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It was a great pleasure and experience for me to participate in The 8th Convention of the International Association for Ethical Literary Criticism: Ethical Literary Criticism and Interdisciplinary Studies at Kyushu University in Fukuoka, Japan (July 2018). I found it very interesting to meet colleagues from Asia and North America who study world literary texts from an ethical perspective. World literature, for that matter all literature, contain discussions on values. This is self-evident. However, in the field of ethical criticism scholars address how literary artifacts give form to the question of human values in a modern world where the humane in itself is not a given thing.

My contribution to the conference was a lecture on Hans Christian Andersen (1805-1875), the Danish fairy tale author, who is read — and read aloud — in the whole world. Hans Christian Andersen is an ethical teller of tales. He takes a position on societal values and he always sides with the weak and fragile, the children, the outcast and the strange and odd characters. In his iconic and very famous fairy tales like, for example "The Little Mermaid," Andersen discusses what the conditions are for becoming a human and also what it takes to remain human. "The Little Mermaid" is like most of Andersen's tales and stories ethics in the artistic form of genius.

This special issue of *Form for World Literature Studies*, which I — to my delight — have been asked to edit together with Lyu Hongbo, is dedicated to the study of Hans Christian Andersen and his works. The authors of the four articles have all focused on the question of ethical readings while performing individual readings of aspects of Andersen's literary output. This issue begins with Frandsen's article "Light and Shadows in Stories by Hans Christian Andersen: Ethical Perspectives on the Fairytales" which contains an analysis of several fairy tales. The analysis is intended to show that Andersen always guide humans to confront themselves and

face the values which make us human. In the next article "Hans Christian Andersen, Literature and Ethics: New Perspectives on Old Stories" Tony S. Andersen and Anne-Marie S. Christensen argue that ethical reflections are almost always present in Andersen's world which they show in readings of four of his fairy tales. These readings can be used as teaching material for young people.

In "Denmark, my Native Land! Hans Christian Andersen as a Happiness Object with Killjoy Potential" Torsten Bøgh Thomsen and Anne Klara Bom portray how Andersen in his time took part in the construction of the national feelings for his home country, Denmark, and how Andersen today functions as an icon for modern nationalism and a sense of national community. In their discussions, and by using concepts like "Happiness Object" and "Killjoy," Thomsen and Bom show how the modern use of Andersen as an icon contains both constructive and destructive elements in relation to the conceptions of the national. Thereby the authors point out that though Andersen can be used as an icon for Denmark, his authorship as such is much larger and diverse than that. In the article "Is the Ugly Duckling a Hero? Using Philosophical Inquiry to Unfreeze Hans Christian Andersen's Fairy Tales in Danish Primary School Teaching" Anne Klara Bom and Caroline Schaffalitzky focus on how Andersen's fairy tales can be of use in philosophical inquiries and ethical dialogues in Danish primary school teaching. They analyze "The Ugly Duckling" and use Andersen's tale as a platform for teachers to conduct dialogues with children on philosophical and ethical questions at the primary school level.

I hope that readers of *Forum for World Literature Studies* will enjoy this special issue. My thanks to the authors, to Lyu Hongbo, Professor Nie and the editorial board.

Light and Shadows in Stories by Hans Christian Andersen: Ethical Perspectives on the Fairytales

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Abstract My paper is about Hans Christian Andersen and his Fairytales. I want to discuss some ethical aspects of the fairytales and Andersen as a writer of ethical tales. In my paper I am going to analyze stories or tales as *The Little Mermaid, The Little Matchstick Girl, The Piggy Bank* and *Thumbelina* — all by Hans Christian Andersen — to point out how Andersen's work and art are dealing with both existential and ethical questions. Hans Christian Andersen (1805-75) lived in a time where European cultures were changing into modern forms and Andersen registers that changing as a kind of tension between light and darkness or between light and shadows in an existential way. Andersen depicted in a way the ethical choices of modernity and he did that in stories reflecting both social circumstances and a great hope for upcoming humanism.
Key words Hans Christian Andersen's fairytales; social experiences; hunger and imagination; existential and ethical questions
Author **Johs. Nørregaard Frandsen** is Professor in Danish Literature and in Hans Christian Andersen Studies at The Department for the Study of Culture, University of Southern Denmark, and he is head of The Hans Christian Andersen Centre, University of Southern Denmark. He has published a great amount of articles in journals and published more than 50 monographies or Anthologies on Danish literature, Danish Cultural History and on Hans Christian Andersen.

Introduction

I want to discuss some ethical aspects of the fairytales and Andersen as a writer of tales. In my paper I am going to comment some of Andersen's stories or tales as

The Little Mermaid, *The Little Matchstick Girl*, *Thumbelina* and *The Piggy Bank*[1] to point out how Andersen's work and art are dealing with both existential and ethical questions. Andersen (1805-75) lived in a time where European culture changed into more modern forms and Andersen registers that changing as a kind of tension between light and darkness or between light and shadows in an existential way. Andersen depicted in a way the ethical choices of modernity.

The Danish philosopher K.E. Løgstrup says in *Den etiske fordring* [The Ethical Claims] (1956/1961) that every person lives in covenant with ethical claims. Literature and narrative are ways in which values and choices can be made clear to the individual. Hans Christian Andersen's stories always contain values and choices between values. In that sense, Andersen's stories are always ethical literature.

Several Voices

Allow me to quote the opening lines of the fairytale "The Tinder-Box" and I quote from the edition of the fairytales in *Andersen*:

> A soldier came marching along the highway: left, right! left, right! He had his knapsack on his back and a sword at his side, for he had been out fighting a war, and now he was on his way home. (Andersen 49)

That's exactly how a soldier moves of course — left right, left right, one two, one two. That is a child's logic. It can obviously only be a soldier when he marches left right, left right. What do soldiers do? Well, they fight wars, and after that they long to return home. The child mind can easily understand that, and in that way the story was clear. Something had to happen, something strange, for here was a soldier ready for the unexpected: one two, one two!

And things certainly start to happen. He is offered a tinder-box, an Aladdin's lamp, that can turn all his wishes into reality. He suffers trials and tribulations, but all finally goes well. He gains the princess and half the kingdom, even though the dogs brutally heave the old king and queen from their throne. They are the soldier's future in-laws, after all! It also costs the old witch her life — the soldier cuts off her head. We accept all of this in a fairytale by Hans Christian Andersen, for we are precisely in a fairytale, where the rules, morals and ethics are those of the narrative and not those of social life.

Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales create a fantastic room or space that one

1 All the Hans Christian Andersen quotations during this article are cited from the Klaus P. Mortensen collection of Andersen's works. All quotations are translated by John Irons.

is invited to inhabit. In these "rooms" everything is basically so very simple, because everything has its own logic. In "The Snow Queen," the snow queen at one point offers the boy Kay "the entire world and a pair of new skates" (Andersen 327). The expression "the entire world" is quite abstract, but a pair of new skates is immediately understandable to the child in us. What child wouldn't like to have a pair of new skates? And even despite the fact one has just been given the whole world — for what can one really do with that?

The distinctive thing about Hans Christian Andersen's writing is that there are always several voices in the fairytales. Narration takes place at several levels at the same time, thereby involving several narrative voices (Bøggild; Binding; Frandsen, "The Insoluble Conflict of Transformation"). Andersen tells his stories for children, but at the same time he tells profound stories about life, death, love, pain and human conditions. He tells of ethics and morals, about what is dangerous and seductive. Andersen, for example, is fascinated with all that is modern, that thrusts itself on his own age. The steam machine and electromagnetism become the two great "machines" of the new world, one in which the mass production of goods and communication over long distances pave the way for the new.

Andersen registered the new, was enthusiastic but frightened at the same time to see how the old norms and old, solid culture were being undermined and were disintegrating. This ambivalence is everywhere in Andersen, who himself had to break out of straitened circumstances to gain high social status through his art and his genius. There is an ambivalence in experiences that make him a mould-breaker both socially and as an artist. He has to develop a new genre in order to express himself. This he does in his fairytales and stories (Thomsen).

It is interesting to see how, in his early works, Andersen is bound by such traditional genres as, for example, the classical folk-tale. But in 1835, he breaks out and publishes *Eventyr, fortalte for Børn* [Fairy Tales Told for Children]. This marked the birth of a completely new, worldwide literary genre! (de Mylius)

The German cultural scientist Walter Benjamin has said that the folk-tale belongs to the people and not to an individual artist. The folk-tale contains a common experience, it passes from mouth to mouth, is adapted and altered in the course of time. The Kunstmärchen, the novel and the novella, on the other hand, belong to a single personality, that of a writer and his or her ability to transmute experiences into artistic form. Hans Christian Andersen takes the common genres, such as the folk-tale, as his point of departure, but makes them personal and lends them his own artistic expression. This enables his stories and fairytales to include the deep experiences, pains, sorrows, humiliation, social climbing, love and loss of love of the poor

man, the child and the little man in society (Benjamin).

In his fairytales, then, Andersen is capable of speaking with many voices and thus to many different realities: that of the child, the dreams of the young person, the voice of those in love, the experiences of the adult, the retrospective gaze of the old person.

Andersen for Children?

The distinctive feature of Andersen's narrative art, then is his ability to tell a story with several voices at the same time. This is what produces an artistic and ethical conversation in the fairytale. The child always has one of the voices in Andersen. The vulnerable, timid and lonely child is given a voice. Not necessarily an actual, physical child, rather the child and vulnerability still existing in a grown-up person. When Andersen called his first tales from 1835 "Fairy Tales, Told for Children," he did not mean that they were only intended for children. He is in fact quoting from the baptismal ritual as used in the Lutheran-Evangelical Church, which cites the gospel of Mark: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not [...] Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein" (*The Bible*, Mark 10, 13-16).

The fairytale is a conversation with the lonely, abandoned child that is to become visible and come alive once more in the garb of fantasy.

Andersen's oeuvre is full of pleasurable examples of the magic that arises when well-known objects or phenomena are transposed into new semantic contexts. They are often amusing, but at the same time contain grotesque aspects and strong representations of anxiety or fear. Andersen's so-called "thing-fairytales," in which he allows objects or animals to assume human attitudes, values, relationships, morality and ethics give language and form to what is stunted or crippled. Andersen writes never or very seldom directly about traumas or traumatic experiences. On the other hand, always present in his stories and fairytales is an element of ambiguity that includes that which is highly sinister — *das Unheimliche* — emotions that are homeless or ice-bound. There are shadows and ominous reverse sides, or perhaps invisible aspects of a matter on which no light is shed.

Let us take a couple of quotations from the apparently innocent but also grotesque fairy tale "The Piggy Bank" from 1854. Here everything is at stake in a kind of psychoanalytical *dance macabre*:

> The drawer of the dresser was ajar and there a large doll could be seen — she was rather old and her neck had been repaired — she gazed out and said: 'Let's

> pretend we are humans — that's always something!' and then what a commotion there was, even the paintings turned round on the walls — they showed their reverse side, though not to be contrary. (Andersen, vol. II, 114)

There are reverse sides and repressions that are let loose in this thing-fairytale, where lust and desire and suppression are portrayed in a grotesque-amusing tale about the toys in the children's nursery. Note that everything takes place at night, when the children of the bourgeoisie have been laid in bed in order to sleep, that the toys assume a different life: The Other, the reality of night and darkness start to "play at being humans." It is not the children who are portrayed here as being traumatised or locked in repressions. It is, on the contrary, the representatives of the adults' cultural systems, hierarchies, power, that play the night-time games and give life to that which threatens the child's innocence and open mind. The piggy bank is a kind of master or maybe even a super-ego in the fairytale. It is said of him that he was well aware that he could buy everything with what he had in his stomach.

Toys play at being humans. The toys enact power, sexuality, violations, as when "The walking cane stood there and was proud of his ferrule and silver knob — he was both well-heeled and well-topped; two embroidered cushions lay on the sofa, they were attractive but dim-witted —."

By using the nursery and portraying the rigid life of the adults via the grotesque acting of the toys, Andersen indirectly portrays how the child with its open fantasy is on the way to losing its mental integrity and to being pulled into an almost psychotic life as a citizen and adult where things, money, power and hierarchy have a deadening effect.

> They all sat and watched, and were asked to crack, bang and rattle as they felt inclined. But the riding whip said that he never cracked for old folks, only for those who were not yet engaged. 'I'll go bang for anything!' the banger said. [...] The play itself wasn't much good, but it was well performed, all the actors put their painted side forward, they could only be seen from one side, not the reverse, and all of them acted splendidly, coming way out past the footlights — their wires were too long, but that made them all the more conspicuous. The doll was so entranced that her repairs worked loose, and the piggy bank was so entranced too in his own way that he decided to do something for one of them, put him in his will as the one who would lie in an open grave with him when the time came.' (Andersen, vol. II 115)

The acting scene is not only full of irony. It tips over into the grotesque. It creates alienation and "*Unheimlichkeit*." The repressions become embodied and allow themselves to be enacted here in the children's nursery, where the toys represent all that threatens the children and their integrity as human beings (Müller-Wille).

There are a host of strange occurrences in Andersen's tales. The characters are non-characters although they represent characters in the form of things, toys, animals, etc. There "characters," these representations, are given a free rein with the form and framework of the fairytale. But many of them are characterised as lacking something. They are odd, strange, weird and thus not, as it were, part of the community to which they so violently wish to belong. The tin soldier, the main character in 'The Steadfast Tin Soldier' is such a character who lacks something. There was not enough tin, so he was made with only one leg. For that reason he is odd and different from the other twenty-four in the box. He falls in love with the ballerina, who is made of paper and who he believes has the same handicap or some lack as he does himself. He believes that she only has one leg like himself, but that is only because the other leg is hidden from view. The fellowship he longs for, love with her, is prevented, except for the fact that both of them perish in the flames of the same tiled stove. During the story he is sent on a journey. The soldier, whose life as a tin soldier is traumatised by a physical lack and also a lack of awareness, falls from the upper-class window down into the gutter. He is sent on a trip in the gutter, through mire and mud, he is besmirched and pursued by rats in the darkness. Swallowed by a fish, but actually returns to the room from where he once came. Although only to see himself consumed by the flames.

Andersen's figures sometimes have a destiny. An inner desire or a destiny. It can be grotesque as in "The Piggy Bank," but it can also unfold as in the case of the ugly duckling which is mobbed and mishandled, but which ends up as a beautiful swan in "The Ugly Duckling" from 1843. He is exposed to much trial and tribulation, but his inner destiny finally triumphs. The artist, in this case, gains access to a community among white swans — and it is the children by the lake that pay homage to the new arrival.

A Quest for Humanity

The story of "The Little Mermaid" from 1837 contains an even stronger duality of desire and prevention and therefore an even stronger and deeper ethical challenge. The little mermaid is born into a happy life in the world of the sea-folk. She can live for 300 years without cares and worries. That is how things are for the sea-folk and the sisters. But the little mermaid, the youngest and most beautiful of the sea-king's

daughters, wants something else and something more. She longs for something she herself only half understands but which becomes clearer to her when she is allowed to observe the world of humans. She wants to become a human being! The human life she catches a glimpse of above the water is both beautiful and stormy. It contains contrasts. It is not only happy like that of the sea-folk. It contains suffering and death, but it also contains the redeeming possibilities of love. She wishes to have a soul like humans.

The path to what is human is hard and full of suffering. It is the demon of the sea, the sea-witch, who can give her the first prerequisites for becoming a human being. But the price is terrible. The mermaid has to give up her voice, which is the loveliest siren voice of the sea, she must abandon forever her unconcerned life on the sea-bed. Her lovely fish-tail must be converted into a pair of legs, and whenever she walks on them she will feel eternal pain. The course of human life is beset with pain. On the other hand, she will have the possibility of acquiring a soul like humans have. This means that God will be able to recognise her and take her up to Himself when she dies after the short time humans have on this earth. But it also costs a lot to be part of a human community. For a soul to be able to pass into her she must first be loved so much and so strongly by another human that this person, a man, will allow the priest to declare eternal fidelity between the two of them.

She pays the price, comes up to the earth, but the prince does not view her as a person of equal worth whom he is prepared to love and marry. She is an outsider! She has paid everything to gain what she will never be able to gain. She loses everything in her desire to become a human being in a human community — loses both her possibility to become a full human being and to return to be a mermaid. Only grace, God's saving grace is left!

"The Little Mermaid" has to do with the desire for humanity and the price that has to be paid for becoming or being a human. This is an issue that is no less topical today. Are we prepared to invest what is necessary for being a real human being? Are we prepared to give up an idyll or security and apparent happiness in order to become truly human? The fairytale has to do with the enormous power of love between human beings, but in particular with love as the destiny that makes us human.

The Goose and the Hunger

Hans Christian Andersen's moving story of "The Little Matchstick Girl" from 1846 depicts, as is well known, the unhappy fate and death of the small, poor girl on New Year's Eve in a way that calls for compassion and maybe even anger at the conditions under which she has to live and die. Fortunately, as we may perhaps feel, the

Lord God takes her to his home in heaven out of grace and love. It is a story about the social motif, the merciful God, a grandmother's love and compassion. But it is also a story about what one could call the fantasies of starvation and cold, for in the most extreme moments of life the light of delusion is lit:

> Another one was struck, it burnt, it gleamed, and how the gleam fell on the wall, it became quite transparent, like gauze: she was looking straight into a living room where the table was covered with a dazzling white cloth, with fine porcelain, and there the roast goose stood steaming, stuffed full of prunes and apples! and what was even more marvellous — the goose leapt from the dish, waddled across the floor with knife and fork in its back; straight over to the poor girl it came — then the match went out and all she could see was the thick, cold wall. (Andersen, vol. I 436)

The wall becomes transparent, it becomes like gauze or a veil that creates transparency to the other side, so the idea of another world not only opens up but becomes concrete. In this other world there is not only food, warmth, light and beauty but also strange occurrences, such as a roast goose that can waddle off with a knife and fork in its back. Here we have two victims that meet, the one frozen-cold outside and the slaughtered goose inside meet in a distraught moment before everything is all over. The whole scene rests, in terms of narrative, on the awareness of an imminent loss. The light is brief and the scene is switched off in the next instant. Nothing that is happy lasts, and Andersen repeatedly portrays the gauze, the thin membrane between life-fulfilment and loss.

In this story of the matchstick girl, Andersen employs the same technique as in his so-called thing-fairytales, where tin soldiers, paving maidens, red shoes, teapots, balls, tops, etc. are given the ability to act and to formulate attitudes or points of view in thought or speech (Bøggild). The goose admittedly does not say anything. It just waddles. The girl and the goose, however, are both victims. The one is frozen-cold and on the point of starvation, while the other has been slaughtered, roasted and pierced by knife and fork. Andersen's mastery consists in the linguistic construction of the duality of suffering and enjoyment, fear and fascination, attraction and repulsion, gain and loss. The language is rhythmic with its alliterations — stood steaming, stuffed full of prunes..., for example — and Andersen invites his listeners into his language that is full of sensual images such as 'fine porcelain' and a stuffing of "prunes and apples." But every happiness situation is nearly always accompanied in Andersen by the possibility of loss. This also applies, as we have seen, in "The

Little Matchstick Girl."

Andersen is an ethnographer of the senses! He registers, senses, comments on and describes unceasingly both that which is close and that which is far off. His collected works are thus both a seismographic and astonishing musical score of the possibilities for sense perceptions in 19th century Denmark and Europe. Andersen saw, sensed and committed to paper! He collected the pleasures and sublime moments of life in the same way as he collected sublime poetic moment in his rich art. Alongside such lovely pleasurable moments, however, there were also disappointments and black holes — the positive moments sometimes gave way and were suppressed by discontent, shadows and fear. Situations of happiness are coupled with possible loss in his writing. The fear of being insufficient, of not being able to hold onto the good life is always present. Of being unmasked as the proletarian who does not belong in finer circles. A bog-plant with roots in the mud and constantly searching for the light without being able to reach it — to name just one metaphor that Andersen used about himself. That is why Andersen notes and registers in artistic fashion the taste of the good life! He knows it can be lost within a second. But in the artistic form, in the depiction, the sublime experience, the lovely sound, the taste gains eternal life. What is lost is retained for ever in art.

Food, Hunger and Imagination

Food is one of the moments of sublime pleasure that Andersen often cultivates. The writer maintained a conversation with food over the years and its potential was exploited in his art and his diaries. The gastronomic element, however, is often connected to illness and anxiety.

As differing writers as the cultural historian Peter Riismøller and the Norwegian psychiatrist and writer Finn Skårderud have, from widely differing perspectives and intentions, described the helpless language of hunger and deficiency. In *Sultegrænsen* (The Hunger Borderline) from 1971 described the importance hunger and the awareness of the terrifying nearness of the hunger borderline in Denmark had in the period right up to and even including the first decades of the 20th century (Riismøller, Skårderud). Riismøller shows how the culture of survival developed in an eternal struggle against hunger that was on one's doorstep the moment anything went wrong. Riismøller describes how the animals went amok when, after a long winter indoors with dry straw as fodder they were at last let loose into fields of green, juicy clover. They go berserk, eat themselves blind and half-crazed. Riismøller shows that people in straitened circumstances — he refers to them as the forms of affliction — such people, whose growth or lack of same was typified all

life long by malnutrition and who died far too early, also went berserk in momentary gluttony and self-indulgence in slaughtering binges and sheer sensuality.

The Norwegian psychiatrist Finn Skårderud, in books such as *Sultekunstnerne: Kultur, krop og kontrol* (Hunger artists: Culture, body and control) from 1991 and *Uro: En rejse i det moderne selv* (Restlessness: A journey into the modern self) from 1998, describes how behind such modern phenomena as anorexia and bulimia it is possible in principle to trace a long line back in European cultural history, one that deals with the staging and cultivation of the body, food, hunger, renunciation and suffering. The body, Skårderud says, is often for religious or ritual purposes, exposed to the suffering of hunger, so that the culture in question can express its total control through the individual body, the single individual. For that reason, food and its consumption often — and in various culture-historical periods — has been staged in a duality of strict sinfulness and a hedonistic enjoyment of purgation and puritanism. Food, menus, food consumption, diet become an instrument and the subject of a duality of the utmost voluptuousness and the utmost anxiety. Food and the enjoyment of the delights of the well-stocked table are portrayed in art as sources of this dangerously seductive fantasy. Food becomes fascinating show dishes, and in renunciation lies the self-evidence of control (Frandsen, "Hunger and Plenty") .

Andersen never directly starved as a child. But his childhood in a poor quarter of Odense was partly typified by a moderation that was acutely necessary, and partly, at the charity school, by an environment where there were children marked by hunger and lack.

As a shoemaker outside the guild, Andersen's small family in Munkemøllestræde definitely did not have access to the rich man's table, let alone habits. When his father died in 1816, with Hans then eleven years old, this meant a further serious shove in the direction of a social underworld for the sensitive boy. Anxiety must have towered over him with its long, ugly shadows.

Despite this, young Hans Christian occasionally feasted at the rich man's table — though mostly with his eyes. For he sometimes visited the houses of the wealthy in the rich part of Odense when there were festive occasions, and he sometimes took to singing for those present. This could give him a few pennies — perhaps even a few mouthfuls? The fine menus, the well-stocked tables were however — and in the literal sense of the term — merely show dishes for the boy. As in a theatre, as in a peepshow where illusions of the fairytale were enacted! Look, don't touch! Look, but this is not real reality! These upper-class homes with their well-stocked tables were not his world. He was an outsider! He was allowed to look, observe, maybe even fantasise, but not be one of the diners. Perhaps that scenario is present in the

writer:

> The fine food and the fine tables as fascinating show dishes that acquire their own life when played and replayed for the imagination. This gives one practise at describing and fantasising. Andersen never forgot the shadows. The mould-breaker knew his own limitations and remembered his background — but in language the show dishes could unfold and expand. (Frandsen, "Hans Christian Andersen in his Own Age")

Andersen saw children in his own age suffering under the social conditions that prevailed. He saw children be exposed to terrible things and experiences. He himself was forced to attend executions, and also had to visit his mentally ill maternal grandfather at the asylum where the patients were kept locked up. Andersen registered all of this. He never forgot the wounds and the traumas. His answer to them was to work with the imagination, with love and mercy. In the world of fantasy and fairytale he found an outlet, not as a kind of flight, never as flight, but as a way of confronting the unbearable. Secondly, he had a profound trust in a God who was not a determinative God but the principle of goodness and love in the world. God's greatest gift of grace to him was his imagination and his ability to translate social experiences, traumatic experiences and mental wounds into poetic expression. That is why his stories are not just nice, entertaining stories for children. They are often violent, insistent, sinister stories about the unacknowledged demons of human life.

To Where the Swallow Flies

"Thumbelina" (1835) is a strange story, which on one hand has a simple plot, but which also contains many symbolic meanings. In the opening passage it says: "There was once a woman who so much wanted to have a teeny-weeny child, but she had no idea where she was to get one from" (Andersen, vol. I 111). She goes to an old witch, who takes her quite literally, for she does indeed get a 'teeny-weeny child', a girl that is only one inch tall — the top joint of a thumb.

Thumbelina is stolen, taken away from her mother by an ugly, nasty, large, wet toad mother. She must prepare herself for a life in the mud, in darkness. But the swallow, the beautiful bird, now becomes her redemption, saving her from the threatening trauma having to spend the rest of her life in winter and underground darkness. At a symbolic level, the swallow, who is redeemed by Thumbelina's love, is a messenger or disciple, who takes her from the cold North to the eternal warmth of the South. It lifts her up and carries her over forests, lakes, and the snow-clad

mountain tops that separate north from south. In Hans Christian Andersen's writing, migratory birds such as the swallow, the nightingale and the stork often have symbolic roles as mediators between south and north. And in many instances in Andersen's oeuvre, he praises the South — Italy, Portugal and Spain — as countries and regions that contain a glimpse of eternity and memories of Paradise.

The swallow and Thumbelina fly to the South, where she is united with the people — the elves or flower-angels — to which she not only belongs but whose queen she is destined to become. The flower's angel first decides, however, that the name Thumbelina, which is cold and technical, is to be replaced by the name Maja. In Greek mythology "Maia" is the name of the beautiful nymph that is married to the god Zeus and the mother of Hermes, who among other things was the god of travelling and human movement. In Roman mythology, "Maja" is the goddess of spring — just think of the month of May — and thus for the return of plants and warmth.

It is a story about travelling across the water, the land, under the ground and in the air. But "Thumbelina" is also a symbol-laden story from Andersen's fertile imagination. Thumbelina is too small for this world, is saved and gains her true format as the Maja of the spirit and nature in the Garden of Paradise, or the eternal summer.

Hans Christian Andersen was himself a traveller. He travelled through Europe time and time again and also travelled inside Denmark. In terms of literature too he was a traveller. His works, and in particular his fairytales, often contain the journey, the change or the transformation. His main characters are nearly always on their way from one situation to another, or from one state to another. They are on their way out into the world or crossing inner or outer boundaries. They are in motion and often driven by a searching, a longing or a destiny. 'Thumbelina' is travelling. And "The Little Mermaid," "The Ugly Duckling," "The Steadfast Tin Soldier," "The Travelling Companion," "The Story of a Mother," "The Snow Queen" are all, in their separate ways, stories about necessary journeys. The shadows are in stagnation. Stagnation is traumatic. To become a human being, you must transform. To become a human being, you must act ethical and ethical means to transform shadows and stagnation into lights and where the good God's light are shining. So to live is to travel towards the light. Hans Christian Andersen viewed himself as a swamp plant that had its roots deep in mud and sin, but that, with its stem and leaves, constantly strove upwards towards the life-giving light and the sun's rays. "Thumbelina" is a story that unfolds in the artistic strivings of the swamp plant. "Thumbelina" describes — and is — a journey towards the light and the light is on the ethical side of

human living.

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H. C. Andersen, Literature, and Ethics: New Perspectives on Old Stories

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Abstract We all know H. C. Andersen as the writer of wonderful and enchanting stories. Many people have also pointed to H. C. Andersen as a writer that touches on ethical issues, such as the critique of hypocrisy and blind allegiance to authority in *The Emperor's New Clothes* (*Kejserens nye Klæder*). In this article, we want to pick up on this last point and argue that ethical reflection is an integrated part of many of H. C. Andersen's stories, and that this reflection often takes a form that is directed at moral education and development. This article has two major parts. In the first, we open with an argument for the role of literature in moral development, and then move on to argue for the special status of H. C. Andersen's stories within this field. In the second part, we present new readings of three well-known fairy tales, *The Shepherdess and the Chimney-Sweep* (*Hyrdinden og Skorstensfejeren*), *The Swineherd* (*Svinedrengen*), and *The Little Match Girl* (*Den lille Pige med Svovlstikkerne*) with the aim of showing how reading these stories from an ethical perspective opens up new dimensions of H. C. Andersen's magic work.

Key words H.C. Andersen; ethics; moral development

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Introduction

We all know H. C. Andersen as the writer of wonderful and enchanting stories. Many people have also pointed to H. C. Andersen as a writer who touches on ethical issues, such as the critique of hypocrisy and blind allegiance to authority in *The Emperor's New Clothes* (*Kejserens nye Klæder*). In this article, we want to pick up on this last point and argue that ethical reflection is an integrated part of many of H. C. Andersen's stories, and that this reflection often takes a form that is directed at moral education and development. This article has two major parts. In the first, we open with an argument for the role of literature in moral development, and then move on to argue for the special status of H. C. Andersen's stories within this field. In the second part, we present new readings of three well-known fairy tales, *The Shepherdess and the Chimney-Sweep* (*Hyrdinden og Skorstensfejeren*), *The Swineherd* (*Svinedrengen*), and *The Little Match Girl* (*Den lille Pige med Svovlstikkerne*) with the aim of showing how reading these stories from an ethical perspective opens up new dimensions of H. C. Andersen's magic work.

