时也印证了他对模范公民形象的重视。他希望社会能尊敬他，不愿自己沾上任何形式的污点。

在家庭生活中，海尔茂认为丈夫在婚姻中的角色就是保护和引导妻子。他为爱妻娜拉需要他的指导而颇感得意，他乐于扮演妻子的靠山，像父亲一样去教导她。海尔茂说：“正因为你自己没办法，所以我格外爱你，要不然我还算什么男子汉大丈夫？”（174）。倘若娜拉自有办法无需依靠他，他的伦理身份会显得黯然无色。海尔茂享受被依靠的乐趣，像慈父般深爱着娜拉，任由娜拉去做自己高兴做的事，满足娜拉购物的花费，还很高兴作为娜拉的舞蹈老师。他乐于把自己当作娜拉的“救星”，甚至对娜拉说：“常常盼望有桩危险的事情威胁你，好让我拚着命牺牲一切去救你”（167），“……什么事都不用怕，到时候我自有胆子和力量。你瞧着吧，我的两只宽阔肩膀足够挑起那副重担子”（106）。这些诺言或许在没有威胁到社会伦理信念以及他的社会名誉的前提下是肺腑之言。“你放心，一切事情都有我。我的翅膀宽，可以保护你。……你在这儿很安全，我可以保护你，像保护一只从鹰爪子底下救出来的小鸽子一样。我不久就能让你那颗扑扑跳的心定下来，娜拉，你放心”（174-175）。起初娜拉也对此深信不疑，希望海尔茂得知她有麻烦后，可以理解她、保护她。

然而，当展现救星身份的机会来临时，海尔茂的家庭伦理身份就消失了。从文学伦理学的角度重新审视海尔茂的伦理身份，会发现他的家庭伦理身份是多次缺席的。首先，他所信奉的伦理信念认为身为丈夫应该保护妻子，成为妻子的倚靠。但是，在他治病的那段时间，是娜拉独自担负起照顾丈夫和整个家庭经济的重担，此时海尔茂保护家庭的伦理身份是缺失的。即使他身体康复，回到工作岗位，扛起家庭责任，之前的债务还是靠妻子长时间省吃俭用、做些零工慢慢偿还的。海尔茂经常责怪娜拉乱花钱，但是娜拉从不为自己添加华丽的、昂贵的衣服，而他却从未真正关心过娜拉的钱到底是花在哪里，在辱骂娜拉触犯伦理禁忌的同时，海尔茂也失去了理性，表现了伦理混乱，此时他的家庭伦理身份也消失殆尽，仅用社会伦理身份来面对妻子，触犯了家庭伦理的基本法则——相互尊重。在娜拉和海尔茂的相处模式中，我们能发现他们两人都忽略

了这一基本伦理法则。在一个幸福的家庭，如缺乏了这一基本元素，家庭的美满与和睦是难以长久维系、禁不起考验。

## 二、伦理信念与伦理禁忌

“伦理的核心内容是人与人、人与社会以及人与自然之间形成的被接受和认可的伦理秩序，以及在这种秩序的基础上形成的道德观念和维护这种秩序的各种规范”（聂珍钊 17）。而“几乎所有伦理问题的产生往往都同伦理身份相关”（聂珍钊 14）。易卜生在《玩偶之家》中细腻地描述了人与人、人与社会之间的伦理关系。剧中海尔茂和娜拉努力扮演着自己的伦理信念所认定的伦理身份，也作出了各自不同的伦理选择。而在选择伦理行为的过程中，各自触犯了伦理禁忌。其中娜拉非法假冒签字借债这一伦理禁忌是整部剧中的主导伦理结，它自始至终主导着娜拉的思想 and 行为，剧情也围绕着这一问题展开，引发了夫妻间的冲突以及家庭伦理与社会伦理之间的冲突。

《玩偶之家》中的这一伦理结是预设的<sup>②</sup>，我们从人物的对白中可以得知这一事实。从人物对白中我们还能了解到这一伦理禁忌是如何促成的。娜拉与海尔茂已结婚八年，家庭似乎一直和睦美满。这期间，作为一家之主的海尔茂生了一场大病，娜拉不想让丈夫担心任何事，但唯一可以依靠的父亲又躺在病床上，巨额的医疗费用没有着落，为了家庭的幸福、为了维护丈夫的自尊，娜拉瞒着丈夫借债，挑起了家庭经济的重担。娜拉所作出的伦理选择是以“爱”为名义的，她认为自己伪造签字借债行为是在无助的情况下为了救丈夫才做出的决定，这一举动虽然触犯法律，但是不这么做就无法挽救丈夫的性命，即无法尽到妻子的伦理义务与责任。娜拉的家庭伦理信念认为，她的选择应该得到社会的谅解，只要还清债务，她的犯罪也就一笔勾销。同时，被她搭救的丈夫也应该心存感激。娜拉甚至将此事当作为未来爱情延续而储存下的一笔资本：“……到好多好多年之后，到我不像现在这么——这么漂亮的时候……我的意思是说等托伐不像现在这么爱我，不像现在这么喜欢看我跳舞、化装演戏的时候。到那时候我手上留着点东西也许稳当些”（52）。

柯洛克斯泰的信件出现之前，海尔茂都不知道解除他的这一灾难的是他眼中不懂事的、只会像小孩子一样玩耍的妻子娜拉！更可怕的是，她竟然胆敢触犯了法律！在海尔茂看来娜拉的行为不仅触犯了社会伦理规则，更毁坏了他的个人乃至整个家庭的幸福。妻子以“爱”为名的这一“壮举”，严重冲击了海尔茂的家庭伦理信念。他在家高高在上、扮演妻子“救星”的伦理身份变成了被妻子搭救的弱者形象，娜拉僭越了海尔茂心目中的家庭伦理身份，更何况这件事还牵涉到犯罪行为，这必定会损及他在社会上的名誉，可能因此受牵累而身败名裂。他失去了家庭伦理身份的尊严，努力树立起的社会身份的完美形象也面临冲毁的危险，而罪魁祸首居然是他深爱的妻子。

娜拉和海尔茂各持不同伦理身份与伦理信念，他们之间产生了矛盾与冲突。伪造签字借债的行为，在娜拉看来是对丈夫“爱”的表现，而海尔茂看来夫妻

的伦理身份被颠覆了。海尔茂认为触犯了法律，家庭的幸福必定摧毁，而娜拉认为她的犯法行为，正是为了维护家庭的幸福。在短暂的冲突与争执中产生了难以逾越的鸿沟，家庭的和谐与幸福难以延续，最终两人各奔东西，家庭支离破碎。妻子的隐瞒让丈夫失去信任，丈夫的无情辱骂摧毁了妻子的幻想。信任和尊重是夫妻之间乃至人与人之间相处时不可忽视的要素。娜拉和海尔茂失去了对彼此的信任和尊重，美满的家庭顿时破碎。

《玩偶之家》情节的重要转折均与写信和读信有关。信件在剧中起到关键作用：柯洛克斯泰的信件不仅揭发了娜拉隐瞒丈夫所做的冒名签字借债行为，还反映出经过海尔茂和娜拉努力粉饰的难以察觉的、在本质上并不快乐完美的家庭生活的现实，易卜生在《玩偶之家》预设的伦理结也因此开始解构。另外，林丹太太写给洛克斯泰的信也是使柯洛克斯泰改变主意的关键所在，同时也消解了娜拉和柯洛克斯泰之间的伦理结。

剧中柯洛克斯泰共写了两封信，第一封信中他向海尔茂揭发了娜拉伪造她父亲签名借债的非法行为。这封信的出现，引发了夫妻间的严重冲突，彻底毁掉了娜拉和海尔茂夫妻恩爱的幻景。娜拉想方设法阻止海尔茂读到第一封信，因为“这件又高兴又得意的秘密事要以不漂亮的方式告诉他（海尔茂）——并且还是从你（柯洛克斯泰）的嘴里说出来。他（海尔茂）知道了这件事会给我惹许多烦恼（73）”。娜拉一直相信自己的所作所为都是为家庭、为“爱”而做的伟大壮举，因此，即便是触犯了社会伦理禁忌也应该被认可、被谅解。但从法律角度看娜拉的行为是犯法，剧中柯洛克斯泰就是因为曾经犯下同样的罪行而身败名裂，在社会上无法立足。但是娜拉认为“国家的法律跟我心里想的不一样，可是我不信那些法律是正确的。父亲病得快死了，法律不允许女儿给他省烦恼。丈夫病得快死了，法律不许老婆想法子救他的性命！我不信世界上有这种不讲理的法律”（183），那根本是“笨法律”（79）。陷入了社会法律与伦理认知相互冲突的困境。娜拉站在个人的伦理信念角度认为自己的行为是无奈之举，该受到理解和同情，认为海尔茂读完这封信后的表现严重违背了她所信奉的家庭伦理信念——夫妻应该对彼此无条件奉献，娜拉无法理解不愿体谅自己用心良苦的丈夫。

第二封信使娜拉摆脱了柯洛克斯泰的债务，卸下了对海尔茂的责任，但是娜拉意识到这两封信不仅仅暴露了她隐瞒丈夫去借债的事实，还暴露了他们夫妻关系的本质，他们信奉着完全不同的伦理信念。海尔茂愤慨的反应让娜拉睁大双眼看清了她和海尔茂关系的本质，意识到了自己为维护家庭的和睦而要把戏的日子并不开心，自己一直委屈周全之举也根本不被丈夫认可。因此重新设定了她的行为目标和步骤，她改变了原本为弥补过失而做出最后牺牲——自杀的想法，决定离开丈夫海尔茂。这表示她开始重新认识自我以及所处的社会环境，为别人而活之前应该要学做自己。娜拉对自我的伦理意识有了新的定义，然而，这一觉醒与决定让她无意中再次破坏了家庭伦理秩序。

### 三、伦理混乱与伦理选择

海尔茂一直努力扮演好社会与家庭中的伦理身份。他曾经是律师，维护社会伦理秩序是他的职责；他为人父、为人夫，保护家庭是他的基本义务与责任。然而在家庭伦理身份与社会伦理身份发生冲突时，海尔茂惊慌失措，陷入了伦理混乱，甚至失去了理性，他的家庭伦理身份也随之消失。他的伦理选择是站在社会伦理身份的立场，对妻子不留情面地责骂，不理睬也不去试着了解妻子这一举动背后的动机与考量。事实上海尔茂一直以来从未发现妻子单纯幼稚的表象背后的苦衷。娜拉原本以为海尔茂知道她假冒父亲签名以及柯洛克斯泰威胁她的情况后会承担一切责任，义无反顾地牺牲他的名誉来保护他。但是真相揭发后，海尔茂不但不愿出手相助，更不愿替娜拉担起罪责，反倒破口大骂，娜拉对丈夫崇高的期望彻底破灭了，她对婚姻生活的其他幻想也随之烟消云散。

当克洛克斯泰送来第二封信的时候，海尔茂又非常紧张的说：“娜拉，你快藏起来，只推托有病”（172）。这时的海尔茂急速转变回家庭伦理身份，担心妻子受到坏人的伤害，扮起丈夫保护妻子的角色。在情急之下为了妻子而撒谎，他再次陷入了伦理混乱状态。看到第二封信时，海尔茂说：“娜拉，咱们没事了！现在没人能害你了”（173）。这时的他完全不顾自己的社会身份所信奉的伦理信念，尽管他的伦理信念告诉他，“犯罪的人只要肯公开认罪，甘心受罚，就可以恢复名誉。……他（克洛克斯泰）使用狡猾手段，逃避法律的制裁，后来他的品行越来越堕落，就没法子挽救了”（86）。但是这件事牵涉到妻子时他说“这件事无论如何不能让人家知道”（172）。他做出的伦理选择是想办法保护家庭，不惜违背自己的伦理信念。

夫妻的危险过去了，海尔茂请求娜拉谅解他刚才的辱骂，说自己能大度地原谅妻子先前的犯法与欺瞒的行为。“……你不懂得男子汉的好心肠。要是男人饶恕了他老婆——真正饶恕了她，从心坎里饶恕了她——他心里会有一股没法子形容得好滋味”（175）。若将海尔茂的这番话放在当时的伦理环境来解读，我们能发现新的观点。当娜拉的好友林丹太太听到娜拉瞒着海尔茂借债时说过“做老婆的不得她丈夫的同意没法子借钱”（49）。林丹太太觉得娜拉“瞒着他（海尔茂）就是太鲁莽”（50）。这句话所反映的伦理背景是，即便娜拉借债之事没有牵涉假冒签字，这一举动不但违背了家庭伦理秩序，还违背了当时的社会伦理秩序。但是尽管如此，海尔茂说：“我已经宽恕你了，（因为）我知道你干那件事都是因为爱我”（174）。他认为自己施舍了宽宏大量，却根本没有察觉到自己已经触犯了维系家庭伦理的重要禁忌，即没有遵守无论是夫妻之间还是父母孩子之间乃至人与人之间都该相互尊重的最基本伦理原则。

娜拉的家庭伦理身份认为，她的选择应该得到法律的谅解，只要还清债务，她的犯罪也就一笔勾销。同时，被她搭救的丈夫也应该心存感激。在伦理身份的扮演上，娜拉始终努力扮演好家庭伦理身份。娜拉的伦理信念告诉她，妻子为丈夫和孩子牺牲一切是义无反顾的职责。如林丹太太那样“千千万万的女性

都为男人牺牲过名誉”（186），娜拉也愿意如此。这一伦理信念使她做出了为家庭幸福和谐不惜撒谎、欺瞒甚至犯法的伦理选择。她的一切考量都是为家庭，为丈夫和孩子，因此受到柯洛克斯泰的要挟与丈夫的指责时都感到费解与委屈。她认为一切都是因“爱”所致，认为该受到认可与谅解。然而无论有什么样的动机与隐情，都不可否认触犯社会伦理禁忌对社会伦理秩序的破坏性。人是构成家庭的重要元素，同样的，家庭亦是构成社会的重要成分。家庭伦理与社会伦理是息息相关的，没有遵守社会伦理就很难维系完整的家庭伦理。而家庭伦理建立在家庭成员之间扮演好各自角色的基础上，如果家庭成员触犯了社会伦理，整个家庭伦理的和睦必然有残缺。

娜拉和海尔茂的表现不仅透露出他们一直处于伦理混乱中，还显示他们的关系就如林丹太太一针见血地指出的那样“他们夫妻应该彻底了解，不许再那么闪闪躲躲，鬼鬼祟祟”（151）。他们之间缺乏沟通，从未真正了解过对方。戏剧接近尾声时，他们夫妻才正视到他们面对的是自己想象中的对方，而不是现实中真实的面貌。娜拉明白丈夫不是她理想中的那颗为她不顾一切、牺牲所有的“救星”，海尔茂也发现了自己一直生活在一个充满谎言的家庭里，妻子原来是个“骗子”。对彼此的失望，成为彼此间难以逾越的鸿沟。无论在社会还是在家庭，人与人相处时，彼此信任是最基本的要素之一，而这信任需要良好的沟通才得以实现。真正的“爱”亦并非是以自己的方式强加于他人，而应该是以正确的方式给予对方所需要的内容。在剧中海尔茂与娜拉一直相信自己是爱对方的，但是都以自己的方式、一厢情愿地去表达自己的爱。同时他们都相信对方对自己的爱，而且都期待以自己想象中的方式取得对方的爱。他们之间缺乏沟通，对彼此的了解都是在表面的态度与肤浅的对话中“以为”如此。这不得不令人深思人与人之间坦诚沟通的重要性。

从文学伦理学的角度分析《玩偶之家》，剧中人物的伦理信念与伦理身份不同，各自的伦理选择也随之变化。而在履行各自伦理身份的义务与责任时，或由于僭越了伦理身份、或由于缺乏理性的判断而导致触犯不同领域的伦理禁忌，也引发彼此之间的矛盾与冲突。然而，易卜生“所宣传的那种道德的法则是没有任何明确的内容的”（普列汉诺夫 150）。他的戏剧中所谈论的是问题本身，而不是如何解决问题，并没有明示人与人之间错综复杂的伦理问题该如何处置，也没有指出孰对孰错。《玩偶之家》中每个人物都忠实于扮演好各自的伦理身份，他们在履行自己的伦理义务与责任时所触及到的伦理禁忌从各自的伦理语境来看皆有迫于无奈的理由。“易卜生的‘社会问题剧’归根究底是告诉人们，在追求物质利益的同时，不要忘记关注人性，不要忘记关注作为人的情感。但是到底如何调和两者之间的冲突，易卜生也没有具体告诉我们，而是通过戏剧讨论，启发人们的思考”（张连桥 35）。“究竟是社会正确，还是我正确。”这是女主人公娜拉离开家庭进入社会后要去寻找的答案。然而，“真正的答案，似乎就是没有答案；或者不如说答案无穷无尽”（麦克法兰 345）。这或许就是易卜生想要留给观众去思考的社会伦理及家庭伦理之间的矛盾与问题。

## 注解【Notes】

①本文所引《玩偶之家》原文出自 Henrik Ibsen, “A Doll’s House & Ghosts”, in *The Works of Henrik Ibsen*, Volume IX (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1911)。汉译采用潘家洵译文（参见《易卜生文集》第五卷，人民文学出版社，1995年），略有改动。以下仅标注英译本页码，不再一一说明。

②运用文学伦理学批评的方法分析作品，寻找和解构文学作品的伦理线与伦理结是十分重要的。伦理线和伦理结是文学的伦理解构的基本成分。而在文学文本中，有些伦理结是预设的，也有些伦理结是在故事的发展中逐渐形成的。参见聂珍钊：《文学伦理学批评及其他——聂珍钊自选集》（武汉：华中师范大学出版社，2012年）13。

## 引用作品【Works Cited】

奥托·布拉姆：“亨利克·易卜生”，《易卜生评论集》，高中甫编选。北京：外语教学与研究出版社，1982年。

[Brahm, Otto. “Henrik Ibsen.” *Collected Essays on Ibsen*. Ed. Gao Zhongpu. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, 1982.]

