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Marginalization and Minorities in Contemporary World Literature and Film

Edited by

Jørgen Veisland

Shanghai·Wuhan·West Lafayette

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当代世界文学和电影中的边缘化与少数族裔研究

乔根·维斯兰德（专刊主持）

上海·武汉·西拉法叶

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Marginalization and Minorities in Contemporary World Literature and Film:Introduction

Jørgen Veisland
Department of Scandinavian Studies, University of Gdańsk
Wita Stwosza 55, 80-952 Gdansk, Poland
Email: finjv@univ.gda.pl

The articles introduced here are the result of the work of a research team on marginalization and minorities in literature and film at the Faculty of Philology, University of Gdańsk, Poland.

The collection represents a wide spectrum of research on the philosophy and theory of marginalization, examining the practice of the margins in current world literature and film and focusing on the motif of minority experience. The articles cover a number of highly differentiated interpretive approaches, methods and conclusions, including a philosophical perspective on the dialectics of marginalization; the motif of death in modern literature and philosophy; colonial Africa in Muriel Spark's fiction; journals from Greenland; the experience of marginalization in essays by Said and others; Africa and Europe in the Danish author Kirsten Thorup's latest novel; black male marginalization in American literature; Count Leon Skórzewski as a citizen of the world; Jewish soldiers in American war fiction; the narratology of marginalization; AIDS and discrimination in the film "Philadelphia"; the Other and vampires in the HBO series "The Blood"; disabled people in Korean film.

The range indicated briefly above is truly remarkable and testimony to the increasing interest of readers, scholars and critics in the topic of marginalization in contemporary society. The treatment and practice of the margin is becoming highly complex, and the logical *locus* of this practice is the artwork which, owing to its inherent nature and form, lends truth, honesty and complexity to the examination and analysis of the multiple issues connected with marginalization. In doing this the artwork is—now and always—superior to the standard media and press descriptions and interpretations that often tend to simplify the issue. The artwork, in short, emerges at this point in history as the possibly sole agent of truth and reality.

Reflections on the Dialectics of Marginalization

Łukasz Rybiński
Faculty of Philology, University of Gdańsk, Poland
PŁOWCE 41/5, GDAŃSK, 80-153, Pomorskie, Poland
Email : lukasz.k.rybinski@gmail.com

Abstract This work reflects upon the philosophical origins and literary consequences of Theodor Adorno's thesis "the whole is false" (*das Ganze ist das Umwahre*), as it greatly influenced the literary and philosophical practice of modernity. In investigating this problem the paper attempts to approach the vital question whether thinking from the standpoint of margins in terms of philosophy is possible and what is the nature of truth that such a philosophical project reveals.
Key words marginalization; dialectics; Adorno; negation; truth; *Ulysses*

1. "The Whole is Untrue" —Emergence and Alienation of the System

In almost every dimension, ontological, moral and existential, the world-system illustrated by Franz Kafka in *The Trial* appears to be an alienated sociological totality opposed and contradictory to the irreducible consciousness of an individual existence—Joseph K. Therefore the main experience that is conveyed in *The Trial* is the expression of the embarrassment that the individual consciousness suffers from non-conciliation with the system comprehended as the whole—that which is identical with itself. This incompatibility leads K. to recognize the system as false:

> You don't need to accept everything as true, you only need to accept is as necessary".
>
> "Depressing view" said K. "The lie made into the rule of the world. (Kafka 406)

These words almost immediately remind one of the more radical, negative, yet fundamental thesis of modern philosophy formulated by Theodor Adorno, *the whole is false*. However, the question here arises: How is individuality possible given the coercion of the system? If in the process of the dialectical movement the individual constitutes only a moment –merely one element of the total assemblage, society, how does it become possible that this element differentiates itself by gaining self–

awareness? Adorno claims that in the dialectical movement of the totality something always stays behind and in turn that fault implies the primal and axiomatic crack in the very origins of dialectics. In this instant of incoherence hope and truth may reside as it releases self-consciousness in constituting itself, thus arising in freedom from the totality. Nevertheless, in light of the above thesis an inappropriate question appears almost instantly: what is truth? Of course in the face of negation such a question should not even be thought. Out of curiosity however, pursuing further the trace of negation designated by Adorno, what is found is the critique of the realm of the spirit:

> In those branches themselves, in the emphatic claim of their autarchy, dwells untruth. All culture after Auschwitz, including its urgent critique, is garbage. By restoring itself after what transpired in its landscape without resistance, it has turned entirely into that ideology which it potentially was, ever since it took it upon itself, in opposition to material existence, to breathe life into this latter with the light, which the separation of the Spirit from manual labor withheld from such. (Adorno 358-361)

As such, the untruth lives in the emphatic demand for autarchy of the dimension of Spirit—culture. The echo of this claim and its literary allusions reaches far back into the history of philosophy —to Hegel's thesis that culture is in fact an alienated spirit:

> This spirit is the absolute and universal inversion and estrangment of actuality and of thought; *pure culture.* (Hegel 62)

Let us then take a closer look at the origins of this thesis from Adorno's stance: in Hegel's historiosophy the spirit through the negation of negation—negation of the primal difference—absorbs the different—*nature*. Culture emerges as the expression of spirit's mediation in nature and at this precise moment of expression culture becomes different, alienated from the identity of the spirit. Thus the author of *Negative Dialectics* is entitled to assert, that culture "perhorresces a stench, because it stinks" (Adorno 358-361), because, as he believes, culture bears the guilt of old Adam, that is the fault of absorbing the different—nature. Every conception bears the trace of this guilt, as Adorno emphasizes:

> In truth all concepts, even philosophical ones, move towards what is non-conceptual, because they are for their part moments of the reality, which necessitated—primarily for the purpose of controlling nature—their formation. (23-24)

Moreover, Adorno maintains that this primal correspondence is based on an intrinsic violence associated with the dominance underlying the dialectic movement. Therefore the author of *Negative Dialectics* introduces in his philosophy the moment of grounding in the manifestation of the most individual and irreducible experience—the experience of pain.

> The impoverishment of experience through dialectics, which infuriates mainstream opinion, proves itself however to be entirely appropriate to the abstract monotony of the administered world. What is painful about it is the pain of such, raised to a concept. (18-19)

In this manner pain for Adorno becomes almost a metaphysical principle as it previously was for Schopenhauer:

> The need to give voice to suffering is the condition of all truth. For suffering is the objectivity which weighs on the subject; what it experiences as most subjective, its expression, is objectively mediated. (29)

For Schopenhauer as well the will in its blind pursuit of objectification and subjecting to it convicts itself to suffering in the view of the final contradiction: limiting the spatiality of objectification and the infinity of desire. Accordingly Adorno asserts that every notion in its innate dialectics terminates at such a contradiction as it evokes the different in its own identity, which is related to suffering. The metaphysical pain in *Negative Dialectics* becomes as it were a mystical experience which forces the philosophical order to pursue the impossible, i.e. to reflect the irreducibly different:

> It is characterized as much by its relation to the nonconceptual—as in keeping with traditional epistemology, where every definition of concepts ultimately requires non-conceptual, deictic moments—as the contrary, that the abstract unity of the *onta* subsumed under it are to be separated from the ontological. To change this direction of conceptuality, to turn it towards the non-identical, is the hinge of negative dialectics. (23-24)

2. Thinking Through the Margins—Testimony and Literary Truth

> The only philosophy which can be responsibly practiced in face of despair is the attempt to contemplate all things as they would present themselves from the

> standpoint of redemption. (Adorno 247)

In the light of these reflections it can be concluded that individual being is likely to differ from the system, the social totality. However, is the absolute breakout possible or are we just lured into the trap of a paradox as expressed in *Ulysses* "Think you're escaping and run into yourself. Longest way round is the shortest way home" (Joyce 360).

The greatest reflections of this *negative* trend in literature are the works of James Joyce. The famous stream-of-consciousness carries not only psychological meaning, but more importantly: it expresses the irreducibility of the single consciousness in the face of world thought as whole:

> If Socrates leaves his house today he will find the sage seated on his doorstep. If Judas go forth tonight it is to Judas his steps will tend.' Every life is many days, day after day. We walk through ourselves, meeting robbers, ghosts, giants, old men, young men, wives, widows, brothers-in-law. But always meeting ourselves. (204)

To penetrate deeper into the consciousness might lead one to the point of its disintegration. Therefore *Ulysses* balances at the verge of communication and reasoning whereas *Finnegan's Wake* collapses further into the incomprehensible. Still *Ulysses* appears to depict the struggle of the abysmal irreducibility of consciousness with the non-transparent *world without end*:

> Ineluctable modality of the visible: at least that if no more, thought through my eyes. Signatures of all things I am here to read, seaspawn and seawrack, the nearing tide, that rusty boot. Snotgreen, bluesilver, rust: coloured signs. Limits of the diaphane. But he adds: in bodies. Then he was aware of them bodies before of them coloured. How? By knocking his sconce against them, sure. Go easy. Bald he was and a millionaire, *maestro di color che sanno*. Limit of the diaphane in. Why in? Diaphane, adiaphane. If you can put your five fingers through it, it is a gate, if not a door. Shut your eyes and see.
>
> Stephen closed his eyes to hear his boots crush crackling wrack and shells. You are walking through it howsomever. I am, a stride at a time. A very short space of time through very short times of space. Five, six: the *nacheinander*. Exactly: and that is the ineluctable modality of the audible. Open your eyes. No. Jesus! If I fell over a cliff that beetles o'er his base, fell through the *nebeneinander* ineluctably. I am getting on nicely in the dark. My ash sword

> hangs at my side. Tap with it: they do. My two feet in his boots are at the end of his legs, *nebeneinander*. Sounds solid: made by the mallet of *Los Demiurgos*. Am I walking into eternity along Sandymount strand? Crush, crack, crick, crick. Wild sea money. Dominie Deasy kens them a'.
>
> *Won't you come to Sandymount,*
>
> *Madeline the mare?*
>
> Rhythm begins, you see. I hear. A catalectic tetrameter of iambs marching. No, agallop:*deline the mare*.
>
> Open your eyes now. I will. One moment. Has all vanished since? If I open and am for ever in the black adiaphane. *Basta*! I will see if I can see.
>
> See now. There all the time without you: and ever shall be, world without end. (Joyce 37-38)

In order to elucidate this process it is essential to understand that to fulfill the task of reflecting the different—negativity as both a philosophical and a literary vision, or rather testimony of the real need to become as it were a kaleidoscope—reality transformed. Although this project of thinking aims at truth, eventually it falls into the inevitable, inner contradiction between primal impulse—the desire to express and its exteriorization into meaning. This is why Adorno ends up entangled in his own method. At this point it seems that it would only be prudent and consequential for him as a philosopher to take a resolute step into silence, like Wittgenstein did. However, then he would fail to express his truth. To follow the path of the endless need of expressing means failing to posit the philosophical imperative, as Hegel would argue:

> (…) Spirit is this power only by looking the negative in the face, and tarrying with it. This tarrying with the negative is the magical power that converts it into being. This power is identical with what we earlier called the Subject, which by giving determinateness an existence in its own element supersedes abstract immediacy, i.e. the immediacy which barely is, and thus is authentic substance: that being or immediacy whose mediation is not outside of it but which is this mediation itself. (Hegel 19)

However this "failure" implies that the works of Theodor Adorno attain more literary value. It means that to some extent *Negative Dialectics* is essentially a work of literature and therefore it is a testimony of its time—modernity. Adorno's experience is in fact of a historical nature and thus his work gains the additional significance of historical truth which is expressed in philosophical terms. Yet, this language is used in a purely artistic manner as a medium to create some kind of metaphorical

archipelagos.

As such, the seemingly incoherent reflections of *Negative Dialectics* constitute a flow which originates in the very fault that Adorno perceives in dialectics as a characteristic core of philosophical inquiry and of thinking. Adorno's thinking appears to accrue around the dialectical moment wrested from the Hegelian totality. In such a project thinking is confined to reflecting upon difference and therefore the intellect still comprehends conceptual characteristics only in their abstraction - one-sidedness and finitude while difference itself becomes an abstract, empty contradiction in which everything has its negation but not an identity. Thus Adorno brings out a Hegelian negation which, detached from the whole, becomes the formal principle of *Negative Dialectics*. Consequently the author states his thesis subjecting it to the principle of contradiction. By means of philosophical language Adorno expresses his utterly sincere wrath—historical truth.

Negative Dialectics, like *Ulysses,* is a journey that opposes itself to its own goal and, I believe, it intends to present the demand of critical consciousness; it is a sign indicating utopia as the possibility of something different than what is faced in reality. Although this flow of thought consistently follows the trace of difference and negation the fact remains that this path does not lead anywhere. Thus *Negative Dialectics* is indeed both a manifesto and almost an image of the true nihilism that is, in Adorno's belief, "nihilism that implies the opposite of the identification with nothingness" (Adorno 369-374). Thus in the world of Adorno's philosophical demands we may either place literature in the dimension of philosophy or put *Negative Dialectics* in the realm of literary truth. However, the latter finds it possible only to observe a historical event, indicating it and by that referring to the possibility of something different—utopia. This kind of power lies only within the works of art.

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The Marginalization of Death in Culture Based on Selected Examples of Modern Literature and Philosophy

Krystyna Rybińska
Faculty of Philology, University of Gdańsk, Poland
PŁOWCE 41/5, GDAŃSK, 80-153, Pomorskie, Poland
Email: rybinska.krystyna@gmail.com

Abstract The thesis that underlies this paper is comprised of a paradox. Although, as modern literature discloses, death has been marginalized in our public life and awareness as well as in humanist discourse, yet simultaneously, according to Theodor Adorno it "has become something which has never yet been so feared." The paradox leads us to a philosophical re-evaluation of the existential meaning of death after Martin Heidegger and to an investigation of not only the consequences of the marginalization of death but also of the roots of this phenomenon. Our investigation will trace the presence of the phenomenon in selected works of modern literature and philosophy, e.g. Franz Kafka's *The Trial*, Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time* and Theodor Adorno's *Negative Dialectics,* which purposely venture into the margins of public discourse and culture.
Key words marginalization of death; ambiguity of culture; Beckett; Adorno; Heidegger

The very process of marginalization of death is representatively depicted in *The Trial* (1925) by Franz Kafka. Not only the ruthless manner in which Joseph K. is killed but the place is curious, as the very scene is symbolic in all its aspects. In a quarry, outside of town he is stabbed in the heart with a butcher knife in a rather negligent, mechanical manner. There is something wicked and unnerving in his death, the way it becomes depersonalized in its existential aspect—"like a dog!" (Kafka 419) At this point death ceases to be an individual and mystical dimension of existence; instead it becomes a mechanical and administrative act, executed by an ambiguous system rather than a person. Still it is the place where K. is killed that is even more significant. The quarry, a dead and nonhuman place, is set outside of town in an unknown location and thus manifests not only rejection but the marginalization of Joseph K.'s death.

He is a neglected person whose death is of no importance, no meaning—in a way his death is not part of common experience. However, although it is the final scene of the book and naturally reveals itself to us as its conclusion, it also produces a reflection on the root of the absurd chain of events. It forces the reader to recall Joseph K.'s dialogue with priest: "You don't need to accept everything as true, you only need to accept is as necessary". "Depressing view" said K. "The lie made into the rule of the world" (406). This piece of conversation throws a prophetical light on the nature of the mayhem of what appears to be a succession of accidental, irrational happenings patched together with a classical *fatum* acting like a series of consequences that lead K. to his inevitable end. What is the lie that underlies the world? The significance of these words is even greater once it is realized that these words became reality and echo through *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (1963), where Hannah Arendt reports how mass murder had become a matter of necessity and carrying out an order.

The symbolic death of Joseph K. is neither the beginning nor the end of the process of marginalization; the quarry outside of town in *The Trial* turns into an empty road with a tree enclosing two men in an almost magical circle with no way out in Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. Perhaps even the stranger that appears in the window in K.'s last minutes becomes Godot for Vladimir and Estragon? Or, the quarry might have been the market visited by some madman crying "God is dead!" (*Gott ist tot!*) (Nietzsche 181) in Friedrich Nietzsche's *The Gay Science.* Nonetheless, changing from a crowded marketplace into a quarry and finally into an empty road this no-place depicts the here and now of modernity, or rather, a timeless contemporaneity.

1. Existential Analysis of Death: The Ambiguity of Culture

To comprehend the significance of the marginalization of death the meaning of death should be reconsidered. Philosophical hermeneutics conceives man as determined by understanding and thus the main and primal question underlying any cognitive activity is the question of meaning. Firstly, the notion of meaning implies comprehending the overall object—the phenomenon along with its references and context; as such it points to the necessity of reaching a cognitive distance. Secondly, the question of meaning is comprised of "why?" as well as "for what purpose?" Therefore, although the term of understanding as it presents itself in direct reflection appears to be partially entrenched in the past, it is in fact essentially aimed at the future. It is possible because the understanding in Martin Heidegger's opinion intrinsically contains the existential structure of the *Project [Entwurf]*.Thus to *project*—and to exist means to *throw oneself into being*. It suggests that the ecstatic nature of understanding originates in the very nature of man as *Dasein*—being thrown into the world amidst other beings:

"[…] as thrown, Dasein is thrown into the kind of Being which we call projecting." (Heidegger 185)

The *Thrownness [Geworfenheit]* allows us to understand *Dasein* as openness towards the world and the beings in it through the creative activity of changing the world into a civilized and less hostile environment. In this respect understanding means to surpass the strangeness of the world.

Nevertheless *Dasein* is above all *Being-Towards-Death [Sein zum Tode],* that is, living and dying at the same time. Man is the only being aware of its finitude. Thus the experience of mortality is the foundation of the understanding mode of *Dasein's* being in its endeavor to comprehend the wholeness of the self which involves *running ahead [Vorlaufen]* into the future.

> When one understands oneself projectively in an existential possibility, the future underlies this understanding, and it does so as a coming-towards-oneself but of that current possibility as which one's Dasein exists. The future makes ontologically possible an entity which is in such a way that it exists understandingly in its potentiality-for-Being. (385)

Dasein comes to itself in the ecstasy of the future, the final horizon that is always death as the innate possibility of being. R*unning ahead [Vorlaufen]* into the future provides a distance necessary to totally experience oneself as a whole. However, it is unattainable, since death is never entirely present while one is living. Therefore, understanding oneself as a whole is a process and its self-awareness is always suspended, as "there belongs to Dasein, as long as it is, a "not yet" which it will be—that which is constantly still outstanding." (286)

Moreover, the very experiencing of death and one's finitude is a rather intricate matter and not easily gained in everyday life. According to Heidegger we experience our finitude only in situations where we experience anxiety *[die Angst]* and the problem of meaning present in it as well.

> Thrownness into death reveals itself to Dasein in a more primordial and impressive manner in that state-of-mind which we have called "anxiety". Anxiety in the face of death is anxiety 'in face of' that potentiality-for-Being which is one's ownmost, nonrelational, and not to be outstripped. That in the face of which one has anxiety is Being-in-the-world itself. That about which one has this anxiety is simply Dasein's potentiality-for-Being. Anxiety in the face of death must not be confused with fear in the face of one's demise. (295)

In anxiety [*Angst*] death presents itself to man as the impassable and as an immanent possibility; therefore the very situation is marked with immense loneliness. However, the impact of this loneliness does not simply mean being abandoned by people but means touching the very *nothingness [das Nichts]* - the void in which what slips away is everything as wholeness, and *Dasein* finds itself incapable of affirming the notion of the self as an individual being.

> Holding itself out into the nothing, Dasein is in each case already beyond beings as a whole. This being beyond beings we call "transcendence." If in the ground of its essence Dasein were not transcending, which now means, if it were not in advance holding itself out into the nothing, then it could never be related to beings nor even to itself. Without the original revelation of the nothing, no selfhood and no freedom. (Heidegger 105-106)

In Angst the state of awareness of *Dasein* is awakened, as its appropriate *[eigentlich]* mode of existence, that is as a being *[Sein]* aware of the self. *Dasein* attains a distance towards the being and the self and thus is enabled to see, almost touch, the self. Being as world *[Welt]* is recognized as an instrumental construction and slips away. This way the experience of *Angst* is essentially an individual experience; a fundamental *mood [Stimmung]* reveals the truth of *Dasein* transcendence and distance.

However, another modern writer Witold Gombrowicz points out that the experience of *Angst* is also a primal experience of the absurd**:** "Anxiety is fear of nothing, of no-meaning. We fear that we might not give meaning to the world and lose ourselves."(Gombrowicz 607)[1] The above understanding of *Angst* in opposition to fear which is always founded in something threatening one's life corresponds with Heidegger claim" That in the face of which one is anxious is completely indefinite." (Heidegger 231) Nevertheless, Gombrowicz identifies the "nothing" with the absurd as no-meaning. How to understand the fear of no-meaning? According to Heidegger understanding consists of human beings projecting their mode of existence. For *Dasein* understands the world and the self by projecting, that is by running ahead into the future and thus reaching itself again by returning to the self. *Dasein* is the project as possibility thrown into the world, and therefore it exists in a constant desire to understand the self and the world. The source of this desire is a primal lack, the absence of meaning in the present moment. The "now" of *Dasein* is always marked with lack, deficiency of both the world and the self. Heidegger emphasizes: "In *Dasein* there is undeniably a constant 'lack of totality' which finds an end with death." (286) The very factuality of existence excludes experiencing meaning as the

wholeness of "here and now", and *Angst* reveals this deficiency.

In the light of the above analysis death appears to be a source of meaning in human existence; however, its essence is never present. Thus it resembles a mirror, which - although reflecting the light - is itself concealed in darkness. If we were to understand the light in accordance to its metaphorical relevance as reason then what appears in this light would be the world of men—culture as a sphere of meanings created by man. The experience of the absence of meaning constitutes the source of all creative activity.

In order to confirm this thesis Hans-Georg Gadamer investigates the oldest story about the light and the beginning of culture—the myth of Prometheus. However, what is found is a paradox. Gadamer emphasizes the ambiguity of the Promethean gift of fire, since on the one hand it enables humankind to evolve whereas on the other hand it continuously conceals a tragic inner contradiction and reveals the culture as a de facto flight from finitude and death. It is in the nature of fire to allow things to be seen and recognized. However, the reverse side of the moment of recognition is the inevitability of the simultaneous disappearance of other things. The situation is easily illustrated in making fire in the woods, when a great quantity of things escape the circle of light and become even more impenetrable for one's eye. From this moment all human performances no matter how great amount to the struggle to live.

Thus culture can be understood as both the human expression of self-understanding and as a flight from finitude. Based on the latter, dark side of culture we find Heidegger's critique of culture as a sphere of public life in which *Dasain* falls into habit *[Das Man]*—the wrong mode of existence.

> As falling, everyday Being-towards-death is a constant *fleeting in the face of death*. Being-*towards*-the-end has the mode of *evasion in the face of it*—giving new explanations of it, understanding it inauthentically , and concealing it. […] *Even in average everydayness, this ownmost potentiality-for-Being, which is non-relational and not to be outstripped, is constantly an issue for Dasein. This is the case its concern is merely in the mode of an untroubled indifference towards the uttermost possibility of existence*. (298-299)

The everydayness of public life and culture does not discredit the fact of finitude but it twists it. Death is still present in the common public discourse but in an erroneous way that conceals its essence. To speak of death in the public sphere is in fact "cowardly fear , a sign of insecurity on the part of Dasein, and a somber way of fleeting from the world" (298). It is always inappropriate to leave the circle of light and wander into the abyssal darkness of non-existence.

2. Dead Voices on the Empty Road

It seems that the reality of falling into habit *[Das Man],* as a mental image, is ingenuously depicted in *Waiting for Godot.*

> VLADIMIR: All I know is that hours are long, under these conditions, and constrain us to beguile them with proceedings which—how shall I say—which may at first sight seem reasonable, until they become a habit. You may say it is to prevent our reason from foundering. No doubt. But has it not long been straying in the night without end of the abyssal depths? That's what I sometimes wonder. You follow my reasoning?
>
> ESTRAGON: [Aphoristic for once.] We all are born mad. Some remain so. (Beckett 72-73)

Vladimir in the above words describes almost the entire content of the play from the point of view of an action. "Hours are long, under these conditions, and constrain us to beguile them with proceedings which […] may at first sight seem reasonable, until they become a habit" (72)—what does it mean?

> ESTRAGON: We always find something, eh Didi, to give us the impression we exist?
>
> VLADIMIR: [Impatiently.] Yes, yes, we're magicians. (61)

It may appear that these proceedings are in fact a camouflage, a struggle to give what is a semblance of real existence—meaning and through that to provide a foundation for their own subsistence and the possibility of experiencing it. Analogically, according to Heidegger, falling into habitual existence *[Das Man]* is only a semblance of authentic being—a parody of this state and of understanding. The picture we observe in the drama depicts nothing at all, a void.

> POZZO: What is it like?
>
> VLADIMIR: [Looking around.] It's indescribable. It's like nothing. There's nothing. There's a tree. (79)

Of course there is a tree, a field and a road around Vladimir and Estragon, thus the space seems to be filled up; however, what is experienced is an overwhelming nothingness. Everything appears to be nothing as it is devoid of meaning. Hence in light of the above comments *Waiting for Godot* reminds one of an erroneous game.

The game or play is Gadamer's concept of the mode of existence of an artistic phenomenon, which is bound to reveal a momentary truth—"what is". What does erroneous mean? It means a play devoid of the essential moment of truth—revealing reality, the "what is". The characters created by Beckett seem to float in egotistical suspension, utterly detached from reality. This state is reflected in their ambiguous future and in the waiting for the vague figure of Godot. In this play, although all the formal aspects are present, there is no moment of truth. In Gadamer's locution it would signify a confirmation of community as the most concealed basis of human existence. We should therefore ask: why would Beckett present a play devoid of truth? Or perhaps the more primal question is: What is being presented?

Firstly, what is outside as well as inside the characters is not a simple and obvious matter for Beckett. It is significant that the characters have been universalized along with the space on stage. Therefore there is a significant resemblance with the works of Franz Kafka, for whom Joseph K. is simultaneously nobody and everybody, and so an *Everyman*. However, what does the universalisation consists in if not in wresting something from the observer that is existentially closest to him—the cause of the most inner and intimate dilemma as it emerges from the human condition? Admittedly, Schopenhauer claims that the most excellent form of tragic work of art should reveal before us the identity of the fate of the characters and ours, so that we may experience that "we feel ourselves already in the middle of the hell".(Schopenhauer 282). Still, Beckett and Kafka seem to proceed further and present the character's fate as not only an approximate and possible mode of existence but also as a revelation of the absurd as the actual state of things. Beckett's proceedings as a playwright are quite precise, as in *Waiting for Godot* alone he reduces scenic means to the basic minimum, while in his last works we face the absolute degradation of characters to disturbed voices. As Proust, Beckett's inspiration, wrote:

> The only business of art is to penetrate something inside oneself. What intelligence presents as the past is not the past. (Hayman 33)

Hence the critics often point out that characters in Beckett's plays frequently reflect the same disintegrated personality, constantly seeking itself:

> In *Waiting for Godot* resonance depends partly on the impression that the central argument is going on inside a single consciousness […] The components which normally give opacity to drama have been so attenuated that we can see a consciousness arguing with itself. (4)

Therefore, in the world of the author of W*aiting for Godot* where the outside is a reflection of the inside the main motif is not only the relation of a man to the others but to himself as well.

What is the nature of that *exteriorized insideness*? What does Beckett discover about human beings? He definitely confirms what Proust and Joyce claimed—that man is nothing but a disappearing flow of thoughts:

> The individual is the set of a constant process of decantation, sluggish, pale and monochrome, to the vessel containing the fluid of past time, agitated and multicolored by the phenomena of its hours. (Esslin 30)

Ronald Hayman notices that not only the dialogues among characters, but the very course of action reflects a course of thought, and the degradation of scenic means emphasizes the all-encompassing process of the stream of consciousness:

> Becket's use of the medium has been determined by the same overwhelming need that is evident in his novels, the need to investigate the non-stop flow that goes on inside our heads, mixing words (heard, spoken and remembered) with images (observed, remembered and evoked). (Hayman 9)

> What does its absurdity consist in? Martin Esslin would argue that in the quandary and the inability to find oneself reside the infinite waiting of the subject. The situation thus resembles Jaspers' dilemma: man is torn between the longing of transcendence and need of becoming. However, the resonance of *Waiting for Godot* seems to reach much deeper if one inquires: who is Godot? Again Esslin would argue that the identity of Godot is irrelevant since the waiting is the main theme of the play. God-ot—purposely not God, but rather a mere reminiscence of God; that is, logos is thought to contribute some meaning and aim to the existence of Vladimir and Estragon. The idea corresponds to Witkacy's (Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz) conception of characters in the modern theatre. In *New Forms in Painting. Aesthetic Sketches* Witkiewicz claims that characters are to become symbols of the Mystery of Existence showing trough, as remembrances of the religious rites in which theatre originates. However, the symbol is deliberately deformed: "God-ot". Furthermore, it contributes nothing more apart from approaching oblivion to the fate of the characters. If we were to follow the sound of the name rather than graphics we would perhaps hear an echo of Nietzsche's "Gott ist tot!" Significantly, according to Karl Jaspers' analysis of Nietzsche's work, the phrase "death of God" does not aim to name

> the fact; rather, it reveals the condition of common public awareness which falls into habitual, schematic religious thinking devoid of real sacrum. I believe that there is a clue to understanding *Waiting for Godot* in the words of Vladimir: […] Astride of grave and difficult birth. Down in the hole, lingeringly, the grave-digger puts on the forceps. We have time to grow old. The air is full of our cries. [He listens]. But habit is great deadener. [He looks again at Estragon.] At me too someone is looking, of me too someone is saying, he is sleeping, he knows nothing, let him sleep on. (Beckett 83)

Perhaps Vladimir's words are there to convey Esslin's conviction about the desertion of faith, or rather about the absurdity of faith, and thereby of hope as well which underlies the very act of waiting.

> The act of waiting is essentially *absurd*. Admittedly it might be a case of '*Credere quia absurdum est'*, yet it might even more forcibly be taken as a demonstration of the proposition '*Absurdum est* credere'. (Esslin 35)

However, the second part of Vladimir's speech contradicts this assertion, as he implies belief of being observed and judged and through it he reveals a constant awareness of transcendence. Is it the spectator? Perhaps. Nevertheless it seems more adequate that we experience the resonance of Camus' everyday Doom and throughout it the clear call for truth. It might be noticed that in Vladimir the consciousness of the play is present as his first question: „Was I sleeping while the others suffered?" seems to open the third sphere of the situation presented, not entirely elucidated but where the truth is nevertheless revealed, or to use Gadamer's locution "what is". What is the reality concealed underneath the unimportant gestures and blabbing—the apparently erroneous play?

Another trace appears as we may pursue a further vital question—"But in all that what truth will there be?" (Beckett 83) It indicates that Vladimir seems to be aware of the theatrical character of what is around him—he is aware of the *play*. But his question reaches deeper than presenting the artificial assertion of what is happening—it touches the true nature of the ultimate play of which Vladimir himself is a part. Notably, Vladimir also talks about forgotten or perhaps unnoticed suffering and the play is a result of this.

It appears a paradox that meaningless proceedings that constitute the game presented in Beckett's drama are to fill up the time of waiting for Godot. Corresponding to the action of the drama the dialogues are devoid of any apparent meaning, yet this talking nonsense is constantly presented and examined and not

without reason:

> ESTRAGON: It's so we won't think.
> VLADIMIR: We have that excuse.
> ESTRAGON: It's so we won't here.
> VLADIMIR: We have our reasons.
> ESTRAGON: All the dead voices. (53-54)

At first sight talking nonsense appears to be what Heidegger calls patter, which signifies the time of straying when Being is concealed. But the above dialogue of Vladimir and Estragon continues and merges into a subconscious monologue that purposely drowns out the "dead voices", thus indicating the underlying mystery. Whose voices are they talking about? Vladimir continues: "To all mankind were addressed, those cries for help still ringing in our ears!" (72)

3. A Lifelong Death Sentence

That existence directly points to the factuality of death seems to be the thesis and source of Samuel Beckett's artistic activity, as out of the recognition of the primal dialectics of existence the image of chaos and the absurd emerges. As an artist he speaks about the vital truth about man in modernity and his relation to death.

> What is, is like the concentration-camp. Once he [Beckett] speaks of a lifelong death-sentence. The only hope, faintly dawning, is that there would be nothing anymore. This too he rejects. Out of the fissure of inconsistency formed by this, the image-world of nothingness appears as something which tethers his poetry. (Adorn 369-374)

It appears that Adorno's conclusion is coherent with Vladimir's words "The air is full of our cries" (Beckett 83). What does, then, the paradox of "a life death sentence" mean? Beckett in his plays depicts the world of the living in a state of death—a fake living for which non-living appears as hopeful end only. However, to fulfill this hope would be to run away—the option which even Vladimir and Estragon fail to accomplish. Thus, according to Adorno, the works of Beckett are evidence of the genuine struggle of authentic nihilism, as he endows the absurdity of nothingness with artistic suspension and sustenance and hence forces it to signify something. Therefore, *nothing to be done* sounds like a mantra throughout the play, enchanting the reality depicted in *Waiting for Godot* and making it into an image of lifeless barrenness except for the *tree*, the insignificant *name* of the unknown. To be sure,

in the lines cited above Adorno refers to the even more cruel reality of *Endgame*; however, the degradation of the stage's reality is a constant and consistent process in Bekcett's plays starting with *Waiting for Godot*. Ironically, the essential sentence of the play is repeated continuously: "There's nothing to do" (66), as the expression of the utterly powerless state of the characters in face of the play's truth.

The experience and notion of *katharsis*, as the purpose of the tragic work of art implies that in fact the work of art is constituted as an act of the subject's cognitive activity. However, the notion of purification reveals the underlying dialogical nature of the work of art owing to not so much the constitutive power of the cognitive act as to its emotional echo; this echo fulfills the wholeness of the work of art. Adorno describes Beckett's world as follows:

> In the legacy of its treatment, of the apparently stoical carrying-on, what is noiselessly screamed is that things ought to be different. Such nihilism implies the opposite of the identification with nothingness. (Adorno 369-374)

As a result of interiorizing the reality previously described as tragic—the exposure of hell as here and now—we reach Nietzsche's negation understood as distance:

> Gnostically, it regards the world as it has been created as radically evil and its repudiation the possibility of a different, not yet existent one. So long as the world is as it is, then all images of reconciliation, peace and quiet resemble those of death. The smallest difference between nothingness and that which has come to rest, would be the refuge of hope, the no-man's-land between the border-posts of being and nothingness. From that zone needs to be extricated, instead of overcoming, the consciousness of what the alternative would have no power over. Nihilists are those, who oppose nihilism with their more and more washed-out positivities, conspiring by means of these with all existent malice and finally with the destructive principle. What honors thought, is defending what nihilism is castigated as. (369-374)

In the lines cited above Adorno raises two vital accusations which may be reformulated into two theses: that Auschwitz was a fact and, what seems even more important and yet distressing, that this fact always will be socially possible. The crime against humanity was done in a death camp in spite of the enlightenment identified with culture; what is more, this possibility in fact arose in the light of a mythical Promethean fire. At this point Vladimir's words may be quoted again:

> VLADIMIR: All I know is that hours are long, under these conditions, and constrain us to beguile them with proceedings which—how shall I say—which may at first sight seem reasonable, until they become a habit. You may say it is to prevent our reason from foundering. No doubt. But has it not long been straying in the night without end of the abyssal depths? That's what I sometimes wonder. (Beckett 72-73)

In Vladimir's question the problem of the tragedy of culture in its flight from death recurs. It appears as though one who is fearful of something and flees from it paradoxically always carries it with him. The mind of a person who in fear of darkness starts a fire is constantly immersed in darkness. Therefore the entire sphere of the enlightened spirit, the humanistic sciences, veils the negation of death in the very 'truth' of enlightenment—it is in fact an escape from truth and thus Adorno may conclude: "In those branches themselves, in the emphatic claim of their autarchy, dwells untruth." (Adorno 358-361)

This is why, the author of *Negative Dialectics* claims, Auschwitz was possible; the detachment from the truth of death was revealed in the veiled face of culture.

> With the murder of millions through administration, death has become something which has never yet been so feared. No possibility anymore, that it could enter into the experienced lives of individuals as something somehow concordant with its course. The individuated is expropriated of the final and most impoverished thing which remained to it. That the individual [Individuum] no longer died in the concentration camps, but rather the exemplar, has to affect the dying of those who escaped the administrative measures. (354-358)

In the twisted reality of concentration camps the existential phenomenon of death became subject to total rationalization. Death became an accountable matter and a subject of pure administration. The impact of Auschwitz as a realized social possibility does not terminate at the simple historical fact that it was and ergo is possible. Death in the horizon of culture has attained a mode of becoming exemplary instead of being individual, even if society will never again provide the required administrative means. In other words: my own death can always become nothing more than a statistic data when the instinct to survive is hidden in public life.

Note

1. The translation is made by the author of this article.

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Being a Minority: Colonial Africa in Muriel Spark's Short Stories Cycle

Marta Nowicka
Faculty of Languages, University of Gdansk, Poland
ul. Wita Stwosza 55, 80-952 Gdańsk, Poland
Email: emnowicka@gmail.com

Abstract Muriel Spark in her works drew heavily on her lifetime experience, especially that gained in exile—while she was living in Africa (1937-1944). It is especially visible in the cycle of her short stories to which the following titles can be included: "The Seraph and the Zambesi," "The Pawnbroker's Wife," "The Portabello Road," "The Go-Away Bird," "Bang-Bang You're Dead," and "The Curtain Blown by the Breeze" . In all of the works we can see how Spark's feeling of alienation transcends the pages of her works, how she discusses the issues connected with being a minority—a white woman in Africa. She also pays attention to problems with assimilation between and among the races. It all serves not only literary purposes, but also enabls the writer to deal with her past and the feeling of not belonging to a place she is in, which is often the problem of her protagonists.
Key words Muriel Spark; Short Stories Cycle; Africa; minority

Muriel Spark (1918 – 2006) had a very tempestuous life. From her autobiography and biographies we may sketch an image of a woman who experienced a lot but never lost her wit and insightfulness. Experiences connected with World War II and the years she spent in Africa (1937-1944) left a lasting impression on her oeuvre. Memories from the time spent in Southern Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe, are captured in many of her works; most intensely in the African cycle of short stories to which we may include the following titles: "The Seraph and the Zambesi" (1951)—this work launched Spark's career after she had won a short story competition in The Observer; "The Pawnbroker's Wife" (1953), which draws heavily on the period when Spark was waiting to return to England in 1944; "The Portobello Road" (1953), an extremely peculiar ghost story; "The Go-Away Bird" (1958), "Bang-bang You're Dead" (1958) and "The Curtain Blown by the Breeze" (1961), all of which discuss the position and role of women in the Empire. All the stories, although quite distinctive, share certain characteristic typical of Spark's writing. They all include the supernatural, eagerly

explored by the writer in most of her works, as well as numerous autobiographical references based on the time Spark spent in Zimbabwe. In all of them the author raises the issue of being a minority, whereas she, herself, may as well be perceived as a member of various minority groups—as a woman writer creating fiction during the war-time, as a woman whose husband tried to force her to abort a child and as one who opposed it, as a Catholic convert with parents of different religions (her father was Jewish while her mother was Presbyterian), as a women who was addicted to food suppressants and, most importantly, as a Scottish living in Africa.

Africa inspired Spark's writing in numerous ways—from various themes, most vividly discussed among them is the role of women, through beautiful landscapes, the most memorable being a trip to Victoria Falls, to situations which exercised her imagination—the result of which we may see in "Bang-Bang You're Dead". In Zimbabwe, Spark was removed from her element—away from family and friends with a man, as it turned out, she barely knew and who suffered mental problems. When she wanted to return to the home country, the war broke out. Once she finally returned to England, she tried to make a living for herself, suffering many hardships along the way—she kept having financial difficulties, got addicted to Dexedrine which resulted in anorexia and nervous breakdown during which she believed that T.S. Eliot was sending her encrypted messages. Throughout this period she received a lot of help and support from her friends, she converted to Catholicism and continued her literary career writing poetry as well as shorter and longer fiction in which she frequently reflected her life.

"The Seraph and the Zambezi"

The short story which advanced Spark's career is also one of the most peculiar in her oeuvre. It is treated as a masterpiece of magic realism.[1] The action takes place around Christmas near Victoria Falls, Africa, in the proximity of Samuel Cramer's house. Cramer is an author of a Nativity Masque playing the character of a seraph who is confronted by an actual angel. He is recognized by the narrator as a figure from Charles Baudelaire's novella "La Fanfarlo" (1847). This, from the very beginning, proves that Cramer is different—his longevity, mixed origin (his father was German, his mother—Chilean), being a European in Africa, ascribes him a minority status. He is well assimilated (he speaks some "Kitchen Kaffir"), very distinctive and extremely condescending.

"The Seraph and the Zambezi" explores the human world and nature, as well as the juxtaposition between the natural and the supernatural. In this story, the African experience of the author is reflected most strongly through images. We can also notice the tension between the whites and the natives. The whites are "arrogant, snobbish and

vengeful" (Aly, "Exile" 94), they keep together. Although they are in minority, they believe they are superior to the natives—they frequently shout at them and treat them as subordinate human beings. It is worth noting that this short story was written three years before the author converted to Catholicism. The work "[o]n an elemental level, ... is a struggle between the forces of good and evil, told with what would become one of Spark's distinctive narrative voices.... It expresses a devil-may-care attitude characteristic of all Spark's work, derived from her religious faith" (Hosmer 459).

Spark not only wrote "a highly experimental piece," but also embedded her interest in Baudelaire's story and her experience of South Africa (Stanford 57). As a converted Christian, we may view her reason behind creating such a story in a way which was described by Derek Stanford. He believes that "[t]he nativity masque represents the commercialisation of the spirit of Christmas—of all which the modern world understands by that term. In addition, the masque is not being performed to the greater glory of God, but to the greater profit and aggrandisement of Cramer and the Fanfarlo" (117), which puts the representative of the whites, the protagonist, in a negative light.

"The Pawnbroker's Wife"

This story is set in Cape Town, which Spark mentions in her autobiography as a city with the community heavily divided into coloured, white and black (Spark *CV* 135). The story focuses on the title character, Mrs Jan Cloote, and her manipulative power. Mrs Cloote's husband left her, he allegedly lives with a coloured woman, and abandoned his business. The pawnbroker's shop is now run more successfully, although Mrs Cloote denies the vocation by underlining that she is only the pawnbroker's wife. The title character is not only a white woman living in Africa, but she is also in a minority group of women left by their husbands who now live with a native women. Abdel-Moneim Aly believes that "Spark transforms many of her real experiences into the fictional ones of the narrator of 'The Pawnbroker's Wife' and in Mrs Jan Cloote and her three daughters she shows how the white South Africans refuse to 'face the human facts around them' " (Aly, "Exile" 99). The author, in her autobiography, stresses that these whites were in " 'a world of their own' " (Spark *CV* 135).

The pawnbroker's wife is so bored by her life in Africa that she starts to invent stories, not only to explain and conceal doubtful morality of herself and her daughters, but also to liven up their life stories. The work depicts, on the one hand, a slow, not fully conscious process of assimilation with the locals, through picking up their habits, such as placing the word 'eh' at the end of sentences. On the other, we learn, through various remarks, that natives are treated as second category citizens. Mrs Cloote's

husband was known for his two passions—yellow advocaat and black girls (105). The use of the colours ascribed to people and alcohol in one line may present marginal treatment the natives received and that they were regarded more like a property, commodity. Yet again, in this story the whites are put in a negative light, especially taking into account the title character—a manipulative, deceitful, vindictive woman.

"The Portobello Road"

This story's focus is on Needle's encounter with two of her friends, a few years after her death. She was killed by one of them because of a secret they shared in Africa. George, Needle's killer, goes to Africa to take over his uncle's tobacco farm. He keeps in touch with his friends, two of them, Needle and Skinny, visit the country because of Skinny's research expedition. They meet George's mistress who is a native. Later, in confidence, George reveals that he married the girl and he has two children with her.

In this story, Spark reveals a lot about the connection between and among the races. The narrator, upon learning about George's mistress, declares "I must say I was myself a bit off-put by this news about the brown woman. I was brought up in a university town to which came Indian, African and Asiatic students in a variety of tints and hues. I was brought up to avoid them for reasons connected with local reputation and God's ordinances" (6). When George reveals his secret, Needle's immediate reaction is: "How dreadful!" (10). The older settlers, however, are tolerant of this relationship, though they are not aware of the marriage. Nevertheless, they cannot bear George's method of raising tobacco which they perceived as "disloyal to the whites" (6).

Not only the three friends belong to the minority of the whites. Also George's mistress is not a typical native—her father was white and she had different upbringing from other coloured. Nevertheless, she was treated as a servant even when she was four months pregnant. George does not even pretend that he has any deeper feelings for her—he needs her for sex, especially since, which is stressed in the story, there are three white men to one white women in Africa. The whites are quite patronising when referring to the mistress as "George's Dark Lady" (16). Regardless of what they think of her, she is a clever woman who got a lot of money for letting George leave Africa and for promising not to tell anyone about their marriage in the Congo. Her financial condition disturbs "respectable coloured girls in their neighbourhood" (16), which causes tensions. When George's friends do not have any news of his whereabouts for a long period of time, they assume that "[h]e's probably gone native. With his coffee concubine and a dozen mahogany kids" (13). Needle, although she got on well with the natives and had many friends, keeps in touch just with a family which is representative of all the others.

The protagonist was killed because she wanted to reveal George's secret when he told her he is planning to propose to their mutual friend, Kathleen. Upon seeing Needle's ghost, George is driven to the verge of insanity. Vern Lindquist believes that "[t]he repeated sightings of Needle's ghost on the Portobello Road drive George mad not out of guilt, but because he mistakenly believes she has come back to tell Kathleen about his bigamy". I would argue, however, that George is not so much concerned with Needle revealing his secret, as by the mere fact of her appearance, since she is long dead. In this story, again, the most violent turns out to be the representative of the whites.

"The Go-Away Bird"

This story, set in Africa, is divided into three parts. In the first, we meet the protagonist, Daphne du Toit, whose uncle, Chakata, had an affair with Old Tuys' wife. Old Toys now seeks revenge, thus it is advisable for a young girl to go to England. The second part portrays the trip to England which proves to be a failure. In the third part, Daphne is brutally murdered by Old Tuys shortly after her return to Africa. All the events are linked by a foreshadowing sound, 'go-away,' made by a loerie. This story, as the previous ones, can be linked to Spark's life. She, as well as the protagonist, could not find a place for herself, a place she belonged to, neither in Africa, nor in England. They were unhappy with both English and African existences. Daphne's search for her identity fails miserably and the girl's end is tragic, although the narration is conducted in such a way that the reader does not necessarily feel compassion towards the character.

Daphne, throughout her life, is an outcast. Her father was Dutch, her mother —English. After their death she moves to a relative, James, who goes by the name Chakata, which shows his love for natives. Nevertheless, although he understands and can speak Afrikaans, he refuses to do so. He prefers to use English and is offended if addressed in Dutch. He married a woman born in the Colony who speaks English and who is now, because of Old Tuys' plan for revenge, forced to sleep guarded and with her gun. Daphne used to play with the only other European children in the vicinity — the Coates. She had a native friend but he died after being attacked by a wild animal. The situation in the Colony is often compared to what is happening in England. It is explained that love affairs, like the ones in Africa, does not happen in Europe and 13-year old girls do not know much about sex or rapes.

It is not only a story about a community but, most importantly, about looking for a place for oneself, unfulfilled expectations and inability to belong somewhere. The author embeds many African words in the story to strengthen the local colour. It is the work which most strongly gives us a taste of colonial Africa. Daphne's search

for a place where she would belong ends up tragic. Neither Africa, nor Europe, gave her a chance to put down roots. It is similar to Spark's situation. In the story, the reader may find remarks which make them think of the natives as savages. They have animalistic qualities, it is stated that they are, as leopards, 'under control.' Nevertheless, the conclusion unifies the races with the statement "we haven't got *the savage in ourselves* under control" (241).

"Bang-bang You're Dead"

In this story, Spark echoes the Gothic motif of the double—two women share uncanny physical resemblance. This story was also inspired by events in Spark's life. Africa is presented as a dangerous place—not only because of wild fauna, but also because of the people who live there, not necessarily the natives. The tribulations between the whites result in the biggest number of victims. The protagonist, Sybil, mentions at one point that she had no problem with the black, only with the whites (68). Shooting affairs were quite common in the Colony and all the people Sybil was close to are now dead. They were all white Europeans who treated natives as servants although the whites were in minority. Also during watching a film presenting Sybil's life in Africa one of the guests is enchanted by "those adorable shiny natives all over the place" (53), as if they were a landmark or a tourist attraction.

"The Curtain Blown by the Breeze"

As Aly summarises it: "The story is set in a remote part of the Southern African Colony and we are shown how the alien environment puts pressures on the characters that result from the tension between the natives and the whites as well as between the Africans and the British" ("African Short Stories" 4). The main protagonist's husband is sent to prison for shooting a young native who was peeping through a window when his wife, Sonji, was breast-feeding their baby. While he is in prison, his wife discovers the wealth her father left and changes her life in Africa—starting from redecorating her home (to make it more Europeanised), through changing her social circle and her name from Sonji to Sonia, to becoming involved with other man. When the husband is released, he kills his wife and her lover and this time meets much severer punishment —one may wander—is it because it is his second offence or because this time he killed white people. "As in many of the African stories, the culture of violence seems to be a part and parcel of life in the Colony" (Aly "African Short Stories" 5).

In this story, a strong division is stressed not only between the natives and the whites, but also within the whites—the wealthy and the poor. Sonia would not have an access to a higher social group, since she was thought to have some coloured blood, if it was not for her wealth. The protagonist, due to all the changes, feels she "made a

corner of civilization" for herself. A native is referred to, at one occasion, as "a blerry nig" and a servant in Sonia's house has "huge ape-like hands," which again ascribes animalistic qualities to the ones treated as minority by an actual minority group. This all stresses the division and different possibilities and opportunities of the two races. It also depicts how one can change and what one can do in order to fit into a community. In this story, yet again, a white person proves to be the most violent.

The analysis of the African short stories cycle provides us with numerous areas of further research and stresses motifs which were particularly interesting for Spark. Apart from "The Seraph and the Zambesi," all the protagonists are women, often shown as ones struggling to find a place for themselves. Spark frequently presents the whites as conceited and prone to violence. They are the minority but they often feel and act as superior human beings treating the natives with disrespect. The author presents the divisions between the whites and the natives and draws heavily from her own experience—of a white woman living in Africa. She often depicts women who take charge of their own destiny, such as Mrs Cloote or Sonia; but, at the same time, shows their failure and often tragic ends, as it happens with Daphne.

Spark easily moves through settings, African and English, which is especially visible in "The Go-Away Bird" and "Bang-Bang You're Dead". In the latter story "we see violence as a principal factor of life in the Colony. There are tensions not only between the white and the coloured but, especially in "The Go-Away Bird" (as in "The Curtain Blown by the Breeze") between the English and the Dutch" (Aly "African Short Stories" 5). Martin McQuillan notices that:

> Spark's writing on Africa, unlike the rest of her fiction, is marked by the number of murders that take place in the stories, notably of white women. The violence done against them by white men brings questions of the role of white women in the colonies sharply into focus. Many of the women that inhabit Spark's short stories set in Africa, demonstrate a diastase for any ideological commitment to colonial culture. They are women who return continually to the question of their own conflictual negotiations with, and attempts to transgress, the confines of strongly defined, indeed often menacingly policed, roles available to white women in the colonies. (118)

The country as seen through the narrators eyes is perceived as savage and inhospitable (Aly "Exile" 103) with numerous threats of various natures. But, unequivocally, the biggest threat lies within the human being, regardless of colour or origin.