Literature and Moral Development

Central to our readings of H. C. Andersen's stories are the ideas that literature offers us a particular form of knowledge, and that engaging in literature can further moral development. It is a standing discussion in philosophy whether and how literature may play a part in the ethical development of a person, and one way to approach this is to look at the ancient Greek discussion about this issue. In *The Republic*, Plato argues that we should be very aware of how literature may make us believe in things that are not true and may seduce us by waking our emotions and desires — which according to Plato belong to that part of humans not susceptible to moderation or reasonable arguments. As far as Plato is concerned, literary art is harmful, both for epistemological and moral reasons, because it distorts our perception and knowledge of reality, and because it speaks to the lowest and most uncontrollable part of us. "For that reason," he writes, "we must put a stop to such stories, lest they produce in the youth a strong inclination to do bad things" (Plato 391e-392).

The criticism of the moral potential of literature is thus almost as old as Western thinking itself, but the defence of literature quickly followed; it was put forward

by Plato's own student Aristotle.

Aristotle also thinks that literature appeals to our emotions, but he disagrees with Plato's view that moral development demands the suppression of our emotional lives. According to Aristotle, emotions are neither good nor bad, instead, for a person to be good or virtuous is for that person to be able to feel and display emotions in accordance with reason. The task of moral education is therefore to enable us to feel the appropriate degree of emotion in various situations, i.e., "to have these feelings at the right times on the right grounds towards the right people for the right motive and in the right way" (Aristotle, *Ethics* II.vi 1106b).

It is precisely because Aristotle places such importance on the education of our emotions that he thinks literature can have an important role in our moral formation. When we read literature, we engage emotionally with the book. We identify ourselves not just with the situation of the characters, but also with their emotions and reactions. We empathise with them, and through that we learn something about how other people might live, how they might feel and react to life and other people, and we come to reflect on how they succeed or fail to succeed in doing this in the best possible manner. We find most of the central elements of his argument for this potential of literature in his well-known definition of tragedy as "a representation [*mimêsis*] of an action of a superior kind — grand and complete in itself — […] effecting, through pity and fear, the purification [*katharsis*] of such emotions" (Aristotle, *Poetics* 1449b21-29). By engaging our emotions, literature familiarises us with these emotions and leads us through a process of purification that opens for their possible refinement. In this way, literature may help us develop an emotional life that allows for a fine-tuned understanding of the situations we encounter and a sensible and appropriate emotional response on our part.

This leads us to Aristotle's second argument for the ethical significance of literature: that literature is an art form that resembles the shape of our lives. According to Aristotle, the central element of literature is the "representation of action and life" (Aristotle, *Poetics* 1450a16-20), because it mirrors features of the way we are engaged in life as acting and living creatures, for example that life is temporally structured. There is always-already an established past against which we must make our decisions, and any decision and subsequent action reaches towards the future, towards the goal we wish to realise. This structure, where decisions and actions can only be understood if seen in connection with a person's past and future, recurs in the narratives of literature which also expand in time, and for this reason, literature is such an apt medium for an investigation of our lives with action. Furthermore, literature is not restricted to the simply copying of lives and actions as they have al-

ready unfolded; on the contrary, literature is concerned with how our lives could unfold, the possibilities available in life and action. One might even argue that it offers us an exploratorium of life.

In contemporary moral philosophy, many philosophers such as Martha Nussbaum and Cora Diamond continue to work with Aristotle's idea of the potential of literature in connection to ethical education. These thinkers take it that literature might offer us a special kind of knowledge. Not factual knowledge, but knowledge about all the different ways in which human life may develop and the many ways humans may experience life. Literature speaks about us and offers us knowledge about "what it is like" to be human, and this means, in Martha Nussbaum's words, that "our interest in literature becomes […] cognitive, an interest in finding out (by seeing and feeling and otherwise perceiving) what possibilities (and tragic impossibilities possibilities) life offers to us, what hopes and fears for ourselves it underwrites or subverts" ("Perceptive Equilibrium" 244). This knowledge of "what it is like" is often called knowledge by acquaintance, and we can see this as a development of Aristotle's idea that literature presents the possibilities of human life.[1]

Thinkers such as Nussbaum and Diamond argue that literature not only offers us morally relevant knowledge, but also ways to cultivate morally important capacities. They hold that literature can play a role in our moral cultivation by exercising and developing ethically relevant skills and abilities, such as capacities for perceptual attention, for dealing with our emotions, for imagination as well as abilities of moral understanding and reflection. One set of abilities that is important for moral understanding concerns attention; abilities to discern what is ethically relevant in a situation and to do so in a nuanced way. Thus, Nussbaum has argued that in moral life, we should give "a certain type of priority to the perception of particular people and situations, rather than to abstract rules" (*Love's Knowledge* ix). Developing such fine-tuned attention does however also involve developing the abilities of empathic understanding with other people. As an example, Cora Diamond has discussed the way that Wordsworth's poem 'The Old Cumberland Beggar' awakens our empathy, thereby showing us how in relation to others we need "a capacity to respond with deep sympathy to the feelings of other people" (298). Fiction can stimulate and further our capacities for interpersonal understanding "by presenting characters and their situations so vividly and unignorably as virtually to compel the reader to "feel" what it would be to be such a character in such a situation—no small achievement, and one of no small moral significance" (Cohen 491), as Ted Cohen remarks.

Another morally important ability is imagination, because it allows us to in-

1 See also e.g. Palmer, Currie and Carroll.

vestigate how different decisions and actions would affect the people involved in a possible decision. If you want to help a friend, who is in trouble, it is better if you first, taking into account your knowledge about your friend, use your imagination to consider whether this help would be perceived as welcome or as condescending. As K.E. Løgstrup notes, "in order to become clear about what will best serve the other person we must use imagination quite as must as calculation" (Løgstrup 119). Engagement with literature offers us a possibility for cultivating and refining the imagination that conditions our understanding and interaction with others, because it mirrors another aspect of our lives, namely that human experience is always connected to a certain perspective. Even people who are in the exact same situation will perceive it very differently all according to their individual backgrounds, knowledge, and position in life — it is one thing to be a little girl accused of shoplifting and quite another to be an older woman who witnesses it, although it is the same situation to a certain extent. Literature makes it possible for us to experience these changes in perspective, and in doing this, literature offers us the opportunity to imaginatively put ourselves in the place of the other.

In reading literature, we seek to discern what is morally relevant in the situations described, we participate in reflections on the characters' actions and reactions, we feel and react emotionally to them, and we are constantly imagining how a situation might turn out. By engaging and refining such abilities, literature may play a role in moral education.

H. C. Andersen and Ethics

We have argued that literature gives us the possibility to see and to experience the world from another viewpoint. During the actual process of reading we open ourselves up to another way of perceiving the world; a way which we may reject, accept, or wonder about afterwards, but while we are in that particular literary universe, we are "an Other." Literature and the reading of it thus gives us (or may give us) knowledge and experiences which then become a part of our moral understanding. That is why literature is morally important. Not because it should teach us certain ethical values or principles, but because it shows us the variety of values which appears in our lives, the many ways in which we may succeed — or fail to succeed — as humans, the radically different life situations and perspectives which form our choices and actions, and because the involvement with good literature develops our ethical sensibility and understanding.

This is particularly interesting in connection with a writer such as H. C. Andersen. He is read, not only by adults, but also by and to children — as opposed

to most other literary superstars. Because he is so loved by children, the ethical and formative aspect of his stories has a huge potential impact. One of the first reviews of Andersen's fairy-tales in fact mirrors Plato's worries about the possible corrupting influence of literature, stating that "nobody will be able to claim that the child's sense of propriety will be improved by reading about a princess who rides in her sleep on the back of a dog to a soldier who kisses her."[1] In contrast, we will argue for the ethically illuminating nature of Andersen's stories. In many of these, the reader is placed in a position where she may or perhaps has to relate to particular ethical problems within the story; for instance, it is difficult to read about the little match girl without being drawn in and reacting emotionally to the suffering involved in and the injustice of her situation and the indifference and maybe even cruelty of the people around her. In other stories such as *The Shepherdess and the Chimney Sweep*, Andersen shows us how an individual's specific character may limit the possibilities and potentials that she is able to realise in her life — as it happens when the shepherdess lingers on the brink of the big, wide world and returns to the smaller, but safer reality that she knows. In this manner, the stories become a part of our own development, and this happens to both the grown-up reader and the child that listens to the stories.

We would like to mention some anecdotal examples showing that Andersen's stories can have this impact. In August 2016, a conference with the title *Hans Christian Andersen's Values in Modern Education* was held in connection with the H. C. Andersen Festivals in Odense, and a number of Danish and Chinese scholars and students participated. One student claimed that Andersen had "shaped my values," and Tao Xiping, Honorary President of UNESCO in the Asian-Pacific Region, argued that the Dane was a "designer of the soul." Those are grand words, but they also beg the question: what is it then that Andersen's stories might teach us?

In an ethical investigation of literature, there are two possible strategies. First, to treat the literary text as a writer's intentional contribution to an ethical debate with a clear theme and coherent arguments. This is not the strategy that we will pursue; instead, we wish to see the texts as a presentation of various ethically important aspects of life and various possible ethical positions and conflicts which challenge our ethical assumptions, and which add to our ethical thinking exactly because of their literary form.

In the following, we will therefore not speculate about Andersen's own ethical standpoint — it may very well be that "Andersen completely lacks a view of life" (Kierkegaard 32), a well-integrated philosophy of life, as the Danish philosopher

1 Quoted from Grønbech, 90.

Søren Kierkegaard famously claimed.[1] Also, we will not argue that Andersen's stories are ethical *per se*, but rather argue that what they do is allowing the reader to investigate and reflect on ethical problems — and that is much more important. Neither do we think that the stories present us with readymade moral answers or positions, but rather that they challenge readers to work through ethical issues for themselves. We here disagree with Bengt Holbek, who talks of the message in the story *The Wild Swans* "that innocent goodness triumphs over evil" and remarks that "In Andersen's universe, the qualities of good and evil have become absolute" (231). Rather, we think that Andersen is less an advocate of a specific moral position in his stories, such as for example sentimentalism, and that he deals more in possibilities than in absolutes, showing or inviting us to engage in different moral worldviews. We thus read the fairy tales in line with Bo Grønbech, who notes that they are "not harmless and innocent reading. If you know how to read, they will leave your soul disturbed" (131).

In the following we will therefore investigate what ethical dimensions and situations we are presented with in three of his stories and explore the ethical positions or questions which we find in *The Little Match Girl*, *The Swine Herd* and *The Shepherdess and the Chimney-Sweep*, while keeping in mind that the best stories do not moralise or impute an ethical position on the reader. Instead, they demand that you, however briefly, *respond*. The ethical H. C. Andersen is the one who ends a story like *The Gardener and the Noble Family* with the appeal: "Now you may think about it!" It is in this interaction with the text that reader, literature and ethics come together in the best possible manner. The following is not concerned with Andersen's ethics, but with how we can discuss the ethical potential of literature through Andersen's stories.

The Little Match Girl

Most of us know about literature that has an ethical dimension. A literature which does not merely have an aesthetic purpose, but which is also oriented towards life and which tries to engage its reader in its subject matter. This does not mean that this literature is political or moralising, only that it relates to something, for instance its age or the relationship between parents and children, and that it strives to make its reader do the same. Andersen's *The Little Match Girl* is a prime example of a literary text with such an ethical aspect.

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1 The sentence is translated from Danish, "Andersen aldeles mangler Livs-Anskuelse." Kierkegaard makes this claim in his biting review of Andersen's *Only a Fiddler* (*Kun en Spillemand*, 1837), published in Danish with Kierkegaard's personal papers.

We all know the story. The girl is poor, freezing and hungry, she strikes the matches, experiences a warmth of sorts, and dies — and only a reader with a heart of stone could remain unmoved and indifferent. "No sentimental phrases mar this story," as Grønbech notes, it is "remarkable for its soberness" (115). Yet the ending of the story is open to interpretation.

Let us, however, begin with the opening lines that establish the girl's situation and the tone of the story with remarkable pace and economy. It is a cold, dark, and snow-filled evening. It is also New Year's Eve, an evening of joy for most people, but not for the girl who is poor, bareheaded and barefoot. Her extremely exposed position is illustrated as society in the shape of two carriages rattles by, and a boy steals one of her slippers since he might be able to use it one day. This boy actually has the privilege of being able to imagine a (better) future which the little match girl obviously cannot. As a matter of fact, she cannot even appreciate "her long fair hair, which hung in pretty curls over her neck," because she has far more important things to worry about such as hunger. Andersen knew pretty well that future prospects and good looks do not count for much when your stomach is empty.

It does not look too good for the girl because nobody wants to buy her matches, and returning home is not a solution for her since only more cold and a beating await her there. So, she sits herself in a corner and strikes the first match, and immediately it seems to her that she is sitting next to a great iron stove. The second match discloses a sumptuous dinner on the other side of the wall, and the third match puts her beneath "the most beautiful Christmas tree." Together these three vignettes expose a bottomless gulf between the girl's reality and her dreams — dreams which happen to be real for others, because as Andersen points out, the girl had *seen* a wondrous Christmas tree "at the rich merchant's home." If the reader did not already feel a bit uneasy about the slightly accusing and indicting formulations in the beginning of the story about how no one had bought anything from her or given her anything, then surely the description of the materialism and excesses of Christmas makes for an uncomfortable reading. The story might easily have ended here, because the girl's sufferings and the social, economic and material inequalities have been made clear, and the reader will most probably be more generous the next time she sees a match girl or a beggar on the streets. The story, however, has another layer that is important for an ethical reading, namely the religious.

When the girl sees a shooting star, she remembers her old grandmother who seems to personify the ideal Christian faith. The grandmother is friendly, shining, kind and lovely, and in order to keep her with her the girl strikes all the matches at once. Immediately afterwards the girl and her grandmother ascend with exultation

to the heavens where there is no cold, hunger or fear. And the story might also have ended here, even if this ending would probably have left us with a slightly different impression, as the ascension suggests that the little match girl has her just rewards in Paradise. If that is true, then the rest of us, the ones who are comfortably off, do not have to worry about the social injustices, or be weighed down by the responsibility of knowing about them. In other words, if the story stops here, the readers are in a sense off the hook: They have the possibility of not relating emotionally to the wretched poverty described.

However, Andersen has given the story about the little match girl an open ending; a quivering ending which leaves it up to the reader herself to judge how the girl's death must ultimately be interpreted and understood. Here are the final, concluding lines:

> But in the corner, leaning against the wall, sat the little girl with red cheeks and smiling mouth, frozen to death on the last evening of the old year. The New Year's sun rose upon a little pathetic figure. The child sat there, stiff and cold, holding the matches, of which one bundle was almost burned.
>
> "She wanted to warm herself," the people said. No one imagined what beautiful things she had seen, and how happily she had gone with her old grandmother into the bright New Year.

The ascension scene suggests that this *is* a happy ending. The girl is in a better place now — as the saying goes — and death is not an ending, but a beginning of a new and better life. And you may notice the words "bright" and "beautiful" which obviously define this new life with grandmother; "bright" is thus repeated three times in the final three paragraphs, and it is underlined that there is no cold, hunger or fear with God. Simultaneously, however, the final paragraphs present a condemnation and a head-on criticism of a society where no one takes care of the poorest, and where little girls die of frost and cold. The story thus juxtaposes "poverty and privilege" as Perri Klass points out (Klass). What good does it do that the little match girl has "seen" something beautiful in her moment of death when the reality is that she has died on the doorstep of society, the text asks, but it does not answer. These paragraphs also involve an implied criticism of the mainly passive compassion of the bourgeoisie which reveals itself in the remark "She wanted to warm herself!" where the response focuses on the burned matches — and not on the reasons behind the girl's death. Still, the interpretation is up to the reader herself, the story merely calls for the form of "deep sympathy" described by Diamond, and in this manner

Andersen's story has a potential for change; regardless of whether it makes its reader think, understand, feel or act, it has brought about a reaction.

To sum up, *The Little Match Girl* has an ethical potential because it establishes a situation, a fictive universe in which the reader experiences a world which might be fundamentally different from her own, but which nevertheless contains a common humanity that she must react to. We are not arguing that the reader is put on trial in the story, as she is certainly free to follow Andersen's Christian assumption that the girl is at a better place at the end of the story, but as a reader she is definitely summoned to take a stand. The story demands a reaction.

The Swineherd

Another thing that happens if you read Andersen's stories ethically is that it sometimes throws new light on the old stories. Let us take a look at *The Swineherd* which most people remember as having something to do with a prince who disguises himself as a swineherd, and a princess who is silly and materialistic. But that is not the whole story. It begins with a prince who is "rather bold" and asks for the Emperor's daughter, even though he is poor. This tells us that he is an ambitious young man, and the fact that hundreds of princesses would have said "yes" probably also tells us that he is very good-looking as well. However, this particular princess is not interested, and she dismisses his courtship and his presents. Now, the story could have ended here. But as it says "it was not so easy to discourage" the prince, and as ethical readers we have to consider what that means. Does it mean that the prince, as so many other masculine heroes, fights for what he wants? Or is it a problem that he pursues the princess after she has rejected him? Is he entitled to get the woman he wants? Does "no" actually mean "yes"?

In the main part of the story, the prince disguises himself, and through an elaborate plan he lures the princess into giving him several kisses. But the kissing is discovered by the Emperor, and he reacts rather strongly as the following quote shows:

> "Such naughtiness!" he said when he saw them kissing, and he boxed their ears with his slipper just as the swineherd was taking his eighty-sixth kiss.
>
> "Be off with you!" the Emperor said in a rage. And both the Princess and the swineherd were turned out of his empire. And there she stood crying. The swineherd scolded [skændede], and the rain came down in torrents.

So, they are thrown out of the empire, and the princess is crying but the prince scolds. Something important gets lost in translation here because the Danish word

"skænde" actually means both to *scold* and *to dishonour or to violate.* And this is exactly what the prince does: he violates the princess, he dishonours her through his plan, and then he even says: "I have only contempt for you!" But the ethical question here is whether the prince in any way is in a position where he can morally condemn her? Who has actually acted in bad faith in this story? An ethical reading would certainly point to *the prince* who takes the road of payback and tries to revenge himself because the princess has rejected his offer of marriage. He consciously destroys her life because she did not want him. A revenge which under no circumstances reflects her offence.

So, why do we not feel bad about the princess at the end of the story? Probably because she is not a very likeable character. Our first impression of her is negative; she refuses the precious gifts of the prince, the rose and the nightingale, and because of that she strikes most readers as stupid, uneducated, materialistic and shallow. Her taste is very simple; she prefers a pussy-cat to a nightingale, she can only play the piano with one finger, and she thinks it is very interesting to know what other people are having for dinner. However, having a simple taste does not make her a bad person, and the fact that most of us do not feel sorry for her ending up completely alone and dishonoured probably says more about us than about her. From this perspective, Andersen's story might just be revealing our own self-righteous bigotry.

Still, the princess undoubtedly shows poor judgement when she is persuaded to buy the kettle and the rattle for secret kisses, but she is hardly the first young person who has been indiscreet in the endeavour to gain something. But has she really deserved what she gets? Is it really true what the prince claims, namely that the princess has been "properly punished"? The central question, which an ethical reading of *The Swineherd* leads us to, is whether we should point the moral finger at the victim or the victimiser. Who is ethically in the wrong in this story? We do not get a straightforward answer to this question, but, as Nussbaum would argue, Andersen certainly reveals to us knowledge of the tragic possibilities of life and an experience of how it may be to be outcasted because of some minor transgressions. At a time when the unwanted posting of nudes online, so-called revenge porn, is a potential risk in many young people's lives, the story about a girl who loses everything because a boy cannot accept her rejection of him, is surprisingly relevant. If we can understand and emotionally engage with the situation of the princess at the end, ostracised, victimised, and utterly alone, then we might realise that it is never acceptable to harass or destroy other people just because they do not want you. And neither is acceptable to despise or wash one's hands of a young person who has made a mistake. *That* is the ethical message lying underneath *The Swineherd*, and the story

thus provides us with knowledge of what it would be like to lose everything through a moment of indiscretion.

The Shepherdess and the Chimney-Sweep

Finally, we will turn our attention to *The Shepherdess and the Chimney-Sweep*. A traditional reading of this story will regard the shepherdess as someone who fails, as someone who does not quite rise to the occasion. But as was the case with *The Swineherd*, an ethical reading of the story offers a different perspective which provides a more nuanced portrait of the shepherdess — and of what constitutes a happy life.

But we will begin somewhere else, namely with the photo *Untitled Film Still #21* by Cindy Sherman. The motif is that of the insecure, young woman, and in the photo, she seems anxious, off balance, unsettled by her first encounter with the big city. She expresses a dis-attunement and an almost existential despair which, in our opinion, perfectly illustrates the shepherdess' feelings at the moment when she reaches the rooftop. It is this particular expression that we have to keep in mind when we judge her actions in the story.

The shepherdess is offered the world when she reaches the top of the chimney. But how did she end up there in the first place? Well, she only decides to run into the big, wide world because she does not want to be forced to marry General Headquarters-Hindquarters etcetera. This is not a positive choice. It is a negative one. And the young couple know this. The chimney-sweep even looks her straight in the face and asks her, not once, but twice, if she "really" is brave enough to go through this escape which shows little faith in her determination. When he asks her a second time, she looks into the stove and answers: "It looks very black in there" — and still she follows him. It is obvious that she does not have great expectations of the life that awaits at the end of the chimney, but she fancies a life as the general's wife, in the dark chest, even less. This possibility is claustrophobic and does not leave a lot of room for the shepherdess as an *individual*. It does not offer her a *room of her own*, so to speak.

Still, when the shepherdess finally reaches the top of the chimney, and the big, wide world stretches out before her, we as readers expect her to be happy. After all, freedom and opportunities await her. The problem is that the proportions are too big for her and "her little head." She cannot handle all these possibilities, and she cries: "This is too much […] I can't bear it. The wide world is too big." As readers, we might shake our heads in disbelief at this, but that might just show how we fail to appreciate her view of life. We may enjoy the possibilities and freedom of a life

under the starry skies, but she clearly does not. She feels like the young woman in Sherman's photo. Anxious and in despair.

The shepherdess is not brave. She is not courageous. She is not interested in the big adventure. She has no grand ambitions to pursue. That does not mean that she is indifferent or easily satisfied, but merely that she is very average and human. She does not want to be locked up in the chest, but she does not want to live among the rooftops either, because that world is too big and challenging for her. She does not want to marry somebody she fears, but she would like to marry somebody she has a lot in common with. She may be a bit high-strung, and she is not always nice to her chimney-sweep, but these are her short-comings and her choices, and she does have her reasons which we must respect. Isn't it perfectly ok that the shepherdess learns from her mistakes and acts accordingly? Is it not acceptable that any young girl makes a choice about education or residence, and then grows wiser and realises that that choice and the consequences that followed did not make her happy? Of course, it is — even if her choices are different from the choices we would have made. If we consider who the shepherdess is, her reasons do not have to seem incomprehensible to us.

An ethical reading of the story would thus underline that our judgement of other people's lives and choices must begin with a willingness to understand the basis for these choices — and not with our own values and norms. And it would also show that a good and happy life must be in attunement with your dreams and abilities. Not all of us make great and courageous decisions, Andersen tells us. Actually, like the shepherdess most of us make timid and worried decisions, and sometimes even against a background of negativity and self-doubt, but these choices shouldn't be disregarded. It is significant that within the story, the journey to the rooftops is not a failure or a disaster because the shepherdess actually realizes who or what she is *through* that journey. She recognizes that she has made a mistake; that this life is not what she thought it would be. She really does not want the great wide open, but rather the security and the cosiness of well-known and well-defined surroundings. In other words, she finds her identity and right place in life through the story's home-away-home structure, and the end *is* a happy end. The shepherdess is never married to General Headquarters-hindquarters etcetera, and she remains together with her chimney-sweep, and "they kept on loving each other until the day they broke."

So, in our ethical reading, *The Shepherdess and the Chimney-Sweep* ultimately asks its readers to enter the worldview of the shepherdess through the use of their imagination and come to understand that her hopes for a good life may be quite different from theirs. Such imaginative understanding may help us to acquire a little

more understanding of the life choices that people make — however wrong or petty or unambitious they may seem at first glance. In other words, Andersen's story offers us the opportunity to improve our capacity for moral discernment.

The Ethical Potential of Andersen's Stories

Andersen's fairy tales may have been intended for children — but Andersen had the hope that grown-ups would listen in as well. "I get an idea for grown-ups," Andersen says about his own work, "and then tell my tale to the little ones, while remembering that Mother and Father will be listening and must have something to think about" (Spink 66).[1] What we have aimed to show is that listening in may be rewarding, not because Andersen provides us with ready-made ethical answers, but because of the questions and experiences that he makes available for us. In this way, we take Andersen's stories to be arch examples of ethical literature in the sense developed in the first part of the article because they present the lives, the experiences, perspectives, ethical challenges and dilemmas of human beings and invite us to emotionally and imaginatively engage in these experiences and challenges. Andersen thus offers us, children as well as grown-ups, an opportunity for moral development and for a widening of our moral understanding. Furthermore, even if Andersen's stories are shaped by their times, we also hope that we have been able to illustrate how they deal with universal ethical themes that can be tied to challenges facing people today — something which makes Andersen very much our contemporary.

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1 The quote is from a letter from Andersen to the Danish poet B.S. Ingemann, see also Grønbech, 91-2.

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Denmark, My Native Land! Hans Christian Andersen as a Happiness Object with Killjoy Potential

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Abstract Hans Christian Andersen is staged as a national icon in contemporary Danish political and cultural contexts, where certain affective perceptions of the Danish community are attached to him and his authorship. In this article, we discuss the content and function of some of these constructions by use of cultural studies scholar Sara Ahmed's term *killjoy* (*The Promise of Happiness*). It is our main argument that while Andersen's oeuvre represents a complexity of meanings, this complexity is sometimes lost when certain interpretations are extracted from his texts. Our analytical focus is on such polarized receptions and readings of Andersen and his authorship, and it is our aim to accentuate the complexity of the intermediate layer where different values are negotiated. Thus, we argue that Andersen's own texts contain a killjoy-potential that can be brought to the fore through analysis of his texts and different stagings of him.

Key words Hans Christian Andersen; nationalism; killjoy; canonization; romanticism

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reading of the authorship of Hans Christian Andersen arguing that his ambivalent descriptions of nature, the aesthetic use of things in the so-called object tails, the interest in natural science and the meta-poetic considerations found in Andersen's texts can be analyzed with perspectives from current theories of ecocriticism, new materialism and posthumanism to illuminate an anti-universalist aspect of his oeuvre; **Anne Klara Bom**, PhD, is Associate Professor at the Hans Christian Andersen Centre, affiliated with the Department for the Study of Culture at the University of Southern Denmark. Her research field is cultural studies. In her PhD dissertation she presented Hans Christian Andersen as an analytical object for cultural analysis and since then, she has published extensively on Andersen as a cultural icon, including how he can be approached analytically and methodologically, and how he is staged and perceived in contexts of cultural tourism and (inter-)national value systems.

Introduction

Hans Christian Andersen is a canonized author in Denmark. Thus, it has been decided that his work is a significant element in Danish literary heritage, and that he has contemporary potential as an icon through which we can continue to tell stories about Denmark, Danish values and Danishness. The authorship of Andersen is multi-faceted. It contains highly complex narratives, and covers a great variety of themes. Many of the themes that continue to spark debates across borders, genders and ages are profoundly ambivalent. The texts are often constructed as open-ended deliberations on ethical and existential themes, and therefore they rarely present a moral with a clear and fixed understanding of the world. In spite of this inherent ambivalence, or perhaps because of the lack of clear moral stances, it is possible to extract phrases, sections and arguments from the texts and put them to use in reductive ways that correspond with current hegemonic interpretations of Andersen and his work. A Danish example of this is the nationalistic perception of Andersen as a national romantic. In this article, we want to focus on this particular understanding of his work. In the first part of the article, we want to show examples of how this framing can be said to work as what cultural studies scholar Sara Ahmed has termed a *happiness object* (*The Promise of Happiness*) in contemporary Danish discourses, but also how there is something in the texts that can somehow be said to resist this hegemonic understanding: There is a killjoy-potential in Andersen's texts ("The Politics of Bad Feeling") — a complexity that cannot be silenced and which, when brought to the forefront, has the potential to undermine the more reductive interpretations of them.

In her extensive work on how affects work in cultural politics, Ahmed argues that "politics works in complex ways to align individuals with and against others, a process of alignment that shapes the very surface of collectives" ("The Politics of Bad Feeling" 73). In line with this, we focus on specific uses of Andersen that illustrate how he is sometimes attached to nationalistic discourses, and how he is framed as a *happiness object* that contains and sustains a Golden Age national narrative about Denmark as a small, idyllic, monocultural and homogenous fairy tale nation: a narrative about national pride. This particular "frozen" version of Hans Christian Andersen is but one of many. It has therefore been an ambition for recent contributions to Hans Christian Andersen research to complicate "frozen" readings of the texts, for example by questioning biographical and moralistic readings of the work. Arguments have been made to see Andersen as a cosmopolitan and internationally oriented writer rather than a Biedermeier author (de Mylius et al., 1993, Binding, 2014). Similarly, several efforts have been made to consider Andersen a modern author, both in Danish and international contexts (Bom et al., 2014; Segala et al., 2010).

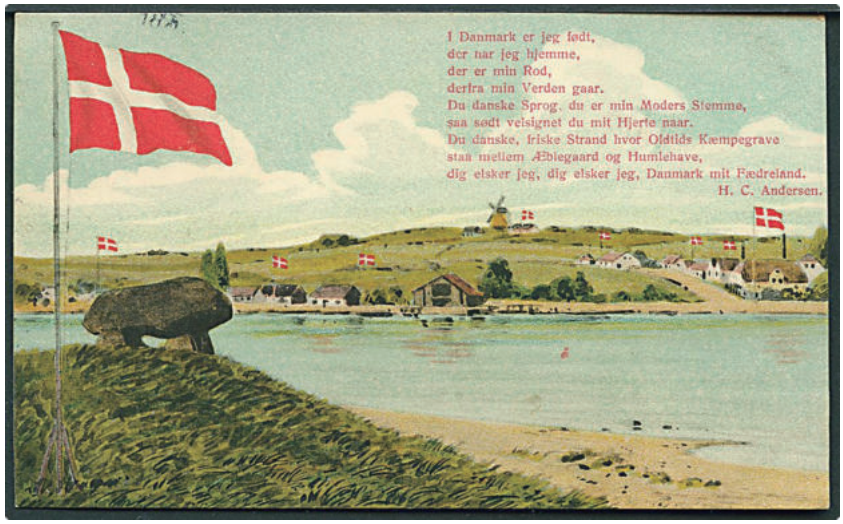
The question of nationalism and Andersen has, however, not been critically addressed by researchers. Several researchers agree that Andersen's texts are more internationally minded than national, but the question of how national romanticism works in the oeuvre and how this has been used by his posterity has not been the object of discussion.