易卜生：《易卜生文集》第5卷，潘家洵译。北京：人民出版社，1995年。

[Ibsen, Henrik. *The Collected Works of Ibsen* Vol.5. Trans. Pan Jiaxun. Beijing: People’s Literature Press, 1995.]

J. W. 麦克法兰：“亨利克·易卜生”，《易卜生评论集》，高中甫编选。北京：外语教学与研究出版社，1982年。

[McFarlane, James Walter. “Henrik Ibsen”. *Collected Essays on Ibsen*. Ed. Gao Zhongpu. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, 1982.]

聂珍钊：“文学伦理学批评：基本理论与术语”，《外国文学研究》1(2010):12—22。

[Nie Zhenzhao. “Ethical Literary Criticism: Its Fundaments and Terms.” *Foreign Literature Studies* 1 (2010):12—22.]

普列汉诺夫：“亨利克·易卜生”，《易卜生评论集》，高中甫编选。北京：外语教学与研究出版社，1982年。

[Plekhanov, Georgii Valentinovich. “Henrik Ibsen”. *Collected Essays on Ibsen*. Ed. Gao Zhongpu. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, 1982.]

张连桥：《伟大的问号——易卜生“社会问题剧”中的问题性》，硕士学位论文，长春：东北师范大学，2009年。

[Zhang Lianqiao. *The Great Question Mark: The Issues in Ibsen’s “Dramas of Social Problem”*. M.A. Thesis. Changchun: North Eastern China Normal University, 2009.]

责任编辑：尚必武

# Introduction to Turkish Literature Studies

**Serkan Ertin**

Department of Western Languages & Literatures, Kocaeli University Turkey  
41380, Kocaeli, Kocaeli Üniversitesi Umuttepe Yerleskesi, Turkey  
Email: serkan.ertin@kocaeli.edu.tr

Cahit Sıtkı Tarancı, one of the most significant poets of the republican period in Turkey, aimed simplicity through the use of metre and rhyme as he believed that poetry should be a simple expression of feelings. He successfully represents the emotionality of childhood in his poetry using various other genres and modes such as tales and nursery rhymes. The simplicity of the tone and the style of the poems, thus, is significant.

A political activist, Aziz Nesin portrays a harsh critique of the oppression and brutalisation the common man faces, and he also highlights the bureaucracy and economic injustice he suffers from in his stories which blend the local with the universal. Nesin has received many awards in and out of Turkey and his works have been translated into over thirty languages. He stood against the military government after the 1980 coup in Turkey and the oppression of the intelligentsia. He endorsed free speech regarding Islam and combated religious fundamentalism, too.

Considered one of the most notable living novelists in Turkey, Adalet Ağaoğlu is also a revered intellectual, a playwright and a human rights activist who has been awarded numerous honors in addition to the literary awards she won in the fields of novel, short story and drama. Her well-knit prose mingles her first-hand experience of the socio-political context in Turkey with her conception of social pressure and gender prejudice. In the fictional urban setting she depicts, her characters experience the modernity struggle and oscillate between the old and the new, and their dilemma is further complicated by bewildering political, religious, economic and social transformation.

Gul Deniz Demirel's article, "Treatment of 'Death' in the Poems of Thomas Hardy and Cahit Sıtkı Tarancı" analyses how Tarancı and Hardy portray the theme of death. For both, the idea of death culminates in an anxiety regarding time as a result of the idea of transience, ageing and getting closer to the end. The idea of ageing leads to the poets' anticipating their own deaths and actually they sometimes aspire to die as they are fed up with all the grief they are afflicted with and they both consider death as a way of dissolution into nature. In this respect, they regard death as a refuge, yet they

are so entwined with life that they also fear being forgotten after death.

“Lost in the Freeplay of Signifiers: A Derridean Analysis of ‘Loving Tülsü’” written by Örmengül offers a Derridean reading of one of Nesin’s short stories, “Loving Tülsü” and intends to explore how the story typifies the freeplay of signifiers in language. The reader never finds out who Tülsü is as she resists any attachment to any fixed identity throughout the story. Tülsü, corresponding to an empty signifier, problematises the signification process itself. Tülsü, a woman who never appears in the story, thus, may be identified with all women since she cannot be defined or prescribed in linear temporality to result in a final signified.

Nurten Birlik’s article, “*Lying Down to Die: Breaking the mould*” aims to explore Aġaoġlu’s character Aysel’s purgation process within the social context and milieu which she was raised in. In the article, the strong parallelism between Aysel, the writer’s own life and the new era of the Republic is underlined. In two and a half hours in a hotel room, her past and present blend into the social context she lives in, and her effort to trace her past acts as a purgation process by way of which she discovers her suppressed bodily self. The new regime in Turkey, meanwhile, endorses women’s farewell to their traditional role as the secondary submissive sex and their gaining an important status in society. Education of children, especially that of girls from rural areas, was gaining importance in those years. However, despite the increasing awareness of women’s changing role and status in the society, the novel also highlights the failure to comprehend the equality of the sexes and the inevitable suppression of sexual identities. Among these radical changes and conflicts, Aysel attempts to establish herself challenging the traditions which are in contradiction with what she learned at school.

责任编辑：易立君

# Treatment of “Death” in the Poems of Thomas Hardy and Cahit Sitki Taranci

**Gül Deniz Demirel Aydemir**

Department of Foreign Language Education, Faculty of Education, Middle East Technical University

Üniversiteler Mahallesi, Dumlupınar Bulvarı, Çankaya/Ankara, Turkey

Email: e149125@metu.edu.tr

**Abstract** Thomas Hardy and Cahit Sitki Taranci are two significant representatives of modern English and Turkish poets. Their poems are marked by an intense preoccupation with death, which is actually in parallelism with the sense of ending and crisis of representation experienced by most intellectuals of their time. Poetry was a means of revealing their uneasiness about the overwhelming idea of death. Therefore, both Hardy and Taranci wrote poems dealing with the passing of time, transience, and aging. Thoughts of coming close to the end made them write poems anticipating their own deaths as well. Some of their poems display a willingness to die because they consider death also as a sort of relief that keeps them away from all their worldly sufferings. However, the possibility of being forgotten after they die was another important concern in their poems because they cling to life with all its pleasing details and traumatic experiences. Thus, death also meant a separation from the beloved ones and familiar things in life to them. Moreover, death is represented as a way of dissolution into nature in Hardy’s and Taranci’s poems but this process has different implications.

**Key words** Thomas Hardy; Cahit Sitki Taranci; death; Turkish poetry; modern poetry

Death has been a frequently referred phenomenon in both modern Turkish and English literatures as a theme, a source of inspiration, a plot device, a metaphor or symbol, possibly because death as an end bears strong affinities to the sense of ending, in epistemological sense, experienced traumatically at the turn of the nineteenth century or in the first half of the twentieth century. Another reason for the attraction of death as a theme might be the crisis of representation experienced by the intellectuals and their linguistic impotence to capture “meaning.” This paper deals with the treatment of death in the poems of Thomas Hardy and Cahit Sitki Taranci who are both known as “death poets” in English and Turkish literatures. One can see that the lives of

both Hardy (1840-1928) and Taranci (1910-1956) were toughened by the grave idea of death and bereavement, and poetry served, for them, as a device to express their anxiety with this devastating idea. Their poems also represent death as a way of escape from the gloomy life they led into nature, which offered some sort of relief.

“If that most of the aesthetics theorists consider art as a ‘projection’ theory is remembered, the poet has a desire to overcome his/her fear of . . . time and . . . death by turning into eternal reflections by means of art. Thus, the pressure of death that has become an obsession . . . is aimed to be lowered” (Korkmaz 224). As it is mentioned above, the idea of death brings about an anxiety regarding time because of the idea of transience, ageing and coming close to the end. Hardy laments for passing of time for many different reasons as well. In “The New Dawn’s Business,” time is represented as the killer (Bailey 575). In “During Wind and Rain,” continuously repeated expressions, “Ah, no; the years O!”(6) and “Ah, no; the years, the years”(13) remind “the reader both of the ineluctable passing of time and of mortality” (Harvey n.pag.<sup>1</sup>). Also, in “A Broken Appointment” the expression “time-torn man” (15) refers to the destructive features of time. In Taranci’s poems, time is represented with similar motives: The lines, “Ah o kadrini bilemediğim günler,” [“Oh! Those days I didn’t appreciate” (9)] in “Gençlik Böyledir İşte” (“Such is Youth”) and “Ve sanmam geri gelsin bu giden günler ölüm.” [“And I don’t think these passing days will come back, death!” (8)] in “Obsession” bear the same feeling as that of Hardy’s.

In Hardy’s “I Look Into My Glass” and Taranci’s “Dar Kalip” (“Tight Fit”) and “Otuz Beş Yaş” (“Poem at Thirty-Five”), the poets express their consternation at passing of time by means of reflecting upon the fact of getting old. In “I Look into My Glass,” upon seeing his image in the mirror, Hardy, aged sixty at that time, laments that “his heart has not shrunk as his features have” (Bailey 111):

I LOOK into my glass,  
And view my wasting skin,  
And say, ‘Would God it came to pass  
My heart had shrunk as thin!’ (1-4)

This first stanza of the poem makes it clear that the poet is agonized at getting physically old while remaining young inside, which is also indicated by the words, “throbbings of noontide” (12) which refer to the fact that the heart of the poet beats as if he was in his youth, in the last line of the poem.

In “Tight Fit,” Taranci uses the same image of looking into a mirror:

My mirror, my mirror shows me my interior and my exterior

As a giant and a dwarf,  
 Feeling and reflecting upon this blatant contradiction,  
 How shall I hold back my outcry! (5-8)<sup>2</sup>

Like Hardy, Taranci complains about the discrepancy between his heart as being young and his appearance as looking old. He feels like a giant but he looks like a dwarf and he cannot stand this situation. Similarly, in "Poem at Thirty-Five," the poet cannot believe that the old looking image in the mirror is his own: "Look at my temples, are they snow-clad? / O my God, is this wrinkled face me? / These eyes rimmed with rings purple and sad?" (6-8). These lines show that he cannot accept ageing and he blames the mirrors for this situation: "Why are you now my arch enemy, / Mirrors, the best friends I ever had?" (9-10). He also alludes to his loneliness by calling the mirrors his "best friends." In view of these poems, one cannot help remembering Hynes's ideas on Hardy and Yeats as old poets and apply it to Taranci as well though he was younger when he wrote his poems. He says that "they express more than the decay of the flesh; they also reveal the separation between the outer and the inner self that all old people feel" (110).

The idea of ageing gives way to another common frame in which the macabre thoughts are represented, which is the poets anticipating their own deaths. In "Who's in the Next Room?" Hardy feels that death is nearby. As Bailey suggests, "the poem seems an eerie dialogue between Hardy's feeling of dread and his reason" (399). He thinks that he sees, hears and feels somebody in the next room, which is actually a metaphor, but he is assured that he does not in the last lines of the first three stanzas. Barbara Hardy states that [t]his is the voice of Hardy's irony, solemnly and patiently spelling it all out, not pitying but invoking the sense of mortality in a voice which comes frighteningly from nowhere, unidentified except as a source of knowledge" (B. Hardy 122-123). In the last stanza, he gets his answer and all his intuitions are proved to be true. The person in the next door turns out to be "a figure wan" (17) and this figure connotes death, which becomes more obvious in the following lines: "With a message to one in there of something due? / Shall I know him anon? / 'Yea he; and he brought such; and you'll know him anon." (18-20).

In "Şaşırdım Kaldım" ("I'm at a Loss") written by Taranci, the same image of death being nearby is encountered again. However, it is felt more deeply this time because it is not "a figure wan" in the next door but "a horse nickering at [the poet's] door" (11-12):

No blessings left in the faint and dim  
 Light of hope,

And death has become a restless horse  
Nickering at my door after all. (9-12) <sup>3</sup>

Taranci thinks that there is no way out at that point because there is no hope left anymore. He feels so helpless so he thinks he is going to die. These two poems indicate that the idea of their own death was always present in the lives of the two poets, especially when they got older. They were, in a way, waiting anxiously for the day to come.

They sometimes hope to die as well because they are fed up with all the grief they are stricken with or with the life that is so gloomy all the time. In “To Life,” Hardy expresses his pessimistic view of life and calls out to “life with the sad-seared face” (1) and mentions that he is bored of it because it always involves pessimism:

I know what thou would’st tell  
Of Death, Time, Destiny –  
I have known it long, and know, too, well  
What it all means for me. (5-8)

Hardy tells the reader that he has long been familiar with those pessimistic phenomena probably because of his bitter experiences. Taranci mentions his suffering in many poems but two lines in “Bir Lahzam” (“An Instant of Me”), in which he speaks to his reflection, shadow and self, summarize it well: “Aşına değiller çektiklerime; / İçlerinden biri gelse yerime.” [“They are not familiar with my woes; / I would rather one of them in my shoes” (3-4)]. As it is mentioned above, due to the intensity of their gloomy feelings and grim thoughts, they sometimes consider death as a relief or a way of escape from their pains. To illustrate, in Hardy’s “Regret Not Me,” the mood is consoling. It is written as if a dead person were speaking to somebody mourning by the grave. The poetic persona acknowledges the tranquillity of the state of being dead and considers the situation from the positive side: “Beneath the sunny tree / I lie uncaring, slumbering peacefully” (2-3). As Morrel suggests, “The man lying ‘Beneath the yellowing tree...uncaring’ had not dreamed ‘that heydays fade and go’. He is, thus free from the nagging time-sense that inhibits enjoyment of the present” (131). He further points out that “The absence of any regrets, remorse, or hankering after what ‘might have been’, is obvious enough even if the reader is unfamiliar with those other poems” (131). The same idea appears in Hardy’s “The Six Boards” again. The poetic persona thinks about his coffin and dwells on the idea of being in the coffin, under the grave. Then, this idea seems to amuse him:

Yea, hid where none will note,  
The once live tree and man, remote  
From mundane hurt as if on Venus, Mars,  
Or furthest stars. (17-20)

The poet suggests that dead people are relieved from all the worldly sufferings because they are in a place beyond reach.

Likewise, Taranci has some poems in which he tries to find relief in death: "The poet who realizes that he cannot get rid of the idea of death tries to relieve himself by sublimating it. The thing that is feared turns into a hope" (Korkmaz 219). "Her Gece mi Bu Uykusuzluk" ("Every Night's Sleeplessness") illustrates this idea. In the first stanza the desperate situation that the poet is in because of sleeplessness, which is caused mainly by the grim thoughts that eat him up at night, is explained. He likens his bed to hell. In the second stanza, the poet announces that he will welcome "death" if it guarantees a deep sleep:

If you promise a deep sleep,  
Regardless of whether your time is up or not,  
Despite my youth,  
Death! You may come right away.  
The door is open, the light is off. (6-10) <sup>4</sup>

His suffering is so unbearable that he does not mind the fact that he is still young to die. In this poem, "there is a surrender to death, which is going to come with the promise of a sound sleep, shown by the imagery of 'open door' and 'off light'" (Korkmaz 229). He considers death as an escape. Another example is the poem "Ölüm I" ("Death I") in which the poet cannot find any consolation in the past; is pessimistic about the future; and hopes to die:

Neither any good in the unfaithful past,  
Nor the ones to come succour,  
The boat has long been swamped,  
The hopes have long been pinned on you, death! (9-12) <sup>5</sup>

In these lines, he uses the metaphor of a swamping boat for his life getting worse day by day. As a result of this process, he considers death as the only way out.

On the other hand, while the poets hope to find relief in death, the idea of being forgotten after death occupies their minds. Though ironically, in "Ah! Are you digging

on my grave?" Hardy deals with this issue and makes his distress obvious. The poetic persona hears somebody by the grave and tries to find who it is. First, she thinks that he is her lover: "My loved one?—planting rue?" (2), but finds out that he married another woman already. Secondly, she thinks that it is a relative: "My nearest dearest kin?"(8) and learns that it is not so. In the third stanza, she learns that she does not worth even her enemy's hatred any more: "She thought you no more worth her hate, / And cares not where you lie..." (17-18). Then, she learns that it is her dog: "O it is I, my mistress dear, / Your little dog, who still lives near," (21-22). However, the first lines of the last stanza, "'Mistress, I dug upon your grave / To bury a bone, in case'" (31-32), make it clear that it is really her dog but it is not there to show its fidelity. It is there for a purely personal reason.