Spark's characters suffer because of their alienation, they are outcasts, not

only as the minority of the whites in Africa, something the author experienced first-handed, but also they are unable to fit anywhere within the society. They are trying hard to find a place for themselves, but they are failing. They are unable to assimilate into a new culture because they cannot find their true self. The stories are not devoid of humorous elements, witty comments and remarks. Nevertheless, the reader may discover a gloomy picture of unhappy life of people who do not belong anywhere—a feeling that, for a long time, was not strange to Spark.

Note

1. The source is "Dame Muriel Spark" (*The Telegraph* 17 Apr. 2006: n. pag. *Telegraph.co.uk*. 17 Apr. 2006. Web.15 June 2012.)

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The Presence of the Other in Knud Rasmussen's "The New People"

Agata Lubowicka
Department of Scandinavian Studies, University of Gdańsk, Poland
ul. Wita Stwosza 55, 80-952 Gdańsk, Poland
Email: finalu@univ.gda.pl

Abstract The aim of the article is to discuss the presence of the Other in the most famous Danish polar explorer Knud Rasmussen's (1879-1933) first expedition account about Northern Greenland and its native people Inughuit entitled "The New People". Since the account was written in the period of Danish imperialism in the Arctic and Knud Rasmussen was a key agent in the colonization of Northern Greenland, I apply analytic tools within postcolonial critical theory, but instead of focusing on the oppressive power of colonial discourse in the text, my goal is to examine how the native agency and resistance understood as "counter-colonial properties" (McLeod 158) are manifest in "The New People". By applying the concepts of heteroglossia and the splitting of the subject I will show how Rasmussen's text challenges imperialist ideology and resists Eurocentric textual violence.
Key words Knud Rasmussen; the Other; heteroglossia; native agency.

Much has been said and written about Knud Rasmussen and his work[1]: the most famous Danish polar explorer, son of a Danish vicar and a half-Greenlandic mother, born in 1879 and grown up in Ilulissat, Western Greenland (and thus speaking Greenlandic), known as a bridge builder between Danes and Greenlanders because of his unique combination of language and negotiation skills. Rasmussen is best remembered as a self-taught ethnographer and commander of his scientific arctic expeditions including the most famous 5th Thule Expedition (1921-24) whose main aim was to study the Inuit communities spread along the north coast of the American continent and record their oral folklore. Rasmussen was made honorary doctor at the University of Copenhagen in 1924 and the University of Edinburgh in 1927. He died in 1933 as an unquestioned expert in Greenlandic issues and Danish national hero.

Knud Rasmussen and the Colonization of Northern Greenland

From the Euro-American perspective Northern Greenland was a "no man's

land" when Knud Rasmussen embarked on a Danish Literary Expedition in 1902 (Müntzberg and Simonsen 210). The Danish state colonized gradually the western part of the island up to the settlement in Upernavik, a process that started in 1721 and resulted in Danish sovereignty over that territory with missionary activity and colonial administration managed by The Royal Greenland Trading Department (Den Kongelige Grønlandske Handel). However, Northern Greenland was not a *terra incognita* at the beginning of the 20th century. On the contrary, it was a territory that British, American and Scandinavian polar researchers and travellers were struggling to explore in order to gain scientific expertise and, as a consequence, obtain national fame and prestige. The Literary Expedition to Greenland (1902-1904) under the leadership of the writer and journalist Ludvig Mylius-Erichsen (1872-1907) was the first Danish initiative in the area north of the border of the Danish colony (Petersen 224). After coming back from the Literary Expedition Knud Rasmussen and Ludvig Mylius-Erichsen tried to convince the Danish state to colonize the region, but Danish officials were afraid of ruining their relations with USA and Great Britain that also showed interest in those distant territories. This made Knud Rasmussen establish the Thule trading post in North Star Bay in 1910 as a private enterprise in collaboration with a Danish engineer and businessman Marius Ib Nyeboe (1867-1946). It depended on the fur trade with the Inughuit living in the region, which turned out to be a profitable undertaking that provided the necessary financing for Knud Rasmussen's scientific activity (the so-called Thule Expeditions, seven in all). The establishing of Thule trading post was the first step to the private colonization of the whole region[2], which allowed Knud Rasmussen to act as a sort of absolute ruler of Northern Greenland. After his death Thule was bought by the Danish state from Dagmar Rasmussen (1882-1965) for 400. 000 Danish crowns and became officially a part of the Greenland colony in 1937 (Petersen 243).

The New People

After completing his education in Denmark, Knud Rasmussen embarked on the Danish Literary Expedition to Greenland in 1902. After coming back to Denmark in 1904 he wrote his expedition account entitled *The New People* (Nye Mennesker), published in 1905[3]. The book is very heterogeneous and consists of three parts: "The New People" being the actual account of the expedition's stay at Agpat Island[4], the ethnographic account of Inughuit belief system and practices titled "Primitive Views of Life" as well as "Fables and Legends" containing myths, legends and fables of the Inughuit. In this article I will only focus on the first part of the book titled "The New People", which I perceive as a very unusual second-position expedition account[5], differing from other known expedition accounts of the period not only because of the

fact that it was published before the first-position expedition account that is Ludvig Mylius-Erichsen and Harals Moltke's *Greenland* (Grønland, 1906), but first and foremost because of its unique representations of the Inughuit [6], which are the object of my present reading.

Heteroglossia and Native Agency in Travel Writing

My approach in this reading of "The New People" is the one offered by post-colonial critical theory[7] and, more specifically, within the colonial discourse analysis, aiming at uncovering the oppressive apparatus of European textuality through an analysis of how knowledge is produced via literary representations in order to subjugate individuals as well as whole cultures and societies (Brydon i Tiffin 81). In accordance with Edward W. Said's views presented in *Orientalism* (1978), I perceive colonial travel literature[8] about Greenland as closely interwoven with the imperialist discourse (that is, being the product of this discourse as well as contributing to its creation) but unlike Said I see the colonial discourse as a site of ambivalence containing an inherent possibility of native agency and resistance. As Mary Louise Pratt has shown in her study of colonial travel writing *Imperial Eyes*, the European subject of any travel account is always a transculturator, transporting to his/her homeland knowledge infiltrated by non-European knowledge, which results in a "heteroglossic dimension" in all travel writing (Pratt 135):

> Its knowledge comes not just out of a traveler's sensibility and powers of observation, but out of interaction and experience usually directed and managed by "travelees", who are working from their own understandings of their world and of what the Europeans are and ought to be doing. (Pratt 135-136)

As I see it, the heteroglossia of colonial travel writing takes place in what Homi Bhabha calls "the space of the adversarial": "the place of difference and otherness, […] never entirely on the outside or implacably oppositional" (Bhabha 109)[9] enabled by the inevitable splitting of the European subject resulting in "a persistent questioning of the frame, the space of representation" (Bhabha 46). Taking those theories as my point of departure I will examine through a motivated act of reading how the heteroglossia in the text of "The New People" (understood as the presence of the Other[10]) is manifested in the split European subject's experience and knowledge and, as a consequence, how native agency and resistance are present in Rasmussen's expedition account, challenging the monolithic imperialist discourse and subverting the hegemony of European textual violence.

The Split European Subject and the Presence of the Other

Already in the preface to "The New People" the narrator's words reveal the splitting of the European subject:

> When I was a child I used often to hear an old Greenlandic woman tell how, far away in the North, at the end of the world, there lived a people who dressed in bearskins and ate raw flesh.
>
> Their country was always shut in by ice, and the daylight never reached over the tops of their high fields.
>
> Whoever wished to go there, must travel with the South wind, right up to the Lord of the wild northern gales.
>
> Even before I knew what travelling meant, I determined that one day I would go and find these people, whom my fancy pictured different from all others. I must go and see "The New People", as the old story-teller called them. (Rasmussen 1908, Preface)

The quoted passage shows clearly that the white, middle-class, male and European subject is not a "self-sufficient, monadic source of knowledge" (Pratt 136), but that his knowledge is a result of his interaction with the Other, whose "calling" (Islam 3) he hears even before he embarks on his first expedition. Listening to the old Greenlandic story-teller about the mythic people living in the Far North becomes a part of his experience[11] and while he repeats the story in the preface, the Inughuit are still present in his consciousness.

Although the discursive practices of "othering" (Fabian 1990: 755) are already at work in the quoted passage, which contributes to the text's colonial polarizations[12], the presence of the native knowledge epitomized by the narrative of the Greenlandic story-teller is not only accepted by the young traveller as an equal world view to his own, but also represented by him as the actual point of departure for his travel to the North[13]. His narrative is written in a double mythical pattern: the ancient European myth of Hyperboreans living beyond the home of "the Lord of the wild northern gales", on the edge of the known world, and the Greenlandic tale about the "new", unknown people wearing bearskins and eating raw flesh. This double mythical order, based on European as well as Greenlandic knowledge helps the European traveller to find directions in the new, "uninscribed" space, ready to be "discovered" and filled with ambivalent meaning. His simultaneous recalling of both stories situates him in an "in-between" reality between them - just like the meaning of the whole statement, where they are juxtaposed)—"neither the one nor the other" (Bhabha 13, 36).

As I have shown above, the split European subject does not reject the indigenous world of knowledge and experience. After meeting the little community of Inughuit living near the Agpat Island the narrator and his comrades pitch their tents and live among the natives, observing their daily life. The narrator's observation of the Inughuit from a secure vantage point from which he carries out "a representation of difference" (Islam vii) transforms gradually into participation and real interaction with the Other. The first distinct step towards this is taken through the narrator's acquaintance with the old bear-hunter Sorqaq[14]. His name in English means "The Whalebone", but in Danish it is translated as "Bard"—a word having two different meanings: "whalebone" and "bard" (ancient poet and singer). The other meaning adds an extra dimension to the figure of Sorqaq in the narrative: the concise utterances of the Arctic poet are full of wisdom of his great ancestors and his life philosophy inspires the young traveller from Europe, who step by step lets himself influenced by the old "bard's" view of life:

> Happy Sorqaq! Thou wast born with an energy that will never let thee rest. Thou must live travelling because thou canst not stand always and every day to return to the same pen. The domestic animal nature has never formed part of thy composition.
> The world is large, that men may take it in possession. And so, when the travelling fever comes over thee, then do thou fling thyself on thy sledge, lord of thy day, master of thy dogs!" (Rasmussen 42-43)

For the narrator Sorqaq epitomizes freedom and independence, qualities that not only conform to his modern need for an authentic, primitive Other. Sorqaq's energy and nomadic lifestyle are set against the cultivated domesticity of the Europeans, a binary opposition between nature and culture in reverse where the first part is presented as positive and enabling the narrator to construct or find his Self by identification with Sorqaq according to what Simon During calls "self-othering" (During 47). The European traveller sets off on a bear hunt, following his "bard" and this taking the first step towards crossing the border between modernity and non-modernity[15] and becoming the Other: an Arctic hunter, free and unfettered by the bonds of Western culture, a real superhuman and Arctic authority[16]. Instead of the rigid boundary between Self and the Other, supporting the hegemony of the imperial order, the traveller leaves the door open onto the outside where he lets his travel pass along "supple lines" (Islam 9).

It is through the interaction with the Inughuit during their hunting journeys the narrator's gradual becoming-other reaches its peak[17]. Through experiencing the

real life of the Arctic hunters and what follows: hunger, hectic pursuit of game, hard frost in the mornings, and story-telling in the evenings he immerses himself in the Inughuit world of experience. This is reflected in his language where the Danish impersonal form "man" is preferred rather than the essentializing subject in the third person as well as the ethnographic present tense (Fabian 1983: 85) when speaking of the Inughuit. Such a subject construction includes the narrator himself, making him a part of what is represented by annihilating the distance between the world and his Self. This disrupts the construction of an autonomous and stable subject perceiving its objects at a distance. Instead of imposing European knowledge on the world perceived, his knowledge becomes the result of that fractured boundary and being in the world as the Canadian writer John Moss puts it: "if truly there, you cannot tell yourself apart from it" (Moss 5).

Reversed Colonial Codes

The European subject's immersion in the North-Greenlandic Other manifests itself in a subversive inversion of colonial binary codifications. The presence of other European travellers than the narrator himself is almost totally effaced in the narrative alongside with the Inughuit being represented as its key agents. Effacement is a conventional colonial trope used for representing "new" territories as an empty space, a country without mythology or memory and thus ready for the introduction of a new beginning (Slemon 11), but in "The New People" that trope is reversed by highlighting the native presence while obliterating the Europeans and the effects of the Western presence in the region. In contrast to the standard colonial narratives, the narrator of "The New People" makes en effort to mention all the quoted Inughuit by name and focuses on their distinctive and unique features[18]. His immersion in the totality of the surrounding environment results in a representation of The North Greenlandic space as satiated with local meanings, myth and history. Also the Other's language is incorporated in the narrative in the form of (sometimes unglossed) Greenlandic words and quotations or translating them into Danish in such a way that they reflect the Inughuit way of thinking[19]. The infiltration of the native knowledge and language into the narration of "The New People" questions the superiority of European knowledge and perception of the world. Of course, this strategy also serves imperialist ideology by putting stress on the primitive, natural and undisturbed way of life in Northern Greenland, but it still enhances the narrator's being *in* the represented world while distancing him from what in the very beginning of his account was his European center.

The narrator's shifted position in reference to the Other is also manifested in another inversion of the most conventional tropes in colonial travel writing: the traditional asymmetry in the relation between the Europeans and the natives reflected

in the dichotomy between the passivity of the perceived native objects and the activity of the observing European subjects (Karlsen 2011(a) 48). Already in the scene of the Europeans' arrival at Agpat the Inughuit are represented as active agents while the newcomers are assigned the role of *passively* perceiving subjects, which makes the Inughuit be the active part in the cultural encounter taking place in the North Greenlandic contact zone. That strategy as well results in challenging fixed colonial binarities and disrupting the unidirectionality of the imperial discourse of power.

The Other Speaking: Native Agency and Resistance

The Inughuit are not only *represented* by the European newcomer, they are also *representing* themselves: the European subject recognizes the Other by giving him/her the possibility to speak. It is on this level that the heteroglossic dimension of "The New People" is most evident in the narrative. Unlike Caliban or Friday the Inughuit do not speak through the voices of the Europeans, but according to the phenomenon by James Clifford called "inverse-ethnography" which means a process where the perspectives of the subject and the object are reversed (Clifford 9). In this way the Inughuit become the initiators and not the objects of the cultural encounter. This transformation from the objects into the subjects of the narrative is an expression of native resistance against the imposition of unambiguous, fixed meaning from the outside.

In the following I want to examine what the Inughuit speak of when they get the permission to speak. Firstly, they reveal themselves as subjects who perceive actively the European traveller, his customs and behavior by which he sometimes holds himself up to ridicule, especially when women are involved (Rasmussen 10, 47). Moreover, they do not hesitate to reprimand him if they think he did something against the local custom. During the ceremony of conjuring up spirits, the old shaman Saqdloq[20] puts the blame on the newcomers for bringing the dog illness to the village with them and as a consequence causing the illness of this wife:

> The white men brought the Evil Fate with them, they had a misfortune-bringing spirit with them. I saw it myself, there are no lies in my mouth; I do not lie, I am not a liar, I saw it myself! (Rasmussen 19)

"The wisdom of his forefathers" (22) is speaking through the mouth of Saqdloq, but the narrator adds very quickly that although Saqdloq's utterance has made an impression on the people, they soon "separated and went back to their work and play" (21). He is pretty convinced that the Inughuit do not feel like worrying about the words of the old shaman, but—or: because - he *cannot* know, how the native people

have interpreted the Saqdloq's pronouncement. His uncertainty about it makes him choose to ignore the accusation and not a word more is said about the dog illness in the narrative - a silence that is very meaningful and tells a lot about the European subject's lack of authority and control.

Another example of the Inughuit acting as speaking agents is a situation where Qisunguaq[21], a young Inughuaq, reproaches the narrator for not respecting his dead kinsmen: "[y]ou are so strange, you white men! You collect things you will never require, and you cannot leave even the graves alone" (72). Also here the narrator cannot really respond to the articulated reproach and chooses to ignore it, firstly by giving a cunning answer saying that the corpse has got "exchange gifts to the soul" (72) and therefore should be satisfied[22]. But Qisunguaq does not let the narrator delude him by an argument apparently consorting to the Inughuit logic of thinking and asserts: "[t]he thoughts of the dead are not as out thoughts; the dead are incomprehensible in their doings!" (73) Although the narrator does not let the young Inughuaq deliberate further on the problem, the last word in this discussion is Qisunguaq's. He questions the authority of the European traveller and it is his accusations that unanswered still resound in the air after reading the passage.

In both cases it is clear that the European narrator is represented by the Inughuit as a stranger, whose presence in Northern Greenland is called into question. Saqdloq as well as Qisunguaq's utterances reveal distrust and suspicion towards the European traveller perceived as coming from outside their world, driven by unknown intentions and not respecting their traditions. By questioning his innocence they question the ideology of anti-conquest, all pervasive in the text. The native resistance to the preeminence of the European narrativizing of harmonious relations between them and the Inughuit lurks in the interstices of the text of "The New People" contributing to its ambivalence.

The discursivizing of resistance by the Inughuit can also take the form of parables—as is the case with the legend about the white boy who was found in a box from a plundered European ship and who grew up among them until he began to yearn for "milk and the sweet dishes" (Rasmussen 82) and disappeared without a trace. One of the old Inughuit who tells the story ends it with following words: "[…] you are strange, you white foreigners; one fine day you appear in our country, and as soon as we have learnt to care for you, you vanish, and we do not know where you go" (82). The second maxim is told by an old Inughuit woman named "The Sinew" and at the same time the passage constitutes the end of the whole book:

> You are like the sea-king. When the spring warms the country, it visits us. It comes from a country far, far away, which we do not know.

> You came here like the sea-king, with the welcome spring; but when the summer was over and the flight began, you stayed. So that is why you are eager now to get back to your country and your people; and it is good for you to go.
> Do you hear? Your dogs are whining. Never wait for the dawn, when you are eager to be gone! (217-218)

While the end of the first Inughuit story about the white people can be read as a native request for a permanent presence of the Europeans in the region, legitimizing a possible imperial expansion, the content of the legend itself suggests a rather different message: it highlights what is later on confirmed by The Sinew's words. "White foreigners" come *and go*, they are supposed to be at home in the metropole and not on the distant periphery situated "far north of the civilization" (79). It is a native call towards the European newcomer to go home, supported by the knowledge passed on to them by their forefathers and wisdom drawn from the observation of the surrounding environment.

Conclusions

The uniqueness of "The New People" as a polar expedition narrative written in the period of Danish colonialism lies in the distinct presence of the Other in the text, which becomes visible while applying the concepts of heteroglossia as well as the splitting of the European subject offered by postcolonial critical theory. The presence of the Inughuit manifests itself on two levels: in the European narrator's utterances as well as in the voices of the indigenous people. On the level of the European subject, it is expressed in the presence of native knowledge, language and worldview as well as in his crossing the boundary between the Self and the Other. On the level of the native voices in the narrative the Inughuit are able not only to express their contrary view of the world to that of the Europeans', but also to verbalize their resistance against the European presence of in Northern Greenland. Consequently, "The New People" can be read as a colonial expedition account where the Inughuit are not produced as "instrumental subjects" (Pratt 130), but as active agents in the cultural encounter with the Europeans and their presence in the split subject's knowledge, experience and language challenges the dominance of imperialist Eurocentric ideology.

Notes

1. Only within the recent 2 years there have been published three exceptional biographies of Knud Rasmussen: Kirsten Hastrup's *Heart of Winter* (Vinterens hjerte, 2010), Knud Michelsen's *The Young Knud Rasmussen Presented through Letters and other Sources* (Den unge Knud Rasmussen

belyst gennem breve og andre kilder 1893 – 1902, 2011) and Niels Barfoed's *The Man Behind the Hero: Knud Rasmussen at Close Range* (Manden bag helten: Knud Rasmussen på nært hold, 2011) but his expedition accounts are still waiting to be analyzed as *literary* works with the postcolonial approach.

2. The trade station was a private enterprise, but the Danish state supported it unofficially, e.g. helped Rasmussen to equip his scientific Thule Expeditions.

3. In this article I use the English translation of *Nye Mennesker* that was published in 1908 in London within a compound work *The people of the Polar North: A Record* compiled and edited by G. Herring.

4. I use the old spelling of the name used in "The New People". In modern Greenlandic the name is spelled Appat.

5. The terms "first- and second-position expedition accounts" are used by Silje Solheim Karlsen in her article about Firdtjof Nansen's *Farthest North* (Fram over Polhavet, 1897) (Karlsen 113).

6. Taking into account that *The New People* was written before Knud Rasmussen's private colonization of North-Western Greenland which started in 1910, his travel to the region *can* be interpreted as a physical reconnaissance in the region and its literary result that is The New People as a successful attempt to create an image of "friendly North Greenland" in order to win the interest of the Danish reading public and, last but not least, the favor of political decision makers.

7. But, as the Canadian literary critic Stephen Slemon points out "[r]egardless of where one stands on the question, there is no single post-colonial theory and no one critic can possibly represent, or speak for, the post-colonial critical field" (Slemon 2001, s.101).

8. According to Elleke Boehmer colonial literature can be described as "reflecting a colonial ethos" and "concerned with colonial perceptions and experience, written mainly by metropolitans, but also by creoles and indigenes, during colonial times." (Boehmer 2) In this view, Knud Rasmussen's expedition accounts, written in the period of Danish colonialism, can be undoubtedly treated as colonial travel writing.

9. For Bhabha, resistance is "the effect of an ambivalence produced within the rules of recognition of dominating discourses as they articulate the signs of cultural difference and reimplicate them within the deferential relations of colonial power—hierarchy, normalization, marginalization, and so forth" (Bhabha 110-111).

10. I understand "the Other" as everything which is "unfamiliar and extraneous to a dominant subjectivity, the opposite or negative against which an authority is defined" (Boehmer 21).

11. As Johannes Fabian claims, it is owing to the subject's reflexion "to be in the presence of others precisely inasmuch as the Other has become content of our experience" (Fabian 1983: 91-92).

12. However, it has to be noticed that the construction of the Inughuit "other" is created against not only the European, but also against the West Greenlandic "same" since for the old Greenlandic woman the wild people living in the Far North are as strange and exotic as for the little European boy listening to her stories.

13. In accordance with Tvetan Todorov's rhetorical question in *The Conquest of America* Tvetan Todorov: "Is not a travel narrative itself the point of departure, and not only the point of arrival, of a new voyage?" (Todorov13)

14. In the Danish text of "The New People" the name is spelled "Sorkrark".

15. For During that border is not a geographical fact a set of discursive practices dividing the present from the past (During 50-51).

16. Being the typical way in which the Inughuit were represented at the turn of the 19th century (Fienup-Riordan 15; Gaupseth 214).

17. My conclusions regarding the European subject's becoming-other in the following paragraphs are based on the chapter in Danish entitled "Efter Vildren", which is unfortunately missing from the English translation of "The New People".

18. Rasmussen's narrator does not use generalizing (and dehumanizing) expressions as "our skimos" "a few Eskimos", frequently used in narratives of exploration.

19. For instance the Greenlandic name of June translated as "the breeding month" (Rasmussen14).

20. The name is spelled Sagdlork in the Danish original text.

21. The name is spelled Krisunguark in the Danish original text.

22. One can notice here a strategy Peter Hulme calls "a polytropic man", which can mean being cunning, intelligent, slippery and deceitful while coping with obstacles of various kinds. Hulme 1984, s.20.

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The Experience of Marginalisation in the Process of Discovering Identity in *Out of place* and *Persepolis*

Magdalena Stola
Institute of Polish Philology, University of Gdańsk, Poland
ul. Wita Stwosza 55, 80-952 Gdańsk, Poland
Email: sto.la@interia.pl

Abstract The article focuses on the issue of marginalisation in Edward Said's *Out of Place* and Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis*. In these autobiographical texts both writers try to express the process of discovering and naming their identities. It seems that bell hooks' concept of the priviliged position of the margin is applicable to their narrations. Both Satrapi and Said witnessed historical events and in their texts they try to convey their testimonies. Themes of childhood and memory are explored differently in their stories but they both underline its significance. The article tries to show in what way the experience of marginalisation affected their emerging individualities, contributed to building their inner freedom and independence and influnced their notion of identity.
Key words marginalisation; Said; Satrapi

Nowadays, the issue of marginalisation is a widely discussed problem of literary theory, especially exposed in cultural, postcolonial, feminist and gender studies. It is connected with the issue of identity and experience, as well as with the Standpoint Theory based on the work of Michel Foucault. The concept of marginalisation as a privileged position is articulated in the works of Bell Hooks. According to her, the greatest advantage of being situated on the margin is a different, broader perspective. It is rather a place of possibility than a place of humiliation (hooks: 52).

Edward Said's *Out of Place* and Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis* are unique and exceptional works. Similar in concentrating on the period of childhood and growing up, both can be read as an example of a Bildungsroman. The first one is a memoir, the second—an autobiographical graphic novel successfully presented in the film adaptation in 2007. Said and Satrapi both seem to trace in memory the painful process of discovering and shaping their individuality and identity. They learn how to be

bicultural and, at the same time, how to keep their original heritage.

Said started working on *Out of Place* in 1994, shortly after he was diagnosed with leukemia. In this extraordinary piece of literature he returns to his childhood spent in the Middle East. Born in Jerusalem in 1935 to Palestinian parents, he was raised in Egypt and Lebanon and witnessed the establishment of Israel in 1948. His family belonged to an Evangelical Church, therefore he was perceived as a represantative of a minority within Christian minority in the surroundings dominated by Islam. At the age of fifteen he moved to the United States, where he graduated from Princeton University in 1957 and earned his Ph.D. from Harvard University in 1964. He was University Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University until his death in 2003.

Said always accentuated the exceptional quality of his personal experience and *Out of Place* can be read as his testimony. Evoked memories are combined with reflections and assessments of the past based on observations made from the perspective of the present moment. A very introspective story of gaining knowledge about the world and himself is conveyed in the style of a confession.

Said's experience of marginalisation was complex and multi-faceted. Before moving to America, he attended nine schools mostly in Egypt, including British Gezira Preparatory School and Cairo School for American Children. In every school he had difficulties with adaptation and mostly felt left out as an outcast. He confesses with sadness that he does not remember any pleasant moment with his classmates and any uplifting words from his teachers. Vulnerable, afraid of sudden ostracism and intimidated by the confidence of his American colleagues, he tried to hide his skills during the lessons in the Arabic language. As most children at the age of ten, he did not want to be excluded from the group and longed for acceptance. His frequent efforts to adjust were mostly failures and he did not succeed in gaining friends and appreciation from his teachers. Marginalised at school, Said started to reconsider himself in terms of nationality. Inside he felt confused with his Arabic heritage and his American false identity and for a long time he did not know how to cope with this problem. At the Cairo School for American Children he wanted to conceal his Palestinian roots and put it away deep into the abyss of unconsciousness, push it away into the shadow of the Freudian id. This strategy seriously affected his personality and as a result he became even more isolated, confused, timid, insecure and weak in his own eyes. This bitter feeling of humiliation and low self-esteem changed him. He was aware that the outside image was a projection of his desires and covered his fear of rejection. In *Out of place,* Said describes situations when unexpectedly from this artificial mask of American identity an inner strength emerges. According to him, it was something more than an Arabic heritage, it was rather human dignity and a strong

conviction of injustice of his situation by comparison to others.

Said's double identity was exposed especially in the juxstaposition of his name and surname. He tried to hide this odd combination of the typical British name 'Edward' and the surname of Arabic origins by pronouncing the latter in a more American way: 'Sigheed'. This binary opposition mirrored the black and white evaluation of the world typical for the colonised person. However, the division between 'good American culture' and 'worse Arabic tradition' was not so clear for him. Several times he states that his inner self was somehow free from national and cultural labels. He found himself completely independent in the field of music, a universal language serving as a kind of cure for strict categories of politics, nationality and social functions. Music, as a form of escapism from prejudiced assessments, was to him the divine uniting force which transcended imposed divisions.

In his youth, Said suffered because of his double Arabic- American identity and then he had two ways of solving that problem: accept his bicultural upbringing or try to conceal his Arabic origins. From *Out of place* we learn that he mostly tended to choose the second option which was for him a certain method of defense. Surprisingly, when he speaks about the issue of languages, he clearly states that as a child he did not know which one was really his own. From the beginning, it was a rather harmonious and smooth coexistence of both. English was an official language and Arabic was more intimate and personal and served the purpose of communication especially with his mother. This bilingual experience affected his maturing individuality, depriving him of making sufficient bonds with the surroundings. It always reminded him of the fact that he was not wholly from the place he was born and that part of him was different from the tradition he was raised into. Similarly, the juxstaposition of his name and surname was a sign of multiple identity and underlined his otherness vis a vis both American and Arabic culture.

As Jacek Gutorow stated, the major theme of Said's works is the motif of identity threatened by various ideological systems (Gutorow 127). From the memoir of the Palestinian writer it seems that his evolving individuality was marginalised by the oppressive structure of school, nation and family. Fond memories of his parents are combined in *Out of Place* with assessments made from the perspective of time. As a youth he always felt pressure at school as well as at home. The tension between the center and the margin was mirrored in the relationship between dominating and overprotective parents and the son who was under their influence.

This experience of marginalisation was probably a crucial factor in the process of discovering his individuality and naming his identity. The deprivation of the right to express himself freely when he was young seems to be the driving force of Said's narration. The oppression that he noticed and recognized in constructs like

family, society, nation and the system of education was perhaps the starting point of his studies on colonialism, which finally were presented in *Orientalism*. In *Out of Place* Said explores the issue of alienation, dependency and the enslaved mind. By approaching his youthful expriences, he wants to reinterpret and understand his life. It seems that his memoir is the expression of the hidden need to give meaning to the past. The marginalisation he experienced himself allowed him to examine this problem from an inside perspecitve and make it the object of his thorough reflec- tion and study. The resulting distance enabled him to look critically and without emotional involvement on the issue of the margin.

As Bell Hooks stated, the experience of marginalisation can be enriching as long as it allows one to gain a different view and a more empathetic attitude. Said, as a person of double identity, was especially intrested in the writers of the 'Third World'. He was also involved in the issue of the independence of Palestine, which he described by using colonial rhetoric. After the events that took place in 1948, he strongly felt as a Palestinian and heartily devoted himself to defend the interests of people who shared his fate.

In *Out of Place* the motif of insomnia is especially exposed. It symbolises the state between dream and reality, childhood and adulthood, the present and the past, life and death. Said's memoir is an attempt to catch the moment from the passing of time and make it infinite. This state of uncertainty and being somewhere "between", typical for insomnia, also made him reflect on the issue of identity. Said says explicitly that he prefers perceiving idenity as a concatenation of freely flowing streams rather than a stable and solid construct. It is his choice to live between worlds, on the verge of cultures. Paradoxically, it appears that the marginalisation he experienced as a youth was enriching in that sense that it helped him to achieve inner freedom. It encouraged him to reconsider the problem of rejection and exile in terms of the human condition. The state of marginalisation, as painful as it is, takes away the comfortable feeling of confidence and instead gives one humility and an awareness of limitations. Said's awareness of mortality, the temporal boundaries of life and the impossibility of possessing anything echoes in his ideas about the fragility of identity. Destructive feelings from the past seem to change and are transformed into this concept of personal freedom. The identity emerging from *Out of Place* is rather a mosaic and a collection of many different elements. It appears that he found fulfillment in the work at the university and in the process of writing. In his text *Reflections on Exile* Said discusses the notion of home in modern times, commenting on the works of Theodor Adorno. According to this philosopher, the only possible "home" nowadays is the act of writing itself. Similarly, Ryszard Nycz in his article states on the basis of Polish literature that there are two types of exiles: the one completely isolated and the

other who despite isolation reaches for universal culture and always looks for the universal element in the local (Nycz 22). In this typology, Said would be a definite representative of the second option.

Said's essay *Reflections on Exile* is a good illustration to *Out of Place* and allows him to perceive the experience of marginalisation as an enriching factor, despite all the costs and negative aspects. His memoir is written from the point of view of a person who accepted his bicultural heritage and became aware of the instability of any forced and imposed structure. Said speaks about "contrapuntal consciousness" as a distinctive feature of people of multiple identity and stresses its benefitial role in improving the ability to sympathize (Said 148).

In his intimate and insightful memoire, Said makes an effort to understand his life and to capture something which once was marginalized. From the point of view of a professor of literature at Columbia University and author of *Orientalism*, he looks back on his turbulent days with the hermeneutic wisdom to read life as a whole and to judge the past with the indulgence of the present moment.

Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis* is an autobiographical graphic novel presented in the form of a black and white comic-book. Satrapi's story of childhood and youth was also captured in the film adaptation in 2007. The story about the Iranian girl Marji starts with the outbreak of the islamic revolution in Tehran. This event changes the life of ten years old girl, who from now on witnesses the dramatic events of the uprising. From the history of Iran told by her father, she learns that her country was always the object of invasion and the imperial influence of the West. The events of the revolution enlarge her awareness of the injustice and make the process of her growing up more rapid and dynamic. Although a child, she wants to participate in the protests and gain knowledge about the situation. She sees people as equal and does not understand economic differences in society. Sensitive to injustice, she observes with fear the repressions after the downfall of the Shah and the war between Iran and Iraq.

Marji is an example of many children whose childhood was invaded by politics and history. She is deprived of a normal life and the right to grow up in peace. What is worse, she is constantly afraid for the lives of her dear ones as much as of her own, especially after the death of uncle Anoosh and the departure of her best friends. These experiences shape her views and emerging individuality. She becomes courageous enough to point out the lies of her teachers and openly speaks about political prisoners and executions. Because of the growing danger, parents decide to send Marji to Vienna where she encounters a new culture and a new way of life very much different from the one she used to know. She attends school where she meets new friends and notices her own otherness and maturity.

In Austria she is often insulted because of her nationality. Disrespectful remarks

about Iranian people deeply hurt her pride and dignity, but at the same time help her discover anew her identity, which emerges in a painful way as a form of rebellion. There are situations when in answer to malicious comments she cries out loud that she is proud to be Iranian. Many times Marji regrets the fact that she has been trying to conceal her nationality to gain people's acceptance and has a bitter feeling of betraying her Iranian roots.

For Marji, who comes from a very restrained culture, the unhibited bahavior of her colleagues is something shocking and confusing. Sexual liberation and drug use are for her the symbols of Western culture- the same culture that she used to cherish as a child in Iran. She is confused and tantalized by the notion of freedom she encounters in Vienna. To fulfill the expectations of the group, she reaches for the drugs but deep inside she has a feeling of betraying herself. The girl makes desperate efforts to assimilate to the surroundings and she wants to be a part of it and, at the same time, she feels that she does not fit there. Marji goes through painful experiences and major disappointments just to be, in the end, wrongly accused of being a drug dealer and become homeless. After living for two months on the street, the girl ends up in the hospital where she is found by her parents. These traumatic events make her realise that she does not belong to Austria and after taking into consideration her health and mental state, she finally decides to return to Iran.

It appears that Marji experienced marginalisation in Austria, as well as at home in Iran. In Vienna she felt as a stranger because of a different cultural paradigm and in Iran because of the political situation and restrictions connected with religion. In Iran her individuality was marginalised from childhood on. During the islamic revolution she was forced as a little girl to wear a veil, later on she witnessed how disrespectful the representations of the regime towards Iranian women were. Marji also suffered from the changes imposed on the system of education. The revolution and the war made it impossible for her to grow and share a normal life with her family. Instead, she had to look for possibilities for education in Europe, and in a way her stay in Vienna was enriching because it gave her a chance to compare. From a distance, Marji noticed the oppression of the patriarchal culture in Iran, where she rebelled against the restrictions connected with looks and dress. Marji's mother wanted her to be an independent, strong, educated woman and was very disappointed with her daughter's decision to marry at a young age just to adjust to the customs and expectations of others. The girl felt unhappy in that marriage and, although it was not popular and well perceived in her country, she decided to divorce. She was aware that there was no future for her in Iran where freedom was constantly jeopardized and she finally left the country permanently.

In Marji's life, the experience of marginalisation seemed to be the starting

point of the process of discovering her identity as an Iranian woman. The fact that she conveys her story in French is meaningful and gives her a safe distance. When in France a taxi driver asks her where she comes from, her reply is clear and strong. No one knew how long the journey was she had to make to be able to give such an answer. It captures the entire spectrum and range of feelings and experiences: war, humiliation, fear, alienation, marginalisation, pride, courage and rebellion. By accepting her identity she also made a certain choice. She chose to be true to herself and live without fear and in that sense she truly chose freedom.

Both Edward Said and Marjane Satrapi deal with the problem of marginalisation. Despite all painful experiences, the fact of being situated on the margin gave them also a broader perspective, inner freedom and make them more sensitive to any kind of injustice. It also enlarged their conception of identity. They both reach back to their childhood with the aim to embrace their lives and the process of writing and leading narration seems to be a way to understand something they could not comprehend as children. It is also a form of acceptance of their fate. By sharing their experiences they made use of their double heritage in the best way they could.

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A Mysterious Closeness: Africa and Europe in Kirsten Thorup's *The God of Chance*

Jørgen Veisland
Department of Scandinavian Studies, University of Gdańsk
Wita Stwosza 55, 80-952 Gdansk, Poland
Email: finjv@univ.gda.pl

Abstract *The God of Chance* by the Danish author Kirsten Thorup is a novel about a meeting between Africa and Europe that turns into a confrontation. The main characters are a Danish professional woman, Ana, and an African girl from Gambia, Mariama, whom Ana decides to sponsor after having met her on the beach while on vacation in the African country. The article examines how and why a conflict develops between Ana and Mariama after the young girl has come to London to pursue higher education. Stress at work has caused Ana to become one-sided, limited and phobic, or xenophobic. She develops an obsession with her own "other", Mariama, and tries to preserve a fixed image of the girl in her mind, disallowing the girl to grow and refusing to see her as an independent, grown woman. Ana grows increasingly apprehensive and phobic when faced with the multiethnic urban environment of London. By contrast, Mariama resolves her relationship to her own race and to the white race. A dream sequence epitomizes the transcendence of racial differences, posing the "rainbow" as the multicolored spectrum from which transparency and knowledge emanate. At this point the narrative likewise erases the border between narrator and character, artist and artwork, utopia and dystopia.
Key words Africa; the corporation; black and white; transparency and opacity; self and other; transcendence.

> What is pure art according to the modern idea? It is the creation of an evocative magic, containing at once the object and the subject, the world external to the artist and the artist himself.
>
> —Charles Baudelaire

The letters "m" and "n" are phonetically so close that they may signify sameness and difference at the same time. Mariana, called Ana, a Danish woman in her early forties, is on a brief vacation in Gambia, West Africa, to take time off from her stressful job

as financial entrepreneur with the corporation Rower International; on the beach she is approached by a fifteen year old Gambian girl, Mariama, who is selling local products in order to help her aunt, Rosie, support a large family consisting mostly of younger brothers and sisters. The opening pages of Kirsten Thorup's novel *The God of Chance* (*Tilfældets gud*; 2011) subtly indicate a mixture of similarities and differences between contemporary corporate structure in the world of global finance and African family structure, the most notable similarity being that of the presence of a powerful figure lurking in the background as the one in charge, a mostly anonymous corporate executive, in (Mari)Ana's exclusively work-oriented life, centered on Copenhagen and London, and "Big Man" in Mariama's family-oriented life in Serra Kunda, Gambia. From the very beginning of the complex narrative Thorup brilliantly posits a number of detailed, intricate rhetorical comparisons manifesting the indistinct, insoluble nature of sameness and difference, socioeconomically, culturally and, not least, racially. The rhetorical ingenuity of the text suggests that, although the two structural relationships outlined above may be similar, there are also significant differences, the major difference being that the African girl possesses a sense of belonging, purpose and integration despite her poverty and near-emaciation, while the Danish woman is approaching a complete nervous breakdown owing to the pressures of her job that alienate her from herself, conducive as they are to a sense of non-integration with self and milieu.

At the same time it is indicated, by way of subtle rhetorical patterns imbedded in the text, that the dialectics of African family structure and European/global corporate structure is not a simple bipolar dialectic; rather, it is a dialectic whose poles are inextricably mixed up with one another so that it becomes virtually impossible to "evaluate" which side is positive and which negative, although one would tend to "favor" the African pole. However, if one favors the African pole one should keep in mind that the text also suggests a potential cause-effect relationship, demonstrating, perhaps, that a deeper anthropological relationship may exist between "Africa" and "Europe", the "world of finance", in the sense that the latter may have "inherited" the power structure of the former; on the other hand, of course, this may be reversed so that the "correct" interpretation would be that postmodern and postcolonial corporate structures have invaded African family and work relations causing them to deteriorate and, even, collapse; from this point of view the narrative emerges as a text on economic and political oppression intimately tied up with psychological, emotional repression. I am suggesting that Thorup's novel is a form of ingenious testimony to the "sameness" in the "difference" between socio-dynamics and psychodynamics. I would also suggest that moral deterioration and degradation has become endemic to contemporary corporate finance to the point where the entire world is turning into a

"business" devoid of ethical substance; in turn, this moral degradation is invading postcolonial Africa and in so doing creating a new form of oppression: an oppression emanating from "within" the corporate world itself, and from *within the mind of the individual, in casu Ana*, who is suffering from emotional and moral deprivation. Oppression in the 21st century, then, is a double-edged sword directed at Africa and Europe or "the West" at one and the same time. I see clear signs of this in the text, most notably in Ana's reflections on herself and on her motives for "adopting", i.e. sponsoring Mariama and taking her to London.

Ana asks herself the following question:

> Det var så mærkelig uvant for hende at være bundet til noget uden for Rower, at være indfanget af en hidtil ukendt følelse for et andet menneske. Hvad var det for en mystisk nærhed, hun følte til dette pigebarn fra et kontinent hun kendte ganske lidt til?
>
> (It was strangely unfamiliar to her to be bound to something outside Rower, to be caught up in a hitherto unknown feeling for another person. What was the nature of this mysterious closeness she felt to this young girl from a continent she knew so little about?)
>
> (Thorup 267; translations from the Danish original are mine)

The answer to Ana's question cannot be arrived at intellectually, just as the multiple sessions she is undergoing with Rower's professional therapist are ineffectual owing to the perversely rational and rationalizing nature of the therapeutic "treatment". The answer is to be found somewhere else; in fact, it is present already as the narrative opens. Lying on the beach Ana hears Mariama's voice for the first time, asking (in English): "Want something"?—The voice enters Ana's ear, penetrating her mind as it indeed offers her "something she wants", making her melt like a snowman in the spring sun—an implied allusion to Hans Christian Andersen's "The Snow Queen"—and prompting her to react strongly as she gives in to the voice: "En overjordisk skønhed, en sølvklokkes fine klang opfyldte hende/An other-wordly beauty, the delicate chiming of a silver bell filled her" (15); another allusion to Andersen, this time to the story "The Bell". These allusions are of course not only aesthetic in the sense of constituting intertextuality; they imply the loss of "the other world", not as a romantic loss of the ideal placed outside or above the individual but as a loss of mind itself understood as individual *and* universal. The composite, mutually inclusive essence of *individual* and *universal* in *mind* works in Thorup's text as a revelation, the purpose of which is to disclose the deviations, social and cultural, of global finance, the deviation of "Rower" as "power": power in the raw, power as ruthless, power

"roving" throughout the world, i.e. wandering aimlessly in a futile, materialistic pursuit.

In meta-psychological, philosophical terms, Rower International is also a projection from within, a projection of an outside which is finally separated from the inside with the advent of language. Ana is a consummate believer in language, reason and the material, physical world. It is logical that she gravitates towards Rower International; the corporation confirms the final impervious border between the inside (pre-verbal) and the outside (verbal). Yet that border may be pervious, i.e. penetrable. In *The Powers of Horror* Julia Kristeva writes:

> "… there would be witnesses to the perviousness of the limit, artisans after a fashion who would try to tap that pre-verbal "beginning" within a word that is flush with pleasure and pain. They are *primitive man* through his ambivalences and the *poet* through the personification of his opposing states of feeling—but also perhaps through the rhetorical recasting of language that he effects …" (Kristeva 61)

To Ana, the non-material world does not exist prior to the meeting with her namesake on the beach. Ana is herself an artificial product, *kunstprodukt* (Thorup 106), a so-called donor child, a fact she discovers by accident at a student graduation party. She is the *anonymous* creation of semen and egg, and anonymity in the sense of the erasure of identity and personality governs Rower. To Ana and Rower chaos is hell. Ironically, chaos, the "heart of darkness", invades Ana's life on the beach in Gambia as she is out late one night and witnesses a scene of otherworldly beauty, "overjordisk skønhed" (37).

Women decorated with jewels and artful headdresses are dancing around a fire; the narrator describes the scene as sinister and passionate; the security guard who had been accompanying her is gone. An old woman assures her that she is in good hands and entices her into the inner circle close to the fire. Ana is prepared to give in to the ritual, recognizing that it is taking place in another world. The ritual intensifies; children seated close to the fire start screaming and yelling as they endure the pain of burnt feet, and to Ana it is as if "de høje skrig og klagelyde kom fra hendes eget indre og sprængte sig ud gennem hjerneskallen/the loud shrieks and moaning sounds came from her own inner consciousness, exploding through her skull." (39).—The verbal and the pre-verbal are no longer separated by an impervious wall; the wall has become pervious, practically transparent, as the poles of rational language and ritualistic images collapse and co-mingle. Later, the security guard claims that the ritual must be a figment of Ana's imagination; however, whether imagined or not, the scene remains

real. Moreover, the ritual is powerful enough to move Ana and the "poet", i.e. the narrator, beyond the mere personification of opposing states of feeling, represented by Hans Christian Andersen's "bell" and Joseph Conrad's "heart of darkness". A "rhetorical recasting of language" is effectuated whereby (Mari)ana comes ever closer to Mariama—"ana" turns into "ama", *l'âme,* spirit, mind.

The rhetorical recasting of language makes the text into a palimpsest. Situating this textual move in history one could call it a postcolonial palimpsest. Africa, here Gambia, is and is not the "Other" of Europe, or the West as represented by Rower International. The text viewed as palimpsest would then wipe out, erase the border between the pre-verbal and the verbal, as I have suggested above; layers superimposed upon layers would produce a composite image that is opaque and transparent at the same time. The blend of opacity and transparency makes for a singularly complex text; the interesting question here is whether the text itself valorizes transparency or opacity, and whether the characters themselves, especially Ana, possess transparency or not. The more transparency the more insight, and the text itself may certainly be said to opt for transparency, and Ana indeed approximates a state of transparency, insight into herself, the corporation and Africa. But she does not get close enough. Her reflections on the meeting with Mariama tend in the direction of rationalizations and are done on the premises of Rower; she reflects on Mariama while sitting in her deckchair on the beach outside the luxurious hotel, calling the girl her "soul", the "missing link", i.e. "den manglende brik hun havde ledt efter i sin individuelle udvikling hen imod at blive "et helt menneske", som var et af firmacoachens mantraer"/"the missing piece she had been looking for in her individual development towards becoming "a whole person", one of the mantras of the company coach." (Thorup 50).

In other words: Ana is still thinking about her place in the company, thinking in rather trivial, contrived psychological terms and not wanting to pursue the problematic of self and mind far enough to get to the bottom of things. Ana is holding back. She maneuvers energetically and intelligently to obtain the sponsorship of Mariama, to get her out of Gambia and away from aunt Rosie and Big Man and finally succeeds in getting the girl set up in London where she will attend college; but she lets her friends Ben and Bea, an English couple she had met in Gambia, take care of the girl instead of inviting her to stay in her own London flat, despite Mariama's wish to live with her "sponsor". Sponsoring the African girl becomes a project of conversion, Ana's personal project of getting the girl "integrated" into Western society. This turns out to be extremely problematic for Mariama as she has assumed the dual burden of pursuing higher education and working part-time to send money to her younger siblings in Gambia. Mariama finally moves in with Ana, but at this point the girl is

taking Diazepam to alleviate stress symptoms; she is experiencing the same work-related stress as Ana who has been taking potent sleeping pills for a number of years and is suffering from chronic insomnia.

In this increasingly difficult situation photographs come to play a significant role. Mariama had not wanted Ana to take snapshots of her on the beach in Gambia, claiming that photos steal the soul and that snapshots may be manipulated and exploited by evil powers. In London, Ana—who contrary to her expectations was not offered a job by the London branch of Rower—becomes increasingly paranoid and is obsessed with the thought that two photos of her, left out in the open at Mariama's mother's place in Gambia, may be used against her by evil spirits. Ana's irrational state of mind causes her to develop a serious case of phobia and xenophobia; she starts noticing the practically ubiquitous presence of black people in the streets. Rather than breaking through to the state of higher insight and transparency offered by the text; and rather than incorporating or even understanding the ethical perspective proffered by the narrator (or implied author) in objective terms, *qua* the mimetic function of the text, Ana sinks into an opaque, subjective abyss where "Africa" really becomes "the Other" in a sinister sense. The discrepancy between narrator function and character function emerges here as a disjunction between the knowledge and perception of the character and the knowledge and perception of the narrator. This disjunction is especially apparent in the case of Ana. Mariama, the younger woman, approximates the knowledge of the narrator to a much higher degree. It is perhaps interesting that Thorup did not choose the "I" form for the novel, making it into a first-person narrative; in that case we would have had *character narration*, a discourse described by James Phelan in *Living to Tell About It*: "In reading character narration, we regard the character functions as more prominent than the narrator functions." (Phelan 28).

What is intriguing, though, and hard to explain, is that in Thorup's text character functions assume primary importance, both in the case of Ana and Mariama (I will comment on Mariama in more detail a bit later); one reason for the valorization of character over narrator is, obviously, that it is virtually impossible to construct an objective ethical discourse. The moral and psychological problems imbedded in the text do not derive from the narrator. They derive from the characters and their subjective experience on the basis of which they are trying to construct an ethic and a way to live. Yet the narrator's voice speaks consistently in the third person and, mostly, the past tense. At this point the prefaced citation from Baudelaire echoes in our ears: pure art as an "evocative magic" containing "the object" and "the subject", world and artist alike. The borderline between subject and object, art and world has ceased to exist.

Umberto Eco suggests a reason for this in *The Open Work*:

> The artist realizes that language, having already done so much speaking, has become alienated to the situation it was meant to express. He realizes that, if he accepts this language, he will also alienate himself to the situation. So he tries to dislocate this language from within, in order to be able to escape from the situation and judge it from without. Since language can be dislocated only according to a dialectic that is already part of its inner evolution, the language that will result from such a dislocation will still, somehow, reflect the historical situation that was itself produced by the crisis of the one that had preceded it. (Eco 154)

Not violating language would amount to expressing a false integrity. This integrity is propagated, dishonestly and unethically, by Rower International's "coach" as a "mantra" making up, in the case of Ana and Mariama, a Platonic whole. Thorup violates language by preserving the narrator function only to undermine it by letting the persistent voices, the "character function", of Ana and Mariama resound powerfully from the written words. And Ana cannot be captured, not even photographed, as she finds out already as a young girl at a portrait session; the frustrated photographer fails repeatedly in the attempt to take pictures of Ana's face. There is quite simply no imprint on the photographic plate in the camera. Irritated, the photographer claims that Ana cannot be photographed because she has no soul.