Consequently, the second part of the article uses Ahmed's further argument that nationalistic narratives must be questioned and disarmed by *killjoys* as a point of departure. Here, we turn to examples from Andersen's own writings and argue that he himself works as a killjoy. Literary scholar Aleida Assmann sees processes of canonization as highly active exceptions from the normality of personal and cultural life which is to forget: The canon is the actively circulated cultural memory that keeps the past present: In order to remember, something must be forgotten (Assmann 97-98). The *killjoy* examples from Andersen's work are currently placed in what Assmann would call the *archive*: the "storehouse for cultural relicts" that does not have an immediate space in the active cultural memory and canon. These elements, however, always hold the potential to be opened up in new contexts and interpretations, argues Assmann (99). In conclusion, therefore, we suggest that critical research that combines literary and cultural studies can perform a useful critique of the cultural-political use of Andersen and his texts. We believe that it can be fruitful to regard his work as complex questions rather than unequivocal answers, and that such a framing of Andersen can open critical perspectives on contemporary issues

such as nation, migration and identity.

Andersen as a Romantic Object of Happiness

There are several examples of how it can be easy to see Hans Christian Andersen as a representative of romanticism in a universalist and nationalist sense. Among the prominent examples are isolated readings of the fairy tale "The Bell" (1845) and of the poems "Denmark, my Native Land" (1850) and "Jutland" (1859)[1].



1920's postcard, unknown painter[2]

This postcard from the 1920's presents a nationalistic framing of "Denmark, my Native Land." The text on the postcard is the first verse of the poem, and the picture shows a dolmen stone reminiscent of the Danish Viking era, which is a powerful

1 Niels Kofoed's characterization of Andersen as "wholeheartedly romantic and anti-academic eagerly concerned with folklore and the popular cause." (215) supports this view on his authorship.

2 The English version of the first verse of the poem reads:
"In Denmark I was born, 'tis there my home is,
From there my roots, and there my world extend.
You Danish tongue, as soft as Mother's voice is,
With you my heartbeats O so sweetly blend.
You windswept Danish strand,
Where ancient chieftain's barrow
Strands close to apple orchard, hop and mallow,
'Tis you I love - Denmark, my native land!"
("Denmark, My Native Land")

symbol for nationalist affects, not only in Denmark but also in Scandinavia more broadly. There is also a little windmill on top of the hill, which is closely associated with the idea of the Danish nation state: In 1864, Denmark lost a war against Otto von Bismarck's Prussian forces in a very bloody battle at Dybbøl Mølle in Southern Jutland in the Southwest of Denmark. This was a devastating blow to the nationalism and militarism that had been increasing in Denmark during the previous decade, the 1850's, ever since the Danes had been victorious in a three year-long war against the Prussians from 1848-1850. This nationalism was fueled by national romanticism in the arts. With reference to Hans Christian Andersen's poem "Jutland," landscape geographer Kenneth Olwig writes:

> Andersen's interpretation of the Jutland landscape is very much the product of the national romantic era, when Denmark was in the process of redefining itself as a homogeneous nation-state with a homogeneous national landscape. National romanticism was a cultural movement identified with the arts and that paralleled the development of political nationalism more generally. (22)

Together with "Jutland" we often find "Denmark, my Native Land" highlighted as an exemplary illustration of this national romanticism. The poem was written during the three-year war out of a nationalist passion that, as Olwig mentions, intensified at this point in time, and that motivated a return in the arts to Danish history, Nordic mythology and a reverence for the Danish landscape. Thus, romanticism in Denmark developed into what became known as the Golden Age. Golden Age nationalism produced powerful artistic and literary idealizations of Danish history, nature, pagan mythology, the Danish countryside, as the postcard from the 1920's suggests, this very Golden Age imagery might be invoked at times of peaking nationalism in Denmark. 1920 was the year Denmark was given back the substantial part of Southern Jutland that was taken by the Germans in 1864. This is known as the "Reunion" in Denmark and it is still celebrated today.

A nationalist use of Andersen's poem also appeared in 2011. The right wing, Danish People's Party used a line from "Denmark, my Native Land," the line "from here, my world extends" ("herfra min verden går") as its campaign slogan (Dansk Folkeparti). The party used the slogan in speeches, on posters and even made a song with the line as its title and central part of its chorus. In the music video, prominent party members are lined up in a setting that mimics the well-known charity songs of the 1990's such as "Heal the World." The video is sprinkled with cutaways showing a version of Denmark, which emphasizes the pastoral, rural and natural landscape in

a way that is drawing on the aesthetics of the Golden Age, and like the 1920 postcard closely identifies Andersen with this aesthetic.

These cases are examples of polarized framings of Andersen: He is staged as an icon and as what Ahmed defines as an object supposed to cause happiness, a sense of belonging:

> To be affected in a good way by objects that are already evaluated as good is a way of belonging to an affective community. We align ourselves with others by investing in the same objects as the cause of happiness. (*The Promise of Happiness* 38)

These happiness objects can take the form of social norms: education, parenthood, heteronormative relationships and family structures or similar institutions that are supposed to be self-evidently desirable and, if reached, will produce happiness. However, the objects can also function on a political, national level when cultural icons are attached to affects of belonging to a national community that is presented as static and closed. In Denmark, we argue that the Golden Age has been a workshop for the production of such nation-defining objects of happiness. As Ahmed puts it:

> Happiness is imagined as a social glue, as being what sticks people together. The mission to put glue back into communities not only suggests that communities lack such glue but also that they once had it. The program offers as its idea of happiness an image of a world in which people are less physically and socially mobile […]. This nostalgic vision of a world of 'staying put' involves nostalgia for whiteness, for a community of white people happily living with other white people. The nostalgic vision of whiteness is at once an image of racial likeness or sameness. In mourning the loss of such a world, migration enters the narrative as an unhappiness cause, as what forces people who are 'unalike' to live together. (*The Promise of Happiness* 121-122)

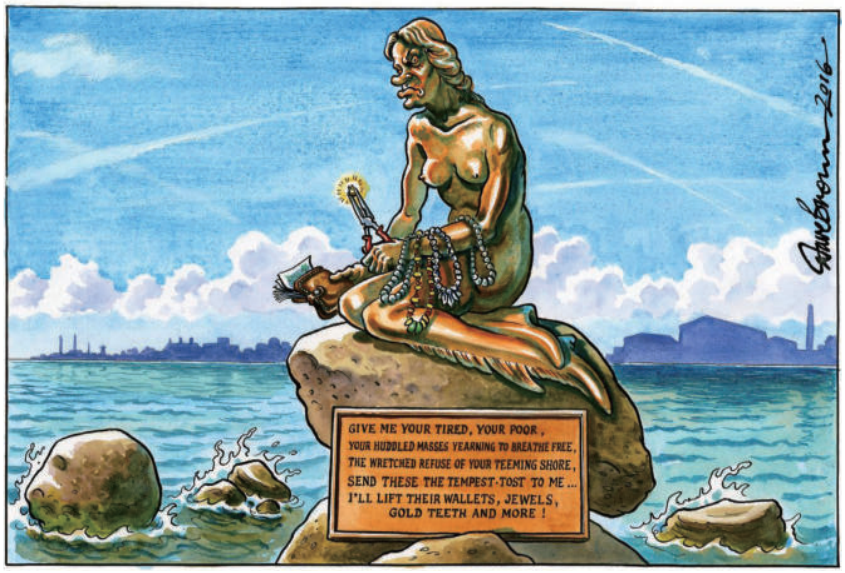
Following these thoughts, we argue that the invocation of 19th century aesthetics and the staging of Andersen as a national romantic is an attempt to put a social glue back into a community that is perceived to lack in cohesion. The trouble is of course that the production of these objects of happiness relies on exclusion. Some groups of people are left out or disqualified from attaining proximity to the iconic phenomena or institutions, either because they are denied access or because they pursue a life

that is deemed to be the cause of unhappiness by some kind of majority. But sometimes the icon or object of happiness itself might resist its own interpretation. As we shall see, pigeon-holding Andersen like that is not easy. Thus, Andersen's status as a cultural icon is not always used in these kinds of nationalist, propagandistic ways. Actually, it can also be used as a vehicle for critique. To show that, we will turn to an example of a much debated and ambiguous part of Andersen's legacy, namely The Little Mermaid, which is Danish cultural heritage in more than one sense. Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale from 1837 is a part of the Danish cultural canon, which means that the Danish government has elected this fairy tale as essential to Danish cultural heritage. And the statue of The Little Mermaid on Langelinie in Copenhagen Harbor is one of the most visited tourist attractions in the capital city. The statue is considered a national icon and it is frequently used as a visual brand of Denmark.

Following geographer and anthropologist David Harvey, we conceptualize heritage as a cultural process, which means that heritage is never static, but always dynamically in motion. In this sense, heritage is always about power, and thus, it is of interest how people engage with heritage — how they re-work it, adjust it and contest it (Harvey 2001). This focus will enable us to see how identity, power and authority is produced throughout society. As a monument that contains a great deal of affect, the mermaid does not stand alone. Throughout history, monuments have been significant elements through which identities are negotiated. When monuments work as unifying symbols in these ways, they are objects of affective meaning-making: People tell stories through monuments. This is also the case with the statue of The Little Mermaid. The statue represents a particular interpretation of the story by Andersen, and in a broader context it is symptomatic of the understanding of him and his authorship as gentle and effeminate. With the statue's solemnity, self-complacency and fairy tale-like qualities, it also tells a certain narrative about Denmark as a peaceful fairy tale country. In this version, the mermaid is framed as a cause of happiness, but that framing has repeatedly been contested and debated through different kinds of damage of the statue: It has been dismembered, splattered with paint, dressed in a burka and a gasmask, and decapitated several times. These actions have frequently been explained as activism or artistic performances rather than just vandalism, and they have often involved some comment or stance on a current political situation (*BBC:* "Little Mermaid").

All applications of The Little Mermaid are examples of how Hans Christian Andersen's legacy is put to use. In Denmark, there are several tendencies towards what sociologist Nikolas Rose calls a community's "harnessing" of a common good

(176): Andersen can work within this harnessing as something that is privately owned — a common, but mostly for the Danes. But sometimes, the outside world also wagers in with a use of Andersen that works as a contrast to this framing.



Dave Brown's illustration to the article by Lizzie Dearden: "Denmark approves controversial refugee bill allowing police to seize asylum seekers' cash and valuables," *The Independent*

In 2016, cartoonist Dave Brown made a satirical illustration for an article in the British newspaper *The Independent*. The occasion was that the Danish government had passed a refugee bill that instructed the police to search all refugees at the border for valuable objects and cash, because everything that was estimated to have a value of more than 10.000 Danish kroner (approx. 1300 euro) was to be confiscated (Agerholm).

On his illustration, Brown uses The Little Mermaid as the personification of Denmark. The dolmen stone setting and the surroundings on Langelinie are upheld, and the same goes for the mermaid's position and tail. But then the similarities appear to stop. The mermaid's harmless and friendly appearance is replaced with a grumpy and vigilant facial expression. The girly body with fine lines is now more masculine, and the hands that were passive before now firmly grasp a wallet with cash and a pair of pliers that have just removed a gold tooth. Put together, the drawing of the mermaid still conveys a national narrative about Denmark, but this time, the narrative is told by the outside world, and the framing of a harmless fairy tale

country is overwritten with the story of a xenophobic right-wing community. The intangible heritage processes the statue is center to here are dynamic and powerful. Furthermore, this alternative national narrative about Denmark is elegantly related to the outside world through the poem on the inscription in front of the mermaid. It is a re-articulation of Emma Lazarus' famous sonnet "The New Colossus." Lazarus wrote the poem in 1883 as a contribution to an auction that had as its aim to fund money for a pedestal for the Statue of Liberty. On Brown's drawing, the closing lines of the sonnet are quoted accurately, except for the very last one where Lazarus' welcoming "I lift my lamp beside the golden door!" is replaced with the mocking "I'll lift their wallets, jewels, gold teeth and more!" Thus, aside from communicating an alternative national narrative about Denmark, Brown's illustration establishes a connection to another national monument, The Statue of Liberty. By this he reminds us that heritage monuments in general hold the potential both to convey values to the outside world and to be used in political contexts that reflect the present more than the past. Monuments such as The Statue of Liberty and The Little Mermaid are both elements that can be placed in the canon, in Assmann's sense of the word, a canon that is "defined by a notorious shortage of space," and "built on a small number of normative and formative texts, places, persons, artifacts, and myths which are meant to be actively circulated in ever-new presentations and performances" (100). In line with this, Brown's illustration of the statue is an example of how elements from the canon are staged and exposed simultaneously: If there are stories to tell through The Little Mermaid about what Danes value and how Denmark is valued, the statue indicates that such stories can be far more complex and nuanced than the unequivocal narrative about a cozy, harmless and liberated Denmark. Brown's caricature shows the power of interpretation and signals that the processes through which cultural phenomena are interpreted never stops. In itself, the statue of The Little Mermaid represents an idyllic interpretation both of the work of Hans Christian Andersen and, to a larger extent, Denmark in general. But as the contesting actions towards and framings of the statue shows, adding more layers of interpretation to such seemingly unambiguous icons, can have the potential to destabilize the hegemonic interpretations and make them deeply ambiguous. This destabilization does not, however, necessarily have to be imposed on the icon from an external perspective. In the case of Hans Christian Andersen, the ambiguity seems to be weaved into the very fabric of his texts.

Andersen as an Anti-nationalist Killjoy

I thus offer an alternative history of happiness not simply by offering different

> readings of its intellectual history but by considering those who are banished from it, or who enter this history only as troublemakers, dissenters, killers of joy. (*The Promise of Happiness* 17)

Following Ahmed, Brown's satirical drawing can be seen as an example of a killjoy that comes from the outside, enters the scene and points to those who are excluded from the affective community attached to one central happiness object: Hans Christian Andersen. What is interesting here is that this killjoy is formed by a queering of the original object of happiness that constructs and deconstructs national hegemony simultaneously. Like a puzzle picture it presents a statement alongside that statement's refutation.

This can be seen as symptomatic for the double role that Andersen sometimes plays in discursive constructions of Danishness. In an article in the popular Danish travel magazine *Ud og Se*, the Danish writer Dorthe Nors was interviewed about Danes and Danishness. She started out by delivering a scorching critique of the much-praised Danish concept "hygge" (roughly translatable as "coziness"), which is a very powerful cultural concept and object of happiness in Denmark. Everyone should strive after "at hygge sig" ("being cozy"). In the interview, Nors performs a killjoy move by pointing directly to the people left out of the community created by this object, stating that:

> 'Hygge' is a consensus seeking suppression of feelings in a community consisting of primarily white Danes who have soft blankets and fire in the fireplace.[1] (Hjortshøj 68, our translation)

One could add that given the fact that this concept of hygge is increasingly associated with food items such as different kinds of traditional servings of pork and alcohol, the kind of hygge linked to food works as a powerfully exclusionary tool and object of political conflict in the public discourse in Denmark. This concept of "hygge" is by Nors however connected to a sort of duty-based reverence for certain cultural icons, including Hans Christian Andersen:

> We Danes have grown up with the fact that if guests come to our country, we will talk nicely about everything: Grundtvig, H.C. Andersen, the bike lanes and

1 "'Hygge' er en konsensussøgende undertrykkelse af følelser i et fællesskab bestående af først og fremmest hvide danskere, der har bløde tæpper og ild i pejsen" (Hjortshøj 68).

> Olsen Banden[1] That's all well enough, I do it myself. But there are also less good things.[2] (Hjortshøj 66-68, our translation)

Here, Nors presents Hans Christian Andersen alongside other cultural icons and phenomena that are already evaluated as good, and as something we as Danes are expected to invest in, in order to belong to the Danish affective community. However, when she debuted as a writer, Nors in her own words refused to participate in this culture of consensus, which she believes also permeates the literary circles. In her concluding words, she states:

> From the beginning, I told myself that, as an author, I wanted to be known for what I did — not who I drank beer with or was petting publicly or liked on Facebook. There were several who said to me that 'that's not how it works, Dorthe'. But it has worked for me. I came in like *fucking* Clumsy-Hans.[3] (Hjortshøj 68, our translation)

After the positioning of Andersen as a representative and part of a consensus seeking culture of hygge, Nors concludes the interview by comparing herself to a character from one of Andersen's fairytales. Clumsy-Hans, the disruptor who throws mud in the face of the decadent court culture, is used as an allegory on the disturbance of consensus. As in the example with The Little Mermaid, interpretations of Andersen is used to construct both the happiness object of the affective community *and* the killjoy undermining this community, which points to an interesting ambivalence when it comes to Andersen as a cultural icon. Ahmed also touches upon the concept of ambivalence, when it comes to reading happiness:

> Cultural and psychoanalytic approaches can explore how ordinary attachments to the very idea of the good life are also sites of ambivalence, involving the confusion rather than separation of good and bad feelings. Reading happiness

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1 A 70's series of comedic movies, ed..

2 "Vi danskere er opvokset med, at hvis der kommer gæster til vores land, skal vi tale pænt om det hele: Grundtvig, H.C. Andersen, cykelstierne og Olsen Banden. Det er også fint nok, jeg gør det selv. Men der er også mindre gode ting" (Hjortshøj 66-68).

3 "Fra starten sagde jeg til mig selv, at jeg som forfatter ville kendes på, hvad jeg kunne - ikke hvem jeg drak øl med, pettede offentlig med eller likede på Facebook. Der var flere, der sagde til mig, at 'sådan fungerer det jo ikke, Dorthe'. Men det har det altså gjort for mig. Jeg kom ind som fucking Klods-Hans" (Hjortshøj 68).

> would then become a matter of reading the grammar of this ambivalence. (*The Promise of Happiness* 6)

We believe that this productive confusion concerning the attachment to happiness objects is particularly relevant with regard to the works and function of Hans Christian Andersen in Danish culture. Though he might be presented as unambiguous, he holds a potential to be framed as a site of ambivalence. We have seen this in the ways he is staged and used in contemporary culture, which can be accentuated by use of perspectives from cultural studies, but the ambivalence can also be strengthened by the use of literary analysis and a closer attention to his own writings. They too are permeated with ambivalence.

Reading the Grammar of Ambivalence

Rather than being exemplary of Andersen's overall oeuvre, it would be more accurate to consider nationalistic texts such as "Denmark, my Native Land" and "Jutland" as outliers in a body of work that for the most part is inquisitive, critical even, of the tendency of Golden Age nationalist aesthetics to turn into universalistic clichés and produce fantasies of national hegemony. This critique can be traced even in those works of Andersen that seem to adhere to the ideals of universal romanticism.[1]

In Denmark, as we have mentioned, romanticism was closely connected to nation building, but Andersen cannot be pigeonholed as a nationalist. Throughout his life, he remained what can be termed a cosmopolitan humanist, by which we mean that his works contain a humanitarianism that transcends classes and borders. And he was particularly critical towards what he saw as a specifically Danish tendency to self-complacency, to wall oneself in, cut oneself from the world and think too highly of oneself. Sometimes this resulted in decidedly anti-nationalist texts from Andersen's hand.

Of particular interest in this regard is his use of female Jewish characters in the novels *"To Be Or Not to Be"* (*"At være eller ikke være")* from 1857 and *Only a Fiddler* (*Kun en Spillemand*) from 1837. In these two novels, Esther and Naomi, respectively, offer cultural side-glances on Denmark and they often have some very critical remarks when it comes to the Danish community and national identity. Here it is a passage from *Only a Fiddler*, where Naomi speaks particularly bluntly with

1 For a further discussion of this aesthetic of ambivalence of Andersen's and its links to the concept of romantic irony, see Thomsen, *Skyggepunkter*, 2017 and Thomsen, "Funen Means Fine," 2019. The two literary examples that follow are also part of the argument in Thomsen,"Funen Means Fine," 2019 with a more literary-historical focus.

reference to Golden Age national romanticism:

> Yes, the climate was the aiding topic in the recurring conversational quarrels in the Count's home. Let poets and patriots sing and say as much as they like about the loveliness of Denmark, Naomi however declared that we live in a miserable climate. "If the Heavens had considered," she said, "that our admiration of nature should've risen to this degree, we would surely, like the snail, have been created with houses on our backs. Then we would have been relieved of this constant looking out for capes, cloaks and umbrellas that form such an integral part of our person as it is now. […] I'm no poet who sings in order to become knighted!" Naomi said, "I'm no patriotic speaker, who wants to be accepted in the great grade-book of the Danes, the "Statskalender": I appreciate what is beautiful, and if other people didn't do that to such an excessive extent, perhaps I would be excited too!" It was true. Perhaps she admired more than others the green, fragrant forest, the boldly shaped clouds, the sea and the burial mounds with the blooming blackberry vines. But she also knew that there are greater wonders in God's great creation and that our climate is terrible. (Andersen 5, 194, our translation[1])

As mentioned, we argue that the Danish Golden Age can be perceived as an aesthetic workshop that produced a lot of the objects of happiness that Danes still navigate in accordance with. With this historical perspective in mind, Naomi's harsh condemnation of a culture of consensus bears several similarities to Nors' critique from 2018.

From a narratological perspective, the choice of words in the little sentence "It was true" stands out. The narrator pops up out of nowhere to sympathize with these anti-nationalist sentiments thus placing him firmly on the side of his killjoy, Naomi. So, when Andersen is classified as a sentimental romantic and his works are used in nationalistic ways, it seems appropriate to counter this narrative by pointing out that focusing solely on the idealizing texts in his oeuvre involves ignoring the significant part of his texts that are skeptical towards this very idealization. Thus, in Assmann's terms, examples from the archive can be reactivated to question the reigning canon and canonization more generally.

1 Since no officially recognized, standardized translations of the novels exist, We have taken the liberty of translating our examples in this article ourselves. The existing translations are highly uneven in quality, exist in a lot of versions and are often re-written versions that have been stylistically embellished or otherwise altered.

An even more poignant example of this — which also relates to the question of migration touched upon in this context — is found in the latter part of *Only a Fiddler*. In the third part of the novel, the reader is introduced to a short side story about the Romani people living on the heath of Jutland, the mainland of Denmark famed for its harsh weather and climate conditions. The narrator begins by describing India, where the Romani people were thought to stem from, in terms that showcase the orientalism of the 19th century. India is believed to be like the Garden of Eden and the narrator informs us that ever since Adam and Eve were expulsed from this place, all human beings might in some sense be considered migrants living in a kind of diaspora. Thus, it is implied that all kinds of nationalistic claims that some groups of people are entitled to clearly demarcated geographical parts of the world are in fact arbitrary and unmerited. The narrator goes on to describe the Jutland heath as a rough and unforgiving environment in ways that correspond with a romantic fascination of wilderness. Then a social indignation takes over:

> Even to the north, to the barren heaths of Jutland, the youngest generation of the Pariahs migrates. We call them gypsies, scoundrels. The field of grain is their summer tent, the deep ditch their winter chamber. The children of the Pariahs don't have like the fox its cave, like the bird its nest. They walk in sludge and storm over the rough heath. There, like beasts, they give birth to their kin. The place of birth is the place of custody, so the farmer always seeks to move the pregnant women over to the neighbor's district. Thus, she is often taken from place to place on the miserable, uncomfortable wagon, without straws to lie upon, and gives birth there to her child, which is doomed to wretchedness. (Andersen 5, 218-219, our translation)

In compassionate terms, the narrator describes the conditions of the Romani people. He is not content to present the landscape as sublime in its harshness. The reader is also reminded that this harshness has real consequences for real people. The social indignation is clear, as is the criticism of the blame-worthy farmer who chases the pregnant woman away from his premises. Furthermore, the wretched conditions of the people are described in detail in ways that make them tangible to the reader. Finally, Andersen focuses specifically on the pregnant woman and the child: He tells us about the fate of the most vulnerable and encourages us to have compassion with them. This is a literary break with the conventions of universal romanticism, and it is launched from a position of social indignation and sympathy for the poor. As such, it performs the work of a killjoy. The break creates space: "To kill joy […], is

to open a life, to make room for life, to make room for possibility, for chance" (*The Promise of Happiness* 20). The ultimate goal for making this room, creating this space, would not necessarily be to create different kinds of communities, but raising an awareness of the excluding mechanisms involved in community making in general, and point to a solidarity around the feeling of estrangement from objects of happiness.

> There is solidarity in recognizing our alienation from happiness, even if we do not inhabit the same place (as we do not). There can even be joy in killing joy. And kill joy, we must and we do. (*The Promise of Happiness* 87)

It is this kind of solidarity that can emerge when we begin attending to Hans Christian Andersen as a site of ambivalence when it comes to affects of happiness and community.

Concluding Perspectives

As Assmann elegantly puts it, total recall is only possible in the Arnold Schwarzenegger movie (105). We cannot remember everything, and in the context of cultural memory, this has as a result that certain heritage elements are selected and charged with the highest meaning and value (100). In a Danish context, this is the case with Hans Christian Andersen, who has been selected as a part of the canon and still works as both tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Our aim with this article has been to illustrate some challenges and potentials that reveal themselves around Andersen's status as a canonized cultural icon in Denmark. By use of Ahmed's concepts we have argued that while Andersen is currently framed as a happiness object in specific uses of him, his own writings hold the potential for him to work as a killjoy that questions and dismantles the Danish discourse that stems from Golden Age nationalistic aesthetics. This is in line with new research on Hans Christian Andersen that challenges the unequivocal reception of him as a national romantic figure.[1]

Our analyses point to several levels of "happiness objects" and "killjoys" when it comes to Andersen. Literary analysis allows us to identify a coinciding construction and questioning of national romantic themes in Andersen's texts, and perspectives from cultural studies makes it possible to see a similar duality when it comes to the way he is staged in contemporary culture. As a cultural icon, Andersen occu-

1 See for example Thomsen, *Skyggepunkter*, 2017, Bøggild 2012, Bøggild 2014 and Bom et al. 2014.

pies the role of the happiness object and the killjoy simultaneously, and the potential of these powerful framings reside in his texts, in hegemonic perceptions of him both as a historical person and as a representative of Danish culture and Danishness, and in tangible framings of both him and his work. Through his profound contribution to Danish culture, he represents an exertion of cultural power that can be open to political exploitation, but the queering of his legacy and the texts themselves might resist this use. There is a deep ambiguity in his writings. We argue that it is precisely because of the fundamental ambivalence in the authorship that any unambiguous interpretation of it can and often will be met by its contradiction. Andersen can never be completely harnessed: he will never stay frozen for long.

Viewed from one perspective, Andersen represents a cultural powerhouse that has had great impact on Danish culture, branding and self-understanding. From another perspective, however, he appears as the disrupter, the Clumsy-Hans, the child from "The Emperor's New Clothes" who unmasks the constructions of cultural hegemonies and, like a killjoy, undermines this very self-understanding from within. The challenge, it seems, is to keep our eyes open to both aspects and not allow his writings to stagnate in one extreme or the other.

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Is the Ugly Duckling a Hero? Philosophical Inquiry as an Approach to Hans Christian Andersens Fairy Tales in Danish Primary School Teaching

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Abstract Hans Christian Andersen is a cultural icon, and his fairy tales are famous around the world. But despite the positive ring to this description, his status as a canonized author poses a challenge when he is passed on to new generations of readers. In this article, we show examples of how this challenge reveals itself in Danish primary school teaching where Andersen is an obligatory figure in the subject Danish in which he is frequently framed as a national romantic author of morally unambiguous texts. Taking the current use of "The Ugly Duckling" (1844) in primary school teaching materials as a point of departure, we aim to show Andersen's potential to be presented as an element in primary school teaching that draws on dialogic inquiries rooted in Philosophy with Children. Philosophical inquiries are characterized by an open mindset that incite teachers as well as school children to engage with the rich ethical themes and literary qualities of Andersen's fairy tales. We conclude the article with our own inquiry manual to "The Ugly Duckling" to illustrate a way to overcome the current hegemonic framing of Andersen and reopen his fairy tale for future discussions and interpretations.

Key words Hans Christian Andersen; cultural studies; Philosophy with Children

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Introduction

There are many sides to Hans Christian Andersen. He is a historical person and a world-famous author, but he is also a cultural icon. Across borders, people identify with Andersen, particularly with characters in his fairy tales. What such identifications consist of, however, depends on culturally specific gazes that are shaped by value systems, beliefs and moral views (Bom kulturfænomen). This can lead to reductive uses of Andersen based on simplified perceptions of him as a "communicator of true values" — a perception that misses the potential for existential and ethical reflection embedded in the fairy tales. A similar risk of simplification emerges from the way Andersen is positioned in public opinion. The fairy tales are considered literary world heritage, and as such, they should be regarded as 'cultural commons' in the sense that they must be equally accessible to everyone (Bom commons). According to sociologist Nicolas Rose, however, the existence and sustainability of the cultural commons is threatened by the way communities and political systems 'harness' the commons (Rose 176): They take ownership of them, construct culturally specific 'frozen' versions of them, and, as a result, exclude others from them.