Taranci deals with the same idea of "forgottenness" of dead people but he is not so ironical in his writing. For instance, in "After Death," the poetic persona is dead and informs the reader that the dreamlike idea of death with the connotations of relief and escape is shattered when you experience death: " We died, hoping for something from death / In a great void the charm was broken" (1-2). The reason for this frustration is that nobody cares about the dead people any more. "Now there is no news from that world / Nobody misses us or asks for us" (6-7). Dead people are also disappointed because life is continuing quite well without them as indicated by the last line of the poem: "In the flowing water there is no trace of our reflection"(10). The flowing water is a metaphor for continuing life and they realize that there is nothing left related to themselves in the lives of living people. Actually this poem is "the comprehension and explanation of worldly beauties. Despite all the problems, humans are in the best world to live. Death is a daring raid that puts an end to the 'beauty' in this world" (Korkmaz 227). So, the poetic persona does not want to sever all his ties with life by being forgotten. Similarly, in "Neden Sonra" ("Afterwards") by Taranci, the theme of loneliness in the grave is present. In the first stanza, the poet says that after death, one realizes the loneliness and faces the fact that anyone can be infidel to you if you are dead:

Afterwards, you realize  
 The terrifying forlornness around you.  
 The beloved one? A friend? What are you looking for?  
 The address of infidelity is unknown. (1-4) <sup>6</sup>

The same mood is continued in the second stanza. The poetic persona underscores the idea of the transience of love and friendship. He likens a dead man to a bare tree because love and friendship, which constitute the falling leaves of the tree, disappear

when people die:

Love, friendship!.. They all are falling leaves.  
 Your reflection is a bare tree on the still water.  
 So-called loneliness starts in life;  
 To continue in the grave. (5-8) <sup>7</sup>

Both poets reveal their anxiety about being forgotten. However, it is clear that Hardy, unlike Taranci, needs other people to refer to him in their speeches to feel fulfilled after his death and he even express his will to be remembered in his poems:

If I pass during some nocturnal blackness, mothy and warm,  
 When the hedgehog travels furtively over the lawn,  
 One may say, 'He strove that such innocent creatures should come to no harm,  
 But he could do little for them; and now he is gone.' (9-12)

In this poem, "Hardy celebrates the life he will be leaving, but his marginal impact on the world will, he implies, not be as a poet, but as an ordinary observant countryman, alive in his neighbours' memories as one who 'used to notice such things'" (Harvey n.pag.). Contrary to what Taranci does, while expressing his love for life outside, he reveals his expectation to be remembered and thinking that it will be so consoles him. Also in the poem, "A Poet," his consolation seems to be the possibility of being remembered after his death as a man who was loved by two great women in his lifetime:

'Whatever his message - glad or grim-  
 Two bright-souled women clave to him;'  
 Stand and say that while day decays;  
 It will be word enough of praise. (13-16)

Hardy "imagines life after his death not as survival but as other people's memory" (B. Hardy 188). Therefore, Hardy is not after eternity in the phenomenological world.

On the other hand, Taranci tries to achieve immortality through eternalizing the moments he enjoys in his life. As can be seen in these poems, Taranci is "like a dancer hovering between joy and pleasure of life and fear of death. He uses an unsophisticated style as much as possible in order to express his strong tie to life and the reality of living" (Erten 71). His love for life consoles him even against being forgotten after death as suggested in "Ben Aşk Adamıyım" ("I am a Man of Love").

In this poem, he tells the reader that he does not need anyone to remember him to find consolation unlike other people. He says that even if nobody cries after him, prays for him in holly days, or brings flowers to his grave, he would not be down and he would continue loving them as if he was alive:

Still, I wouldn't mind,  
 Still, wouldn't be piqued at anybody.  
 I am a man of love,  
 I am here to love people. (9-12)<sup>8</sup>

The reason for this is that “the looks of a man who yearns for eternity at the world after he was left in a poky grave rather demonstrates that that person longs for the things that he could not get when he was alive, after his death” (Korkmaz 233). Another poem that illustrates this idea is “Dalgin Ölü” (“Absent-minded Dead”). In this poem the poetic persona, who is a dead man, does not want to break away from worldly beauties that he could not experience enough during his lifetime:

Yesterday, a beautiful woman passed  
 Near my grave.  
 I watched to my heart's content  
 Her daylight treasure legs  
 That ruined my night. (1-5)<sup>9</sup>

The rest of the poem focuses on the fact that he cannot internalize his new situation as a dead person due to his strong tie with life.

You won't believe if I tell,  
 I was just about to get up and give it back  
 When she dropped her handkerchief  
 I forgot that I had died. (6-9)<sup>9</sup>

Handkerchief is an important symbol in Turkish literature. In this poem, the dropped handkerchief, which will stay by the grave for a long time, symbolizes Taranci's permanent love for life to create contrast with the woman who is just passing by. “The handkerchief which is a symbol of unsatisfied feelings is the sad representation of the effort/will to stay human, lost bliss, unconsummated love, and unsung songs” (Korkmaz 233).

In these poems, one can see that Taranci has a pessimistic view of death as well.

The reason for this is the fact that he loves living more than anything despite his suffering. In fact, most of his sufferings stem from the reality of death, in other words, the idea that everything will come to an end one day: "Realization of the fact that death is inevitable makes Cahit Sitki hold on to life more strongly" (Korkmaz 230). It is clearly seen in his poem, "Ben Ölecek Adam Değilim" ("I am not a Man to Die"). In this poem he speaks to death and orders it not to come because he is a man who clings to life strongly. This idea is expressed in the following lines:

I got accustomed to the sky. It happened!  
The clouds have been a constant companion to me.  
I get bored  
If the birds do not twitter on their twigs. (4-7)<sup>10</sup>

Later on in the poem, death is defined as getting separated from the familiar ones (52-53). When these lines are considered, it is figured out that Taranci feared death because he loved life itself. Similar to what Korkmaz says, Aydin points out that Taranci's hovering between life and death resembles the movement of a pendulum. Upon each occurrence of the scary idea of death, Taranci leaps with acceleration to the embrace of life. "In short, he reaches immortality by eternalizing the 'moment's on which all the experiences related to this world are recorded and the 'moment's that he finds in the life circle he leaps at with each of his escapes from death" (Aydin 10).

Another common treatment of death by Hardy and Taranci is that they both consider death as a way of dissolution into nature. They express this idea using nearly the same expressions and similar contexts. In "Voices from Things Growing in a Churchyard," in each stanza a dead person speaks in his/her new form as a plant. For instance, in the following stanza, a girl called Fanny Hurd who is buried in the grave speaks in the voice of the daisies on it: "The humour, the jingling refrain, the insouciance of the voices, and the beauty of the plants and trees emphasise the unthreatening naturalness of the process of dissolution, while again bringing the dead to life in Hardy's imagination" (Harvey n.pag.):

These flowers are I, poor Fanny Hurd,  
Sir or Madam,  
A little girl here sepultured.  
Once I flit-fluttered like a bird  
Above the grass, as now I wave  
In daisy shapes above my grave, (1-6)

Taranci expresses the same idea in a very similar context in “Bir Ölünün Ağzından” (“Words of a Dead Man”). This time the poetic persona says that he finds it ridiculous when people bring flowers into his grave because he implies that he is not in the grave as he has dissolved into nature and probably has become a flower:

I ridicule people bringing flowers to my grave;  
 Unwary are those people, so to say;  
 They don't know I have nothing to do with this grave;  
 I'm in those flowers, these flowers are me. (1-4) <sup>11</sup>

“That the human beings realize their helplessness against this harsh reality [of death] leads them to search some new sources of relief. The idea of communing with the spirit of nature and continuing to live in the form of colour, sound, and scent should be viewed as the attempt of the human mind and soul that wish to overcome death to become eternal” (Korkmaz 218). Taranci supports this idea in some other poems as well. In “Bir de Baktım ki Ölmüşüm” (“The Truth Burst upon Me that I was Dead”) and “Ölmüştüm” (“I was Dead”), Taranci imagines that he died. These poems are “verses that have the characteristics of a greeting from the ‘beyond’ to the world with life on it” (Korkmaz 231). The line “Böcekler gücüm yetmez” [“I can't cope with the insects.” (9)] in the former poem and the lines “Ölmüştüm, kabrinde unutulmuştu ceset; / Zulmette böcekler eczasini yiyordu” [“I was dead, the corpse was left behind in its grave / In the murk, insects were eating its remains” (2-3)] in the latter refer to the idea of a dead body dissolving into nature by the process of being decomposed by insects but not with the implications of regeneration. Although Taranci is brought up in an Islamic society, he harbours a positivist attitude towards death and afterlife. His ways of thinking are rather phenomenological than religious.

All in all, death was a common source of inspiration for both Thomas Hardy and Cahit Sitki Taranci in their poems. That's why the theme in most of their poems was death or was related to death. They had been overwhelmed by the transience of time and coming close to the end or getting old so they anticipated their deaths and sometimes felt that their time was up in life. Due to these anxieties and the gloomy life they were leading, they sometimes considered death as a refuge as well. However, they were so intertwined with life, with all the nice details and bitter experiences that they also feared being forgotten after death. Apart from these, they considered death as a way of returning to nature. All of these points were ideas reflected in their poetry which were marked by the whims of death.

## Notes

1. "n. pag." indicates that there were no page numbers in the source cited.
2. Aynam, aynam bana bir devle bir cüce  
Halinde gösterir içimle dışımı.  
Bu müthiş tezadı duyup düşündükçe.  
Nasil zaptedeyim ben haykirişimi! (5-8)
3. Kalmadı ümidin soğuk ve ciliz  
Işığında bereket.  
Ve ölüm, kapımda kişner, sabirsiz  
Bir at oldu nihayet. (9-12)
4. Deliksiz bir uykuya vaadin,  
Günün dolmuş veya dolmamış,  
Gençliğime filan bakmadan,  
Derhal gelebilirsin ölüm;  
Kapi açıktır, lamba sönük. (6-10)
5. Ne vefasız geçmişten hayir var,  
Ne gelecekler imdada koşar,  
Çoktandır tekneyi aldı sular;  
Çoktandır ümitler sende ölüm. (9-12)
6. Neden sonra farkına variyorsun  
Etrafındaki korkunç ıssızlığın.  
Yar olsun, dost olsun, ne ariyorsun,  
Adresi belli mi vefasızlığın? (1-4)
7. Aşk, dostluk!.. Hepsi dökülür yapraklar!  
Çıplak bir ağaç durgun suda aksin.  
Yalnızlık dediğin hayatta başlar;  
Kabir boyunca devam etmek için. (5-8)
8. Yine tasa etmem,  
Yine kirlenmem kimseye.  
Ben aşk adamiyim,  
Sevmeye geldim insanlari, (9-12)
9. Dün güzel bir kadın geçti  
Kabrimin yakinından.  
Doya doya seyrettim  
Gün hazinesi bacaklarını,  
Gecemi altüst eden.  
Söylesem inanmazsınız,

Kalkip verecek oldum.

Düşürünce mendilini;

Öldüğümü unutmuşum.

10. Aliştim bir kere gökyüzüne;

Bunca yıllık yoldaşımdır bulutlar.

Sikilirim,

Kuşlar civildamasa dallarında, (4-7)

11. Kabrime çiçek getirenlere gülerim;

Gafil kişilermiş şu insanlar vesselam;

Bilmezler ki bu kabirle yoktur alakam;

Ben o çiçeklerdeyim, ben bu çiçeklerim. (1-4)

### Works Cited

- Aydin, Abdulhalim. "Order of Things and Search for Immortality in Cahit Sitki" Web. September 2012. [perweb.firat.edu.tr/personel/yayinlar/fua\\_1554/1554\\_63999.doc](http://perweb.firat.edu.tr/personel/yayinlar/fua_1554/1554_63999.doc)
- Bailey, J.O. *The Poetry of Thomas Hardy: A Handbook and Commentary*. Chapel Hill: The U of North Carolina P, 1970.
- Erten, Münir. "Cahit Sitki Tarancı'nin Şiirlerinde Deyimler." *Proceedings of Ölümünün 50. Yilinda Cahit Sitki Tarancı, September 21, 2006*. Ankara: Atatürk Kültür, Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu Atatürk Kültür Merkezi, 2007.
- Hardy, Barbara. *Thomas Hardy: Imagining and Imagination in Hardy's Poetry and Fiction*. London and New Jersey: The Athlone, 2000.
- Hardy, Thomas. *Thomas Hardy: The Complete Poems*. New York: Palgrave, 2001.
- Harvey, Geoffrey. *Thomas Hardy*. London: Routledge, 2003.
- Hynes, Samuel. "How to Be an Old Poet: The Examples of Hardy and Yeats." *Bloom's Modern Critical Views: Thomas Hardy*. Ed. Harold Bloom. New York: Infobase, 2010.
- Korkmaz, Ramazan. *İkaros'un Yeni Yüzü Cahit Sitki Tarancı*. Ankara: Akçağ, 2002.
- Morrel, Roy. *Thomas Hardy: The Will and the Way*. Kuala Lumpur: Art Printing Works, 1968.
- Tarancı, Cahit Sitki. "After Death." *The Penguin Book of Turkish Verse*. ed. Nermin Menemencioğlu. trans. Bernard Lewis. Suffolk: Penguin, 1978.
- . *Otuz Beş Yaş [Age Thirty-Five]*. ed. Asim Bezirci. 1983. İstanbul: Can, 2010.
- . "Poem at Thirty-Five." *A Brave New Quest: 100 Modern Turkish Poems*. ed. and trans. Talat S. Halman. New York: Syracuse, 2006. Web. 16 May 2011. <<http://books.google.com.tr>>.

责任编辑：刘富丽

# Lost in the Freeplay of Signifiers: A Derridean Analysis of “Loving Tülsü” by Aziz Nesin

**Seda Örmengül**

Department of Foreign Language Education, Faculty of Education, Middle East Technical University

ODTU Yabancı Diller Egitimi Bölümü EFB27 06800 Cankaya Ankara/Turkey

Email: cseda@metu.edu.tr

**Abstract** Aziz Nesin, a prolific intellectual in Turkish literature, is known as a poet, a novelist, a playwright, and also a short story writer. Nesin wrote over two thousand short stories for which he gained a worldwide recognition. He has been regarded by many critics as a great master of humor and satire. Nesin’s work is thought to shed light on a turbulent phase in Turkish Republican period from the establishment of the multiple-party system (1945) to 1990s. In his stories, Nesin usually explores the relationship between the individual and socio-political system, and he foregrounds conflicts stemming from the socio-political disorganizations and inefficiency of the bureaucratic system. Political hypocrisy and bourgeois morality also come to the fore as his target of satire. On the other hand, a thorough analysis from a Derridean vantage point enables one to approach some of Nesin’s stories on a different layer of reading as with his subversive attitude, Nesin goes beyond exploration of the individual-system conflict in some of his stories and creates a space for the freeplay of language. “Tülsü’yü Sevmek” (“Loving Tülsü”) is one of Nesin’s short stories which appeared in his short story collection titled Yetmiş Yaşım Merhaba (Hail to my Seventieth Year), first published in 1984. The story is about a man who tells everyone he meets that he loves Tülsü, although he does not exactly know who Tülsü is. A traditional, reading of the story might lead to a Platonic analysis in which Tülsü stands for the ideal love. In this respect, Tülsü may be regarded as the transcendental signified while various women stand for shadows which refer to the ideal concept of Tülsü. On the other hand, a double reading reveals that Tülsü stands as a signifier which keeps its status as a signifier all through the story, and does not refer to any transcendental signified. Throughout the story, Tülsü as a signifier corresponds to an empty locus, however, it functions well to create intersubjectivity. Looking at some of Derridean ideas might prepare the ground to see better how the word Tülsü functions

as a floating signifier. This study aims to analyze Nesin's "Loving Tülsü" and expose how it proceeds through the dissemination of signifiers and problematizes the Platonic assumption of signified in signification process.

**Key words** Aziz Nesin; Turkish Literature; short story; Derrida; freeplay

Aziz Nesin (1915-1995), one of the outstanding writers of twentieth-century Turkish literature, always voiced the unvoiced of his community and, in the process, revealed the deeper recesses of the collective consciousness from different vantage points. Nesin wrote many important works in a variety of genres, but was best known for his short stories. A prolific short story writer, not only did Nesin make significant contributions to Turkish short story heritage, but he also gained worldwide recognition with his more than two thousand short stories. His stories, marked by a skillful command of humor and satire, are still widely read, being as relevant today as they were written. Talat Halman, a prominent literary critic in Turkish literature, features Aziz Nesin as "Turkey's best satirist ever" who dominated satirical fiction from the 1960s onwards (88). Halman further explains that "[h]is immensely popular short stories have inspired people to coin such expressions as 'straight out of Nesin' and 'almost as funny as a Nesin story'" (217).