Later, in London, Mariama and Ana go through a conflict, a confrontation. At this point Ana has lost control of herself and is roaming the streets searching for Mariama who has disappeared. Ana thinks back to a frightening experience she had as a child when her parents took her to the circus and she became scared out of her senses by the *white* clown; now Ana realizes that it is the color white she is afraid of, not black. And Mariama has a dream consisting of a dialogue between herself and her friend Janet; in the dream a similar reversal of colors occurs:

> … ud af stilheden kom Janet hende i møde indhyllet i sort klæde. "Du er lys, jeg er mørke," sagde hun. "Jeg har ledt efter dig så vi sammen kan mane ånden i jorden,"svarede Mariama. "Gå ikke ud. Når solen står højest på himlen, forsvinder din skygge og med den din sjæl," sagde Janet blidt som en søster."Jeg var nødt til at forlade ånden i englændernes hus," beklagede Mariama. "Jeg hoppede ud af rammen. Jeg ville ikke være et billede på væggen," sagde Janet. "Du må hente ånden, så de hvide kan få fred," insisterede Mariama. "Jeg kan ikke give dem fred."Janet skiftede farve, først til rødt, så til gult og til hvidt, og endelig var hun igen den sorte farve der indeholdt alle regnbuens farver. (Thorup

310)

> (... out of the quiet Janet was walking towards her, wrapped in a dark cloth. "You are the light, I am the dark," she said. "I have been looking for you so that we can lay the spirit in the ground together," Mariama said. "Don't go out. When the sun is at its highest in the sky your shadow and with it your soul will disappear, " Janet said, gently as a sister. "I had to leave the spirit in the house of the Englishmen", Mariama complained. "I jumped out of the frame. I did not want to be a picture on the wall", Janet said. "You have to go get the spirit so the white people may have peace of mind," Mariama insisted. "I cannot give them peace." Janet changed colors, first to red, then to yellow and white, and finally she turned black again, the color containing all the colors of the rainbow.)

Janet represents total transparency on more levels than one; having stepped out of the "picture frame" she has turned into pure spirit, translucent mind, composed of all the colors of the rainbow and combining all races—native American, Asian, white European, African— in a heterogeneous unity, *the immanent, endemic unity of all colors in one: black*. The transparent rainbow is a result of Janet stepping out of the frame and appearing to Mariama in dreams only; a parallel rhetorical move may be indicated here: the narrative "jumps out of" its own framework, endowing the characters with knowledge, thus shifting that knowledge from narrator to character. The illumination of the mind of the character is complete in the case of Janet, and, possibly, in the case of Mariama. It is only potential in the case of Ana.

We need to find out why this is so. The passage, i.e. dream sequence quoted is preceded by significant changes in the lives of Ana and Mariama. Trying to find Mariama who has disappeared owing to visa problems and problems at college, Ana "descends" into the most racially mixed district of London, looking almost like a homeless woman. She has no idea which country she is in, neither in the UK nor anywhere else on the world map. She gives up trying to guess where people around her are coming from because the mixture of races is perplexing to her, and she reflects as follows: "Hun befandt sig et sted ude i fremtiden, hvor alle nationaliteter var smeltet sammen til én mangfoldig menneskehed/she existed some place in the future where all nationalities had melted into one manifold humanity" (292). But Ana does not experience this "manifold humanity" as something positive; rather, it is threatening and tends to increase her xenophobia. At one point she spots a white woman in the crowd at a local market; she recognizes her vaguely, but it seems to her that the woman's face is a mask hiding her identity in an attempt to become someone else, perhaps someone whose mind is possessed by evil spirits; also, Ana is asking

herself whether all the black people around her might not actually be white people who had painted their faces black. Even worse, she herself may have turned into a black person already.

The scenes described above clearly show Ana's inability to embrace "manifold humanity" by throwing off her own mask. She does not achieve the transparency and insight potentially present all around her. She denies the possibility of a utopian future where all races are one. By contrast, Mariama has developed into a mature young woman who is able to handle a part-time job, college—even though her education is temporarily suspended—a boyfriend, and the increasingly difficult situation at home in Gambia, described in a phone call by her mother as violent and chaotic as the president has instigated a virtual witch hunt. All this hardship has not prevented Mariama from experiencing life at present as "en mærkelig turbulent og vægtløs tid, en regnbue- og rosentid/a strangely turbulent and weightless time, a time of rainbows and roses" (297).

Mariama is spotted, finally, by Ana in a soup kitchen run by monks, and after having been followed by Ana for some time, Mariama in turn recognizes her "sponsor", encountering a new Ana, a woman looking like a "plucked bird", a "naked human being", a person, in short, like herself. Mariama is relieved to see Ana like this. But the meeting develops into a confrontation, Ana accusing Mariama in harsh terms of neglecting her studies and wasting her time with a boyfriend. Mariama responds that she is no longer the young girl, the child Ana found on the beach in Gambia. She has grown into a responsible woman able to handle herself. Ana persists in accusing Mariama, finally striking her so that she falls and hits her head on the pavement. The sound of ambulance sirens closes the scene.

The dream sequence consisting of the dialogue between Janet and Mariama contains significant clues to the motif of transparency versus opacity. The opening line of the dialogue indicates the light-dark complementariness embodied by Mariama and Janet respectively, or rather, embodied by the two of them together. The next line is an allusion, once again, to a story by Hans Christian Andersen, this time "The Shadow" in which the learned young man, a poet, steps out of the house at noon and loses his shadow, i.e. his "soul". The blinding light of the sun obliterates the color black, turning man into a specimen of "one-dimensional man", man become mask, a clown wearing a white mask, empty, hollow inside. This emptiness is felt acutely by Ana but she does not know how to work her way out of it; there is no "therapy" for this kind of pain. She reacts to it with a mixture of phobia, anger and aggression. By contrast, Mariama succeeds in growing. Initially, she is afraid of the "spirit" in the English couple's, Ben's and Bea's, house—the spirit of Janet who had been adopted by the couple. Her fear of the spirit who "jumped out of the frame" prompts her to study in a

cafeteria nearby; Mariama handles the situation but she still insists, as she says in the dialogue, that Janet fetches, gets hold of the spirit so that white people may have "peace of mind". But Janet cannot give them peace of mind.

Why not? Because the "spirit" or mind present only in Ben's and Bea's house to begin with has now become ubiquitous. It literally *haunts* white people and cannot be controlled or stopped by Janet. The spirit originally contained by Janet as *individualized* has become *universal*, a manifest unfolding of the future in the present. The spirit is the rainbow, all colors in one, indistinguishable from one another. Ana's and other white people's bi-polar thinking would isolate and separate black and white from one another, thus creating a state of opacity instead of transparency. The opaque mask hides an empty mind, and an empty mind is prone to be haunted by a "spirit". Janet cannot give white people "peace" for they do not know how to find it in themselves. Instead, she vanishes into "den rene, klare luft, der ophævede tiden/the pure, clear air that suspended time" (310).

A deft rhetorical maneuver accomplishes a transition from chronological narration to non-chronological narration; time is suspended in the narrative as Janet merges with the "pure, clear air that suspended time". The suspension of time occurs in the consciousness of the characters—Janet and, with her, Mariama—and in the mind of the narrator *simultaneously* so that we have a convincing, ingeniously executed example of what Baudelaire calls "pure art"; transcendence manifests itself as a moment in time outside of time where all races blend into the colors of the rainbow, thus also mixing narrator and character. The narrator is, in a sense, eliminated here, and James Phelan's "disjunction" between narrator function and character function is transcended so that the mind that is so powerfully present in the dream sequence, Janet's mind (i.e. Mariama's mind actually), becomes mind itself, a differentiated, heterogeneous yet universal and unified mind. *Mind* is the rainbow, mind is clear light coming from within and from without at the same time, thus forming a stark contrast to the blinding sunlight in Andersen's "The Shadow" that tears light from shadow, self from other, in a cruel polarizing act creating the modern split subject and producing hegemony and dictatorship in society.

The dream sequence affirms Baudelaire's statement about pure art in the modern sense and about the artist merging with his artwork—and both of them merging with the world. In Thorup's novel the entire passage leading up to, or rather containing the dream sequence as a poetic culmination, is a mixture of "subject" and "object" as anticipated by Baudelaire; text blends with milieu—or, milieu becomes text and vice versa. Chronology is suspended; past, present and future become mixed in a temporal rainbow, so to speak, as Ana wanders aimlessly through the unfamiliar, *uncanny* district of London where "everywhere" has turned into a "nowhere". The mixing of

time dimensions in the text is a clue to the dream sequence where, as I have argued, Janet (and Mariama) assume a role superior to that of the narrator. This unusual move in the discourse signifies a crossing of the borderline between artist and artwork, text and world, author, narrator and character. This particular feature in Thorup's fascinating novel is unique in that it attains transformation and transcendence by evoking a pure light pointing to the utopian yet *real* universe of the artwork; that real universe may be hidden in the so-called "real" world, which means, of course, that the artwork *is the real world in the true sense of the word.*

The passages culminating in the dream sequence are a kaleidoscope conducive to the recognition that there is no identity, racial, ethnic, or individual. The self is an illusion. As long as "white people" wear the mask of identity, the clown's mask, they do not enter the rainbow, the clear air of timeless mind. In his *The Philosophy of Literary Form* Kenneth Burke offers "Twelve Propositions". Proposition 4 reads:

> The purely psychological concept for treating relations to symbols of authority, possession and dispossession, material and spiritual alienation, faith or loss of faith in the "reasonableness" of a given structure's methods and purposes and values, is that of "identity". (Burke 306)

Ana holds on to the traditional notion of identity, personal and racial, and to the Platonic concept of the whole person as integration with self. Her perspective on Africa in general and on Mariama —Mariama as African and as *l'âme*—is skewed by her Cartesian *ratio*. Ana deviates from mind by clinging to self.—Burke's proposition 5 reads:

> In this complex world, one is never a member of merely one "corporation." The individual is composed of many "corporate identities." Sometimes they are concentric, sometimes in conflict. (307)

Written in the year 1941 Burke's proposition on identity is strikingly innovative. Thorup's text goes further, however, and succeeds in achieving transparency and heterogeneity, the rainbow and the pure air that "suspends time". These are the levels and dimensions of the mind that we find in Mariama and Janet, who is, in a sense, Mariama's own voice, addressing her from within. The suspension of time and identity is, indeed, the future Ana observes on the streets of London. And yet time re-enters the narrative, violently and abruptly, in the form of *chance*.

Chance, indeed the "god of chance" enters the universe of Thorup's novel as *violence*, and this violence is perpetrated by Ana. Applying Emmanuel Levinas'

thought on violence and the other may prove helpful here. In his essay on Levinas, "Violence and Metaphysics", Jacques Derrida says that "the nudity of the face of the other —this epiphany of a certain non-light before which all violence is to be quieted and disarmed—will still have to be exposed to a certain enlightenment"(Derrida 105). This enlightenment consists of, among other things, the insight that *thought*, as anterior to language, is " a relation to an irreducible other who summons me without possibility of return from without, for in this order is presented the infinity which no thought can enclose and which forbids all monologue …" (129).

In a revealing conversation with Mariama, Ana tells the girl that there has not been time for love in her life, omitting any reference to an affair with a colleague at Rower in Copenhagen, Hans. Ana adds: "Til gengæld har jeg held i spil/However, I am lucky when I gamble" (Thorup 239). Mariama ironically asks whether Ana believes in "statistics", and Ana replies: "Hvis jeg endelig skal tro på noget, så tror jeg tilfældet styrer os/If I have to believe in anything, then I believe chance rules us." (loc. cit.) Opposed to that, of course, we have Mariama's belief in the "spirit", which I see as Levinas' irreducible other. The two perspectives collide although chance initially seems to be on Ana's side. While waiting in line in the soup kitchen run by monks, she sees Mariama in front of her, and the narrator comments, "… hvis Ana virkelig bekendte sig til tilfældets gud, nærmede øjeblikket sig, hvor hun skulle falde på knæ/ … if Ana really had faith in the god of chance, the moment was approaching where she would drop to her knees" (300). As we know, finding Mariama only leads to a violent confrontation where chance is twisted and loses its sense of unique opportunity. Ana hits Mariama and that is the end of the recognition of the "irreducible other", the sudden insight that would "disarm" violence. Thus chance does not rule Ana; Ana tries to rule chance, thus repressing the potentially benevolent force of the "god".

Faced with unemployment and with a dwindling savings account, Ana resorts to gambling after the violent confrontation. She still wants to sponsor Mariama (if Mariama, indeed, has survived the incident) and plays for high stakes at a local casino. At the roulette table she places significant amounts on the number 3, her lucky number, because she believes in the magic of numbers (*talmagien)*, and she is not an atheist, "snarere en hedning, der levede magisk i verden/rather a heathen living magically in the world" (313). She ends up losing five thousand pounds, gambling on the color red, when the ball hits the color *black* after striking red seven times.

The irony is obvious. Ana loses because of her own violent interference with chance, or rather, her twisting around of chance, inverting it so that it becomes violence. The irreducible other, *black* as the fusion of all the colors of the rainbow, strikes back at her relentlessly, asserting itself as the ultimate "god of chance".

A dystopian ending? Perhaps. But it contains a utopian promise.

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Black Male Marginalization in Early Twentieth Century American Canonical Novels: *The Great Gatsby* and *Of Mice and Men*

Agnieszka Lobodziec
Faculty of Humanities, University of Zielona Gora
Wojska Polskiego 71a, 65-762 Zielona Góra, Poland
Email: agat47@yahoo.com

Abstract The aim of this article is to delineate racialized discourse in the two canonical American novels *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald and *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck, which are regaining popularity in the 21st century. The timeliness of this analysis is marked by the continued discussion of race in the United States, particularly oscillating around black and white dynamics, resurfacing, for instance, through the reported increase of inter-racial hate crimes. The chosen novels offer information regarding the genesis and nature of racial bifurcation endemic to the nation's historically evolving conceptions of white superiority and black inferiority. The marginalization of black males bears particular significance in that this phenomenon enunciates the gendered politics of race.
Key words American society; white supremacy; black men; marginalization; race

The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald and *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck are two literary texts of American canonical literature of the twentieth century that have been belabored on by a considerable number of literary scholars. Today in the 21st century the novels are being revisited. For instance, the adaptation of *The Great Gatsby*, starring Leonardo DiCaprio, premiered earlier this year, and a new Polish translation *Of Mice and Men* was released last in February 2012. Both literary works present images of the class and racial stratification of American society. Although they bear on American social and moral dilemmas engendered by US capitalism in the first half of the twentieth century, they are deemed to be currently informative and enlightening. The books disclose that the forces that led to the marginalization of black men have historical origins earlier than the 1920s and 1930s. They bring to memory the racialized nature of the American society to 21st century readers. The debate about race is an aspect of current social, political, and academic discourse

involving the polemic whether race is still central in the US, in the time of the so-called post-racial era, the "Age of Obama". The objective of this analysis of Fitzgerald and Steinbeck's novels is to make an attempt at ascertaining the extent to which racial questions delineated in these works are applicable to present-day American racial reality.

It is common knowledge that the leitmotif of both novels, *The Great Gatsby* and *Of Mice and Men*, is the American Dream. The myth of the Promised Land and the hope for better future prospects have accompanied the ideologies and actions of hordes of peoples seeking social advancement in the New World since the arrival of the first European settlers. The famous words in the final paragraph of *Of Mice and Men* recall the "fresh green breast of the new world"[1] (115) which Dutch sailors ravished in their lust for gain. Not only did the Dutch, but also other Europeans envisioned rebirth in the virginal land, away from their oppressive, corrupt European homelands. The desire for wealth in the New World brought about struggles for prosperity and power, which fostered the necessity to define and utilize categories that divided people and granted the privileges to the emerging dominant group. Race was the category chosen to justify the human, moral, and intellectual superiority of the European immigrants and the inferiority of non-white others. In an interview "The Pain of Being Black," Toni Morrison explicates the role blackness played as a referent against which the Europeans aggrandized their status in America. She states:

> If there were no black people here in this country, it would have been Balkanized. The immigrants would have torn each other's throats out, as they have done everywhere else. But in becoming an American, from Europe, what one has in common with that other immigrant is contempt for me— it's nothing else but color […] Every immigrant knew he would not come as the very bottom. He had to come above at least one group—and that was [black people]. (Taylor-Guthrie 255)

In *The Great Gatsby*, the narrative presents the diseased outcome of the racialized mindset that had been festering in America for four centuries. Aesthetically, whiteness overwhelms the seemingly idyllic surroundings. The spotlessness creates an illusion of moral purity, as some apparently uncorrupt characters wear white clothes, own "white palaces" (6) a "white roadster" (48), speak "as cool as their white dresses" (10) with a "complexion powdered milky white" (20).[2] Engulfed by whiteness, they relish luxury and lavish parties in celebration of attaining the American Dream. In other words, they seem to have made it.

However, the expansive referencing of widespread happiness, though illusionary,

intertwines with the narrator's, Nick Carraway, allusions to not only inter-class conflict between the generational aristocracy residing in East Egg and the newly established upper-class living in West Egg but also to the racial stratification of American society. The characters' statements on ethnicity are sparse, however when the topic is broached, their utterances are explicit enough to reveal the racial and ethnic thought which permeated the first half of the twentieth century. The America portrayed is a country of immigrants. Peter Gregg Slater, a literary critic, remarks upon the ethnic background of those around Nick Carraway's. He cites Carraway's "Finnish servant who mutters to herself in her strange language, […] 'a gray, scrawny Italian child' […] the owner of the coffee joint by the ash heaps as 'the young Greek, Michaelis' [and] 'the lost Swede towns' [which] are a part of the Middle West with which he does not identify" (55). The Euro-Americans are to be found in all social classes. Nick Carraway, Tom Buchanan, and Tom's wife, Daisy represent the most privileged generational aristocracy. Some whites, Jews, and other European immigrants belong to the inferior nouveau riche, like the Jew, Meyer Wolfsheim, who involved Gatsby in the corrupt, though extremely profitable, business of bootlegging. Myrtle and her husband, in turn, are at the bottom of the social ranking.

References to the characters' ethnic background evidence the narrator's tendency to identify with privileged Nordics and to discriminate against non-whites and working-class whites. For instance, Nick Carraway descriptions of Wolfsheim involve the reference to "'the 'tragic' and quivering nose, the accent ('gonnegtion'), the cuff-links made of the 'finest specimens of human molars,' and the 'Swastika Holding Company' with its 'lovely Jewess'" (Gregg 56). Nick's prejudicial statements regarding the Jewish millionaire may stem from moral condemnation of Wolfsheim's illegal business. On the other hand, his attitude seems racial or, more precisely, anti-Semitic because he does not reproach in an equally hostile manner Gatsby, who is similarly engaged in the same corrupt activity. Surpassing the narrator's racialized aspersions, Tom Buchanan's infamous comment is the most poignant white supremacist statement. He contends,

> Civilization's going to pieces […] I've gotten to be a terrible pessimist about things. Have you read *The Rise of the Colored Empires* by this man Goddard? […] The idea is if we don't look out the white race will be—will be utterly submerged […] This fellow has worked out the whole thing. It's up to us, who are the dominant race, to watch out or these other races will have control of things […] This idea is that we're Nordics. I am, and you are, and you are, and […] we've produced all the things that go to make civilization—oh, science and art, and all that. (10-11)

In this passage, Fitzgerald juxtaposes three corresponding aspects of the growth of global Western colonialist modernity—science, civilization, and whiteness. The literary reference to *The Rising Tide of Color Against White World-Supremacy* (1920) by the racial anthropologist Theodore Lothrop Stoddard signified fear that peoples of other races were outnumbering the white population. Moreover, Tom's assertion of white human and intellectual superiority reflects earlier perspectives enunciated by certain Enlightenment philosophers. For instance, regarding black people, Montesquieu posited, "It is impossible for us to suppose that these beings should be men; because if we supposed them to be men, one would begin to believe we ourselves were not Christians" (qtd. in West 61). Voltaire stated, "If their understanding is not of a different nature from ours, it is at least greatly inferior. They are not capable of any great application or association of ideas, and seemed formed neither for the advantage nor the abuses of philosophy" (qtd. in West 62). One of the American Founding Fathers, Thomas Jefferson, went so far to claim "Comparing them by their faculties of memory, reason, and imagination, it appears to me, that in memory they are equal to the whites; in reason much inferior […] and that in imagination they are dull, tasteless and anomalous" (qtd. in West 62). In the same vein as the quoted Western thinkers, the fictitious character, Tom Buchanan, affirms white supremacy by belittling the capacities of non-white people.

The other characters that represent the members of the privileged white aristocracy in America do not question Tom Buchanan's racist assumptions. His wife, Daisy, in admiration, considers his suppositions as expressions of true scientific knowledge not pseudo-science. When Tom asserts the Nordic identity of his company and sounds the alarm to defend racial purity, he is unopposed.

In Fitzgerald's novel, amidst all the marginalized representatives of multiple ethnicities and nationalities, black men appear as the most fearful group that needs to be excluded. The black male marginalization is not the effect of the 1920s competitive rat race, discriminatory class-consciousness, or ethical ambiguities. The utterances of some characters reveal the systematic, more deeply rooted anti-black racism which advocated multifaceted exclusion from the mainstream American, and supposedly global, community.

Above all, anti-black racism possesses an ontological dimension as it denies the recognition of black people's equivalent humanity and intellectual capacity, as put forward by major Enlightenment figures. Although Tom demeans all 'colored' people when he calls for white civilization's hegemony, he seems to be particularly fretful about black male intrusion into the white male world order. In a heated argument with his wife, Daisy, and her lover, Gatsby, Tom voices his racial fear. First, he

reminds Gatsby of his uncertain origins, saying "I suppose the latest thing is to sit back and let Mr. Nobody from Nowhere make love to your wife" (82-83). At this point, Tom's statement might be interpreted both as reference to Gatsby's ethnic ambiguity or disapproval of his social status, as a member of the nouveau riche who come from 'nowhere'. Further on, Tom shifts from class-consciousness to racialized thinking and considers the ultimate taboo of black/white intermarriage. He complains, "Nowadays people begin by sneering at family life and family institutions, and next they'll throw everything overboard and have intermarriage between black and white" (83). Therefore, Tom sees interracial marriage as a threat to the maintenance of white hegemony within mainstream American society. To him, ontologically, this means racial degradation.

Apart from its ontological dimension, Tom's white supremacy is sexual. His anxiety about black male interference in the white man's order surfaces at the moment when he mentions the threat of interracial marriage. While he is reproaching Daisy and Gatsby for their love affair, black and white relationships enter his mind. Since he is concerned with the white woman's, Daisy, love life, a troublesome black male presence lodges within. Tom's stance is typical of white supremacists in the 1920s, a period of intense activity of the white racist terror group, the Christian Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. Tom is a white man who sees black sexuality as a threat to white femininity, thus to his own wellbeing. In America, white men developed this mindset during slavery, "Slave owners would naturally assume that a slave who desired white women also desired other things that white men had: freedom, wealth, dominance" (Leiter 30). White fear of black male interference furthered the myth of black male hypersexuality and of the black man a rapist (Leiter 49). The white woman, in turn, became the embodiment of femininity and purity, and, as bearer of life, was viewed as instrumental in maintaining a racially pure white society. In post-bellum America, "the fear white men had of black men began to take some of its most lascivious forms. It was then that the myth of the black man's sexuality, the myth of the black man as sexual monster, as a threat to pure white womanhood, began to gain force" (Wallace 23). At this juncture, white nationalism employed a gendered and racialized discourse. Although the prohibition of interracial relationships proscribed intimate relations by whites with black women as well as black men, white supremacists focused more on limiting black men's sexual agency vis a vis white women. Alleged rape of a white woman was frequently used as an excuse for the lynching of black man. Therefore, sexuality was politicized, as professor Roland Murray lays out, "By prohibiting black men sexual access to white females—in ideology and practice—white Americans inscribed their denial of blacks' right to participate in the body of politics and rationalized their violent repression of a race" (72). No wonder that, *The*

Great Gatsby, is "intimately engaged with tropes of identity" (Schreier 153). Tom's fear of the demise of white civilization is accompanied by a focus on white femininity underlined with the references to almost angelic beauty. The narrator describes Daisy Buchanan and Jordan Baker as "two young women […] buoyed up as though upon an anchored balloon […] both in white, and their dresses […] rippling and fluttering as if they had just been blown back in after a short flight around the house" (7). After Tom's diatribe against black/white interracial marriage, the white female, Jordan, affirms their whiteness, stating, "We're all white here" (81). Therefore, not only is whiteness an aesthetic trait, but it also reflects the white supremacist worldview of some characters who fantasize over a supposed black male threat to white male dominion.

Paradoxically, in the midst of the 1920s, the period known as the Jazz Age, the characters imbibe black music. Nonetheless, they reject the recognition of black people as full-fledged citizens of American society. Basically, the explicit black presence is erased from the scenes of *The Great Gatsby*. Only at one time does the narrator stand closely to a "pale well-dresses negro" (98), the witness of a car accident in which Tom Buchanan's lover, Myrtle Wilson, is killed. The phrase a "pale well-dressed negro" conjures up the slavery term mulatto and colorism involving, a "prejudicial or preferential treatment of same-race people based solely on their color" (Walker 290), also known as pigmentocracy, according to which "an African American person's worth as a human being is determined on an ascending scale based on an admixture of Caucasian blood. The more white-skinned a person is, (supposedly) the greater that person's psychocultural superiority and capacity to dominate others" (Cannon 72). A value system such as this leads to the privileging light-complexioned black people and the marginalization of the darker-skinned. Seemingly for this reason, in *The Great Gatsby*, Nick Carraway acknowledges the company of an affluent light-skinned black man and is disturbed by darker black people in a passing car "driven by a white chauffeur, in which sat three modish negroes, two bucks and a girl" (44). Carraway responds with the thought "anything can happen now" (44). He comments on their appearance with derision, stating, "I laughed aloud as the yolks of their eyeballs rolled towards us in haughty rivalry" (40), exposing his caricature minstrel show perception of black people which was pandemic in the 19th century, popularized by "blackfaced white men mocking black culture, language, and character" (Bell XVIII).

All things considered, in *The Great Gatsby*, black male marginalization is portrayed through a number of racialized, aesthetic codes. Omnipresent whiteness is a metaphor for white supremacy, and the lack of blackness signifies the marginalization, and even desirable erasure of black men from mainstream American social reality.

John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* presents a more racially explicit image of black male socio-political marginalization. At first glance, the white and black working class representatives appear to be equally positioned at the bottom of the social ladder, forced to perform backbreaking work on a ranch during the Great Depression. The roles of white people are both that of exploiting employers and exploited workers, represented by Curley and his father and George, Lennie, and Candy respectively. Stratification within the second group soon surfaces. Hard labor and resourcefulness were for some the only survival strategies during that time. Those who could not manage were marginalized. The strongest, on the other hand, constituted a separate, unified group. An occasion evidencing division between the two groups occurred when all the strong and young men left the farm for entertainment, leaving behind those who did not belong to their group, mentally impaired Lennie, an old man Candy, a crippled black man Crooks, and a woman, Curley's wife. This is also an instance showcasing the racialized marginalization of the black man where he is degraded to the lowest level of the social rung among the outcasts.

One of the recurring motifs in the novel is loneliness, as George's epigraphic statement says, "Guys like us, that work on ranches, are the loneliest guys in the world. They got no family. They don't belong no place. They come to a ranch an' work up a stake and then they go inta town and blow their stake, and the first thing you know they're poundin' their tail on some other ranch. They ain't got nothing to look ahead to" (15). At the same time, George disclaims his and Lennie's loneliness, retorting ""But not us! An' why? Because I got you to look after me and you got me to look after you, and that's why" (15). Even after George kills Lennie in order to circumvent his subjection to mob violence for the accidental killing of Curley's wife, George has companionship, because Slim accompanies George and consoles him. At this point, "Steinbeck is stressing the significance of the new relationship between George and Slim" (Owens 20). Also Curley's wife, no matter how possessive her husband is, sometimes succeeds in communicating with other men, in resistance to her husband's oppression. Besides, playing games and partying together, the ranch laborers find opportunities to socialize.

In contradistinction, the black man, Crooks, is the most marginalized person on the farm. His isolation is not existential but racial. Crooks inability to participate socially with white people is emblematic of the pervasive racial segregation in America. When Lennie inquires about his separateness, he responds, "Cause I'm black. They play cards in there, but I can't play because I'm black. They say I stink. Well, I tell you, you all of you stink to me" (68). Further, he implies that although Lennie does not fully belong to the more privileged group as a retarded person, he still faces more prospects and holds a better position to that of Crooks, who states,

"You got George. You *know* he's goin' to come back […] S'pose you couldn't go into the bunk house and play rummy 'cause you was black. How'd you like that […] I tell ya a guy gets too lonely an' he gets sick" (72). The sickness he speaks of refers to the aloofness he develops as a survival strategy. Cognizant of his deprivation, he is adamant about dominating his own space. Seeking to be a ruler at least within his closest surroundings, he manages to create the illusion of an ability to decide about himself. For this reason, he lets it be known that, "This here's my room. Nobody got any right in here but me" (68). When Lennie responds that he decided to trespass Crook's threshold because he saw the light as an invitation, Crooks reproaches him, "Well, I got a right to have a light. You go on get outta my room. I ain't wanted in the bunk house, and you ain't wanted in my room" (68).Crooks later appears to seek sincerity in his communications with Lennie and Candy. He is well aware of his powerlessness and the threat whites present. He begins to speak to Lennie in a more hesitant and "softer" (70) tone when Lennie approaches him with a menacing look. Possibly, it is wariness of the mentally challenged white man's higher status in the social hierarchy that induces the black man to temper his demeanor. On another occasion, Crooks is taken aback when Candy enters his space and he voices the comment that it is out of the ordinary for white people to visit "a colored man's room" (75) and "Candy quickly change[s] the subject" (75). The racialized marginalization of the black men is entirely ignored, although Crooks attempts to initiate serious, honest conversation about his status and his feelings regarding it. Lennie and Candy avoid it, choosing to dream on about their future farms, possessions and their own autonomy.

Another symbolic, and not uncharacteristic, manifestation of black male marginalization entails the juxtaposition of the black male's status with that of the white woman. As has been pointed out earlier, apparently, the white woman, Curley's wife, also lives a relatively marginalized existence to varying degrees distinct from that of Lennie, Candy, and Crooks. Like the three men, she is left behind, alone, on the farm, while more privileged others leave for entertainment in town. The withholding of her name highlights her subjugation. She is known only as Curley's wife. Unrecognized, possessed by her husband, and lacking identity, she seeks emotional closeness with other men, who she hopes can offer some consolation and compassion. In doing so, she approaches them with seductive gestures. Although her husband dominates her, and other men fear him, she does not hesitate to take the risk. The only man with whom she reverses her role from oppressed to oppressor is the black man. Discourteously interrupting conversation between the three discredited men, she denigrates all them, inquiring, "An' what am I doin'? Standin' here talkin' to a bunch of bindle stiffs—a nigger an' a dum-dum and a lousy ol' sheep" (78). In

response, simple-minded Lennie is taken by surprise and made speechless, the elderly man Candy questions her authority. When Crooks makes the slightest attempt to defend this trespass into his space, the white woman immediately threatens him with lynching. Expressing her power over black men, she reproaches him, "Listen Nigger, […] You know what I can do to you if you open you trap? […] I could get you strung up on a tree so easy it ain't even funny" (80). As a result, Crooks "reduce[s] himself to nothing" (80). Therefore, although Curley's wife has somewhat lower status in certain situations on the white male dominated farm, she knows she is at least one level above black men. Crooks, in turn, ceases defense in awareness of the lethal threat a white woman could be to the existence of black men in racist America. His reducing "himself to nothing" (80) represents the "fear of the white woman instilled in the [black men's] minds [compelling the black men to] "avoid the woman that is white, act as if she does not exist" (Hernton 58). The white woman's threat of lynching reveals knowledge of the white group's mob mentality.

Lastly, black men's marginalization in *Of Mice and Men* testifies to the colonial model of white supremacy in America. In colonialist terms, the American society regards "the black community as an underdeveloped colony whose economics and politics are controlled by leaders of the racially dominant group. […] black men […] remain, a group subjected to economic exploitation and political control; they lack the ability to express their cultural values without incurring serious consequences" (Staples 39-40). Correspondingly, the black male character, Crooks, recalls his nostalgic past, growing up on his father's prosperous ranch in California. Paradoxically, his family had what the white men around him dream of - land of their own. However, he discerns the analogy between the racialized societal realm in the past and the present, stating, "There wasn't another colored family for miles around. And now there ain't a colored man on this ranch an' there's jus' one family in Soledad" (70). Moreover, as he was not allowed to play with white children in his neighborhood before, now, he is not allowed to socialize with the white men on the ranch. His status has even deteriorated as he does not live and work on his own land. Like a colonized object, he is forced to serve the dominant group.

In summary, *The Great Gatsby* and *Of Mice and Men* delineate the complexity of black male marginalization in American society as a result of the politicization of race. F. S. Fitzgerald reconstructs white supremacy mostly aesthetically, through the implementation of omnipresent whiteness. This corresponds with Toni Morrison's observation regarding representations of whiteness characteristic of canonical American literature containing:

> images of impenetrable whiteness (that) need contextualizing to explain

> their power, pattern, and consistency. Because they appear almost always in conjunction with representations of black or Africanist people who are dead, impotent, or under complete control, these images of blinding whiteness seem to function as both antidote for and meditation on the shadow that is companion to this whiteness—a dark and abiding presence that moves the hearts and texts of American literature with fear and longing. (Morrison 33)

In *The Great Gatsby*, omnipresent whiteness accompanies references to barely visible blackness. Whenever the white characters mention a black presence, they are skeptical and refuse to recognize its existence within the white dominated realm. Black males appear to constitute a particular threat to the white male order, as evidenced by the character Tom Buchan's statements. In *Of Mice and Men*, the white male dominated ranch serves as a microcosm of an America society stratified by race and class, where black men are positioned at the lowest rung. Although some white characters fail to realize their dreams, like, for instance, Lennie or Curley's wife, the reason, in their case, is existential not racial. All in all, with their 21st century resurgence in popularity, both novels engage in recalling the forces that formed the racialized construction of American society. They refer to the 1920s and 1930s deep-seated racial segregation, when efforts to further promote white hegemony sought to eliminate black participation in the general society. The derogatory, stereotypical descriptions of the black characters, their social degradation, the refusal to acknowledge their advancement, and their isolation from the dominant group are all factors in relegating black people to the inferior status of so-called second-class citizens. An awareness of these tactics seems crucial in the 21st century, a time when anti-black racial hate crimes are reported to be on in America. For instance, soon after the election of President Barack Obama, in November 2008, the reports of a "white backlash" flooded the American press with headlines such as "Cross burnings, Schoolchildren chanting 'Assassinate Obama', Black figures hung from nooses, Racial epithets scrawled on homes and cars" (Washington). Most revealing is the fact that "hate crimes are not committed against people because of their personal identity. Those who commit hate crimes are not focused on *who* the victim is, but rather *what* he or she is" (Parks and Jones 1313). Therefore, anti-black hate crimes do not result from direct inter-personal conflicts but from mindsets that envision black men as potential enemies. In this context, the novels *The Great Gatsby* and *Of Mice and Men* are certainly worthy of revisiting.

Notes

1. Quotations from *Of Mice and Man* see John Steinbeck, *Of Mice and Men* (London: Penguin Books, 2000).

2. All quotations of *The Great Gatsby* are from F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* (Ware, Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions, 1993).

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Caught in the Middle:Jewish Soldiers in American War Fiction

Karol Jaroszewski
Faculty of Languages, University of Gdansk
Stanislawa Wyspianskiego 17/60, 81-435 Poland
Email: k-and-k@o2.pl

Abstract This article examines the way in which Jewish soldiers are portrayed in American war fiction, on the basis of four texts by authors William Wharton, Winston Groom, Philip Roth and Norman Mailer. It depicts the situation in which Jewish soldiers find themselves, their fears, convictions and objections, and the prejudice they face. It also shows the scale of complexity with which this issue is presented, depending on the work and author.
Key words Jewishness; army; misplacement; duty; equality

Minorities in literature are a delicate issue. It is never easy to fully grasp or communicate the dynamics of their functioning without offending anybody, striking a patronizing chord, or falling into clichés and stereotypes. War fiction makes this matter even more complicated. Here we face a combination of fear, tiredness, monotony, madness, loathing and grief, with such in-depth issues as race, religion, rejection, a sense of belonging, as well a sensation of being caught in between, not entirely secure in one's position. Such, in my view, is the case of Jewish soldiers in American war fiction. Their struggle is one with their enemy, their brothers in arms, and frequently with themselves, their views, their incapacity to adapt, their uncertain footing. In this article I would like to focus on four texts, which show the diversity in which Jewish soldiers can be depicted. Some examples may pose as simpler, more easily defined, others as more complex, yet all have one thing in common—they provide us with an image of conflict within conflict, a confinement within confinement in circumstances that are always hostile.

Stanley Shutzer, one of the protagonists of William Wharton's "A Midnight Clear", is a member of an Intelligence and Reconnaissance platoon, deployed in the Ardennes in the winter of 1944, just days before the famous German counter offensive. The unit is comprised mostly of particularly gifted and intelligent young men, participants in the ASTP (Army Specialised Training Program)—a short-lived

college education program for soldiers and recruits. They take up their post in an old abandoned mansion and begin patrolling missions. Sometime after their arrival they encounter the Germans, however, no fight ensues. Instead both sides toss snowballs, build snowmen and exchange Christmas gifts. Finally, owing to Shutzer's translation, the Americans find out that the Germans want to surrender, and both sides come up with an elaborate plan to make it look like the Germans surrendered in battle, so as to save their families back home from repercussions. Unfortunately the plan fails miserably and Shutzer dies on the way to Headquarters.

Shutzer's Jewishness could at first be considered stereotypical, given the circumstances. He is the only one among the protagonists who calls the Germans Nazis, and throughout the greater part of the novel his strong anti-German sentiments are highlighted, as opposed to the somewhat anti-war approach of the entire squad. As Will Knot, the main protagonist remarks "He's the only one of us fighting the war on purpose" (117).[1] This of course stems from Shutzer's absolute conviction as to the fate of the European Jews, something that the other members of the squad still find doubtful: "'You really believe that shit, Stan? You really think the Nazis are killing Jews?' 'I *know* it. It's hard for a goy like you to believe, but I *know*. I have relatives who were there. These Nazis are bloodthirsty monsters (...)'" (118). As we can see Shutzer knows why he fights, but he also perceives and stresses the differences and inequalities in the U.S. Army, calling Knot a goy as opposed to himself, and remarking "'You can't have brown eyes and be an officer'" (154). He thus realises his position - being caught between his mortal enemies, the Germans, and the system behind the army in which he has to serve. However, when the Americans realise that the Germans in their vicinity act somewhat strangely, it is Shutzer who first begins to make out their intentions "'If those Nazis were going to kill me, they already had their chance. I figure they're dogging it the way we are (...)'" (118). Ironically, he is the one who enables any communication between the German and American soldiers, as he speaks Yiddish, a language spoken by the Jewish Diaspora around the world, which was developed to a large extent from German. Thus, it appears that culturally Shutzer has more in common with the Germans than with the Americans. Thanks to him both sides develop their mutual plan of the German surrender. Just before the tragic finale we can see a shift in Shutzer's character. He drinks and smokes with the rest of his unit and the Germans, he stays behind with the German unit to give the cease-fire signal, which makes it obvious that he believes in the success of the entire plan and trusts the enemy soldiers. Tragically, when "Mother" Wilkins, the only member of the American unit who was not informed of the deal, begins to shoot at the Germans to "save" his squad, Shutzer becomes one of the first casualties. He is wounded by the German commander, an event he himself deems ironic: "'Me, the one guy who wants

to fight these Nazi bastards gets the million-dollar wound. Isn't it that way?'" (197). Shutzer dies on the way back, pulled behind a jeep, fastened to a wounded German soldier, who dies with him, forming a final symbolic bond between mortal enemies.

Lieutenant Billy Kahn, the protagonist of Winston Groom's "Better Times than These" is an officer in the U.S. Air Cavalry, serving a tour of duty in Vietnam. He commands an infantry company and takes part in a series of jungle battles, until several of his men rape and murder two women, Viet Cong prisoners of war. Kahn is summoned before a military court and is charged with neglecting his duties, with respect to the prisoners in his custody. As he testifies his company is nearly wiped out when their positions are overrun by the North Vietnamese Army. Kahn blames his superior, Lt. Colonel Patch, for his men's fate, and threatens him with an investigation board. Patch, in order to get him out of the way, offers to have him reassigned and sends him back United States.

The key issues connected with the character of Billy Kahn are those of misplacement, debt and duty. He feels misplaced at home as a teenager, in a neighbourhood where there are no other Jews. He is misplaced in Vietnam, when he has to testify before the court while his men and friend, Lieutenant William Holden, acting commander of his company, get slaughtered by the enemy. He initially feels misplaced back home, assigned to a temporary base before he can get his discharge from the army. The issue of debt is connected with the way in which he believes he is perceived by others, as one of those who "killed Christ." He believes that it was the need to pay this debt that forced his parents to put Christmas ornaments on their house, when their neighbours said it was their turn. He himself, attributing his failures to this debt of Jewishness, tries to pay it by joining the football team at school, and later by joining the army. He believes it his duty to kill the North Vietnamese, hoping that if it be fulfilled, it will pay his debt to the society, washing him of his people's "original sin." However, when the army, represented by Patch, and the society, represented by the passengers on his flight back to the United States turn away from him, he realises that his duty is not towards the society, and his true debt has little to do with his identity. After spending time in his new temporary unit, being suspended in a void on uncertainty, he realises that he must do as much as he can for his comrades, those dead and those still alive and still in combat. He contacts the families of his dead friends, and at the end it is suggested that he is planning to take action against his former superior, by contacting a congressman, a father of one of his former subordinates. Kahn was a geologist in his earlier civilian life, and this profession seems to be of symbolic significance, as he uncovers the layers of his assumed identities to reach the fundamental truth, that his duties are not connected with race and what prejudices anyone might have towards it, but with friendship and

loyalty towards his comrades.

A different and more complex image of Jews in the U.S. armed forces, stressing certain delicate issues for the Jewish community, is presented by Jewish writers Philip Roth and Norman Mailer. I want to begin with the characters featuring in Roth's short story "Defender of the Faith". The main protagonists are sergeant Nathan Marx, an experienced non-commissioned officer, who fought in Europe between 1944 and 1945, and private Sheldon Grossbart, a trainee in the outfit to which Marx is assigned. The title of the story suggests a defence of religious traditions, codes of conduct, and it is Grossbart who begins to speak of tradition, when he asks that he and his friends, two other Jewish G.I.'s, be allowed to attend church services on Friday night, during their regular barracks' cleaning duties. When Marx asks if they were not allowed to do so before Grossbart reveals the real problem "'It's the other guys in the barracks.' He leaned toward me. 'They say we're goofing off. But we're not. That's when Jews go to services, Friday night. We have to.' 'Then go.' 'But the other guys make accusations. They have no right.'" (118). [2] It is the first instance when Grossbart asks for special treatment on account of his Jewishness. He not only wants to be relieved from his duties, but he also wants protection from the other men in the unit. What is more, from the beginning, Grossbart tries to work on the sergeant's sense of identity, and is successful: "'You can stay and scrub floors or you can go to shul-' The smile swam in again. (...). 'You mean church, Sergeant.' 'I mean Shul Grossbart!'(...) I turned and saw Grossbart's dark frame fleeing back to the barracks, racing to tell his Jewish friends that they were right - that, like Karl and Harpo, I was one of them" (119). From this moment on, regardless of his dislike for Grossbart, Marx defends him, seemingly defending Jewish faith and customs. He makes excuses for Grossbart in front of his superior officer, claiming that the private is an orthodox Jew, whom he is not, judging by his tactless behaviour during the services, when he drinks alcohol and says "'Let the goyim clean the floors'" (122). It is all because of the illusion that Grossbart evokes in Marx, an illusion of himself from the past. He remembers his grandmother, her kind words and her mercifulness, whenever he did something wrong. These memories keep filling Marx with a sense of guilt whenever he argues with Grossbart. The Private also works on that sense of guilt, whenever Marx does something against his will: "'Why are you persecuting me, Sergeant? (...) I've run into this before,' he said, 'but never from my own! (...) They say Hitler himself was half a Jew. Hearing you, I wouldn't doubt it.'" (134-135). The sergeant comes to realise Grossbart's true nature when the latter uses his influences to prevent being sent to combat, and does nothing of the sort to help his friends from the unit. Marx loses his patience and gets the Private transferred back to his combat unit. This leads to their final argument:

> 'You owe me an explanation!' (...) 'Sheldon you're the one who owes explanations.' (...) 'That's right, twist things around. I owe nobody nothing. I've done all I could for them. Now I think I've got the right to watch out for myself.' 'For each other we have to learn to watch out, Sheldon. You told me yourself.' 'You call this watching out for me- (...)?' 'No. For all of us.' (140)

It is here that Marx assumes his true role, as defender of the faith. However, faith in this context does not imply religion. For Marx this faith seems to be in unity, in being fair towards your own people, in remaining together in difficult times. What is more, it is unity set within certain boundaries. When the Sergeant remarks "'this is a war, Grossbart. For the time being be the same'" (136), he makes it clear that they, the Jewish soldiers, need to conform, remain united but equal to all other men in uniform, which in universal terms implies the society. This unity in conformity seems to be the real statement behind Roth's story.

Norman Mailer's "The Naked and the Dead" also depicts a clash between two Jewish soldiers, Roth and Goldstein. They are both privates, assigned to a recognisance platoon—part of a task force fighting with the Japanese on the island of Anopopei. They are the only Jews in the platoon, a situation that initially brings them together. However, they cannot fully come to terms with each other. Roth keeps complaining about everything he has encountered in the army, from the other soldiers: "They were all stupid, Roth thought. All they could think about was getting women" (59), the conditions in which they were transported to the island, to his very recruitment: "All the Army wanted you for was cannon fodder. They even made riflemen out of men like him, fathers, with poor health. He was qualified for other things, a college graduate, familiar with office work. But try and explain it to the army" (59).[3] He finds Goldstein's attitude towards the army annoying: "he was enthusiastic about almost everything to the point of being a moron" (62) and he is irritated by Goldstein's old-fashioned Jewishness with regard to political issues: "Why was it, he asked himself, that so many Jews were filled with all kinds of old wives' tales? (...) Goldstein was like an old grandfather full of mutterings and curses, certain he would die a violent death" (62). In his own conviction Roth is modern, "an agnostic," as he calls himself. His conversation with Goldstein and his own afterthoughts reveal to a large extent his attitude towards being Jewish:

> 'The Jews worry too much about themselves,' Roth said. (...) 'If we don't worry,' Goldstein said bitterly, 'no one else will.' Roth was irritated. Just because he was a Jew too, they always assumed that he felt the same way about things. It made

> him feel a little frustrated. No doubt some of his bad luck had come because he was one, but that was unfair; it wasn't as if he took an interest, it was just an accident of birth. 'Well, let's stop talking about it,' he said. (62)

The above fragment shows Roth's desire to be separated from other Jews. He treats his Jewishness as an "accident"; he feels superior with regard to other Jews due to his views and education. He goes further when he says: "'I never detected any similarities in Jews. I consider myself an American'" (477), at which point he simply discards his identity. Goldstein shatters Roth's vision of himself with a simple statement: "'When the time comes,' he said solemnly, 'they won't ask you what kind of Jew you are.'" (62). This statement, apart from evoking obvious associations with the Holocaust, signifies one simple, inescapable truth—Roth is Jewish, he is part of the nation, he is no exception. His sense of superiority, his pride at being educated, contrary to the other men in the unit, is also shattered, as he is unable to cope with the hardships of military service: "He had again the corrosive sense of failure that always dogged him. I'm no good at anything, he bleated himself. He made a stroke with the machete and the impact snapped it out of his hand. 'Ohh.' Drearily, he bent down to pick it up" (473). His weakness, self-pity, and his inability to adapt lead ultimately to his death.

Goldstein is not religious in traditional terms. He believes in "a personal God with whom he could quarrel, and whom he could certainly upbraid" (211). His Jewishness is a result of his upbringing, when his grandfather told him that "a Jew is a Jew because he suffers" (484). Setbacks make him who he is, and his entire life is marred by series of setbacks in all fields—work, which never satisfies him; education, which he feels he lacks, even marriage, though he cannot fully admit it. He clearly sees and reinforces the division between people like him and others, the "*grobe junge*" or "peasants", the "anti-Semiten", he draws a clear line between himself and the uneducated rabble that is contemptuous of him and other Jews. His actions result from three major factors—guilt, shame, and a desire to please everybody. It is guilt that forces him to go back for one of the men from the platoon, left behind after they are ambushed: "I shouldn't take any chances, Goldstein told himself. (...) But he felt a sense of guilt when everyone remained silent" (521). It is shame that brings upon an argument between him and Roth, when the latter cannot cope with a simple physical task: "he was always a little chagrined that Roth was Jewish, for he felt he would give a bad impression to the Gentiles" (478). His desire to please can be observed in his conversation with Gallagher, in fact one of his enemies in the platoon:

> Goldstein went on talking. He had some constraint, for Gallagher was the man he had hated most in the platoon. The warmth and friendliness he felt toward

> him now were perplexing. Goldstein was self-conscious when he saw himself as a Jew talking to a Gentile; then every action, every word, was dictated to a great extent by his desire to make a good impression. Although he was gratified when people liked him, part of his satisfaction came from the idea that they were liking a Jew. And so he tried to say only the things that would please Gallagher. (453)

The observations above indicate that contrary to Roth, Goldstein takes certain pride in who he is. What is more, his hard work, dutifulness and the risks he is willing to take as a member of the platoon are a sign of certain conformity, a desire to be treated on equal terms by the rest of the men in the unit. This again is contrary to the attitude presented by Roth, who wallows in self-pity, broods over his weakness, and does nothing more than talk about his equality to the other men. Goldstein's devotion also brings him back to the fundamental issue of his Jewishness. At the high point of his ordeal, when he helps to carry a wounded soldier through the jungle, he keeps repeating a phrase which he learnt as a child: "Israel is the heart of all nations" (670). He wonders what the significance of this phrase is for him, believing at one point that Wilson, the wounded soldier, could be that very "heart":

> Wilson was the object he could not release. Goldstein was bound to him by fear he did not understand. If he let him go, if he did not bring him back, then something was wrong, he would understand something terrible. The heart. If the heart died ... but he lost the sequence in the muck of his labours. They were carrying him on and on, and he would not die. His stomach had been ripped apart, he had bled and shit, wallowed through the leaden swells of fever, endured all the tortures of the rough litter, the uneven ground, and still Wilson had not died. They still carried him. There was a meaning here and Goldstein lumbered after it, his mind pumping like the absurd legs of a man chasing a train he has missed. (670-671)

When Wilson dies and his body is lost during a river-crossing, it turns out that the "meaning" Goldstein is after was made obvious to him long ago:

> But the heart could be killed and the body still alive. All the suffering of the Jews came to nothing. No sacrifices were paid, no lessons were learned. It was all thrown away, all statistics in the cruel wastes of history. All the ghettos, all the soul cripplings, all the massacres and pogroms, the gas chambers, lime kilns - all of it touched no one, all of it was lost. It was carried and carried and carried, and when it finally grew too heavy it was dropped. That was all there was to it. He

> was beyond tears, he stood beside Ridges with the stricken sensation of a man who discovers that someone he loves has died. There was nothing in him at the moment, nothing but a vague anger, a deep resentment, and the origins of a vast hopelessness. (679)

He is a Jew because he suffers. He suffers the ordeal of the march with the wounded man, and he suffers a defeat when the soldier dies and is lost. His suffering is futile and will never be remembered. However, at the end, Goldstein does receive gratification for his dedication to the unit and the other men --he survives. Unlike Roth, he is prepared to exceed the limits of his capabilities in order to prove himself, to be useful to the other men, to conform to the needs of those around him. Instead of unity in conformity, as presented in the "Defender of the Faith", what we are dealing with here could be called self-loyalty in conformity—remaining loyal to oneself and one's beliefs, and fulfilling one's duties as part of a group.