There are many examples of such harnessing processes, both in Denmark and in other countries around the world. Here, we will focus on one specific case, namely examples from primary school teaching in Denmark that are dominated by specific perceptions of the fairy tales. First, we outline the potential of Andersen's fairy tales in moral education and show how examples of traditional learning material used in Danish primary schools in the subject Danish fail to release this potential. Second, we argue that there are reasons to think that the dialogic approach found

in the traditions from Philosophy with Children (PwC) can provide a productive pedagogic framework, if done properly. It is our main argument that Hans Christian Andersen and PwC can be a fruitful match, because the dialogic approach in PwC invites the students to engage in ethical reflections and literary interpretation in a way that can help unfold the potential of the fairy tales. In this way, the use of PwC can help keep Andersen a cultural common and make sure that his work is passed on to the next generations in versions that reflect rather than neglect its inherent complexity and ambiguity.

Ethics and Values in Andersen's Fairy Tales

In Denmark, the harnessing of Hans Christian Andersen is explicitly related to his status as a canonical author. Hans Christian Andersen is canonized in different ways. The fairy tale "The Little Mermaid" was for example chosen as one of 107 'unavoidable' works for the Danish Cultural Canon: a collection launched as a common introduction to the Danish cultural heritage in 2006. In addition, Hans Christian Andersen is a part of 'the obligatory common canon for the primary school' in the Danish educational system. This canon is a list of 14 Danish authors that pupils in primary schools must get acquainted with in some way at some point during their education.

In a Danish primary school setting, there are examples of how the canonization has resulted in a framing of Andersen as a typical (national) romantic figure who conveys explicit moral messages in his fairy tales. Recent contributions to Hans Christian Andersen research, however, point to different perceptions of Andersen and thereby also to a different, more democratic and ethically subtle positioning of him and his work. For example, Andersen scholar Torsten Bøgh Thomsen has argued that the fairy tales are never moralising (*Skyggepunkter, mudder og menneskeatomer*): questions about good and evil, right and wrong, always remain open in the fairy tales. His main point is that "Andersen's texts give room for statements and convictions to stay in a tension, an undecidedness, instead of settling in an unequivocal view of the world or art" ("Vi have intet at hovmode os over" 63, our translation).

Thus, Andersen avoids final answers and static morals when in dealings with the conditions of human life, and with this perception of him as a point of departure, it seems fair to argue that the framings of Andersen as a national romantic moralist in Danish educational contexts can be replaced with more dialogic, open-ended approaches to the work. Accordingly, Andersen can be perceived as a communicator of values in the sense that his texts incite people all over the world to conduct con-

temporary reflections on what they find important and why. In this way, Andersen is potential medium through which new narratives about values, morals and beliefs can be told (Bom and Thomsen). In teaching practices, this requires that the fairy tales are used as cases for the practising of moral and philosophical reasoning. As we will argue in this article, this use of Andersen and his fairy tales will also make it easier to include him in other primary school subjects than Danish.

But what does it mean to think of Andersen as a communicator of values? First, it is important to define the word "value" in a constructive way. In a Western context, the general expansion of capitalism through language has resulted in an instrumentalization and economisation of values, as the concept both in theory and practice is linked to thoughts on what is "valuable." This discursive construction of values can ultimately make people perceive themselves as marginalised and excluded from the communities they feel like they should belong to (Bom and Bøggild), and thus, a more democratic and including approach to values is pivotal. This goes for classroom teaching as well. It has been suggested that a possible scholarly response to this is to connect the concept of value to something other than economy (Bom and Thomsen). Within such a framework, "values" can be defined as 'guiding principles in life' that affect our perceptions of attitudes, beliefs, norms, and traits (Schwartz 16).

To perceive Hans Christian Andersen as a communicator of values, however, is in no way to position him as someone who communicates explicit, absolute values or morals. This would amount to what cultural studies scholar John Hartley has categorized as a premodern perception of the author as divine: "a text meant what its (divine) producer said it did. All that remained for readers to do was to work out what the author 'meant'" (Hartley 132). Hartley argues that the ways in which we ascribe meaning to values has changed significantly over time and that the contemporary perception of how meaning is communicated through texts has drifted from the author to the "other end of the value chain": Today, the reader/audience — mass democracy — are the ones who have the power to convey meaning and add values to texts (ibid.), and thus, texts do not merely mean what they say they do. This is particularly important in the context of education. Hartley puts it this way:

> in contemporary times, truth has multiplied and fragmented, just as power has. In these days of difference, diversity and diaspora, truth has become inclusive, plentiful. It is revealed by plebiscite. Education is no longer purposed for the literate mass workforce only, but for universal learning services available on a commercial, customized 'borderless' basis to anyone, anywhere, of any age. (135)

In line with Hartley, we believe that a perception of Andersen's fairy tales as mediums through which values can be discussed, contested, re-worked and adjusted, would correspond well with the content of the fairy tales. In this way, emphasis would be on our present-day reflections on moral values, beliefs and practices and that Andersen's work invites his readers all over the world to ask questions such as: What do *I* see as the central argument here — and why do I see it this way? Do other people see it the same way I do? Why/why not? We believe that the democratic traits of PwC can be a fruitful approach to such an educational approach to Andersen, and that it could even help to sustain Andersen's fairy tales as cultural commons: As something that should be equally accessible to everyone, just as education itself.

Thus, we will argue that a more dialogic oriented framing and use of Andersen has the potential to thaw frozen framings of his work and make it accessible for contemporary existential and ethical reflections on what *we* perceive as good and evil, right and wrong, instead of a blind positioning of Andersen as an authority who tells us — or even dictates — what to do and how to live our lives. In the following section, we look further into how Andersen is presented in contemporary Danish primary school teaching.

"The Ugly Duckling" as Common Sense

Hans Christian Andersen's status as a central figure in Danish culture and heritage is a challenge when it comes to reading and interpreting the fairy tales in primary schools: The literary Hans Christian Andersen research began when his works were first published, and as a result, specific interpretations of the most popular fairy tales are now almost perceived as common sense.

An obvious example of this is "The Ugly Duckling" from 1844 (Andersen). Almost immediately after its publication, the fairy tale was equipped with a biographically oriented interpretation that became hegemonic in Denmark. This interpretation can be summed up with author Georg Brandes' statement that the story about the misunderstood duckling that turns out to be a beautiful swan is the "quintessence of its author's entire being" (Bredsdorff 113-114). Among several others, Andersen scholar Johan de Mylius has contributed significantly to this discourse by pointing out the fairy tale as the one in which Andersen's private mythology was given "eternal expression" (12). In the frequently used learning material for the school subject Danish, *Vild med Dansk* (*Crazy about Danish*), the perception of a close link between the author and his fiction is reflected in two interconnected ways: The fairy tale is positioned in its time, romanticism, and the person Andersen is

placed in close relation to the content of the story. Let us turn to some examples.

In *Vild med Dansk*, "The Ugly Duckling" is mentioned in a section about romantic art. First, the spiritual values of romanticism, "the good, the beautiful and the true" are mentioned alongside the romantic focus on how ideas and truths are reflected in the real world. Then, "The Ugly Duckling" is chosen as the illustrative example:

> "You probably know Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale The Ugly Duckling. It is a real romantic fairy tale where the truth is revealed in the end: The haunted duckling turns out to be a beautiful swan. There is no evil in the duckling, it swallows its defeats and it refrains from taking revenge. The moral of the fairy tale is that everyone will become what they were created to be." (*Vild med Dansk 7* 217-218, our translation)

This exemplifies the staged connection between Andersen's fairy tale and romanticism and the result is a closed reading that leads to a statement about the *moral* of the fairy tale. The idea that there is an explicit moral in the story establishes a close connection to Hans Christian Andersen as a communicator of this moral to his readers. This connection is even more clear in another example from the same learning material. In a chapter about film adaptations of books and narrative forms, "The Ugly Duckling" is chosen to illustrate what a "commentary" is:

> "The narrator comments on the plot and the persons and accentuates the moral. Famous is for example the ending of Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale The Ugly Duckling where the narrator states in the end: 'Being born in a duck yard does not matter, if only you are hatched from a swan's egg.'" (*Vild med Dansk 8* 113, our translation)

Again, the fairy tale used as an example of a story with an unequivocal moral, and here, it is even stated that this moral is directly communicated from the author to the readers. This however, as we mentioned in the introduction, reflects a rather simplified and reductive perception of the content in Andersen's fairy tales, because it does not consider the characteristic narrative forms, techniques and stylistic features in his work. Andersen scholar Jacob Bøggild and curator at the Hans Christian Andersen Museum in Odense, Henrik Lübker, have studied Andersen's methods and identify what they see as dominating traits in his writing and here, his use of romantic irony is accentuated:

> "The term refers to the shattering of the illusion that occurs when a story comments on itself. With Andersen this often happens with an emphasis on the fairy tale's truth status, which has the effect that the reader starts to doubt, whether the narrator and thus what is told can be trusted." (Bøggild and Lübker)

The way "The Ugly Duckling" is presented in the two examples mentioned does not take romantic irony into account. The fixed interpretations are presented as final answers which do not invite to further questions. But surely the statement "Being born in a duck yard does not matter, if only you are hatched from a swan's egg"[1] provokes the reader to ask whether it is really the case that it doesn't matter. To reflect on this question, consider the passages that encircle this stock phrase. Just before the duckling sees its own reflection in the water, it swims towards the swans and prepares to die: "'Kill me!'" said the poor creature, and he bowed his head down over the water to wait for death." As part of the common sense interpretation of the fairy tale, we all know that the swans do not kill the duckling but welcome it because he has turned out to be one of them. Arguably, this cannot mean that the duckling instantly forgets the horrible experiences that were the consequence of "being born in a duck yard." The lines that follow exemplifies this: "He felt quite glad that he had come through so much trouble and misfortune, for now he had a fuller understanding of his own good fortune, and of beauty when he met with it." Here, the duckling's past is presented as the one thing that *does* matter: as the one thing that enables the duckling to *understand* its place in the world. This way of playing with the position of the narrator is a recurring technique in Andersen's writings (Bøggild and Lübker), and it has as a result that the reader is constantly made aware that the perspective she hears the story from is pivotal to her understanding of it.

So, Andersen reminds the reader that the narrative is a narrative. Another way of doing this, Bøggild and Lübker argue, is when Andersen repeats the title of the fairy tale in the very last sentence. Among others, "The Ugly Duckling" is one example of this, as the very last sentence in the fairy tale is this thought from the duckling itself: "I never dreamed there could be so much happiness, when I was the ugly duckling." Thus, it is too simple to state that Andersen's fairy tales just *say* something specific. They contain performative strategies that are valuable and relevant in educational contexts. Bøggild and Lübker sum up the performativity of the

1 All translations are Jean Hersholt's published on the homepage of the Hans Christian Andersen Center.

texts in this way:

> (t)here is an interaction between being in the text, being immersed in its universe and being outside of it, where we become aware of the text's way of making itself visible. Thus, a textual duality occurs that counteracts any attempt to finish the text with a final, meaningful moral lesson. What we get instead are questions that revolve around ways of being in the world and what it really means to be in the world. Questions, which the texts very seldom answer, but which the reader has to process independently - without a list of results, and therefore at his or her own expense and risk. (Bøggild and Lübker)

The strict positioning of Andersen as a representative for the national romantic artists in Denmark, has closed and excluding readings of his fairy tales as a result (see also Thomsen and Bom, this issue). And the fact that he is usually presented in the school subject Danish has resulted in a lack of teaching material in other primary school subjects. We have shown some examples of how Hans Christian Andersen is framed as a canonized example of romanticism and a communicator of moral messages in learning materials for the subject Danish, and thus, there is a gap to be mended between the content of the texts and the potentials they have to produce new questions rather than provide old answers. In the following section of this article, we will present the approach Philosophy with Children as a possible solution to this challenge.

A New Approach Inspired by Philosophy with Children

In his exposition of "The Ugly Duckling" as an expression of Andersen's private mythology, de Mylius points to one exception to the hegemonic discourse on the fairy tale. In a letter to Andersen shortly after the publication of the fairy tale, poet and scholar Carsten Hauch described it as a "universal statement about one of the basic terms of life" and he wrote: "The story about the cat and the chicken who consider themselves as belonging to the best part of the world and who despise everything that cannot purr or lay eggs repeats itself every day on earth" (Hauch in De Mylius 63-64). In this reading, Hauch does not mention Andersen's own biography, and the remark about how the story repeats itself every day shows that it resonates with ordinary human life. This reading places the interpretative responsibility with the reader who will therefore need interpretative and argumentative skills. Hauch's interpretation invites the reader to ask questions concerned with "ways of being in the world and what it really means to be in the world," as Bøggild and Lübker put it.

This example shows that it is possible to read Andersen's stories without getting trapped in frozen interpretations. But such examples are rare in learning materials and educational contexts more generally. One reason for this is probably that both primary school teachers and pupils are already acquainted with the most popular fairy tales before the actual learning situation takes place, and so, it is a challenge to be open to alternative interpretations of the stories. However, as Bøggild and Lübker argue, the fairy tales invite their readers to ask questions, and we suggest that this (together with the rich ethical content) makes the fairy tales very suitable as stimuli in philosophical inquiries with children. In this section we offer at brief outline of what Philosophy with Children (PwC) is to show why philosophical inquiries could offer an approach that can help avoid the problems seen in more traditional teaching settings.

The first PwC programs were established in US in the 1970's and 1980's by the American philosophers Matthew Lipmann (Lipman et al. 1980) and Gareth Mathews (Matthews 1980). In Europe, the German philosopher Ekkehard Martens has worked with PwC since the 1970's (Jørgensen 2010, Martens 1979). Internationally, PwC has since become a recognized field of research and practice, and has been employed in schools, not only in the US, but also in countries across Latin America and Europe, especially Norway and the UK, as well as in South Africa, Japan, and Australia (UNESCO 2007). In Denmark, PwC was introduced in the 1980's (Jespersen 1988) and some teachers and teachers' colleges have worked theoretically and practically with the approach.

Philosophical inquiries are the core activities of PwC. They are open, structured group discussions of abstract, but engaging subjects such as: Can a robot be a person? What is time? Can a criminal act be brave? The students offer ideas and discuss questions in pairs (or small groups) and in general discussions in the class. A trained facilitator helps keep the discussion relevant and respectful, without taking part or adding content (Schaffalitzky). Philosophical inquiries are different from traditional teacher-centered teaching because they are explicitly dialogic. In fact, philosophical enquiries have been used to provide a framework for interventions in research on dialogic teaching (e.g. Reznitskaya and Glina).

There are a variety of traditions and programs within PwC, but they share some common traits. Inquiries typically begin with a stimulus such as a story, pictures, ideas, or objects well-suited to bring out questions and discussion. After the stimulus has been presented, the discussion begins with a question (posed by the facilitator or participants in the dialogue). It is important that the question is what the British philosopher Peter Worley has called "conceptually open" ("Open thinking,

closed questioning: two kinds of open and closed question" 19). This means that the question must be so that it is not clear what the truth of the matter is (or whether there even *is* a truth of the matter). This is an important rule of the dialogue because it makes it less likely that teacher steers the dialogue towards a specific answer. The main responsibility of the teacher is to facilitate the discussion and encourage the students to articulate their thoughts, to provide reasons for their views, and to engage in peer discussion. The teacher makes sure that everyone is invited to speak, and that the discussion stays on the topic, but he or she must refrain from asking leading questions and from giving any kind of correctness feedback or indication of his or her own opinion (see, for instance, *The If Machine* for a comprehensive description of facilitation techniques).

We suggest that teachers can replace (or at least supplement) traditional, teacher-centered approaches to Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales with philosophical inquiries as outlined here. In fact, we think that this approach is very much on par with Andersen's view of the child as a powerful agent: Children who can and dare to reveal nudeness of Emperor's are not to be steered by fixed interpretations and static moral views that stem from common sense readings of the fairy tales. Rather, the children should be offered the opportunity to engage in philosophical dialogues that are not defined by goals in terms of underlying morals or final answers.

A Caveat: Not Quite As Easy As It Sounds

Some may object that our suggestion is not as novel as we present it here because several teaching manuals in Philosophy with Children already contain suggestions to uses of Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales as stimuli for philosophical enquiries with children. However, a closer look at some of these inquiry manuals shows that either they fall victim to the above-mentioned problems identified in traditional teaching materials, or they are only superficially concerned with Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales and thereby fail to engage with the moral and literary qualities of the stories (Schaffalitzky and Bom, forthcoming). In this section, we will provide two examples of teaching manuals to illustrate why a dialogic approach is more difficult than it may appear at first. Both teaching manuals use the story of "The Ugly Duckling" as a stimulus.

The first example is an inquiry manual from Teaching Children Philosophy — a prominent organization within the field of Philosophy with Children. The manual consists of three sections: Summary, Guidelines for Philosophical Discussion, and Questions for Philosophical Discussion. A striking feature of the manual is that it contains many examples of pre-framing. In the Guidelines section, it is stated that

"even humans are mean" to the ugly duckling, and that:

> While some forms of discrimination may be unintentional, the form that it takes in the story, as is the case with the schoolyard bully, is conscious and intentional. Discrimination is a form of prejudice, which includes feelings of hostility, antipathy, or indifference, as well as belief in the inferior morals, intellect, or skills of the targeted person or group of people. The story lays out a case of persistent, aggressive prejudice in a way that makes the harm of such discrimination very clear. (Teaching Children Philosophy)

Both passages suggest specific (and contestable) rigid interpretations of Andersen's view on humans and animals and on his portrayal of the animals in the story. In addition to this, the questions that the inquiry manual is built around, are arguably more leading or factual than conceptually open:

> 1. Why did the other animals call the Ugly Duckling ugly? What did they mean when they called him ugly? Does looking different make someone ugly?
> 2. Why would someone tease/bully/make fun of people who look different from them?
> 3. Is there any situation in which it is acceptable to judge someone by their appearance? (Beauty pageant, fashion contest, job interview...) What makes these different from the case of the Ugly Duckling? (Teaching Children Philosophy)

This example, we suggest, support our claim that the influence of being a cultural icon should not be underestimated. If highly skilled and experienced writers of philosophical inquiry manuals fall prey to it, it is no wonder that traditional teaching can struggle with receptions of the tales that are frozen by canonization and moralization.

The second example of an inquiry manual for "The Ugly Duckling" is published by Center for Philosophy for Children, a leading organization in the field, both in terms of research and practice. The manual consists of a very brief plot summary (four lines) and the following Discussion Questions:

> Was the "ugly duckling" really ugly? If so, what made him ugly? Did he stop being ugly at the end of the story?
> What does ugly mean?

Would the "ugly duckling" still be ugly if someone thought he was beautiful?

What is beauty?

How do we decide what is beautiful and what is not?

If you're ugly, are you always ugly, and if you're beautiful, are you always beautiful?

Are the following things beautiful?

-a sunrise

-The Mona Lisa

-a smile

-a song

-a feeling

-a thought

-a painting

If the ugly duckling believed he was beautiful, would that make him more likely to be seen as beautiful?

What does it mean to have "inner beauty?"

Can someone be a terrible person and still be beautiful? An extraordinarily wonderful person and be ugly? (Center for Philosophy for Children)

Some of these questions are arguably also somewhat leading or moralizing, but a more prominent feature of the manual is that the questions are only concerned with the story to a very limited degree. There are interesting philosophical questions, but they are detached from the story and therefore not helpful to the ambition of engaging with the ideas in Andersen's text. Where the first example shows what happens when the hegemonic interpretations of the cultural icon are so powerful that they leave no room for literary and philosophical engagement with the story, the second example shows that a complete detachment from literary interpretation reduces the fairy tale to at launch pad for an abstract discussion unconcerned with the content of the story: it could just as well have used "Beauty and the Beast" or a reality television show about "extreme makeovers" of persons that are judged to be ugly as its starting point.

Recommendations for Dialogic Approaches to Andersen's Fairy Tales

The two philosophical inquiry manuals illustrate the point that future manuals on the fairy tales must balance two concerns: First, the manuals must seek to engage with the actual literary content of the fairy tales if the inquiry is to be more than

an opportunity to discuss abstract philosophical topics. Second, they must avoid the obstacles relating to the staging of cultural heritage, the canonization, and the positioning of Andersen as an obvious example of moral education. In short, we recommend that future manuals must have few and conceptually open philosophical questions that steer clear of biographical information and literary schemes. This is crucial to overcome the tendency seen in traditional teaching materials to reproduce fixed readings and reception. Closed, biographical and literary questions may be very relevant for other purposes, but not in a philosophical inquiry.

In a new inquiry manual for "The Ugly Duckling" (Schaffalitzky and Bom) we have suggested how to conduct a philosophical inquiry around the fairy tale in a way that accommodates the two concerns mentioned above. The manual includes both questions for the fairy tale in its entirety and for specific passages. These are suggested questions for the story:

1. Is the duckling the same in the beginning of the story as in the end?
2. Is the duckling the hero of the story?
3. Is the duckling a praiseworthy creature?

For the passage about the duckling's meeting with the hen and the cat, we suggest that the passage is read aloud (ending with "Believe me, I tell you this for your own good. I say unpleasant truths, but that's the only way you can know who your friends are. Be sure now that you lay some eggs. See to it that you learn to purr or to make sparks about the cat and the hen in the house.") The questions we suggest are:

1. Is the hen telling the truth?
2. Would the story be different if retold from the point of view of the cat?

This last question links to suggested activities such as inviting the students to act out the story playing the different characters with masks, re-writing the fairy tale in other genres (for instance, in that of a "duck tabloid"), and telling the story with pictures that doesn't match the hegemonic interpretations (for instance, a *really* ugly duckling without any likability). Questions and activities as these would provide an opportunity for the teacher and students to explore Andersen's work through inquiries involving literary interpretations and philosophical discussions about identity, personality, change, social perception, the meaning of life and many other themes. And if this can be achieved with "The Ugly Duckling," a next step could be to write similar teaching materials for other fairy tales on the curricula. Supplementing

teaching practices with these manuals would mean that the ambivalence, ethics and multi-layeredness of the fairy tales could become an integral part of the dialogues between teacher and pupils in primary schools.

Conclusion

Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales are a cultural common, and as such, it is an ethical responsibility to ensure that they remain equally accessible to readers across borders, value systems, ideological convictions, genders and ages. A significant threat to sustaining the common is communities' harnessing of them, and we have presented examples of how this takes place in learning material for Danish primary schools: The canonization of Andersen means that he is presented in the subject Danish as a typical national romantic author who communicates morally unambiguous messages through his fairy tales.

By use of the "The Ugly Duckling" as our case, we have argued that the hegemonic framing of Andersen will overlook both the literary qualities of the fairy tales and the great potential they have for present-day ethical reflections on the conditions of human life. Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales are always complex and ambiguous and as such they have great potential in any educational context. They can incite teachers and pupils to engage in open and including dialogues and ask new questions instead of repeating old answers. For these reasons, we have argued that techniques from the tradition of philosophical inquiries from Philosophy with Children (PwC) may hold the key to move beyond fixed readings and teaching practices.

An important feature of philosophical inquiries is that the teacher facilitates the discussion instead of steering it and providing content. It must be noted, however, that inquiry manuals to "The Ugly Duckling" (written by leading organizations in the field) can fall victim to challenges similar to those seen in learning materials. Consequently, we have presented our own PwC manual to "The Ugly Duckling" to show that it is, in fact, possible to avoid the problems of both frozen readings of Andersen and detached philosophical use of the fairy tales. In conclusion, we suggest that this path is worth investigating further to help keep Andersen's complex work relevant and alive to future generations.

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When Literature and Religion Intertwine: Rostam as a Pre-Historic Iranian Hero or the Shi'itic Missionary?

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Abstract This article aims to show how Rostam, the legendary hero of Iranian mythology, have witnessed ideological alterations in the formation of Persian epic, *Shahnameh.* Among different oral and written *Shahnamehs*, this paper focuses on *Asadi Shahnameh* written during the 14th or 15th century. Though he is a pre-Islamic hero, Rostam and his tasks are changed to fit the ideological purposes of the poet's time and place. A century later, under the influence of the state religion of Safavid Dynasty (1501–1736), Iranian pre-Islamic values underwent the process of Shi'itization. Scarcity of literature regarding the interpretation of *Asadi Shahnameh* and the unique position of this text in the realm of Persian epic are the reasons for our choice of scrutiny. In *Asadi Shahnameh* Rostam is both a national hero and a Shi'ite missionary. By meticulous textual and historical analysis, this article shows how Asadi unites seemingly rival subjects like Islam with Zoroastrianism, philosophy with religion, and heroism with mysticism. It is concluded that Asadi's Rostam is the Shi'ite-Mystic version of Iranians' popular hero who helps the cause of Shi'itic messianism and performs missionary tasks in both philosophic and practical levels. Although the epic hero is not Shia, the literary text recasts him as the covert representative of the emerging and developing ideology of its time.

Key words *Asadi Shahnameh*; Rostam; Islam; Zoroastrianism; Philosophy (of Illuminationism)

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Introduction

In the 16th century as the Safavid Dynasty (1501–1736) succeeded to the throne, Shi'ite branch of Islam gained political power and became the religion of the overwhelming majority of Iranians. This popularization of Shi'ism is rooted in Safavi's ideological clash with Ottomans who knew themselves as the Sunni descendants of Abbasid Caliphate. During the interregnum, many manifestations of Iranian values and even its pre-Islamic cultural content underwent the process of Shi'itization due to the influence of the state religion. The literature of this period, especially epic, is mirroring the realization of this trend. No trend exists in vacuum. The ideological backdrop of this inclination is built in pre-Safavid era that is the focus of our study.

Considering the vast scope of this article, this paper scrutinizes one version of *Shahnameh* in the apex of pre-Safavid Shi'itic development called *Asadi Shahnameh*. Probably written by Asadi and available only in handwritten manuscripts, it dates back to the 14th or 15th century containing 23,183 couplets (Soltani Gord Faramarzi 15-17; Ghaemi, "Critical Introduction" 105-131). Thought it falls within the remit of national epics, its religious, especially Shi'ite content, proves *Asadi Shahnameh* as the best example of Shi'itization of national hero. Epics play an influential role in forming and remaking national heroes (Miller 214-15). In *Asadi Shahnameh*, Rostam, the pre-Islamic hero serves as an emblem of

Shi'ite ideology for two reasons. First, the text belongs to the period when Shi'ism started to develop phenomenally and its ideology gained power. Second, it is the most recent and the longest epic in Persian classic literature that portrays the turning point in the history of Iranian hero. This article attempts to examine the Shi'itization process that Rostam, the Iranian epic hero, undergoes. Rostam has a multi-millennia background in Iran's social and cultural life and has interwoven himself into the fabric of national identity.

The significance of an in-depth examination of *Asadi Shahnameh* is double-fold. Firstly, the genre, literary, historical, and socio-political aspects of the work need much attention because of the unique role this epic plays in connecting literature with religion. Secondly, the small bulk of literature available on this topic necessitates this research. *Asadi Shahnameh* relays strong ideological implications 500 years before the modern developments of Iranian Shi'itic government in 20st century. The formation of the concept of *Velayat-e Faghih* (Guardianship of the Islamic Jurist), and Shi'itic political legitimacy in contemporary Iran rely heavily on *Asadi Shahnameh*'s ideological implications.

In this paper, first Rostam's backdrop and origins are discussed from prehistorical accounts to his presence in the most recent epics. Then the ideological metamorphosis of the national hero is analyzed to answer the following questions. Why did Shi'ism decide to create an Islamic version of the non-Islamic, national hero, Rostam? What devices and methods were employed to fulfill this aim? Finally, we reached the conclusion that *Asadi Shahnameh* is a canonical text that has intermeshed Shi'ism, Sufism and Iranian identity in epic genre. It is important to mention that though the focus of this article is *Asadi Shahnameh* we are benefitting from continuous comparisons between the Rostam in the most famous *Shahnameh*, written by Ferdowsi (977- 1010) and the Rostam the most recent *Shahnameh*, titled as *Asadi Shahnameh* (14th- 15th c.).

The Origins of Rostam's Character: Pre-*Shahnameh*, *Shahnameh* and Shi'ite Age

In Middle Persian language, Rostam was called Rot-Stakhmak or Rot-Stakhm/ Rot-Stahm meaning "raging and flowing river" which brings to mind his strength, sturdiness, and valorous spirit. The same meaning is discernible in his title *Tahamtan*, meaning indestructible, unique, colossal, and powerful. Rostam enters the realm of written Persian epic first in Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh* (10th- 11th c.). He is the Sistani hero of the son of Zāal and Rudabeh and "the most well-known hero of Iranian national epics" (Khaleghi 487). Many resemblances between Rostam and Kresāspa, the ancient Persian hero in *Avesta*, are found. In the collection of

Zoroastrian religious text of *Avesta*, Kresāspa was titled as Naire-manah with the last name Sāma. He is the most famous hero in *Avesta* and other Zoroastrian texts. Later, Rostam, the Sistani hero, is associated with him by changing the title and the last name to Kresāspa's namesakes; Rostam chooses 'Nariman' instead of 'Naire-manah' and 'Sāam' instead of 'Sāma'. Both Nariman and Sāam play an important role in Rostam's lineage since Nariman is Rostam's great grandfather and Sāam, Zāal's father, is Rostam's grandfather. Thus, many of Garshāsp's heroisms in *Shahnameh* and other Persian epics are attributed to Nariman, Sāam and particularly Rostam (Khatibi 400, 411-412).

Similarities between Kresāspa and Rostam's heroic actions which were first pointed out by Marquart (643) and followed up by other researchers (Hüsing 172-73, 213; Herzfeld 54-75; Wikander 163; Molé 129) led historians to hypothesize that these two characters might be, in fact, the same person. This hypothesis, however, was disapproved (Christensen 134; Henning 465-487; Sarkarati 118-148). The reason for the formation of this hypothesis was that Rostam had performed most of Garshāsp's heroic actions. The lack of family relationship between Rostam and Garshāsp as well as the absence of Rostam's name in *Avesta* and other Zoroastrian texts, has led some scholars to claim that Rostam's name was deliberately omitted from religious texts (Von Spiegel 126), a claim that is disputed later (Safa, *Epic Poetry* 563-64). Some critics have attempted to trace Rostam's historical origins in the Arsacid Age and among Parthian princes (Safa, *Epic Poetry* 563-69; Koyaji 9-162). This claim is also refutable based on older, fragmentary sources that narrate the deeds of Rostam in Soqdian texts. The oldest Soqdian source about Rostam is a manuscript in Khotani-Soqdian language discovered in Dunhuang (Gharib 44-53; Sims-Williams 54-61). This Soqdian text appears to have been a fragment from Rostam's *Haft Khaan*, Seven Feats, or a separate story (Zarshenas 5-94). Differences between this ancient narrative and Ferdowsi's account of Rostam indicate that different versions of the legends about this Persian-Scythian hero have existed in the Eastern part of the Pre-Islamic Iran (Azarpay 6-95). It must be mentioned that Bu Mansoori, Masoodi Maroozi and Abu Shakur Balkhi have penned older versions of *Shahnameh* before Ferdowsi's magnum opus, but their works did not survive.