Critical studies, made on Nesin's stories so far, have chiefly been confined to thematic analyses with their emphasis on humor and satire that Nesin used while exploring and revealing the various conditions of individuals entrapped in a stifling bureaucratic mill, bourgeois morality and political hypocrisy. To give a case in point, Kemal Karpat notes that Nesin is "a prolific and gifted writer of humorous stories with a sharp eye on human frailties", and he "ridicules the incompetent bureaucrat, the pompous politician, and the superficial intellectual, as well as social injustice in all its manifestations" (502). On the other hand, a thorough analysis from a Derridean vantage point allows the reader to approach some of Nesin's stories on a different layer of reading, since Nesin goes beyond the exploration of individual-system conflict in some of his stories, and creates a space for the freeplay of language in a subversive fashion. This study aims to analyze one of Nesin's short stories "Tülsü'yu Sevmek"<sup>1</sup>("Loving Tülsü") in the light of some Derridean theories, and explore how the story epitomizes the dissemination of signifiers in the freeplay of language.

"Loving Tülsü" is about a man who makes it his business to love a woman named Tülsü, and announces it to people around him at every opportunity; but as it will soon be revealed, to the reader's surprise, he does not actually know who Tülsü is. Tülsü resists any attachment to any fixed identity throughout the story. Remaining as an eternal signifier within the story's universe, Tülsü corresponds to an empty locus, thereby problematizing the Platonic assumption of signified in signification

process. In this context, a brief theoretical background about some Derridean concepts might provide a basis before exploring the function of the word Tülsü as a floating signifier.

The concept of the *freeplay of language*, put forward by Derrida, suggests an attempt to transcend the Platonic binaries which form the basis of western philosophical tradition, or metaphysics of presence as Derrida called it. Platonic binary system implies a system of thought that is grounded in the assumption that each and every signifier ultimately leads to a transcendental signified, an assumption which insistently foregrounds one leg of binary, and tends to keep the other leg in the background. As Arthur Bradley puts it, "binary logic of oppositions and hierarchies is the product of a very questionable series of decisions: why, for example, has the masculine been historically deemed to be more real, present or authentic than the feminine?" (7). In the same line of thinking, Derrida also asserts that the Western philosophical tradition is logocentric in that it "always assigned the origin of truth in general to the logos" (*Of Grammatology* 3). *Logos*, in a Derridean context, refers to "a point of reference, a fixed origin" ("Structure, Sign" 149). Derrida further argues that all the metaphysical determinations of truth are more or less immediately inseparable from the instance of the logos, or of a reason thought within the lineage of the logos (*Of Grammatology* 10).

The modern linguistic distinction between signifier and signified is closely related to the assumptive binary opposition between sensible and intelligible worlds (Bradley 45). Derrida discusses this relation in several of his writings. In *Of Grammatology*, for example, he states that "[t]he linguistic 'science' cannot hold onto the difference between signifier and signified without the difference between sensible and intelligible...As the face of pure intelligibility, it [sign] refers to an absolute logos to which it is immediately united" (99). In a similar fashion, in "Structure, Sign, and Play", he argues that the traditional concept of sign has always been considered and determined as a relation between a signifier and a signified, that is, a signifier referring to a signified, signifier different from its signified (152). Obviously, Derrida challenges the metaphysical relationship between signifier and signified, as he states: "There is no transcendental or privileged signified and...the domain or the interplay of signification has, henceforth, no limit" ("Structure, Sign" 151). Hence, according to Derrida, language consists of dissemination of signifiers, existing in an incessant process in which a signifier leads to another signifier, rather than a final signified which encircles the meaning. "There is not a single signified that escapes, even if recaptured, the play of signifying references that constitute language" (*Of Grammatology* 7), and "the absence of the transcendental signified extends the

domain and the interplay of signification *ad infinitum*” (“Structure, Sign” 151).

Derrida points to the fact that no linguistic sign evades the freeplay of language, and there is not any single sign which happens to be pure and unmediated, which invalidates the concept of *origin*: “In this play of representation, the point of origin becomes ungraspable. There are things like reflecting pools and images, an infinite reference from one to the other, but no longer a source, a spring. There is no longer a simple origin” (*Of Grammatology* 36). Defying the existence of a simple origin, Derrida introduces the concept of *trace*. From a Derridean perspective, every sign retains the traces of other signs, and every sign is related to every other. Consequently, the meaning of every sign is dependent on the traces of other signs that differ from it in both space and time.

Against the background of all Derridean ideas discussed so far, it turns out that Aziz Nesin’s<sup>2</sup> “Tülsü’yü Sevmek” opens itself to a Derridean reading with its numberless references to Tülsü, a woman who never appears in the story, creating a space for the freeplay of signifiers. The story consists of a letter from the narrator to a friend of his, explaining the reason why he has send him a telegram message prior to that letter, saying “I love you, Tülsü” (9).<sup>3</sup> The narrator writes retrospectively in the letter that one night he goes to a cheap restaurant for a drink, where he ends up sharing a table with a stranger in his seventies. To start a conversation with the stranger, the narrator asks him about his occupation, and the man says that he loves Tülsü. The narrator thinks that the man has misunderstood him, so he repeats his question to receive the same answer once again. Seeing the narrator’s astonishment, the man goes on to explain himself: “Is there any other business in the world more serious than loving someone else? I have loved Tülsü so far, and I will be loving her till I die” (9). While the conversation develops, the narrator attempts to learn in vain who Tülsü is, getting gradually more baffled and confused each time the man talks about Tülsü.

Tülsü does not refer to one single woman, but to all women the man has met in different periods of his life, an inference which reminds the reader the Platonic forms. Thus, a traditional reading of the story most probably ends up in a Platonic analysis which would regard Tülsü as a transcendental signified-the symbol of ideal love-, while considering various other women shadows which refer to that ideal concept of Tülsü. Very suitably, another Turkish short story writer, Adnan Özyalçınır comes up with such a Platonic reading: “Tülsü is a dream woman. A woman emancipated from all the negative aspects of other women in the author’s life”(57). However, a double reading might well reveal that Tülsü is not a transcendental signified, or to rephrase it in Derrida’s words, “not a fixed locus but a function, a sort of non-locus in which an infinite number of sign substitutions came into play” (“Structure, Sign” 151).

Tülsü refers not to a signified or a fixed locus, but to a space in which the man

enjoys his existence, as it is confirmed by the very words of the man: "You know, each and every person has a different reason for being. Mine is my love for Tülsü. I can exist as long as I love Tülsü" (11). The man then attempts to tell the narrator when he saw Tülsü for the first time. Yet, his memories are very hazy, most of which becoming confused with those of his father:

I remember the first time I saw Tülsü only from my father's anecdotes. One day, we were sitting in the shop of a friend of my father on a hill by a rough sidewalk. My father says that a girl passed by the shop. She was a long-haired girl, around fourteen or fifteen years old. I became fascinated, and said I would marry that girl. My father told that incident so many times that I came to believe that I really saw her, and that girl turned into a real being. (9)

His accounts reveal that Tülsü is not a pure and unmediated sign, but an intertext, consisting of the man's and his father's vague memories. As Barry Stocker points out, "[p]lay is the repetition, substitution and contextuality of the sign that can never be said to be simply absent or present, and the same applies to anything in the experienced world" (186). Stocker's statement draws attention to the loss of an absolute origin as in the case of Tülsü. The boundaries between fact and fiction blur in the man's mind, or he willingly comes to accept the *assumed* status of the signified.

Hearing the man's descriptions of Tülsü, the narrator deducts that Tülsü must be an old woman at that very moment:

-So she must be over her 80s, said I.  
 -Why do you think so?  
 -If she was fifteen years old when you were four or five...  
 -Tülsü never gets older.  
 -So you mean that you saw her afterwards?  
 -I have been looking for her for years. Why do you think I am here? Tülsü is a woman who lives in a city somewhere in the world unknown to me, and sure she is waiting for me. I know I will find her one day. (9)

The narrator has a glimpse of the man's experience through the perspective of linear temporality and causality. It is for this reason that he fails to figure out loving Tülsü is not an end in itself, but a process which the man enjoys being a part of. The man, being unable to freeze the flow of signifiers, pursues a kind of riddle that does not necessarily demand to be solved. The word "Tülsü"<sup>4</sup> literally means a piece of tulle which is floppy and slick creating a floating look without a solid substance. Thus,

the word itself contributes to the creation of the sense of floating signifiers. A piece of Tulle resists having a permanent shape, just like Tülsü resists belonging to a permanent identity.

The man further tells the narrator a series of incidents when he caught a glimpse of Tülsü in several different places of the world: When he was thirty years old, he happened to see Tülsü in a metropolitan area as a girl with short brown hair in her twenties. Ten years later, he saw Tülsü near the bank of the Danube River. She was a blonde girl with blue eyes at that time, nearly twenty-five years old. After a couple of years, he met Tülsü to find her as a princess of a far eastern country. Another time, Tülsü turned out to be a beautiful black woman. These incidents are reminiscent of the Derridean idea that every sign retains the traces of the other signs against which it is to be defined, in other words, in order to have any meaning at all (Allen 220). There is always a dissemination of signifiers which keep the traces of other signifiers. Likewise, Tülsü has traces of a variety of different women, without being fully identified with any of them.

The function of Tülsü in the story might also be interpreted as the epitome of another Derridean concept, *différance*. Derrida agrees with Saussure's argument that meaning is the product of the differential relations between signifiers. However, he goes beyond Saussure in claiming that signifiers are always deferred from reaching any absolute meaning. In *Speech and Phenomena*, he argues that "the movement by which any language, or any code, any system of reference in general, becomes 'historically' constituted as a fabric of differences" (141). *Différance* means both 'to differ' (in the sense of distinguishing or differentiating something from something else) and 'to defer' (in the sense of delaying or postponing something to a later point in time) (Bradley 70). To analyze the story in this context, there are various Tülsüs, all are different from each other, but still have each others' traces. Nevertheless, Tülsü does not correspond to any of those women. As Abrams puts it, there is no ground, in the incessant play of difference that constitutes a language, for attributing a decidable meaning, or even a finite set of determinately multiple meanings to any sign (57). Accordingly, Tülsü as a signifier neither signifies one single woman nor equals to the whole women the man has met, while occupying a *surplus* status. As Derrida suggest, all language displays *surplus* over exact meaning, and the linguistic sign always outruns and escapes the sense which tries to contain it (Eagleton 134).

The narrator wonders why the man never stops pursuing Tülsü despite the fact that he found her many times in the past, as he has told so. The man then explains that he found Tülsü only in momentary instances:

- I am always in search of Tülsü while years are passing.

-But, you do find her.

-Yes, I do, but how? It is an instance like the flash of a lighting, which suddenly flares up just to fade away in a split second. I lose her as soon as I find her, which does not mean a reunion at all. (11)

Derrida argues that “[f]reeplay is the disruption of presence. The presence of an element is always a signifying and substitutive reference inscribed in a system of differences and the movement of a chain” (“Structure, Sign” 152). Tülsü always escapes a signified; hence the man’s reunion with her is always deferred. The man describes those moments as materialized like a flash, a detail which brings to mind the Derridean assumption that “freeplay is always an interplay of absence and presence” (“Structure, Sign” 152). Thus, in this freeplay, “there is a continual flickering, spilling and defusing of meaning” (Eagleton 134). The man’s inability to put an end to the movement of signifiers does not discourage him at all, in fact, the opposite happens: the flight of the signifiers stimulates his Desire even further.

In a Derridean context, language is not transparent, representative or referential, as it always stands for a lack or an absence. As Brenda Marshall states, “[l]anguage doesn’t represent the world; it is not a moment of simultaneity. Rather, language stands in for presents, something that is not present. Language functions in the space of absence” (69). Language functioning in the space of absence might explain the man’s persistence of mentioning Tülsü:

“I talked to you about Tülsü. Now, you know that I love her. I want to make the whole world know that. In the past, I used to go to the countryside or to the woods to cry out, ‘I love you, Tülsü’. I used to hear the echo of my voice. Shouting always in the same manner was not so good, so from time to time, I used to change the word order and the tone of my voice”.

He began to shout, like he did in the woods, but this time in a lower tone so that other people in the restaurant would not hear him:

-Tülsü, I love you

-I love you, Tülsü.

-I do love you Tülsü. (11)

The man resorts to language to fill the space created by the absence of Tülsü as a transcendental signified or a center. In such a context, language both adds to the dissemination of signifiers and becomes a substitute as “[w]hen the center-the transcendental signified- is never present, then language becomes the movement” (Marshall 69). This might also reveal why the man sends telegraphs to random

addresses:

- I send telegram messages to Tülsü from the post offices of different places I visit.
- So you know her address.
- No, how can I know? I send them to random addresses
- It means then that messages are sent back to you when they do not reach Tülsü.
- I think so, but they do not find me, either. My address is also a fake one. (12)

The man persistently adds more to the flying signifiers with those telegram messages which substitute for the absence of a stable and permanent meaning. They never reach Tülsü, nor do they turn back to the man. Therefore, the binary opposition between the lover and the beloved is eliminated as well, for neither the lover nor the beloved holds fixed positions, and they act as spaces for the freeplay of signifiers.

The story concludes with the narrator's decision to join this play, which is why he has sent such a strange message to his friend:

When you received my note, you probably got puzzled, and wondered the meaning of it. I know that writing such a note was not something a sane person could do; anyway I cannot say that I was totally sane when I sent that note to you. (12)

Eventually, the narrator achieves to go beyond the traditional conception of language as the ultimate representation of reality. Instead, he sends an empty signifier to his friend in the form of a note that does not signify anything for his friend, an act which defies the sense of origin and telos in the metaphysical space of signification.

In conclusion, it appears that Aziz Nesin creates a space for the freeplay of signifiers in "Loving Tülsü". Tülsü is not categorized or situated in linear temporality. In the course of the story, it metamorphoses into a space in which signifiers never lead into a final signified. Tülsü carries traces from different women, while the flow of signifiers never comes to an end. Loving Tülsü is an enjoyable ontological process for the man, which rejects any rational categorization and principles of linearity and causality.

## Notes

1. "Tülsü'yü Sevmek" is the first story of Nesin's short story collection titled *Yetmiş Yaşım Merhaba* (*Hail to my Seventieth Year*), first published in 1984.
2. Here it might be interesting to mention the ambivalent status of Aziz Nesin's own surname, since

it resists signifying a specific familial origin. Aziz Nesin was named Nusret by his parents before the enforcement of the Law on Family Names. Nusret remained undecided of his family name to be adopted after the enforcement of the Law. In the meantime, everybody would ask him in curiosity, “Nesin?” (What are you? What family name have you adopted?). Consequently, he decided on “Nesin” as his family name (Shaikh 3). Thus, his very surname acted as a signifier without referring to a signified.

3. Translations are the author’s

4. Tülsü literally means *tulle-like* in Turkish.

## Works Cited

- Abrams, M. H. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace College, 1999.
- Allen, Graham. *Intertextuality*. London; New York: Routledge, 2000.
- Bradley, Arthur. *Derrida’s Of Grammatology*. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana UP, 2008.
- Derrida, Jacques. *Speech and Phenomena and Other Essays on Husserl’s Theory of Signs*. Trans. David Allison. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1967.
- Of Grammatology*. Trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1976.
- “Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences.” *Twentieth Century Literary Theory: A reader*. Ed. K.M. Newton. Houndmills, Hampshire: Macmillan 1988.
- Eagleton, Terry. *Literary Theory: An Introduction*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2008.
- Halman, Talat S. *Rapture and Revolution: Essays on Turkish Literature*. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse UP, 2007.
- Karpat, Kemal H. *Studies on Turkish Politics and Society*. Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2004.
- Marshall, Brenda K. *Teaching the Postmodern: Fiction and Theory*. New York: Routledge, 1992.
- Nesin, Aziz. “Tülsü’yü Sevmek.” *Yetmiş Yaşım Merhaba: Öykü*. İstanbul: Adam, 1989.
- Özyalçın, Adnan. “Aziz Nesin’in Olgunluk Dönemi Öyküleri.” *Aziz Nesin Günleri : 29-30 Haziran 1996*. Ed. Hüseyin Atabaş. Ankara: Edebiyatçılar Derneği, 1996.
- Shaikh, Masud Akhtar. “Aziz Nesin-A Great Turkish Humorist” *Laugh or Lament? Selected Short Stories of Aziz Nesin*. Trans. Masud Akhtar Shaikh. Ankara: Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Turkey, 2002.
- Stocker, Barry. *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Derrida on Deconstruction*. London: Routledge, 2006.