The final issue I would like to consider in this paper is the attitude towards Jews presented by the non-Jewish soldiers in the four described texts. The works differ greatly in this respect, some paying great attention to this matter, others being close to disregarding it. In the case of William Wharton's "A Midnight Clear" this attitude is neutral—Jewishness is simply not an issue. The soldiers in the platoon are all friends; they share interests and hobbies, play games together. Whenever the question of Shutzer's Jewishness comes up it is usually treated in humorous terms. For example, when the Americans set out to their final meeting with the Germans one of the soldiers, as an intended joke, tells Shutzer "'OK, you inferior-type, nick-pricked Jew, take me to our real leaders'" (187)—an instance of rough humour one can display only among friends, and of course no offence is taken. The only possible racist overtones appear in the already mentioned remark: "You can't have brown eyes and be an officer", a general yet important statement about the army, which emphasises Shutzer's difficult situation, i.e. that of a Jew trapped between two hostile forces, where his only allies are his friends from the platoon. In Winston Groom's "Better Times than These" it is only Kahn's friend, Lieutenant Holden, who initially feels ill at ease about Kahn's Jewishness. However, he does not give this matter any consideration, and he never allows himself to mention this to Kahn. Thus, the motif is not developed further. In Philip Roth's "Defender of the Faith" sergeant Marx tries initially to defend Grossbart in front of captain Barrett, the company commander. Here are Barrett's views on the question of Jewish personnel:

> 'Marx, I'd fight side by side with a nigger if the fella proved to me he was a man. I pride myself,' he said, looking out the window, 'that I've got an open mind.

> Consequently, Sergeant, nobody gets special treatment here, for the good or the bad. All a man's got to do is prove himself (...)' He turned from the window and pointed a finger at me. 'You're a Jewish fella, am I right, Marx?' 'Yes, sir.' 'And I admire you because of the ribbons on your chest. I judge a man by what he shows me on the field of Battle, Sergeant (...)' (118)

Barrett speaks of equality and he tries to appear as fair and tolerant, but what he says in fact is that he would fight even alongside someone he considers inferior. What is more, the manner in which he gives his justification for the respect that he feels for Marx looks more like an attempt at convincing himself, reassuring himself in his views. Barrett expresses satisfaction whenever Marx acts against Grossbart, giving the sergeant a "mockingly indulgent smile"(126) when he admits that Grossbart is strange, and when Marx is forced to shout at the private: "'Barrett smiled at me, and I resented it'" (128). It appears that the captain's role in the story is that of a dividing factor, shattering the unity of the Jews in the unit, something that, in his own way, Marx ultimately defends. In Mailer's "The Naked and the Dead" we can see direct hostility towards both Roth and Goldstein from the men in the platoon. At critical points, when an anti-tank gun is lost during a march through the jungle, when a wounded man asks for water that he cannot receive, when the conditions of the final patrol become unbearable, they receive additional insults, such as Izzy or Yid, relating solely to the fact that they are Jewish. In a moment of fury Corporal Stanley calls Goldstein a "dumb Jew bastard" (623) shortly after having a very amiable conversation with him, leading Goldstein to a sad realization: "You can't trust any of them, he thought numbly with a certain bitter pleasure. At least this time he was certain" (623). When Gallagher hits Roth and yells "'Get up, you Jew bastard!'" (659), just moments after trying to help him on their march, Roth reaches his breaking point: "The blow, the word itself, stirred him like an electric charge. (...) It was the first time anyone had ever sworn at him that way, and it opened new vistas of failure and defeat" (659). Roth suddenly realises that Goldstein was right from the beginning—he cannot escape being Jewish in the eyes of others:

> It's ridiculous, thought Roth in the core of his brain, it's not a race, it's not a nation. If you don't believe in the religion, then why are you one? This was the prop that had collapsed, and even through his exhaustion he understood something Goldstein had always known. His own actions would be expanded from now on. People would not only dislike him, but they would make the ink a little darker on the label. (659)

It needs to be added that this hostility is not shared by all men in the unit. After the ordeal with the wounded man Goldstein befriends Ridges, the other soldier responsible for carrying the stretcher. This friendship has ironic overtones, for it reveals Goldstein's own bias: "The goy friend he got was such a goy—a peasant, an outcast himself. He *would* get somebody like that. But he was ashamed for thinking this (...). For a friend he had an illiterate, but so what? Ridges was a good man" (703). This is the second gratification that Goldstein receives. His struggle for equality through hard work and dedication earns him his life and friendship in circumstances where friends are scarce. Thus, in the end, his suffering does amount to something, and makes him one of the very few characters in the novel to achieve some victory.

As we can see above the portrait of Jewish soldiers in American war fiction differs from author to author. The protagonists of the four works mentioned in this article choose different paths. Shutzer chooses pacifism over the desire to take revenge—a choice that, ironically, leads to his death. Kahn chooses loyalty towards his friends, rather than towards the army or the society in general, thus renouncing his desire to absolve himself in the eyes his countrymen. Marx chooses to accept his responsibilities as a soldier and as a Jew. Roth chooses self-pity and tries to renounce his Jewishness, only to have the discarded label branded on him with greater force. Goldstein dedicates himself fully to his duties and remains loyal to his convictions. What these characters do share is a sense of misplacement, rejection, and of constant menace. They know that they are not treated on the same terms as the other men, and so their wars are never two-sided ones. They are caught-up in the middle, between the enemies of their country and the enemies of their nation.

Notes

1. All quotations from *A Midnight Clear see* William Wharton, *A Midnight Clear* (London: Vintage, 2001).

2. See Philip Roth, *Goodbye, Columbus* (New York: Bantam Books, 1978).

3. See Norman Mailer, *The Naked and the Dead* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2006).

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A Citizen of the World:Count Leon Skórzewski[1]

Ryszard Nowicki
Faculty of Administration and Social Sciences, Scientific Information and Library Studies, Kazimierz Wielki University
Ogińskiego 16, 85-601 Bydgoszcz, Polska/Poland
Email: nowickiryszard@interia.pl

Abstract After World War II, Count Leon Skórzewski settled in Australia. He is a unique Pole living on this distant continent. He was born in 1933 in Czerniejewo into a family of landowners. His parents were Count Zygmunt Skórzewski and Princess Leontyna of Radziwill. In 1940 they fled from the occupied country. During World War II, Count Skórzewski stayed in Romania, France, Spain and Italy, where his parents were arrested. In 1945 in Poland the landowners were destroyed as a result of political and structural changes. After the war, the Skórzewski family's extensive fortune, with palaces in Czerniejewo and Lubostroń, was nationalized. Leon Skórzewski remained in exile. He worked in Corsica, Canada, Singapore and Australia. He has never ceased to be a Pole, though he neither maintained any contacts with the Polish community nor gave any interviews; he has never contacted the media. In Australia, he belongs to a small group of people from the European aristocracy. This paper is based on a historical and librarian research, connected with the access to the private family archive, conducted by the author in 2008 in Australia, and a series of extensive interviews with Count Skórzewski.
Keywords Leon Skórzewski; Poles abroad-Australia; Minorities

Leon Skórzewski, who lives in Australia, belongs to a small group of people from the European aristocracy. He is without doubt an exceptional Pole living on this remote continent whose fate, until recently, remained unknown. In 2008 I made a research trip to Australia. I am the first person who interviewed Leon Skórzewski and who had access to his private archive. Two years later, i.e. in 2010, my book entitled *Count Skórzewski's Search for a Place on Earth. The Diary of a Journey to Australia* was published by University of Bydgoszcz. I presented there extremely interesting events connected with the life of a man who, over a period of several decades, became a citizen of the world.

Leon Skórzewski was born in a family of landowners in Czerniejewo in

1933, several kilometres from Gniezno, the first capital city of Polish. His parents were Count Zygmunt Skórzewski and Maria of Radziwill Skórzewska. It is worth mentioning that his grandmother, Marie de Benardaky, was the object of Marcel Proust's youthful affections, as Céleste Albaret mentioned in her diary (*Pan Proust [Monsieur Proust]*, the memoirs were written down by Georges Belmont [226-7]). Marcel Proust was said to be 'crazy' for Marie de Benardaky. She was the archer of Gilberte Swann in the autobiographical novel cycle *In Search of Lost Time* (or *Remembrance of Things Past*, French title: *À la recherche du temps perdu*).

Leon Skórzewski's parents had extensive properties in Greater Poland and two palaces: in Czerniejewo and Lubostroń. A few-year-old son, who was to become the heir to the family fortune, initially studied English and French. He barely knew Polish then. His home education was abruptly interrupted in 1939. A few weeks before the expected outbreak of World War II, Leon's parents took their children to Ołyki to a relative, Prince Janusz Radziwill. In September 1939, Zygmunt Skórzewski and his wife had to flee from the Germans. For his initial support of the insurgents in Greater Poland the Count was threatened with death. The family reached Ołyki on September 17, 1939, on the day of the Soviet aggression on Poland. Leon Skórzewski remembers that his father, as a sign of mourning, broke his sword and buried it before the walls of the castle in Ołyki. The whole Skórzewski family was temporarily deprived of their freedom by the Russians and then consequently evicted. In the winter of 1940, they illegally crossed the Polish-Romanian border near the town of Kolomyya. A few-year-old Leon recalls that they fled in a small group and before crossing the Cheremosh border river they covered themselves with sheets. In Romania, the Polish consulate issued two passports: for the father and the mother photographed with three children. This was the first foreign country to which the little boy arrived in unusual circumstances. Leon was a gifted child. In a short period of time he began to speak Romanian. In May 1940, the whole Skórzewski family went to France. In Paris, Zygmunt Skórzewski volunteered for the Polish Army. He was soon sent on a mission to Spain. In Madrid, his son began to attend a school and learnt Spanish. It did not last long, however, as the Count was given another important task to perform, this time in Italy.

Zygmunt Skórzewski, in January 1941, was sent to Italy as a representative of the Polish government in London. Before leaving Madrid, he personally informed of his mission the British Ambassador Samuel Hoare. The English diplomat asked the Count to examine the situation and check if there were chances of reaching an agreement with Italy, namely the transition of Italy to the Allies. Anthony Eden, the British Foreign Secretary in Winston Churchill's wartime Cabinet, knew about the top-secret mission of Zygmunt Skórzewski.

The trip was organized with the help of European aristocratic families. In order for the departure not to cause any suspicions and look reliable, Zygmunt Skórzewski wrote a letter which was sent by his wife, Leontyna Skórzewska, to one of her aunts, who served as a lady-in-waiting to Queen Elena of Italy, the wife of Victor Emmanuel III. These attempts proved to be successful. The whole Skórzewski family received, within a short period of time, permission to stay in Italy.

Zygmunt Skórzewski, during this difficult period, conducted talks regarding the conclusion of peace between Italy and the Allies. The task was not easy and safe due to the fact that Benito Mussolini was an ally of Adolf Hitler. Contacts with the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs were facilitated by Carlo Sallier De la Tour, a relative of Leontyna Skórzewska. The Count also informed Pope Pius XII, during a private audience, of the crimes committed by the Nazis on Polish and Jewish nations in occupied Poland.

Zygmunt Skórzewski's dangerous mission did not end in a success. Under pressure from the Germans, the Italian secret police arrested, in 1942 in Terminillo, Zygmunt and Leontyna Skórzewski. They were locked up in a Roman prisons—Regina Coeli for men and Mantellate for women. The orphaned children were taken care of by the workers of the Embassy of Poland in the Holy See in Rome, especially by ambassador Kazimierz Papée. Pope Pius XII and Queen Helena of Italy were informed about the imprisonment of the couple. A year later, Zygmunt and Leontyna Skórzewski were deported by the Gestapo to Berlin. The International Red Cross and Monsignor Giovanni Battista Montini, later Pope Paul VI, solicited their release.

Leon Skórzewski was one of a few Polish boys residing in Rome during the war. He attended a school in Mondragone and learnt another language, Italian. He was not aware of the importance of the actions taken by his parents. For long months he did not have any news about them. During the occupation, thanks to the nuns, he also learnt Polish. It is amazing that despite a short period of learning this language he has not forgotten Polish to this day. It is worth emphasizing that, for over sixty years, living away from the home country, he has not been using the language of his ancestors.

The war had a unique impact on the psyche of the boy. As he recalls, he regarded bombings as something normal, peace was unusual for him. This is characteristic of many, especially young, people who survived World War II. He did not realize the impending danger. At the end of the war he witnessed, among others, the Allied bombing of the headquarters of Gen. Albert Kesselring, Frascati, a small village near Mondragone. During the bombings, he did not go with others to a shelter. He used to stay in his room in the attic and with the carefree, childlike curiosity he watched exploding bombs, incoming planes, antiaircraft headlights. After the raid, the

Mondragone school was closed. He then started to attend another one in Rome. The World War II period was particularly difficult for the young boy, though he was not aware of it. Deprived of their freedom and facing a pending trial, his parents did not have any possibility to contact their children. Leon found friends among adult men, including Polish soldiers from the army of General Władysław Anders.

The family reunion took place in Rome in 1945. Skórzewski was released from prison by the Germans just before the end of the war. The nephew of King Gustav V of Sweden, Count Folke Bernadotte, the vice president of the Swedish Red Cross, who had negotiated with Heinrich Himmler the end of the war, drove the couple to a safe place. Then they sailed from Lübeck to Sweden. Through England they reached Rome and returned to their children. They had to make a very difficult decision—where to live. The return to Poland was impossible. The country was under the influence of the Soviet Union. For political reasons, the gentry in 1945 ceased to exist. They suffered numerous hardships, they were persecuted and imprisoned, they were not allowed to return to their estates and even live near former private properties. False press releases were published about them. Multigenerational family residences, which survived the Nazi occupation and were not destroyed by the Russians, were nationalized. And so it happened with the Skórzewski's estate. In exile, they had no means of support. Before the war, all the accumulated savings of the father of Leon Skórzewski were allocated for homeland defence purposes. They only managed to buy, in 1947, a piece of land in Corsica. They lived very modestly. They had no financial means to educate their children. Sending Leon Skórzewski to a hotel school in Switzerland was a major financial effort.

For several years Leon Skórzewski worked hard as a farmer on the island of Corsica. He befriended local shepherds and learnt their language. After graduating from the hotel school in Lausanne in 1965, he took up employment on a vessel sailing between Italy and Greece. In 1968 he moved to Canada where he was working at the international exhibition for six months. After marrying Ulrike Skórzewski, they went to Singapore. For over a year he worked as a director of one of the restaurants. In 1970, he decided to go to Australia.

Poles have been living in Australia for two centuries; they are the nation's minority population. The first came in the late eighteenth century. During the next century, after the fall of the November Uprising and the Spring of Nations political exiles arrived. However, few Poles lived there—in 1947 only 6000. Increased inflow took place after World War II and after 1989. At the end of the 1980s, there were more than 130 thousand citizens of Polish origin in a country with the population of over 17 million people. The Australian populace was created mainly due to immigration; with the majority of British origin. Numerous Polish organizations are operating on the

continent, but Leon Skórzewski, not even for a while, has been a member of any of them.

Hotel education gained in Lausanne gave Leon Skórzewski and his wife hope of finding a job quickly. But the reality proved to be different. Upon arrival, during the first few months, they were staying in a transit camp. Then they went to Sydney. Leon Skórzewski had been working in Australia until his retirement. He has Polish citizenship, which he has never expatriated, as well as French and Australian. His only son, Thomas, was born in Australia. Together with his wife, Leon Skórzewski decided to bring up a child who would be looking into the future and not the past, especially since the past was very painful. For years Leon Skórzewski had no hope that the return to Poland would be possible. He did not maintain contact with the Polish community and any societies in Australia. Referring to the motto of his family "Semper recte", which means always justly, dignified and noble, he decided to bring Thomas up in new conditions as a free man who would not be burdened with the baggage of the past.

Although he settled several thousand kilometres from the family nest, he has never renounced being a Pole. He studied the rich history of Poland and Polish language. He owes this knowledge primarily to nuns, parents, relatives and a few other people who took care of him during World War II. In his home he keeps precious souvenirs connected with Poland. The collection includes, e.g., a graphics depicting the last Polish king Stanisław August Poniatowski. He knows well the history of Polish sovereign, including the conqueror of the Turks, the victorious king of Vienna, 1683, John III Sobieski, whose miniature he carefully stores. A few photographs survived from the Polish period, among them a portrait of a carefree little boy pictured in front of palaces in Czerniejewo, where he was born, and in Lubostroń. The relationship with other European royal and aristocratic families is proven by, e.g., an invitation to a party from King Edward VII, which Leon's ancestors, Michal and Maria Radziwill, received in the early twentieth century. To particularly precious souvenirs one may include a copy of an original book by Tadeusz Stryjeński, *Pałace i dwory z czasów saskich, Stanisława Augusta i Księstwa Warszawskiego w województwie poznańskim. Na podstawie podróży odbytej w lipcu 1926 roku,* published in 1929. From the once rich collection of books from Lubostroń and Czarniejewo, amounting before the outbreak of World War II to a total of about 70 thousand items, in a private collection of Leon Skórzewski just one volume has survived. This copy has a symbolic meaning. It also shows the tragedy that struck one of many aristocratic families in Poland and their book collections. Skórzewski's library collections belonged to the largest private collections in the country.

During numerous trips, Leon Skórzewski has visited the whole world. He

worked in Europe, North America, Asia and Australia. It is worth emphasizing that everywhere he feels good. He says that if he lived in France he would feel as a French, in Italy—as an Italian, in Spain—as a Spanish. Now he lives in Australia, so he feels as an Australian. He believes that this is a fantastic country and the people are wonderful. His life, full of fascinating experiences, depicts the process of becoming a citizen of the world. Events connected with World War II, on which he did not have the slightest influence, made it necessary for him to wander through Europe and the world. First, following the decision of his parents—and later, in the adult life, of his own accord.

He lives on the Gold Coast, a few dozen kilometres from the capital of Queensland - Brisbane, the most easterly region of Australia. Years ago he bought a piece of land, within walking distance of Surfers Paradise. Earlier this place had been only a pasture with just one tree growing. He built a house and created a garden where he planted palm trees, fruit trees and ornamental shrubs. A one-storey building is surrounded by exotic plants. This extremely friendly garden is frequently visited by various species of parrots, kangaroos and koalas. A snake named Fred in the attic lives. For many Europeans this image may be downright heavenly. Leon Skórzewski befriended the animal world to the extent that he feeds wild birds from his hand. He knows numerous interesting stories about the fascinating flora and fauna of Australia, which he eagerly tells. He appreciates the value and the importance of protecting the natural world both on a local and global scale.

The distinctiveness of Leon Skórzewski lies in the fact that he belongs to a small group of the descendants of the European aristocracy living in Australia. He has never felt as an emigrant. Owing to his parents, he has felt as a citizen of the world. He is a Pole by birth and he has never ceased to be one. All the knowledge about the rich past of his family he drew almost entirely from the oral tradition handed down by his parents and relatives during family gatherings. He is a living history, the last heir to the centuries-old tradition of an aristocratic Polish family, related by blood to the European aristocracy, living on a distant continent. When World War II broke out, he was barely 6 years old. He did not even know Polish well. After the war his parents worked hard to survive. On Corsica, Leon Skórzewski, plowing with mules the soil and collecting olives for several years, experienced hard work. He rightly believes that parentage does not matter. He is proud of his noble origins and the title of Count, at the same time considering it as obsolete. He states that the title of Count should be earned, not inherited. He is convinced that his ancestors lived in line with the family motto “Semper recte”. He decided to raise his only son, Thomas, in accordance with this maxim. As stated by Leon Skórzewski, the most important in life is the future, not looking back. That is why, after arriving in Australia, his most important decision

was that his descendant was to become an Australian, a free and honest man. He has never told his son about the noble titles and their lineage because of the fact that the Polish nobility ended with World War II. He is very proud of the history of his lineage and of his parents who demonstrated profound patriotism and heroism during the war. He perfectly remembers about his aristocratic origins and Polish roots but he has never given interviews and he has not maintained any contact with the media or any societies. The memories are very painful to him. He is a citizen of the world who believes that all people should be treated equally, regardless of origin, skin colour, nationality, religion or profession. He is convinced that the world would be much better if everyone acted in accordance with the Skórzewski's motto: "Semper recte".

Note

1. This paper is translated by Marta Nowicka.

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The Transparent Peasant: On the Narrative Voice in John Berger's *Into Their Labours* Trilogy

Bartosz Lutostański
Faculty of English Philology, The University of Gdańsk, Poland
ul. Bażyńskiego 1a, 80-952 Gdańsk, Poland
Email: bart_lutostanski@poczta.onet.pl

Abstract John Berger's *Into Their Labours* (1992) was written "in a spirit of solidarity with the so-called 'backward,' whether they live in villages or have been forced to emigrate to a metropolis" (xxix). This paper examines the semantics of such a literary strategy by analysing, first, the narrative voice and, second, narrative techniques of embedding and metalepsis in order to argue that Berger's approach to the "backward" bestows a false narrative coherence on a much more complex and intrinsically unrepresentable experience of (French) peasantry. Two key notions to help understand my argument are betweenness and subaltern. The former stands for the misunderstood boundary between the narrator of the trilogy and his protagonist(s). The latter refers to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's famous thesis on the impossibility and/or limitation of representing the marginalised and disempowered group of people, the "backward" in Berger's sense.
Key words Berger; narrative theory; narrative techniques; post-colonialism; Spivak

In his introduction to *Into Their Labours* trilogy (1982), John Berger remarked that it had been written "in a spirit of solidarity with the so-called 'backward,' whether they live in villages or have been forced to emigrate to a metropolis" (xxix). But what does Berger mean by the phrase "in a spirit of solidarity with the 'backward'"? How does it reflect the way of story-telling? And, finally, what implications for stories, characters ("the backward") and the author himself does a particular way of storytelling have? These are the three main questions I want to discuss in the following paper using one particular story from *Into Their Labours* trilogy (from *Once in Europa*), "Boris Is Buying Horses," as my prime example.

In order to examine the storytelling, I will begin with a narrative (close-reading) analysis. Arguably, the most important narrative category in the process of storytelling

is the narrative instance.[1] "Boris Is Buying Horses" is told by a narrator who openly acknowledges his presence in the story. He is a writer ("my books" (Berger 213)) and a horse dealer ("In the spring I had to deliver a third horse to him" (Berger 221)). Moreover, at the beginning we learn that he is now writing/creating a life story of his friend, Boris ("Sometimes to refute a single sentence it is necessary to tell a life story (Berger 213) and "[Boris says,] 'Now you are writing the story of my life'" (Berger 216)).

Such a narrative situation bears an important implication for the mode of storytelling. Firstly, like Watson telling a story of Holmes' adventures, the nameless narrator tells a story of eponymous Boris. He takes part in the action, but mainly as a narrator—a witness, archivist, or memoirist. And as such Gerard Genette would call him a homodiegetic narrator located extra- and intradiegetically (Genette 1980 227-252). The first term has to do with the narrator's presence in the story he tells whereas the last two with the narrative levels which I will discuss in due time.

Now let me analyse the homodiegetic narrator to a greater extent. As I have noted, he seems an eyewitness or biographer; he is well acquainted with the protagonist and has predominantly first-hand knowledge concerning, for example, his childhood, family background, failed marriage, or the incidents of his being teased and mocked by school children (Berger 214). In several cases the narrator indicates an additional source of narrative information by attributing it to other characters ("All this was observed by the neighbours" (219), "One of the young men looked out through the window and saw their car parked opposite" (217)) or Boris himself ("[Boris says,] 'Now you are writing the story of my life'" (216)). Furthermore, that Boris functions as a story source is also indicated by a frequent adapting of his perspective when reporting the story.[2] In consequence, a considerable number of passages are focalised through Boris: "He believed that the unsaid favoured him. And yet, despite himself, he dreamed of being understood" (215), "Before he saw her, he was telling himself that, after all, he had only lost half his sheep" (234), "Boris decided to remain in the mountains" (234).

These textual phenomena seem to point out a sort of faithfulness and realism on the part of the narrator ("I say nothing. I go on writing" (216)). There are, however, other textual phenomena that shed a different light on the narrator of "Boris Is Buying Horses." Consider six following passages:

1. The young in the village nicknamed her the Goose—*for reasons that are not part of this story*. (213)
2. The month of August was the month of Boris's triumph. *Or is glory a better term?* (225)

3. … Marc, *who*, with his pipe and blue overalls, *is the sceptic of the Republican Lyre*, the perennial instructor about the idiocy of the world. (226)
4. The trees form a copse *which I would be able to see now* from the window, if it were not night. (242)
5. Once again she laughed, this time quietly. *Later he was to recall* this first morning that he found himself in the kitchen … (219)
6. Every time he visited her, he brought her a present; the lamb was only the first. (219)

The passages above display the narrator's considerable power over his narration. (1) shows him as the ultimate material gatherer, the one who decides what is included in or excluded from the story; and also the one who has a broad knowledge of the events as prolepsis in (5) and frequency figure in (6) demonstrate. (2) exemplifies the narrator's inability to decide for a more appropriate name for Boris's business success (linguistic limitations). These textual phenomena illustrate another side of the same coin (the narrator). This side clearly indicates that he is not only a faithful storyteller, but also a creator who feels free to go against famous Henry James's rule of a narrator's meekly telling the story, staying in the shadows. No; the narrator in "Boris Is Buying Horses" does not hesitate to enter the stage of his storytelling as the main character, backgrounding Boris. (3) and (4) are exceptionally good cases in point. Both have to do with the abovementioned level inconsistencies. I have noted that the homodiegetic narrator is located variously extra- or intradiegetically. This level uncertainty lies in the fact that Boris's life story is a narrative told "between the moments of action" and as such called an embedded narrative (see Keen 111, see Genette 1980 217). In other words, "Boris Is Buying Horses" consists of two levels, "the now" and "the then" divided by approximately a twenty-year gap. "The now" level is marked by an opening ("Now I come to the sentence that I want to refute" (Berger 213)) and a closing ("So I have told the story" (Berger 243)) whereas "the then" is the embedded narrative—the story of Boris.[3] However, the level construction is not always sustained, as (3) and (4) have illustrated; (3) explains Marc's characteristic behaviour and (4) serves to acknowledge the narrator's immediate situation. Narratively speaking, in (3) the narrator located at an intradiegetic level (within "the then") breaks the level and gives additional information on one character as an extradiegetic narrator ("the now"). The tense also changes—from past to present. There are several instances of the phenomenon, called metalepsis, on pages 215, 225, 226, 232, 242 of my edition of *Once in Europa*. Again they all attract attention to the narrator and his narrative mediation (Genette 1980 234-237; see Nelles 350).

To sum up, at the beginning of the story, the narrator says, "Sometimes to refute

a single sentence it is necessary to tell a life story" (Berger 213). A few lines down on the same page we learn that this single sentence to be refuted is "Boris died" (Berger 213). The narrator thus suggests that Boris is going to be the subject of the story. Such an assumption complies with a general, macro-strategy of John Berger[4] who, as I have quoted at the outset of my paper, has written his trilogy "in a spirit of solidarity with the so-called 'backward'" (Berger xxix). However, my conclusions seem to question John Berger's idea for tree reasons.

Firstly, the narrative techniques of, say, the homodiegetic narrator, metalepsis and embedded narrative in "Boris Is Buying Horses" not only characterise the medium (literature) but also indicate the ongoing process of aestheticisation (or, as some say, more tellingly perhaps, falsification). Therefore, being self-reflexive, the narrative devices "conspicuously foreground an act of narrative," says Jeffrey Williams (100). As a result, the referential function and the story's contents (the life and death of Boris) become backgrounded, what leads to a conclusion that in the literary text processing and codification, narrative devices can overshadow the story contents and instead of subjectification of the protagonist, we deal with his objectification. This brings to mind a (post-)imperialist, (post-)colonialist argument that "in the case of western knowledge produced about the non-western world ["the backward" in Berger's case] the object of thought disappears under the weight of western representation" (Morton 41).

Take Boris; not only objectified, he is also seen as a mute (or illiterate to some extent) for whom the narrator must give voice.[5] Consequently, the character exemplifies a general strategy in the entire trilogy, where John Berger aims to address the experience of "the backward," say, by giving names to them, to villages they live in, to cafes they drink beer in, or to valleys they breed their sheep in. But, specifically speaking, who is the narrator of "Boris Is Buying Horses"? In a way he belongs to the community he describes, he is a horse dealer. On the other hand, he is not a peasant—he is a writer with enough time on his hands to create fiction ("my books" (Berger 213)). In other words, the narrator occupies the position of betweenness (see Spivak 284-285) or Derrida's *antre*, a privileged position predicated on the questionable grounds of his education, eloquence and culture. In his book on Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Stephen Morton makes reference to Spivak's work on Immanuel Kant in *Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Towards a History of the Vanishing Present*, and states that in the western Enlightenment tradition, lack of education and culture has resulted in inferiority and led to a creation of an environment regulated by (intellectual) power. [6] As a result, in the story we deal with a "colonising" and "the colonised" (or the subaltern in Antonio Gramsci's and Spivak's sense[7]).

Secondly, from the position of betweenness, the narrator attempts to represent

(speak for) the peasant community via literary re-presentation under the assumption that "the small peasant proprietors 'cannot represent themselves; they must be represented. Their representative must appear simultaneously as their master, as an authority over them …'" (Marx quoted in Spivak 276-277). Such an authority and betweenness presuppose transparency (Spivak 275).[8] To put more simply, the narrator in "Boris Is Buying Horses" at first glance effaces his role of the narrator—"I say nothing. I go on writing" (Berger 216)—to be a transparent, simple medium through which Boris communicates his experience. But one does not have to say anything to speak, does one?[9] Literature is never transparent, as Berger seems to hope.[10]

Last but not least, written in "a spirit of solidarity with the 'backward,'" the trilogy is in fact detrimental to "the backward." First, the term is an oversimplification negatively influencing the real community the narrator attempts to re-present. "The backward" is thus a Derridian catachresis, a term with "an abusive effect on those people, whose lives and experiences are named and defined by such master words" (Morton 35). Further, Stephen Morton comments that for Spivak such an instance of catachresis bestows a "coherent political identity" which in fact "is always already an effect of the dominant discourse that represents" (Morton 35) those who "live in villages or have been forced to emigrate to a metropolis" (Berger xxix).

Therefore, John Berger falls prey to one of the fundamental arguments of Marxism and post-colonialism—"worlding" which is "the assumption that when the colonizers come to a world, they encounter it as uninscribed earth upon which they write their inscriptions" (Spivak 1990 129; Morton 18). *Into Their Labours* exemplifies how "the benevolent, radical western intellectual can paradoxically silence the subaltern by claiming to represent and speak for their experience …" (Morton 56). So instead of "shatter[ing] an opaque part of the ruling ideology" (Berger 2003 368), Berger's trilogy sustains it.

Notes

1. Gerard Genette explains that a narrator is the subject who "carries out or submits to the action," who recounts and/or participates, however passively, "in the narrating activity" (1980 213).

2. The phenomenon of adapting a character's perspective in telling a story is called focalisation, defined by Mieke Bal as "the relation between the vision and that which is 'seen,' perceived" (142). In other words, Genette clarifies, "the focus [of the narration] coincides with a character, who then becomes the fictive 'subject' of all perceptions, including those that concern himself as object" (Genette 1990 74).

3. Such a strategy of opening and closing the frames exemplifies several narrative topoi with which the story complies. One of them is the topos of embedded narrative, succinctly and comprehensively

discussed by Jeffrey Williams in *Theory and the Novel*. Firstly, as I have just noticed above, there is a narrative scene that sets the time and space of embedded story separate from the embedding story ("the now" and "the then" above). Secondly, we have narrative circle defined by Williams as characters whose "primary action is the delivery and/or reception of narrative" (108). In the case of Berger's story, indicates its main narrative source—the narrator—present in the story at all times; either as merely the narrator, "I say nothing. I go on writing" (Berger 216), or as both the narrator and a character, "In the spring I had to deliver a third horse to him" (Berger 221). The third feature of the narrative embedding is narrative cause also explicitly acknowledged by the narrator, "Sometimes to refute a single sentence it is necessary to tell a life story" (Berger 213). And Boris' life story is what seems to be needed to refute his death. In other words, the narrator proves that Boris in a sense did not die since he lives in his life story. This leads to the last, fourth, feature, narrative adverts, characterised as "explicit depictions of narrative-to-be-told and of the narrative desire of the narrative circle" (Williams 108). In "Boris Is Buying Horses" the role of adverts is played by passages such as "Sometimes to refute a single sentence it is necessary to tell a life story" (Berger 213).

4. In "Speech on Accepting the Booker Prize for Fiction" delivered on 23 November 1972, John Berger mentions his new project "about the migrant workers of Europe" (2003 253-254). *Into Their Labours* trilogy is a part of the project. In it, he wishes that "some of the voices of the eleven million migrant workers in Europe and the forty or so million that are their families, mostly left behind in towns and villages but dependent on the wages of the absent workers … speak through and on the pages of this book" (2003 254).

5. See footnote no. 4

6. "In *The Critique of Judgment,* Kant argues that it is primarily cultivated and educated men who can make judgments about taste and sublimity. For Spivak, this moment in Kant's argument is particularly revealing because it raises questions about those groups and societies who *do not* have access to the culture that Kant is describing. For if the moral subject needed culture to define *his* cognitive limitations in the face of the infinite structure of the sublime, what happens to those subjects who do not have access to Kant's understanding of morality or culture?" (Morton 115).

7. Subaltern encompasses "a range of different subject positions which are not predefined by dominant political discourses" (Morton 45). Originally Antonio Gramsci's term, it denoted "the unorganised groups of rural peasants based in Southern Italy, who had no social or political consciousness as a group, and were therefore susceptible to the ruling ideas, culture and leadership of the state" (Morton 48). Subsequently, the denotation has extended to define "the general attribute of subordination in South Asian society" and, finally, a community or society without any coherent political and cultural identity (Morton 49).

8. "Two senses of representation are being run together: representation as "speaking for," as in politics, and representation as "re-presentation," as in art or philosophy. Since theory is also only "action," the theoretician does not represent (speak for) the oppressed group. Indeed, the subject is

not seen as representative consciousness (one re-presenting reality adequately). These two senses of representation—within state formation and the law, on the one hand, and in subject-prediction, on the other—are related but irreducibly discontinuous. … These immense problems are buried in the differences between the "same" words: consciousness and conscience (both *conscience* in French), representation and re-presentation. The critique of ideological subject-constitution within state formations and systems of political economy can now be effaced, as can the active theoretical practice of the "transformation of consciousness." The banality of leftist intellectuals' lists of self-knowing, politically canny subalterns stands revealed; representing them, the intellectuals represent themselves as transparent." (Spivak 275).

My reading of false transparency in Berger is reflected in his essay "The Storyteller" where he repeatedly uses the phrase of the village's continual "portrait of itself" (Berger 2003 368, 369).

9. "… for in the constitution of disempowered groups as coherent political subjects, the process of (aesthetic) representation is subordinated to the voice of the political proxy who speaks on their behalf. As a consequence of this conflation, the aesthetic portrait—symbolically representing disempowered people as coherent political subjects—is often taken as a transparent expression of their political desire and interests" (Morton 58).

10. In his essay "The Storyteller," John Berger writes that "the act of writing is *nothing* except the act of approaching the experience written about" (2003 366; my italics).

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责任编辑：易立君

Discrimination of Sexual and AIDS Minorities in Jonathan Demme's *Philadelphia* (1993)

Magdalena Zegarlińska
Faculty of Philology, The University of Gdańsk, Poland
Morska 222/30, Gdynia, 81-006, Pomorskie, Poland
Email: Magdalena.okroj@wp.pl

Abstract The article discusses the problem of discrimination of minorities, i.e. homosexuals and people suffering from AIDS in Jonathan Demme's *Philadelphia* (1993), illustrated by various instances from the film. The introduction presents a general cultural context and is followed by a detailed description of the characters and their attitudes towards the protagonist who is a homosexual dying of AIDS, suing his superiors for discrimination. What follows, are basic data concerning the disease, and the historical background. The conclusion confronts critical reviews and discusses the cultural impact of the film.
Key words homosexuals; AIDS; discrimination; minorities; Philadelphia

The problem of the discrimination of minorities is a current issue in social debates and modern media. Recent decades brought rapid development in gender studies, with special emphasis on the equality of sexes and social attitudes towards sexual minorities. Homosexuality has always been perceived as a taboo, and often as a deviation from a fixed and established social order. Homosexuals have been forced to hide their orientation, for fear of being persecuted and deposed from a society (Demers 2006). Certain occupations, entailing working with children or in exclusively male environments were, and I believe still are, illicit for people who divulge their orientation which varies form a fixed social order. Such a policy is unlikely to change, unless homosexuality ceases to be perceived as an aberration, or at least not taken into consideration in professional relations. In Jonathan Demme's *Philadelphia* (1993), sexual orientation proves to matter more than person's qualifications and professional experience. The director touches upon the problem of the discrimination of people infected with HIV, and refers to his work as "an analysis of prejudice" (qtd. in Jones 2002). The film discusses social unawareness towards homosexuality and AIDS in a poignant story of love, and presents the character's struggle against fatal disease and to defend his human dignity. In her essay entitled "The Crimes and Punishments

of Society: Jonathan Demme's *Philadelphia,*" Catherine Marcks comments on these issues as follows:

> We connect the themes of this illness to greater concepts of human nature. People have always investigated sin, crimes against society, and issues with identity. All of these concerns can be found in the ways society views and stigmatizes AIDS. The film *Philadelphia* uses a full spectrum of emotions, images, and metaphors to discuss homosexuality and AIDS during the nineties. (2012)

For a place of action Demme chose Philadelphia, from Greek "the city of brotherly love," which seems to be an obvious and symbolic choice. In his review, James Berardinelli argues that being a psychological and social drama, the movie is hardly a source of entertainment for the viewers. Instead it fulfills an important social mission. "For viewers of the movie, the question is not whether they sympathize with Tom Hanks' AIDS-afflicted, gay character, but whether that sympathy opens up a different perspective on the victims of the disease in the real world" (1994). Hanks gave an outstanding performance, which is one of the strongest elements of the film, on which Berardinelli comments thus:

> Tom Hanks gives what has rightly been called "the performance of his career", lending humanity and vibrancy to the victim, and portraying him in a manner that eschews maudlin, obvious tactics to garner the audience's sympathy. We feel for Andrew Beckett because he seems to be a genuine human being, not because the script and production have twisted circumstances to manipulate our emotions. (1994)

Similar opinion was voiced by Luke Grundy: "Hanks, who so often plays the American everyman driven to extraordinary lengths, now portrays a brilliant man driven to extraordinary lengths just to be treated like everyone else. This inversion of Hanks' familiar role makes his performance all the more impressive" (2012). What is worth noting is that the film is not a campaign defending gay rights or contending for special treatment of minorities. On the contrary, the main figure struggles to be treated honestly and normally, regardless of his sexual orientation or state of health. The scene in which he denies being a gay-rights activist and his trial being used for their purposes is a perfect example.

The protagonist Andrew Beckett is a highly respected lawyer who becomes promoted because of his outstanding accomplishments, and is subsequently deposed for having an "attitude problem" and the negligence of his professional duties. A

homosexual, living in a monogamous relationship with Miguel Alvarez (Antonio Banderas), Andrew conceals his sexual orientation and the fact of being infected with HIV from his superiors, so as not to bring his private life to work. Only when his health rapidly deteriorates and mysterious bruises begin to appear on his face, the bosses become suspicious. When Andrew's illness develops and becomes apparent, they find a pretext to dispense him, by means of hiding some important documents, to make him look incompetent. The film is a sharp criticism of relations between the management and the staff in a large corporation. During the trial, which Andy brings against his superiors for AIDS-based discrimination and humiliation, he is attacked for concealing not only his illness but also his sexual orientation, which is against constitution[1]. In the course of legal action, it becomes clear that the genuine reason for Andrew's dismissal is not related to his incompetence. "This case is not all about AIDS it's also about homosexuality and prejudice," professes Andy's attorney, and he adds that "his employers discovered his sickness and the sickness I am referring to is AIDS, and they panicked, and in their panic they did what most of us would like to do with it, get it and everyone who has it as far away from us as possible" (*Philadelphia*). Andrew's employers defend themselves arguing that "He was fired for incompetence, not AIDS," and claim to have been unaware of his sickness. Later, however, they admit Andrew's illness was not of no importance. "Andrew brought AIDS to our company," they profess (*Philadelphia*). Moreover, they describe his work as "merely satisfactory," despite having offered him a promotion, and attempt to present their once "golden boy" in an unfavourable light. "Andrew is dying and angry because his reckless behaviour cut short his life and he wants someone to pay" (*Philadelphia*). The concealment of Andrew's sexual orientation was for them tantamount to hiding his real identity. Andrew's attorney refrains from judging the actions of both his client and his former employers as ethical or unethical, but emphasizes the fact that law was broken, since discrimination is illegal. Moreover, he reminds the jury that sexual orientation has no connection whatsoever to a person's quality of work.

Andrew's case became a burning issue in the media. Pro-homosexual demonstrations are gathering outside the court during the trial, seeing in Andy the defender of their rights. He, however, refrained from engaging himself in any campaigns for special treatment of homosexuals. The avoidance to use Andrew's case in a general debate over homosexuality, prevents the film from becoming merely a political image. Instead, the emphasis is placed on a human tragedy—a dying man's struggle for justice and dignity.

Various instances of discrimination are further multiplied in the film. When Andrew visits the library to do some research on AIDS and legal acts against discrimination, a librarian suggests that he had better studied in a separate room. "We

have a private research room sir, wouldn't you be more comfortable in a research room?". When Andrew declines the suggestion, the man becomes insistent: "Wouldn't it make you more comfortable, sir?" (*Philadelphia*). On hearing the conversation, other people begin to move aside. Also the hospital, however unlikely it may seem, is not devoid of discrimination. When Miguel visits Andrew, a doctor treats him unsympathetically. "You're not a member of a family, I can have you removed," he says.

Joe Miller (Denzel Washington), Andy's solicitor, is reluctant to help him when informed about his illness. His initial reaction is wiping his hand shaken by Andrew, and careful observing each move of his prospective client. Unaware of possible ways of becoming infected, being both a homophobic and an AIDS–phobic, Joe was alarmed to see Andy touching various objects in his office. "How many lawyers have you consulted before me?," he asks, "Nine," replies Andrew. "It's because you don't have any case," Joe attempts to discourage him, not even investigating the issue carefully. His prejudice conquers his professionalism, and on returning from work he goes to the doctor for examination, and to obtain some knowledge concerning the possibilities of becoming infected. Joe's attitude reflects social fears connected with AIDS, on which Grundy comments as follows: "Demme's movie remains remarkably apposite, even 17 years after its release—although we know far more about AIDS now than we did in 1993, there still lingers a fear of the disease and swathes of general misconceptions about its sufferers" *(*2012). Back at home Joe converses with his wife about homosexuality, and realizes that they know more gays than he has ever suspected. "Aunt Teresa is gay? That beautiful, sensuous woman is a lesbian? Since when?," he inquires astonished, which proves his stereotypical thinking about homosexuals. Further, he plainly states his attitude thus: "I admit it. I'm prejudiced, I don't like homosexuals. You can call me old-fashioned, you can call me conservative. You can call me a man" (*Philadelphia*). Attempting to domesticate the issue, he derides homosexual behaviours, but to no avail. He ends up confessing to his wife: "Would you accept a client if you were constantly thinking: I don't want this person to touch me, I don't want him to breathe on me?". "Not if I was you honey," his wife replies (*Philadelphia*). Being an "everyman, the on-screen representation of those in the audience who harbor homophobic tendencies" (Berardinelli 2012), as Berardinelli calls him, Joe undergoes an outstanding transformation throughout the story, which manifests itself not only in a developing friendship between him and Andrew, but also in the fact that physical distance between them diminishes. Being a witness of the situation in the library Joe decides to represent Andrew as his attorney, which becomes a breaking point in their relations. "As the film progresses, they grow gradually closer, sitting across a table at a library, then side-by-side in court. Finally, past the moment

of Miller's crisis of conscience, he drops all barriers by lifting an oxygen mask to Andrew's face, momentarily touching flesh to flesh," observes Berardinelli (2012). Joe's main motive to change his initial decision stems from his sense of justice and a firm belief in the legal system. "What I love about law is that every now and then you are a part of justice being done," he later claims. When Andrew quotes legal acts concerning discrimination, he realizes that Andrew's dismissal was against the law and agrees to represent the man in a legal case against his former employers. After engaging himself in the case, Joe becomes an object of derision himself. "Are you becoming you know...?," asks one of his friends, and Joe replies, "Those people make me sick but law has been broken," which makes the character more complex—instead of a sudden transformation from a homophobic into a tolerant liberal man, the viewers may observe a cautious gradual change. Strangers suspect Joe to be a homosexual himself, which incites his angry reaction. "Do i look like gay? Do i? It's exactly this kind of bullshit that makes people sick of you guys," he replies and further proves his not being devoid of prejudices indeed. To avert his thoughts of imminent death, Andrew takes Miguel to a fancy dress gay party, to which he invites Joe and his wife. Surprising as it may seem, the solicitor agrees to come and, what is more, spends an exceptionally enjoyable evening in a good company. Seeing Andrew and Miguel dancing together with tenderness, he fathoms they truly love each other, which is a shocking revelation. It is worth noting that there is no explicit sexuality between either Andy and Miguel or any other homosexuals presented in the film, which diverts attention from a physical to an emotional sphere, and deprives the film of unnecessary controversial content.

As has been noted, gradually relations between two lawyers tighten and become rather friendly, since Joe commences to look beyond Andrew's sexuality and illness, and notices a kind, funny, sensitive man and not only a gay with AIDS. "You survived your first gay party intact," remarks amused Andrew, which makes Joe look at his inhibitions more distantly and less seriously. The film reaches its climax when, during the most poignant scene in the movie, masterfully performed by Tom Hanks, Andrew passionately narrates for Joe Maria Callas' aria while listening to it. He does so with such a passion, pain, and dejection in his voice, that Joe leaves his apartment disconcerted. The incident makes him realize how precious his own life—health, family, and children—is. At the end of the film Joe is eventually able to overcome his prejudices and comfort Andy on his deathbed and hug Miguel, an incident unthinkable of before he engaged himself in Andrew's case. The emotional side of the film manifests itself further in the scenes with Andrew's parents who support and love him unconditionally, even when truly embarrassing facts from their son's past become revealed. Andrew's employers try to question his truthfulness referring

to his fortuitous sexual contacts with strangers in the past. "I didn't raise my kids to sit at the back of the bus. Go there and fight," says Andy's mother, heartbroken to see her son being humiliated in public. During the trial, however, it is not only Andy, whose shameful secrets become divulged. Mr. Wheeler, one of his superiors, would discriminate the employees of his company in the past on racial and sexual grounds. Jokes concerning homosexuals or "too ethnic a jewelery" of one of his Afro-American employees, were a common practice. In his final speech for the prosecution in court, Joe begs the jury to overcome their inhibitions and prejudices. "Ladies and gentlemen. Forget everything you've seen or heard on the television," he pleads them, and convinces that the behaviour of Andrew's employers was utterly reprehensible. As a result Andrew wins the case and is given over 4 million of dollars remuneration for his humiliation. "Excellent work counselor," Andy thanks him on his deathbed. "It was great working with you counselor," Joe replies, which are the last words the men exchange before Andrew dies (*Philadelphia*).

When analyzing the problem of discrimination in Demme's film one ought to become acquainted with basic facts concerning the disease, to thoroughly comprehend the sources of characters' prejudices. AIDS is a fairly new medical condition, which became known to the Western world no more than forty years ago. According to American Department of Health and Human Services, in the early 1980s: "rare types of pneumonia, cancer, and other illnesses were being reported by doctors in Los Angeles and New York among a number of male patients who had sex with other men. These were conditions not usually found in people with healthy immune systems" ("AIDS"). However, initial instances of the infection, were recorded as early as in 1959 in Kinshasa, Congo. In 1980s and 1990s, the knowledge about HIV and AIDS was still rather low and insufficient. The protagonist of Demme's film refers to it as "a gay cancer," which was a popular notion used to describe the mysterious new disease, spreading mostly through sexual contacts. The term AIDS—"Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome", was first used in1982 by public health officials in the USA to signify "the occurrences of opportunistic infections, Kaposi's sarcoma (a kind of cancer), and *Pneumocystis jirovecii* pneumonia in previously healthy people" ("AIDS"). A year later a notion HIV—"Human Immunodeficiency Virus" was coined to define the source of the disease ("AIDS"). Modern medicine is still unable to cure it. The only possible way to suppress the dispersion is increasing a social awareness concerning possible ways of contamination. Those who are ill, are treated for the diseases which are an outcome of AIDS—cancer or pneumonia, but a complete recovery is impossible. The statistics are thrilling. According to the American Health Organization around 33, 4 million people worldwide are currently infected, with 2,7 million new infections each year, and more than 25 million

deaths since 1981. The majority of infections was reported in Africa where sanitary awareness and the availability of medical care are still very low. In 1993 in the USA White House Office the National AIDS Policy (ONAP) was established by president Clinton, which suggests the problem received proper attention of the government ("AIDS Timeline"). The number of the infected in the USA only, was estimated to exceed one million people in 1993, with over fourteen million worldwide. The same year, Diana, Princess of Wales, who was an anti-HIV activist, delivered a speech in which she predicted a rapid spread of the infection thus: "By the year two thousand, only seven years from now - even the most conservative estimates predict there will be more than thirty million people worldwide with HIV-equivalent to more than half the population of the United Kingdom" (qtd. in "The History of AIDS"), which illustrates the spectrum of the problem and the level of awareness around the time when *Philadelphia* was shot. The announcements that the infection was spreading mostly through homosexual contacts caused not only social unease towards the illness itself, but also towards homosexuals in general, which is greatly portrayed in Demme's film. The infected were often perceived as guilty of their tragedy, since their illness was claimed to be caused by recklessness and negligence—a main objection raised against Andrew Beckett in the film. One might be inclined to observe that it is not indulgence in professional matters that Andrew's superiors truly mean, but rather carelessness in his sexual activity, which ultimately leads to his infection and fatal disease. In her book *AIDS and its Metaphors,* Susan Sontag discusses the condition in context of guilt and crime, using military notions such as an "invasion against the body" or "pollution" (105). Considering main demeanours conducive to proliferation of the disease, i.e. sexual contacts and illegal drugs consumption, Sontag describes AIDS as an "indulgence, delinquency," a result of "addictions to chemicals that are illegal and to sex regarded as deviant" (113), which reflects social attitudes at that time. Catherine Marcks, in addition, suggests moral and religious implications of both AIDS and homosexuality: "During the initial outbreak of AIDS, society was not only dreadfully afraid of contracting the disease itself, but worried about the possible transmission of sins attached to the illness" (2012). She later develops the thought adding that "The majority of people viewed homosexuality as a crime against what nature intended. Many religions believe that homosexuality is to be regarded as an act of sin, deserving of punishment. Consequently, AIDS was viewed as punishment for the immoral conduct that an individual chooses to pursue" (2012). The categories of "guilty" or "victim" are employed by Demme by showing a striking divergence between social attitudes towards Andrew, who became infected during an unsecured sexual intercourse, and a woman who was tainted during blood transfusion. Andrew was presented as guilty of his own reckless actions, with no empathy presented by

his superiors whatsoever, whereas the woman as a victim who was unable to avoid contamination. She, however, plainly and decidedly demurs at such a distinction. "I'm not guilty, I'm not innocent, I'm just trying to survive," she professes (*Philadelphia*). Marcks notes that "The stigmas and actions attached to AIDS often engross people to the point where they forget to empathize with those who are ill. These actions were frequently viewed as criminal injustices against the norms and values of society," which is exactly what one might observe during Andrew's trial (2012). Sontag, complements her discussion defining a link between homosexuality and AIDS thus: "The illness flushes out an identity that might have remained hidden" (113). Indeed, one of the main accusations towards Andrew is not that of being a negligent worker but of obscuring his real identity of a homosexual, a matter completely unrelated to his professional life. Such an intervention into human being's private matters is absolutely reprehensible not only in professional relations.