Nöldeke believes that the story of Rostam belongs to the local Scythian literary tradition of the opulent city of Zarang in Sistan, a province in Southeastern Iran (*Essay in the Outline* 10). However, the ubiquitous presence of this hero from China's East Turkestan to the Soqdian and non-Soqdian graffiti in the ruins of Varakhsha palaces (5^{th} - 6^{th} c.), in Samarkand and Panjikant in contemporary Tajikistan, indicate that the story of Rostam is not limited to a particular region

since it has been as extensive as the Scythian culture. Considering the absence of Rostam chronicles in *Pahlavi Narratives*, Arabic and Persian writings, Khaleghi Motlagh presumes that most of the stories of Rostam in *Shahnameh* have not existed in the Pahlavi *Xwadāynāmag* (Book of King Gods) (*Flowers of Ancient Pains* 66-67). Critics believe that Rostam has found his way into Ferdowsi's narrative through a book compiled by a Zoroastrian priest named Āzadsarv either directly or via an intermediary source. Āzadsarv's source could have originated in Scythian or Soqdian languages (Khaleghi Motlagh, *Flowers of Ancient Pains* 66-67). Books about Scythian leaders such *Peykaār* and *Saboksarān* mentioned by Mas'udi (1: 265) as well as oral sources could have been possible bases for Rostam's narratives.

Therefore, Rostam, originally the warrior in nomadic Scythian traditions, has gradually found his way into the mythologies and epic narratives of a feudalist division of the Parthian Empire (247 BC-224 AD). During the Sassanids (224-651) and the Islamic era, Rostam as a 'non-Zoroastrian', yet not anti-Zoroastrian figure, builds his lineage with ancient Persian heroes such as Garshāsb, the great dragon slayer, and the grandfather of Rostam. Though in Zoroastrian scriptures, Rostam is punished for murdering Prince Esfandiyār, Ferdowsi's heroic depiction of Rostam, had an influential role in changing the image of Rostam. From then on, he became the emblem of national hero in Persian culture and literature.

Ferdowsi has had a fundamental role in underscoring Rostam in Iranian literature and culture. Ferdowsi adds stories to Rostam's life that were not present in *Life of the Kings* translated from Xwadāynāmags. Xwadāynāmags, or Books of the Kings, were chronicles of the Sassanid period which were translated in Iran's Islamic period as *Siyar al-mulûk* during the 8th century. Including Ibn al-Muqaffa's *Siyar al-mulûk*, Xwadāynāmags are retitled as *The Art of Ruling* in Arabic chronicles. Later, after the 8th century, they are re-translated and entered Persian literature as *Shahnameh* (Khaleghi Motlagh, "Rostam" 490). Though Ferdowsi models Rostam after Xwadāynāmags' hero, the story of Rostam's *Seven Feats* and *Rostam and Sohrab* are basically his innovations.

Ferdowsi elevates Rostam's reputation by additional narratives summarized in two techniques. Firstly, he sympathizes with Rostam where he errs, like the accounts of killing Prince Esfandyiār and his son Sohrab. Secondly, he depicts an independent, noble character who does not bow to tyrants such as Kavoos even if his life is at stake. Rostam does not have any servants or bodyguards, and he goes to hunting and battle only with Rakhsh, his devoted steed. The noble spirit of Rostam, his dignity, audacity against the kings and the disdain for the royal throne place him in the heart of the Iranian audience. He is the Prince of Sistan, but he never

seeks the throne despite Zāal's longevity. His humane personality and superhuman characteristics brought his enduring fame and popularity in Iranian culture. The great Sunnite mystical poet of the 13th century, Rumi (1207-1273), who stood at the pinnacle of the Ash'ari faith (a branch of Sunnism with close affinity with Shi'ism), places Rostam alongside Ali. Ali Ibn Abi Taleb, the fourth Sunni caliph and the first Shi'ite Imam, is considered as the paragon of the complete human (Rumi, *Collection of Mystical Poetry*, Book I, 1: 3721-3772). When Rumi is frustrated by his contemporaries, he seeks help from Rostam and Ali: "I am anguished by these weak-minded companions/ I want God's Lion (Imam Ali's title) and Rostam-e Dastan (Rostam's title)" (*Collected Poetry of Shams*, Sonnet 441).

Now that the origins of Rostam has been discussed, Rumi's analogy between Rostam and Ali builds the foundation of the next step in this paper that is the analysis of the Shi'itization of the Persian pre-Islamic epic hero in the era of Shia expansion. Rostam's religious inclinations are studied from three perspectives: first, his ideological role as a Shi'itic missionary in both philosophic and practical level, second, his devotion to Shi'itic messianism and third, his position as a mystical hero in *Asadi Shahnameh*.

Rostam, the Shi'itic Missionary

One of the main ideological aspects of Asadi's Rostam, who is by no means related to Ferdowsi's creation, is his role as a Shi'itic missionary. Ferdowsi's Rostam is a pious man but he does not advocate any religion. Even during the reign of Vishtaspa when Zoroastrianism gains power, Rostam does not convert to this new religion though he pays tribute to it. In his combat against Esfandiyār, the Zoroastrian hero, he swears to the Iranian prophet Zoroaster, Zoroastrianism and its religious scripture — *Avesta*. Nevertheless, Asadi's Rostam is the combination of Sufi monotheism and Shi'itic approach which the Sufi Shi'ism of the 14th to 16th centuries represents. In *Asadi Shahnameh,* Rostam is the ideological ambassador who acts as both a philosophical missionary and a practical missionary to propagate the dominating religion of the story.

Philosophical Missionary: When Illuminationism is Taught

It is important to mention that since Asadi tries to be faithful to basic historical facts, like Rostam's existence long before the birth of Islam, he is not directly using the word "Islam" or "Muslim" when he describes Rostam. Yet, the predominance of names like Mohammad and Ali leaves no doubt that by "the religion" he means Islam.

Asadi's Rostam is a missionary and in contrast to Ferdowsi's Rostam who has never appeared as a clergy, Asadi's Rostam has played the role of a missionary in several instances so as to represent the religious wisdom intended by the poet. One of the best examples of Rostam's ideological realizations is his religious debate with King Solomon in Jerusalem. Contrary to other narrations in which Rostam fights against Demons and Imam Ali, in *Asadi Shahnameh*, Rostam appears not as a warrior but as a prudent ambassador. This is Asadi's portrayal of Iranians' religiosity. In the debate, King Solomon questions the beliefs of Iranians collectively. Rostam is successful in convincing Solomon when he asks questions regarding epistemology, the purpose of genesis, the reason behind the sky's curvature structure, the human soul, and finally the origin of human destination and the fate (*Asadi Shahnameh* 995-96). One can draw analogy between Rostam's response and the philosophy of Illuminationism introduced by Sohravardi (1154-1191), the 12th century Persian philosopher (Butterworth 336-400).

In Solomon's palace, after an introduction to Iranians' battle against idolatry, including his own heroic deeds, Rostam admits the veracity of all religious scripture (*Asadi Shahnameh* 1009-1012). Asadi shows that while confronting with one of the most influential and the wisest Jew prophet, Iranians are equipped with wisdom and power during the negotiation. In response to Solomon's questions about genesis and destiny, Rostam is not only a missionary but also an Iranian-Islamic philosopher who blends Shi'itic Sufism with Zoroastrianism. Rostam recites the thoughts of Iranian mystics such as Hafiz (14th century) who believes that the beginning of genesis is synonymous with *Tajalli* or Unity of Appearance (Sonnet no. 125).

The theory of *Tajalli*, which has a close connection with Sohravardi's philosophy of Illuminationism, discusses the function and responsibility of *Farrah* (Charisma/ Devine Light) in Khosravani *Hikmat* (Wisdom). Illuminationism elaborates on the relationship between *Farrah*, Public Guidance, and *Bakht* (Fate). Public Guidance is reached through *Pārsai* (Devotion and Piety) with the ultimate aim that *Nür Esfahabod* (Command of Light) can encompass and win the world (Sohravardi 83-107). In Sohravardi's philosophy, the world is nothing but light and the universe is nothing but *Ishraq* (Intuition/ Light of Intuition). Whatever comes into being is a manifestation of light and human is no exception. Human can become the source of bounty and generosity since s/he can both enlighten the universe and turn into light.

The philosophy of Illuminationism is rooted in Iran's prehistoric mythology; *Farrah* (Devine Light) was always possessed by Mïtra (Ïzad Mehr), Goddess of Sun, Light and Love, who can bestow it upon someone or take it away. Thus,

Bakht (Fate) is transferred to a person through *Farrah* (*Avesta*, Mehr Yasht 108-111). Kingship *Farrah* will leave any king if he ever sins. Shah-Mobad, the senior priest, blesses people and nature's fate with the light of *Farrah*. If the king loses his *Farrah*, his land and his people will lose Shah-Mobad and Mïtra's blessing as well (*Avesta*, Zamyadisht 69-74). Rostam provides a symbolic representation of *Tajalli* in universe: out of the Light source, *Fayyāz* (Treasure of Light and Sun or Sohravardi's the "Light of Lights"), *Feyzān* (the Emission of Light) shines on human; as a result, the bountiful human shines the light back to the world. That is how fate and the portion of this sacred heavenly source are distributed among all creatures.

> When the sun of *Tajalli* rose
> On all creatures of the world, this light shone
> The world is illuminated with this leadership's light
> You see the trace wherever you caste your eyes
> Through this light, boundless rations and nourishment provides
> Thousands of livings with love and lives. (*Asadi Shahnameh* 1018-20)

Emphasis on the symbolic sanctity of the sun is an important point in Rostam and Solomon's dialectic debate. Since Asadi has always kept in mind the Persian Goddess of Sun, Light and Love, Mïtra, sun plays a crucial rule in this religio-philosophical part of the narrative. In order to prove the existence of God, King Solomon asks questions about the nature of creation (*Asadi Shahnameh* 992). In response, the Iranian hero mentions that the sun sits on the throne of the sky so that everything in the universe is protected. Furthermore, Asadi's knowledge of Avestan scriptures is reflected in Rostam's words when he claims that Mïtra patrolled in the sky with ten thousand pairs of eyes to protect God's creatures (*Avesta*, Yasna, Yasn 3, 1 and 5). Rostam also mentions the role of sun as fate's lamp which is comparable to the shining of *Farrah* (Light) in Zoroastrian Philosophy and *Feyzān* (the Emission of Light) in the philosophy of Illuminationism (*Asadi Shahnameh* 1015-16).

In another section, Asadi adds the commemoration of Prophet Mohammad by mentioning the greatness of his role in the establishment of the universe represented in "Mohammadian Light." The belief in Mohamamdian Light that connected the Illuminationism mysticism to Shi'ism manifested itself in the Shi'itic writing 14th and 15th centuries; it covers a wide range including philosophy, literature and the other art forms. With Asadi's explicit reference to "Light,"the influence of Sohravardi's Illuminationism becomes obvious:

The Sun, the Moon, Saturn, and the moving wheel of the sky
From the surface of the Earth to the Seventh Sky
All created from Mohammad's Light
He who is the key to religion's lock. (*Asadi Shahnameh* 3330-31)

In this period, while emphasizing the belief in Mohammadian Light, original Shia sources cite narratives that in addition to proving Mohammadian Light, they argue for its all-encompassing quality (Majlesi 1: 97, 4: 198, 16: 403 and 18: 360). In some chronicles, the union of Ali and Mohammad's Light is mentioned to the extent that some prophetic narratives read, "God hath created me [Mohammad] and Ali from one single light" (Sadouq, *Al-amali* 236). In *Asadi Shahnameh*, the mystical belief of Mohammadian Light is intertwined with the Shia belief of *Shafa'at* and the process of becoming Alawite. Alawite or Twelver School, a sect in Shia whose followers believe in twelve Imams, is closely linked to *Shafa'at* or Intercession in the Judgment Day since Alawite believe that Imams' intervention can pardon some sins committed by human. Simurgh, the Persian mystical bird, represents the Emission of Light from the Ultimate Good. While Zāal and Simurgh are united, Rostam swears on this divine Light and consciously connects the Mohammadisan Light to the Light of Ali's face.

I swear to the rein of King Solomon
To the Light of Mohamed, the prophet of human
I swear to his cousin Ali
Merciful he is like a bountiful sea . . .
When facing the light of his face, how insignificant is the sun. (*Asadi Shahnameh* 14103-7)

Having firmly stablished the Shi'itization of Rostam, now Asadi addresses his audience directly and justifies his own Shi'itic beliefs. He asks for Imam Ali's intercession for his sins and the wrongdoing of his readers. He considers resorting to "The Alawite Light" until the rise of the last savior of Shia, Imam Mahdi, as a strategy for human salvation (*Asadi Shahnameh* 14108-14112). For Asadi, the establishment of the universe and *Tajalli* (Unity of Appearance) depends on the continued radiation of the "Alawite Light" (*Asadi Shahnameh* 19959-19964). This Shia reading of Sohravardi's Illuminationism considers the formation of the universe as the radiation of a single light which is represented in Ali and Mohammad. Rostam provides an interpretation of the nature of creation relying on the relationship

between *Tajalli* and the original sin of the creatures — especially the angels like Satan — in the story of the creation. Rostam claims that *Jabaroot* (Divine Wisdom) is a mirror which reflects the real position of each creature; it has been determined in *Azal* (the Pre-creation State), but with their rebellion and transgressions, considered as the original sin, God's creatures have lost their path (*Asadi Shahnameh* 1024-25). Therefore, God created humankind from the most inferior element, clay, so that the heavens and the angels bow not to his/her worthless body, but to the divine spirit that has been incarnated into it. For the same reason the sky is concave, in the constant position of obeisance, bowing to God's creation. According to Rostam's interpretation, the angels' conceit was the reason that God put an earthly creature above them to cure them of their arrogance and lead them toward repentance (*Asadi Shahnameh* 1025-27). This interpretation has close affinity with Malāmati Sufism that was popular during the 13th and 15th centuries (Geoffroy 67, 87-98; Schimmel 87). Rostam ascribes Devine Logos or God's name to *Tajalli* which is the basis of human's intuitive knowledge about the "Light of Lights" and the reason for human eloquence; thus, for Asadi the rhetoric ability and grandeur of speech is assumed to be the manifestation of Alawite-Mohammadian Light planted in human since *Azal* (*Asadi Shahnameh* 1030-31).

The Practical Missionary: When Polytheism is Challenged

After cementing the theoretical framework of Shi'itic ideology with complicated philosophy of Sohravardi's Illuminationism and Persian mythology, Asadi portrays Rostam as a practical missionary. The best example of this dimension can be seen in Rostam and Kariman's travel accounts of the East. Kariman is Borzoo's son and Rostam's grandson and their relationship reminds the reader of the popular Quartic story of young Prophet Moses and wise Prophet Khidr, a sage who was granted foresight and secret knowledge by God (*The Quran,* Al-Kahf 18: 60-82). Asadi has chosen an imaginary place called Achin that brings the name of China (*Chin*) to the mind of the Persian reader. Readers in Asadi's era associate China with fabulously artistic sculptures, exoticism, richness and farness; for Asadi, China is so uncanny and inaccessible that even Arabs have failed to conquer (*Asadi Shahnameh* 9420-9430).

The affluent city of Achin has a speaking idol called al-Lat that represents Asadi's anachronism, albeit justifiable because of its symbolic significance. Al-Lat is the name of a famous idol in Mecca that was destroyed when Arabs converted to Islam after the Battle of Tabuk in the 7th century (Tabari 46; *The Quran,* Al-Asra 17:73). After the conquest of the Achin, Ghidar, the old chamberlain of the

idol, brings al-Lat's head to the court of Shahbāl, the king of Achin. The king asks, "Who has done this?" and Ghidar responds, "Ask the idol's head!" (*Asadi Shahnameh* 9441-9451). This is the reminder of another Quranic story narrating Abraham's demolition of idols and holding the biggest idol responsible for his own transgression because the idol was carrying the ax; by this incident, Abraham proves the insignificance of idols to confirm monotheism (*The Quran* Al-Anbiya 21: 51 - 69). Rostam scoffs and says, "How a thing that is so easily broken into pieces could think or speak!?/ [. . .] The God who has created existence and nonexistence and has given life to human out of four contradictory elements is observing and He is aware of everything" (*Asadi Shahnameh* 9441-9472).

For Asadi, not only is Rostam a national hero, but also he excels Abrahamic prophets in advocating religious doctrines. Abraham exploits Socratic irony so that the audience will come to the right answer by series of question regarding the ineffectiveness of their idols, however, Rostam even overdoes Abraham when he responds himself that an idol is not capable of taking actions. Rostam, like an eloquent orator, initiates a discussion about God and monotheism that sound thought provoking for Shahbāl (*Asadi Shahnameh* 9471-9488). He also becomes aware of the king's conspiracy to poison him, but he does not retaliate. Ashamed, Shahbāl throws his crown on the ground in front of Rostam and converts to Islam; his people follow his example and accept Islam (*Asadi Shahnameh* 9489-9527). Instead of being thrown into the fire like Abraham, Rostam is treated with respect and the people of Achin accept Rostam's monotheistic views and destroy the rest of the idols. Rostam's power and tact is also outshining the prophets' diplomacy. King Solomon, who represents the perfection of Jewish supremacy, needs Rostam's help to put the demon in chains. That is how Asadi defines Iranian version of Islam: a religion that conquers the hearts rather than the lands.

After conquering the polytheistic land of Achin, Rostam defeats the King of Badakhshān who is worshiped by its people. In the conquest of Badakhshān, Rostam meets a decent young man, Bahram, the son of the King of Badakhshān. He orders his soldiers to untie Bahram; then, like a "spiritual father," he engages in a conversation with him regarding the creator of the universe. He addresses Bahram as his "son" and "the man of pure heart" (*Asadi Shahnameh* 9796-9801). Rostam's convivial behavior, kindness and arguments about the existence of one God shines a light in the heart of Bahram. He shuns the idols and becomes a Muslim by confessing that God is one and Mohammad is the prophet (*Asadi Shahnameh* 9796-9901). This ritual in *Asadi Shahnameh* is very similar to Islamic tradition of convert, *Shahadatayn,* which is the declaration of God's oneness (*Tawhid*) and the

acceptance of Mohammad as His prophet.

Like the same storyline in Achin and Badakhshān, the human inhabitants of the land of Samāvāt unanimously decide to believe in God and Mohammad. That is why Rostam and Kariman destroy the chamber of idols in Samāvāt. Rostam's power of propagating Islam is not limited to human beings. Asadi goes so far that even demons are converted to Islam upon hearing about or witnessing Rostam's deeds. After the conquest of a citadel located on the peak of Samāvāt where endocannibalist demons fatten human to eat them, Rostam spares the lives of the demons who survive the battle; they repent of bad deeds and convert to Islam (*Asadi Shahnameh* 9034-9050).

It seems that Asadi's Rostam is the representation of all Iranian ideals in different scopes. In the national realm, Rostam proves to be a national hero who conquers the land and the heart of the people in Achin, Badakhshān and Samāvāt. As for his capability in advocating religion, Rostam's power of discourse excels Abrahamic prophets. Ideology, imagination and national pride permeates so far in *Asadi Shahnameh* that even endocannibalist demons convert to Islam.

Despite some instances of anachronism in *Asadi Shahnameh*, the poet was careful about the historical precedence of Rostam to the rise of Islam. Though Rostam's actions are echoing Islamic rituals, if "Islam" is explicitly mentioned, it is only in the voice of Asadi as the narrator not in the words of Rostam. The proceeding epis, composed after the 18th century, failed to preserve the basic historical chain of events. Asadi does not explicitly declare that Rostam is a Shia Muslim. However, he propagates the dominant ideology of Shia Islam in his time, blends it with the philosophy of Illuminationism, Sufism and the culture of forgiveness and tolerance in practical level.

Shi'itic Messianism: When the Savior is Recreated

In *Asadi Shahnameh*, the link between Shia ideology and Asadi's characters like Rostam, Zāal and Kay Khosrow is so strong that Shia Messianism is woven into the plot of the story. The destiny of Kay Khosrow and its affinity with Zoroastrian Messianism has paved the way for Shia ideology to replace the Zoroastrian savior, *Saoshyant*, with Shia Messiah, *Mahdi*. Indeed, this replacement was not initiated by Asadi's epic. In Pahlavi literature, Kay Khosrow disappears at the end of his reign with the order of Ahuramazda, Zoroastrian God, so that he can reappear in the Last Day of World in Gang Citadel (Dadgi 137). According to Avestan narratives, this sacred building is erected by Siavash and is brought down from the sky to earth by Kay Khosrow (Dadgi 138) so that the last battle between good and evil begins from this citadel.

In Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh,* which is to some extent de-Zoroastrianized, Kay Khosrow simply disappears with no promise of return. However, in Zoroastrian texts, after centuries of occultation, Kay Khosrow is one of the immortals who, upon sitting on the throne in Gang Citadel, helps Saoshyant in the last war at the dawn of resurrection (*Dēnkard*, Book 7, 1:38-39 and Book 9, 23: 1-6; *Minoo-ye Kherad* 46-47; *Pahlavi Narratives* 60). Therefore, from the 13th century onward, during the period of Shia development, the belief in the existence of a savior has gained momentum and the analogy between the return of Zoroastrian Kay Khosrow and Shia savior was drawn. Sacred Zoroastrian places called Šāzand, meaning "the King is [always] alive,"are the best examples for the integration of Zoroastrianism and Shi'ism. Šāzand, the name of a city in the current map of Iran's Markazi Province, is said to contain labyrinthine caverns where Kay Khosrow is hidden along with other immortals. This place later becomes a religious site for Shia Muslims who believed that Šāzand's residents are associated with Imam Mahdi (Dahgan 1329; Ghaemi, "Textual Analysis of Solomon's Position" 117-136). According to the tales of Shia storytellers, Kay Khosrow and six of his loyal entourages have survived in a cave so that they can fight alongside Mahdi when he reappears to save the world (Anjavi Shirazi 2: 160, 259, and 2: 267-297; 3: 179-180).

Shi'itization of this Zoroastrian subject is not limited to Kay Khosrow and it has encompassed Rostam as the national hero of Iranians as well. Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh* ends in Shaghad's well when Rostam realizes that he is betrayed and his loyal steed, Rakhsh, is dead (Ferdowsi 451-461). Ferdowsi's narrative is connected to Shia's belief in the existence of sacred wells, such as Jamkaran Well in Iran and Samara Well in Iraq, where Imam Mahdi communicates with his people (Qomi 491). According to the tales of Shia storytellers, Rostam is not dead and he will be resurrected in Shaghad's well by the rise of Shia Messiah Mahdi, the 12th Shi'ite Imam. In that day, summoned by God, Rostam will come out of the well to be the first and the only commander-in-chief of Mahdi in the apocalypse to fight against evil opponents (Anjavi 2: 156). According to other narratives, Rostam will share this role with Kay Khosrow (Anjavi 2:109).

Asadi reinforces the relationship between Zoroastrianism and Shi'ism when he introduces Spring of Kowthar in his epic. Kowthar is where Prophet Mohammad has promised to meet with devoted Muslims in Paradise (Sadouq, *Al-eteghadat* 1: 65). In *Asadi Shahnameh*, in a moment of revelation, after Kay Khosrow finishes his prayers, Soroush the archangel of God gives him a mystic and spiritual wine from the Spring of Kowthar in Paradise; he promises Kay Khosrow to become one of the companions of the last prophet (*Asadi Shahnameh* 21842-5). Since Rostam and

Zāal have both visited King Solomon, Asadi gives both of them a role in delivering the ideology of the last Abrahamic religion. In *Asadi Shahnameh*, Solomon reveals to Zāal the promise of the last prophet, Mohammad, and the coming Savior, Mahdi. Upon Solomon's verdict, until the arrival of the Savior, Zāal will be the sovereign of Persia as well as the king of beasts and fairies after Solomon's death (*Asadi Shahnameh* 15628-15634). That is how Asadi cleverly justifies the longevity of Zāal's reigning. The rest of the message is a Shi'ite manifesto: it reveals that Mohammad's prophetship ends in his sons' succession, *Velayat*, and continues to the age when the last successor, Mahdi, rises again (*Asadi Shahnameh* 15602-15604). Asadi explicitly calls Ali the Imam of Imams and he has thus admitted to the issue of *Velayat* or Spiritual Leadership and divine succession.

Solomon's message determines Iranian Shi'itic mission. It must be mentioned that the most important message of the story is given to Zāal, the father and the guide of Rostam, because he represents the divine wisdom of the epic world. Furthermore, not only Zāal and Solomon's blessedness but also the close friendship between Iranian Muslims and Jews is highlighted in Asadi's account. Affected by the discourse dominating the poet's age, Asadi claims that Zāal's action bears witness that Iranians had been aware of the prophet and the leadership of his successors even before his emergence (*Asadi Shahnameh* 15637-15640). Now the Shi'ite ideology becomes clear when Asadi relies on Imamyieh Faith, the Shi'ites who believe in twelve Imams and *Mahdavyiat*, the coming of Mahdi the Savior. To consolidate the discourse of Mahdavyiat, Solomon announced to Zāal and Rostam that Mahdi is the Imam in occultation but it is promised that he rises to deliver justice with the help of Kay Khosrow, as the king of seven realms and Savior's ally (*Asadi Shahnameh* 15813-15817).

Rostam, the Mystic Hero

Religious epics, *Naghali* or storytelling scrolls, and oral epic prose such as *Rostam Namehs*, *The Book of Rostam*, have been in the scene from the composition of *Asadi Shahnameh*, around the 14th century, until the dawn of Qajar Dynasty in the early 20th century Iran. As mentioned before, the amalgamation of religious epics and mysticism was one of the cultural tenets of Shi'ism in the 14th century, although mysticism was faded as Shia jurisprudence prevailed. Nevertheless, Asadi's Rostam is shaped in an age where Shi'ism is still closely associated with mysticism. Therefore, some heroic tasks in *Asadi Shahnameh* are similar to mystic deeds.

In order to find and slay the White Demon, *Div-e Sepid*, and save King Kavus, Ferdowsi's Rostam would perform seven labors that could be taken as the hero's

rituals of initiation (Ferdowsi 63-65). Asadi's Rostam, too, has seven labors, but these seven labors are transformed into seven valleys of mystical meditation. This part of *Asadi Shahnameh* is represented in two sets of labors: passing through Ghāf Mount and reaching the land of Seven Perspectives, *Haft Manzar*.

The first Seven Labors of Rostam in *Asadi Shahnameh* constitutes passing through Ghāf Mount to find Ifrit Demon. Rostam has to pass through foggy imaginary lands and surmount strange obstacles to capture Ifrit. Ghāf in Persian is an ambiguous letter that is synonymous with X in English. In Persian literature, Ghāf Mount is an imaginary place, situated beyond geographical borders, passing through which symbolizes initiation into the road of perfection. The same passage or ascent to Ghāf Mount is mentioned by Attar, the 12th century Persian poet and theoretician of Sufism, in *Mantiq-al-Teyr* (*The Conference of the Birds*). Many birds initiate a perilous journey to reach Simurgh who resides in Mount Ghāf. After passing through seven valleys or stages, they reach Simurgh, the symbol of God and perfection. Similarly, the journey to Ghāf is a rite of initiation for Asadi's Rostam. The role of Simurgh as a guide or archetypal wise old man, *Murshid*, assisting Rostam through the mysterious labors, is similar to that of *Hod Hod*, Hoopoe, in Attar's *Conference of the Birds*.

Rostam's second sets of Seven Labors is passing through the land of Seven Perspective, *Haft Manzar*. After the battle of the Eight Armies is over, some of Rostam's grandchildren are held captive in a mysterious citadel by Simāb, the Silver-faced Sorceress. Anybody who attempts to save them is caught and after that the citadel vanishes in a fearsome storm so that nobody knows the ways to enter or exit. Commanded by Soroush, the king dispatches Rostam to the mountains.

Rostam is an ascetic who, through truth, performs Seven Labors, each level of which belongs to one of the celestial bodies, *Aflāk*. Each Labor necessitates Rostam to enter a house that has its own obstacles, situations and fearsome creatures with a king who is similar to the god of that celestial body in mythology (*Asadi Shahnameh* 22096-22762). The setting of the first Labor is silver associated with the Moon. The second house belongs to Mercury in the Solar System; it is white and is made of mercury. The third Labor is crimson, made of copper and belongs to Venus where people are bewitched with music and songs. The fourth Labor, belonging to the Sun, is golden with high emerald arch. The fifth, belonging to Mars, is made of steel covered with an army of riders in red with crimson banners. The sixth, belonging to Jupiter, is yellow and made of tin. Finally, the seventh is made of lead and is pitch black, "darker than all the sorrows of the world," since belongs to Saturn (*Asadi Shahnameh* 22760).

The old righteous resident in a temple in Ghāf Mount accompanies Rostam. The name of this wise old man is Borhan, meaning 'reasoning' and his nationality is Greek. *Asadi Shahnameh* builds upon the previous knowledge in Persian literature where Greece is associated with the land of philosophy, logic and wisdom (Venetis 158). This image goes back to the legacy of the King of Persia, Anushirvan in the 6th century who introduced many Greek ideas into his kingdom. Later in the 8th and 9th centuries after the Arab conquest of Hellenized areas like Syria and Egypt, all Muslims, including Iranians became familiar with Greek ideas. The popularity of Greek philosophies found its peak in the late 9th century by the construction of Baghdad's *Bayt al-Hikma*, House of Wisdom, where the translation of all of Greek, Persian and Syriac works were supported (Lyons 55-77).