责任编辑：刘富丽

# ***Lying Down to Die: Breaking the Mould***

**Nurten Birlik**

Department of Foreign Language Education, Middle East Technical University

Üniversiteler Mahallesi, Dumlupınar Bulvarı, Cankaya/ Ankara, Turkey

Email: nbirlik@metu.edu.tr

**Abstract** Agaoglu's *Lying Down to Die* (1973) fictionalizes the early decades of the new Turkish Republic through Aysel and her classmates. It offers a comprehensive context to explore the identity formation processes for women against the background of the modernizing project in a conservative context. In two and a half hours in a hotel room, her attempts to trace her past acts as a purgation process in which she discovers her bodily self, which she has suppressed in her efforts to build up her "imagined" identity. This essay aims to explore Aysel's purgation process with references to the social context within which she was raised.

**Keywords:** Turkish novel; Adalet Agaoglu; *Lying Down to Die*

Adalet Agaoglu (1929- ) a leading contemporary Turkish novelist, reminds one of Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* in her *Lying Down to Die* (*Olmeye Yatmak*, 1973), which is the first novel of her trilogy *Hard Times* (*Dar Zamanlar*)<sup>1</sup>. As in the case of Saleem Sinai, Agaoglu's novel tells the story of Aysel whose life runs parallel to the history of the young Turkish Republic. However, she establishes this parallelism from the woman's perspective unlike Rushdie whose protagonist is a man writing from the center of the patriarchal discourse. Aysel, an academician, locks herself in a hotel room in Ankara to prepare for her death. She tries to come to terms with her recent crisis—a sexual liaison with one of her students. In this process, her mind travels through her personal history, and merges into the national history:

Agaoglu gives a panoramic picture of the early and later years of the modern Turkish Republic through Aysel, concentrating on the people in her immediate surroundings who were born and raised in the previous Islamic traditions. These same individuals were caught up in national change. They were suddenly expected to live within a totally different framework of the modern, secular, and democratic system. These changes and expectations produced conflicts and tension between this generation and their children who were regarded as the future of the new republic. (Birlik 9)

The reader can also find a strong parallelism between the writer's own life and the new era of the Republic. In fact, the novels in the trilogy trace through the lives of the 1938 graduates of a village school into the 1960s and the course of things in the characters' lives echo the social context Agaoglu herself lived through. Her early childhood years overlapped with the early years of the Turkish Republic and the nation-building project which had a profound impact on her writing. Agaoglu created most of her characters against the background of the socio-political context of the new Turkish Republic, which is as important as the characters themselves in the author's novels. Other issues she persistently explores are women rights in a conservative context; "the correlation between the community and the individual; the social and financial handicaps that trap or demonize the individual; the cultural metamorphoses of Turkish society" in the new era; "hypocrisy and double standards both in the right and the left wing groups; political oppression; class and national identity"(Birlik 9).

As stated above, the novel traces the 1938 graduates (eight students) of a provincial primary school near Ankara till the late sixties against the background of the new secular regime. The trilogy traces also the quest of these graduates for a stable frame of thought. It gives a panoramic picture of the early decades of the new Turkish Republic, through Aysel, now a university teacher, and her classmates. When the novel starts, she is at a hotel room after an emotional and intellectual crisis triggered by a sexual intercourse with one of her students. We learn from her inner monologue that her long walk in the deserted streets of Ankara early in the morning took her to this hotel room where she is planning to commit suicide; and where she moves back and forth in time and tries to make sense of her present "self" against the background of the society. In two and a half hours in this room, past and present events in her personal history merge into the social context she lives in; and her attempts to trace her past acts as a purgation process in which she discovers her bodily self, which she has suppressed in her efforts to build up her "imagined" identity.

Due to her crisis, she loses her spatial and temporal discipline. She is captured by her memories of the graduation ceremony populated with Dundar, the pathetic primary school teacher; and the other bureaucrats of the small town Nallihan, as well as the local people. These characters are scaled against their willingness to respond to the new Republic's westernizing project, which aimed to change the previous conservative agrarian community into a modern industrial one blending this metamorphosis with a secular and progressive national identity. Therefore, the history of the new Turkish Republic acts as a background text while the foreground text tells the story of the characters who experienced these social changes at individual level.

Although the narrating voice is sympathetic to the new system, it cannot turn

a blind eye to the inadequacy of both its supporters and the ordinary people to understand the essence of it. The novel gives an honest picture of the community as a whole, which is quite heterogeneous: there are Kemalists (supporters of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the new Republic after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in the aftermath of the World War I), leftists, traditionalists, nationalists, the ones who imitate the West at any cost, religious radicals.... Graduation ceremony is functionally used in the novel as an arena for bringing together different segments of the small town and for dialogizing these characters. Therefore, another thing that the novel problematizes is the tension between those who support the new regime and those who choose to stay in the margins of it. Thus, it also voices the silenced groups like the small shop owners or the villagers who feel awkward in the modernizing process. With their uncritical acceptance and class conscious elitism, some of the supporters of the new ideology get very close to imposing authority figures. In their obsession to put modernizing ideals into practice at any cost, they cannot go beyond parodying this ideology and turn into puppet figures, unable to create sympathy in the readers. The ironic gap between how they act and how they should reaches its peak in the graduation ceremony when Dunder, obsessed with “opening a window into the West,”<sup>2</sup> forces his students to dance polka at the expense of putting their parents into an inferior position in the eyes of the community, who regard this western dance as immoral and humiliating as the dancers are supposed to touch the opposite sex. These parents feel dishonored, but in the face of the command “to be civilized” they submit to the authority of the school master. They were deeply aware of an immoral conduct but it was not their fault, they submit as they were forced to do so (19)<sup>3</sup>. The reason why Dunder is so insistent on polka is that dance in the western style becomes fashionable in the capital. (Ironically, he is not aware that polka is a traditional dance of another nation.) New dance schools open, people go to jazz clubs of the big hotels, as Aysel says in an ironic tone of voice: “we who live according to the western traditions and code of conduct, pity the ones who don’t know, don’t care about these patterns and codes” (81). Dunder encourages his student of village origin, Ali, to go to a big city and become a member of the urban community through education. Dunder takes a secret pleasure out of his departure despite the fact that Ali’s mother needs him desperately in cultivating her land. As in Ali’s case, he tries to lift the village boys into the “higher” status of the city children, since for him, this is what modernization commands.

Here it should be underlined that the novel is critical of such characters like Dunder who act on their half-digested Kemalist principles rather than these principles themselves: They create an imaginary gaze which they falsely identify either with Atatürk or with the West, and try to live up to the expectations of this gaze monitoring

the improvement of the country. A case in point is: this progressive ideology says that the villagers are the masters of the nation, a saying which obviously aims to raise the self-esteem of the rural people, whereas the bureaucrats' approach to these "masters" is very class conscious and elitist. They try to "educate" their masters. Or when a district governor sees a villager on donkey passing through in one of the main streets of the capital, he rebukes the villager. The same district governor suggests that they should put statues of naked women in the middle of the town as in the European cities but is opposed by the prominent figures of the town as it would not be proper in a Moslem country. Besides, they say, they have more urgent problems like lack of water supplies, roads, coal, gas, salt, and so on (228). Ironically, they arrange a marriage for this governor thinking that he is sexually aroused. Again, Dundar idealizes the government leaders and transforms them into mythical superhuman figures who "don't eat and drink, don't sleep, and don't go to toilet" (128). For him whatever these "elders" say is good, so everybody should do the task given him by the elders (129).

Against these elitist bureaucrats, the novel also hints that there is another group of bureaucrats who are genuinely interested in the idea of improving the society. However, it does not allocate much space for such bureaucrats. The novel also voices the other side of the coin, how the new system is perceived by the people who are in the margin of this ideology. They move from one epistemology into another one just like a snake shedding its skin, or resist this transition. Their diverse positions to the changes around themselves lead into a persistent and unresolved conflict with the autocrats. These people live in a province of Ankara, but this spatial closeness doesn't guarantee that they are really "close" to Ankara, the new capital city. They were raised in the strictly traditional context of the Islamic order and, now, are spiritually too far from the center. One of them, Salim, Aysel's father and a small shop owner, cannot bring himself to practice the western patterns of life. In the beginning he was one of the committed supporters of the new republic, in fact, he used to feel proud of being one of the soldiers who accompanied Ismet Pasha, the present prime minister, to Ankara in war years. Now, he cannot articulate but there is something in the new regime which he cannot own; he is discontent with it for a reason which he cannot define: *is* it because he had to send his daughter to Ankara for her further education or because his son is literate? Whatever the reason is, he feels trapped whenever the governor talks about a developing country with a bright future. He cannot make sense of the new relation patterns in the new system. When he sees some are rising in the social ladder through flattery, his sense of suffocation intensifies even more, and he becomes more negative and hostile towards the new project and its representatives. He is aware that small shop owners were not referred to in any of the official speeches, it seemed as if he had not existed (49-50). As a result, Salim shrinks in his own eyes

day by day, as the narrator states “nobody could understand his smallness, which gets bigger and bigger” (49).

1938 graduates are raised and educated in such a social atmosphere and reflect these immense social changes at individual level. Their generation was looked upon as the hope of the new republic; and much more than they could accomplish has been expected from them. Accordingly, they do everything in order to be “useful” to the country and for Ali, for example, “the urge to do something good for the country developed stronger than his urge to fill his stomach” (280). Later, Aysel and Omer get engaged in the presence of dead Atatürk, thinking that they got permission from him.

In the new regime, women were encouraged to leave their traditional status as submissive creatures and to hold important positions in society. Educating children, particularly girls, from the rural areas was given a special attention. However, another thing that is emphasized in the novel is their failure to understand the equality of the sexes, which means being “brothers and sisters” with each other, that is, suppression of sexual identities. They envisage a kind of equality in which both sides are desexed. For Dunder, one of the things that makes one a good citizen is this suppressed sexuality. He tells his students that if they take their girl friends “in a brotherly way,” the girls will accept them “as a brother” too (40).

Aysel tries to establish herself despite the traditions which are in clash with what she is taught at school: when her brother hides himself from the police for his illegal activities in a nationalistic right wing faction, her mother is desperate as she has lost “her only son, her only hope.” Aysel is deeply hurt and feels herself like a forgotten thing in an ambiguous corner of the house. During summer holidays, she is forced to wear a headscarf, which is in contradiction to her Kemalist ideals. To be able to continue her education, Aysel makes herself invisible at home not to remind his father that she attends school, although she has grown up. She submits when her brother forbids her to listen to western music. She de-feminizes herself all her life trying to look ugly to escape a possible arranged marriage. To make the matter worse, as an educated girl with different interests, she is alienated from the other girls. As a residue of her teenage years, in her mature years, too, she always puts her identity as an intellectual woman to the foreground: when she is with the cleaning woman, or at the hairdresser’s, she somehow manages to squeeze a reference to her studies with “I am in a hurry, I should attend a conference today” kind of remarks.

Aysel becomes an academician in this new system. Hers is a life lived at the expense of her “self” as she devoted herself to the incorrectly understood ideals suppressing her sexuality and bodily self. The reader fluctuates between the naive submissive girl and Aysel the academician. Aysel’s intellectual crisis seems to be a kind of confrontation with the complacency of the bureaucrats who believe that

everything goes alright in the country: “everything seemed alright. But it should not seem so. There should be a protest if not much has been achieved in the thirty years. We should encounter this ‘nothingness.’ We should fall into a pit in full speed. This fall should expose its real nature” (101). She gradually loses her sense of belonging to the intellectual class: “the things she learned were always in clash with what she sees in life. The desire to swim was getting intense but the water surrounding her was getting higher and higher too” (334).

She confronts the suppressed suspicion in herself and problematizes whether she has really believed the fact that “the hand that made the history did make the virtuous army of Dundar the teacher” or was it part of their mission to believe it? (303) Was this the result that was aimed at by the Kemalist project? If Ataturk says that “men cannot be free in a nation where women are suppressed,” “when one half of the nation is chained, can the other half fly in the sky? Our failure as a nation stems from our mistreatment of women,” or “whatever good in this world is the work of women,” she cannot understand, then, why as women they curse men to loneliness. Although they have struggled desperately against the traditions to live up to the expectations of the new ideology, why couldn’t they establish genuinely equal relationships with men? What have they done wrong on the way to achieve their ideals?

As they are the first generation to be educated in the new secular system, with them “a new generation is born,” a generation which has a grand mission to realize. Ali, one of her classmates, asks: “Being ignorant of everything, we learned how to and how much we should love our country, our nation. This has turned into something like a deep passion.... For what ends do we love our country and nation so much?” (319) Very suitably, Aysel contrasts their case and that of the new generation: “nobody gives important tasks or missions to children nowadays. It is left to their choice whether to do something or not. They enjoy the idleness or lack of a belief in anything” (183).

She is a leftist at heart and her sympathies lie with the peasants and the underprivileged, which is incarnated in her choice of a lover: she falls in love with Engin, a student of hers who comes from such a background. She is also aware that Engin acts in accordance with the half-digested communist ideals and patterns. Through Engin, Marxists, too, are criticized; and Aysel says that they have fallen into “hopelessness and despair” (214). “The sweet made by the Russian Intelligentsia choked (paralyzed) themselves before anybody else.” Their case in Turkey is not different, either. In her practice, she takes sides with these people, but she can also see that rather than a new window for a new framework of thought, she waits hopefully in front of a closed door.

Still, she discovers her neglected “self” through Engin, her student. This

discovery challenges her position as a university teacher, as the one who is supposed to know: “without knowing herself first what can one know?” (345) This sexual attraction seems to stand for a kind of rupture in her personal history, a metaphor for breaking her previous mould which she can no longer squeeze herself into. She draws “a different kind of pleasure” from it. She wants to explore her body more and more in her sexual awakening in which she feels “vital, full,” a woman and a human being at the same time (175). Very suitably, after the first physical contact, her shirt is stained with blood (a metaphorical loss of virginity), although she has been married for many years.

In the hotel room, she is captured by crying fits, which, for her, was a sign of weakness before. Now she has a deep desire to act out of the boundaries that have been imposed upon her since her primary school years. She stays naked, which seems to be an effort to get rid of the imposed identity over her. In the shower, she wants to discard all the segments in her identity with the help of the water and to see what lies beneath. After the shower, she feels that she breaks the mould that covers her and expands into the soil itself, but she is not sure whether the soil will accommodate her (342). When she gets out of the shower, Aysel liberates herself from the position of “the gazed”; or by going beyond the constructed identity of “illuminated Turkish woman” she changes into the identity of any woman who doesn’t have the responsibility of a grand mission to be achieved at any cost. She does not commit suicide in the end, and leaves the hotel room feeling revitalized both in physical and intellectual terms. However, whether she will go back to her life with her husband or she will start a new life on her own is left ambiguous.

## Notes

1. The other novels in her trilogy are: *Bir Dugun Gecesi*, (*A Wedding Night*, 1979) and *Hayir*, (*No*, 1987).
2. Translations are mine
3. See Adalet Agaoglu. *Olmeye Yatmak (Lying Down to Die)*. Istanbul :Yapi Kredi Yayinlari, 1994.

## Works Cited

- Agaoglu, Adalet. *Olmeye Yatmak (Lying Down to Die)*. Istanbul :Yapi Kredi Yayinlari, 1994.
- Birlik, Nurten. “Adalet Agaoglu.” *Companion to the World Novel, 1900 to the Present*, Volume I.(2 Vols). Ed. Michael Sollars. New York: Facts on File, 2008.

责任编辑：易立君

# 接受的复调

——中国巴洛克文学研究的回顾与反思

金 琼

**内容提要：**二十世纪七、八十年代以来，中国对欧洲十七世纪巴洛克文学与文化的研究，涉及巴洛克概念的来源、巴洛克文学的总体评价、巴洛克文学文本探讨、巴洛克文学影响研究等多个方面；研究视角与方法也从比较单一的社会历史批评转向了文本细读、比较研究等方面。但是，目前的研究，还存在一些问题、疑惑和盲点，诸如巴洛克语源追溯观点不一、巴洛克文学文本界定标准模糊、对文本的审美文化价值评判有失公允、对巴洛克文学思潮的理解与评价存在片面性等，只有对此正视并加以探究，才能对今后的巴洛克文学研究有所助益。

**关键词：**巴洛克文学 文学思潮 接受 研究现状

**作者简介：**金琼，广州大学人文学院中文系副教授，文学博士，主要从事欧美文学研究。

**Title:** Accepted Polyphony: Review and Reflection On Chinese Studies of Baroque Literature

**Abstract:** Ever since the 1970s and the 1980s, the studies in China on Baroque literature and Baroque culture in European in the 17th century have been showing a trend of expansion and deepening. The researches involve the origin of the concept of Baroque and Baroque literature; the overall evaluation of Baroque literature; the exploration of the Baroque literature texts and the Influence of Baroque literature. The research perspectives and methods have turned to text reading, more research in the field from a single social history criticism. However, in the current studies, there are still many problems, doubts and blind spots in the aspects such as the disordered phenomena of the trace about the source of the existence of the language, the ambiguous definition of the standard of the confirmation of the literary text of the Baroque, the unfairness of the aesthetic and cultural value judgments about Baroque literary text, one-sidedness in the understanding and evaluation of Baroque Literature and so on. Only when we face all these problems can we better have a positive effect in the future studies of Baroque literature.