Therese Jones criticizes the film rather severely, enumerating its distortions of facts thus: "Presentation of Andrew's legal dilemma is both outdated and incredulous. Ten years before the release of the film, AIDS-based discrimination was a new field of law, and are there are no gay lawyers in the City of Brotherly Love willing to take on such a case?," she asks (2002). According to Jones the film conveys a message that the disease spreads only through homosexual contacts, which is obviously not true: "Even more disturbing are the misleading and mysterious medical facts presented in the film such as the message that heterosexuals do not have to worry about contracting AIDS because it is a gay disease and that a single, unsafe sexual encounter can more readily infect someone when that encounter happens to be anonymous and homosexual" (2002). However, she observes one crucial merit, i.e. the film publicized the problem of sexual and disease–based discrimination and made it a widely discussed issue. Definitely, among pictures presenting this problem, *Philadelphia* appears to be one of the most influential. The film remains fairly objective and not pro- or ante- homosexual, however, it severely castigates discrimination in all possible manifestations of the phenomenon.

Note

1. See Civil Rights Act of 1991, which was signed into law by President George H.W. Bush on November 21, 1991.

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Searching for the Other in HBO's Hit Series *True Blood*

Joanna Bogusławska
Faculty of Philology, The University of Gdańsk, Poland
U1 Janarowa 16B/6, 81-187 Gdynia, Poland
E-mail: joanna_boguslawska@wp.pl

Abstract The paper analyzes the phenomenon of the Other in a highly acclaimed American television series *True Blood* and points out that popular culture, despite its obvious entertainment value, can be used to display a deep and serious context. *True Blood*'s plot focuses on the civil right movement's political fight to becoming equal citizens of the United States, using the allegory of the vampire. HBO's production, being very successful around the world, has made an important contribution to raising the awareness of minorities' rights and is a perfect example of a commercially successful work of art that has the ability to change the situation of minorities worldwide. The article explains the idea of the Other and provides a general decription of the phenomenon of popular culture.
Key words marginalization; popular culture; vampire; discrimination; civil rights movement

"The Other" is a philosophical and sociological term which means "different" and it quite often serves to name a person or a group of people excluded from a given social group because he or she does not succumb to the rules governing it. The Other is, on numerous occasion, rejected and stigmatized, and the rest of the society usually rejects that the person, makes him or her feel not accepted and deprives the person the sense of belonging to their group unless he or she subordinates to the majority. The Other has limited legal rights (in extreme situations may even be considered a sub-human, i.e. a person lacking civil rights), but the term itself does not have to refer only to a given human being; Otherness can be a far broader phenomenon describing the difference between home and away, the feeling of certainty and uncertainty, and it may result in the outcast of not only an individual (an outcast who finds himself in a hostile community) but the whole group or the community.

The term of the Other was first coined by Emmanuel Levinas and apart from the philosophical concept it has political, social and psychological implications. In his

book *Totality and Infinity* Levinas underscores the importance of encountering the Other in our lives and claims that "the presence of the Other, a privileged heteronomy, does not clash with freedom but invests it…" (88). He also notes that "The possibility for the home to open to the Other is as essential to the essence of the home as closed doors and windows…" (172-173). Being close to the Other enriches our own culture and teaches us what tolerance is, as long as we are open-minded to appreciate the opportunity.

According to the definition on the City University of New York's website, the Other is "an individual who is perceived by the group as not belonging, as being different in some fundamental way." And "Otherness takes many forms. The Other may be someone who is of..."

a different race (White vs. non-White),
a different nationality (Anglo Saxon vs. Italian),
a different religion (Protestant vs. Catholic or Christian vs. Jew),
a different social class (aristocrat vs. serf),
a different political ideology (capitalism vs. communism),
a different sexual orientation (heterosexual vs. homosexual),
a different origin (native born vs. immigrant). ("The Other")

There have been countless examples of the Other in novels or films; stories concerning sexual, religious, social or national minorities struggling to live a decent life among a non-friendly environment as well as trying to fight for their rights. In the article I would like to focus on presenting the Other as an individual (or a whole social group) being rejected as shown in one of the most popular modern TV shows, HBO's *True Blood*.

A natural question that appears at this point is why to trace the Other in the art for the masses. Popular culture seems to be one of the most reachable forms of art due to its omnipresence in the media, and, thus, an analysis of the images of the Other in popular culture reveals social opinions of this phenomenon. As we have a basic idea of the concept of The Other, it is appropriate now to explain the notion of popular culture.

Popular culture is a term describing cultural activities or commercial products suited for the general masses. Such a definition may be, however, perceived as too general and quite imprecise, just like the popular culture itself. Popculture is rather a vague concept since it is addressed to general masses. What is more, the term "general masses" may prompt pejorative associations as it might describe a non-demanding audience, lacking the taste and blindly following other people's expectations.

In his book *Cultural Theory & Popular Culture: an Introduction*, John Storey underscores that there is no possibility to discuss popculture without giving it a proper definition. According to him,

1. It is the culture known by the masses, not only a certain part of a society, but people around the world.
2. It does not fulfill the high culture standards, it is made to satisfy the masses and for consumer reasons.
3. It is the culture that is based on what the people, its receivers need and want.
4. It is the culture of rebellion, of breaking the rules. It is against the stiff frames that high culture ought to follow. It has no boundaries, and it has limitless capacity that allows to mix high and low culture together. (4-11)

There is no doubt that popular culture, because of its impressive reach, not only highlights specific social phenomena, but also carries a huge educational potential. *True Blood* perfectly catches people's attention on the idea of the Otherness.

> *Jason Stackhouse: A lot of Americans don't think you people deserve special rights.*
>
> *Bill Compton: They're the same rights you have.*
>
> *Jason Stackhouse: No, I'm just saying there's a reason things are the way they are.*
>
> *Bill Compton: Yeah. It's called injustice.* (*True Blood*, season 1, episode 2, "The First Taste")

Since the release of *Twilight*, an incredibly popular saga written by Stephanie Meyer, the phenomenon of vampire-mania has flourished in the popculture. There is no doubt that the bloodsucking creatures have never been so popular since *Dracula* or Anne Rice's novels. The popularity of the vampire stories is sustained by HBO's show called *True Blood,* which is based on Charlaine Harris' book *The Southern Vampire Mysteries* (aka "Sookie Stackhouse Novels") and deals with vampires' right movement in the state of Louisiana.

That *True Blood* is full of plots and stories focusing on the concept of The Other making it far more serious and complicated than an average fantasy/romance vampire story. Looking closely at the characters, it is clear that most of them represent certain forms of Otherness, and they try to create a peaceful and equal society.

As Alan Ball, *True Blood*'s creator and an executive producer, noted in an interview for the *Daily Beast*, "True Blood is itself a shifting metaphor for oppressed

minorities in America, with vampires and other supernatural standing in at times for gay people, blacks, or a slew of other groups." The opening credits already highlight the show's agenda with members of Ku Klux Klan looking at viewers from their TV screens and a neon light displaying "God Hates Fangs" sign in front of a church (referring to an infamous "God Hates Fags" message made by Westboro Baptist Church).

The Japanese invention of a synthetic blood drink called *TruBlood*, allows the vampires living outside the human world to "come out of the coffin." They do not need to hunt people anymore, they can live among them and drink their favorite blood type heated to the preferable 36.6 C (97.8 F); however, not everyone is thrilled with this. After all, who, when having to choose between the food they love would pick its poor supplement, deprived of taste and the pleasure of consuming? It is no wonder that most people act rather reserved when seeing vampires trying to settle down among them. Coming out of the coffin is only the beginning; it soon turns out the bloodsucking creatures own pubs, airlines, a chain of hotels, that they pay taxes, and they even start the American Vampire League that fights for treating them as equals among people. The party wants to push the VRA (Vampire Rights Amendment) which, if approved and ratified, would give vampires equal rights to humans and the occurrence that triggered the initiative was a night vampire rally in Washington D.C. which took place a couple of years prior to the show's story. VRA faces very strong opposition, especially among conservative groups (it is an obvious metaphor for minorities' struggle for acceptance and equality), but AVL spokeswoman skillfully rejects the critical approach. She is present in most of the news and talk-show programs, which reminds the viewers that all rights-based movement (whether gay, women, indigenous, civil or religious) require the media coverage and good representatives.

"Coming out of the coffin" is an allegory for "coming out of the closet", a situation when a person who is bi- or homo-sexual decides to reveal his or her sexual preferences. People who are scared of vampires are called vampophobic. If we look deeper into the problem, we might ask whether the vampires can really be trusted, where the line between tolerance and the self-preservation instinct should be drawn and whether people who do not support the vampires' equality movement are prejudiced or scared. Yet the act of raising such questions would suggest that we miss the message of the story, namely, the need for tolerance and the vampires' struggle to have the same rights as all other citizens:

> It doesn't take much imagination to perceive the parallels between this Vampirian struggle and the 1960's Black civil rights movement in America. The widespread

> prejudice towards vampires seen on True Blood forces us to confront the cynical possibility that outgroup prejudice is part of our basic psychological make-up. History is repeating itself despite the lessons that past racial conflicts had supposedly taught our society. ("True Blood Psychology")

There are a lot of traces of intolerance towards vampires in the series, some of which can be even described as hate crimes. In season one woman who socializes with vampires is murdered by a serial killer who hates "fangbangers" (an offensive name for all people who hang out with vampires and support them). Three vampires, while staying in their home, are killed in a fire caused by vampire-haters. An unintentional victim of the embezzlement is a human who was spending time with them. The police are oddly befuddled and sluggish in their investigation and show a lot of ignorance in their work. The viewers might think the law enforcement is not truly engaged in finding the killers because the officers want to stay out of the case and feel that perhaps the vampire-supporters get what they deserve. The first season also shows people protesting against a new law in the state of Vermont allowing vampires and humans to marry.

Season two focuses on the story of a Fellowship of The Sun church, a pseudo-religious organization committing on antagonizing vampires and turning people against them in the name of God. The church holds special camps during which reverend Steven Newlin sparks vampire-hate among his listeners and teaches them how to effectively and efficiently bring the true death upon them (this is, once again, a metaphor for many religious organizations that are openly against homosexuals and condemn them). In season three the police refuse to search for a kidnapped vampire claiming that it is dubious if the vampires are alive or un-dead, which means it might be doubtful if the officer ought to engage in search for someone who is already not-alive (vampires in the series are often described as being un-dead). Season three also reveals factions within vampire environment which makes clear that not all bloodsuckers are eager to peacefully co-exist with humans. Season four shows the trend of more and more people protesting against vampires living in Bon Temps alarmed by season three revelations. The fifth installment of the show reveals religious fanatics among vampire authorities expecting uncritical obedience and blind following of their bible, imposing the death to the vampires who disagree with them, as well as factions within the organization, opposing the human-friendly attitude of the leaders. It turns out not only the vampires are the Other and that there are numerous examples of Otherness among them too.

Vampires are not the only minority displayed in *True Blood*; for instance, in a bar, the main cook, Lafayette, is homosexual. It seems that on an every-day basis, the

small community of Bon Temps town has no problem with a make-up wearing chef, who not only is gay, but also black; there are, however, a few conflict situations in the show involving him; some customers who do not want to eat a burger prepared by him, claiming it might have AIDS (a stereotype that all homosexual people are bound to be HIV positive) or a politician who sleeps with Lafayette in his private time but is opposite homosexuality when interviewed by television during a campaign. What is absorbing about Lafayette is the rather untypical way the character is portrayed; he is very flamboyant on one hand, but very masculine on the other and he is by far one of the strongest characters in the show, both physically and mentally. He is very comfortable with his sexuality, unashamed of who and what he is and has no problem with pursuing his love interests. His sexuality is not an excuse for the writers to show him as a vulnerable or conflicted character. Lafayette does not have to prove anything to anybody and lives according to his own standards and does not want to hurt anyone around him. He does, however, have his opinion about vampires' rights, stating that no law has ever been obeyed just because it was asked for, written and voted in. Very bitter words coming from a representative of not one but two minorities (race and sexual orientation-based), whose family has lived in the deep American South for generations. Throughout the series it is also revealed that there are gays among vampires who, being creatures with no sexual boundaries, have no problem with their orientation.

Apart from the idea of struggling for equality, in the vampire society itself there are marginalized (Other) individuals. Bill Compton, the series protagonist, is an over 175 years old vampire, turned against his will, who has been struggling with his blood-sucking nature since he was made, and has never fully come to terms with it. Despite being one of the youngest vampires in the Bon Temps community (and the age is a significant factor as far as vampire hierarchy is concerned) Bill is not submissive, he does not succumb to his much older superlatives, he even rebels against his own maker, finally killing her; he also stakes one of his own while protecting an attacked human; an action completely new and incomprehensible for other vampires. Torn between the two worlds, embracing memories of his former, mortal life, he wants to live among the people and tries to be a decent person but his instinct and blood-drive keep on reminding him he no longer is nor will he ever be human again. All this makes Bill Compton a diversified, conflicted character and his example shows perfectly the vampire struggle to live a normal, human-equal life. The viewers, instead of being afraid of him, may feel sorry for him, because it is difficult to imagine eternity spent without a glimpse of self-acceptance and feeling resentful towards one's nature.. Another example of such a conflicted vampire in the series is Godric. He was an over 2000-year-old vampire and he had every possible potential to

become a vampire Messiah, who would struggle for the peaceful coexistence between humans and his own kind, and spread the words of love and peace. The character dies rather quickly, but it is clear that his point of view brought him more enemies than supporters among his vampire brothers.

The Otherness in *True Blood* is represented both by vampires struggling to become equal citizens in American society, who pay taxes and thus should be allowed to vote, own properties and have crimes against them investigated by the law enforcement and homosexual individuals who need to deal with the prejudiced small-town society. What is original about the HBO series is that it stigmatizes (and condemns) the hypocrisy among people who socialize with blood-sucking creatures and use their blood as a drug and medicine (it is revealed that vampire blood heals human bodies and improves their sex lives) .but do not want to respect their civil rights. It also shows that the vampire society is not homogeneous, that among them there are those who do not want to socialize with people and spot humans only as a source of food and those who wish to mainstream and live together with them, and that not all vampires accept their dark nature. It can easily be said that *True Blood* is so unique not only because it shows the complicated side of a diversified modern society, and the problems occurring when representatives of minorities try to live peacefully among others; it also points out that Otherness can be sought within all possible social groups. *True Blood* is a show that gives a voice to all the injustice and intolerance that the marginalized groups around the world are suffering, because the vampires are only a metaphor. In fact, *True Blood* is a story of sexual, religious and racial minorities.

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An Ostracized Minority Silently Facing Denial of Social Acceptance: The Depiction of Disabled People in South Korean and Japanese Movies

Katarzyna Rukojć
Faculty of Philology, University of Gdańsk, Poland
Wita Stwosza 55, Gdańsk, 80-995, Pomorskie, Poland
Email: k.rukojc@gmail.com

Abstract The article compares the depiction of the disabled minority in selected South Korean and Japanese movies to the general image of disabled protagonists in western cinematography. It also focuses on legal regulations that are to change the inferior position of the disabled, a position based on prejudice, fear and negligence. The article presents different ways of showing disabilities, both from the 'outside' and from the perspective of a disabled hero, which appears to be quite an achievement when it comes to the mentally challenged ones and their recognition of the outer reality. It also describes the methods of assistance presented in the movies, both on the side of society and the side of the family of the disabled, in comparison with their treatment in the real world, where the adaptive process of disabled people turns out to be a tough and slow one; generally it is depicted this way in South Korean productions chosen for this article. What distinguishes the Asian movies' depictions from the mass productions of the West is the attempt to present the inside of the differently able and by doing that to gain the viewers' understanding of their perception of the surrounding reality, which results in evoking the viewers' sympathy and their will to help the suppressed and marginalized group forbidden to coexist in society on equal terms.
Key words physically and mentally disabled; South Korean legal regulations; adaptation

Shocking as it may seem, there are over 550 million disabled people in the world ("Jakość"). Statistically, in almost every country at least one person out of ten is either physically or mentally disabled, or evinces some emotional dysfunctions. The population census conducted in 1988 showed that the disabled constituted almost 10% of global population. The existence of such a huge number of handicapped

unnecessarily qualifies the disabled as minority, nevertheless they tend to be treated as such which proves the necessity to acknowledge the fight for their rights as minority. Moreover, this immense group generates social unrest or even aversion in some environments. The reason for such treatment is very common. The disabled have obvious problems with adaptation to change. They are usually helpless in the majority of everyday situations. When it comes to mentally sick people, they demonstrate tremendous difficulty in understanding the reality that surrounds them. Mentally disabled people's aims are very often inconsistent, therefore such people are characterized by infantilism and the inability to see the reality in a way letting them adjust their behavior to the prevailing rules and, by doing that, function in society without disturbances. Therefore being classified as disabled generates endless obstacles. Firstly, the standard of living of the disabled generally appears to be inferior to the average one. This unfortunate and unjust treatment of disabled people depends on numerous aspects. Besides their medical condition, physical and psychological parameters and non-self-sufficient functionality, their plight is also the consequence of various reasons unrelated to them, namely generated on both micro and macro social levels. These are not only the social standards which influence the situation of the family of the disabled person, but also the economic situation of the country this person lives in, binding law regulations and social policy rules, not to mention the overall social approach toward the disabled which more than occasionally happens to be based on some primal or religious prejudices (demons living inside the disabled body, etc.). The profile of the approach in question, however, can be shaped by the media. They have enough power to attract attention to various barriers and limitations inflicted on people who struggle with disability.

At this point of the discourse a conclusion may be drawn that the limitations of such people stem from the relation between them and their environment. The handicapped meet barriers of various kinds: cultural, social, physical, and many others. Such barriers are the expression of the lack of acceptance, which results in the impossibility of the everyday independent functioning of the disabled, not to mention their participation in even basic aspects of social coexistence. For instance, why are the crippled and mentally retarded deprived of decent conditions of living that are, after all, guaranteed by the Constitution? This issue is widely debated, however, the undeniable fact is that the disabled cannot function independently due to multiple obstacles unrelated to their disability. Consequently, their participation in social systems available to other citizens is withheld. It can be assumed that such social ostracism causes a high level of existential fear. This fear is the source of the negative recognition of the surrounding world and, subsequently, the disturbed orientation in it, which creates a specific lifestyle, dominated by too few cognitive and intellectual

interactions, especially verbal ones.

The awareness of harm done to the disabled began in the 20th century. It brought tremendous changes in the recognition and acceptance of the fact that the disabled are an integral part of society and should be guaranteed the same opportunities as the non-disabled ones. This shift in the treatment of disabilities, especially physical ones, was mostly due to the increased number of war invalids who suffered from multiple injuries. Apart from medical care, they were treated psychologically because of the traumatic experience they were forced to go through (e.g. Vietnam War). The fact that mental destabilization was added to the list of curable diseases was connected with the widespread popularity of psychoanalysis and the acknowledgement of stress-related problems, generated by the surrounding environment, which surely influenced the person's state of mind. Thanks to this innovative wave of thinking, fresh attitude towards the disabled developed and led to a breakthrough point in the 1960's. The law was changed and the disabled were guaranteed rehabilitation. Since then, the early diagnosis and intervention have been the key issues in dealing with various disabilities. The 'differently able', as they tend to be referred to, have the right to medical care, education, social help and counseling, training in the field connected with their work, necessary equipment and services, support in a job-finding process, and generally, everyday life based on self-sufficiency.

In the western part of the world, which is the common name embracing all well-developed countries in Europe and overseas, namely the USA and Canada, dealing with the differently able is based on the word 'integration'. The people with not only minor disabilities attend regular schools, graduate successfully and later find a stable and secure occupation. The fact that they can afford their expenses gives them necessary confidence and strength to develop their careers and simply live their lives. The legislature in those countries ensures essential rights and privileges together with medical care and different kinds of help, including the crucial one-financial. Unfortunately, such a security for the disabled ones in not always granted in the eastern part of the globe, for instance in Asian countries. Surprisingly, this issue does not appear to be resolved successfully even in Japan, where 'disability' seems to be the word its inhabitants are ashamed of. In this well-developed, prosperous country, disability remains a huge problem. The focus of this article is mainly on the depiction of the disabled minority in selected South Korean and Japanese movies, where the treatment of the people with both physical and mental disabilities also appears to be quite the opposite to the one prevailing in the West.

The disabled in Korea are called 'invisible people'. After reading some articles from the websites (such as "Korea's Invisible People", "South Korea: Steps Taken to Protect Rights of People with Disabilities" and "N. Korea Puts Disabled in Camps"*)*,

our impression is that the people who are labeled as crippled or handicapped must undertake quite a struggle to lead a relatively independent life. The biggest complaint on their side is that they are restricted to a very limited, usually isolated accommodation and doomed to vocational schools, depriving them of the chances to develop intellectually. Finding a job turns to be a rare achievement as the majority of employers there assume that the disabled are less productive than the non-disabled ones. *The Korean Herald* from 2005-05-19 reveals that: "Although the government estimates there are 1.6 million disabled people in Korea and civil activist groups say there are 4.5 million, 'Where are they?' is a question many ask. It reflects the isolation in which the disabled live" ("Korea"). Such is the reality depicted in the Korean movie *Oasis* (2002) directed by Lee Chang-dong.

The story begins with Hong Jong-du being released from prison and going to reunite with his family in Seoul. He is a slightly retarded man, unable to comply with social rules. His family reluctantly provides accommodation for him. Their help stems from the fact that his family took advantage of him and his disability because they made him serve time for his sane brother who caused the car accident and killed a man. They even arrange a job that Hong Jong-du could keep, however, his extreme social misfit occurs to be an obstacle withholding him from reconciliation with the surrounding reality. Nevertheless, Jong-du has a goal—visiting a family of the man that was killed in the hit-and-run accident he was unjustly accused and convicted of. In his attempt to get to know that family he discovers that the victim's daughter, Gong-ju, suffers from severe cerebral palsy. She lives alone while her brother, Sang-shik, illegally robs her of all the benefits granted by the State for her, for instance: a new, spacious apartment where he moves with his family and invites his disabled sister over only when there is an inspection conducted by a social worker, checking how the guardians take care of the sick person. This episode clearly points out that the misuse is on the side of the family, whereas the Korean Government does a lot to provide decent standard of living and rehabilitation. The State guarantees accommodation, money in a form of a disability pension and, most of all, it ensures that there is and will be a guardian in the vicinity of the disabled one. In *Oasis*, the disabled Gong-ju is left alone in her old apartment, at the mercy of her frivolous neighbors who regularly neglect her. Gong-ju, however, creates her own imaginary world that helps her survive the constant negligence and abuse. Lee Cang-dong tries to enter this world with his cameras and, naïve as it may seem, he reflects the girl's imaginary asylum. His attempt to recreate the disabled girl's thoughts without any external narrator, this invitation to a place which is impregnable by means of oral communication, appears to be quite successful when compared to the American movie *Birdy* (1984) (directed by Alan Parker), an adaptation of William Wharton's novel. In *Birdy*, the depiction of

the mentally sick boy is totally external and most of the time his actions and behavior are, in some way, narrated by his sane friend. Apart from the main hero's fascination with birds and obsessive attempts to fly that are observed from 'the outside', there is not a single endeavor to enter the inner world of the boy. Due to those limitations of Birdy's depiction the boy is condemned to be recognized and acknowledged as incapable of communicating with society, which equals his further isolation in the institution for mentally sick people, where he is confined to a claustrophobic room. The purpose of providing such conditions, in theory, is to cure the insane man, however, as can be seen in the course of the film, instead of his recovery and reunion with society, only distress and deeper isolation of the disabled person is achieved. The inability to communicate and, what follows, to understand disabled people seems to be the key issue in the depiction of them. Therefore Lee Chang-dong's attempt to change the perspective and put a viewer in the position of a sick person clearly shows and definitely proves that such a person can be contacted with. Owing to this attempt the people watching this movie realize that Gong-ju can communicate and wants to be loved, experience the outside world she is so much afraid of. With the help of the slightly retarded but fully fit Jong-du, who after several encounters becomes her boyfriend, she finally goes outside. The couple becomes inseparable. Jong-du covers Gong-ju's physical disability and, literally, carries her on his back. In this manner they are eventually able to overcome at least some of the barriers of the outside world. Although the couple faces harsh reality of the discrimination, they find consolation and happiness in their love. This picture of disability, both mental and physical, has a revolutionary effect on portraying them. They become 'differently able' but definitely able to behave and react like an ordinary human being. They have the same needs and expectations, which is smartly reflected by Lee Chang-dong's protagonists.

Yet the obstacles posed by society are very often impossible to be overcome. *Oasis* shows Jong-du's attempts to find a job and it is not surprising that he fails in this crucial area of social coexistence. Although Disability and Employment Act in South Korea prohibits discrimination in employment, it '…does not provide any specific guidelines on duties, liabilities and remedial procedures. Therefore, this Act is viewed as symbolic, rather than practical' (Soon-Wook Lee). Following the legal steps taken to secure the rights of the disabled in Korea, the Mandatory Employment of Disability Policy must be mentioned. It is to "…promote employment prospects for people with disabilities". Moreover, Anti-discrimination Against Disabilities Act which was enacted on April 10, 2007 (Act No.8341, April 10, 2007, Effective of April 11, 2008) gave the legal ground for the employment of those differently abled ones. Unfortunately, the employment of differently able proves to be contradictory

to legal regulations in this field, therefore the media, following Lee Chang-dong's example, should use their influence and power to break the stereotypes of thinking and prejudices against disabled people. The movie *Oasis* successfully reflects the plight of those invisible and denied ones and sends a message that they are an integral part of society, yet the part that remains misunderstood and unseen.

Another serious problem the disabled are faced with in Korea is the tendency to confine them to one place which they cannot leave, so called an isolated group facility. Some of those institutions are owner operated, usually illegally "admitting disabled people with an entrance fee and taking their welfare money and donations, using only a small portion to support their residents. Inside the facility, authorities said, incidents of physical and sexual abuse were common and the living conditions were dire" ("Korea"). One of the patients, Ms. Hyun, 42, suffering from cerebral palsy, the resident at Paul Missionary, the owner operated isolated group facility, recalls: "I am a recipient of government welfare, but I don't know what's being done with that money, I have never seen it. This is a lawless place: we have to follow the laws of the facility […] The manager is like the president of a nation here. I'm afraid of the night. Something always happens in the night. Men come into the women's room whenever they get the chance. Many girls have become victims of rape. But my parents tell me that I should live and die here." The examples of such appalling mistreatment of the disabled can be multiplied.

Surprisingly, the picture of an institution for mentally sick people created by another Korean director, Park Chan-wook, in his film *I'm A Cyborg, But That's OK* (2006), does not apply to the vision of a place of torture, full of distress and abuse. The patients there are under excellent care of eager-to-understand them doctors. There are sessions during which the doctors try to form a bond with the hospitalized ones, try to find the source of mental problems, try to cure the disability and bring the 'insane' ones back to society. In this film the belief in the awareness of the mentally disabled person prevails. The main protagonist, Young-goon, a girl who thinks she is a cyborg and obviously acts like one, is interpreted as a mentally unstable and suicidal after the attempt to recharge her batteries with high voltage wires she connects to her wrists. As a consequence she is sent to a mental institution where she is supposed to be cured. A female doctor who is responsible for Young-goon's well-being and recovery, approaches her patients from various 'angles'. Being also a young woman she cleverly tries to connect with Young-goon, believing that when the roots of her psychosis are determined, the problem of mental disability can be dealt with. In one of her medical attempts she interviews Young-goon's apathetic mother who reveals that the Cyborg's grandmother has been institutionalized and qualified as schizophrenic

for the delusions of being a mouse. This scene discovers one more aspect, namely the fact that the mother figure was aware but ignorant of her daughter's delusion of being a cyborg, a powerful self, able to rescue her grandmother. In this movie the faith in the discovery of common consciousness, the place where the doctor and the patient can meet, the golden remedy, seems to be the aim. In modern psychology and psychiatry a prevailing approach is that an attempt to put oneself in the position of the sick person can create such a place, in other words, empathy can evoke the essential awareness enabling to understand the patient's problem. In the collection of articles and discussion, Honorata Korpikiewicz raises a question of whether the awareness is the reflection of reality, and she differentiates the notions of awareness and consciousness in the medical sense. In her opinion such awareness is the reason for particular behavior of the hospitalized. She claims that the activity of certain areas of the cerebral cortex has been observed depending on the surrounding occurrences or recollected memories. Young-goon's hallucination of turning into a Terminator slaughtering all the doctors and orderlies of the hospital, is definitely provoked by the recollection of her helpless grandmother being taken away by the men in white. That inflow of memories also explains the girl's frequent fantasies of reuniting with her grandmother. They are tear-provoking scenes, making the viewer sympathize with the Cyborg. The film evokes genuine concern towards schizophrenic people and the need to understand their world. Compassion is one of many positive emotions cleverly sparked by this movie and planted in its viewers.

Yet another aspect proving Korpikiewicz's point can be found in *I'm A Cyborg, But That's OK* , where the patients themselves continue the treatment of their co-patients after the doctors' failure. Il-sun, a young man who suffers from schizophrenia and kleptomania and who is generally labeled as anti-social, occurs to have remedies for all his co-patients. When Youn-goon's health deteriorates rapidly as she denies human food and licks batteries instead, and force-feeding through her nose is only a short-term solution the doctors come up with, his clever trick with installing an imaginary 'rice-megatron' in Young-goon's back eventually makes her eat. Il-sun happens to be the one that reveals in himself many layers of understanding and empathy for the Cyborg-girl and therefore manages to change her eating habits. An even more striking example of his awareness of reality that saves Young-goon's life is presented. The Cyborg wants to detonate herself as a 'nuke bomb' which requires a bolt of lightning. To prevent that fatal accident from occurring Il-sun places a cork on the top of the metal rod she brings, thereby ensuring the girl will not be hit by lightning. In this case outsmarting the sick girl confirms the observation by Honorata Korpikiewicz that empathy is necessary to feel the psychic of another creature

(14). Ms. orpikiewicz also explains that the personality of a schizophrenic changes temporarily into a completely different self, not necessarily aware of the existence of its alter ego or egos. The dissociation of personality is a typical symptom of schizophrenic psychosis. She explain that the recollections of schizophrenic patients in the state of remission prove that schizophrenic reality is so clear and vivid that it is difficult to be considered unreal. Such reality of unreal is depicted in a masterly fashion in *I'm A Cyborg, But That's OK*. The audience can no longer deny the existence of the world of the mentally disabled. The compassion and sympathy for them definitely change the way they are depicted and show that some delusions should not erase a human being from social life. Park Chan-wook's innovative approach deserves attention, especially when compared to one of the most famous American depictions of a mental hospital in the movie *One Flew Over the Cuckoo* (1975) based on Ken Kesey*'s* novel. Even the outstanding performance of Jack Nicholson does not make it possible to enter the world of the mentally sick patients, see their fears and dreams like in *I'm A Cyborg, But That's OK*.

While *Oasis* tends to reflect the plight of the disabled, *I'm A Cyborg, But That's OK* denies the accusations of wrongdoing when it comes to the treatment of the institutionalized mentally disabled in Korea. The movie *Madeo* (2009) ("mother" in Korean) by Bong Joon-ho, shows yet another treatment of the disabled there. It depicts a retarded young man with a rebellious streak and his over-protective mother with whom he has a particularly intimate relationship (they share the same bed, she holds up a bowl to his mouth so that he can consume his soup as he urinates, etc.). The social situation of the disabled person here is completely different from the ones described before. Yoon Do-joon, the mentally challenged protagonist, has a 24-hour care provided by his loving mother. She is overbearing to such an extent that the man's rude behavior towards her seems to be justified and interpreted as an act of struggling for independence. The movie, however, touches a completely different aspect of dealing with the retarded ones in Korea. Yoon Do-joon is arrested as a prime suspect and after a violent and manipulative questioning he signs a confession. The fact that he is mentally disabled gets no recognition at the police station where he is treated in the same way as the 'healthy' ones. This young man is unaware that he has a civil right to defend himself and he is not informed about it by the police officers questioning him. Such unawareness may be caused, among many other factors, by the lack of proper education of the disabled. That 15.8% of the disabled in Korea have not gone to elementary school is a fact, moreover, 45.1% of them reach only an elementary level of education ("Korea Disabled"). These statistics definitely prove how unreachable the chances for normal life for the disabled in Korea are.

In *Madeo* it can also be observed that the disabled boy wants a normal personal life, a partner. Do-joon expresses his need to have a girlfriend when he is mocked by other men for not having one and admitting to sleeping with his mother. Nevertheless, the statistics do not bring optimism in this matter, either. They show, for instance, that over 60.5% of disabled women in Korea, age 20-29, are single (Lee Ye-Ja). Many international organizations, UN among them, have made tremendous effort to resolve the problems concerning the disabled and enable them to function in society because their exclusion due to the disability is an undeniable fact.

The disabled in South Korea, however, do not remain silent. There are numerous conferences, acts and declarations, protecting them, especially Asian women. In 2000 'The Declaration of the Rights of the Disabled Women' stated as follows :

> Disabled women have the right to political, economic, social power.
>
> Disabled women have the right to be equal.
>
> Disabled women have the right to choose as consumers.
>
> Disabled women have the right to use convenience facilities.
>
> Disabled women have the right to be educated.
>
> Disabled women have the right to be safe from all forms of violence.
>
> Disabled women have the right to work, and also the right to be employed. Disabled women have the right of health.
>
> Disabled women have the right to make and live with their own families. Disabled women have the right to live independently. (Lee Ye-Ja)

Ignorance is not an option in this developing country. By issuing such declarations the disabled send a message that they want their country to be acknowledged and recognized as a civilized one, where human rights are not violated regardless of ability or disability of a person. The common attempt of both activists and artists supported by the media is certainly going to bring positive changes in the depiction and treatment of the differently abled, as they are referred to now.

The question arises whether this tendency to hide disability can be observed in the developing Asian countries only or, on the contrary, it is an occurrence on a massive scale, no matter how far economically the country is advanced. Erich Fromm in his series of lectures entitled *The Pathology of Normalcy* observes that the number of mentally unstable citizens in the well-developed countries is much higher than in those economically unsafe ones, which proves that, paradoxically, the security of

existence decreases simultaneously with the increase of affluence. In his article "Is 'disability' still a dirty word in Japan", Tomoko Otake points out a big number of interesting facts about disabilities in this rich and well-governed country. According to him: "Government statistics show that, out of a population of around 127 million, some 3.5 million are physically disabled, 2.5 million are mentally ill and 500,000 are mentally disabled. That's a total of around 6.5 million individuals. But where are they?", Otake asks and he answers as follows: "Granted, we see more station elevators, wheelchair-accessible toilets and buses with passenger lifts nowadays. Such facilities are visible, but many people hardly ever encounter those who use them—let alone anyone with non-physical disabilities. In fact, apart from people with disabled family members or friends, most Japanese quite likely live their whole lives without ever interacting with their disabled fellow citizens." And he adds: "Japan is extremely behind [other countries] in the inclusion of the disabled in jobs and education, [...]the education ministry remains firm in its stance that education systems for disabled and non-disabled people should be separated." In the course of the article it appears that the prejudice against the disabled students is mostly generated by the State, as non-disabled students provide help for their disabled classmates when the permission for such a mixed class is granted by the school's authorities. This situation proves that the disabled ones in Japan do not attract enough attention and the tendency to 'sweep them under the carpet' prevails.

However, in his film *Dolls* (2002), Takeshi Kitano, the worldwide recognized Japanese director, features both mentally and physically disabled. The plot covers three distinct stories that occasionally cross-over. There is a story of a young man, Matsumoto, who breaks his girlfriend's heart and ask his company's president's daughter to marry him. When his former fiancée, Sawako, attempts suicide which ends up in her semi-vegetative state, he takes responsibility for her and they start walking aimlessly together, connected with a red rope, the symbol of their former love. The second story shows another young man, Nukui, helplessly in love with his idol—a beautiful singer who has a car accident after which she remains disfigured and hides herself from the world, ashamed of her unattractive appearance. As she rejects people who can see her, Nukui blinds himself to be able to meet the pop star. The third story is about an aged yakuza and his attempt to reunite with the girl he loved and who loved him back before he chose the path of a villain. One more disabled character is depicted in this story, a boy on a wheelchair, but the viewer soon realizes that he has a comic role and is not to be treated seriously. Based on these three stories the picture of the disabled ones in Japanese society is formed.

First of all, the young couple walking in shabby clothes and a rope between

them, are laughed at and shun. The people they encounter express lack of mercy or sympathy towards them. There is a winter scene in which the couple sits on the snow in the vicinity of a building full of young, prosperous people they used to be. Matsumoto starts a little fire to warm them up and a moment later they are chased away by the owner of the building who offers no help, but instead, treats them like unwanted stray dogs, a dirt that must be removed from his backyard. The two beggars, one of them mentally disabled, must keep walking in the freezing snow at night. They are treated in a surprisingly inhumane way, especially as the action takes place in a well-developed and affluent country—Japan. Another scene from *Dolls* that depicts the disabled ones in the country where cherry blossoms bloom shows an isolated beach where Nukui, after blinding himself, goes to encounter his beloved singer. In this scene two stories cross over. The viewer can see Matsumoto and Sawako walking there at the time when the isolation-seeking singer allows the blind fan to contact her. This scene provokes an opinion that the isolation of the disabled ones can be inflicted on them both by society and by themselves, because they personally believe the disability eliminates them from the world of success, career, prosperity and pleasure.

Unnoticed, neglected, abused and avoided—hopefully these are not the only epithets that can be applied to the disabled minority in Asian countries. Their situation presented in the four movies described in this article deserves a fair judgment. On the one hand, they are depicted as fully dependent citizens, unable to coexist under the terms of society. On the other hand, they are portrayed as people with natural human needs: the crave for love and partnership, or the necessity to reunite with the family members. The irrefutable fact is, however, that their disability, whether mental or physical, excludes them from society and condemns them to a life on the outskirts of human existence. The disabled encountered in the above mentioned movies seem to be mute and susceptible to the environment and the inferior position it imposes on them. Nevertheless, such movies speak for them, to shout out their plight and attract the essential attention of the outside world. The major change the movies can make is the change of attitude towards the disabled. That can be achieved by showing the world from their perspective. This cinematographic endeavor raises common understanding and acceptance of the fact that the disabled are the integral part of society and the exclusion of them is not an option. On the contrary, the State and society have moral obligation to ensure that their conditions of life are on acceptable level. The research into the situation of the disabled shows that their needs and expectations are not marginalized. Unfortunately, concluding from the image presented in the above South Korean and Japanese productions, numerous barriers, created by both society and the family, still must be fought against.

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Dissection and Assembly: Malayan Imagery in Tash Aw's *The Harmony Silk Factory*

Fan Pik Wah
Department of Chinese Studies and Malaysiam Chinese Research Center, University of Malaya, Malaysia
Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences, 50603 Kuala Lumpur
email: fan5668@hotmail.com

Abstract Tash Aw, Malaysian Chinese author who resides in England, won the Whitbread First Novel Award with his monograph *The Harmony Silk Factory*, also known as *The Mystery of Silk*. Through intricate story plots, Aw aptly presents the mysterious past of an emerging Chinese merchant. Besides, the novel also portrays great perversion of human nature as well as the generally unpredictable fate of common people during the time of British Colonialism and the Japanese Imperialism. With puzzle-like narration, the author probably assumes the role of a spokesperson on behalf of his ethnic group, revealing through his novel certain historical truths that have always been denied by the Malaysian government and hidden away in the course of history.
Key Words Tash Aw; *The Harmony Silk Factory;* Malaya Colony; Malaysian Chinese Literature

Tash Aw, winner of 2006 Whitbread First Novel Award with his award-winning novel *The Harmony Silk Factory*, was born in Taipei. At the age of two, he moved to Malaysia with parents of Malaysian citizenship. Hence, he completed his primary and secondary education in Kuala Lumpur. At the age of 18, he studied law at Cambridge University. Subsequently, he became a practicing lawyer. Two years later, he furthered his studies at the University of East Anglia, majoring in creative writing. Ever since then, he devotes himself to the writing career.

Written in English, *The Harmony Silk Factory* is Aw's maiden work. Having won the award, the novel was translated into more than 20 languages and enjoyed worldwide readership. Chinese translations of the novel were published in year 2008. Its Taiwanese title was *The Harmony Silk Factory* (《和諧絲莊》) whereas its title in the Republic of China was *The Mystery of Silk* (《丝之谜》). Aw spent two years to carefully examine the history of Japanese occupation in Singapore and Malaya

during the World War II. Weighing through an extensive research references, Aw dived deeply into the understanding of the livelihood of Malayan Chinese during the Colonial period. As he was raised in this very land, Aw truly knew Malaysia. His perception is therefore steeply different from those by Western observers. Caricatures of Colonial Chinese in his novel inevitably carry distinct Oriental overtones (Wen 166).

Narration: Criticism and Sarcasm

The setting of *The Harmony Silk Factory* is Malayan Peninsula[1] in the 1940s. The novel is sliced into three segments, with dissections of the main character by three persons closely related to him. Johnny, the main character, never actually appears in the novel. However, his presence is quite apparent between the lines. The first segment of the novel, "Jasper: The Notorious Harmony Silk Factory", is a memoir of Jasper Lim regarding his father, whom he regards as a villain. The second segment, "Snow: Honeymoon of Four" is the journal of Johnny's wife regarding her honeymoon in the company of three chaperones. The third segment, "Peter: Heavenly Garden" is a travel log of Peter, the main character's friend, regarding his excursion to the land of the Orient.

Each of the three accounts depicts a formed perception of its narrator regarding the past. As each narrator has his/her unique language features, variants in their event interpretations provide the reader with a new appeal each time a subject matter is retold. Since each narrator reflects on things differently, the puzzle images they put together turns out quite different as well. The true identity and factual aspects of Johnny become more labyrinthine than at the beginning of the novel. Upon completion of the novel, readers may relate with what the author was probably hinting: Given some differences in each reader's standpoint, a plethora of reconstructions could actually be made regarding the incomplete account of the history of Malayan national building.

Malaysia is a multi culture and multi ethnic country. A Malaysian reader of Aw's novel would probably revisit the idea of "harmony" with some time implications. People tend to have high hopes regarding racial harmony. During the 1940s, Malaya was a British colony as well as a paradise for explorers. Born a peasant, Johnny Lim left mainland China for Malayan Peninsula. Having enduring much hardship and striving all alone, he finally had an opportunity to establish the "Harmony Silk Factory". He then emerged as a renowned entrepreneur among the locals. His story is a symbol in itself. The book's title "The Harmony Silk Factory" is already quite cynical. The entire novel is further infused with huge dissonance. All the more, fights and conflicts in the novel are all related to personal gains.

During the World War II, the state of affairs changed unpredictably. Malaya was a British colony that unfortunately fell target to Japanese conquest. Sandwiched between the power plays of China and Japan, Chinese in Malaysia found themselves in awkward situations with unclear self-identities. Meanwhile, conflicts between father and son, husband and wife, father-in-law and son-in-law, friends, nations and political parties were all unfolded in a small town in Malaya. Deducting from the memoirs of those who lived in Malaya—a country strategically positioned as the hub of cultural exchange between the East and the West—the story reflects culmination of cultures at the Peninsula during the Colonial era.

Etymologically, the word "silk" in the title relates to China. It is a cue regarding the complex ties between Chinese in Malaya and Chinese in the mainland China. Because of the subtle cultural tie, Malaysian Chinese during the Colonial period inevitably came between the clash of international powers as well as local political upheavals. Their choice in the course of such tensions determines their future.

Internally, Colonial Chinese assimilate into local community and become an organic circle of connections. Externally, they network and socialize with foreign political and interest bodies. Often, these Chinese leaders take on multiple identities. To name, a merchant may be a cultural activist cum a political representative, and so forth. Their rise to power and fame is due to various factors. Some turn from rags to riches; others might be opportunists who finally made it. Their political affiliation ranges from the Communist Party to the Nationalist Party. Some of them are national hero; some collaborate with the British or the Japanese army. Some are defenders of nation's independence but also enemies of the country. Some are victims; some others benefit from the situation. The life of Johnny Lim is a stereotype of many Chinese of the time. He experiences all kinds of trials. Yet with an extraordinary will to live, he never fails to thrive through crisis. For his very survival, he traded in his dignity, his family, good conscience and even honesty. In the end, what is left is that Johnny Lim, a successful merchant on the surface, is at the same time a nasty crook in the eyes of his own son.

The mystery of this "Mystery of Silk" conceals the complexity of human nature. The brilliance of the novel, however, lies within the mysteries behind the stories. Even when one slices it layer by layer, no satisfactory answer could be derived.

The first segment of the novel is Jasper's account regarding his father Johnny Lim. Johnny's real name was Lim Seng Chin. Like other Chinese immigrants, he had a typical Chinese name when he came to Malaysia from China. Later, he adopted an English name "Johnny". Quickly wiped off his Chinese peasant imprint, he became active amidst the business community. Jasper recalled seeing some carefully preserved Tarzan magazine cuttings among things that his deceased father left behind.

As the name of the artist who played the character of Tarzan was also "Johny", Jasper concludes that his father's English name was derived from that person:

> He named himself after Tarzan. I know this because among the few papers he left when he died were some old pictures, spotty and dog-eared, cut carefully from magazines and held together by a rusty paper clip. In each one, the same man appears, dressed in a badly fitting loincloth, often holding a pretty woman whose heavy American breasts strain at her brassiere. In one picture, they stand on a fake log, clutching jungle vines; his brow is furrowed, eyes scanning the horizon for unknown danger while she gazes up at him. Behind them is a painted backdrop of forested hills, smooth in texture. Another picture, this time a portrait of the same barrel-chested man with beads of sweat on his shoulders, bears the caption, "JOHNNY WEISSMULLER, OLYMPIC CHAMPION" (Tash 6-7)

The Harmony Silk Factory employs a multiple-angle narration, resulting in multilayered effects. The fact that Jasper Lim chose to describe only past events suggests that his has merely presented a fragment of the history. He isolates the father's past from its historical backdrop—it shows that his perspective is lopsided, and his point of view could not be justified. A good example would be regarding his father's name "Johnny." The rationale of having an English name should be out of a survival need, i.e., after an incident in the past of which the father, still a young man, accidentally stabbed a British mine owner to death. The inference to the Tarzan pictures is nonsensical.

The way Jasper reconstructs his father's story deters the validity of his critique. Having decided to judge his father mercilessly, many of his detailed accounts were merely strenuous attempts to prove that the father was despicable. It undermines the meanness of capitalists during the Colonial period and the cruelty of the Japanese regime. Interestingly, his approach produces a reversed effect. The more he wants to paint his father black, the more it makes sense to the readers how the atmosphere of the time leads to such irrevocable fate and destiny for his father. Readers of the novel become more sympathetic with Johnny instead.

As the story goes, Jasper Lim was born during the Japanese Occupation; the first generation of Chinese born in Malaysia. He experiences the surrender to the Japanese, the strife of Malayan Communist Party (MCP), the emergency state, the process to attain Independence of Malay(si)a, and so on. He and Chinese youths of his time received Malaysian national education. When they were growing up, the MCP -- the anti-colonial and anti-imperial body—had already ceased their forefront operation and withdrawn to the jungle. Under the strict enforcement of the Internal Security

Act (ISA), any involvement in MCP's activity is subversive to the country. Hence, the commoners (especially the Chinese) resorted to keeping a distance from members of the MCP, gradually accepting the official account of this segment of the Malayan history. The government gave MCP a rather grave image, that they are stumbling blocks for national progress and destroyers of the people's unity.

In order to uncover the "real story of what happened" regarding his father, Jasper read meticulously through each mentioning of his father's name in "books, newspapers and magazines." He spent a great deal of time in libraries and the bureaus to screen through all available information. Derived through systematic and rational analysis, he concluded that Johnny his father is a notorious "Chinaman". Hence, with what he considered as sufficient background search, he outlined the father's "sinful past" for his audience.

Young Lim Seng Chin (Johnny Lim) was exceptionally skillful in handling machinery. The British mine owners learned of his ability in machinery assembly and hired him to manage the dredger. However, the dredger was rather old and broke down constantly. The mine owners exploited Johnny shamelessly, making him work day and night. In order to cut expenditure, they were not willing to invest new parts for the machinery. One day, the dredger totally broke down. The big bosses used that as an excuse to stop the operation of the mine. Shifting all the blames on Seng Chin, they stopped the workers' payroll. Without any discernment, the workers beat Johnny up brutally. The mine owners ridiculed Seng Chin continuously. Having endured utter humiliation and abuse, Seng Chin finally acted out. He thrust a screwdriver on Sir No.2's thigh. As Seng Chin was still a youth then, the court judged it as a juvenile case. He received ten lashes of canning and was released after that. Sir No.2 died a year and a week after the incident. His death was thought to be caused by Seng Chin's stabbing. After the release, Seng Chin wandered from a place to another. In order to survive, he abandoned his past identity along with his skill in machinery operation. He adopted an English name and became Johnny Lim. He was sheltered by a local merchant cum communist leader "Tiger", and then inherited his business. Johnny eventually married Snow, the daughter of tin magnate TK Soong. When the Japanese invaded Malaya, he cooperated with the Japanese, betrayed his comrade-in-arms in exchange for the continuity of his prosperous business, until he finally founded the notorious "Harmony Silk Factory".

The first segment of *The Harmony Silk Factory* depicts the despicable life of Johnny Lim. However, the author's intention is not all about Johnny. Rather, he intends to restore the historical mapping of Malayan history though Johnny. Johnny's life encounters and some other truths of the story are hereby waiting to be unfolded at the second and third segments of the novel.