Borhan has been the master of Phillip the Wise and his knowledge surpassed any sorcery (*Asadi Shahnameh* 21913-21990). Phillip the Wise is Philip II of Macedonia, King of Babylon, who has found its way into Persian literature through fake legends in *Iskandarnameh* (Alexander's Accounts) where the myths of Alexander the Great are narrated. Thus, Borhan is the guide to the path, the old sage, *Murshid*, and the symbol of "active reasoning" (*Asadi Shahnameh* 21999).

Borhan describes Haft Manzar Garden as a "nonexistent manifestation" (*Asadi Shahnameh* 21964). If Rostam succumbs to fear, this manifestation destroys him but if he stays bold, the manifestation is destroyed. This challenge is a test to the ascetic's faith and courage. The last request of Borhan is that Rostam buries him in the vault if he returns triumphant. The "master" (*Morād*) dies when the "disciple" (*Morid*) reaches perfection because disciple is now a "perfect human being" and a sage (*Asadi Shahnameh* 22001). After the seventh house, Rostam reaches Sorceress Simāb's palace and takes her life. At dawn, there is no trace of Haft Manzar Palace, its insurmountable walls and its residents, the khans and houries in Simāb's land. At the end of the Seven Labor, Rostam becomes a perfect Murshid. Saman Khan, son of the Chinese king, who is among the liberated captives of the Haft Manzar is so mesmerized by Rostam's personality that he converts to Islam (*Asadi Shahnameh* 23050). What is noteworthy here is that in Iranian epics, China is a neighbor of Turan and is thus always geopolitically important. Turan always plots to ruin the peaceful relationship between Iran and China. Therefore, the conversion of Chinese King to Islam is doubly important because China becomes the international and religious ally of Iran.

Conclusion

Rostam is a prehistoric character with Scythian origins who became known as

the example of an unmatched warrior in the class-based structure and federative culture of the Parthians. After the disintegration of Abbasid Caliphate by the Mongols (1258 A.D), Shia Islam initially grows as a social movement and with the establishment of the Safavid government (1501-1721) it becomes an instrument for seizing and maintaining power and a means to substantiate the legitimacy of kings. *Asadi Shahnameh* belongs to the development of pre-Safavid Shia Islam. Following the collapse of the empire of Abbasid Caliphate, there was room for rapid growth of Shia faith which, until then, had only served as a religious minority or a political opposition against the dominant ideology. Until the 12th century, Shia Islam was more like a politico-religious position and from the 13th century onwards, it gradually developed into a social movement. Later in the 16th and 17th centuries, with the seizing of power by the Safavids, particularly due to their ideological confrontation with the Ottoman Sunni Turks, Shia became a dominant ideology and political religion. The rapid spread of Shia Islam throughout Iran became possible with the convergence of this ideology towards two basic cultural elements: ancient Persian civilization and mysticism. This feature was extremely attractive in the Middle Ages in the Islamic civilization for both the elite and the mob of Iranian society. In *Asadi Shahnameh* Rostam is the Shi'ite-Mystic version of Iranians' popular hero. Although he is not a Shia, he is the covert representative of the emerging and developing Shia ideology.

Four centuries after the arrival of Islam in Iran, Ferdowsi penned the most enduring epic, *Shahnameh,* the book of the dreams of a nation defeated by Arabs. In Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh,* Rostam was transformed into a monotheist, liberal and strong hero who not only was pardoned for his errors, killing Sohrab and Prince Esfandiyār, but also became the main protagonist of the book because of his role as a savior of Iran in an age when Iran was in dire need of a hero. After Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh* gains preeminence, Rostam becomes a national hero and transforms into a Superhuman in Iranian culture. In this regard, Rostam is a unique character who embodies the history of ideological developments and circulation of power in Iran's last two thousand years.

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Poetics as Vocabulary of Resistance: A Linguistic Analysis of Ebinyo Ogbowei's Poetry

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Abstract In the past decade, the third generation Niger Delta poet, Ebinyo Ogbowei has jettisoned the poetics of passivity associated with J.P. Clark-Bekederemo, Gabriel Imomotimi Okara and side tracked Tanure Ojaide's eco-critical poetry subscription, to embrace a fierce and militant poetics of nationalism in his poetry. Arguably, Ogbowei deploys resistance trope in his poetry, to address the social contradictions besetting the Niger Delta communities. This paper problematizes the dilemma of Niger Delta nationalities, although subdued, but are determined in their struggle to have a fulfilled life in an ecologically degraded environment. The paper is focused on the analysis of poetics of resistance in Ebinyo Ogbowei's six poetry collections: *the heedless ballot box* (2006), *the town crier's song* (2009), *the song of a dying river* (2009), *marsh boy and other poems* (2013), *let the honey run* (2013) and *matilda* (2018). Voicing the worsening plight of the Niger Delta, Ogbowei's poetry not only engages the region's enduring poverty, ecological degradation and despair but also explores a generational resistance against its persistent subjugation. In this paper, attention is paid specifically to the linguistic analysis of representative poems from the six collections purposively selected for the delineation of poetics of anger, belligerence and resistance in Ogbowei's poetry. In fulfilling its aim, the analysis is achieved with recourse to the dictates of Critical Discourse Analysis which postulates that language in use is not neutral, but is rather used in the performance of power, ideology, identity and hegemony.

Key words poetics as vocabulary of resistance; Niger Delta; ecological degradation; Critical Discourse Analysis; Ebinyo Ogbowei's poetry.

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Introduction

If the Niger Delta's enduring crisis has in recent years benefited from the poetry of anger and disillusionment deriving from a generational reaction to the obvious economic strangulation, its political marginalization, social emasculation and ecological despoliation of the various communities in the region have been stridently contextualized in the poetry of Ebinyo Ogbowei. The Niger Delta's ecological degradation ostensibly results from the poorly regulated activities of the multinational oil firms, who have been operating with reckless abandon in the past decades. Since 1960, the farm lands, fishing ponds and flowing rivers have borne the inscription of environmental pollution orchestrated by Shell and other oil multi-national in the region. The effect of degradation on the Niger Delta's communities has been threatening in scope, frightening in assessment and destructive in its action. In view of the continual despoliation of the Niger Delta's flora and fauna, the region remains a significant subject matter in contemporary Nigerian literature.

Curiously, if the dialectic determination to amplify the narrative of misery besetting the Niger Delta is of utmost concern to the writers from the region, then how does one come to terms with the revelation that the first generation of the Niger Delta poets like John Pepper Clark-Bekederemo and Gabriel Imomotimi Okara reacted passively to the degradation of the region in their poetry? Perhaps their hesitant reaction is borne out of a measure of their respective attitudes toward

the euphoria of celebrating a promising, newly independent Nigeria nationhood bristling with a boisterous optimism in the 1960s to the detriment of launching a vitriolic campaign for the restoration of Delta's ecosystem. The poetry of the duo professed a disparate leaning as they are effusive in their praise and celebration of the rustic charms of a Niger Delta's milieu as exemplified in *A Reed in the Tide* (1965) and *The Fisherman's Invocation* (1978). Of course, at this stage, the degradation of the region as we have it now had not become a national embarrassment. Nevertheless, given the fact that postcolonial Nigeria has convincingly been a very disparate nation with enormous regional differences, Clark-Bekederemo and Okara must have deliberately shied away from capturing in their poetry, the humiliating and festering poverty that the Niger Delta has been contending with since Nigeria attained independence.

Yet within the limits of his concern, Tanure Ojaide, a prodigious second generation Niger Delta poet, betrays a reactionary sensibility in his poetry: *Labyrinths of the Delta* (1986), *the endless song* (1989) and *The Tales of the Harmattan* (2007) to draw awareness to the ecological degradation of the Delta region. However, in the last ten years, the passivity of the first generation Niger Delta poets and reactionary poetics of the second generation poets have been replaced by a new poetic consciousness which emanated from a combative reaction to the relentless, successive military subjugation and economic emasculation of the region. Suffice it to say that years of neglect, reckless appropriation of the wealth of the Niger Delta by the Nigerian government in correspondence with the insensitivity of the oil multinationals have fuelled a wave of radical ecological poetics from the third generation Niger Delta poets like Ibiwari Ikiriko, Joe Ushie and Ogaga Ifowodo. Drawing on the seemingly, eco-critical reactionary poetry of Ojaide, the third generation Niger Delta's poetry is entrenched in anger and defiance to address the gamut of grievances of the Niger Delta communities: theft of the region's wealth by the Nigerian government, the destruction of the ecosystem by the operating oil multinationals, pauperization of the population due to the polluted water and farm lands and deficit in social amenities in the region. Reflecting on the embarrassing Delta's degradation, Niyi Akingbe argues that "in the context of the degradation of the Niger Delta, the language of neglect continues to revolve around the images of oil exploitation and, by extension, economic dispossession" (Akingbe 17).

Ogbowei is a third generation Nigerian poet and one of the most prodigious poets from the Niger Delta region. His six poetry collections: *the heedless ballot box* (2006), *the town crier's song* (2009), *song of a dying river* (2009), *let the honey run* (2013), *marsh boy & other poems* (2013) and *matilda* (2008) are crowded with the

tremolo of poetics which oscillate between pugilism and belligerence. Discernible in Ogbowei's poetry is a reflection of the contradictions and struggles within the Niger Delta communities. A terrific inscription of despoliation exegesis in the poetics of Ogbowei frames the anguish of untold hardship in the Delta communities —an anguish which reinforces the theme of neglect which necessitated a counter-reaction that developed into violence. Death and violence coalesce admirably to heighten the tension in Ogbowei's poetry as a way of arousing our understanding of the current socio-political rhythms in the Niger Delta. Correspondingly, the Niger Delta's sustained dilemma has been relentlessly referenced in the eco-critical poetics of Ibiwari Ikiriko's *Oily Tears of the Delta* (2000), Ogaga Ifowodo's *The Oil Lamp* (2005), Ebi Yeibo's *The Forbidden Tongue* (2007) and Joe Ushie's *A Reign of Locusts* (2004).

As with any group threatened with annihilation, the Niger Delta communities have constantly resisted exploitation/domination during colonialism and in the post-colonial Nigeria. Isaac Adaka Boro's referenced "The Twelve-Day Revolution" in 1966 provides a striking example. However, during the 1990s, due to the militarization of the zone, the crisis escalated and received international media coverage. Over the years, government's neglect of the Delta communities in terms of non-provision of basic amenities, the destruction of farmlands and fishing waters have significantly fuelled agitations that have developed into an enduring resistance—youth militancy. This typifies a historical intervention that has redefined agitation in the region, which the government and oil multi nationals have not succeeded in curbing. Suffice to state that, in the domain of the arts, literature apparently undertakes the task of documenting prevalent social realities within the environment in which it is produced. The paper is focused on articulating a linguistic analysis of the intersection of poverty, deprivation and ecological degradation that have given rise to forms of militant resistance as depicted in Ogbowei's six poetry collections.

Rallying Voices and Resolute Revolts

As the world continues to witness accretions of repression, injustice and blatant subjugation of the oppressed minorities, technological advancements and the appropriation of social media have provided viable pathways to the creation and sustenance of protestations for social change. Through hash tags and online trends like #ArabSpring, #BringBackOurGirls, #BlackLivesMatter, attention is drawn to prevailing social situations while physical moves are made to correct identified wrongs. However, while online or social media-based protestations are regular

occurrences and have been adjudged as influential, the levels and forms of political protest have only continued to expand (Norris 20). Social scientists and sociologists have been concerned with the social demographics of protests, the attitudes and motivations for protests and how protestations are mobilized. However, for most literary writers, resistance and protest are hinged on the weight of conscience where the pen is mightier than the sword. Consequently incidents of cultural imperialism, political subjugation, economic and social oppression are regular themes explored in literary writings.

The role of the literary writer extends beyond reducing thoughts to writing. Writers are the conscience of the society as they draw attention to existing social ills. This preoccupation is targeted toward eventually occasioning social change. Within the African continent, politically-conscious writers have undertaken this onerous task, oftentimes to their personal detriment. Some popular names that come to mind are Wole Soyinka, Jack Mapanje, Kole Omotoso, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, and Chinua Achebe. With specific attention to the genre of poetry, Okara argues that the "poet must exist to exercise the powers of the Word to realise his visions and an existing society on which he focuses his visions" (78).Achebe (1985) also asserts that literary writing's are often concerned with the contemporary issues. However while physical resistance and protests may involve violence and the breakdown of law and order, resistance and protest through literature functions as an arbiter of justice through non-violent means. Tanure Ojaide (42) also declares that:

Literature has to draw attention to [the] increasing gap between the haves and the have-nots. Literature has become a weapon against the denial of basic human rights… It is understandable why the African (Nigerian) artist is utilitarian.

The poets, as the case is in the present study, employ their artistic talents and consciousness to create awareness either to avert conflict or reconcile people enmeshed in conflicts (Ofure 6). The present enquiry extends Ofure's (8) typification as "town criers" of poets "who harness the relationship between art, ideology and social consciousness to articulate the prevalent conflicts in postcolonial Nigeria." However this enquiry is limited to the exploration of the linguistic representation of activism and resistance in the selected eco-critical peoms.

Ecocriticism, Ecological Oppression and the Propagation of Poetic Expressivity

Ecocriticism substantiates the intersection between literature and the environment. Ezenwa Ohaeto (1994) remarks that ecocriticism explores the interaction between literature and nature. Since literature exists as a mirror of the human society and serves as a form of documentation of the prevailing happenings, eco-critical literary

writings have grown to draw attention to the aftermath of human activities on the environment. Buell, Heise and Thornber (418) opine that ecocriticism is central in view of the necessity "that environmental phenomena must be comprehended, and that today's burgeoning array of environmental concerns must be addressed qualitatively as well as quantitatively." The expression of ecocriticism through literary writings spans the three genres of literature, although the present enquiry focuses on poetry. As a tool for creative expression, poetry has been harnessed for the documentation of historical realities and for stimulating socio-cultural consciousness. In addition, it is employed for mediation or reconciliation during dissonance. In the present scenario, it is used to engineer affection on the experiences of persons inhabiting environmentally-degraded locations and unravel the capitalist inclinations that result into the birthing of such experiences. This suggests the concept of ecological oppression where business concerns take more significance than the lives of the occupants of these terrains. Commenting on ecological oppression, Bunker (25) states that:

> When natural resources are extracted from one regional ecosystem to be transformed and consumed in another, the source-exporting region loses value that occur in its physical environment. These losses eventually decelerate the extractive region's economy while the resource-consuming communities gain values and their economies accelerate.

The oppressive regime permeates the daily lives of the victims leading most often to loss of livelihood, ruining of the environment, and incidences of health challenges. Naturally, victims of such exploitations do not take things lying low. There are often protests, physical attacks, media advocacy and, in the case of the Nigeria's Niger Delta, militancy and armed engagement of government forces coalesced into series of kidnapping for ransom. The agitation has however not been limited to militaristic responses. In fact, such experiences have spurred and engendered the spurning of creative writings borne out of the choleric energies. These literary compositions not only document the peculiar experiences of victimhood, they also markedly explore the activities of perpetrators through first-hand recounts of happenings. These expressive litanies are discussed and contextualized with specific attention paid to the linguistic framing of resistance and protestations and the ideological implications of the identified linguistic realisations in Ogbowei's six poetry collections.

The Niger Delta as a Tale of Hardship

The Niger Delta region traditionally extends from the tributaries of the River Niger to its depository in the Atlantic Ocean at Oghoye, in the Ilaje country of the South-Western Nigeria. Within the context of littoral sphere, the Delta region is a geographical area that has often been neglected in terms of infrastructural development by successive Nigerian governments. "It is a homeland to relatively small, migratory ethnic groupings like the Ijaw, Urhobo, Itsekiri, Ilaje, Ogoni and Isoko, who have competed with one another from the pre-colonial period for dominance in trade and have often asserted supremacy through warfare''(Akingbe and Akwen 2-3). Recently however, the appellation is used to include all the areas where there are confirmed petroleum products extractable in commercial quantities. The area spans Edo, Delta, Bayelsa, Rivers, Akwalbom, Cross River, Ondo, Abia and Imo States. These states are members of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), an agency of the Nigerian government established to manage the affairs and peculiar developmental challenges of the region.

Despite the intervention of the NDDC over the years, what is not in doubt is that the region constitutes a gaping irony of wealth and poverty. An oil-rich region, a significant contributor, up to about 90% to the Nigerian GDP, the Niger Delta is enmeshed in environmental degradation as well as systemic neglect and marginalization. While the dominant and primary occupation of the peoples of this region used to be fishing and farming, oil spillages and hazardous gas flares have concertedly ruined the once lush region. Hence, socially- and politically-conscious writers have consistently dwelt on the plight of the region for national and global attention. The writers include Gabriel Okara, Ken Saro-Wiwa, J.P. Clark, Tanure Ojaide, Ibiwari Ikiriko as well as Ebinyõ Ogbowei whose creative intervention constitutes the data for the present study.

The Niger Delta region has had a chequered history with antithetical frustrations from the two existing divides: the government and the multinational oil companies who reap the benefits of oil exploration, exploitation and marketing; and the residents who suffer the effects of the environmental degradation in their homelands caused by oil spillages and incessant gas-flaring worsened by the lack of commensurate government presence in terms of social services. Paradoxically, ''the Delta region is the richest and most naturally endowed, but seems abysmally, a lesser developed part of the Nigeria nation-state. Nevertheless, some of the northern states are far worse on many basic indicators of development. That was the case before Boko Haram insurgence, and it is most definitely the case after it'' (Akingbe,

"Writing against Tyranny" 13).

Despite prolonged clamouring for resource control, a sizable amount of the oil blocks are owned by private individuals from outside the region while exploration is done by foreign oil companies. Uzoechi Nwagbara (77) refers to this as 'a serious form of polarisation, which finds timbre in the periphery and centre paradigm or town/country thesis, where the core depends on the periphery for the supply of its economic means and materials'. David Dafinone explains that:

> The Niger Delta people vehemently oppose being colonized by few Nigerians who have captured the instrument of power for their interests. As long as the government continues to alienate the people from their land and usurp their right without due process, the government cannot be seen to be democratic as it does not take into consideration the principles of corporate governances, which involves freedom of choice, rule of law, transparency, accountability, probity, equity and justice. Our stand on this issue is not in the context of breaking from the Nigerian federation or excluding other non-oil producing areas from benefiting from the proceeds from oil export and production... (4)

Contemporary Nigerian literature has highlighted the conflagrating tensions in the Niger Delta. Similarly, poetics of the third generation Niger Delta poetry revolves around the experiences and challenges of Delta communities and inhabitants which have been poignantly articulated in the poetry of Ogbowei. These poetry collections encapsulate the issues that surround the erosion of their homelands, their identities, languages, and environment and culture. They are also wielded as cudgels to batter the government. Enajite Ojaruega says:

> The debacle caused by oil exploration and exploitation activities in Nigeria's Niger Delta region has attracted much attention within and outside the annals of literature to such an extent that; even now it is possible to refer to the fast growing corpus of literary writings on these issues as "Niger Delta Literature." Many writers have written and published works in all genres of literature describing in literary terms the on-going despoliation and degradation of the physical environment of this region. The extraction of crude oil from the land and water spaces as well as gas flaring activities have led to the pollution of the region's land, water, and air. (495)

Consequently, creative writings from the region have, beyond documenting the

peculiar experiences of its inhabitants, been confrontational and oppositional in orientation. Poetic outcrops from this region have also been perceived as products of "conflict, political schisms and experiences that enables self-expression, self-fulfilment and maximum self-realisation" (Aito 11). In all, the Niger Delta poetry revolves around the discourse of experiences and conflicts as they affect individuals, communities and the region as well as how these influence the relationship with the Nigerian political entity.

Methodological Details

Ogbowei's six poetry collections were purposively selected because of their ostensible Niger Delta's reclamation campaign. With the hindsight of rhetoric of motives, Ogbowei's poetry provides a veritable linguistic-literary site where Niger Delta's nationalism dovetails with a regional determination for a resource control. This concern is imbued with a linguistic exploration of protestation and resistance that reinforce a polemic of "we" versus "they" in the selected poems culled from the six collections. The poetry collections bear the imprint of Ogbowei's fidelity and dedication to the Niger Delta's nationalism and political activism tailored toward total emancipation of the region. Excerpts from these poems are employed as supplements in the subsequent discussions of how protestation and resistance are enacted and (re)negotiated in Niger Delta poetry. The analysis is guided by tenets from Critical Discourse Analysis. To Fairclough and Wodak,

> CDA sees discourse — language use in speech and writing — as a form of 'social practice'. Describing discourse as social practice implies a dialectical relationship between a particular discursive event and the situation(s), institution(s) and social structure(s), which frame it: The discursive event is shaped by them, but it also shapes them. That is, discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned — it constitutes situations, objects of knowledge, and the social identities of and relationships between people and groups of people. It is constitutive both in the sense that it helps to sustain and reproduce the social status quo, and in the sense that it contributes to transforming it. Since discourse is so socially consequential, it gives rise to important issues of power. Discursive practices may have major ideological effects — that is, they can help produce and reproduce unequal power relations between (for instance) social classes, women and men, and ethnic/cultural majorities and minorities through the ways in which they represent things and position people. (258)

According to Wodak (2009), CDA "is not interested in investigating a linguistic unit per se but in studying social phenomena which are necessarily complex and thus require a multidisciplinary and multi-methodical approach". Instead, CDA focuses on larger units than isolated words and sentences and, hence, new basic units of analysis: texts, discourses, conversations, speech acts, or communicative events. The implication hence is that CDA contextualises the use of language and attributes situational functions (social, cultural, situative and cognitive) to language use. CDA's predilection for social phenomenon therefore suits the attendant enquiry which the paper explores.

Exploring Activism, Protestation and Resistance in Ogbowei's Selected Poems: A Discussion

In subsequent sub-headings, the linguistic framing of the themes of activism and resistance in the selected poems are discussed. The implications of these findings are further elaborated.

Stylistic Deviations and Foregrounding

The tone of resistance and protestation is set from the cover page through the preliminary pages where writing conventions are serially flouted. The most obvious realisations, which also run across all the poems, come from normally capitalised words (proper nouns, the first letter of sentences and titles), which are reproduced in deviant fashion. The conventions of initial capitalisations, capitalisation of proper nouns and full stops are ignored. These realisations constitute grammatical and graphological foregrounding which lead to stylistic prominence. Some instances include:

i sing of creeks…
i sing of ponds…
i sing of rivers…
i sing of swamps…
i cast aside paddle and net…
i am the marsh boy… (*marsh boy* 21)

In the above, I, the first person personal pronoun is written in small letters. While it visibly breaks the convention of writing, its miniaturization stylistically validates the second-class citizenship of Niger Delta residents within the post colonial Nigeria.

The deviation portrays the sub-humanity of the victims who live a life of penury despite the wealth on which their homelands are situated. Some other excerpts are:

many mays have passed (58)
folake, folarin (34); mammanvatsa, bukharin (35)
ratkomladic, sarkin bello (62)

where 'mays' refers to the month of May in plural form whereas the other realisations are deviant forms since they are proper nouns, names, which under normal circumstances should be written with initial capitals. Similarly, in *song of a dying river*, the misery of the Delta is further pursued in a poem titled "vultures":

a dead gull
a dead turtle
fish washed up shore
a motorboat strike
a maimed manatee
a raucous vulture restaurant (*song of a dying river*, 41)

A further realisation of deviation within punctuation is the obvious and intentional elision of intra-sentential markers like comma, full-stop, colon and semicolon. The only constantly properly applied punctuation is the apostrophe to indicate possession or ownership. While, normally, these punctuation conventions are used to assist readers in understanding a text, the poet's wilful deviation complicates reading and comprehension, subtly replicating the difficulty of daily existence in the Niger Delta. By making the reader treads the confusing paths of interpreting the writings, the poet also subjects the reader to share in the excruciating hardship and toil. An instance is provided from "*marsh boy*":

the horse will throw off the rider
mudbugs would be honoured held high
mud hens would roost in palaces
we'd be decked in royal robes
but you dress us in shrouds
we desire liberty equality not bread
but death is a liberator
the grave a leveller

you feed us the poisoned fruits of freedom (*sarsh boy* 22)

Correspondingly, this elan of hardship is reiterated in "curving winds of hate" where in *song of a dying river*, we identify several instances of non-punctuation through which the poet activates shared feelings between the readers and the Niger Delta residents:

the city by the sea is burning
a triangulating greed
patriotic awesomely tribal
carries off the prize
puts to death the battered bride (*song of a dying river*, 27)

The poet's intentional flouting of the conventions of written English language in his poetry portrays the collections as anti-normative or counter-discoursal. The experiences of oppression and the ruining of homelands, particularly in a nation in which the Niger Deltans feel alienated, are clearly not normal. Consequently, the poet uses *abnormal* language to portray the sustained social disequilibrium suffered by the Niger Delta's residents. Sadly enough, people on whose lands 'black gold' is extracted are enmeshed in defiant poverty. The linguistic resistance and protest here thus suggest that the poet is ready and willing for a new reality, one where they can "pluck out the green white green, the plunderer's flag of pride" (62). The protestation therefore goes beyond the distaste for prevalent poverty, environmental exploitation and control over resources; it embraces the yearning for self-rule and the preservation of group identity. The aspiration to 'pluck out' the green white green, a Nigeria's flag from the Delta communities, signifies a morbid disenchantment with the Nigerian nationhood. It equally implies that the relation between Nigeria and Niger Delta has become tenuous: as spatial divides, and the assertion of binary opposition of "we" and "they" subsists. The rancorous campaign for the severance of Niger Delta from Nigeria, illustrates that little or non-benefits have been derived from the Nigeria nation-state by the region since the attainment of independence in 1960.

Poetry is a form of song and its mellifluousness lies in the engagement of sounds for lyrical creativity. Foremost trope devices employed in the achievement of this are assonance and alliteration. Within the poems lie several of these realisations, with some examples given below:

…**p**rison of **p**overty
…**r**ight to **r**ise
…**s**ighing **s**wamps
…**c**reeks with **c**rushed dreams
…**h**umble **h**ungry **h**unter (*marsh boy* 1)

…**c**arpet…**c**auterize **c**lean the **c**ancer
…**b**omb the **b**ellicose **b**ogs
…st**one** and thr**one**
…pl**ea**ding repr**ie**ve (*marsh boy* 2)

Assonance and alliteration trope devices are also realised in the poetics of 'depression':
...by **s**uffering and **s**orrow
A**s**mile **s**tretche**s** the crea**s**e**s**
And**l**aughter
lightening out of the dark **r**eaches
of a **wr**acked soul (*the heedless ballot box* 30)

rallyrascals and renegades
summon sycophants and squanderers (*song of a dying river* 61)

Beyond enhancing the lyrical nature of poetic renditions, sounds play symbolic roles when they are used in creative writings, some sounds for instances are exploited to convey meanings like force and softness. Plosives, sounds which are produced with the explosion of air through the oral cavity, are indicative of force. Therefore the conscious repetition of such sounds — in these cases, /p/ and /k/ in **p**risons of **p**overty; **c**arpet bomb…**c**auterize **c**lean the **c**ancer — is indicative of force, affirmation, conviction, etc.

Parallelism is a linguistic tool in which similar linguistic structures are repeated. The repetition of such structures has stylistic and ideological implications: they are emphatic since they reiterate viewpoints and perspectives. Instances of these realisations are rife in ''a riddle'':

long stabs search for liver
long knives bloody a river
black clouds rain clouds

a quiz thunder louds (*the town crier's song* 36)

Parallelism is further realised:

i sing of creeks…
i sing of ponds…
i sing of rivers…
i sing of swamps… (*marsh boy* 21)

this ideology of terror…
this love of the betrayer
this loyalty to the slayer
that bullies us
into taking the name of our abuser…
into learning the lingo of the looter
this perpetual paranoia (*marsh boy* 27)

The realisations provide the poetry its musicality while also emphatically drawing attention, through the repetition of structures, to the thematic of chaos. In addition, "the felon is on the run" (49) is suffused with and totally reliant on the use of parallelism in realising its thematic focus. Instances are:

the conflict is on the run
the jailer too is on the run…
the felon is on the run
the enforcer too is on the run…
the shoplifter is on the run
the shopkeeper too is on the run…
hawker and retailer are on the run
wholesaler and bulk buyer too are on the run.. (*marsh boy* 49)

"the doorway to hell" in *song of a dying river* also reverberates with a striking parallelism:

i see them all
saracens and crusaders
visigoths and vandals

makers of history...(95)

Paradigmatic relations in terms of the substitution of lexical items within the same word category are however employed to sustain and reiterate the spheres of discourse. Therefore we have situations where any of the nouns — conflict, jailer, felon, enforcer, etc. — can replace any of the other options. These portray the circuitous resource bleeding of the Niger Delta by the successive Nigerian governments, multinational agencies and internal saboteurs within the region.

Further identifiable are realisations of rhetorical questions which are heavily laden with expressions that heighten concerns about the Niger Delta's plight. An instance is below:

is it fear
or a pontifical perfidy
that shuts your ears
to the apostrophising pain
of the wounded and dying? (*matilda* 30)

Here the poet questions the raison d'etre of the continual subjugation of these underprivileged people. He also employs the use of "apostrophising" in a novel manner that attests to the gross indifference which follows the pains and long-suffering that have become second nature in the Delta region. Since apostrophes are used to show possession or ownership, the marked presence of 'pain of the wounded and dying' is asserted. Unfortunately however, their plight is ignored. The poet queries the inaction of the power elite, who could have rescued the situation by demanding to know whether their silence is due to "fear or a pontifical perfidy" — fear of being undermined or displaced from been in control of the prevailing exploitation.