**Key words:** Baroque literature; literary trends; reception; research status

**Author:** Jin Qiong is associate professor of Chinese at School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Guangzhou University. Her major research focuses on European and

American literature . Email: jinqiong\_q@163.com

对兴起于十六世纪末、繁荣于十七世纪、衰落于十八世纪的欧洲非主流文学思潮巴洛克文学的认识、评价与接受，与在欧洲所经历的由否定到修正直到现在的充分肯定一样，中国也形成了自己对此种文学思潮的接受轨迹。在西方，“现代批评家成功地解释了十六世纪末至十七世纪初这一阶段历来史学家无法自圆其说的文学现象，重新发现了一些被遗忘的重要作家，重新评价了一些重要作品，也改写了这一段的文学史。”七十年代以后出版的欧洲文学史大都增添了巴洛克文学这一章。<sup>1</sup>在中国，对巴洛克文学现象的关注与研究也渐呈拓展与深化之态势。黄云霞、贺昌盛《被遗忘的“巴洛克”：中国的巴洛克文学研究》，就回顾了当前国内的巴洛克文学研究现状，谈到了巴洛克的语词界定、文本研究以及巴洛克与其他艺术形式之间的关系问题，较有参考价值。<sup>2</sup>但该文忽视了国内的一些《外国文学史》论著对巴洛克文学与文化的评析，遗漏了某些重要论文及作品；而对目前研究存在的问题与研究的走向等，也还可作进一步的讨论。本文拟从以下几个方面简要地回顾、评析当前中国的巴洛克文学研究成果，指出目前研究中存在的一些问题、疑惑和盲点，诸如巴洛克语源追溯杂乱、巴洛克概念及文学文本界定标准含混、对文本的审美文化价值评判有失公允、对巴洛克文学思潮的理解与评价存在片面性等，学界应对此予以重视并积极探索，以期对今后的巴洛克文学研究有所助益。

## 一、巴洛克概念及其运用研究

巴洛克（又译“巴罗克”）一词，从语源上说，发源何时何地？“巴洛克”的涵义经过了怎样的演化发展过程？对此，学者们各抒己见，既有一致的认识，又存在不同的看法。

杨周翰先生《巴洛克的涵义、表现和应用》指出：“一般认为是从葡萄牙语巴罗珂一词演变而来，原来是珠宝商用来称呼形状不规则的珍珠的术语。最初它是一个带有贬义的词，表示不完美、粗糙，以至丑陋怪诞，但也有新颖奇特的一面。钱钟书先生在《通感》一文中把它译为奇崛”。<sup>3</sup>

朱维之、黄晋凯、赵澧等先生主编的《外国文学史》中称“巴洛克”（baroque）一词来源于葡萄牙语的“barocco”，原是用来形容一种形状不规则的珍珠，后来被艺术史家用来形容文艺复兴后意大利等国出现的一种新的建筑风格。<sup>4</sup>

叶廷芳先生在《巴罗克的命运》中认为：“巴洛克（baroque）”是一个艺术史概念，也是一种风格的名称，属于诗学和美学的范畴。其词源一说来自中世纪拉丁语 baroco，意指荒谬；一说来自葡萄牙语 barroc，或西班牙语 barroco，意谓“小石子”或“不规则的椭圆形珍珠”；德文 brochenperle，也是指“破碎的珍珠”。各种语源都表达了同一个意思：即非正规的艺术，法国古典主义者给予这个词的普遍性定义则是：“古怪、浮夸、可笑、不自然的”等等。<sup>5</sup>

张石森、岳鑫先生主编的《巴洛克与洛可可艺术》中说：“‘巴洛克’一

词学者们公认为源于葡萄牙语，意为“不合常规的，特别是那些外形有斑点的珍珠”。“巴洛克艺术风格形成的动机是为了用一种荒诞的、不寻常的形式赢得人们的喜爱和承认。”<sup>6</sup>

伍彝甫先生在《巴洛克与中国绘画艺术》中对“巴洛克”的涵义进行了综合性的探讨，概要指出了“巴洛克”一词涵义的历史变迁。<sup>7</sup>

郑克鲁先生主编的高教版《外国文学史》认为：巴洛克文学产生于16世纪下半叶，在17世纪上半叶达到盛期。巴洛克一词来源于西班牙文 *barruko*，在16世纪用在首饰行业中，指的是“一颗不圆的珍珠”。<sup>8</sup>

朱龙华先生在《意大利文学史》中则引述德、法两国的文学批评家们的观点，说它来源于西班牙语语的“*barrueco*”和葡萄牙语的“*barrocco*”，后派生出法语形容词“*baroque*”，指一种形式奇特的珍珠。意大利人则指出，“巴洛克”来自逻辑学中用来形容三段论法的一个名词“*barocco*”。

韦勒克教授在《文学研究中的巴洛克概念》一文中认为“巴洛克”一词来源于西班牙文 *barroko*，后于1962年写作的《后记》承认“巴洛克一词及其转用到文学上来的历史需要作出修正”。巴洛克一词更早来自葡萄牙文，指“不整齐的、奇形怪状的珍珠”（韦勒克，111-112）。

综观这些文学批评文章、专著和文学史对巴洛克一词的解释，不难发现：学者们大都认为“巴洛克”有形状奇特、古怪、不规则等含义，但是对“巴洛克”一词的语源，学者们却有不尽相同的看法：1. 来源于葡萄牙语（持此观点者，占多数）；2. 来源于西班牙语；3. 来源于葡萄牙或西班牙语；4. 来源于拉丁语或西班牙或葡萄牙语；5. 来自逻辑学中三段论法的一个名词。并且，有关葡萄牙语的拼读，也有三种不同的方式：“*barroc*”（叶廷芳先生）“*barrocco*”（朱龙华先生的《意大利文学史》）“*barocco*”（朱维之、黄晋凯、赵澧等先生的《外国文学史》）。可见，张石森、岳鑫先生所说的“学者们公认为源于葡萄牙语”，与实情不符。

1888年沃尔夫林在《文艺复兴与巴洛克》一书中指出：“1580年理所当然地成为巴洛克风格充分形成的开端”，“米开朗基罗当之无愧地成为‘巴洛克艺术之父’”。（沃尔夫林，15）在书中，他还很有创见地提及诗歌中的巴洛克手法：“塔索的开场白非常不同……到处都是玄虚的形容词、铿锵的尾韵和有规律的重复，句式严谨，节奏徐缓。但是，庄严不仅仅存在于措辞之中，言语形象也变得高大起来”（沃尔夫林，78）。

此外，“巴洛克”是如何从艺术领域被援用为一种文学风格和思潮称谓的？这是研究巴洛克文学的逻辑起点和必须面对的问题。

李嘉《关于巴洛克概念的解读》一文中指出“意大利学者E·南乔尼于1895年进一步把17世纪文明的特点归纳为巴洛克主义。由此学术界逐渐形成了17世纪是巴洛克时代的概念，甚至有了巴洛克音乐、巴洛克文学、巴洛克哲学等提法。”20世纪初人们逐渐接受了巴洛克文学这一概念，有关巴洛克历史时期划分则有两种观点：一说是1600年至1750年，还有一说是1580年前后至

1750年巴赫去世为止。<sup>9</sup>

韦勒克教授曾认为“沃尔夫林是第一个将巴洛克一词转用到文学史上的人。”王昌建主编的《从巴洛克到现实主义》亦指出：“首先为其正名，并赋予它特定美学意义的是德国史学家沃尔夫林。”并断言“巴洛克作为一个时代的象征也终于被历史所肯定，并确定了它的价值所在。”指出在沃尔夫林之后，法国的塔皮耶、雷蒙、朗格等史学家也系统地论证了巴洛克艺术的美学价值与意义。<sup>10</sup>

然而韦勒克在《后记》中对此进行了修正：“在西班牙，门南底斯·伊·派拉约的《美学思想史》（1886）中的‘文学中的巴洛克风格’这个唯一的例证甚至比沃尔夫林还要早。就意大利来讲，我没有提到卡尔杜齐在1860年曾偶尔用过这个词。”但是，韦勒克强调沃尔夫林由于写了《文艺复兴与巴洛克》而仍然是“把这个词搬到文学上来的中心人物”（韦勒克，112-113）。陈众议先生《西班牙文学 黄金世纪研究》也指出：“在造型艺术领域，巴洛克这一概念是由德国人率先提出的。1756年，德国学者温克尔曼曾用以指涉建筑中的各种复杂装饰花纹。而文学中的巴洛克概念却是由西班牙评论家梅嫩德斯·伊·佩拉约于1886年在其著作《美学思想史》中首先使用的。”<sup>11</sup>

既然沃尔夫林的《文艺复兴与巴洛克》发表于1888年，佩拉约于1886年在其著作《美学思想史》已提出了“文学巴洛克主义”的概念，那么佩拉约就理所当然比沃尔夫林更早将巴洛克这一概念引进文学中的人。另外，冯寿农先生在《艺苑上的奇葩》中提到：“本世纪初（指20世纪），法国批评家雷蒙·勒伯克、皮埃尔·科勒、马赛尔·雷蒙等人也开始将巴洛克艺术引进到文学批评中。”<sup>12</sup>

综上所述，“巴洛克”的语源及援用问题已经受到广泛关注，为巴洛克文学研究的进一步深化打下了基础，但依然没有形成一个比较统一的认识与看法。

## 二、巴洛克文学思潮与风格的评价

研究巴洛克文学的专著在我国很少见，对巴洛克文学的认识与评介多见于各个历史时期的各种外国文学史以及相关的研究论文。在中国的外国文学研究界，不同历史阶段编写的《外国文学史》教材表现出对这一文学思潮的不同认知方式与价值评判标准。

杨周翰先生的《欧洲文学史》（人民文学出版社，1964年版）在谈到十七世纪欧洲文学发展的不平衡状态时指出，“意大利逐渐丧失了它在欧洲文化中的重要地位，文学衰落了，‘马里诺派’诗歌泛滥一时，这是一种堆砌典故、雕琢辞藻的贵族形式主义作品。”英国的“玄学派”诗歌内容“晦涩难解，以意象奇幻取胜，反映了当时一部分人对于文艺复兴时期人文主义理想失去信心。”<sup>13</sup>而十七世纪的西班牙则是“贵族绮丽派文学在文坛上盛极一时，”……“这个诗派轻视人民群众，提倡为‘高雅人士写作’，作品堆砌夸张的辞藻，充满隐喻和难解的词句。其内容大多是人生无常、终归毁灭等悲观思想。”<sup>14</sup>不难发现，杨先生是以阶级性、人民性、思想性等为尺度来评价巴洛克文学的，

所以站在人民群众的立场上，他自然会认为巴洛克文学的思想和艺术皆乏善可陈；但是杨先生，指出巴洛克文学堆砌典故、语言雕琢、意象奇特、晦涩难解等，却或多或少地揭示了巴洛克文学的审美特征。

柳鸣九、郑克鲁、张英伦等先生主编的《法国文学史》（上）（人民文学出版社1979年版），在评价伏瓦蒂尔时指出：“他以写纤巧的情诗和谄媚的书信出名，文风装腔作势，正投合了贵族男女粉饰其丑恶关系的需要。”谈及杜尔菲写了近二十年的冗长“膨胀”的五大卷六十册的长篇田园体小说《阿斯特莱》时说：“内容极为无聊，……正反映了因长期内战和社会变乱而破产的贵族留恋往昔安逸生活的心理。”认为斯居戴利的历史小说中所谓的“文雅”语言“不伦不类”，描写“散漫”“冗长”，令人“无法卒读”。<sup>15</sup>书中未明确提及“巴洛克”概念，只提出了“贵族沙龙文学”概念，对巴洛克文学作品（伏瓦蒂尔、杜尔菲等人被界定为法国的巴洛克作家）的评价不高，其评价标准也与杨周翰先生大体一致。

朱维之、黄晋凯、赵澧等先生主编的《外国文学史》（中国人大出版社，1980年版）对巴洛克文学做出了这样的评价：“巴洛克文学在思想上偏重于表现信念的危机和悲观颓丧的倾向；在艺术上，刻意追求怪诞，偏于雕琢，以至被一些史家称为夸饰主义。巴洛克在意大利和西班牙较为流行。”<sup>16</sup>

陈振尧先生的《法国文学史》（外语教学与研究出版社出版社，1989年版）中则提及“17世纪初英国、西班牙、意大利等国文坛，风行一种表达方式古怪、内容繁琐夸张的情诗，这种情诗是欧洲文坛雅风之滥觞。”<sup>17</sup>

正如冯寿农先生所言，在1990年以前，我国的许多文学史论著要么对巴洛克文学“只字不谈”，要么“略有提及”也是“片言只字，一笔带过”，甚至“张冠李戴”，把它与“矫揉造作文学”混为一谈，这的确有失公允，存在“偏颇”和“武断”。<sup>18</sup>其批评的视角与方法，也不同程度地带有社会历史批评的阶级分析色彩，就那个时代而言，是具有不可否认的深刻性的。不能否认的是，他们的评价具有开创之功。

不过，自此以后，文学史论著对巴洛克文学的评介渐趋公允、全面。如王忠祥、聂珍钊二位先生主编的《外国文学史》（华中理工大学出版社出版社，1999年版）认为：“巴洛克的语源涵义是破碎、不规则和奇妙的意思，用来指16世纪末至18世纪中叶流行在西方建筑、雕塑、绘画和文学领域中的一种美学风范。巴洛克文学反映了当时人们苦闷颓废的情绪和形式主义的艺术趣味，具有语言雕琢矫饰、手法怪诞夸张、形式华丽纷杂的特点。”<sup>19</sup>后来，聂珍钊先生于2004年重新主编《外国文学史》（华中科技大学出版社，2004年版），仍沿袭了这一评述。而在聂珍钊先生新版的“国家级精品课程”教材《外国文学史》第二分册（华中师范大学出版社，2010年版）中则有第四篇《十七世纪文学》第三章专章对巴洛克诗歌、小说、戏剧进行了全方位的评价，足见对此种文学思潮的关注与重视。

值得注意的是，朱维之、黄晋凯、赵澧、崔宝衡等先生后来重编《外国文学史》

（欧美卷，南开大学出版社，2004年第三版）时，对1980年主编的文学史中对巴洛克的评述进行了修正与补充，既在总体上对巴洛克文学进行了述评，客观地指出：“巴洛克文学的情况非常复杂。有各种各样的巴洛克，他们的思想倾向并不一致。”又对重点作家作品作了较中肯的评析，认为：“巴洛克文学的影响很广，<sup>17</sup>世纪最杰出的法、英大作家如高乃依、拉辛、弥尔顿、马维尔等人的作品也有巴洛克的痕迹。”<sup>20</sup>

张世君教授主编的《外国文学史》教材（华中科技大学出版社，2007年4月版）则不仅在“十七世纪文化”中单列了“巴洛克艺术”一节，在“十七世纪文学”中也对“巴洛克文学”进行了专节论述，并做出了较客观公正的评价。

“它与巴洛克艺术风格一致，内容上带有宗教神秘色彩，艺术上借鉴中古文学象征、寓意、梦幻的手法，语言雕琢，表现出华丽纤巧的风格。”难能可贵的是，本教材明确了巴洛克文学的各国代表性作家：意大利的马里诺、西班牙的贡戈拉、法国的贵族沙龙文学家、英国的玄学诗人以及德国的马丁·奥毕茨、格吕菲乌斯等，避免了将文艺复兴时期的主要代表作家也列入其中。<sup>21</sup>

这些《外国文学史》关于巴洛克文学评介的转变，透露了巴洛克文学研究的深度、广度和视角等都在不断地发生可喜变化的信息。这一点，从部分论文、专著的研究视角、方法和观点中也可以清楚地看出。

例如，陈众议先生《“变形珍珠”——巴洛克与17世纪西班牙文学》认为“巴洛克是多元认知方式和价值标准催生的矛盾复合体，既具有文艺复兴时期的人文主义基因，又明显背离文艺复兴时期的托古倾向和理想主义情怀；既具有现实主义底蕴，又不乏悲观厌世的虚无主义色彩。”并希图“通过历史的梳理和对西班牙文学的个案分析，对巴洛克及巴洛克文学以尽可能客观、公允的界定。”<sup>22</sup>

值得一提的是，陈先生2007年4月出版的专著《西班牙文学：黄金世纪研究》，无疑对西班牙文艺复兴时期与巴洛克时期的文学进行了成效卓著的国别断代研究，对巴洛克诗歌、戏剧和小说进行了细致精到的解读和有理有据、慧眼独具的评判：“总体说来，巴洛克文学拓宽了西班牙作家的表现空间，也极大地丰富了他们的表现方法，但同时也因过分强调雕琢或反常而不同程度地使自己滑向了唯美主义、形式主义和怪诞主义，从而对西班牙和西班牙语文学（如浪漫主义、现代主义及当代拉丁美洲文学等）产生了深刻、持久的影响”（陈众议，239）。