Slicing Up: Memory and Imagination

The second segment of the novel is a journal written by Snow Soong, Johnny Lim's wife. It records the "Honeymoon of Four" experienced by the couple Snow and Johnny, along with their three chaperones: Japanese professor Kunichika, Johnny's good friend Peter, and British merchant Honey. The team went to the Island of Seven Maidens during September 24th to November 15th, 1941. Johnny lived with the Soongs after he married Snow. The trip was proposed by Snow's father TK Soong in the name of giving the couple some space for leisure. Against the couple's will, Soong arranged for Kunichika, Peter and Honey to journey along, resulting in a very unusual traveling team.

The main foci of Snow's journal are her acquaintances with all the three men and the happenings during the island trip. She delineates the complicated relationships among the team members. In Snow's account, Johnny Lim is the original choice of her heart. Her account is different from Jasper's, which suggests that marrying a rich man's daughter has always been Johnny's scheme in order to attain an easy and successful life. In Snow's eyes, Johnny has a child-like genuineness. She felt that Johnny, being raised in the farm, would be far more reliable than the playboys. Sadly, she discovered after married that her romanticizing of marriage was a mistake. Born a humble birth, Johnny was petty, uncultured, lack of courage, and knew nothing about Snow's marital expectations and romance by the standard of the West. When they slept together, Johnny would not even dare to touch her. Even though Snow did not elaborate further, the journal reveals her sense of loss in search for romantic love. The presence of Kunichika captured her spiritual and sensual needs.

Snow's journal contains the full account of how Kunichika crashed into their lives. The polished and erudite professor gained Snow's initial admiration. Then, their mutual affection developed secretly. The journal also records some private connections between the two, hinting that Johnny actually knew about Snow and Kunichika's shady relationship. There were a few times that Snow wanted to end her marriage with Johnny. Yet she was too sorry to raise the matter. From Jasper's narration, readers would know that Kunichika is not as innocent as Snow thought him to be. He is but the top special agent sent by the Japanese to Malaya. During the Japanese occupation, he was instrumental in cruel murders of many lives, known as the *daisa* (Colonel) by the locals.

The intention of Kunichika's acquaintance with Snow becomes clearer in the third segment of the novel—*The Heavenly Garden*. Narrated by Johnny's English friend Peter, this portion of narration is presented in a non-linear, back and forth manner between the present and the past. In Peter's memory, he came to the East due

to his search for the mysterious garden. Having met Johnny briefly in Singapore, Peter treaded a long way to the Kinta Valley to look for the man again. Upon his new arrival in Kampar, he coincidentally witnessed a scene of which in an explosion, Johnny rescued Snow's father TK Soong out of the danger. He then got to know Johnny's beautiful wife Snow. The "Honeymoon of Four" mentioned in Snow's journal is one of the most important memories of Peter. He admitted that he secretly fell in love with Snow. He also noticed the developing, shady relationship between Snow and Kunichika. He saw the malicious intention behind Kunichika's advances at Snow. Utterly despising such behavior, Peter felt the painful state of helplessness of Johnny.

Peter's memory is hardly a complete story. Nevertheless, those past experiences have turned into lifetime memories for him. 80 years of age, this old man has been looking for the dreamed "heavenly garden" his whole life. His narration presents another side of Johnny. Johnny has regarded Peter as his good friend. While getting acquainted, Peter learned of Johny's childlike innocence. Johnny learned English and Western social etiquette earnestly in the hope to improve the communication with his wife and her family members, as well as the assimilation into the upper middle class. Even though he married Snow and inherited Tiger's business along with great reputation and status that come with it, his father-in-law who is well-versed in both Eastern and Western cultures despised him. The snobbish mother-in-law also dislikes him. Johnny thus developed a deep inferior complexity. Peter's version of Johnny enables readers to further understand Johnny's character. It provides some rationale regarding Johnny's move in submitting himself at the full disposal of the oppressive Japanese military.

Through Jasper's narration, one knows that during the Japanese occupation, many leaders of the Anti-Japanese People's Army were massacred. Johnny was the only survivor. Since then, the Harmony Silk Factory emerged as the only prosperous local business, with Johnny becoming the communicational bridge between the locals and the Japanese. He and Kunichika became interdependent. To secure safety and security for the locals, Johnny assumes the role of tax collector on behalf of the Japanese. Johnny then survived two assassination attempts. The first incident happened after the group execution of the people's army leaders in 1944. The second took place during the Independence of Malay(si)a in 1957, when Johnny was watching a live telecast in a coffee shop. Twice being targeted, twice a survivor. Jasper's narration suggests strongly that the murder attempts were plotted by the Communist party. More than a decade later, the Communist members were still seeking vengeance on Johnny. It shows how deep their hatred was against him. Jasper implies that Johnny has traded in his comrade-in-arms for personal gains. As the son, Jasper views his father's collusion with the Japanese as betrayal to his comrades as well as treason to the people and

the country. He therefore felt utterly shameful about the father. That was why he left his father at the age of 18, cutting the ties with the father, and breaking himself away from the history of the family.

The relationship between Johnny and Kunichika is clarified in Peter's memoirs. The sudden presence of Kunichika in the town before the invasion of the Japanese had caused Peter quite a sense of alertness and insecurity. He started to pry on Kunichika's moves. Not only he discovered that Kunichika was having an affairs with Snow, there was also a big conspiracy against Johnny plotted by the Japanese Army. He saw clearly Johnny's role among the locals and his importance to the Japanese. Kunichika and Snow connected between each other shamelessly via intimate body languages throughout the honeymoon trip in the Seven Maidens. Even a spectator like Honey could tell about their relationship. Yet Peter concealed his anguish, not wanting to point out the known-to-everybody's secret to Johnny. On the day before they were leaving Seven Maidens, Johnny shared painfully with Peter that someone had betrayed him and revealed to Kunichika that he was a Communist member. Only then that Peter understood the actual reason of Johnny's permissiveness about the affairs between Kunichika and Snow. Threatening Johnny with Snow and the shop, Kunichika wanted his full service for the Japanese. Johnny is therefore trapped in painful dilemmas. Either helping the Japanese or acting against them -- once the secret is exposed, Johnny's life is at stake. Whether he succumbs to Kunichika or not, he knew that he would inevitably lose the wife Snow.

Both Johnny and Snow considered Peter as their most trusted friend. Before the evasion of the Japanese, both of them approached Peter for the favor of taking care of their better-half if any misfortune happens. Unfortunately, Peter and the other British people left Malaya hastily before the Japanese arrived. He returned to Malaya only after the Japanese surrendered themselves. Snow passed away during child labor on the second year of the Japanese occupation. She is survived by Jasper, who looks like Japanese. Peter did not keep the contact with Johnny after that. Rather, he chose to reappear only in Johnny's funeral.

Peter's narration reveals that he sympathizes with, and has great pity on Johnny. He could not help but to harbor a sense of guilt towards Johnny. As Peter's description is confined with what he could observe, it cannot confirm on Johnny's actual betrayal of his comrades. The only clue for one to associate with might be what Peter witnessed as he was leaving the town. In order to bid Snow and Johnny farewell, Peter went to TK Soong's house, only to realize that Kunichika and some Japanese soldiers were guarding the door, while Snow was nowhere to be found. As he treaded pass the construction site of the "Harmony Silk Factory", Johnny was busy giving instructions to the workers. When their eyes met in the dreadful second, Peter saw Johnny's

"open-mouthed face fell silent, the light in his widened eyes dying even as it flickered to life". Peter gazed at some point in the distant as if he had not seen Johnny, and he left. They did not exchange any words, yet there was already an immediate, tacit understanding between the two. He knew the exact choice that Johnny had made.

At the end of the novel, Peter handed Snow's journal—a journal that he had kept for over 40 years—to Jasper at Johnny's funeral. That completes Peter's portion of narration. At the conclusion point, readers would suddenly come to a realization that Peter was the elderly Englishman at the first segment of the novel, who handed a sack to Jasper after Johnny's funeral. The sack which Johnny threw carelessly into the car boot contained Snow's diary, and Peter secretly hid it away before the honeymoon team ended their trip on the Seven Maidens. The final entry of the journal contains elements of the emotional connections between Snow and Peter. Hence, all the fragments are put together like puzzles at the conclusion of the novel, bringing forth historical captions of great imagination.

Although the "real story" is now pretty clear after one assembles all the parts together, the entire truth is still questionable. Jasper's narration was lopsided slicing of the real history. Snow's diary was her own experiences, which in turn lacks objectivity. Peter's narration is mixed with reality and some imaginations. All three are not ideal restorations of the history. Through these incomplete pictures put together by the three characters, a legendary and mysterious life of Johnny prevails. Since Johnny is not given a say in the story, ambiguities remain unresolved, and the man Johnny become more mysterious than ever.

Assembly: History and the Fragments

The most interesting part of the novel is its "baffling" historical truth. The geographical description captured in the novel is vivid. The people and customs are also very authentic. Some of the imageries are but déjà vu for readers who are familiar with Malaysia historical backdrop. Younger generations growing up after the Independence of Malaysia, namely those who are immersed with the official account of national history would naturally consider the MCP as more fearful than the British colonizers and Japanese invaders. Many will not revisit the painful past of the previous generations, choosing rather to suffer "demertia" regarding that particular period of history (Lin 152-181). Although as the author has clarified, the novel is a mere fabrication, it did bring back to certain extent memories of specific segments of the Malaysian history. Some of the happenings during that era of time are still fresh in the memory of Chinese Malaysian. Those affected by related incidents of that time could not bear the pains of re-scratching the scars.

Kinta River Valley mentioned in *The Harmony Silk Factory* used to be a bustling

hub in the Southeast Asia. Rich with the mines and enchanted with vast tropical jungles, it once attracted numerous explorers and tourists around the world to come for a share of its wealth or other travel interests. Chinese settlers of poor living conditions dotted the valley. They are natural targets for the MCP campaign. There is definitely a historical reason for the MCP to be active in this specific area. The existence of traitors among MCP members, resulting in the massive slaughtering of MCP leaders by the Japanese is also a historical fact. Through novel writing, the author reconstructs this segment of history intentionally, recollecting the economic exploitation of the British colonizers in Malayan Peninsula as well as the tyrannous rule of the Japanese military against local Chinese.2 Like many other overseas Chinese, Johnny Lim undergoes constant and stringent emotional struggles in the midst of his strife for survival.

Malay(si)a achieved independence in 1957, ending 450 years of colonial history. By the end of the 1920s, the British were still controlling the Malayan Peninsula and the Straits colonies. Large number of Chinese immigrants came from the mainland China to the Peninsula for commerce activities or as laborers. In the 1930s, the British developed mining and plantation activities extensively, rolling away a great amount of wealth. Having undergone years of exploitation by the Colonial capitalists, anti-colonial nationalism movement sprouted up. The MCP was founded in 1931. It was immediately condemned as a subversive, illegal party by the British. When the Japanese army occupied most territories in the Southeast Asia, the British government sought alliance with the Communists to fight against the invading Japanese. However, after the Japanese surrendered themselves, the British troupe recolonized Malaya and suppressed the Communists, forcing them to revolt in violence. After the Independence of Malaysia, the government which is comprised mainly of the Malays continued the British approach in treating MCP as the number one enemy of the country—in the name of ensuring national safety. They propagandized the violent activities of the Communists in the papers and cut off connection between the Communists and their supporters, resulting in dwindling Communist influences as time went by. After another 30 years of dismal operations, the Communist members finally surrendered themselves in 1989, leaving the jungle and rehabilitating at homes. The history of anti-British, anti-Japanese activities of the MCP becomes a taboo among Malaysian residents. Younger generations would not discuss this segment of the history. Moreover, most of them do not really know the history of the MCP. Those who happen to have some idea were usually having negative impressions about the subject matter.

The first segment of *The Harmony Silk Factory* was narrated by Jasper Lim about the life of his father Johnny Lim. Somewhat biased, he associates his father's life with

"crime", denoting his father's "sin" to the dark side of the inner man. Readers who are not familiar with the history of Malaysia may interpret that the novel is all about twisted personalities. However, readers who are well-versed with Malaysian Chinese history would be able to relate with the historical backdrop of the novel immediately. Each character has its own symbolism, carrying voices of the respective narrator, with their respective background and different understanding of the history. The author, a Chinese, is probably presenting to his non-Chinese readers some historical facts that have been deliberately hidden away in official, recorded history. The long period of time since the British colonization and the Japanese occupation, through the "State of Emergency" and the Independence of Malaysia, is a time when the Chinese suffer ambiguity and trauma regarding their cultural cum political identity.

History textbooks available in Malay(si)a are subject to the control of the government, with a biasness in degrading factual truths about the early contributions of the Chinese in national building and development. Often, the Chinese are ill-represented as proponents of gangsterism and subversive communist activities. The powerful controls the media. The MCP, having lost power, becomes unsung and unspoken of by the authorities. Swept away along with it is the history of the early Chinese in the land. Occasional mentioning of them could only be found in certain literature. In the 1990s, a great number of memoirs of MCP members were published. These literature provide valuable information about the MCP. The most significant of which is regarding MCP leader Chin Peng, with the book title *My Side of History*.3

Before writing *The Harmony Silk Factory*, Tash Aw labored extensively on research materials regarding the history of the colonized Malay(si)a. In the epilogue of the Chinese spin-off of the novel, he denies that his novel contains elements of a biography. Jasper Lim is not a personification of the author. To certain extent, the back-tracking approach of Jasper regarding his father Johnny's past, namely reconstructing the "true picture" of a Chinese merchant through examining countless of books, official records and memoirs—that could be the actual process of Aw's re-discovering the history of that period of time. Jasper considers the information he read (which are abstractions of local official records) as irrevocable historical truths that give him a strong rationale to breach the familial ties with his despicable father.

Aw strongly suggests that there is a methodological issue in Jasper's research procedure in seeking historical facts. Jasper's understanding of his father is mainly derived from his own imaginations. His educational background influences and limits his perception of history. As he separates the life of the father from the historical backdrop and reconstructs everything by his own presumptions, his version of the story becomes not entirely reliable. That is why exactly when Peter handed him the well-kept-for-40-year diary of his mother (Snow's journal), Jasper tossed it casually

into the car boot, considering it but a worthless item.

To recover the truth, the author aptly includes the account of another two narrators, namely Snow's journal (an autobiography) and Peter's memoir (a personal recollection of the past) so as to compliment the insufficiencies in Jasper's narration.

The ties between the MCP and Malay(si)an Chinese is rather strong. Almost every Chinese family of the time has some dealings with the Malayan Communists or leftist idealism. Due to the unique political landscape of Malay(si)a, the Malay-majority government treated the MCP as a stumbling block in inter-racial unity in the national building of Malay(si)a. Acts and enactments were undertaken to eliminate Communist influences. Followers of the MCP are portrayed as violent, murderous, armed terrorists; or in other words, the number one enemy of the country. Therefore, discussion of the MCP becomes a "taboo" for Malay(si)an citizens. Younger generations barely bear any memory regarding the contributions of the MCP in the acquisition of the solitary of the land. In 1989, the MCP leader Chin Peng and the Malaysian government signed a peace treaty, after which the MCP was dissolved officially. Since its disbandment, related writings on the subject matter get published occasionally. Researcher Zhong Yi Wen, inducting from her research work regarding the MCP, states that such resources, especially biographies, oral history, historical events retellings, personal memoirs, etc., are not only "redefining" the roles of the MCP, but have also become dialectical materials that stand against the official history accounts of the authority (Zhong 4). These writings provide historical facts and perspectives that are beyond the history defined by the ruling authority. They enable readers to reexamine the history of Malay(si)an Independence with more reference points.

The Harmony Silk Factory is written with multiple narrations and literary forms, piecing the puzzles together regarding the real identity of a Malay(si)an Chinese merchant cum Communist member who once lived during the pre-Independence era. The approach taken is somewhat similar to an effort to "unearth" the MCP profile. Jasper Lim's description is derived mainly from official account by the authority. Snow's journal is also her biography. Peter's narration is a memoir. Aw must have read unofficial materials of such before penning his novel. It is therefore not surprising to have the novel presented in such approach.

The author asserts high passions in novel-writing. Meticulously, he presents every piece of information about Malaysia, i.e., Malaysian geography, cultures, history, traditions, social structures, and so on and so forth. Reading his novel is like having attended an informative lecturer on Malaysian history. Moreover, Aw's vintage point helps to chart Malaysia on a larger worldview. In *The Harmony Silk Factory*, Malay(si)a is not only presented as a multi-ethnic country, but also the gathering hub

of international cultures. The main characters in the novel are of different nationalities, with respective language and cultural background as well as lifestyle. Readers of the novel might truly be amazed by the diversity and openness of Malaya as a regional melting pot of cultures back in the 40s.

The author leaves ample rooms for imaginations in the novel. His success lies in the interpretive freedom provided by the story for readers of different background, countries of origin and cultures. Li You Cheng mentioned in the foreword section of the Taiwanese spin-off of *The Harmony Silk Factory* that Aw's creative endeavour would not end here. It is quite foreseeable that Aw would continue to produce novels with history of Malaysia as the backdrop, and that would be in line with the blueprint of his entire writing enterprise.

Notes

1. "Malaya" is the pre-Independence name of Malaysia. Malaya attained its autonomy and achieved national Independence in year 1957, forming the Federation of Malaya. On September 16, 1963, Sabah, Sarawak and Singapore joined the federation, becoming the Federation of Malaysia. Singapore, however, seceded from the Federation in 1965. The official name of the country is changed to "Malaysia". For convenience of discusion, "Malaya" refers to the Malay Peninsula during the Colonial rule, whereas "Malaysia" refers to the country that achieved Independence in 1957.

2. Li You Cheng, "Who is Tash Aw?" *The United Daily Morning News, Supplement* (23-02-2006).

3. Chief secretary of the MCP, Chin Peng, published *My Side of History* in 2003 as a counter reference regarding the MCP as compared to the portrayal of the Malaysian government about them. (Singapore: Media Masters, 2003)

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爱与其他——论欧大旭小说《没有地图的世界》中的本体与喻体

蔡晓玲

内容摘要：欧大旭小说《没有地图的世界》，书写一九六0年代的印度尼西亚（印尼），国家与民族之间的融合与分裂、矛盾与冲突。“爱”与其他原本互不相干，却被放在同一个语境中，被赋予联系。由“爱”反向思考“历史”命题的叙事手法，也充分展现了欧大旭对东南亚历史叙事的创见与野心。本文将尝试分析《没有地图的世界》中，作者欧大旭如何以“爱”作为喻体，把一个宏观大叙述转换成小故事，进而探讨蕴含其中的大我意识。

关键词：欧大旭；没有地图的世界；印度尼西亚；东南亚历史

作者简介：蔡晓玲，马来亚大学中文系博士研究生，研究方向为当代文学和马来西亚华人文学。

Title Love and the Others: Discussions of Tenor and Vehicle in Tash Aw's *Map of the Invisible World*

Abstract *Map of the Invisible World*, the fiction by Tash Aw, depicting the fusion and division of a country, contradictions and conflicts between ethnic groups during the 1960's in Indonesia. The concept of "Love" and the others as Tenor and Vehicle were related under same context. Tash Aw tried to ponder the meaning of love and "historical" in his works. He displayed his ambitions and attempts to historical narrative on Southeast Asia, convert a macro-narrative into a short story. This paper is attempting to analyze the metaphor of "love" and figure out the possibility of the hiden meaning.

Key Words Tash Aw; *Map of the Invisible World*; Indonesia; Southeast Asia

Author Chai Siaw Ling is PhD Candidate of the Department of Chinese Studies, Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences, University of Malaya. Her major researches are contemporary Chinese Literature and Malaysian Chinese Literature. Email: emily_siawling@yahoo.com

欧大旭（1971–）生于台北，幼时随其马来西亚籍双亲回到吉隆坡居住，完成中学教育后才到英国留学，其后在英国住了二十年。三个不同文化背景——国籍马来西亚、祖籍中国与现居地英国，强化了欧大旭对身份认同的思索。在他小说中常探讨身份课题，且怀拥为东南亚国家写史的意识与企图。不可讳言，

东南亚历史已经成为欧大旭小说书写的核心主题。从第一部小说《和谐丝庄》以一九三0与四0年代、英国殖民与日本占领时期的马来亚为背景，第二部小说《没有地图的世界》更是扩展其国族寓言的版图，书写一九六0年代的印度尼西亚（印尼），国家与民族之间的矛盾与冲突。

史学家写史，是记录客观上的真实事件，而小说家写史，则是为了重现情感或心理层面的真实记忆。简言之，作家的写实是一种创造性的（主观的）书写，也是“诗的写实”，而不是临摹的写实。鉴于小说虚构的自由性，作者在撇开政治忠贞度（political correctness）不谈，更可以任意寻找切入点。欧大旭在访谈中透露：“虽然我的两本作品看似在宏大的历史架构之下完成，但是它们原先也只是一个很小的家庭故事或爱情故事，并不复杂的。”[1] 这种写法是把一个宏观大叙述转换成小故事，但既然大叙述可以寄托于小故事，反之亦然，我们也可从书中的小我，窥探蕴含其中的大我意识。

台湾学者李有成在《没有地图的世界》导读中提及：“《没有地图的世界》所叙述的恐怕不仅是个爱、恨与背叛的故事而已，欧大旭的野心其实是在记录现代东南亚历史中相当艰涩的一段插曲”[2]。诚如刘勰的《文心雕龙·隐秀》提到一种“隐”的写法：“隐也者，文外之重旨者也.....夫隐之为体，义生文外，秘响傍通，伏采潜发，譬爻象之变互体，川渎之韫珠玉也”[3]。“隐喻”就像密码，意义潜藏在表面之下，需要破译才能获知。本文将尝试分析《没有地图的世界》中，作者欧大旭如何以“爱”作为喻体，书写这一段东南亚历史下的大课题。

一、兄弟之爱

欧大旭曾经在访谈中提到，《没有地图的世界》涉及历史的部分，尤其是印尼和马来西亚的关系：“印尼就像个大哥哥，而且还是个有点危险的大哥哥。”[4] 印尼与马来西亚本是一体，两个国家语言和文化相近，宗教、风俗习惯也雷同，两国人民交往密切，未独立前难分彼此。这就像书中的约翰与亚当，他们本来是一对兄弟，但哥哥约翰先被马来西亚的有钱人家领养，带到马来西亚展开新的生活，独留弟弟在孤儿院，他们的人生从此划为两半。

两兄弟的差别是，哥哥约翰还保留着前生在孤儿院的记忆，弟弟却因为被遗弃的感受太深，而选择将过去遗忘了。由于还保留记忆，对哥哥而言那“前生”也还是“此生”，只能将自己抛入一种悬浮或漂流的状态（或存在），来承担一切痛苦的记忆。于是约翰一直无法停下他的虚无漂泊感，他要不断的奔驰，“在黯淡无光的十字路口，他连看都没看一眼就闯了红灯。他从来不注意其他车辆，他从来不注意任何事物”（67）[5]，“他必须持续移动，只要他不是在静止的状态，他就会没事。天空下着雨。有时他可以想见海。他飙驰过这寂静的城市。”（367）这便是直接面对的痛苦，面对过去的剥离所撕扯开的无尽的时间空洞，没有终点的移动。这种拒绝未来的启动而继续活在过去的人，他们没有现在，抑或，他们抵抗“现在”的存有。相对而言，没有记忆的弟弟似乎比较没有负担，哥哥对于他只是残存的模糊身影，连轮廓也记不起，寻获哥哥也只是一种有意

无意的念头。亚当对想帮他寻找哥哥的丁说："知道在这么多年后要去找回自己的哥哥，感觉好奇怪。我从没想过自己可以谈论这件事情，甚至只是去想这件事情……从某个角度来说，我还蛮高兴自己记不得任何他的事情。因为那样一来，我就不怕失望了"（236）。记忆是历史的基本构成，历史定位在抵抗失语和集体记忆的建构之间，但无论是记忆抑或历史，因其"无法改变"的本质，缅怀从来都是一种"痛苦的重归所属（re-memory）"[6]。

到了约翰和亚当的此生，也即是书中的"现在"——独立后的印尼和马来西亚。因某些因素受到阻断而分道扬镳的，无论国家抑或"爱"，皆可做类比。当约翰问他的养母："妳可以再说一遍我弟弟的事给我听吗？"（156）养母因不想说而推拒，约翰把目光转到餐厅另一头的一对夫妇。那对夫妇正朝对方伸出双手，指尖轻拂指尖，几乎没什么接触，只是想确认对方还在那里，万一餐厅时空旋转的时候，他们还可以紧握住彼此的手不放开。这时的约翰，竟然希望餐厅会旋转得愈来愈快，他想看看那对夫妇会怎么做，因为他知道"他们并不会生死相随"（156）。这是一种自动投射的情绪反应，约翰想起自己和亚当是骨肉相连的兄弟，但人往往无法掌控命运的转向，到了命定时刻，他们还是被逼得分离。这好比历史中的印尼与马来西亚，随着两国各自独立，关系也一度从融和走向分裂。

1957 年 8 月 31 日，马来亚正式脱离英国独立。1963 年，马来亚半岛连同英国海外领地的沙巴、砂拉越、新加坡组成马来西亚联合邦。马来西亚原定于 1963 年 8 月 31 日成立，这天恰好是马来亚独立以及英国赋予新加坡、沙巴和砂拉越自治权的纪念日。由于当时的印尼总统苏卡诺（Sukarno）提出反对，加上砂拉越人民联合党发动了多次抗争行动，延迟了马来西亚的成立。最后，马来西亚于 1963 年 9 月 16 日正式诞生。在马来西亚成立之初，1963 年至 1966 年间，也即是此小说的故事背景，印尼苏卡诺政权采取"冲突政策"（Konfrontasi），不满马来西亚将婆罗洲（Borneo）及砂拉越（Sarawak）并入马来西亚联邦（Federation of Malaysia），挑战马国政府在该地区之合法性与正当性，使东南亚紧张情势升高。[7]

然而，政局随着苏卡诺总统于 1967 年垮台以后有所转变，新总统苏哈托（Suharto）逐渐与马来西亚和解，双方共同体认到将此一和解精神区域化的重要性。这样的历史演进，就像小说文末，法拉问约翰："你想查出你弟弟后来怎么了吗？"（339）约翰说："不想……他已经成为过去，而我再也不想知道了"（340）。另一端的亚当也说："你无法控制你的人生，你只能任凭人生牵着你走"（364）。当养父卡尔给亚当一张写着其哥哥在马来西亚此生家庭地址的纸片，亚当看了竟一点感觉都没有，接着把纸片塞进了口袋。

欧大旭的《没有地图的世界》，"爱"与其他原本互不相干，却被放在同一个语境中，被赋予联系。这样做的目的并不在于说明（那是评论者的工作），而是为了给熟悉之物（本体）增添陌生感和新鲜感，打破人们对它的刻板印象（stereotype），展示出那些不为人注意的特征，从而引导出新的认知。在某些

情况下，文本中本体和喻体的关系，并不会那样清楚地点出来，两者之间可能保持着不确定的开放状态，任读者去想象和诠释。而由“爱”反向思考“历史”命题的叙事手法，也充分展现了欧大旭对东南亚历史叙事的创见与野心。

二、外族之爱

在《没有地图的世界》中，有一对外国恋人卡尔和玛格丽特，两人分开多年，直到卡尔被印尼军方逮捕，其养子亚当长途跋涉到雅加达向玛格丽特求助，两人的命运才又再次连接在一起。欧大旭藉助这一对外族恋人的口告诉读者，爱情与政治时局（或地方；或国家）一样，随时都在改变，对任何一方皆是。玛格丽特这样论爱情：“她相当了解爱情并不持久，它会随着时间改变，从你身边漂移开去，然后也许在你几乎全都遗忘的时候，又再回到你身边，而爱情的不持久，对其中一种性别的折磨并不会比另一种性别多；女人可以和男人一样用情不专、一样难以预测”（248）；卡尔则这样论峇里：“人会抛下事物或地方的说法并不是真的——其实是事物或地方会抛下我们……而且很快它就会变得面目全非，妳会发现自己游荡在一个妳不再认识的地方”（325-326）。

当时的印尼正处于内战边缘，玛格丽特所居住的城市雅加达陷入政治混乱的局势中，各政治势力正在角力，无不想获取政治利益。玛格丽特的澳洲友人米克在谈论苏卡诺政权时也说：“反马来西亚这件事情正在把他一步步推向共产主义，这一点更是犯了美国政府的大忌。刚开始只是跟苏联政府眉来眼去，没想到印尼共产党很快地变成了他在车后座鱼水偷欢的对象，现在更是威胁他要明媒正娶，我并不确定那是他想要的”（116）。但是，“不结盟很容易被美国误解。美国只是在你加入了它所选择的一方时才会喜欢你，如果你不完全与其行动一致，你便会被认为是加入了苏联一方”（Gardner 128）。依照美国的冷战思维，民族主义、中立主义同共产主义并无多大差别。

在 1964 年印尼独立纪念日当天，受困于雅加达街头学生反马来西亚示威的游行队伍中，玛格丽特脑中竟然浮现少年时曾经读过的一本书，书里的一句话——我死定了。故事讲述一个女孩疯狂爱上一个二十岁的西班牙男孩，爱到失去自尊和理智，完全无法自己，所以“我死定了”就表示“已经没救了”。玛格丽特顿时觉得，政治时局就和书中所描述的爱情一样，让人没有选择的余地。

小说中有一个情节，特别让“爱”与“政治”作为本体和喻体的对比关系浮出台面。当玛格丽特为了救出被印尼士兵所捕的卡尔，答应美国大使馆比尔的任务，送一副画给印尼总统苏卡诺时，苏卡诺运用“爱”来叙述印尼和美国的关系：

> 曾有一个时间点，我们，该怎么说呢，我们之间的关系，我们两国之间的关系，是发展得起来的。我们甚至可能彼此相爱。有一段时间，我们甚至以为我们的关系已经是那样的了。我们送给彼此很多礼物。我们当时比较年轻，也都比较愚昧。而现在，我认为那个时机已经过去了。（318）

在送画的过程中，小说也带出了印尼对于外国的态度转变。从总统府开始，玛格丽特忆起过去（印尼刚独立不久的几年）她首次看见总统府时无比震慑，最主要的原因是“这地方的气味；来自泥土和碎草的微弱芬芳，跟长年烹煮的油腻味交织在一块儿，形成了一种典型的亚洲香气”（308），然而现在总统府再次令她震慑，但“不是因为它的尺寸和气味，而是因为它传达出一种令人生畏的距离感”（308-309）。看到墙上苏卡诺的照片，玛格丽特也心想“在过去那些日子里，他还比较像个革命家，比较不像个冷酷的政治家”（310）。当玛格丽特真正面对苏卡诺总统，更是“感受不到一点他过去那令人目眩的年轻朝气”（315）。以上迹象都证明了印尼日渐走向排外与封闭。

当玛格丽特终于找到卡尔以后，他们带同亚当一块离开雅加达，到鲜少有人造访的外岛展开新生活。从故事最后的情节铺排可引伸几个可能性，或许当那些外国殖民势力真正走出印尼这个国家，印尼才有自主权？又或者，当地图没有了界限，则和平才会降临？

所以欧大旭可以合理地无需交代“实际上发生了什么事”，其背后的因素又如何如何。而正是这一种替代、转换的策略，把本体交给喻体负责，让小说回归其虚构性。“爱”在《没有地图的世界》中，是作为历史位移的一种机制，也是一种叙事方式。绕过历史，位移向抒情诗歌，在情意绵绵的后面，却有历史山河。

三、领养之爱

约翰生于印尼，被生母遗弃在一间位于裴度岛的孤儿院，之后被一对来自马来西亚的夫妇领养，从此定居吉隆坡。约翰养父母在小说中嫌少登场，连名字也并未让读者知道。唯一的讯息是，约翰的养母对约翰很好，但约翰的养父却不甚疼爱约翰。约翰对养父说“你从来没爱过我。你打从一开始就不想要我，对吧，爹地？”（246）

养父把约翰看成是“非我族类”，对于谣言指约翰每晚在城里开车到处跑、出入非正经场所、抽烟喝酒的行为，养父说“他是个野孩子”，“这一类的孩子”，“这么说好了，就是你的出身背景。说真的，一切都归因到基因。大家都知道印尼人是野性的族类。他们跟我们并不真正相同”（245-246）。“我们”是正常的、合理的，然后把印尼人想象为与“我们”不同的“他者”，是野蛮的、不文明的，这也就或隐含或显露地展示“我们”对于“他者”的一种歧视、压迫和边缘化的态度。

与约翰不同的是，亚当与其养父卡尔的关系良好。纵然卡尔是荷兰人（殖民者），却是扮演着与他所属的“种族”群体以外的一个角色，正如卡尔经常对亚当说的：“我跟这里的其他人一模一样”（52），他代表的是“同文同种的人”、印尼人的身份。他不是把与自己不同的“种族”塑造成他者，而是尝试创造一个“种族”之间的联系。因此，这样一个在“本族”和“外族”之间

建构新的情感和观念者，却是另一把声音。

欧大旭刻画了各不同种族肤色的人与他们相互的关系，正好作为某种喻体思索一幅被层层分隔界域的地图，是否怀拥平等关系的可能？或许那个终点，也既是“没有地图的世界”的理想蓝图。

四、孤儿之爱

在《没有地图的世界》中，亚当不晓得自己的生父、生母是谁，和哥哥也是在幼儿时期就分开了，是血缘上的孤儿。祖拜妲则是一个怀拥马克思主义为印尼未来而革命的年轻大学生，用其名字中的“祖”（Z）命名他们的革命杂志，因为Z“茕茕独立于字母表的尾端，寂寞、生命中无所展望、被其他字母所抛弃。它是字母表里的孤儿——”（175）换句话说，她是意识形态的孤儿。

对于孤儿，文中有一番独特的见解：

> “如果你是孤儿，你是不可能找到真正的快乐的。”
>
> “那不是真的。孤儿是唯一能够自由追寻自身快乐的人；他们没有属于自己的历史，于是他们就自行创造。”
>
> “可是，Z，那只是假象。他们的生命是由跟他们完全无关的人来决定的——完全的陌生人主宰了他们的未来。他们不附属于任何事物，他们在黑暗中跌跌撞撞，直到某天发生了一些事情，让他们踏上不同的、随机的路途。我可不认为那是自由。”
>
> “但我们不也都是这样吗？”（174-175）

祖拜妲在人们议论亚当作为一个血缘上的孤儿有没有快乐的可能时，提出了“他们”（革命者）不也是孤儿吗？这样的默契与了解，促成两人无需经过多少时间的情感酝酿，见过三次面两人就陷入爱河了。或许他们的 “爱”与“结合”，也隐喻着意识形态上的孤儿其实与血缘上的孤儿没有差别，他们同样没有历史。毕竟，革命立场使他们坚决要和过去切断关系，“人得要活在当下”（22）。对于这族群而言，无疑是生存于一个只有横向关系而没有纵向关系的世界中。

最后，虽然祖拜妲非常舍不得亚当，但她依然让亚当跟着卡尔和玛格丽特离开，因为就算亚当选择留在雅加达，“你要做什么？你要住哪里？如果几年后你还想回来，到时候我会在那里等你。应该会吧”（365）。他们都是无根的人，没有一个真正的落脚之地，也不知道该何去何从，未来是没有定数的。于是，只能随波逐流地跟着时局走向来移动，不能为自己的爱或命运争取什么。

以此看来，欧大旭并无意书写一部“寻根小说”，而是“反思文学”——“反思生命与爱”（162），演示了那个时代一群没有历史的族类，他们无根的存在。有趣的是，“没有地图的世界”在这隐喻着一群迷失的人尚且没有地图在手，无根所归、漂泊无依的状况，又与前几节本文所推测的含义有所不同。足见小说标题《没有地图的世界》蕴含了多种可能性，也可谓是一种喻体。

结语

一般常见的“历史小说”，多半由单一身份的族群作为观点叙事，反映社会在与时代互动下所产生的面向。这个现象主要根源于个人在历史、社会的歧义性，因此作家一般只好将自己所关注的面向或熟悉的部份，个别取材，藉以反映整体社会。因此，在欧大旭对于不在地者书写历史的可靠性表示怀疑的同时，他却能仗着其东南亚出生与成长、欧美国家留学与工作，这两种不同的经验，东西两方的社会语境彼此辨证与互补的情况下，让他的叙述更具世界观。

> 在月光下，那一整片珊瑚就像是一个未知世界的幽影地图，那个世界没有固定的边界，里面的国家不断变形。当他游得更深远，超出了海水呈现黑色的浅水区，他看见了团团萤火，他心想，也许这些是珍珠或是海洋生物，也或许是来自天空的光线不可思议的折射。（153）

换句话说，“没有地图的世界”堪称是欧大旭的写作目的，一种“超越国界”的企图心。因为正如萨伊德（Said,1935-2003）所言，小说不仅参与，而且还实际上成为缓慢细微的政治过程之一部份，此过程足以强化甚至促进人们对某事某物的认知和态度。[8] 欧大旭透过他的小说，无疑是参与了这段历史与家国的建构或再建构。

注解【Notes】

1. 诚品网络编辑群：“我一直透过小说来思考“认同”为何：专访《没有地图的世界》欧大旭”，台北：诚品站（2012 年 2 月 13 日）。

2. 李有成：“冷战岁月——欧大旭与其《没有地图的世界》”，收录于欧大旭，《没有地图的世界》12。

3. 参见刘勰：“隐也者，文外之重旨者也；秀也者，篇中之独拔者也。隐以复意为工，秀以卓绝为巧。斯乃旧章之懿绩，才情之嘉会也。夫隐之为体，义生文外，秘响旁通，伏采潜发，譬爻象之变互体，川渎之韫珠玉也”，《文心雕龙注》54-55。

4. 参见“华裔作家欧大旭——台北书展谈创作中的身份认同”，《第十九届台北国际书展》，台北：华文出版与影视平台（2012 年 2 月 2 日）。

5. 本文引用的作品内容均出自欧大旭：《没有地图的世界》，赖肇欣译（台北：联经出版社，2012 年）。本文引用时随文注明出处页码，以下不再一一说明。

6. 这是霍米 • 巴巴在《文化定位》中的一段话：“缅怀从来就不只是一种内省或回顾的行为，它是个痛苦的重归所属（re-memory），拼凑被支解割裂的过去，了解当前创伤的行为。”；朱立立在《身份认同与华文文学研究》中引述了这段文字，并指出：“属性受制于历史、文化与权力的运作或操纵，因此不是固有的本质，而是形成的，它具有双轴性，一轴是类同与

延续，另一轴为差异与断裂。”(119-120)。

7. 参见李琼莉：“东协区域冲突管理机制与角色探讨”，《台湾东南亚学刊》2(2010):3-20。

8. 参见萨伊德：“导论”，《文化与帝国主义》1-29。

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The Palace Entertainment Institutions in the Tang Poetries

Wang Li
Department of Chinese Studies, University of Malaya, Malaysia
Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences, 50603 Kuala Lumpur
Email: allywong007@gmail.com

Abstract The names of some palace entertainment institutions of the Tang Dynasty often appeared in the Tang's poems, such as Nei Jiaofang, Liyuan, Xuanhui Yuan and Zhangnei Jiaofang, which had no clear descriptions before. This paper not only introduces those related institutions but also explains Diyi Bu that was a title of a kind of members in the institutions and Faqu that was a type of music to help readers to understand the poetries meanings correctly. With these institutions' information, the readers can understand the Tang's poetries well.
Key Words Palace entertainment; Jiao Fang; Tang Peotries, Chinese music

During the Tang Dynasty, the palace entertainment institutions were an important part in the music performance and development so their names always appeared in the Tang poetries. It is hard for readers in nowadays without related information to understand those poems deeply. Thus we will introduce some necessary historical facts of the palace entertainment institutions and a type of music, Faqu (法曲 a kind of entertainment music), as following.

Nei Jiaofang (内教坊)

Xuan Zong(玄宗 , r. 712-756) set up Nei Jiaofang in 714 (Kaiyuan 开元 2nd year), "In Kaiyuan 2nd year, Xuanzong set up Nei Jiaofang beside the Penglai Palace (蓬莱宫)" (Ouyang and Song 816). Following its creation, Nei Jiaofang became the most important musical institution in the palace. Although there were wars in Chang'an (the Capital city of the Tang 长 安) and some emperors loved other entertainment institutions more, Nei Jiaofang was sustained and developed until the end of the Tang Dynasty.

From the Daizong (代 宗 , r. 762-779) Period, the functions of Nei Jiaofang changed. It not only served the emperor in the palace, but it also supplied the musical services to the court and some social activities. During Xianzong (宪宗 , r. 805-820),

Wenzong (文宗 , r. 827-840) and Xuanzong (宣宗 , r.846-859), Jiaofang's influence was restricted to some extent. However, on the whole, because of the eunuchs' strong influence and the emperors' love of entertainment from the middle to the end of the Tang Dynasty, Nei Jiaofang's power remained strong.

Meanwhile, Jiaofang began to exert influence over Shijing Ji (市 井 妓 the performers who worked in the cities and the way for them to make a living was similar as geisha in Japan) of Chang'an. These influences included controlling their name registrations, ordering them to perform in some large scale programs, and managing their services during feasts held by Jing Zhao Yin (京兆尹 the government of Chang'an). Jiaofang's management of Shijing Ji was grew and expanded during the Song (宋 960-1729), Yuan (元 1206-1368) and Ming (明 1368-1644) Dynasties.

Wang Jian (王 建 , 767?-831?) wrote about Jiaofang ordering girls to enter the palace in his poem that narrated a story about a Shijing Ji who learned to play Konghou (箜 篌 a kind of instrument) when she was young, and then was selected into the palace by Jiaofang. She lived with Gongnv (宫 女 women worked in the palace) after entering the palace. He wrote, "She learned to play Konghou at thirteen and was selected from Shijing Ji. She joined Jiaofang yesterday. This morning, the Gongnv, her roommate, helped her to comb hair" (十三初学擘箜篌，弟子名中被点留。昨日教坊新进入，并房宫女与梳头) (576). The reason Jiaofang selected Yueji (乐伎 female performers) for entrance into the palace was to perform music. Normally, Jiaofang's Yuegong (乐 工 performer) did not live with Gongnv. The girl in the poem who lived with Gongnv showed how Jiaofang had some control over Gongting Nvyue (宫廷女乐 another kind of entertainment institutions of the palace whose members were Gongnv).

During this time, Jiaofang had begun to let Shijing Ji join in performances which was illustrated in another Wang Jian's poem that described a story about a young Shijing Ji who joined the dance performance on Chunshe Day (春社 a festive in spring). He wrote, "The young pretty Shijing Ji' names were always recorded by Jiaofang. In Chunshe Day, there were many dance teams playing before the palace. The leaders of these dance teams asked for costumes" (青楼小妇砑裙长 , 总被抄名入教坊。春设殿前多队舞，朋头各自请衣裳) (Wang Jian 632). This poem showed how much control Jiaofang had over Shijing Ji.

Diyi Bu (第一部)

"Diyi Bu" was the title of some Yuegong with excellent musical skills in Nei Jiaofang, Liyuan (梨 园) and Zhangnei Jiaofang (帐 内 教 坊). The Yuegong of Diyi Bu in these institutions were the emperor's first choice to perform for him.

"Diyi Bu," "Diyi Bu Gongfeng" (第 一 部 供 奉 the first branch to serve),

"Gongfeng Diyi Bu" (供奉第一部 the first branch to serve) and "Yuqian Gongfeng Diyi Bu" (Yuqian means in front of the emperor 御前供奉第一部 the first branch to serve for the emperor) had the same meaning. Musicians of "Diyi Bu" were also highly skilled performers who were deeply loved by the emperor. After performing for the emperor Muzong (穆宗 , r.820-824), Zhang Jian (张渐) was rewarded and asked to perform in "Gongfeng Diyi Bu" of Zhangnei Jiaofang. (Li Youbai) Li Mu (李暮), the famous flute player during the Kaiyuan Period, was also "Diyi Bu." (Zhou 619)

The "Diyi Bu" Yuegong had nothing to fear because of the emperor's love. Even in the case when they offended, they were not penalized. Such a situation was illustrated in the story of the minister Zhang Jun's feast:

Zhang Jun (张 浚) was the prime minister. Once he went to Wanshou Si (万寿 寺 a temple) with other officials in the court to hold a feast and watch peony. Performers who supplied music services in the feast all belonged to Yuqian Gongfeng Diyi Bu. They were proud and had nothing to fear because they were loved by the emperor. The feast continued through nightfall. Suddenly, one of performers, Zhang Yin (张隐), stood up and sang loudly (with disrespectful lyrics). After the end of the song, he left immediately. All the guests were surprised and speechless. Thus the party was over (Ren 1171).

Zhang Yin could sing songs sneering at current politics and stride away without looking back, even at a party held by the prime minister without repercussions. Because of being loved by the emperor, Yuegong of "Diyi Bu" were so respected and valued, they did not fear the court officials.

Musicians of Diyi Bu would be called into the palace by the emperor at any time. For example, Yuegong of Diyi Bu in Liyuan was urgently summoned back to the palace when they played outside as was written in *Taiping Guangji*:

> Taifu Qing (太府卿 official title) Cui Jie (崔洁) went around with Chen Ton (陈彤). They bought fish and met a person with Ziyi (紫 衣 purple cloths showing honorable). Ziyi said he was Diyi Bu in Liyuan and was good at cooking fish. When Ziyi was cooking, an eunuch came to issue the edict that the emperor went to Longshou Chi (龙首池 a lake in the forbidden garden) and ordered Diyi Bu Yinsheng (音 声 singers). Ziyi brought his cloth (when he cooked, he took off his purple cloths) and left in a hurry without saying good-bye to Cui Jie and Chen Tong. (1125)

Those performers could go out when they were not on duty. However, they must let their managers know where they were, so they could be found quickly, because Chang'an was so large it was difficult to find performers quickly.

Being members of Diyi Bu, stood an equal chance of being summoned by the emperor, but "Pian Zhao" (偏召 someone being summoned specially and frequently) still existed. That meant some musicians were called into the palace by the emperor more often. For example, Zhao Bi (赵 璧), who was written about in the poem of Yuan Zhen (元 稹 779-831), was "always summoned more times by Dezong and other members of Diyi Bu" (众乐虽同第一部，德宗皇帝常偏召) (322). Playing in officials' mansions was an important source of Yuegong's incomes (Wang Li). However, because Zhao Bi was kept by Dezong often, he had no chance to perform in other places to make a profit like other Yuegong.

Bai Juyi wrote in his famous poem *Pipa Xing*: "She said she lived in Hama Ling in the capital city. She learned playing Pipa when she was thirteen years old and belonged to Diyi Bu of Jiaofang" (自言本是京城女，家在虾蟆陵下住。十三学得琵琶成，名属教坊第一部) (241). This not only showed Diyi Bu members had the high level skill but also showed that Jiaofang controlled Shijing Ji.

Liyuan and Faqu

Liyuan, another music and dance institution of Xuanzong in the palace, was created in 714. It was often misunderstood and people associated "Liyuan Dizi" (梨园弟子 the performers of Liyuan) with actors when they were actually singers or dancers. It was also a mistake that people regarded Liyuan in the Tang Dynasty as the earliest ancestor of drama.

According to Qingshang Yue (清商乐 a kind of entertainment music), Xuanzong created Faqu during the Tang Dynasty. He used some of Qingshang Yue's instruments, rhythm, Gongdiao (宫 调 musical note) and performance styles to create a new, elegant kind of music. Besides modifying some old Qingshang Yue, most of Faqu consisted of newly written music and the incorporation of other music. Since he hoped to develop this new music on a large scale, it was necessary for Xuanzong to establish a new institution. "Li Sanlang (李三郎 Xuanzong's nick name was Sanlang and his last name was Li) loved Faqu deeply and established Liyuan as his Fabu (法部). Fabu was the Yuebu (乐部 a team of performers) who performed Faqu." (Qiu 49) Therefor, the most important part of Liyuan was Fabu because Liyuan was created for Faqu's performances.

In Wang Jian's *Nishang Ci* (霓裳辞), he mentioned Fabu:

> Fabu was called to play "Ni Shang" which was newly written after Xuanzong's order.
>
> Guifei came upstairs to inspect the preparations. Neiren carried down a case of color silk

cloths. (传呼法部按霓裳，新得承恩别作行。应是贵妃楼上看，内人舁下彩罗箱) (437)

Liyuan had a substantial impact on Faqu during the Tang Dynasty. Although Liyuan had been merged into Taichang Si Fabu during the Dezong Period, the name of "Liyuan" was still used and became the another name of Taichang Si Fabu in later ages.

For example, in Liu Yuxi's (刘禹锡 772-842) *Chou Yang Si Ye Juyuan Jian Ji* (酬杨司业巨源见寄), "Liyuan Dizi came and asked for the words to a song." (梨园弟子请辞来) (Peng 4085) Another writer, Yang Juyuan (杨巨源 755?-?), had a poem *Listen to Li Ping Play Konghou* (听李平弹箜篌) which showed that Taichang Si Fabu existed after Dezong's succession:

The emperor left his palace to hear music. The wind blew music from the forbidden garden. (This showed the emperor went to the forbidden garden to listen to the music.) The people in Li Yuan were happy because the emperor was visiting. The music had a high-pitched sound. (听奏繁弦玉殿清，风传曲度禁林明。君王听乐梨园暖，翻到云门第几声) (Peng 3742)

This poem described the emperor listening to music in Li Yuan (梨 园 the pear garden) which was used as an entertainment site after Dezong's succession. Li Yuan in the forbidden garden was still used as entertainment place after Liyuan was dismissed.

Besides Faqu, Liyuan also played songs and dances which were written about in Bai Juyi's (白居易 772-846) poem "Jiangnan Yu Tianbao Yuesou" (in the south of China, I met an old musical who had played in the palace during the Tianbao Period 江南遇天宝乐叟), "An old man with white hair cried and said that he joined Liyuan before the An Shi Rebellion, and always accompanied Xuanzong in Huaqing Chi (华清池 a famous hot spring during the Xuanzong Period, also known as Wenquan Palace) because he could play both Pipa and Faqu" (白头病叟泣且言，禄山未乱入梨园。能弹琵琶和法曲，多在华清随至尊) (288) .

There were also members of Yuegong in Liyuan who were good singers or dance experts. Wang Jian wrote about the dancers in Liyuan in his poem, *Wenquan Gong Xing* (温泉宫行 poem of Wenquan Palace): "Yuegong in Liyuan had stolen the musical score and taught singing and dancing out of the palace when they were old" (梨园弟子偷曲谱，头白人间教歌舞) (Wang Jian 11). Liyuan, Faqu and Wenquan Palace (Huaqing Chi) were popular vocabularies in the Tang's poetries.

Xuanhui Yuan (宣徽院 **)**

After the Mid-Tang Period, Xuanhui Yuan began to participate in the entertainment of the emperors. In the Northern Song Dynasty (北 宋 960-1127), Xuanhui Yuan even took the place of Taichang Si as the main musical institution of the country (Tuo 2549).

Xuanhui Yuan was set up at the end of the Dali Period (大历 766-779) and was divided into two parts, South and North, which was equal to Shumi Yuan (枢密院 the institution in the palace to control the army). (Zhang Guogang 112) Xuanhui Yuan located in the Xuanhui Dian (宣徽殿 Xuanhui Palace) of Daming Palace (大明宫) (Zhao Yule 57). The reason it was established was related to the eunuchs' growing power (Ma 526). Like Shumi Yuan, Xuanhui Yuan's power was gradually increasing (Sun Guangxian 1858). Eventually, without Neishi Sheng's control, Xuanhui Yuan became a real powerful institution in the latter part of the Tang Dynasty (Meiwei 303). Theoretically, it was controlled by the emperor but in actuality the eunuchs were in control of the palace's political power and were constantly battling to keep that power. (Zhao Yule 58).