There is also an over-reliance on nominal groups and adjectives. Nouns refer to people and things while adjectives work alongside nouns to provide more information. The penchant of the poet for nouns and adjectives are not far-fetched. These word classes help in achieving a vivid representation of the thoughts of the poet and reinforce the images of happenings in the Niger Delta.

seeing these smoking shores
the sacked villages their smouldering huts
the gullied faces of stripped peasants

their drooping shoulders their despair-dimmed eyes ("a dream delayed" *matilda* 60)

"smoking shores, sacked villages, smouldering huts, gullied faces, stripped peasants, drooping shoulders, despair-dimmed eyes" are all dim reflections of the Niger Delta experience. The Nigerian government's unleashed carnage in the Delta is unforgiving and has continually ruined the inhabitants. The reference to fire — through smoking, smouldering — indicates the deplorable state which the contentious oil exploration has plunged the region. The inhabitants are also not spared as they have 'gullied faces, drooping shoulders, despair-dimmed eyes' and have become "stripped peasants".

Graphological Deviation

Graphology is concerned with studying how what is said is represented graphically. Through this, a language scholar may gain insights into covert meanings, information as well as the personality or psychological state of the writer. Graphological deviation however occurs when established norms of writing (graphemes) are intentionally flouted to create additional meanings in a text. Several instances are identifiable in the *marsh boy*.

What are cruisers and **suv**s to the swamp dweller (28)

The word "suvs" is put in bold to reinforce the contrast in fortunes in terms of material acquisitions for the Niger Delta residents and the exploiting government officials. It could also be interpreted as the poet drawing attention to the alphabetism which otherwise should have full stops between each letter.

Within the *larcenous party*, there are also instances of graphological deviations. The word 'hole' is written in such a symbolic manner where the written fonts thin out, one word per line, as if a hole is being dug. The adjective 'black' is also graphologically realised:

black
h
o
l
e (*marsh boy* 59)

Similarly, graphology is harnessed in ''the heron hunt'':

pitiless ghosts out of the past
pursue the heron
down
looping creeks
to her hair-raising loft
lost in this wilderness of want (*the heedless ballot box* 72)

Beyond the written letters, the imagery reinforces the context/situation which the poet documents. Black suggests the bleakness and acute irredemption of the plight of the masses who have been thrown into "contemplative poverty" by the licentious and profligate rulers. The graphological recreation in '*the heron hunt* represents the jagged pursuit along looping creeks. The semblance of a spiralling effect is also enacted through graphology viz:

S
p
i
r
a
l (*marsh boy* 60)

In the "shifting fault lines" (62), the word "war" is handwritten and not typewritten. This provides graphological prominence especially as it makes the word markedly different from the other words around it. There are two assumptions about the motivation for this realisation. First, is the context of the use which resonates with the action of "carving" as in "the bludgeoned body of baby charles/dumped on the doorsteps of our distraught home/the word war with a fork/carved on his bloated belly." The second interpretation lies in the fact that human actions — self-inflicted, handwritten — are usually the causes of crises, conflicts and eventually war.

The poet also appropriates the use of italicisation as a graphological tool. This is exemplified in ''Christmas'':

Mummy mummy
you'll buy us new shoes of fine leather
a pair for me
a pair for heather (*Let the Honey Run* 3)
Italicisation is also employed in ''stormin''

how bad for Baghdad
how sad for saddam (*the town crier's song* 87)

In "the fumbling king" (51), italicisation is used in the penultimate stanza to delineate the eventuality of the arrogant ruler. While the death is occasioned by betrayal through "oily words of sharks with shiny teeth/sharper than brutus' dagger," italics foreground the remark that the stab "*cut through his cunning heart/feels the feral pain of pleading death*."

The refrain in "a deranged gun" (38) is also repetitively rendered in italics:

ransom riches have reached rumuekpe
banditry brings beautiful girls and luxury cars (*marsh boy*)

These realisations foreground the expressions and also establish a homological effect, which Short (2000) refers to as a "graphology-symbolic" effect. This occurs where a word or a piece of text actually looks like the concept that it represents.

Allusions and the "Historization" of Resistance

Allusion refers to a passing reference or indirect mention. It may also be defined as an expression designed to call something to mind without mentioning it explicitly. Such instances are rife in Ogbowei's poetry. Locations, persons and events within and outside Nigeria are constantly referred to. These function as indexes of fields of experience. Whether direct or inferred, allusions assist in broadening the readers' understanding. Not only are the references reflective of the shared experiences, they are also evocative of the inhumane disparities in the performance of power. The allusions in the anthology are varied and stride different spheres of human activities. However the most realised domain of allusion is from the socio-politics. Instances of such socio-political references in Ogbowei's poetry abound. This can be located for instance in "for kenule saro-wiwa":

sunglasses award the degree of the white feather
deliver it with nine decapitated red cocks
bleeding thrashing scratching from the rolls
not the name *saro-wiwa*
not the name *mosop*
but*khanagokana tai eleme*
and nine necklaced cocks

are nine burning hellhounds hanging (*let the honey run* 47)

Some other realisations from *marsh boy* are:

son my and **srebrenica** (21) (refers to ethnic cleansing massacre, a localized genocide. A town in the east of Bosnia, which was the site of an ethnic cleansing massacre in July 1995.)

mean months of **'66** (21) (refers to the eventsthat surround Isaac Boro's referenced 'The Twelve-Day Revolution' and the first Nigerian military coup)

romanovs who see in our desolation their prosperity
somozas who see in our destruction their security(23)
tuolsleng (28) (a notorious prison in Cambodia)
choeungek (28) (a traumatic reference to a killing field in Cambodia)
dawsuu (35) (a Burmese non-violent politician)
insein prison (35) (a Burmese top security prison)
bush, blair, barak (37) (names of former American presidents)

As well as the following from: "stalking death":

a river of corpses
running through the bosphorus
seeks a northerly course (*matilda* 66)

These references are infused with senses and imageries of destructions and hegemonic imbalances. They testify to the cyclical nature of history and referenced the contemporary challenges of the Niger Delta people in the context of previous occurrences elsewhere. Through this, we know that, in addition to the systemic exploitation of natural resources, oppression and state repression are the lot of avengers who seek a halt to the exploitative realities. Ogbowei therefore situates the Niger Delta resistance within the global theatres of violence where the voices of dissent and resistance are met with decisive state repression. By navigating the Niger Delta's political turbulence, Ogbowei appropriates the striking contiguous memories of terror and oppression: from Spain, Portugal, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Guatemala, Cambodia, Philippines, Ukraine, Senegal, China, Kenya, Turkey and Russia. Most of these countries have witnessed dictatorial regimes and have adjudicated on cases of human rights abuse. Consequently, the names of perpetrators of crimes against humanity as well as their victims are also recounted. The names of

these dictators are derisively mentioned — Somoza, Mugabe, Mubarak, Museveni who represent the oppressors; and correspondingly, Ken Saro-Wiwa and Mamman Vatsa represent the victims. The poet therefore contextualizes the present Niger Delta's turmoil within the proclivity of both the classical and contemporary realities.

In addition to the allusions to socio-political history, there are references to popular culture:

this game of thrones (*marsh boy* 27)
shifting patterns on corleone's chessboard (*marsh boy* 27)
dancing dacoits to the dragon throne (*song of a dying river* 34)

Popular culture refers to the mundane prevailing culture within a society and encompasses realisations from art, cooking, clothing, entertainment, films, mass media, music and sports. The "game of thrones" refers to a television series which enjoyed wide viewership. However, the poet uses the allusion to represent the power play that goes on when politicians' exercise their strategies in gaining a stronghold. The allusion is sustained through another popular culture referenced in the text and movie 'The Godfather' where Corleone is a mafia don. The reference to "chessboard" affirms the place of stratagems in political battlegrounds. However the situation does not favour the masses, who are continually trampled upon in "the cut-throat politics." In fact, the poet affirms that the politician "bullies us into taking the name of our abuser that bullies us into learning the lingo of the looter." This excerpt asserts the forced nationhood foisted on Niger Deltans by the Nigeria nation- state.

The Politics of Language in Indexing Resistance

Language is never neutral when in action. Instead it is made malleable to perform multifarity of roles and functions. In the texts, the English language is the dominant language. However, this is interspersed with the creolised Nigerian Pidgin and the Ijaw language spoken by the majority of Niger Delta communities in Bayelsa and Rivers states.

Creolised Nigerian pidgin is strikingly appropriated in "na here de deal dey don":

oga notin dey shele
notin dey happen
na here de deal dey don
an na here de don dey deal (*song of a dying river* 58)

(Boss, nothing is happening
It is here that the deal gets done
And it is here that they have been doing the deal)

Significantly, the dialectic of Ijaw language is ostensibly explored in *welcome to our smouldering swamps*:

Asawana
Wana (an Ijaw battle cry) (*marsh boy* 29)

The war cry is emblematic of the call to arms in the spirit of protest and resistance against entrenched systemic subjugation to which the Niger Delta people have been consigned. Through the use of the Ijaw language; the poet asserts his Ijaw nationalism, courts a group patronage, and seeks to establish a lingua-cultural affinity. He also establishes the "we versus them" dichotomy, an alternation that suffuses in the text.

In "avoid them" (43), there are realisations of Nigerian Pidgin, a contact language which is fast becoming creolised in the Niger Delta region. The identified excerpts are of proverbs from the Niger Delta Creole.

not every han carry cutlass kin kill
yet you get for watch cutlass and han (*marsh boy* 43)
(although it isn't every hand that wields a cutlass that can kill
Still you've got to watch both cutlass and hand)

orange yellow fine for eye
how you know 'e sweet (*marsh boy* 43)
(how can you tell the sweetness of and orange
From its seemingly attractive colour)

learn for be sentinel na you hos
cos plenty tem nadere de rascals kin gada (*marsh boy* 43)
(learn to be a sentinel/watchman in/over your own house
because many a time the rascals gather there)

There is also a rendition of a French proverb:

Lameilleurefacond'atteindrevotre
ton but c'est par la force le fusil
(the best way to achieve your goal is by the gun)

It is noteworthy that the non-English sentential expressions are proverbs. Proverbs are aspects of oral literature and provide a window into the ethos and norms within a culture. Nigerian Pidgin/Creole is regarded as a neutral language which cuts across cultural and social divides. Consequently, its use is intended to serve as a vehicle of propaganda, to communicate and accentuate the Niger Delta's dilemma beyond the region. This is with the consequent intention of ensuring public sensitization on the agitating issues.

Hedging Lexis and Vocabulary Range

Cohesion is a textual resource employed to link different sentences within any text. Through the establishment of cohesive relationship, the linguistic choices in different parts of a text correspond with one another to form a network of sequential relation. According to Leech and Short (244), cross-reference and linkage are the two major kinds of cohesion. Cross-reference is concerned with how language is used to indicate referentiality within different parts of a text, that is, how connectivity is established in the text. This is realised through the use of definite reference (personal pronouns, deictics, and definite articles), substitution, ellipses, and repetition. Linkage, on the other hand, involves the use of overt connectors such as coordinating conjunctions, subordinating conjunctions, and linking adverbials.

Pronouns are used to replace nouns and are imbued with ideological framing characteristics since they can signify inclusiveness or otherwise. This implies that pronouns can be harnessed by politically-conscious writers for the statement of group affinity and otherness where affiliations and dissociations are established. The resultant identities assist in the perspectivisation of the "factional" creations enacted by the poet. In *marsh boy*, Ogbowei employs the pronouns "I, we, our, us" as counterforces to "they, them, their" where their inclusion in the plight of Niger Deltans is established. The oppressors are in this case the Nigerian government, complicit Niger Deltans and the oil multinationals who do business but fail to ensure abandonment liability which requires that they restore their areas of operation back to how nature intended. Apart from being very harsh in the criticism of the activities of the "pillagers", exploiters and oppressors, the poet's tone is also scathing in denouncing the complicity of opportunists who betray the struggle in recompense for government's lucre.

With regards to employing words as weapons for activism and resistance, the phases of transition witnessed among residents of the Niger Delta is identifiable thus:

> watch the plundered province provoked to revolt
> cut herself loose from this house of hate
> this house full of strife...(*song of a dying river* 69)

Again, memory is subverted to recall the despoliation of the Niger Delta in "the floor plan of a dream":

> the silhouette of a simulated passion
> is thrown upon the screen where fond memories
> dance to a thousand instruments
> playing half-forgotten tunes (*let the honey run*, 25)

This dialectic of transition is further pursued in the marsh boy:

> i am a **marsh boy** quick and handy with a gun
> i am the **marsh tiger** stalking beneficent tyrants (*marsh boy* 23)

This transmutation of the marsh boy and his consequent heroism as a freedom fighter and revolutionary is occasioned by the troubled experiences in the exploited yet degraded region. The marsh boy is in real pursuit of equity and the chance to live a fulfilled life. The quest for "liberty equality" however does not come on a platter of gold; especially as there have been "compatriots made to pay for crimes for which others are decorated." The metamorphosis of the "marsh boy" to a "marsh tiger" follows his transition from a "humble hungry hunter pushed out of the dining hall by the buccaneering brothers." This speeds his response as the conscience of the society as he becomes the "spear driven into the soul of the stalker… the bomb exploding the peace of the pillage…quick and handy with a gun."

> I am the **evil child** who cries too much/you say
> I am the **evil spirit** driving the delta round in loops/you say (*marsh boy* 22)

The transfiguration of the Niger Delta protester/rebel is also attested to from the above excerpt where he/she metamorphoses from being a child to being a spirit.

Obviously, the expectation of the government is for the status-quo of exploitation to be maintained, at which point the protester is still accorded the designation of a child. However, once the protests become disruptive, inhibiting the status-quo, the protesters become "evil spirits" which must be exorcised.

Lexical items are also employed to establish contrasts in the prevailing realities as it pertains to the experiences of the victims and the aggressors. A veritable instance comes from "welcome to our smouldering swamps,"

> What are schools and clinics to the vanishing ones
> What are water pumps and power mowers
> What are cruisers and **suv**s to the swamp dweller
> This toothache running needles
> Through the roof of your head
> This bomb ticking in your grasping mind
> This running sore draining your sick soul (*marsh boy* 28)

These lines document the lacklustre state of affairs where even good things are meaningless for the inhabitants of the Niger Delta region. Schools and clinics which ordinarily should be commonplace social amenities are unavailable yet the marsh boy has limitless access to arms.

The contrast is further sustained:

> romanovs who see in our **desolation** their **prosperity**
> somozas who see in our **destruction** their **security** (23)

where the "desolation" and "destruction" which the Niger-Delta inhabitants and their homeland undergo are juxtaposed with the 'prosperity' and 'security' which the looters and exploiters enjoy. The anger which the poet feels can therefore be better understood since the wealth in which the exploiters gloat have not been used to service the needs and yearnings of the Niger Delta region.

The poet further invoices the prevalent situation in the Niger Delta through the effusive use of adjectives whish reinforce the imageries and portrayals of the realities in the Delta. He identifies the Niger Delta as "contentious constituent" (42), "traumatized territories" (25), "eventful graveyards" (24), "smouldering swamps," "swamps of death" (28) and, with a tone of anguish and finality, declares that the region is a reflection of ''a failed federation'':

odi's the sector
that killed our faith
in a failed federation
where contentious constituents
disdainful of minorities
mired in the maligned marshland
hurry south spreading
the language of hell (*the heedless ballot box* 42)

The predilection for a jeremiad persists in *matilda* where through the imagery of rainfall, judgment day is announced to evil doers while the suffering lot of the Niger Deltans might eventually have respite in "by the brass river bury me":

thunder drums heralding the retreating rains
heaven's fury searing the weeping sky
lancing the heaving sea
all wails shall drown
drown all self-flattering tears (*matilda* 38)

Through expressions like "thunder drums, heaven's fury, wails shall drown… all self-flattering tears", one can identify an intertextual appeal to the biblical Armageddon. It can be surmised therefore that not only are people in the Delta communities angry and desperately in need of intercession, but heaven's fury also sets to be unleashed.

He further tolls the death knell when he submits that:
the delta is a death parlour
a place of grief
where we're gathered to hear
the ghouls decide how you deserve to die (*marsh boy* 24)

The poet through the use of these evocative expressions can be assumed to, after assessing the present realities, have foreclosed the possibility of a change in the fortunes of the Niger Delta through a peaceful dialogue. History is also harnessed as an ideological construct. Through historiography, the cyclical nature of documentation is brought to the fore particularly where events in other parts of the world are weaved, because of the mirrored realities, into illustrating the

present Niger Delta's experience. As earlier identified, the use of socio-political and historical allusions in the poems, foreground the contemporary problematic of the Niger Delta within the context of certain historical realities. They are also indicative of the referencing of the political history, like the invasion and destruction of Odi village during the regime of President Olusegun Obasanjo.

The Ideological Implications of the Linguistic Realisations

Ogbowei's *marsh boy* poems have been identified as suffused with vivid cataloguing of the lurid realities of life in the Niger Delta. The linguistic tools employed are further reliant on specific ideological constructs. The first and obvious ideology is that of Otherness wherein the author situates the sufferings and poverty of his people against the backdrop of surpluses and vanity by the exploiters. This viewpoint is accented across the poetry collection. A significant pointer is from "this perpetual paranoia" (27):

> this ideology of terror…
> this love of the betrayer
> this loyalty to the slayer
> that bullies us
> into taking the name of our abuser…
> into learning the lingo of the looter (*marsh boy* 27)

> and 'how many mays more' (58):
> communities can't coalesce into a nation
> tribes can't be welded into a state (*marsh boy* 58)

The excerpts indicate through the use of pronouns and nominal items the contrasts in the situations. Expressions such as "betrayer," "slayer," "abuser," "looter" are provided oppositional signification. They also testify to the forced/continued nationhood foisted on the Niger Deltans who would rather elect to have their own sovereign state. "Our" and "us" however identify the Niger Deltans as the oppressed minority. In addition, and as identified earlier, lexis has been manipulated as a linguistic implement in exemplifying the performance of Otherness. The excerpt from ''how many more days'' also queries the rationale behind the cynical Nigerian citizenship which the Niger Delta nationalities have been forced to acquire. The Nigeria nation-state is often viewed as colonial relic and outcrop where apparently, the ethnic majorities are obviously enjoying a privileged position over

the minorities. A situation, which has often pitched the Niger Delta nationalities against the ethnic majorities of Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo who have successively produced the political elite that has governed the postcolonial Nigeria since independence with the exception of President Goodluck Jonathan, so far the only past Nigerian president of the Niger Delta's extraction, whose emergence as president is the result of a fortuitous combination of concessions.

Oppression is also depicted as an ideology and wielded as a tool of subjugation. The oppression as used by the aggressor (the government and its capitalist counterparts-the oil multinationals) is framed in several forms – from its use as a repressive implement to being employed as a device through which the opposition is forced to join the exploiters' camp. The poet reiterates that, oftentimes during and after protestations and resistance, charlatans come forward to reap the fruits of group struggles. Consequently, the cycle of lack, deprivation and resistance are poignantly contextualized:

> frustration ploughs my back
> cuts gullies down each side of my face
> theharmattan of poverty has cracked my soul...(*let the honey run* 67)
>
> starving criminals scavenging for supplies
> dance around the dead and dying
> rush into promising stores and warehouses
> haul home stereo systems sacks of sugar and flour (*marsh boy* 24)
>
> now locked doors are blown open
> see palm-greasing patriots
> flirting through breached bunkers
> to the hall where history is made
> now locked doors are blown open... (*marsh boy* 25)
>
> …you dress us in shrouds
> we desire liberty equality not bread
> but death is a liberator
> the grave a leveller
> you feed us the poisoned fruits of freedom (*marsh boy* 22)
>
> the creeks burning at shoulders

beat a hasty retreat
the rivers on fire foam at mouth...(*the town crier's song* 77)
a clash of cymbals
lightning
out of the barrel
of a sniper rifle
a whirlwind
of pain...(*the heedless ballot box* 72)

now guns are smoking
now resilient rockets and mortars
and dedicated **i**eds
blast rip apart
dreams beginning to bloom... (*song of a dying river* 63)

These realisations poignantly accentuate the emasculation and dehumanization routines that the inhabitants of the region are continually subjected. Significantly, these poems ostensibly capture the level of subjugation of the Niger Delta with a corresponding courageous defiance mustered by the rampaging militant youths to counter the excesses of brutality dispensed by the government troops deployed to the region. Thus, poetics of resistance embedded in the Ogbowei's poetry registers a ringing proclamation that, the Niger Delta's reclamation has moved from the conciliatory passivity to a new phase of armed struggle, which has helped to highlight the tension between a determined struggle for the recuperation of the Delta from the predatory Nigerian government and a resignation to debilitating complacency. Indeed, for the contemporary Niger Deltans, death seems a better alternative — "a liberator" from "scheming cowards and cunning criminals," and from "the poisoned fruits of freedom."

Conclusion

The paper, through a linguistic analysis of Ogbowei's six poetry collections, has affirmed that resistance and the deployment of poetics of protestation has been the leitmotif that runs in the thematics of *heedless ballot box*, *the town crier's song*, *song of a dying river*, *let the honey run, marsh boy and matilda*. The paper has relentlessly stressed that, the first generation Niger Delta poets like J.P. Clark-Bekederemo and Gabriel Imomotimi Okara only deployed themes and styles that celebrated the Niger Delta's rustic charms in their poetry. This tradition morphed

into a criticism of ecological degradation of the Delta region, aptly referenced in the poetry of second generation Niger Delta's poet, Tanure Ojaide and in the poetry of the third generation poets like Ibiwari Ikiriko, Ogaga Ifowodo, Ebi Yeibo and Joe Ushie. However, Ebinyo Ogbowei a third generation Niger Delta's poet has extended the discourse of poverty, misery and ecological degradation of the Niger Delta in the militant vocabulary and combative poetics of the selected poems.

The paper has also acknowledged that due to its poetics of anger, disillusionment and resistance, the poetry of Ogbowei continually seeks to redefine the Niger Delta's struggle against a perceived deprivation within the context of a recognised combative rhythm. Given the all-too-familiar pauperization and subjugation of the region in the past decades, Ogbowei is convinced that these atrocities should be interrogated and challenged in militant poetics. The Niger Delta's exploitation and wreckage is traceable to the history of pervasive military incursions and almost legendary dictatorial "democracies" in the post colonial Nigeria which has led to disaffection, poverty and disruption of the Delta's harmony. It is within this background that Ogbowei thus draws attention to the ecocidal and homicidal activities of the Nigeria rulers who are only preoccupied with the continual theft of the region's wealth, without a corresponding improvement on the economic well-being of the people and environment. The poems from Ogbowei's six poetry collections have not only discussed but also identified the complicity of the Nigerian government in entrenching inequality and exploitation — an economic emasculation gambit which has led to the degradation of the Niger Delta and triggered armed insurrection in the recent time. The poems in these collections further detail the regrettable influence of internal conspirators from the Delta communities who collaborate with the Nigerian government and the oil multinationals to compromise the collective interest of the region.

The evocative attention to the condition of the Niger Delta, its people and environment as grounded in the poetry collections, reverberates what Udenta refers to as "alternative pedagogy." This is further pursued by Maduka who affirms that ''there is a direct relationship between literature and social institutions. The principal function of literature is to criticise these institutions and eventually bring about desirable changes in the society'' (11). The paper has remarkably benefitted from Emmanuel Obiechina's submission that ''all African writing is at once a literary piece, a social protest and a medium of political re-assertion'' (8). Similarly, going by the militant tone of articulation in the collections, the paper has equally reiterated the concern of Frank Mowah that modern African poetry is "a product of conflict, political schisms and experiences" (99). These submissions have

proven that poetry as creative endeavour is a product of endemic socio-political, religious and economic experiences of a particular society. Hence, Ogbowei's poetry therefore has exhibited its thematic commitment to the inauguration of a new Niger Delta where equity, fairness and justice will prevail. This he has ostensibly negotiated through the appropriation of the poetics of nationalism, protestation and resistance.

In exploring the frenetic linguistic architecture of these collections, we have identified how the poet, Ogbowei, has annexed the soaring pyrotechnics of anger, resentment and audacity to contextualize the linguistic deftness that taut the lines of his poetry. Suffice to state that, the analysed poems relied poignantly on language of Niger Delta's nationalism and emotion deployed in the central thematic of recuperation. The poet's impassioned deviations from writing conventions relay the foregrounding strains of resistance and protestation exemplified in the features that are identifiable in the language of the third generation Niger Delta poetry. In conclusion, the linguistic realisations of tropes of resistance in Ogbowei's poetry are dramatically harnessed to fulfil ideological roles in relaying perceptible peculiarities of the Niger Delta's experience.

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The Genre Paradigm and Modification of Modern Turkish Drama

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Abstract The aim of the paper is to show in the historical perspective the development of the genres of the Turkish drama by analyzing more than fifty Turkish authors' plays, define the influence of European dramatic tradition on the formation of Turkish drama's genders, identify a modification of genres and point out the most popular genders of modern Turkish drama. It is used such research methods as analysis and synthesis, functional, systematic, comparative, historical methods. Analyzing Turkish drama, we stated that it embraces such genres as comedy, tragedy, drama, melodrama, historical drama, historical and biographical drama, children's drama etc. The research revealed that historical and biographical drama are the main genres of the modern Turkish one. The majority of modern Turkish dramas embrace creative and quasi-biographies of famous figures etc. (T. Özakman, R. Özçelik, T. Oflazoğlu, D. Sümer). The genre of biographical drama is also widely represented by works telling the life stories of historical figures who made a strong impact on culture's development (Selim III, Suleiman the Magnificent, Mevlana, Yunus Emre, Roxelana, Mimar Sinan). Such writers as T. Özakman, T. Oflazoğlu and Ö. Yula added new topics and diversified the genre paradigm of drama by means of almost full elimination of traditional genres. While such types of drama as children's drama (Ü. Ayvaz, H. Erkek, Ü. Köksal) keep developing, the topics that are typical for Turkic culture are being rethought.

Key words literature of Turkey; dramaturgy; play; genre specificity

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anthology of modern Turkish drama.

Turkish modern drama until today has not been thoroughly studied either in Turkey itself, or in other countries, from the point of view of the formation and development of genres. Undoubtedly, the basic works are those of such researchers as M. And, H. Nutku, O. Nutku, S. Shener. Thanks to them it is possible to recreate separate elements of the general picture of the formation of the genres of the Turkish modern drama. At the same time, until today there was not enough comprehensive research, in which the texts of plays, especially those written at the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century became the basis of the study. The **aim** of this article is to study the gender paradigm and modification of the Turkish drama, corresponding to modern studies in the field of literary science. The **object** of the study — the works of Turkish playwrights, which were written since the beginning of modern drama until today and which are characterized by different genres. In this article we used such research methods as analysis and synthesis, systematic method, comparative and historical methods, cultural and historical approaches, sociological method, method of associative and conceptual analysis.

Classical Genders of Turkish Drama

The genre paradigm of Turkish dramaturgy has been formed under the influence of several factors, such as a strong tradition of national folk theatre, ideological and aesthetic traditions of literary period, impact of Western drama, social and political atmosphere in the country, a particular author's definition of a literary work's type and genre. All this created conditions for the coexistence and interaction of various genres and their modifications.

Analyzing Turkish modern drama, we stated that it embraces such genres as comedy, tragedy, drama, melodrama, historical drama, historical and biographical drama, children's drama etc. Since comedy was primarily inherent to traditional Turkish folk theatre, all of its types, including *Orta Oyunu*, *Karagöz* and *Meddah*, were based on it. *The Wedding of a Poet* by Shinasi, considered to be the first Turkish comedy written in Western style, emerged in the second half of the 19th century. It was followed by the appearance of a wide range of other comedies, such as *Misafir-i İstiklal*, *A Chatty Hairdresser* and *A Small Bell* by Ali Bey, *Who Knows a Lot Makes Many Mistakes* by Recaizade Ekrem, *One Can't Hold Two Watermelons under One Arm* by Osman Hamdi Bey, *The First Baby*, *A Stubborn or a Junkman*, *Evhami* and *No More Lie* by M. Şakir, *An Uncovered Head* and *A Dancer* by Hasan Bedreddin Paşa, and Manastırlı Mehmet Rıfat, *It is All Your Fault* by Şemsi, *A Fool*

by F. Tevfik, *Between Men* by Fikri Paşazade Lütfi etc. The period since the end of the 19th century until the beginning of the 20th century was characterized by the emergence of comedies aiming to demonstrate Turkish society's ridiculous attempts to switch to European lifestyle that was highly appreciated during that epoch. The action of such plays usually takes place in rich people's villas, their main goal is to become Europeans. Despite the fact that a huge number of these plays is based on mythic motives or Western comedies' plots, their main characters, as well as their behavior, are typical for Turkish community. The works of Hüseyin Suat, İbnürrefik Ahmet Nuri, Suat and Şahabettin, Mehmet Rauf, Ali Ekrem, Saffet Nezihi, Tahsin Nahit, Şahabettin Süleyman, Müfit Ratip, Mizancı Mehmet Murat, Servet Muhtar Alus and others were among the most popular (Sokullu 176). In the contrast to the period of Tanzimat, when family problems and everyday issues tended to be the main subject of comedies, at the beginning of the 20th century dramatısts focused on depicting parliament and the representatives of government in a ridiculous way.

Comedies of the Republican period (1923–1960) are very different from those of previous centuries. These comedies include some features of Western vaudevilles, boulevard dramas, and theatre of the absurd and epic drama, combined with the elements of Turkish folk drama. Such authors as R. N. Güntekin, Osman Cemal Kaygısız and Cemal Nadir Güler, who kept observing and developing the traditions of pre-rebublican drama (1908–1923), launched the comedy of the Republican period. The description of old traditions in a ridiculous way became the main topic of that time's plays (Sokullu 197). Musahipzade (1868–1959) was one of the most prominent comedians of that period. Using the elements of traditional folk and European drama, he criticized the Ottoman regime and created a sort of synthesis of the West and the East (*Kadi Aynarosa*, *The Magnificent Ağa* and *A Turban has Fallen Down*). During the Republican period, other dramatists used his plays as an example to follow (Sokullu 202). Nazım Hikmet, Vedat Nedim Tör, H. Rahmi Gürpınar, Cevat Fehmi Başkut and Refik Erduran pursued the traditions established by Musahipzade.