赵焕光先生在《浅谈巴洛克艺术的几点成就》一文中则从西方美术演化的角度，揭示了巴洛克艺术的创新和贡献：“在西方美术史中，充满了古典主义和所有新兴的风格流派的斗争，而巴洛克艺术是最先明确地与古典主义抗衡的主要风格。在时代精神的促进下发挥了一个世纪中人们的心灵和才智，去创造了一套完整的手法，为‘标新立异’的美奠定了形式上的基础，它以自身的存在及其无法抗拒的艺术魅力，使西方人不得不改变了一个古老、僵硬的成见：古典主义是美的唯一规范。后来的浪漫主义、印象派画家均从中得到鼓舞和启

迪。”<sup>23</sup>这一评价对于巴洛克文学的研究，无疑也是有一定启发性的。

综上所述，国内学术界对巴洛克文学与文化现象的认知与评价，经历了一个由浅入深、由片面到全面、由基本否定到不断地有所肯定的过程。特别是近十年来，人们对巴洛克文学的艺术追求和美学意蕴的多重性特征等有了越来越清晰的认知，对巴洛克文学的评价也越来越辩证、客观，而研究的方法和视角等也在不断地拓新。导致这些变化的原因是多方面的，但是有关巴洛克文学文本研究的逐渐深入与拓展，无疑也是引起人们认知变化的重要因素。

### 三、巴洛克文学文本研究

20世纪末到本世纪初，对巴洛克艺术的研究呈现出可喜的局面，单篇论文方面，叶廷芳先生《巴罗克的命运》（载《文艺研究》1997年第4期）对十七世纪欧洲各国的巴洛克文学发展演变脉络进行梳理，并对巴洛克艺术对文学的渗透和影响进行了探索；刘润芳《德国的巴洛克自然诗》（载《外国文学评论》2003年第2期）对巴洛克自然诗的独特性进行了界定，并明确指出巴洛克诗歌“促成了18世纪的启蒙自然诗即真正的自然诗的诞生。”李红琴《西班牙黄金世纪的伟大诗人贡戈拉流派归属辨析》（载《国外文学》1996年第1期），对贡戈拉介于“夸饰主义”与“警句主义”的实质进行了辨析，肯定了贡戈拉的艺术创新及其在欧洲文学史上的地位；张瑾超《卡尔德隆的宗教剧作及其神学基础》（载《福州大学学报》（社会科学版）1999年第4期）则从宗教神学与哲学的角度与视野挖掘了卡尔德隆宗教剧的深层内蕴。

近年来，一些学位论文如李雷《巴洛克时代的巴洛克文学》（兰州大学2008年度硕士论文）、薛爱兰《安德鲁·马尔维诗歌中的巴洛克张力》（西南大学2007年度硕士论文）、闻卓《鲁本斯的巴洛克风格》（东北师范大学2006年度硕士论文）、张宇《巴洛克概念的界定与通转问题》（黑龙江大学2008年度硕士论文）等，对巴洛克的概念，巴洛克文学思潮的形成、内涵、艺术、影响，以及巴洛克作家马尔维诗歌中的张力表现及成因，进行了不同程度的研究；至于南方《约翰·邓恩诗歌中的非个人化张力》（河北师范大学2003年度硕士论文）、白陈英《约翰·多恩爱情诗中的宗教情怀》（重庆大学2008年度硕士论文）、刘立军《约翰·多恩诗歌中的批判现实主义》（河北师范大学2007年度硕士论文）等，则从不同层面揭示了多恩诗歌的思想内涵、艺术特征与宗教情怀。

以上这些研究，除了一些宏观的综论外，主要是从不同的个案、不同的角度和侧面，探讨了巴洛克文学的一些代表性作家作品。这对于深化人们对巴洛克文学艺术特征及其影响的理解，较客观、公正地评价巴洛克文学，无疑是大有裨益的。但是，以下一些问题，尚有进一步思考和研究的必要。

其一，目前，对巴洛克的否定性结论，主要基于对意大利的马利诺、西班牙的贡哥拉主义、法国的伏瓦蒂尔等为代表的文学文本的分析与评判。但是，对德国的格里美尔斯豪森、西班牙的卡尔德隆、法国沙龙“雅女”拉法耶特夫

人等巴洛克文学的代表作家及其作品，学界尚缺乏较有深度的专门研究。其实，这些作家在文学创作上取得了相当不俗的艺术成就。早在上个世纪初，周作人就盛赞“Grimmelshausen 之 *Simplicissimus*（即《痴儿西木传》）”，“写实世情，与人生益益相近，以视虚华之小说，迥不侔矣。”<sup>24</sup>并赞赏拉法耶特夫人的《克莱芙王妃》“已脱旧习，趋于简洁，为 *Manon Lescaut* 之先驱。近代小说，当以此为首出也。”<sup>25</sup>杰拉尔德·吉列斯比也指出：“如果我们运用荷兰学者赫尔曼·梅耶和苏联学者米海尔·巴赫丁提出的理论，那么我们就有充分的理由认为，格里美尔斯豪森的小说达到了文艺复兴时期宏伟的巴洛克的顶峰。”（吉列斯比，101）遗憾的是，对于这样的作家作品，我们至今还没有给予足够的重视与研究。另外，有关巴洛克文学文本研究的视角与方法等，也不够丰富多样。论者往往更多地着眼于题材内容的分析、评价，而对其艺术追求的分析等，则浮光掠影，不得要领。这样一来，就势必影响了对巴洛克文学进行整体评价的公正性。

其二，进行文本研究时，究竟如何确定巴洛克文学文本？或如何面对“巴洛克性”或“巴洛克式”问题？

陈众议先生《“变形珍珠”——巴洛克与17世纪西班牙文学》中认为“如果说巴洛克造型艺术和巴洛克音乐主要兴盛于意大利、葡萄牙、法国、德国和尼德兰，那么巴洛克文学的扛鼎之作显然是由西班牙及西班牙语美洲作家完成的。诗人有贡戈拉、克维多和“第十缪斯”伊内斯·德·拉·克鲁斯，剧作家有洛佩·德·维加、蒂尔索和卡尔德隆，小说家有塞万提斯、阿莱曼和格拉西安，等等。”<sup>26</sup>

叶廷芳先生《巴洛克的命运》中亦称“西班牙早期巴洛克文学的代表主要是格瓦拉和塞万提斯”……巴洛克在西班牙还被发展出了“流浪汉小说”（或称“机智小说”）这一新的叙事文学品种，而以维加和卡尔德隆为代表的“悲喜剧”创作也从根本上彻底打破了悲剧和喜剧的界线。“英国巴洛克文学最高成就的代表作家是弥尔顿、班扬和斯托恩，弥尔顿笔下的撒旦就是个典型的巴洛克形象。”明确指出：“塞万提斯的《堂吉珂德》诞生于文艺复兴的后期，作为现代现实主义小说的典范，它把西班牙的文艺复兴文学推到了顶峰。但这部杰作的基本审美特征是属于巴洛克的，……它开了西班牙巴洛克文学的先河。”<sup>27</sup>

笔者有些疑惑：在多数文学史中被列入文艺复兴时期的人文主义作家的维加和塞万提斯，可以贴上代表性的巴洛克作家的标签吗？或者他们只是被称为具有巴洛克风格特色的文学家？如何界定巴洛克作家？如何鉴别巴洛克文学作品？以什么作为其思想与艺术标准？弥尔顿、班扬历来被称为十七世纪英国清教徒文学的代表作家，特别是弥尔顿，更是被认为是继承文艺复兴的人文主义思想，表现了资产阶级革命精神的作家。他们也能列入巴洛克文学代表作家之列吗？

当然，要研究巴洛克文学，就必须对产生这种文学艺术的土壤进行挖掘，进而发现推动一种文艺思潮产生与发展的内在动力机制，一个作家一部作品是

否隶属于巴洛克文学阵营，也应该联系具体的历史文化情境加以甄别；同时，还要注意，并非带有巴洛克艺术元素的文学，就属于巴洛克文学，有的只是具有巴洛克风格特色的文学作品。而且在16世纪末—17世纪中期，身为人文主义作家而作品具有巴洛克风格，或身为巴洛克作家其作品兼具人文主义思想意识的情况并非个别现象。

笔者比较赞同冯寿农《艺苑上的奇葩》对“巴洛克”的见解，他认为“巴洛克”有广义与狭义之分，广义上说是一种风格、手法，文学史上早已有之；狭义上则专指某一特定时代里形成的普遍的文学现象亦即文学思潮。因而，不能简单地认为具有巴洛克风格特色的作家就可称为巴洛克作家，就像不能将莎士比亚简单地归为浪漫主义流派或批判现实主义流派一样，尽管他的作品无疑既具有浪漫色彩又具有写实因素。持此以观，对维加、塞万提斯、弥尔顿、班扬等争议颇大的作家，笔者暂且不将他们的创作纳入巴洛克文学的考察范畴，不过的确赞同他们是兼具两类创作风格（文艺复兴与巴洛克）特征的作家的观点。巴洛克文学毕竟代表了一种营建“伟大、非凡和可能”的艺术品味，作家作品归属的具体情形需经进一步分析鉴衡后再下结论。

#### 四、巴洛克文学研究存在的问题

综上，目前国内对巴洛克文学的接受与研究不无尴尬：

首先，究竟什么是“巴洛克”？什么是巴洛克文学？学界尚缺乏严格的界定与明晰的阐释。

根据本文第一部分的资料爬梳大致可以看出：“巴洛克”作为一个术语指称的是十七世纪初（也有人认为是从十六世纪末开始）至十八世纪中期形成的一种追新求异、颠覆传统而又在精神实质上复杂多样的文化现象，表征着奇特、怪诞、夸张、多义、令人惊异等文化意义，首先在建筑、雕塑、绘画、音乐领域内流行。陈众议先生认为“事实上它远非‘一种风格’可以涵盖，而是文艺复兴和启蒙运动之间的一个极其复杂的间隙性流派，在不同地区、不同艺术样式中表现不尽相同。”<sup>32</sup>对巴洛克文学的界定则应从内容到形式，从文化历史背景到文学的承传与革新等理论层面，运用美学与历史评判标准做出更精准、客观的阐释与评判。

其次，研究的视角、方法相对逼仄，多半从社会历史批评的角度来研究巴洛克文学，较多地关注巴洛克文学揭示了什么反映了什么，代表了何种思想意识，把思想性、阶级性作为最重要的评判标准，对艺术与美学评判标准关注不够，对巴洛克文学缺乏整体观照与系统研究。我们不禁要问：巴洛克文学究竟仅仅是“贵族形式主义”的东西，还是作为一个特定时期的“文学与文化表征”的内蕴丰富的文化符号？韦勒克已经在其《文学理论》中明确指出：“显然一件艺术品的美学效果并非在于它所谓的内容中。几乎没有什么艺术品的梗概不是可笑的或者无意义的”（韦勒克，157）。英国散文家伯罗兹则明确指出：“我们只埋头在那材料——即其中的事实、议论、报告——里面，是决不能获得严

格的意味的文学的。文学之所以为文学，并不在于作者所以告诉我们的东西，乃在于作者怎样告诉我们的告诉法”（童庆炳，22）。因此探讨“作者怎样告诉我们的告诉法”，才是文学研究的主要任务之一。巴洛克艺术特征是什么？运用了哪些艺术手段营建其独特的艺术世界？进行了哪些艺术创新？意义与价值到底如何？这些都应该成为我们考察的重点。

其三，巴洛克文学文本研究尽管取得了一些成果，有些研究方法与论述的角度也堪称新锐、颇有见地。但总体上讲，还是缺乏对文本的细读及其艺术魅力的深入探索，特别是很多巴洛克文学代表性文本在国内一直没有受到应有的重视，对它们的评价要么立论偏颇，要么含混粗略，有的甚至是明显的贬损或忽视，因而对巴洛克文学的审美内涵、特性及价值等很难作出富有诠释力的理论说明。也正因为如此，全面观照十七世纪欧洲的巴洛克文学文本，在比较研究中寻求这一特殊文学思潮的一些共同的创作规律、思想内蕴和艺术追求，无疑具有一定的理论价值与现实意义。

其四，研究资料显示，就整个巴洛克文学研究领域而言，影响研究方面的探索还只是处在起步阶段，文学研究所需要的材料考据和实证分析还相当匮乏。笔者已在相关论文中专门对此总是进行了探析（见“巴洛克文学的多元文化价值及其影响”，《广州大学学报》2011年第2期），指出巴洛克文学的影响研究还处在起步阶段。对这种特殊文学思潮体现的思想情感的张力和特殊的美学效果，对用典、隐喻、夸饰、象征、陌生化手法等艺术手段的移用、化用、变形和推陈出新的具体情形都还有待进一步开掘。此外，影响本身涉及面广、跨时段长，渊源、传播、接受的具体情形、事实联系的爬梳确证，都还有着广阔的研究空间。只有在搜集、整理、厘清、确证的基础上，才能客观公允地对巴洛克文学对其他文学艺术形式的影响做出科学理性的评判和界定，从而最终明晰巴洛克文学在欧洲文学史上乃至文化史上的地位与影响。

简言之，学界对巴洛克文学艺术的研究尽管已渐呈开放与深入的态势，但确实还存在诸多问题与不足：概念界定众说纷纭，价值评价褒贬不一，典范文本尚无定论，影响研究尚欠深入。不过，也正是这种局面预示着巴洛克文学与文化研究处在活跃期，众声喧哗、各执己见恰恰显示了接受的复调：面对这一复杂而具有强大生命力的文学思潮或流派，各种解读自身就是一个对对象的丰富和完善过程，最终会导向一个新的认知与评价的维度。

## 注解【Notes】

- 1.12.18. 参见冯寿农：《艺苑上的奇葩——巴洛克艺术：从建筑到文学——关于法国巴洛克文学》中的相关论述，《外国文学研究》1（1990）：79。
2. 参见黄云霞、贺昌盛：《被遗忘的“巴洛克”：中国的巴洛克文学研究》中的相关论述，《外国文学研究》4（2005）：155—157。
3. 参见杨周翰：《巴洛克的涵义、表现和应用》，《国外文学》1（1987）：5。

4. 16. 参见朱维之、黄晋凯、赵澧主编：《外国文学史》（北京：中国人大出版社，1980年6月第一版，2004年7月第五版）65。
5. 27. 参见叶廷芳：《巴罗克的命运》，《文艺研究》4（1997）：85，89—92。
6. 参见张石森、岳鑫主编：《巴洛克与洛可可艺术》（呼和浩特：远方出版社，2006年1月第一版）1。
7. 参见伍彝甫：《巴洛克与中国绘画艺术》，《文艺研究》2（1990）中相关论述。
8. 参见郑克鲁主编：《外国文学史》（北京：高等教育出版社，1999年）94—95页。
9. 参见李嘉：《关于巴洛克概念的解读》，《沈阳师范大学学报（社会科学版）》4（2007）128，127。
- 10 参见王昌建主编：《从巴洛克到现实主义》（北京：中国电力出版社，2008年5月第一版）5。
11. 参见陈众议：《西班牙文学黄金世纪研究》（南京：译林出版社，2007年4月版）236。
- 13.14. 参见杨周翰、吴达元、赵萝蕤主编：《欧洲文学史》（北京：人民文学出版社，1964年1月第一版）190，218。
15. 参见柳鸣九、郑克鲁、张英伦主编：《法国文学史》（上）（北京：人民文学出版社，1979年版）152—154。
17. 参见陈振尧主编：《法国文学史》（北京：外语教学与研究出版社，1989年版）96。
19. 参见聂珍钊主编：《外国文学史》（武汉：华中科技大学出版社，2004年版）251页。
20. 参见朱维之、赵澧、崔宝衡等主编：《外国文学史》（欧美卷）（天津：南开大学出版社，2004年第三版，2007年重印）102。
21. 参见张世君：《外国文学史》（武汉：华中科技大学出版社，2007年4月）240。
22. 26. 28. 参见陈众议：《“变形珍珠”——巴洛克与17世纪西班牙文学》，《外国文学评论》4（2005）：74，74—75，74。
23. 参见赵焕光：《浅谈巴洛克艺术的几点成就》，《美与时代》20（2002）：31。
24. 25. 参见周作人主编：《欧洲文学史》（北京：东方出版社，2007年5月第一版）209，212。

### 引用作品【Works Cited】

- 海因里希·沃尔夫林：《文艺复兴与巴洛克》，沈莹译。上海：上海人民出版社，2007年。  
[Wölfflin Heinrich. *Renaissance and Baroque*. Trans. Shen Ying. Shanghai: People's Publishing House, 2007.]
- 陈众议：《西班牙文学 黄金世纪研究》，南京：译林出版社，2007年。  
[Chen Zhongyi. *Research of Spanish literature in Gold century*. Nanjing: Yi Lin Publishing House, 2007.]
- 杰拉尔德·E·P·吉列斯比：《欧洲小说的演化》，胡家峦、冯国忠译。北京：生活·读书·新知三联书店，1987年。  
[Gerald E.P. Gillespie. *The evolution of European novels*. Trans. Hu Jialuan. Feng Guozhong

Beijing:SDX joint publishing company,1987.]