Xuanhui Yuan not only supplied musical services to the emperor but also controlled the palace. There was a sentence in Bai Juyi's poem "He Yu" (贺 雨 congratulation raining) written during the Yuanhe Period, "Gongnv were sent out from the palace by Xuanhui Yuan and the emperor decreased the number of horses he owned"(宫女出宣徽，厩马减飞龙) (Bai Juyi 1). This showed Xuanhui Yuan was in charge of the Gongnv.

At the end of the Tang Dynasty, on April,904 (Tianyou 天佑 1st year), Zhaozong had to dismiss many palace institutions. Xuanhui Yuan was one of the nine institutions that were kept (Liu Xu 527).

Zhangnei Jiaofang

Zhangnei Jiaofang did not belong to the palace, but belonged to Jinjun (禁 军 the guarding army of the emperor). Zhangnei Jiaofang was not set up to provide entertainment for the emperor. But after the Mid-Tang Period, it began to supply musical services to the emperors.

Cheng Dachang (程大昌) wrote:

> There were two parts of Jinjun: Nanya (南 衙) and Beiya (北 衙). Nanya's camp was located at the south of the palace. Beiya's camp was in the forbidden garden.
>
> Beiya was divided into the Zuojun (左军 left army) and the Youjun (右军 right army). Zuojun was east of Dong Neiyuan and Youjun was north-east of Xi Yuan (西苑). (173)

Actually, Zuoyou Shijun (左右十军 ten armies of Zuojun and Youjun) included Yulin (羽林), Longwu (龙武), Shenwei (神威), Shence (神策) and Shenwu (神武) (Ouyang and Song 874). Each of these five armies was divided into two sections: Zuo and You and totaled ten armies.

Five armies came from different groups but they all did not have the same rights and responsibilities. Longwu came from Taizong's (太宗 , r. 627-649) Baiji (百骑 the guard army of Taizong) and Xuanzong had its name changed to Longwu. (Ouyang and Song 872) Longwu had an intimate relationship with the emperor. They always accompanied the emperor to hunt and there were many performances held in Longwu's camp so the emperor loved to visit Longwu. Du Fu's (杜甫) poem describe their relationship: "The emperor planned to go to Qujiang (曲江 a famous scenic spot of Chang'an) but first he visited Longwu's camp and stayed for a long time" (龙武新军深驻辇，芙蓉别殿谩焚香) (Du Fu 450).

Besides playing regular music, Zhangnei Jiaofang performed for the guarding army's polo games. It was a tradition for music to be performed for polo games which continued until the Song Dynasty (Xiang 80). This was written about in Wang Jian and Lady Hua Rui's (花蕊夫人 ?-976) poetry:

> It is hard to defeat the emperor in polo because hitting the ball behind the emperor was forbidden. Neiren sings Qunci songs well and the emperor's horse is fast. (对御难争第一筹，殿前不打背身球。内人唱好龟兹急，天子鞘回过玉楼) (Wang Jian 558)
>
> The polo ground is near the end of a pool of water. The officials are called to enter the palace to play polo. Beside the grounds, the seat for the emperor is decorated. And the sound of the music wakes up mayflies in the pool. (小球场近曲池头，暄换勋臣试打球。先向画楼排御幄，管弦声动立浮油) (Peng 9064)

Zhangnei Jiaofang supplied musical services to the emperor in two ways. When the emperor visited the guarding army, the guarding army supplied the feast and Zhangnei Jiaofang played during the feast. This was the regular way and it was the most common style of performance for the emperor after Xianzong. This was the subject of He Ning's (和凝 898-955) poem: "After the emperor sat down in the guarding army's camp, Yuegong of the guarding army began to play Baixi and they sang the praises of the political situations" (坐定两军呈百戏，乐臣低折贺生平) (Peng 8483). According to the guarding army's arrangement, Zhangnei Jiaofang performed in other places for the pleasure of the emperor. This was another way for Zhangnei Jiaofang to serve the emperors. All in all, the main task and daily job of the Zhangnei

Jiaofang was to perform during the guarding army's officials feasts.

Besides these, Gongting Nvyue, Neiyuan Xiaoer (内 园 小 儿 under aged male performers of the forbid garden) and another Nei Jiaofang created before Nei Jiaofang, Wude Nei Jiaofang, also belonged to entertainment institutions of the palace during the Tang Dynasty. All these institutions had different functions, performances and organizations and they played different roles in the entertainment life of the emperors. Therefore, when the literature works involved them, the basic historical facts of these institutions are necessary to be known to understand the literature works better.

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The Appropriation of Daoist and Marxist Concepts of Dialectics in Brecht's Theatre

Zheng Jie
Faculty of Chinese Language and Literature, Central China Normal University, China
No. 152 Luoyu Road, Wuhan, Hubei, P.R. China, 430079
Email: zhengjie1997@hotmail.com

Abstract This paper centers around the question: What does the term "dialectic" mean to Brecht in the constant flux of his ideas and opinions? I argue for the connection between Daoism and Brecht's specific version of dialectics in his theatre. While my aim is not to claim that Brecht depends on Chinese thought to formulate his theoretical statements about theatre, I attempt to demonstrate that certain Daoist ideas were central to Brecht's very concept of contradiction. Furthermore, I suggest that Brecht's notion of "dialectic" acquires a full meaning and function in Brecht's combination, appropriation, interpretation and use of the Daoist and Marxist concepts of dialectics from his own perspective.
Key Words Brecht; dialectics; Daoism; Marxism; Korsch

There is little doubt amongst critics and commentators concerning the general fact of Brecht's debt to Marxist dialectics or his intention to apply it to the theatre. Yet it would be a mistake to identify Brecht's notion of dialectics with Marxist dialectics—although it is very common for Brecht critics to do so. Three facts need to be clarified prior to our discussion of Brecht's dialectic theatre. First, Brecht's notion of epic theatre evolved in opposition to "naturalism," but it is also, as Willett suggest, "designed for the existing bourgeois 'apparatus' and audience" (*Brecht in Context* 223). Second, Brecht's aesthetics of theatre, as is consistent with his belief in change, is an ever changing one; such is the case in his uses of the terms "epic," "non-aristotelian," and "dialectic" to define his theatre. Third, Brecht's aesthetic theory and practice were influenced by Korsch's understanding of Marxism. This paper centers around the question: What does the term "dialectic" mean to Brecht in the constant flux of his ideas and opinions? I argue for the connection between Daoism and Brecht's specific version of dialectics in his theatre. While my aim is not to claim that Brecht depends on Chinese thought to formulate his theoretical statements about theatre, I attempt to demonstrate that certain Daoist ideas were central to Brecht's

very concept of contradiction. Furthermore, I suggest that Brecht's notion of "dialectic" acquires a full meaning and function in Brecht's combination, appropriation, interpretation and use of the Daoist and Marxist concepts of dialectics from his own perspective.

The paper begins by investigating Brecht's keen interest in Lao Zi's dialectics, which is followed by a full consideration of the transition of Brecht's theoretical development from "epic theatre" to "dialectical theatre" with a focus on his theoretical essays. To question the nature of the particular form of dialectics he is designating in his "dialectical theatre," I shall indicate how Marxist ideas (together with Korsch's version of Marxist dialectical materialism) and Lao Zi's dialectics help formulate the very form of his theatre and writing.

1. Brecht and Lao Zi's Dialectics

The position of Daoism in Brecht's work is a debatable subject among Brecht critics. Berg-Pan emphasizes the complementary function of the Daoist ideas in Brecht's plays: in his words, Chinese philosophy "fill[s] gaps which Marx and Engels have left in their social philosophy" and these gaps include "matters relating to human psychology, to practical questions about how to earn a living, what to do when in love, how to avoid dangers, and other mundane matters which had escaped the attention of Marx and Engels" ("Mixing Old and New Wisdom" 206). The implication of Berg-Pan's claim is that messages—such as "the least useful is the most fortunate"—from Daoism are simply examples of old Chinese wisdom which have no intersection with Marxism. Esslin, taking an opposing view, completely rejects the importance of the teaching of Daoism to Brecht's Marxism:

> This Taoist attitude of yielding to the flow of things, while recognizing its absurdity, coexisted in Brecht's mind with, and below, the doctrine of the class struggle and the gospel of the violent transformation of the world. This in fact is the passive attitude, the yielding to emotion, the abandonment of reason he so feared in his youth, transformed into a mellow and profound philosophy. (243)

Esslin thinks that Brecht simply seeks a reconciliation between his demand for radical social change and "a yearning for the quiet, passive acceptance of the world" (243), a sentiment shared by Brecht and Lao Zi. By setting Marxism and Daoism in opposition, Esslin argues for the complexity of Brecht's works in the sense that Daoism offsets Brecht's radical demand for violent change.

Other critics argue for an analogy between the Marxist dialectic and the Daoist dialectic (which Tatlow considers to be "a peasant dialectic"). Indeed, Brecht's

interest in Daoism and Marxism is perhaps not surprising, considering the fact that Mao Zedong is often known as integrating Marxism with Daoism in his war strategy.[1] Underneath their obvious divergences—in Marxism, the dialectical method of observation is integrated with the historical materialistic view of history, whereas in Daoism, man's place in nature (and society) is aligned with the movement of *tao* (the natural process) in order to reach the harmony and balance of life—Marxism and Daoism do share a similar understanding of the dynamic interplay of opposites (taken out of their distinct historical, social, and philosophical contexts). Yet we should also note Brecht's interpretation and employment of Daoist thought in his specific work do appear to create a tension between his views and traditional Marxist principles.

Before Brecht began his serious study of Marxism, he already realized internal contradictions within the human subject:

> Even when a character behaves by contradictions that's only because nobody can be identically the same at two unidentical moments. Changes in his exterior continually lead to an inner reshuffling. The continuity of the ego is a myth. A man is an atom that perpetually breaks up and forms anew. We have to show things as they are.[2]

This passage, according to Willett's editorial note, was taken from an interview originally published in *Die Literarische Welt*, 30 July 1926. Here Brecht mentioned specifically how the form of men's lives should be approached in light of this constant process of change and internal contradiction. We find a similar view in "A Short Organum for the Theatre [Short Organum]," when Brecht points out the connection between the V-effect and Marx's method of dialectical materialism.

> This technique allows the theatre to make use in its representations of the new social scientific method known as dialectical materialism. In order to unearth society's laws of motion this method treats social situations as processes, and traces out all their inconsistencies. It regards nothing as existing except in so far as it changes, in other words is in disharmony with itself. This also goes for those human feelings, opinions and attitudes through which at any time the form of men's life together finds its expression. (BT 193)

Here the concept of dialectics means no more than to contradict from within, a view that is closer to his earlier belief than a clear elaboration in Hegel's sense (which Marx and Engels inherited).

As early as 1920 Brecht had began to read Lao Zi's *Tao Te Ching* and recognized

an analogy between his ideas and those of Lao Zi, as he writes in his diaries: "But he [Frank Warschauer] introduced me to Lao Tzu, who agrees with me about so many things that he keeps on being astonished…For Warschauer: Baden & Lao Tzu" (*Diaries* 50). What are the "so many things" that Brecht and Lao Zi agreed upon? Berg-Pan argues that Lao Zi's philosophy is concerned "for the fate of ordinary people and the fact of their exploitation" (*Bertolt Brecht and China* 74). Besides this general sympathy towards the common people, Brecht also used various different Daoist images and thoughts, nearly all of which are about human behavior—i.e. the image of process, the strategy of survival, the concept of goodness, the critique of virtues (*Mask* 455-75). However, it would be difficult to verify Brecht's intention. We may well argue that Brecht's observations of the contradictions inherent in human behavior are intuitive, or that he may get them from the Western intellectual traditions (one only needs to mention the name of Nietzsche and Heraclitus). Yet it is not my purpose to argue from which cultural traditions Brecht draws more influence. Rather, it is the collision and conflation between Western and Chinese thought that make the comparison interesting to this investigation.

According to Brecht's perspective, everything is in perpetual flux; or, as Benjamin summarizes Brecht's understanding of history, "It can happen this way, but it can also happen in a different way" (8). It is for this reason that water imagery is so important in Brecht's work, since it indicates that the world and human consciousness accordingly is in a constant process of change. In *Man Equals Man*, when Galy Gay for the first time denies himself, Widow Begbick states in her song of mutability that

> Often as you may see the river sluggishly flowing
> Each time the water is different.
> What's gone can't go past again. Not one drop
> Ever flows back to its starting point. (CP 2: 23)

She suggests that the philosophical teaching that one should never attempt to

> …hold on to the wave
> That's breaking against your foot: so long as
> You stand in the stream fresh waves
> Will always keep breaking against it. (CP 2: 39)

Ewen proposes that Begbick is voicing the sentiments of an ancient Greek Philosopher, Heraclitus of Ephesus, when he said: "You cannot step twice into the same rivers, for fresh waters are ever flowing in upon you" (137). We find, however,

similar views expressed in chapter 8 of the *Tao Te Ching*:

> The highest Good is like that of water. The goodness of water is that it benefits the ten thousand creatures; yet itself does not scramble, but is content with the places that all men disdain. It is this that makes water so near to the Way. (17)

The implication of the potentiality for change reminds us of the ultimate aim of Brecht's theatre, which "sought not only to interpret the world but to change the world."

The water image means more than perpetual flux; it demonstrates an overarching paradox of Lao Zi's *Tao Te Ching*. We read in chapter 78: "Nothing under heaven is softer or more yielding than water; but when it attacks things hard and resistant there is not one of them that can prevail" (165). In his poem "Legend of the origin of the book *Tao Te Ching* on Lao Tzu's way into Exile," Brecht rephrases Lao Zi's thought in his own words: "The yielding water in motion gets the better in the end of granite and porphyry," a saying which implies the most basic paradox in Daoism: the weaker will conquer the stronger. All these indicate that although Brecht's perception of change and contradiction may not solely come from Daoism, reading Brecht's ideas of dialectics with reference to Daoism and Marxist dialectics provides us with more dimensions for exploring how Brecht's perception of dialectics functions in his understanding of Man. Indeed, comparing the Daoist paradox and Marxist dialectics, we find how Brecht swiftly reworks Daoism into Marxist dialectics in formulating his own ideas.

Lao Zi's notion of paradox derives from the theory of *yin* (the receptive and gentle force), and *yang* (the active one), as indicated in *I-Ching: Book of Change*. In this book, *Yin* and *yang* are configured as two significant concepts: they are two polarities within one entity, but it is also through their interactions that they engender the Ten-thousand Beings. According to Cheng, Lao Zi's concept of paradox is inseparably bound up with the interdependence and correspondence between Beings, since Beings, aside from being autonomous and isolated, are a living network characterized by interchange. Cheng further concludes that "Because of this organicist conception of the universe, in Chinese philosophical thought relation rather than substance is emphasized; truth rises out of an intersubjectivity rather than out of the subject/object distinction" (17).

These two polarities within one entity are reflected in the Chinese notion of contradiction/paradox as *maodun*. The Chinese word makes no distinction between these two Western categories and hence refers to both of them. The Chinese notion of contradiction as *maodun* is composed of the two characters *mao* (spear) and *dun*

(shield), which stands respectively for aggressive and defensive weapons in war. The etymological analysis embodies the mutual dependence of all opposites. Unlike the Marxist dialectic in which oppositions are emphasized, it is the complementary nature that is emphasized in Chinese thought. Furthermore, the opposites in unity embody the interplay of polarities. As Jeaneane D. and Merv Fowler explain: "contrary to most western thought it is not the triumph of good over evil, of light over darkness, of the divine over the demonic that is the Chinese goal, but the perfect balance between *yin* and *yang* polarities that enables the self to transcend them in activity. Evil is but temporary disharmony, just as night is the temporary suspension of day" (52). In other words, without its complementary opposite, nothing can be wholly one polarity. Lao Zi views the opposing concepts of beauty and ugliness, good and evil, full and empty, construction and destruction, subject and object as existing and acquiring their meaning in relation to the other, such that in different circumstances each could be transformed to its opposite.

Brecht has no knowledge of the Chinese language, nor did he live to read Jeaneane D. and Merve Fowler. Yet in Brecht, we see how he too questions the basic definitions of social ethics, making it imperative to reconsider the familiar concepts of human qualities (i.e. virtuousness, weakness, goodness) not as absolute categories, but polarity in unity with their opposites. The individual in Brecht's later works is many faceted—good and bad, brave and cowardly, compassionate and cruel, exemplified in the characters of Mother Courage, Galileo, Shen Teh, and Puntila—despite the fact that the individuals are still products of social circumstances. The clear lines drawn between different social classes are blurred; moreover, there is no close link between one's social behavior and social class. Noticing the significance of the Daoist dialectic in Brecht's work of the late thirties and early forties, Tatlow identifies three related topics: "the critique of virtues, the strategy of survival and the problem of natural process" ("Peasant Dialectics" 281).

2. From Epic Theatre to Dialectical Theatre

Brecht used a theoretical vocabulary to describe his techniques of staging, acting and the intended social function of his work; he referred to his theatre as "epic" (as opposed to "dramatic") and "non-aristotelian," and in the last years of his life in Berlin, reckoning the inadequacy of the term "epic," he decided to substitute "dialectical" for "epic", a formal demonstration of his evolving method. Brecht wrote in the "Appendices to the Short Organum" that the concept of "epic" was "too light and too vague for the kind of theatre intended" (BT 276) declaring:

> An effort is not being made to move from the epic theatre to the dialectical

> theatre…'epic theatre' is too formal a term for the kind of theatre aimed at (and to some extent practised). Epic theatre is a prerequisite for these conditions, but it does not of itself imply that productivity and changeability of society from which they derive their main element of pleasure. (BT 281-2)

Brecht is aware that "epic" is more of a formal category, while he contemplated more than a mere revolution of theatrical form. Willett suggests that Brecht came to the designation of "dialectical theatre" based on the later nine essays grouped as "Dialectics in the Theatre" (1948-55). In response to Willett's observation, Peter Brooker studied the late work of Brecht and came to the conclusion that Brecht was undecided about his description of "dialectical theatre," since, on the one hand, his nine essays failed to present a coherent argument (21), and on the other hand, they were not committed to print in his lifetime (26). In opposition to both views, Carney claimed that Brecht's thought was informed by the dialectics as early as the 1930s (154). While I align myself with Carney's argument, I suggest that it is essential to examine the issue of Brecht's notion of dialectics from the following two aspects. First, we need to investigate what the two terms "epic" and "dialectic" mean in Brecht's context. Second, in order to designate the specific version of Brecht's dialectics, we must refer to Korsch's and Lao Zi's thinking about dialectics, both of which, as we shall see, helped to shape Brecht's formulation of his aesthetic of theatre.

Brecht saw his theatre as for the new age, the "scientific age," in which productivity has been made theatre's "main source of entertainment" and "has been also taken to be its theme" (BT 186). The questions for Brecht arise, how could his theatre unveil the commodifications inherent in bourgeois societies? And how could these issued be addressed not only in dramaturgy but also on the performance level with "the whole radical transformation of the mentality" of the performer and spectator (BT 23)? In 1927, Brecht first used the phrase "epic theatre" in print. In the same year he published his essay "The Epic Theatre and its Difficulties" and explained that the epic theatre was a theatrical style laid down by the new school of play-writing. The basic meaning of "epic" (in Brecht's use of it) is, as Willett summarized, "a sequence of incidents or events, narrated without artificial restrictions as to time, place or relevance to a formal 'plot'" (*Bertolt Brecht* 169). Brecht expounded the principles of the epic theatre and emphasized that "the essential point of the epic theatre is perhaps that it appeals less to the feelings than to the spectator's reason" (BT 23).

Esslin suggests that we must understand Brecht's theory of epic theatre as his counter-theory of the German classic theory of drama: "in 1797 Goethe and Schiller, the two giants of the German tradition, had jointly presented their point of view in an essay, 'On Epic and Dramatic Poetry'" (113). Esslin also notes that much of Brecht's

theoretical ideas were anticipated by Racine and Diderot. Indeed, Brecht's labeling of his theatre as "non-aristotelian" signifies that his theatre, counter to the Aristotelian concept of dramatic theatre, does not intend to invite audiences into believing that what is presented on stage is true. However, Brecht is hardly the first person to question and/or disturbs Aristotle's tradition of dramatic theatre. Brooker points out in his article "Key Words in Brecht's Theory and Practice" that the term "epic" was in use in German debates before Brecht adapted it. Furthermore, he listed several sources for Brecht's "epic theatre": "the political theatre of Erwin Piscator and German agitprop; the cabaret of Frank Wedekind and the work of the music hall comedian Karl Valentin; Charlie Chaplin and American silent film; Asia and revolutionary Soviet theatre; as well as Shakespeare and Elizabethan chronicle plays" (187).

What is clear is that Brecht's concept of epic theatre is not only a revolution of the stage as theatre. As Tatlow suggests, "its purpose was ultimately political" (Mask 286). In Brecht's 1927 essay "The Epic Theatre and its Difficulties," an appeal to reason/rationalism (other than feelings) becomes an important features in his concept of epic theatre and is associated with his three specific concerns, summed up by Willett, "the unemotional (or Sachlich) approach, the new economic and social subject-matter…, and…acting, as it were, in quotation marks and from foreknowledge, without ever pretending that cast and producers are unaware what is about to happen" (Bertolt Brecht 168).

Brecht emphasized that the epic theatre was a prerequisite for his theatre. Despite the fact that Brecht adopted the term "dialectical" very late in his life, we find Brecht dealing with dialectical concepts in his theoretical writings quite earlier than one might assume. In the article "The Film, the Novel and the Epic Theatre" (1930), for the first time he emphasized the idea of contradiction. The essay opens with the quotation, "Contradictions are our hope!" From that time the idea of contradiction became increasingly important in Brecht's works. And in yet another article "The Question of Criteria for Judging Acting" (1931), Brecht reflects upon the contradictory nature of language:

> For over and above the meaning of the individual sentences a quite specific basic gest was being brought out here which admittedly depended on knowing what the individual sentences meant but at the same time used this meaning only as a means to an end. The speeches' content was made up of contradictions, and the actor had not to make the spectator identify himself with individual sentences and so get caught up in contradictions, but to keep him out of them. Taken as a whole it had to be the most objective possible exposition of a contradictory internal process. (BT 54)

By dealing with the innovation of play-writing and its relation with contradiction, Brecht is ultimately addressing the issue of language. Brecht does not resort to effective renunciation of the old structure; instead, he solicits subversion from within the old structure by exposing contradictions and internal oppositions upon which the apparatus is founded. The enterprise of his denunciation of bourgeois conceptions depends on the key idea of contradiction. In fact, the idea of contradiction not only works on the level of language, but is also central to Brecht's theatrical innovations on the part of the performer and spectator, and the composition of his dramatic works.

The operation of contradiction is inevitably related to the idea of subjectivity since the Brechtian theatre is intended to "divide its audience" (Brecht's words). Sartillot best summarizes the significance of contradiction in Brecht's epic theatre:

> In the same way that Derrida's deconstruction cannot be reduced to a destruction of Western metaphysics, Brecht's epic theatre is not a destruction, an annihilation of dramatic theatre; rather, it should be regarded as a subversion of dramatic theatre, an inhabitation of its structures in order to reveal its contradictions. (121)

Echoing Sartillot's view, Jameson further claims that for Brecht the dialectic "is defined and constituted by the search for a discovery of contradictions" (79). Indeed, the dialectical method in Brecht's theatre, as Sartillot and Jameson suggest, could best be grasped by the construction of contradictions. However, does this suggest that Brecht's idea of dialectics amount solely to contradictions? In order to answer this question we shall roughly divide this discussion of Brecht's notion of contradiction into two categories: contradictions on the performance level (on the part of the spectator and performer) and contradictions within the text.

Brecht explicitly addresses the issue of how dialectical thinking is employed effectively in the participants of a performance (in this specific case the audience):

> In calling for a direct impact, the aesthetics of the day call for an impact that flattens out all social and other distinctions between individuals. Plays of the aristotelian type still manage to flatten out class conflicts in this way although the individuals themselves are becoming increasingly aware of class differences. The same result is achieved even when class conflicts are the subjects of such plays, and even in cases where they take sides for a particular class. A collective entity is created in the auditorium for the *duration of the entertainment*, on the basis of the 'common humanity' shared by all spectators alike. Non-aristotelian drama of *Die Mutter*'s sort is not interested in the establishment of such an entity. It

> divides its audience. (BT 60)

In addition to revealing and even provoking social conflicts, Brecht's theatre is keen to bring out the contradictions engendered by class conflicts rooted in the socio-economic base. Apparently, the only way to resolve this overarching contradiction is to change society, as Brecht repeatedly emphasized. Contradiction, as implied here, is concrete and "a moment in a process rather than a static structure" (Jameson 79). As for the dialectics on the performance level, the activity of the *Verfremdungseffekt* is essentially dialectical and has a substantial relationship with Daoism and Chinese acting. [3]

In the succeeding discussion, however, emphasis will be put on the noticeable change of Brecht's terminology and his attitude towards his later understanding of dialectics by referring to the nine essays titled "Dialectics in the Theatre." While a Marxist dialectic is essential to Brecht, we should note that Brecht simplified his use of the theoretical vocabulary contradiction drawn from Marxist dialectics, and that in the process he narrowed down the more customary terms from Hegel and Marx. I argue that while Lao Zi's dialectics (together with concrete Daoist paradoxes) had been informing Brecht's thought since the 1920s, his investment in the dialectic is informed by Korsch's interpretation of Marxist dialectical materialism, and later in his life, is extended by Mao Zedong' s ideas of contradiction. I begin my discussion by differentiating Brecht's understanding of contradiction from that of philosophical Marxism.

The central idea of Marxist dialectical materialism is contradiction. In "Afterword to the Second Edition" of *Capital,* Marx explains his dialectical methodology:

> In its rational form it is a scandal and abomination to bourgeoisdom and its doctrinaire professors, because it includes in its comprehension an affirmative recognition of the existing state of things, at the same time also, the recognition of the negation of that state, of its inevitable breaking up; because it regards every historically developed social form as in fluid movement, and therefore takes into account its transient nature not less than its momentary existence; because it lets nothing impose upon it, and is in its essence critical and revolutionary. (xxx)

What is obvious is that the Marxist dialectic is central to Brecht's world view. At the heart of Brecht's dialectic materialism the same idea of change, contradiction, and a materialist conception of history is stressed. Yet, while he follows Marx's emphasis on the transient and historical nature of social forms, Brecht, as a playwright, considers contradiction to be fundamental to understanding the principles of dialectical

development, and is keener about unveiling concrete contradictions than exploring precisely how dialectical development of history (in Marx's sense) takes place within his plays. To provide a point of comparison, consider how in his *Dialectics of Nature*, Engels summarizes a Hegelian perspective on the dialectic method[4]:

> The law of the transformation of quantity into quality and *vice versa*; The law of the interpenetration of opposites; The law of the negation of the negation.

Tatlow noted that although Hegel is "the only philosopher to whom he [Brecht] gave more than cursory attention," Brecht considered him a humorist and "made no systematic study of him" (*Mask* 364). In fact, these Hegelian ideas are never explored or consistently applied in Brecht's plays or theoretical essays. This explains why Brecht critics are suspicious that Brecht is clear about the nature of the dialectic. Tom Kuhn and Steve Giles, for example, remarked in their edited collection *Brecht on Art and Politics* (2003):

> On the one hand, he implies that the contradictory processes uncovered by dialectical thinking are themselves objective features of reality…. On the other hand, he construes dialectic as a mode of cognition, a way of perceiving and understanding reality, and argues that dialectical concepts do not reflect a dialectic which exists in nature. (63)

Perhaps discussing Brecht's dialectic with reference to the meaning of the dialectical principle evidenced in Marx's writing is more misleading (and less fruitful) than referring to Korsch, with whom Brecht had begun a close intellectual friendship in 1926 (when Brecht attended his lectures on Marxism) and maintained their lifelong relationship till Brecht's death in 1956. According to Fred Halliday (in his introduction to Korsch's *Marxism and Philosophy*), Brecht said that he chose Korsch and Fritz Sternberg as his Marxist instructors because they were not orthodox Party thinkers. Halliday recorded that it is Korsch's *Karl Marx* that "inspired Brecht to try to rewrite the *Communist Manifesto*…and in 1945 Brecht sent his draft to Korsch for comment" (21). An investigation of the Korschian version of the Marist dialectic and Brecht's conception of dialectical materialism shall demonstrate that Brecht had relied heavily on Korsch's reading of Marxist dialectical materialism in both his aesthetic theory and practice.

In *The Messingkauf Dialogues*, when asked about how dialectical materialism plays in the theatrical theory, the Philosopher lists a few points:

> The *self-evident*—i.e. the particular shape our consciousness gives our experience—is resolved into its components when counteracted by the A-effect and turned into a new form of the *evident*. An imposed schema is being broken up here. The individual's own experiences correct to confirm what he has taken over from the community. The original act of discovery is repeated.
>
> The contradiction between empathy and detachment is made stronger and becomes an element in the performance.
>
> *Historicizing* involves judging a particular social system from another social system's point of view. The standpoints in question results from the development of society. (100)

The first two points deal with the notion of contradiction—though on two different levels: whereas the first point suggests how contradictions within the individuals' experiences are, through the means of V-effect, exposed from within, the second one refers to the specific dialectical attitude (of empathy and detachment) adopted for both performers and audiences. The idea of historicization explains the purpose of Brecht's setting his plays in previous historical times: to enhance his audience's alertness in noticing the objective contradictions of the society as located in the hero.

In Korsch's *Karl Marx*—in which he summarizes his understanding of the basic principles of Marxism—we find nice parallels between Brecht's notion of historicization and Korsch's interpretation of Marx's principle of historic specification. Identifying it as the core of the Marxist dialectic, Korsch notes that Marx dealt with all economic, social and ideological concepts not through a general abstract description, but through "a detailed description of the definite relations which exist between definite economic phenomena on a definite historical level of development and definite phenomena which appear simultaneously or subsequently in every other field of political, juristic, and intellectual development" ("Why I am a Marxist"). While I have my reservations about Kellner's argument that the Korschian version of the Marxist dialectic is central to Brecht's work (29), such a shared emphasis on comprehending social issues and phenomena as historically specific does indicate the influence of Korsch on Brecht's conception of Marxist dialectics.

It becomes clear (from what has been discussed), firstly, that Brecht's dialectics contains a simplified and incomplete presentation of Marxist dialectics; secondly, that while Marxist dialectics (and Korsch's version of Marxist dialectics) identifies some important contradictions, such as the one between the exploiters and the exploited, it does not provide a specific perspective on contradiction; and thirdly, that although Brecht foregrounds contradiction as key to understanding the thematic issues of

his plays, Marxist principle of dialectical materialism, however, has little concrete contradictions (based on observations of man, and of man's relation to others) to offer. In one of his 1940 journal entries, he also elaborated on the concept of his theatre of dialectics with a sole emphasis on the notion of contradiction:

> ...it will probably be well nigh impossible to demand that reality be presented in such a way that it can be mastered, without pointing to the contradictory, ongoing character of conditions, events, figures, for unless you recognize the dialectical nature of reality it cannot be mastered. The a-effect makes it possible to enact this dialectical nature, that is what it is for; it's what explains it. Even when deciding on the titles that determine the blocking, it is not enough to demand eg merely a social quality; the titles must also contain a critical quality and announce a contradiction. They must be fully adaptable, so the dialectic (contradictoriness, the element of process) must be able to become concrete. The mysteries of the world are not solved, they are demonstrated. (*Journals* 120-21)

Here Brecht explains specifically what dialectic means in his theatre as: "contradictoriness" and "the element of process." At the core of Marxist contradiction is the assumption that the central contradiction is the one between the *social* means of production within the capitalist system and the *individual* sense of property ownership within the same system (the bourgeois mode of production is identified by Marx as the last antagonist form of it) (Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*), yet Daoism is built on the contemplation of contradictions in practical contexts. As is consistent with Brecht's claim that "truth is concrete," Brecht declares that the dialectic must as well be able to become concrete. Specific Taoist contradictions appear widely in *Me-Ti* and Brecht's plays, making it worth considering how the specific Daoist contradictions contribute to Brecht's thematic concerns in his plays. We shall revisit this topic later; suffice it to say here that while Brecht's dialectics is very much influenced by Korsch's version of Marxism, it is Daoist specific examples of contradiction in the *Tao Te Ching* that provide concrete examples in Brecht's plays. This journal entry also touches upon a disputed topic among Brecht critics, the dichotomy of emotion and reason.

Lao Zi is one of the main sources of Brecht's ideas about the role of contradiction, yet the impact of Lao Zi's dialectic on Brecht's work has not been adequately clarified. The *Tao Te Ching* provides the concrete contradictions applied in Brecht's dramatic texts, and those contradictions are employed in Brecht's instruction on how the actor should prepare for a role. In the series of nine articles (consisting of a letter, notes and dialogues) under the general heading of "Dialectics in the Theatre,"

Brecht explicitly addresses dialectical thinking and how it should be employed by the actor in rehearsal. We shall give a brief review of these essays to see how they relate to Lao Zi's concrete paradoxes.[5]

In "A Diversion on *The Caucasian Chalk Circle,*" Brecht points out the contradictory feelings Grusha has towards her interests and towards the child. In "*Mother Courage* Performed in Two Ways," Brecht says that it is the contradictory roles of peddler and of mother which disfigure the character. These two pieces pose problems for interpreting the characters and for the theatrical treatment of characterization. At first glance, the contradictions in the two characters seem to be irrelevant; however, they point to one common observation of human virtue by Lao Zi: the relativity of the virtue of goodness and the paradox of usefulness.

In "A Letter to the Actor Playing the Young Hōrder in *Winterschlacht*" Brecht points out the need for knowledge of history in presenting contradictory attitudes of fear and sympathy. "Another Case of Applied Dialectics" and the note "Conversation about Being Forced into Empathy" are two reported discussions of the contradictory aspect of performance; i.e. how to reconcile two opposing elements (emotion and reason) in presenting the inner conflicts of the characters. The contradictory principles in Brecht's vision of staging and acting within the theatrical space (i.e., the dialectical relation between emotion and reason), as we shall see later, are already predicted in the Chinese theatre.

In his essay "Study of Shakespeare's 'Coriolanus'," Brecht refers to Mao's distinction between dominant and secondary contradictions and makes a connection with the Chinese political situation while analyzing with his company the initial conflict in Shakespeare's play between the Roman plebeians and patricians and their subsequent unity under Marcius Coriolanus in a war against the Volscians. The original conversation is as follows:

> We shall have to go back to the classic method of mastering such complex events. I marked a passage in Mao Tse-tung's essay 'On Contradiction.' What does he say?
> That in any given process which involves many contradictions there is always a main contradiction that plays the leading, decisive part; the rest are of secondary, subordinate significance. One example he gives is the Chinese Communists' willingness, once the Japanese attacked, to break off their struggle against Chiang Kai-Shek's reactionary regime. (BT 261)

This quotation is often recognized as representing, in Brooker's words, "an addition to Brecht's canon of Marxist classics, and is in itself evidence of the extension and

revision his theory was undergoing" (*Bertolt Brecht* 21-2). Tatlow even suggests that "Mao's affirmation of perpetual change," inspired Brecht, whose drama aimed "to awaken and stimulate awareness of contradiction," and one consequence of Brecht's reconsideration of dialectics "was his decision to change the description of his theatre from "epic" to "dialectical" (523). Noting the fact that Brecht died two years later after he read Mao's "On Contradiction" (written in 1937)—which he thought was the best book of 1954—it would be misleading to suggest that Mao's essay alone could make a tremendous influence upon Brecht's notion of contradiction. Yet Mao's thought on contradiction—which is an appropriation of the writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Lao Zi—does enrich Brecht's concept of contradiction. As we can see in "On *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*" (1956), Brecht classifies the contradictions within that play into primary contradictions and other contradictions. He identifies the two primary contradictions as follows: "The more Grusha promotes the child's life the more she threatens her own: her productivity tends toward her own destruction" (91); and "Azdak is the disappointed one who does not turn into the one who disappoints" (91). The other contradictions concerning characters such as the petitioners, the farmers and the architects are considered minor.

Notes

1. Tatlow thinks that the *Tao De Ching* is an expression of "a peasant dialectic." To explains his ideas, he makes a comparison between Marx's and Mao's assessment of the potential role of the peasantry in any revolutionary process:

> Marx saw the peasants as a conservative if not reactionary force, considering them little more than 'rural idiots." Mao, on the other hand, would seem to have placed greater trust in their native intelligence and capabilities and consequently to have expected a certain spontaneity of response to the opportunities presented by the process of replaying rural feudalism with rural democracy. ("Peasant Dialectics" 278)

2. This passage is taken from an interview by Bernard Guillemin. The interview is not in Brecht's own words, but Guillemin, the interviewer prefaced it with a note saying that he had "deliberately translated into normal language all that Brecht told me in his own manner, in Brecht-style slang" (BT 35).

3. In my doctoral dissertation Brecht and China: Towards an Ethical Subject I examines the entangled relation within the dichotomies in the Brechtian theatre such as emotion and reason, reality and illusion, identification and alienation, and performer and spectator.

4. For a full discussion of the origin and evolvement of the term dialectic, see Carney p. 6.

5. With no access to the English translation of most of these essays, I refer to Brooker's summary of them in his book *Bertolt Brecht: Dialectics, Poetry, Politics.* See Brooker 17-33.

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责任编辑：杨革新

布鲁克斯的民族主义诗学与诗歌实践

史丽玲

内容摘要：60 年代黑人权力运动时期，在民族主义的激发下，格温朵琳·布鲁克斯的文化政治立场发生了转变，长诗《在麦加》体现了诗人政治意识与诗歌形式美学之间的转化机制。黑人民族主义强化了诗人的社会批判意识，以及建立团结一致的黑人族群的种族意识。诗歌重新聚焦白人主流话语与黑人主流话语交集之下的黑人贫民窟麦加，阐述了种族主义导致的麦加衰落，以及民族主义引导下的麦加反抗，促成了诗人复调艺术的美学发展。

关键词：《在麦加》　黑人权力运动　民族主义　复调

作者简介：史丽玲，华中师范大学外语学院博士研究生，云南师范大学外语学院讲师，主要研究美国非裔诗歌。该论文为教育部人文社会科学研究青年项目《格温朵琳·布鲁克斯诗歌研究》（编号：11YJC752018），以及云南省哲学社会科学学科建设项目《多族裔视阈下美国现代主义诗歌研究》（编号：XKJS201321）的阶段性研究成果。

Title Gwendolyn Brooks's Nationalist Position and Aesthetic Dynamics

Abstract Inspired by Nationalism which is embraced by the Black Power Movement in the 1960s, Gwendolyn Brooks shows the tendency to nationalist stance. "In the Mecca" demonstrates the interactions between her ideological position and her aesthetic one. Nationalism enhanced her critical consciousness toward the racial society and her eager to unify the black community. The poem refocuses on black ghetto which has been foregrounded by the dominant discourses and examines Mecca's decline caused by racism and Mecca's resistance guided by nationalism as well. Thus, this article examines Brooks's peculiar aesthetic dynamics which transforms her nationalist position into aesthetic features of polyphony.

Key words "In the Mecca"; the Black Power Movement; nationalism; polyphony

Author Shi Liling is Lecturer of English at Yunnan Normal University, Kunming, China. Her major academic field is in African American Poetry.

格温朵琳·布鲁克斯（Gwendolyn Brooks, 1917-2000）是一位在 20 世纪美国非裔诗歌发展中承上启下的重要诗人。虽然是第一位获普利策奖的美国非裔作家，但是布鲁克斯 40、50 年代取得的文学成就却未得到评论的充分肯定。一方面，主流评论始终给布鲁克斯贴上"黑人诗人"（Negro Poet）的标签，暗示着她在主流文化中"入侵者"的身份。另一方面，黑人评论却认为诗歌的"白

人形式”与“黑人内容”处于相互交战的状态，晦涩的现代主义风格使她处于黑人大众读者群体“局外人”的位置。1967 年参加费斯克大学第二届黑人诗人大会时，在阿米力·巴拉卡、唐·李等年轻一代诗人文化民族主义的激发下，年界 50 的布鲁克斯坦诚自己进入了“新意识的启蒙阶段”（Brooks，*Report from Part One* 86）。次年出版的诗集《在麦加》（*In the Mecca* 1968）“体现了这一精神转变”(Bloom 13)，成为勾勒诗人艺术发展轨迹的一个关键点。学界对该部诗集“转变”的观点趋于一致，即政治、种族、抗议的声音增强，以及诗歌形式背离欧洲诗学传统、转向黑人美学。[1] 评论者里奥纳多认为，布鲁克秉承了“哈莱姆”诗人所开创的以形式的复杂性和美学效果回应种族政治的鲜明传统，而将政治关注转化为美学观念是美国非裔形式主义诗人独特的美学机制（Leonard，2-5）。因此，目前学界虽然注意到诗人的政治立场与诗歌形式之间的联系，但是对于具体的社会政治观念如何迁入诗歌，以及诗歌新的艺术形式潜在的政治效果并未作出细致深入的分析。

60 年代激进的黑人民族主义者指出，奴隶贸易和奴隶制割断了美国非裔与非洲文化之间的密切联系，种族主义进而诋毁他们的非洲传统，剥夺他们完整的公民权利。因此，民族主义号召脱离欧洲中心的社会文化体系，建立以黑人性为根本的团结一致族群。布鲁克斯在谈及政治观念的转变时说，40、50 年代的时候认为融合是解决种族问题的途径，但是 1967 年之后放弃了以基督教和民主政治作为政治修辞的策略（Lewis，60），可见诗人在种族政治和文化立场上对黑人民族主义的认同。本文认为，民族主义强化了布鲁克斯的社会批判意识，以及建立统一团结的黑人族群的种族意识，而诗人对美国种族社会现实的新思考和新发现转换为诗歌中新的艺术形式。总体而言，民族主义的社会政治意识转化为诗人复调艺术思维的现实关照，诗歌的复调艺术结构，以及黑人主体平等对话的复调关系。[2]

一、双重语境定位的复调艺术思维

“麦加”是 1891 年建于芝加哥南岸的高档住宅大楼，结合了现代主义建筑设计与工业技术，1893 年哥伦比亚世博会期间成为“芝加哥向世人炫耀之所”。1912 年随着南方黑人移民增多白人纷纷搬离，二战前夕“麦加”已成为单一黑人种族的聚居大楼。战后随着城市资源进一步向郊区白人区转移，内城黑人聚居区迅速衰败为臭名昭著的贫民窟。50 年代“麦加”再次成为媒体关注的焦点，因为没有一座大楼比麦加更突出地向世人证实黑人导致的城市衰落（Lowney 3）。1952 年在新一轮白人城市复兴的神话下，破败不堪的麦加大楼终于被拆除，黑人住户流离失所。另一方面，二战时期黑人民权组织“伊斯兰国度”将总部搬至芝加哥，提出黑人是阿拉的选民，主张信奉伊斯兰教。因此，伊斯兰圣地麦加在黑人心目中蕴含了种族政治与文化含义。由此可见，以“麦加”大厦为诗歌创作的原型，表明了布鲁克斯对种族现实更直接、更热切的关注，并且力图从现实历史语境中汲取更丰富的文学创作素材。诗人对现实的关注首先体现在

诗歌题词中的双重语境定位。长诗《在麦加》有两部分题词，第一部分题词包含了官方对麦加的报道和黑人权力运动者的反抗宣言，第二部分题词“现在麦加道路的事记在下面”（376）则引用了《马太福音》“现在基督耶稣降生的事记在下面”（1：18）。两部分题词不仅仅是烘托了诗歌的历史语境，更重要的是揭示了布鲁克斯的社会政治意识与探寻“麦加道路”诗歌主题之间的联系。

首先，第一部分题词中的第一段引文节选自 1950 年马丁为《哈柏杂志》（Harper's Magazine）撰写的一篇题为《麦加大厦：芝加哥最奇怪的地方》报道中的片段：“一座砖墙建造的灰色庞然大物，四层楼高，顶上有一个笨拙、丑陋的大烟囱 [.....] 肮脏的庭院里满地都是旧报纸、罐头瓶、牛奶盒子和玻璃碎片”（Brooks 374）[3]。这段官方报道中麦加满目疮痍、丑陋怪异，紧接的注解说明中昔日麦加与此形成巨大反差，“麦加是一座建于 1891 年的公寓大楼，一座宏伟的宫殿、芝加哥向世人炫耀之所”（374）。人们不禁要问麦加发生了什么？是什么使昔日“宏伟的宫殿”变成今日破败不堪的“灰色庞然大物”？第二段引文是马丁走进麦加后对其中一个黑人住户的采访，“有多少人住在里面？两千人？不，还要多”（374）。一幢四层楼、176 间公寓的住宅楼最多时有 2000 多黑人住在里面，拥挤、贫困、肮脏、混乱的黑人贫民区浮现脑海。两段官方报道的引文在布鲁克斯精心排列下发生了微妙的逻辑联系，第一段引文留下的疑问在第二段引文中找到了隐含的答案：黑人是麦加衰败的原因。引文暗示的逻辑推论揭示了二战后城市衰落话语 (discourses of urban decline) 种族化的特点。博雷加德在《衰落的不同声音：战后美国城市的命运》中写到，战后美国城市出现了一系列的政治、经济、文化危机，但“60 年代城市衰落话语出现了一个唯一的主题——种族——它统一了话语不同的片段，把城市衰落转变成一个全社会的问题”(Beauregard 136)。城市衰落逐步等同于黑人问题 (The Negro Problem)，贫民区 (slum) 逐步变成黑人聚居区 (ghetto)，而“黑人聚居区将继续快速蔓延，不断传播它固有的聚集性贫困和社会性混乱”(Beauregard 140)。主流媒体对芝加哥种族隔离区黑人贫民窟的报道不仅表明了白人对黑色美国表征的失败，而且在官方的灾难性预言中，诗歌呈现了麦加大厦廖无生机的景象和麦加黑人住户迷失困顿的生存现状。

其次，第一部分题词中与官方报道对峙的另外两段引文分别来自黑人权力运动两位男性的声音。其中一位是名为理查德的“黑石骑兵”（The Blackstone Ranger）组织成员，他大声疾呼：“我的邻里处于危险之中”（374）。遭致社会遗弃的黑人聚居区暴力、犯罪事件不断发生，更加引发了白人社会的恐慌和白人种族主义分子的暴力迫害，黑人聚居区处于内忧外患的交困之中。“黑石骑兵”成立于 50 年代末期，其最初的目的是保护街区的孩子免于受到暴力侵害。另一个声音来自黑人权力运动激进主义者罗斯 • 米克。罗斯是“全国有色人种促进协会”、“哈莱姆民权代表大会”、“黑豹党”等组织成员。他宣称“过去的一切不会再发生，这样的时刻已经来临了”（374），话语间充满了号召性和战斗性。50 年代以马丁 • 路德 • 金为代表的非暴力民权运动使美国南部黑人

的社会状况有了一定的改善，但是 60 年代超过 60% 黑人迁移到北部和中西部城市。北部的种族隔离是事实上的而不是法律上的存在，民权运动没有根本改善他们在城市中的处境，他们对民权运动失去了信心。1964 年至 1968 年每年夏天，美国大城市爆发了大规模的种族冲突，黑人运动逐步由非暴力的融合主义转向了激进的民族主义，反对种族隔离制度与不公正的社会资源分配。题词中黑人权力运动的声音契合了黑人主流话语的变化，与官方报道形成对峙，引领了一条进入麦加不同的路径，揭开了黑色麦加孕育的重生。

布鲁克斯在谈及 1967 年转变后对社会认识的变化时说，“我之前知道存在不公正，诗歌中也写了这些，但我不知道不公正的背后是什么。我不知道我们生活在怎样的一种社会，不知道整个社会是被操控的”（Lewis 62）。民族主义强化了诗人的社会批判意识，布鲁克斯在诗歌开篇的题词中定位于白人主流语境与黑人男性次主流语境，呈现了官方报道压制下麦加的衰落与黑人权力运动引导下麦加的反抗，探寻了不同的“麦加道路”。

二、嵌入式叙事的复调艺术结构

长诗《在麦加》讲述了黑人母亲萨莉 • 史密斯从帮佣的白人主人家回到麦加时，突然发现最小的女儿帕蒂塔失踪了，她与其余的八个孩子找遍麦加却最终在黑人住户爱德华的小床下发现了女儿的尸体。诗歌以黑人母亲萨莉的视角展开叙述，并以萨莉一家的生活为主线贯穿了整栋麦加大厦的黑人生活。从帮佣的主人家下班，疲惫不堪的萨莉想尽快回到麦加给孩子们做晚饭，但是贫穷困扰着黑人母亲，走进麦加她踏上了“破旧的、有感染力的楼梯”（377）。两个形容词将贫困从眼前的物质状况引入到心理感受，它腐蚀的不仅是麦加大厦的每一个角落，更是麦加住户内心的每一个角落。目睹了白人生活的富足，萨莉也想给自己的孩子提供充足的食物和光鲜的家居环境，但麦加筑起的是高墙内外黑白生活的两重天。萨莉的嘴角还留着“主人宴席的最后一丝酸味”（377），但她能为孩子们准备的晚饭只是勉强充饥的食物，“埃米特、卡帕和凯西 / 瘦得只剩皮包骨 / 因为缺少鲑鱼和巧克力 / 还有蛋卷冰激淋，/ 因为缺少英式小松饼 / 还有博伊森草莓酱。/ 谁将是他们的救世主？ / 一些蔬菜和一节火腿肘”（384）。正如马丁 • 路德 • 金在 1963 年的著名演讲中所说，麦加孩子就是被困在物质海洋中的贫困孤岛。看着破败的厨房，萨莉想修缮以便给孩子们稍好的生活环境，但面对眼前的窘境黑人母亲责问自己“我能做什么呢？”（380）在贫民窟恶劣的生存环境中，女儿麦莉蒂只能与蟑螂、老鼠为伍，儿子田纳西扭曲地想作一只猫，对于年龄稍长的儿子布里格斯，“爱 / 已成为包袱，希望只是异教邪说”，（383）只有走上街头拉帮结伙，以暴力的方式宣泄心中的怨恨。60 年代在黑人贫民窟，恶劣的生存环境致使黑人孩子的死亡率远高于白人孩子，低劣的教育条件使黑人青少年的失业率高达 60%，他们被剥夺了改变生活地位的希望，他们心灵扭曲、充满怨恨。布鲁克斯的诗歌展现了马丁的官方报道不能触及的麦加内部生活，揭示了种族主义导致的黑人贫民窟困境。