叶绪民、朱宝荣、王锡明主编：《比较文学理论与实践》，武汉：武汉大学出版社，1990年。

[Ye Xuming,Zhu Baorong,Wang Ximing.*Theory and practice of Comparative literature*.Wuhan: Wuhan University Press,1990. ]

保尔·保贝、丽抒：《表现主义与巴洛克》，《国外文学》4（1993）：106。

[Paul· Paul Pui. Li Shu. Expressionism and baroque, Foreign literature 4（1993）：106]

M·洛巴诺娃、木莫：《巴洛克：时代连续和断裂》，《中央音乐学院学报》2（1987）：68。

[M·Laubat Hoba.Mo My. *Baroque: continuity and rupture of times*.Central Conservatory of Music 2（1987）：68.]

勒内·韦勒克、奥斯汀·沃伦《文学理论》，杭州：江苏教育出版社2005年。

[Wellek',Rene.Warren,Austin.*Literary Theory*.Hangzhou:Jiangsu Education Publishing House,2005.]

童庆炳：《艺术创作与审美心理》，北京：百花文艺出版社1990年。

[Tong Qingbing.Artistic creation and aesthetic psychology. Beijing :Baihua Literature and Art Publishing House,1990.]

责任编辑：郑红霞

# 在历史与未来的交叉口上

——评《当代中国外国文学研究（1949—2009）》

尚必武

**内容提要：**进入新世纪后，随着西方理论热的消退，国内外国文学研究界对学术史的建构与反思渐成风尚。在梳理、反思我国外国文学研究成果的浪潮中，陈众议研究员主编的《当代中国外国文学研究（1949—2009）》一书显得尤为突出。该书按照宏观到微观的研究路径，采用历时和共时的双重视角，史论结合，客观公正地展呈了共和国成立六十年来外国文学研究的学术画卷。

**关键词：**《当代中国外国文学研究（1949—2009）》；学术史；未来

**作者简介：**尚必武，浙江工商大学外国语学院英语系副教授，华中师范大学文学院比较文学与世界文学专业博士后，主要从事叙事学、文学伦理学批评、当代英美文学研究。

**Title:** The Intersection of History and Future: A Review of *Foreign Literature Studies in Contemporary China: 1949-2009*

**Abstract:** The beginning years of the new millennium witnessed Chinese scholar's passion for reviewing and reflecting what has been done in the past. As far as foreign literature studies are concerned, Chen Zhongyi's edited collection *Foreign Literature Studies in Contemporary China: 1949-2009* turns out to be such a highlight. In particular, it has, synchronically as well diachronically, conducted a overview of foreign literature studies in contemporary China from multiple perspectives in the past six decades. With such salient features of being suggestive and informative, the book will stand as a momentum for China's foreign literature studies in the future.

**Key words:** *Foreign Literature Studies in Contemporary China: 1949-2009*; review; future

**Author:** Shang Biwu is Ph. D. and associate professor of English at Zhejiang Gong Shang University (Hangzhou 310018, China). Currently, he is engaged in the studies of narratology, ethical literary criticism and contemporary British and American literature. Email: biwushang@gmail.com

## 一、富有意义的研究背景

为回顾新中国成立六十年来外国文学研究的发展史，国家哲学社会科学规划办公室于2009年发布国家社科基金重大项目“新中国外国文学研究60年”，

面向全国范围的外国文学研究人员公开招标。<sup>1</sup> 这是在国家层面上第一次以重大项目的形式招标外国文学学术史项目，其意义非同一般：既是对外国文学研究的重视，也是对学术史研究的肯定。众所周知，学术史工程意味着学者们要详占学术史料，继而在卷帙浩繁的文献中梳理学术脉络、凝练学术思想、总结学术建树、反思研究缺失。就此而言，学术史工程的浩大与艰辛可想而知。但是鉴于该工程的重要意义，总有一批学者以“为学术而学术”的精神，筚路蓝缕，不畏艰辛，献身此类的学术研究。

实际上，对学术研究的定期回顾与反思已经成为学术界的自觉行为。进入新世纪后，随着理论热的消退，学者们对学术史的建构与反思渐成风尚。中国社会科学院外国文学研究所自2004年开始就已经着手“外国文学学术史研究工程”，<sup>2</sup> 将塞万提斯、歌德、雨果、康拉德、庞德、高尔基、肖洛霍夫、海明威、普希金、茨维塔耶娃、狄更斯、哈代、菲茨杰拉德、贝娄、左拉、芥川龙之介等16位世界文坛的经典作家纳入其中。2009年7月，在浙江大学召开的中国外国文学学会第十一届年会上，“外国文学研究60年”被确立为会议的中心议题。会后出版了论文集《外国文学研究60年》（2011），为推动我国外国文学学术史的构建起到了积极作用。近两年来，作为国家社科基金重大项目的阶段性成果，《外国文学研究》、《外国文学》、《浙江大学学报》（人文社会科学版）、《北京大学学报》（哲学社会科学版）、《四川大学学报》（哲学社会科学版）、《南京社会科学》、《学海》等知名刊物纷纷刊载了关于外国文学研究六十年的相关批评文章，引发学界的广泛关注。在对六十年来我国外国文学研究成果的梳理和审视浪潮中，陈众议先生主编的《当代中国外国文学研究（1949—2009）》（下简称《研究》）一书，显得尤为突出。该书按照从宏观到微观的研究路径，采用历时和共时的双重视角，史论结合，客观公正地展呈了共和国成立六十年来外国文学研究的学术画卷。

## 二、丰富厚重的研究内容

回首新中国六十年来外国文学研究，陈众议先生中肯地评价道：“我国外国文学研究六十年可谓得失并存，喜忧参半，因此总结经验、汲取教训十分必要”（1）。<sup>3</sup> 在梳理总结我国六十年来外国文学研究时，《研究》不忘“五四运动”前后，那些为新中国外国文学研究起到引领和铺垫作用的先驱者们。在第一章“历史回眸”，《研究》以相当的笔墨叙写了“五四运动”前后外国文学的翻译和研究。在这一时期，我国的外国文学译介迎来了第一个高潮，以追求个性解放、思想自由和具有社会批判性质的外国文学作品成为译者们的首选，随之涌现出“易卜生热”、“泰戈尔热”、“拜伦热”、“俄罗斯文学热”等。无论是外国文学的翻译队伍还是刊载翻译文学的出版物在这一时期都形成了一定的规模：林纾、伍光建、胡适、鲁迅、周作人、刘半农、沈雁冰、赵元任、张闻天、郭沫若、郁达夫、田汉等都翻译了大量的外国文学作品，而《新青年》、《每周评论》、《新潮》、《国民》、《小说月报》、《文学周报》等刊物也都刊

载了相当数量的翻译文学作品。向俄苏学习成为五四时期外国文学研究的主旋律。“五四时期的‘俄罗斯文学热’不仅表现在文学作品的翻译上，同时表现在对俄国文学研究上的深化”（28）。继田汉、沈雁冰于1919年分别发表论文《俄罗斯文学思潮之一瞥》和《托尔斯泰与今日之俄罗斯》之后，我国的俄罗斯文学作家作品研究、俄罗斯文学理论研究、俄罗斯文学史研究、俄罗斯文学思潮、中俄文学比较研究都开始发端并日渐繁荣。

1949年，新中国成立。建国以后，“中央对于外国文学翻译和研究工作的关心和支持对我国的文学事业和社会主义精神文明建设产生了巨大而深远的影响”（87）。《研究》的第二章“最初十年”全面回顾了建国初期我国外国文学研究的辉煌成就。这一时期的外国文学研究，无论是在数量上还是在质量上，无论是在广度上还是在深度上都远远超出五四时期。《研究》不仅回顾那个时期外国文学研究界关于翻译标准的讨论，而且有机地回顾了学者们对外国文学研究问题意识研究（如文学与现实之间的关系问题等）。这一时期，苏俄文学的翻译迎来了一轮浪潮。相比之下，俄苏文学研究则显得相对薄弱。究其原因，《研究》认为“首先可归结为当时俄罗斯文学作为学科还处于起步阶段，其学术属性和意义尚未被认识”（132）。可喜的是，在苏俄文学的翻译浪潮中，英美文学研究开始起步，莎士比亚、菲尔丁、狄更斯、斯威夫特、萨克雷等作家均被纳入批评视野。除苏俄文学、英美文学外，其他各国文学如德国文学、法国文学、意大利语、西班牙语文学等也都被以译作的前言或后记的方式加以推介。

1960年，中苏公开交恶，极左思潮在我国外国文学研究领域肆意蔓延，尤其是随着文化大革命的开始，外国文学研究开始衰落、停滞。不仅在建国之初盛极一时的俄苏文学研究一落千丈，就连社科院的三套丛书《外国文学名著丛书》、《马克思主义文艺理论丛书》、《外国古典文艺理论丛书》也停止出版。但令人欣喜的是，“外国文学并没有销声匿迹，它以非常形式，如手抄、口传等隐秘方式成为一股温暖的潜流”（141）。譬如，在20世纪60年中国社科院文学研究所曾以内部发行的方式编辑出版了《苏联文艺理论译丛》、《现代文艺理论译丛》等。《研究》的第三章“峥嵘岁月”回顾了这一时期外国文学研究的低潮。当时外国文学的“皮书”（“供内部参考”的当代外国文学译作）虽然印数不多，但是看过的读者却数量庞大。对此，《研究》编者感慨地说：“这些书和其他‘文革’前出版的外国文学作品在这期间的‘地下流通’速率之高，或许是空间绝后的。一本书常能在短短几年内经过几十甚至上百人转手阅读，对许多年轻人的思想和生活产生深刻影响。在这一时期，一些年轻人对西方语言文化产生了发自内心的兴趣，开始了自发的，刻苦的学习和追求。大家失了学，才有了自己的‘学’”（154）。

“文革”结束以后，尤其是自“十一届三中全会”以降，我国的外国文学研究得到空前发展，进入“黄金时代”。《研究》用了全书百分之七十的篇幅来回顾这一时期的外国文学研究，广泛涉及外国文学作家作品研究、外国文学翻译研究、外国文论研究、外国文学史研究、外国文学思潮研究等多个方面。

就国别、语种和区域文学研究而言,《研究》回顾了英美文学研究、俄苏文学研究、德语文学研究、法国文学研究、东欧文学研究、意大利文学研究、西班牙语、葡萄牙语文学研究、北欧文学研究、古希腊罗马文学研究、朝鲜—韩国文学研究、日本文学研究、东南亚文学研究、印度—巴基斯坦—孟加拉文学研究、波斯—阿富汗文学研究、土耳其文学研究、希伯来文学研究、阿拉伯文学研究以及澳大利亚文学研究等;就外国重要文艺理论思潮和文论家而言,《研究》重点考察了叙事学、接受美学、精神分析学、文学伦理学批评、女性主义批评、后殖民理论、生态批评、比较文学、巴赫金、巴尔特、韦勒克在中国的研究等。

### 三、研究特色与学术创新

虽然《研究》被纳入“中国哲学社会科学学科发展报告”,以发展报告的形式出版,但纵览全书,不难发现,《研究》不失为一部特色鲜明的学术文集。

**其一、作者阵容强大,权威性高。**《研究》由我国知名外国文学研究专家、中国外国文学学会会长、中国社会科学院外国文学研究所所长、《外国文学评论》杂志主编陈众议先生担纲主编,在全国范围内邀请了相关学者就各自最擅长的领域撰写论文,如由俄罗斯文学研究专家陈建华教授撰写“学习俄苏:五四精神的集中体现与阐扬”,由中国叙事学研究会会长、中国文体学研究会会长、中国外国文学学会副会长、国际知名学者申丹教授撰写“叙事学在中国”,由中国外国文学学会副会长、中美诗歌诗学协会副会长、文学伦理学批评首倡者、《外国文学研究》杂志主编聂珍钊教授撰写“文学伦理学批评在中国”等。编者们深厚的学术功底,主编的严格把关,充分保证了《研究》的上乘质量,使其拥有至高无上的权威性。

**其二、学科意识浓厚,现实意义突出。**《研究》不仅是以学术史考辨为主要目的,而是以解决我国外国文学研究所存在的问题为出发点。《研究》对共和国六十年来外国文学研究加以梳理和反思,不仅及时总结我国外国文学研究的成绩,而且还针砭时下外国文学研究的不足。譬如,在论及当下东欧文学研究匮乏的现状时,编者本着高度的学术责任感指出:“商品时代,文学日益边缘化,加上待遇等种种问题,甘愿献身文学翻译和研究的人越来越少。东欧文学翻译和研究领域,更是如此。由于东欧国家都是些弱小国家,经济上也不发达,从事东欧文学翻译和研究,更是面临着人们难以想象的困境:机会少,受重视程度低,出版艰难。在相当程度上,可以说,这项事业已处于濒危状态。期望国家能高度重视这一严重问题。期望有关部门能采取切实有效的措施,扶持东欧文学翻译和研究事业”(230)。

**其三、史论结合,评点精当。**《研究》固然是以学术史的梳理考察为基础,但它并不是史料的堆积,而是在对史料做出精细分析的基础上,做出精当的评点。譬如,针对中国有学者提出要摒弃西方的影响、建构中国自己的叙事学,编者就明确指出:“中国学者近年来一方面有了更强的民族意识和批判意识,努力保持和重构中国文论的特性和主体性,但另一方面也依然注重有选择、有改造

地借鉴西方不断发展的文论。这有利于在保持民族主体性的前提下，借助西方学者的研究来开拓视野，改革创新，发展中国叙事学”（280-281）。至于叙事学在国内的下一步发展，编者又提出了若干中肯的建议：“（1）认识到早期的叙事语法和叙述诗学的局限性。（2）通过跨学科研究来丰富现有理论，以拓展研究范畴，争取新的发展空间。（3）可以结合社会语境的变迁来探讨叙事结构的历史嬗变，国内这方面的研究还不多见。（4）叙事学现有名词术语、范畴概念和分析模式中存在着各种混乱和问题，中文和外文之间的不对应也加重了混乱，对此可以加以审视和修正”（282-283）。又如，作为一种新兴的批评方法，文学伦理学批评在受到学界追捧的同时，也暴露出一些不得不引起重视的问题。对此，编者指出：“迄今为止国内发表的一系列有关伦理学批评的论文中，相当一部分都把‘伦理道德’的讨论虚空化了，往往只注重对作家作品的伦理思想、观点和倾向进行论证和评价，缺乏对文学作品深入细致的客观分析。目前一些所谓的运用文学伦理学批评方法的论文，往往只是属于道德批评的范畴”（325-326）。这些精当的评点有助于后来者避免学术研究的误区，切实解决外国文学研究中所存在的现实问题，从而将外国文学研究事业推向前进。

每到一定时期，人们总会对前一时期的工作做出总结和反思。就外国文学研究而言，世纪之交，我国知名外国文学研究专家吴元迈先生在《外国文学研究》杂志发表《回顾与思考——新中国外国文学研究50年》（2000）一文，指陈了新中国五十年来外国文学研究的成就与不足；在新世纪的第一个十年画上句号的时候，中国社会科学院外国文学研究所发布《外国文学在我国精神文明建设中的地位和作用》（2010）的国情调研报告，收录了“外国文学研究与翻译三十年”、“改革开放三十年英美文学研究小结”、“俄罗斯（苏联）文学研究室三十年工作小结”、“外国文学理论学科1981-2008年的工作”、“中北欧文学研究三十年回顾”、“改革开放三十年东方文学翻译与研究”、“南欧拉美文学研究三十年回顾”、“改革开放三十年和东欧文学”等文章。诚如陈众议先生所言：“学术史或学科史的梳理与研究不仅是温故知新的需要，同时也是端正学术思想基本方式，而且它最终是为了面向未来：总结经验、汲取教训，为明天的学术发展铺平道路”（6）。《研究》充分践行了这样的理念。我们相信，《研究》一定会为我国未来的外国文学研究产生积极而又深远的影响。

## 注解【Notes】

1. 最终，经过激烈竞争，北京大学的申丹教授和华东师范大学的陈建华教授分别率领其研究团队同时获得该项目。
2. 该项目被纳入中国社会科学院院级重大项目。
3. 本文所有相关引文均出自陈众议：《当代中国外国文学研究》（1949—2009）。北京：中国社会科学出版社，2011年。下文只标出页码，不再一一说明。

责任编辑：杨革新



## 世界文学研究论坛

黄铁池/上海师范大学(中国)  
聂珍钊/华中师范大学(中国)  
查尔斯·罗斯/普渡大学(美国)

### Editors in Chief

Huang Tiechi, Shanghai Normal University, China  
Nie Zhenzhao, Central China Normal University, China  
Charles Ross, Purdue University, U.S.A

ISSN 1949-8519