诗歌在萨莉突然发现最小的女儿帕蒂塔不见时转入更深层地揭示一座支离破碎、萎靡不振的麦加之城。当萨莉和八个孩子奔走于大厦的每一层楼、每一个房间寻找帕蒂塔时，诗歌展开了寓言层面的叙述：麦加大厦黑人群体的自我迷失和群体价值的失落。麦加大厦的现代主义设计注重个人的私密空间，黑人住户失去了建立群体交流、信任、安全的公共空间，主流公共话语中对黑人性的贬低和排斥进一步剥夺了黑人"公共性"的一面，他们被关闭在一道道房门内，囚困于自我的世界中，过着浑浑噩噩、廖无希望的日子。孩子们首先敲开的是老祖母的房门，她颤颤巍巍地扭开门柄，"我没看到帕蒂塔。但是 / 我还记得我们的小木屋"（387）。老祖母讲述了一段"微型奴隶叙述"（mini-slave narrative），虽然老祖母对帕蒂塔失踪的忧虑远不及她对奴隶时期的记忆和对死在奴隶制暴行下姐姐的回忆，但她的叙述让奴隶制和麦加、姐姐和帕蒂塔在时空阻隔中突然出现了共通之处，麦加 / 麦加黑人在历史的重压下逐渐走向死亡。黑人住户洛姆没看到帕蒂塔，他正在"悲叹过去所有的不仁慈和伤害"（387）。洛姆的诗节戏仿了赞美诗第 23 首（Twenty-third Psalm）。在这首赞美诗中，大卫歌颂上帝是人类的牧羊人，而洛姆的叙述以非裔和犹太裔悲惨的种族经历揭露了宗教的谎言，"上主曾是他们的牧羊人。/ 但他们是否愿意。/ 如果上主使他们欣然卧在丛林或草场，/ 或走进水旁。他们 / 贫瘠的心灵无法复原，他们的灵魂已被放逐。/ 走过阴森的幽谷 / 他们惧怕凶险，无论上帝是否同在"（388），其中"丛林或牧场"时常用来比喻"奴隶贸易和犹太大屠杀"（Clarke 36）。背负如此沉重的种族灾难，麦加人还能否相信牧羊人的庇佑？麦加的信仰坍塌。玛左拉不知道帕蒂塔是谁，但她目睹了麦加不断上演的死亡。对于麦加"死亡很常见。/ 它来得很快。/[.....] 它在人们猝不及防时突袭"（393）。玛左拉的叙述是一首未完成的十四行诗（unfinished sonnet），九个诗行的韵脚隐约可寻，第八诗行的头韵增强了抒情性。玛左拉以十四行抒情诗的诗歌形式传递了麦加死亡的内容，"在哀叹生命的逝去时也表明了抒情诗在非裔美国传统中的消亡"（Clarke 39）。生命在麦加已变得如此脆弱和轻微，目睹死亡频频发生的麦加人已变得漠然，民族意识和民族凝聚力岌岌可危。

布鲁克斯在自传中谈到《在麦加》的创作构想时说，诗歌触及厚重大楼里生活的每一个音调就能提炼出整体上黑人性的主旨（Brooks 86）。民族主义激发了诗人建立统一团结的黑人族群的种族意识。她将黑人个体叙述嵌入寻找帕蒂塔为主线的表层叙述，形成嵌入式叙事的复调艺术结构，同时在支离破碎的结构中传达了建立黑人凝聚力的期望。当一个个黑人叙述片段从破碎的表层叙述中抽离、并置时，汇集成黑人族群共同的经历和记忆。

三、黑人主体平等对话的复调关系

布鲁克斯谈到 1967 年之后诗歌写作的目的时说，"我的目的就是要写以某种方式成功'唤醒'黑人大众的诗歌"（Brooks, *Report from Part One* 183）。诗歌引入了民族主义的政治文化立场，在民族存亡的公共讨论中，麦加住户的

叙述不是在叙述者统一的意识支配下展开，而是拥有独立的意识、平等的声音和强烈的主体性，黑人个体多声部地共存于一个高于单声结构的统一体中。

民族主义主导的公共讨论中首先出现的是唐·李。他是 60 年代黑人艺术运动的中坚力量，诗歌中唯一真实的人物，他的诗节不仅引入了黑人艺术运动的政治、文化主张。“唐·李想要 / 一个没有差异的美国。/ 唐·李想要 / 一个新国度 / 不受任何庇护；/ 一束身体的光亮逐渐盈满 /[……] 矗立于烈焰的拥戴中 /[……] 想要 / 新艺术和赞美诗; 将 / 要一种在阳光下放声嚎叫的新音乐”(393-94)。美国信条因肤色不同而出现“差异”，唐·李讽刺了美国的立国信条——美国国旗效忠宣言誓词：“我向美利坚合众国国旗及其所代表的共和国宣誓效忠，这一上帝庇护下的国度不可分割，民众享有自由和公正。”唐·李的“新国度”不在任何带有种族歧视的宗教和政治信条的庇护下。身体的“光亮”逐渐盈满，经历革命“烈焰”洗礼转变为光芒万丈的“太阳”。在“光”的意象由微弱到强大、由身体向意识的转变中，唐·李力图唤醒黑人民族意识，渴望铸造新的民族精神和民族凝聚力，号召民众为民族利益而抗争。在文化方面，唐·李想要“新艺术和赞美诗”、“在阳光下放声嚎叫的新音乐”。“新国度”的蓝图已经勾画，而对于实现的方式在黑人话语中出现了分歧。下一个登场的人物阿莫斯代表了激进主义者。“‘需要时间，’渐进主义者磨着牙发出刺耳的声音。/ ‘什么时候开始？’阿莫斯问道”（394）。阿莫斯连续用了三个反问“难道我们要……？”表明黑人民族的危机在渐进主义者一再的妥协中不断加重，他希望以革命的血雨腥风重塑美国。阿莫斯为美国祈求，“让她体内鲜红的血水洗礼她。/ 漫长的血水浸泡将洗尽她的铅华。/[……] 让这场盛怒持续、直到超越 / 她所能相信或者怀疑的范围 /[……] 之后她会重新站起，恢复。/ 永远不会忘记”（395）。在这段祷告中阿莫斯表明了黑人革命的决心和勇气，并主张以激进、暴力的方式改变黑人的处境。阿尔弗莱德则是最终实现麦加重建的人。布鲁克斯赋予阿尔弗莱德“建筑师”一样明辨麦加物质结构的眼睛和“诗人王”一样洞悉麦加灵魂的眼睛，他的黑人意识开始觉醒，逐步渗入麦加的肌理，关注、了解麦加黑人生存现状。在诗歌临近结束时，阿尔弗莱德实现了顿悟走向豁然开朗。“某种，某种在麦加的东西 / 继续呼喊！没有物质形态；却像高山，/ 像河流和大海；像风呼呼吹过的 / 树林”（403）。在荒芜、贫瘠的麦加，自然意象第一次出现，而且这么强劲有力、充满生机。“随后稳固地 / 一股强健的心智，黑色的、令人激昂，/ 铸造篇章和救赎。/ 一阵炙热的分崩离析。/ 一座物质轰然倒塌 / 倒塌之处既是建造”（403）。自然意象转为“强健的心智”，黑人民众挣脱了麦加所象征的政治、经济、文化枷锁，与麦加“分崩离析”，麦加的物质形态轰然倒塌，麦加的灵魂——黑人民族精神——开始建造。

年轻一代黑人读者读完《在麦加》后写下了这样的诗句：“帕蒂塔在这！帕蒂塔在这！帕蒂塔，这就是 / 帕蒂塔。/ 我们所有都是，帕蒂塔，在这”（Traylor 60）。布鲁克斯成功地唤醒了黑人大众，在民族存亡的公共讨论中黑人主体形成了平等对话的复调关系。

60 年代黑人艺术运动时期的民族主义开拓了布鲁克斯在种族内部与种族外部双重语境中的政治文化视野，诗人的政治意识定位转化为诗歌美学定位。在诗集《在麦加》的作者寄语中写道，“我是洞悉的眼睛，灵敏的耳朵，超凡的报告者。”确实如此，布鲁克斯作为黑人敏锐地捕捉到白人话语种族化的特点，官方对麦加大量的报道将麦加的衰落归咎于黑人。她在诗歌开篇就将文本放置于官方语境中，以此揭开麦加荒芜困顿、廖无生机的死亡景象，进而揭示了麦加衰落的真正原因：白人的种族主义和制度性歧视。另一方面，在黑人权力运动席卷大众成为主旋律的时候，布鲁克斯细致地察觉到了激进民族主义的转变，探讨了麦加的反抗和黑人群体的建构。面对白人主流话语与黑人主流话语模式的转型，布鲁克斯调整了自己的政治文化立场，更积极地投身黑人权力运动，更多地采用黑人美学以“唤醒”黑人大众。诗歌在人物之间、诗人与读者之间、情节架构之间展开多层次的对话，诗人 / 叙述者与人物独立、平等地共存于民族存亡这一问题探讨的空间中，极大地恢复了被压制的黑人主体性，诗歌文本也广泛地与历史语境中不同话语模式和话语层次进行多向度的流通。在形式方面，诗歌配合了人物的多重声音，采用了歌谣、抒情诗、赞美诗、黑人布道、奴隶叙述等多种形式；诗歌韵律从无韵体到覆盖了近似韵、任意韵、头韵、双行韵等的韵律诗；诗歌语言包括黑人方言 (Black Vernacular)、黑人街头英语 (Black Street English) 和标准英语 (Standard English)。多种诗歌形式和语言并置于文本中，打破单一的诗歌体裁形式。因此，民族主义的政治意识促成了诗人复调艺术的美学发展。

注解【Notes】

1. 由于布鲁克斯诗歌风格和诗学观在 1967 年发生迥然变化，以及布鲁克斯本人在自传和访谈中对 1967 年前、后变化的强调，布鲁克斯的研究者往往以 1967 作为诗人创作的分水岭。布鲁姆称“布鲁克斯后期转变为一个社会抗议诗人，在 20 世纪的后三十年加入美国非裔诗歌的主要流派”（Bloom, *Bloom's Biocritiques* “Introduction”）。麦克兰登批评“《在麦加》体现了布鲁克斯‘新的声音’，因为她早期诗歌中平静和理智的声调在这首诗中完全消失了”（Mclendon Web. 3 May 2010）。威廉姆斯指出在 1967 年转变后“[布鲁克斯] 成为引人注目的黑人美学代言人”（Williams 98）。麦凯认为“在艺术层面上，觉醒对布鲁克斯作品的影响在《在麦加》中得到充分体现，在这首革命性的诗歌中，她与传统诗歌技巧决裂，转向支持黑人的形式和内容”（Mckay Web. 3 May 2010）。

2. 本文对于“复调艺术思维”、“复调艺术结构”、“复调关系”的特征概括参阅了周启超对术语“复调”的论述。

3. Brooks, “In the Mecca.” 所引《在麦加》诗句均出自此版本，以后仅标注页码，不再加注。

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责任编辑：郑红霞

伦理在战争中的体现和作用

——以特洛伊战争为例

钟　鸣

内容摘要：伦理在战争中表现为战争伦理，战争伦理是战争发生时代社会伦理的体现。特洛伊战争中的战争伦理主要体现在原始人类优胜劣汰丛林原则的原始伦理道德；勇武好斗的伦理道德传统；战争中的人性美伦理道德；公平诚信搏杀的战场伦理道德等方面。伦理是战争的软实力，它影响参战人员的情绪、斗志，从而在一定程度上影响战局。由于特洛伊战争发生在原始社会末期，因而它所体现的伦理道德观念主要是原始社会的，同时也抹上了淡淡的奴隶社会伦理道德色彩。

关键词：战争伦理；丛林原则；勇武好斗；人性美；公平诚信搏杀；奴隶社会伦理影响

作者简介：钟鸣，广东工业大学外国语学院，主要研究欧美文学、大学英语教育。

Title　The War Ethics in Wars：Taking Trojan War as an Example

Abstract　War ethics are a manifestation of general ethics in war-time. War ethics in Trojan War includes the ethics of jungle principle; a warrior culture of war-like people; humanity, integrity and honesty in fighting. Those ethics are the soft power which could influence fighters' emotions and spirits, and to some extent, the situation of war. For Trojan War happened in the end of primitive society , Trojan War ethics mainly reflect the concepts of war ethics in a primitive society , and also smack of war ethics in a slave society.

Key words　war ethics; jungle principle; war-like humanity; integrity and honesty in fighting;　ethic influence of a slave society

Author　Zhong Ming, is a lecturer at the School of Foreign Languages, Guangdong University of Technology (Guangzhou 510006, China), mainly engaged in the study of English and American literature and college English education. Email:letter118@tom.com

战争伦理是战争发生时代社会伦理观念在战争中的体现，“反映战争伦理的文学作品数不胜数，有的颂扬战争，显示其带出的不朽勇气和英雄式自我牺牲”；“也有的坚信战争只是毫无意义的杀戮，它带出的是人性中最残忍的一面”(Peter Singer and Penata Singer 361)。荷马史诗《伊利亚特》所记录的特洛伊战争，不仅是希腊神话和传说，更是古代希腊从氏族社会过渡到奴隶制社会时期的一

部社会史、风俗史，具有很高的历史、地理、考古学和民俗学方面的价值。它虽然历经几千年的洗礼，然而，惊心动魄的战争场面、艳绝天下的海伦、因爱而战的帕利斯、偷情的斯巴达王、叹为观止的木马计等故事情节仍然吸引着众多读者，并引发了无数学术论文和研究专著，对考古发掘以及文学艺术创作如史诗、电影、戏剧、雕塑等都产生了巨大的影响（Cline 6）。同时作为战争题材的文学作品，《伊利亚特》也反映了古希腊这一时期的丛林原则、尚武好战、人性之美、公平诚信等伦理道德观念。

一

原始人类优胜劣汰丛林原则的伦理道德观念在特洛伊战争中有鲜明的体现。特洛伊战争的直接起因是特洛伊王子帕利斯诱拐走斯巴达王后海伦，同时掳走了大量的财宝，于是希腊各部落组成联军攻打特洛伊。现代战争观念虽然认为战争是政治的继续，但政治却是经济的集中体现，所以战争的直接原因往往表现为经济利益。现代战争的争夺市场和资源是如此，特洛伊战争也是如此。原始人类脱离动物界不久，食和性仍然是他们最重要又难以满足的生活需求。那时生产力极度低下，物质生活资源极度匮乏，为了满足食的生活需求，主要靠劳动获得，也抢夺别的部落的生活资料；而性的满足，除通过正常的婚姻形式外，还抢夺别的部落的女人，因而频频引发战争，这也是经济利益的原始表现。随着生产力的逐步提高，战争中不再杀俘，而是把他们充作奴隶使用，“古代部落对部落的战争，开始蜕变为陆上和海上为攫夺家畜、奴隶和财宝而不断进行的抢劫，变为一种正常的营生”（104）。[1] 财宝可以换来食物，满足食的需求，女人能满足性和繁衍后代，直接反映了原始人类的生存需求。因而，《伊利亚特》对战争这种“正常的营生”是歌颂的。帕利斯的“诱拐”比“抢劫”虽有程度差别，但实质是一样的。特洛伊战争中胜利的一方，哪怕是暂时的局部胜利，也会不失时机的疯狂抢夺失败方的财物和女人。为了生存而抢劫，在原始社会是天经地义的，这是原始社会的基本伦理道德观念，没有正义与非正义之分。而且这种抢夺是相互的，不是一方总是抢别人或是被抢，这甚至成为一种生存调节，以有余补不足，维持整个原始人类的相对平衡。有时，内部也相互抢夺，荷马史诗《伊利亚特》就是从希腊联军统帅亚加米农抢占属于主将阿喀琉斯的女俘开始的。然而，亚加米农抢占属于主将阿喀琉斯的女俘并不是为了满足低层次的生存需求，而是出于对财宝和美女贪婪的占有欲，体现了财产私有观念的萌芽，是原始社会末期的伦理体现。

二

特洛伊战争突出体现了英勇顽强不怕牺牲的古希腊尚武好斗的民族伦理传统。两军交战勇者胜。这一战争法则在特洛伊战争中表现得极为充分。战争中，交战双方从国王统帅到将士，莫不奋勇当先一展自己的勇武和武艺。英雄们信奉的战场伦理道德是“即使面对强势进攻的敌人，英雄也不能轻言后撤，而应

鼓起勇气，竭尽全力与对方（他们也是英雄）一拼到底” （陈中梅 296）。亚加米农身先士卒，英勇搏杀，受伤后不顾伤口淌血仍继续战斗。特洛伊国王不顾年迈上阵厮杀，直至战死，显示了他们的“不朽勇气和英雄式自我牺牲”精神。特洛伊战争战死的国王、王子、将士不计其数，荷马在《伊利亚特》中对双方英勇将士都一视同仁不吝歌颂。相反，那些怯战胆小之人则受到谴责甚至惩罚。特洛伊王子帕利斯受伤后呆在家里，不再出战，遭到名将赫克托尔嘲笑，指责他逃避战斗。希腊人忒尔斯忒斯在战场上是个胆小鬼却爱讲风凉话，阿喀琉斯挥拳一击误将他打死，但没有一个人为之惋惜或同情他。这是因为那时认为“由于作战不利而退却是一种耻辱，一般说来，退却不是征战之人的美德” （陈中梅 296）。原始社会生存条件恶劣，原始人类要生存，尤其要勇武强大，只有勇武强大才能在战争中立于不败之地，从而攫取到更多的财富和女人，在部落中“受到赞美和崇敬” （104）。这反映了原始人类在物质需求的基础上又萌生了精神需求，也是原始社会道德伦理观念不断发展进步的表现。古希腊民族尚武好斗的伦理传统是在希腊民族历史生存环境中形成的。古希腊濒临大海，境内却丘陵纵横，高山耸立，交通不便，土地贫瘠，仅靠种植和养殖难以为生，因而古希腊人很早就冒险向大海讨生活。“海上生活能刺激独立不羁和追求自由的精神” (谢选俊 269)，因而“勇敢是希腊人的传统美德” (黄颂杰、章雪富 403)。特洛伊战争所体现的勇武好斗精神是希腊人勇敢传统美德的源头，也是希腊民族这一传统美德的体现。

三

特洛伊战争的伦理也体现在战争中亲情、友情和怜悯之情之中，这是人性美伦理道德观念的体现。战争是残酷的血与火的拼搏，但其中也不乏温情。希腊联军出征特洛伊之前，亚加米农口出狂言冒犯了女神阿耳忒弥斯，受到女神的惩罚：他必须祭献女儿伊菲革涅亚才能得到战船所需的顺风。亚加米农陷入了伦理矛盾：不祭献女儿，影响战争全局，会遭到全希腊人的反对；献出女儿又有违做父亲的人伦之道。几经反复，他最后还是被迫决定忍痛献出女儿。女神被他的亲情感动，让一只牝鹿代替祭献，解决了这一伦理矛盾，显示出亲情的力量。阿喀琉斯因心爱的女俘被亚加米农侵占而罢战，任众人劝说也无动于衷。可是，当他的好友帕特罗克罗斯阵亡后，他马上披挂上阵为好友复仇，并与亚加米农和解。友情化解了怨恨，激发了斗志。友情来源于“人类最早的相互帮助和共同协作，实际上是人类最早的伦理秩序和伦理关系的体现” (聂珍钊 14)。这是因为原始人类的劳动和战争都是集体行为，不可能凭一己之力完成，只有团结协作，共同努力才能达到目的。此外，恻隐之心、怜悯之情也体现了人类人性美的伦理道德观念。特洛伊王子赫克托尔战死后，特洛伊国王深夜来到阿喀琉斯帐中，请求赎回儿子的尸体。看着白发苍苍的老王跪在面前，阿喀琉斯的人伦道德被唤起，动了恻隐之心，答应了他。同样，特洛伊战将门农在战场上发现对手是希腊老人聂斯托尔时，不忍心出手，对他说“要我同你交战，

那是说不过去的，你离开吧”，希腊老人因此保住了性命。恻隐之心、怜悯之情是人性使然。亲情、友情、怜悯之情作为一种本能在许多动物中就存在着，人类则把它上升为伦理道德规范，成为一种人性美，并且一旦形成，从原始社会起代代传承，它不因历史时代的变化而改变，也不因民族差异而不同，即使在残酷的战争也显示其巨大生命力。而那些不讲人性，伤天害理的不道德行为则一定会受到谴责和惩罚。希腊名将奥德修斯有勇有谋，但他的谋常常表现为狡猾甚至陷害别人。他遗弃受伤的战友、战无不胜的弓箭手菲罗克忒斯，嫉妒同僚帕拉墨得斯得到操办祭献阿波罗的风光美差，对他栽赃陷害致死。正义女神在涅墨西斯在天上看到了这一切，对他进行了惩罚。人间人性的伦理道德成了天理，彰显了它的不可违逆和威慑力量。

四

特洛伊战争的伦理道德还体现在公平、诚信搏杀的战争游戏规则得到双方的共同遵守上。兵不厌诈，战争中使用谋略是正常的，并不违背伦理道德。但是战争也有其游戏规则，如不斩来使、公平搏杀、诚信守约等等 (McMahan 693-694)。在特洛伊战争中，交战双方经常发生诸如互派使者沟通、签订暂时休战协议、双方立下誓约各派一人决斗以尽快结束战争等战时行为，体现了公平、诚信打斗的战争伦理道德准则。互派使者沟通，或可使战端和平解决，或交流信息减少不必要伤亡。因而古今中外都遵循交战双方不斩来使的伦理道德准则。特洛伊战争开战之前，双方都曾派出和平使者，要求对方归还抢走（诱拐）己方的妇女，化干戈为玉帛。虽然谈判破裂，还发生了羞辱来使的情况，但都没有杀害对方使者，守住了道德底线。暂时休战可以找回或掩埋各自伤亡人员，也可让将士得到休息，对双方都有利，也是人道的表现，特洛伊战争的几次休战就是如此。特洛伊战争还有好几次决斗，最著名的是帕利斯与墨涅拉俄斯的决斗，双方约定谁胜就把海伦和她的财产带走，结束战斗。双方立下神圣誓约，测好决斗距离，用抽签方式决定谁先向对方掷长矛。特洛伊方的帕利斯首先向希腊方的墨涅拉俄斯掷出长矛，结果只刺中后者的盾牌，自己的长矛反而撞弯曲了。接着墨涅拉俄斯投出的长矛刺穿了帕利斯的盾牌、盔甲，直达紧身衣，若非女神阿佛洛狄忒暗中相助，帕利斯必死无疑。由于没有分出胜负，他们决定再次决斗。这种决斗是公平的竞争，也是展示双方战将武艺的好机会。这种原始人类战争的伦理道德一直沿袭到整个冷兵器时代。而遵守誓约（条约）协议，即使在今天，不管是战争还是政治、经济生活中仍然被奉为道德准则，并有法律作保障。谁破坏了它，谁就要受到舆论谴责和惩罚。特洛伊战争的这次决斗，因特洛伊方潘达洛斯用冷箭射伤墨涅拉俄斯而遭破坏，也破坏了战争伦理道德。值得一提的是，潘达洛斯放冷箭是受了雅典娜怂恿，而雅典娜则是执行宙斯的命令，因为此前宙斯决定要毁灭特洛伊城。可见，让特洛伊人破坏誓约是宙斯为毁灭特洛伊城制造的伦理理由，换句话说破坏誓约的不道德行为会受到惩罚。

战争体现伦理道德观念，伦理道德观念又影响着战争。“战争的伦理问题，

首先表现为战争是否属于正确行为” (Peter Singer and Penata Singer 361)。伦理道德是软实力，对动员舆论、激发斗志具有不可忽视的作用。伦理道德观念影响参战人员的情绪和斗志，间接影响战斗力的发挥。特洛伊王子帕利斯诱拐走斯巴达王后海伦，海伦背叛自己的丈夫墨涅拉俄斯，是不道德的行为。它使全体希腊人受辱，激起了他们极大的愤怒情绪，因而他们同仇敌忾，很快就组成了希腊联军，决心用武力夺回海伦和被掳走的财物，发动了特洛伊战争，是“属于正确行为”。抢夺别人的女人和财物虽是原始社会“一种正常的营生”，但在特洛伊战争时期，父权制的一夫一妻制确立了丈夫在社会和家庭的统治地位，要求妻子对丈夫保持忠贞。帕利斯和海伦的行为显然违背了此时的伦理道德准则。其次，战争虽然是人类的极端行为，但仍然遵从和体现一般社会伦理道德。希腊联军出发前亚加米农得罪了女神，犯了敬神的伦理禁忌；不愿祭献女儿，有失统帅以全局为重的伦理；亚加米农侵占属于阿喀琉斯的女俘的不道德行为等等，所有这些行为都严重打击了军队的情绪，影响了战斗意志和战斗力。此外，在战争中，每当一方有亲人、战友牺牲，必会激起这一方强烈的复仇斗志，取得战争的一些局部胜利。可见，亲情、友情、怜悯之情这些人性中最美的伦理道德可谓是战争中绽放的奇葩，与战争的残酷形成极强的反差，却相辅相成，成了战斗意志和战斗力量的驱动力。

战争中体现的伦理道德观念对战局也有一定影响。得道多助，失道寡助。伦理道德在战争中成为伦理力量，这是战争中极为宝贵的战斗力，起到了军纪、军规等强制性的战争规则起不到的作用。特洛伊战争中，帕利斯夺人之妻、潘达洛斯破坏誓约都是严重违背伦理道德的，前者导致爆发战争，后者背信弃义遭人唾弃。双方交战过程中战局多数时候是希腊方占优势，最后特洛伊城破国亡，不能不说与这种伦理力量有关。然而希腊方也并未占领道德高地。他们抢夺特洛伊国王的姐姐赫西俄涅在先，联军内部违背伦理道德的事件频发。统帅亚加米农贪色以权谋私、奥德修斯遗弃战友陷害同僚、阿喀琉斯为泄私愤，一意孤行不顾大局……所以，希腊军的最后胜利只是惨胜，回到家乡的将士只是极少数人。统帅亚加米农作为最后胜利的象征回到了家乡，但一到家里就被他的妻子谋害了。他的妻子谋害他的理由就是他决定了祭献女儿阿菲革涅亚。值得注意的是，奥德修斯伤天害理，却只受到惩罚并没有死。奥德修斯归途中遇到女仙卡鲁普德并愿与他成婚，保证他与天地同寿，但他不为所动。此时虽是一夫一妻制家庭，“但破坏夫妻忠贞仍是丈夫的权利”（57），换句话说就是绝大多数丈夫做不到对妻子忠贞。奥德修斯做到了，反映了人类夫妻伦理关系的进步，这是非常难能可贵的。他的这一道德善举，使他饱经磨难后回到家里与妻儿团聚了。战后参战人员的结局是整个战争结局一个组成部分，既是希腊军惨胜的体现，又显示了伦理道德的作用。

恩格斯说，“野蛮时代的全盛时期我们在荷马史诗中，特别是《伊利亚特》中可以看到”（22）。因而特洛伊战争中体现的主要是原始社会这一时期的伦理道德观念。但从中我们也能隐隐约约地看到一些奴隶社会的伦理道德观念。

这是因为社会发展是渐进的，而非从某一天突然就从原始社会进入了奴隶社会。原始社会野蛮时代的高级阶段与奴隶社会相互衔接，开始透出文明的曙光。同时，从荷马之后，记录希腊神话的人已进入奴隶社会，文字“记录下来的神话必定染上了记录时代的色彩”（谢选俊 7），因为是“人们按照自己的意思塑造（或创造）了神祇”（陈中梅 140）。特洛伊战争中对战利品的分配体现了从原始社会野蛮时代高级阶段过渡到奴隶社会的伦理道德观念，带有了奴隶社会伦理道德观念的色彩。那时“将战争中俘获的东西归属于胜利者，已成为惯例、法律”（黄颂杰、章雪富 438）。惯例从原始社会形成，并一直沿袭了下去；法律是奴隶社会才有的，奴隶主贵族把原始社会的惯例用法律的方式固定下来，成为强制性的规定。惯例属于伦理道德范畴，法律则是国家机器用以维护国家的稳定和统治者的利益，烙上了私有制的印记。占有“战争中捕获的东西”的“胜利者”，可以是集体也可以是个人。前者属于原始社会早期的惯例，那时还没有私有财产；后者留下了私有制的痕迹。恩格斯说，“在荷马史诗中，被俘的年轻妇女成了胜利者肉欲的牺牲品，军事首领们按照军阶和军功依次选择其中的美丽者”（58）。按军功依次选择战利品是奖励，是原始社会的惯例、军规。而按军阶依次挑选战利品则是奴隶制的等级观念的表现，属于带有法律性质的军规，是一种特权。按照武艺，亚加米农不是阿喀琉斯的对手，但是阿喀琉斯只能以罢战泄愤，并没有用武力从亚加米农那里夺回属于自己的美丽女俘。这是因为亚加米农是统帅，军阶比阿喀琉斯高。等级制度意味着严格的下级服从上级，这也是伦理道德准则，阿喀琉斯必须服从，不能用武力犯上。

特洛伊战争是古希腊历史上一次著名战争，参战的希腊联军还带有部落联盟的性质，这恰好说明这场战争发生在原始社会野蛮时代高级阶段与进入文明时代之交的时期。人类社会也正是在这一时期开始出现财产私人占有的现象。卢梭在《论人类不平等的起源》中指出，私有制的出现，是战争产生的根源（卢梭 125-126）。特洛伊战争之所以爆发，其中不难发现私有财产占有的因素所产生的影响。这场战争所体现出来的战争伦理不仅反映了当时社会财产私人占有萌芽时期的伦理道德观念，还对后世西方战争伦理尤其是现实主义战争伦理的发展有着直接和间接的影响。因此，研究特洛伊战争所体现出来的战争伦理，对于现代战争伦理的探讨具有一定的借鉴意义。

注解【Note】

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An Interview with Jerry W. Ward, Jr.

Wang Zuyou
School of Foreign Languages, Henan Polytechnic University
No. 2001, Century Avenue, Jiaozuo City, Henan Province, P. R. China, 454003
Email: wiziyi@gmail.com

Abstract In my interview with him, Professor Jerry Ward admits that he may be the only person in the United States of America who thinks that no writer is more forceful than Richard Wright in exposing the wounds of history that will not heal. We study Richard Wright, according to Ward, in order to become more honest, to become brave and critical thinkers. Now that his papers are housed and almost completely cataloged at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Ward's life and work become a special legacy that will be treasured by present and future generations in special ways. As a bridge between Chinese and American academic circles, he tries to promote cross-cultural discussions that are very necessary in the twenty-first century. He urges younger scholars to remember that cultural expressions and everyday life exist in symbiotic relationships, to remember that we are dealing with literary or intellectual ecology.
Key Words Professor Jerry Ward; cross-cultural discussions; literary or intellectual ecology

Dr. Jerry W. Ward was a Distinguished Professor of Dillard University, New Orleans. He is a leading scholar in African American literature and literary theory and criticism, and is recognized as one of the leading experts on Richard Wright. He is author or editor of such works as: *The Cambridge History of African American Literature* (2011), *Black Southern Voices* (1992), *Redefining American Literary History* (1990), *Trouble the Water: 250 years of African American Poetry* (1997), and *Richard Wright Encyclopedia* (2008). He is also a member of the editorial board of such journals as *African American Review*, *Journal of Ethnic American Literature*, and *Mississippi Quarterly.* He served as Chairman of the Department of English at Tougaloo College from 1979-1986, and assumed the post of Lawrence Durgin Professor of Literature from1988 to 2002. He has been involved with many professional organizations, such as the College Language Association, the National Council of Teachers of English, the Modern Language Association, the Southern Conference on African

American Studies, and the Southern Black Cultural Alliance. He played a decisive role in the Mississippi Humanities Council and was recognized for his contributions to that organization by being given the Humanities Teacher Award, the Humanities Scholars Award, and being elevated to an executive position in the Council. Aside from his academic affiliation he served on the Mississippi Advisory Committee to U. S. Commission on Civil Rights. I am very happy to have gotten his permission to interview him during my stay in the United States as a visiting scholar.

Wang Zuyou: Professor Jerry Ward, I am very glad that you granted me an opportunity to interview you. In February, 2013, your papers are housed and almost completely cataloged at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. This magnificent collection of your papers will be heavily used and will transform our understanding of the American South and her people. Your life and work are a special legacy that will be treasured by present and future generations in special ways. Congratulations on the holding of your papers at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History! Will you share with us more inside information of this cultural event?

Jerry Ward: Your comments about my papers are most generous, but we must not say they are treasured at this moment in 2013. Perhaps ten years from now we will know if they are treasured or not. Allow me to provide a few facts. I began donating some of my correspondence and writings to the Tougaloo College Archives in the early 1970s. As an alumnus of the College, I thought it was important to provide items that would enhance the possibility of the Tougaloo College Archive becoming a center for research in Mississippi. The Archive already had a vast amount of material pertaining to the Civil Rights Movement and the history of the college. It did not have much material about people who had served on its faculty or primary documents in the field of literature. My objective was to give my college a small number of such documents to complement its extraordinary collection of books (many of them first-editions in the field of African American literature). My papers were housed in the L. Zenobia Coleman Library at Tougaloo College until they were transferred for processing to the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. I am most grateful to Mr. Clarence Hunter, the Tougaloo College archivist, for his dedication and expertise in putting my papers in order and preparing a finding aid for them.

Although it is advertised that my papers span the years 1939-2010, I am baffled by what is there which has anything to do with 1939. I was not born until July 31, 1943. The major focus of my papers is the years 1972-2012, and that focus will be expanded as I continue to produce and donate my works, correspondence and other materials.

To be sure, the MDAH staff will have more to catalog in the future. The collection is divided into the following series: personal matters, consisting of awards, collected items, correspondence, and programs of events; career, consisting of correspondence, documents, and other materials related to my career at Tougaloo, Dillard and other educational institutions; works by me, consisting of the major works I created as a speaker, reviewer, newspaper columnist, and manuscript writer; anthologies, collected works and larger works, consisting of writings that I authored or co-authored; scholar affiliation, consisting of correspondence, documents, and writings of noted scholars; organizational affiliation, consisting of correspondence, documents, and printed materials of professional organizations; collected magazines, newspapers, photographs, and audiotapes.

Wang Zuyou: We know that you and Richard Wright's daughter, Julia Wright, were among the founders of the Richard Wright Circle in 1990, an organization dedicated to the study of Wright's life and work. Among your many writings on the subject some of the most significant are: the introduction to the Harper Perennial edition of *Black Boy;* "*Black Boy (American Hunger): Freedom to Remember*," a work you coauthored with Maryemma Graham; "Richard Wright and the Common Reader," written for *Black Magnolias*; and an entry for the *Mississippi Encyclopedia.* Will you please illustrate your main thought on Richard Wright study?

Jerry Ward: Let me begin with a debatable claim. Among twentieth-century American writers, Richard Wright is the one who disturbs readers in a unique way. He forces readers to think. When we read his published works, we find ourselves thinking about the long history of intrusion, resistance, and conquest that pertains to the Americas, to what Europeans called "The New World." It is not the case that other American writers, especially historians, have not addressed those issues. Wright, however, deals with the issues in his fiction, poetry, non-fiction, and essays by asking hard questions, by challenging us with moral imperatives. James Baldwin, Lillian Smith, William Faulkner, Herman Melville, W. E. B. DuBois, Toni Cade Bambara, June Jordan, and Walt Whitman are other writers who entangle us with moral imperatives, but they seem to be less forceful than Wright in exposing the wounds of history that will not heal. I may be the only person in my country who holds this opinion. Wright fully understood the nature and consequences of the endless suffering human beings must endure. He understood mankind's hunger. As Wright put it, he was not concerned with making people happy, with entertaining them. He was concerned with forcing people to look directly at whatever it is we believe "Truth" to be. His works are unsettling. Wright understood that the primitive instinct of man and woman

to be brutal in their interactions with other men and women is one of the major aspects of human existence on this planet. He knew what material and spiritual poverty is and how such poverty is related to dehumanization, to ethnic or racial hatred, to the psychological grip of religious beliefs and practices, to capitalism and class warfare. His perspectives were not always right, but he was brave enough to have perspectives and to share them with the world. He paid for his pursuit of truth, what Michel Fabre called his unfinished quest, with his life. We study Richard Wright in order to become more honest, to become brave and critical thinkers.

Wang Zuyou: Just now you mentioned that "Wright fully understood the nature and consequences of the endless suffering human beings must endure. …He paid for his pursuit of truth, what Michel Fabre called his unfinished quest, with his life." Will you please discuss the unfinished quest at some length as it is related to your readings of Wright's works?

Jerry Ward: My readings of Wright's works are determined by the special affinity I have with him and by what I find attractive in some iterations of Marxist literary theory, especially in the questions Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin posed about speech act theory and language. I read his works as situated responses, as transactions, with the world he inhabited as an African American male. I summarized my thoughts about affinity, unfinished quest, and my regard for Wright's work from the stories in *Uncle Tom's Children* (1938) to his last novel *A Father's Law* (2008) in the remarks I made when I accepted the Richard Wright Literary Excellence Award on February 26, 2011. Those remarks answer your question.

"Between Richard Wright and Me"

We both spent our childhood and youth in Mississippi in the twentieth century. Like many American males we were sensitive to how we were socialized by the values and expectations of our families. We were fully aware that law and custom set boundaries for our growth, and we discovered fairly early the peculiar feelings of accomplishment that come from defying limits. We were curious rebels, and the price we had to pay for our lack of meekness shaped and left indelible marks on our personalities.

Our curiosity about the things of this world was notably increased by our uses of literacy. We were avid readers, allowing our imaginations to be much enlarged by words, language, and the lore one can acquire from books and from oral transmission. We were different from our peers. We were *existential* before either of us could pronounce or define that word. Our differentness was at once a blessing and a curse, a paradox within the matrix of Deep South society. We were blessed with inner strength

and will power, with knowing we had the option of refusing to become who and what the less than generous world desired we should become. Even if our bodies gave scant evidence of disobedience, our minds delighted in transgressive explorations; we entertained ideas that neither our immediate families nor our environments were prepared to understand or condone. As we grew into adolescence, our observations and readings prepared us to become exceptionally critical of injustice. And we discovered that the forms of language which so fascinated us could be instruments for effecting change. Literature and our experiences taught us that we did not have to be passive. We had agency; it was our entitlement under natural law to deny the possibility of our being wretched and tragic victims.

Obviously, I have sketched a few parallels between the life experiences that Richard Wright described vividly in his classic autobiography *Black Boy* and my memories of the trajectory of my own life. The epiphany I had upon reading *Black Boy* in my youth created a most powerful affinity between Richard Wright and me. It also created the recognition that we shared, despite the thirty-five years that separate us, similar values and tough-minded perspectives about the dynamics of good and evil that impact the lives of human beings. Although our paths in adulthood took quite different directions ----Wright used his talents to establish himself as a writer of international importance, and I used my talents to forge a career in American higher education, we both dedicated our lives to trying in good faith to speak truth about our world, to find receptive ears for our words, and to shake people out of the dangerous habits of inattention and complacency. Richard Wright has indeed taught me through the full range of his writings about my obligations to humanity.

Thus, it is with profound humility that I accept the Richard Wright Literary Excellence Award and express my gratitude to the Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration for deciding that I am worthy of such a distinguished honor. This honor entails an obligation to think and write in ways that pay tribute to the model of excellence that Richard Wright set for us all and to continue my commitment to ensuring that future generations of writers and thinkers never forget how essentially valuable is Richard Wright's legacy to the world.

Wang Zuyou: Richard Wright is one of the most important African American writers. He is also one of the most prolific. Best known as the author of *Native Son* (1940), he wrote 7 novels; 2 collections of short fiction; an autobiography; more than 250 newspaper articles, book reviews, and occasional essays; some 4,000 verses; a photo-documentary; and 3 travel books. By attacking the taboos and hypocrisy that other writers had failed to address, Richard Wright revolutionized American literature and created a disturbing and realistic portrait of the African American experience. *The*

Richard Wright Encyclopedia (Greenwood Press, 2008), of which you and Robert J. Butler are co-editors, is a guide to his vast and influential body of works. What prompted you into undertaking such a giant project?

Jerry Ward: Robert Butler and I undertook the project because it was necessary to provide a reference book for students, teachers, and the general public. We wanted people to have a resource for discovering basic facts about Wright and his works, and we believe that good critical work on writers must start with facts rather than with theoretical speculations. Like Keneth Kinnamon's two magnificent bibliographies of critical responses to Wright, the *Richard Wright Encyclopedia* is an integral part of what the Richard Wright Circle was established to accomplish. I should mention that I have another big, ongoing project. I am writing *Richard Wright: One Reader's Responses*, a study of Wright's mind and his writings. I am not certain that I shall ever finish that project.

Wang Zuyou: Your numerous works are expressions of your endless love of literature, especially African American literature. Besides Richard Wright, who are those writers that absorb your passion and devotion?

Jerry Ward: To use your words, I am passionately devoted to many writers, particularly to writers other critics may have chosen to overlook--Asili Ya Nadhiri, James E. Cherry, Sterling D. Plumpp, Harold Clark, Julius E. Thompson, Eugene Redmond, Kalamu ya Salaam, and Tom Dent come immediately to mind. Ishmael Reed and Lance Jeffers are at the top of my list. I am passionately interested in writers who share all or a significant portion of my commitment to struggling with whatever "Truth" might be.

Wang Zuyou: Will you expound upon them respectively?

Jerry Ward: That is impossible for me to do in this interview. I would need to write several essays to expound. I will say a little about Reed and Jeffers to give you a preview of my thinking. I first read Reed when I was a soldier in Vietnam. I later had the privilege of serving with him on the Coordinating Council of Literary Magazines and of conducting extensive interviews with him in the early 1980s. In his own way, Ishmael Reed continues and takes to a new level the work Richard Wright did. I reject the idea which circulates like HIV/AIDS and cancer among American intellectuals that Wright and Reed are "protest writers." All American writers protest something. I value Reed for his sustained efforts since the late 1960s to promote

genuine multiculturalism in our discussions of the literature and culture of the United States. His efforts as a novelist, poet, dramatist, musician, essayist and cultural critic, publisher and editor are special and unsurpassed. He is dedicated to providing the grounds or the rich, always expanding matrix for the delayed conversation about what it means to be an American. He does not merely give lip-service to multiculturalism and diversity. He is profoundly engaged in the practice of inclusiveness. For this reason Reginald Martin (University of Memphis) and I have begun to work on a book to be entitled *Ishmael Reed's Conversation with America*. Lance Jeffers, with whom I enjoyed a most rewarding friendship during the last decade (1975-1985) of his life, was an excellent poet and critical thinker. He was a man who had absorbed what Jean-Paul Sartre was talking about in *Qu'est-ce que la literature?* (1947). He was *engagé*. Engaged. Committed. For him, as for Reed, writing is an act of social responsibility. I learned much from him about poetry, cultural nationalism, and how to be a responsible person. I wrote the introduction for his novel *Witherspoon*, a novel that John Oliver Killens commended highly. One of my former students, Howard Rambsy II, published a most thoughtful essay on Jeffers and the Black Aesthetic in Kevin Powell's anthology *Step Into A World* (2000). I intend to revise and expand a paper I wrote many years ago on "Racialized Morality in Lance Jeffers's *Witherspoon*." You remind me that I have so much work to do in fitting the writers for whom I have a passionate devotion into literary history.

Wang Zuyou: In *The Katrina Papers: A Journal of Trauma and Recovery*, you fuse autobiography, politics, spirituality, history, and poetry in a highly inventive and unusual trip through the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Your house and the university campus where you worked as a professor were both flooded in the storm. It is from this trauma that you scramble to find hope and sanity in a world ruled by the fact that thousands have been abused by Nature and revenge is impossible. What is the mission that you seem to try to fulfill in this memoir?

Jerry Ward: I do not think *The Katrina Papers* has a mission. The book has purpose. The initial purpose was to examine and document my mind as I dealt with the trauma of loss. I wrote the book as a journal, but if people wish to call it a memoir I do not object. It is journal about what was happening in my mind. The first publisher to whom I submitted the manuscript said I needed to revise it to incorporate a narrative arc. I did not want to include a narrative arc. If my readers find one, that is an accident, a fortunate accident. The ultimate purpose of the book is to inform readers that they too can write their own stories and account to some extemt for their historicity, their participation in the making of social history. All of us have to deal

with the wounds of history that cannot be healed. What I tried to do in *The Katrina Papers* was to minimize the agony of the wounds.

Wang Zuyou: I know that you also write poems, which you may have forgotten, though you have a good memory. Do you think we should give special attention to your poem "Jazz to Jackson to John"?

Jerry Ward: Yes, you should. "Jazz to Jackson to John" is my signature poem. Of all the poems I have written, it represents best my interests in history, music, and state of existence. It addresses what I think the function of memory should be.

Wang Zuyou: In discussing the poetry of Natasha Trethewey, you call our attention to Trethewey's strategies for recovering history in *Domestic Work*, *Bellocq's Ophelia*, and *Native Guard* and how her poems are aesthetic warnings against post-racial delusions. To put Trethewey's being named Poet Laureate of the United States in proper perspective, one must read Honorée Fanonne Jeffers's brilliant essay "The Subjective Briar Patch: Contemporary American Poetry." What is its special use in understanding contemporary American poetry?

Jerry Ward: Honorée Fanonne Jeffers's essay is infused with honesty and integrity. It is a generous, scholarly and civilizing statement about internal struggles within the field of contemporary American poetry. Jeffers challenges us to be logical and sober about how those struggles or negotiations among poets, critics, and readers of poetry are so frequently racist, sexist, and, to be extremely candid, "bitchy." Her essay bids us to meditate on poetry and modernism as an asymmetrical affair, an affair that is saturated with conflicts, taste and discrimination, desperate measures to protect privilege and maintain hegemony and the mountains poets must conquer as they practice their craft. Jeffers illuminates the conflicts, and her essay can be used as a powerful guide for moving through the combat zone. Her essay helps us to discern how political the position of Poet Laureate of the United States might actually be. In an indirect way, the essay also can be useful when we read Trethewey's most recent collection *Thrall* (2012) and Brenda Marie Osbey's *History and Other Poems* (2012). Osbey's is a rare book that secures our participation in and control of the dialogic imagination.

Wang Zuyou: Your commentary "*The Cambridge History of African American Literature and the Limits of Literary History*" seeks to explain the inevitable absence in literary historical narratives of writers who are of equal merit with and sometimes

of greater importance than those who are discussed. Why do you believe this is true?

Jerry Ward: No literary history can account for all of a nation's writers or for all of the writers who have contributed something valuable to an ethnic tradition within a larger national tradition of literary production. A definitive accounting would be nothing more than an enormous listing of names, a literary telephone directory. The population of people who can make some legitimate claim to be writers has grown exponentially within the last thirty years. Population size is one reason for absence. Another reason has to do with how literary histories are constructed and with the choices made by people selected to write chapters of a literary history. In the United States, most of the scholars and critics who write literary history work at colleges and universities. Although some well-informed literary historical comments might appear in blogs or in social networks, it would be indeed rare to find any of those comments in a literary history sponsored by a prestigious university press or a first-rate commercial publisher. Academic circles in the United States tend to be conservative and unwilling to take risks. Tenure and promotion depend greatly on one's publishing articles in the right peer-reviewed journals, publishing books with the leading presses in one's field, and publishing chapters in books that are deemed to have great merit. Excellent writers who are not canonized or strong candidates for canonization tend to be ignored. The tyranny of the academy is powerful.

Wang Zuyou: As an overseas professor at Huazhong Normal University (Central China Normal University) in Wuhan, you have deep interest in exchanges between the People's Republic of China and the United States of America, in promoting the mutual destruction of stereotypes. A lecture you gave there on "American Literature and Digital Humanities" involves a series of speculations on how new technologies may change the study and teaching of literature, especially of African American literature. Right?

Jerry Ward: That is correct. Digital humanities is not a panacea or cure-all, but it is a crucial element in how literature and culture will be written about and evaluated in the future. There are still well-founded reservations about what digital humanities can achieve. I think for some time we will continue to combine traditional methods with those emerging in the field of digital humanities. Ultimately, our scholarly practices as well as our scholarly questions will be altered by new technologies.

Wang Zuyou: You have been involved with many professional organizations, such as the College Language Association, the National Council of Teachers of

English, the Modern Language Association, the Southern Conference on African American Studies, and the Southern Black Cultural Alliance. You have played a decisive role in the Mississippi Humanities Council and were recognized for your contributions to that organization by being given the Humanities Teacher Award, the Humanities Scholars Award, and being elevated to an executive position in the Council. Aside from your academic affiliation you served on the Mississippi Advisory Committee to U. S. Commission on Civil Rights.

Jerry Ward: I have profited intellectually from my diverse professional involvements, because they have enabled me to have exchanges with leading scholars, writers, and artists. Many of these people are more than names on a page. I have had long-term correspondence with some of them; others have become friends; some of the younger people have chosen me to be an informal mentor. During my career as a teacher from 1970 to 2012, working with professional organizations and such cultural organizations as the Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration and the Zora Neale Hurston Festival in Florida has been meaningful. And I have worked with the Project on the History of Black Writing since its inception in 1983.

Wang Zuyou: You received numerous honors and awards throughout your career. What are your most cherished awards? Why?

Jerry Ward: My most cherished awards are the Darwin T. Turner Award of Excellence for Contributions in Research, Scholarship and Mentoring; the "Teacher of the Year" award from Tougaloo College in 1992; the Richard Wright Literary Excellence Award from the Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration; my induction as Honored Girot and Lifetime Member of the International Hall of Fame for Writers of African Descent; and my induction into the Tougaloo Hall of Fame. In January 2013, Tougaloo College designated me Professor Emeritus. From 2002 to 2012, I was the Distinguished Eminent Scholar and Professor of English at Dillard University in New Orleans, Louisiana. I retired from Dillard in August 2012 and now enjoy the life of an independent scholar. I appreciate the awards, and I thank the people who thought I deserved them. I admit, however, that awards frighten me. They are reminders that what I have done in the past is less important than what I am doing in the present. Making worthwhile contributions depends on my continuing efforts to work harder and better. I do hope some of my accomplishments provide ideas and models for invested behavior for younger generations. I do remind myself daily that if I stopped to admire accomplishments, I would become either a failure or an arrogant fool.

Wang Zuyou: We know that African American Studies is an interdisciplinary academic field devoted to the study of the history, culture, and politics of Black Americans. Taken broadly, the field studies not only the cultures of people of African descent in the United States, but the cultures of the entire African diaspora. The field includes scholars of African-American literature, history, politics, religion and religious studies, sociology, and many other disciplines within the humanities and social sciences. As an expert in African American studies and as a bridge between American and Chinese academic circles, what are your suggestions for the younger generation of scholars concerning their research and publications in the realm of African American Studies?

Jerry Ward: You are referring to the broadest field, to the one called Black Studies or Africana Studies or African Diaspora Studies. African American Studies is an ally to the larger field, but it focuses more precisely on studies of work produced in the United States. All of these studies are like the threads of a spider's web. They are part of a larger design. As a bridge between Chinese and American academic circles, I try to promote cross-cultural discussions that are very necessary in the twenty-first century. I am also something of an iconoclast. I like to knock down the false idols of the mind that Sir Francis Bacon identified centuries ago. I have the onus of providing viable alternatives to what I virtually destroy. Be wary of people who talk stridently about revolutions and who have no rational programs to replace what they would eradicate. They do more harm than good. I advise the younger generation of Chinese scholars who do work in African American and American literatures and cultures to arm themselves with in-depth knowledge about the history of the United States. They must know that history to prevent their being misled and mis-educated by either Eurocentric or Afrocentric extremes. They should develop skills in making sharp critiques of African American Studies. If they want to publish their work in the United States or other countries outside of China, they have to master the rhetoric and protocols of scholarship that may be vastly different from scholarship published in Chinese. I urge these younger scholars to remember that cultural expressions and everyday life exist in symbiotic relationships, to remember that we are dealing with literary or intellectual ecology.

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