Due to the change of political situation in the country at the beginning of the 1960's (when the first military coup took place), the topics of comedies went through some transformations. Using an opportunity to dwell on politics and state system openly, the dramatists of the second half of the 20th century, who focused on depiction of rural and social issues, tended to estimate historical events critically. Revealing the essence of events that happened in the past, authors began mythologizing them in order to create an antithesis to modern times regarded to as an era of degradation. Aiming to form a critical esteem of events that took place in

the country, such dramatists as Muhasipzade Celal, Haldun Taner, Turgut Özakman and Turhan Selçuk devoted their works to these issues (Sokullu 215).

Specific rural lifestyle, usually associated with conservative customs and traditions of the past, and innovations of urban inhabitants, considered to be in opposition to old habits, got a new dimension in Turkish drama since both of these images started to be used in order to ridicule something or describe severe social problems of rural inhabitants for the first time. It became a completely new phenomenon in Turkish comedy. Ridiculing the illiteracy and backwardness of rural inhabitants, Cahit Atay, Necati Cumalı, Sermet Çağan, Başar Sabuncu and Aziz Nesin raised many concerns, crucial for villagers, such as lack of modernization and support, humiliation, bribery and unwillingness of authorities to contribute to the development of countryside (Sokullu 218).

During the period between the second half of the 20th century and the first half of the 21st century, comedy became one of the most popular genres among spectators. Such comedies as *Wooden Sandals* and *The Liver of Mother-in-Law* by Necati Cumalı, *The Helicopter* by Tuncer Cücenoğlu, *The Last Exit in Front of the Bridge* by Zeynep Kaçar, such tragicomedies as *Russian Doll* and *The Visitor* by Tuncer Cücenoğlu, *This Important Day* by Zeynep Kaçar, *There is No Truth in Age and Mind* by Şule Gürbüz etc. gained wide popularity.

Despite the fact that the first plays written in the genre of tragedy reflected national poetic traditions, they did not become successful (*Sezgüzeşt-i Perviz* in 1866 and «*Alter Ego*» in 1866 by Ali Haydar Bey). Spectators appreciated this genre with the beginning of the period of Romanticism that enabled depiction of exaggerated passions and melodramatic scenes. Nowadays there are still many examples of it in Turkish dramaturgy (*Sell Me the Prohibited Thing* and *The Shovel* by Volkan Taha Şener, *The Tragedy of Xanthos* by Savaş Aykılıç, *Medina* by Zeynep Kaçar, *Antonius, Kleopatra* by Orhan Güner etc.).

Turkish dramatists borrowed the genre of melodrama from the French literature during the period of Tanzimat (1876–1922). This genre was the most appropriate one to meet aesthetic demands of the society. Thus, within the period between the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century the number of melodramas presented to Turkish audience significantly exceeded the quantity of comedies and tragedies referred to as classical genres (Güçbilmez 14). Namık Kemal is considered to be one of the most prominent experts of melodrama in Turkish literature. For instance, his play *Gülnihal* reveals such features of melodrama as extremely high intrigue, bright actions and dramatic affairs. The author divided the characters of his play into two opposite groups expressing “good” and “bad” ones.

Thus, we may understand what their personalities are from the first lines of this literary work. The majority of Namık Kemal's plays consists of melodramas. It was the author's way to reveal his inner protest against traditional folk drama (Güçbilmez 25). Such writers as Recaizade Ekrem (*Afife Anjelik*), Ahmet Mithat Efendi (*The Language of Law*), Hasan Bedrettin and Mehmet Rıfat (*Bloody Revange*, *The Slaves*, *The Poor One*, *Ahmet Yetim or Neticei Sadakat*), Hüsamettin (Şükrü the *Traitor*), Mehmet bin Mustafa (*Sadness*), Yakub Kadri (*A Meeting With Sadness*), Yağcızade Nuri (*A Woman Who Cheats*), Ahmet Fahri Mustafa (*A Lesson From Life of Fate*) etc. also created many plays in this genre (Nutku 362).

The authors that appeared on literary arena in the 1950's tended to continue the traditions established by this generation's representatives. Thus, the most peculiar features of such plays of Cevat Fehmi Başkut (1905–1971) as *A Man From Picture*, *An American in Harput* and *A Break*, are their acute intrigue and high emotionality, sharp opposition of good and evil, as well as moral and didactic problems raised. Focusing mostly on the representatives of middle class, C. F. Başkut critisized that time's society in most of his works. Time and space of all his plays are both limited with Istanbul of the 50's and 60's of the 20th century. As the author was born in this megalopolis, he used real people as a prototype to create the images of his characters. Realistic situations, represented in his plays, attract reader's or spectator's attention encouraging them to thinking. The plot of C. F. Başkut's plays always develops around the relationships of family members that reflect the state of Turkish society. His characters and main heroes are always men: they are shown as decent, smart, honest and hardworking people. Women who are their wives, on the contrary, are demonstrated as individuals whose only purpose is to get more money, profit and satisfaction. Thus, women are considered to be anti-heroes. All of his melodramas predictably do no end happily. Thus, his character who suffers from poverty gets a harsh life lesson and loses the fight between good and evil.

Having become a dramatic genre tending to escape from the repertoire of theatres after the 1960's, melodrama kept appearing on the stages of travelling theatres of Anatolia from time to time (And *Cumhuriyet* 300). Despite a complicated political situation that kept having a strong impact on culture and literature for long sixty years, the structure and content of Turkish melodramas did not undergo drastic changes.

Turkish drama originated from folk theatre and rituals, and sacred performances in particular (for instance, *Death and Rebirth* and *The Kidnap of a Girl*). Thus, *Death and Rebirth* depicts war that always leads to death and suffering. Being in sorrow, the characters of this play keep crying and praying when some

magic or miracle makes the deceased revive and start celebrating life (And *Oyun* 188). First Western-style dramas appeared in Turkish dramaturgy in the second half of the 19th century. Being familiar with the works of Schiller, Byron, Manzoni and Hugo, Namık Kemal created romantic plays (*Motherland or Silistra*, *Akif Bey*, *Black Tragedy*) that became a great contribution to the development of Turkish drama. Such authors as Ebüzziya Tevfik, Mehmet Rıfat, Mehmet Saadettin, Ahmet Mithat Efendi, Abdülhak Hamit and others also worked over romantic drama (Nutku 360). At the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century drama was represented by such plays as *The Avalanch*e by Tuncer Cücenoğlu, *Mine*, *Dry Summer*, *An Order to Murder* and *Dangerous Dove* by Necati Cumalı, *Sacide*, *The Ways are Over* and *Light in the Darkness* by Ülker Köksal, *Crying in the Shadow of Stars* by Volkan Taha Şeker, *Feather, Sword, Heart* by Savaş Aykılıç, *Wedding Notes / Jail Note*s by Mine Ergen, *The Doorstep* by Hasan Erken etc.

Having compared dramatic works of this period with the plays of the previous one, we stated that modern authors tended to conduct a psychological analysis of their characters on the background of social and political issues, while in the middle of the 20th century dramatists used to depict family relationships and daily life problems in their plays. The fact that Turkish writers used to consider these topics was determined by a new postmodern era that encouraged modern Turkish dramatists to search for innovative ways of scenic expression and language.

Historical and Biographical Drama

Plays that mostly focus on life and art of rulers, famous poets, architectures, scientists and doctors, who contributed to the world's history, represent Turkish dramaturgy of the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century. Such prominent representatives of Turkic world as I. Süleyman (known as Suleiman the Magnificent in the West), Osman, III. Selim, Rumi, Yunus Emre, Orhan Veli, İbn-i Sina, Mimar Sinan and Hürrem Sultan are among them. Those authors who worked over their dramas during that period particularly mentioned such personalities as Tenzing Norgay, a mountaineer usually referred to as Sherpa Tenzing, and a Soviet cosmonaut Vladimir Komarov. Dealing with biographical material, that time's dramatists observed two ways: some of them intended to create historical or historical and biographical drama that would reflect historical events and background in the most accurate way; others aimed to construct a sort of quasi-historical texts where they mythologized biographies and made their characters ideal. Turkish dramatists began using the facts from historical past of the Ottoman Empire in their works only after the period of Tanzimat (the second half of the 19th

century). Thus, such scientific researches upon the history of the Ottoman Empire as *Hikmet-i Tarih* (1863) by Ahmet Vefik Paşa, *Endülüs Tarihi* (1863) by Ziya Paşa and *Devr-i* İstila (1867) by Namık Kemal emerged (Buttanrı 1768).

Researchers consider *Hadji Bektash or the Creation of the Janissaries* (1761) by Thomas Chabert to be the first Turkish historical drama. This drama tells the events of the 13th century, when formation of the Ottoman Empire was in progress. Consequently, the roots of historical drama are traced back to the end of the 18th century, but not to the 60's of the 20th century as O. Oganova stated (Oganova 68).

The Romantic period encouraged such Turkish authors as Namık Kemal, Ahmet Mithat Efendi, Şemseddin Sami, Hasan Bedreddin, Mehmet Rıfat, Abdülhak Hamit, Muallim Naci and others to write upon historical issues. In his introduction to the translation of Emir Nevruz's play, Namık Kemal complained about the lack of works dedicated to historical affairs. He was the first writer who examined the biographies of Sultan Mehmet the Conquer and Sultan Selim I known as Selim the Resolute, whose stories of life were previously researched by other authors (Kemal 4). *The Story of* İbrahim, İbrahim from Gülşeni (1844) by Hayrullah Efendi transfers the reader to the epoch of Suleiman the Magnificent, telling the story of the Vizier İbrahim Paşa and Şeyh Gülşeni who was the founder of the Order of Gülşeni. Having become a challenge to Western Orientalism in the context of comprehension of the Ottoman Empire's historical past, such dramatic poems as "Fatih" (1879) and "Selim" (1883) written by Abdülhak Hamit, served as a source of inspiration for the next generations of Turkish writers interested in development of historical plots in literary works. According to Sadık Tural, "Having examined the historical documents, a writer has to point out the main thesis he will use in his work in order to revive history" (Türkeş 427).

Abdülhak Hamit who resorted to the genre of historical drama in 1874, kept working over it until 1935 despite the fact that it started to lose its popularity at that period (Karaburgu 34). It is necessary to admit that not all of historical dramas of the 19th century may pretend for a high literary level. It is remarkable that the authors of some of these dramatic works intended to interpret not just the past of the Ottoman Empire but also the history of Western countries (for instance, *Happiness and Unhappiness* (1873) by Ahmet Necip, *The Adventure of Love* (1873) by Abdülhak Hamit, *Gave and Seydi Yahya* (1875) by Şemseddin Sami) (Karaburgu 32). This tendency reflected their attempts to comprehend the phenomenon of the world's history in an artistic way.

Namık Kemal is considered to be the first outstanding Turkish historical dramatist of the 19th century. During the reign of Abdülhamit II (1876−1909) the-

re was no historical drama written. These years are characterized by a generally disrespectful attitude towards classical literature and national history. Activities of the literary club known as "Servet-i Fünun" (1895–1901) reflected this tendency in the most vivid way. Focusing on European literary patterns, its representatives considered their own literature's works to be archaic and old-fashioned, consequently they were keen to meet European standards as precisely as possible.

1908–1909 became a turning point in Turkish history, since they triggered such changes in political and cultural life of the country as the overthrow of Sultan Abdülhamid II and a new ruler Mehmet V's interest towards art and literature. The modernization of Turkish literature was accompanied by a so-called "renewal" of classical literature and frequent appeal to the state's historical past. Fiction mostly considered historical events that preceded the establishment of the Republic of Turkey. These events were expressed by means of opposition of "bad past associated with crisis" and "bright present / future" (Buttanrı 1770). Turkish researcher Necat Birinci commented on this trend in this way: "Depiction of historical issues in various artistic genres and rethinking of both victories and defeats at the state level strengthens people's spirit and helps them overcome all the difficulties that go along with crisis" (Birinci 297). However, not all of the authors managed not to be unprejudiced, describing different affairs. Thus, in such plays as *Steal, Repentance and Betrayal* (1910) by Ahmet Bahri, *The Tragedy of One Star* (1911) by Moralizade Vassaf, *The Larceny of One Detective* (1911) by Yusuf Niyazi and *The Skillful Hundred or the Army of Freedom* (1912) by Kamil Bey represent the events of historical past under a strong influence of ideological propaganda that disfeatures them. The figures of sultans are mostly quite negative, as it is in «*The Skillful Hundred or the Army of Freedom*», where Sultan Abdülhamit is depicted as a person who gets satisfaction torturing people: *"He yawns and naps, his head falls on papers and he drops asleep. Suddenly he says loudly: Revenge! Revenge! (the sultan is laughing)"* (Kırcı 62).

Despite the fact that Sultan Abdülhamit was known as a religious person with a high dignity, Kamil Bey described him in the opposite way: *"Abdülhamit (opening a bottle of shampagne): Oh, the hounds of Sharia! (He makes a sip of champagne). Where I am and where Sharia is!... If they knew I had never performed my Salah and usually read magazines and sometimes drink champagne, rakı or beer instead of making prayer, they would already make me answer for it!..."* (Kırcı 62). Thus, the author expressed the sultan grotesquely.

According to İlber Ortaylı's research, since the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, historical drama (the works of such writers as Faruk Nafız Çamlıbel,

Yaşar Nabi Nayır and Behçet Kemal Çağlar in particular) mostly focuses on pre-Islamic period of the history of Turkic nations (Ortaylı 230). That period is also characterized by a gradual emergence of dramas upon the Turkish War of Independence and the stages of formation of the Republic of Turkey: *The Blue Lightning* by Akı Gündüz, *The Unquenchable Fire* by Nahid S. Orik, *A Little Grain* by Necip Fazıl Kısakürek, *The Dastan of Decade* by Halit Fahri Ozansoy and *A New Day Starts* by Peyami Safa (Ortaylı 230). Critically analyzing the artistic value of historical drama, İlber Ortaylı defines it as crude and superficial: "Reading these dramas gives a feeling like they were written in a hurry, without getting involved in the most crucial issues of, for instance, pre-Islamic period of the Turkic nations' life. For this reason, this kind of dramatic works does not contribute so much to the development of both modern Turkish dramaturgy and literature in general" (Ortaylı 230).

Among historical dramatists of the 20th century İlber Ortaylı distinguished Musahipzade Celal Bey (1868–1959) (Ortaylı 231) who is the author of such dramas as *The Köprülü Family* (1912) and *The Epoch of Tulips* (1914). The characters of both works are the prototypes of such historical figures as the Grand Vizier Köprülü Mehmed Paşa, his son Fazıl Ahmet Paşa, Mihriban, who was a concubine in Saidabad etc. These dramatic works describe the Ottoman period of the 17th century (*The Köprülü Family*) and the Epoch of Tulips (18th century).

Changes in social life of Turkey in the 1970's had an impact on historical drama that tended to describe modern life on the background of events of the past. Literary critics of that period demonstrated ambiguous attitude towards the increasing frequency of historical drama. Some literary scientists (İlber Ortaylı, Müzeyyen Buttanrı, Niyazi Akı, Hüseyin Doğramacıoğlu) thought that sustainable development of historical drama was a quite positive phenomenon that could help a new generation understand the history of the state in a better way (Doğramacıoğlu 404; Ortaylı 231; Buttanrı 1767). Others, Mehmet Samsakçı in particular, defined it as a sign of stagnation. The researcher emphasized the authors' tendency to express their characters, inspired by historical figures of the Ottoman Empire, in an unusual way. Therefore, the reader could see just a sort of "transformer disfeatured through the prism of Western culture" instead of their real "faces" and personalities (Samsakçı 5). In our opinion, Turkish authors' will to advert to their national roots is a positive phenomenon. On the other hand, their intension to find out the elements of «modernity» in historical figures by means of Westernization does not always contribute to correct apprehension and understanding of history.

Turan Oflazoğlu (born in 1931) is one of the few modern Turkish dramatists

who mostly worked over historical drama telling the stories of sultans of the Ottoman Empire. Analysing T. Oflazoğlu's dramas, we noticed the chronology of events described in his works: the rule of Padishah Fatih (1451–1481); the reign of Selim I (Yavuz) (1512–1520), Suleiman the Magnificent (1520–1566), Osman II (1618–1622), Murat IV (1623–1640) and Selim III (1789–1807). T. Oflazoğlu is the author of such dramas as *Mad Ibrahim* (1967), *Murat IV* (1971), *Young Osman* (1980), *The Byzantine Empire is Ruined: Fatih* (1981), *Selim III. Sword and Ney* (1983), *Cem Sultan* (1986), *Kanuni Suleiman* (1977), *Yavuz Selim* (1998). Such dramas as *The Byzantine Empire is Ruined: Fatih*, *Yavuz Selim*» and *Suleiman Kanuni* reflect the epoch of the Ottoman Empire's prosperity, glorifying the personalities of sultans who played an important role in Turkey and in the whole world. Despite the fact that such dramas as *Young Osman*, *Murat IV* and *Mad Ibrahim* depict the period of stagnation, their author claims that it was a stage of preparation for changes and reforms. The decline of the Ottoman Empire became the main topic of *Selim III. Sword and Ney*.

Such Turkish dramatists as T. Özakman, R. Özçelik and H. Altıner also presented their own interpretations of historical discourse and recreated the dialogic ties between the Ottoman culture and modernity. These dramatists used historical and biographical narratives in their works. Their attempt to reveal social problems of one epoch through the prism of contemporaneity, emphasizing their national specifics is one of the main features of their works.

Analyzing the biographical modus of modern Turkish dramas, we cannot skip such dramas of M. Baydur as *Vladimir Komarov* (1990) that tells a life-story of famous Soviet cosmonaut Vladimir Komarov, and *Tenzing* (1993), dedicated to a Sherpa mountaineer Tenzing Norgay. Intending to depict some disputable moments of his characters' lives, the author sometimes resorted to quasi-biographical facts. The dramatist created new images, based on real historical figures that reflect a peculiar cultural type with his or her own codes and standards. In this way, he aimed to present a generalized type of person expressing a certain culture.

Thus, historical and biographical dramas are among the most popular genres of modern Turkish drama. Enriching traditionalism with innovations, the authors use a valuable factual material, introduce heroes with different characters and combine the lines of their works' plots. Most of them tend to focus on artistic comprehension of the problems their characters have to cope with. It is necessary to admit that the most prominent representatives of both national and world's history and culture inspired these characters.

Poetic Drama

Such researchers as B. Beckerman, P. Bruin, N. Özdemir, R. A. Sevengil, S. Şener and A. U. Tunçel stated that the genre of poetic drama gained popularity in Turkish literature during the period of Tanzimat going along with modern drama. Despite that the roots of poetic drama can be traced back to traditional Turkish folk theatres of *Karagöz* and *Orta Oyunu*. The authors of first Turkish poetic dramas used to develop a range of well-known Oriental stories like *Leyla and Mecnun*, *Hüsrev and Şirin*, *Arzu and Kanber*, *Tahir and Zühre*, *Aslı and Kerem*. Working over dramatized lyrics and epics encouraged many poets to switch to poetic drama. Therefore, as a Ukrainian researcher N. Kostenko in particular claims, a poem is the most suitable form of verbal art that serves to express and transform emotional meanings in the best way (Kostenko 20). The appearance of poetic drama urged Turkish writers to search for a way to balance metric and genre and adapt them to the poetic traditions of Turkish literature, since poetry was expected to be not just an example of qualitative play but also a highly dramatic work. Such plays as *Sergüzeşti Perviz* (1866), *Alter Ego* (1866) and *A Play in Dreams* (1876) by Ali Haydar are considered to be among first Turkish poetic dramas (tragedies). Namık Kemal (1840–1888) became one of the first dramatists who strived for updating the canons of poetic drama. He decided to use both *arud* and *hece* that refers to syllabic verse. Despite the fact that in this way he aimed to make drama's reception easier, these measures, on the contrary, made it more complicated. In order to keep renewing Turkish drama, he called to be back to rhymed lines and simplify it stylistically clearing from excessive allegories and symbols. Unfortunately, the level of that time's Turkish language development was not favorable to non-radif[1] rhyme searches (Tunçel 59).

Abdülhak Hamid Tarhan continued studying and deepening the concept introduced by N. Kemal. Considering such metre as *hece* to be the most appropriate form of writing poetic dramas, he applied various methods of combining syllables, performed experiments upon their number and tried different ways of using stress and rhyme. His play *Liberte* is a *féerie*, the action of which takes place in an imaginary country with fairy characters. Despite its fabled structure, this drama had a political basis since one of its characters, referred to as Liberal, and resembled Mithat Paşa (1822–1884) who was a statesman of the Ottoman Empire known for his pro-

1 "Radif" is a rule in Persian, Turkic and Urdu poetry which states that, in the form of poetry known as a Ghazal, the second line of all the couplets (bayts or Shers) *must* end with the *same* word/s. This repeating of common words is the "Radif" of the Ghazal.

Western views.

The authors of Turkish poetic drama tended to use mythic and theatrical elements in order to create a "different world" and interrupt the daily routine. In the 20's and 30's of the 20th century such poetic dramas of Faruk Nafiz as *The Assault* (1932) and *A Hero* (1933) became popular. Both of them are mostly dedicated to the events that took place during the Turkish War of Independence. In the 1940–1960's the development of Turkish poetic drama faced a slowdown.

Turan Oflazoğlu was one of the first authors who dared to write poetic dramas after a long break. Such of his works as *Keziban*, *Cem Sultan*, *Kösem Sultan* and *Young Osman* are based on historical events and their characters are inspired by historical figures. Having presented his drama *Kurban* in 1967, Güngör Dilmen manifested his protest against violence against women. Avoiding the overuse of poetic constructions, the author observed an ancient tradition of combining verse and prose and endowed only some of his characters with a "poetic talent." In order to make the reception of poetic constructions easier to his readers, the author placed the rhymed lines between his characters' words paying the reader or spectator's attention to another subject. *Kurban* was followed by the emergence of two-act drama *Bağdat Hatun* (1981), where Güngör Dilmen used similar techniques: he significantly shortened the phrases of his characters and rhymed them sometimes.

Nowadays Turkish dramatists resort to poetic drama rarely. A few examples of it may be illustrated by Turan Oflazoğlu's two-act musical play *Beauty and Love* (1991) considered to be a sequel of Şeyh Galip's mesnevi, and *Istanbul is White, Vodka is Colorful* (1998) and *Shams, Do Not Forget*! (2006) by Özen Yula. Despite the fact that «Istanbul is White, Vodka is Colorful» is dedicated to modern concerns, Ö. Yula decided to make this play poetic in order to refresh the history of Turkish classical literature and prove that classical verse forms could be combined with modern ones. Obviously, Ö. Yula's style differs from the style of those poets who were the representatives of Divan literature: being cleared from excessive allegories, borrowed words and hyperboles, the language of his play is close to a contemporary one that makes his drama's reception easier. His poetic drama demonstrates that poetry is able to intensify dramatic effect significantly instead of reducing it.

The revival of poetic drama enriched and widened the genre horizons of modern Turkish dramaturgy. In spite of the fact that modern Turkish poetic drama keeps being at the edge of margins, a few examples of it clearly express modern dramatists' position. They decided to refuse from the idea of combining poetry and prose since it makes the recipient concentrate on particular work's structure rather than on its contents. Thus, the dramatists usually prefer to arrange their texts in a

way that does not require any complexity.

Monodrama

The genre of monodrama in Turkish literature displayed a rapid development after the 1980's (Uludere). The Meddahs' performance of one actor may be defined as a precursor of Turkish monodrama. After the 1930's, when these performances turned to a sketch show, Turkish monodramatists began following Western patterns. The first monodrama, performed on one of the stages of Ankara in 1965, was a scenic remake of N. Gogol's *Diary of a Madman*. Afterwards a range of monodramas based on poetic works of Turkish classical poets appeared. Murathan Mungan's monodrama *Bizarre Orhan Veli* was performed in 1981. *I am Anatolia* by Güngör Dilmen gained fame not only among Turkish viewers but also among foreign audience (Uludere). Having arisen a great interest among spectators and reviewers, G. Dilmen's play still keeps its popularity. This play was translated into different languages, such as English, German, French and Italian. It was performed on Turkish stages and abroad (in America, England, France and Germany, in particular).

Turgut Özakman's monodrama *I Am Mimar Sinan* is a bright example of drastic changes in traditional structure of monodrama that used to be divided into acts. Aesthetic and cultural codes, hidden in monodramas of G. Dilmen, M. Mungan and T. Özakman, reveal the accumulation of factual material important from the point of view of Turkish society's awareness of its national identity. They also reflect Turkish dramatists' intension to find out new stylistic and genre techniques and perform experiments upon their texts. Modern Turkish monodrama makes traditional drama's structure more narrative, actively encourages its reader or spectator to participate into a character's speech, creates conditions for the author's attendance at performance and represents the inner conflict as a crisis of identity.

Epic Drama

The appearance of epic drama in Turkish dramaturgy in the 1960's was triggered by translations and staging of Berthold Brecht's works. Such dramas of this author as *Baal* and *Drums in the Night* became the first plays to be performed in Turkey (Doğan 413). The emergence of a new type of drama caused a real cultural boom. In terms of that times' difficult political situation (that encountered the first military coup), writers got an opportunity to express their critical attitude towards state politics and politicians openly. Both playwrights and readers / spectators took those changes positively, since the innovations that drama experienced in its structure

and expressive means reminded them an open traditional Turkish drama. Haldun Taner (1915–1986) became the most outstanding representative of epic theatre. He was a person who managed to combine epic elements with traditions of folk theatre making it a significant feature of Turkish epic drama. Enriching this trend with didacticism inherent to the literature of Tanzimat, H. Taner created such original plays as *A Poem about Ali from Keshan*, *I will Close my Eyes and Do my Work*, *A Cunning Wife of a Rogue* and *The Shadow of a Donkey* (İpşiroğlu 80).

Such Turkish playwrights as Vasıf Öngören (*The Way Asiye Will Survive*, *A Notebook of Germany*), Sermet Çağan (*The Factory of Legs and Arms*), Oktay Arayıcı (*Useless World*), İsmet Küntay (*Since the First Rescue*) and Turhan Selçuk (*Abdülcanbaz*) played a significant role in the development of Turkish epic drama (Doğan 414). Such dramas as *Dangerous Pigeon* by Necati Cumalı, *Kiss Hacivat's Hand* by Ünver Oral, *Bloody Nigâr* by Sadık Şengil, *Sarıpınar 1914* by Turgut Özakman etc. also caused a great interest. Despite the fact that these plays were undoubtedly inspired by *Karagöz* and *Orta Oyunu*, all of them have a distinctive author's style (Oganova 94).

In the 1970's–1980's Oktay Arayıcı appeared in dramatic arena. Such of his works as *The World of Traveller Ramazan Bey* (1970), *Social Anatomy of One Dead* (1976) and *Goncagül's Pen Name* (1981) accumulate the best experience of traditional Turkish theatre. *Goncagül's Pen Name* embodies such features of epic theatre as introduction before each act, songs that include comments upon action, frequent use of narratives and the effect of "isolation" (Prushkovska 158).

The works of Bilgesu Erenus (*The Doors* (1973), *A Partner* (1976), *A Game for Two* (1978), Muzaffer İzgü and Zeki Göker (*The Black Order* (1974), *We Are to be Born with Death Again* (1975) made a great contribution to the development of epic drama. In spite of decrease of popularity that epic drama experienced even before the events that occurred in September 1980, such authors as Hidayet Sayın (*Dry Leaves in the Park* (1994), *Game Over* (1994), *Time to Live* (1998), *The Scream of Silence* (1999) and *Wandering Hopes* (2000), and Murathan Mungan (*The Curse of Deers* (1992) kept working over it. *The Curse of Deers* by M. Mungan is the author's version of ancient legends, which embraces the motives that Turks know since the epoch of Seljuqs. The author considers this work to be his masterpiece that accumulates all his experience and knowledge: "If somebody decided to read my works I would strongly recommend him or her to start from this play" (Üstün 8). M. Mungan's drama is based on narration rather than on action. Moreover, this narrative differs from real life's imitation very much. Its plot consists of chronologically connected episodes. The author's comments make his text closer

to an epic one.

Turkish epic drama appeals to its reader's mind and encourages him or her to comprehend a changing world. It has a complicated structure, it is socially oriented and reflects social, moral, ethical and worldview related (ideological) contradictions.

Children's Drama

Despite the fact that the roots of Turkish children's drama may be traced back to the second half of the 19th century, the most active period of its development dates back to the 1940's, when state theatres and theatres for children started to be founded. Before their appearance, traditional folk drama was universal, since there was no division into theatre for children and the same one for adults. As well as adults, children also liked watching plays inspired by *Karagöz* and *Orta Oyunu*, they were impressed by the dolls used during performances, marvelous shades and comic characters. First examples of children's drama were published within 1888–1921 in such art magazines as *Guide for Children*, *Student's Copybook*, *New Generation*, *Teacher's Magazine* and *Kindergarten*. İsmail Hakkı Baltacıoğlu was one of the first playwrights who emphasized the importance and necessity of children's dramaturgy (Kırgel).

In 1935, Istanbul City Theatre created an atelier for writing and staging children's drama. Having opened this atelier, its administration faced the main problem concerning lack of children's plays in its repertoire. *A Lesson of Dramaturgy for Children* is a musical play written by Kemal Küçük on Muhsin Ertuğrul's request. It is considered to be the first Turkish drama for children written in order to draw children's attention to dramatic art. Later, when the idea of publishing a magazine upon children's drama appeared, children got an opportunity to attend children's performances for free in case of buying this periodical. Confirmation of agreement upon building state and children's theatres in the city of Izmir became the second step on the way to creation of children's theatre. *Golden Quill Pen* by Mümtaz Uygun and *Black Palace* by Ziya Başkan were the first plays staged in Izmir (Nutku 357). The emergence of children's plays in the State Theatre's repertoire became a great contribution to the development of children's dramaturgy. Children's drama *Gold Bracelet* by Mümtaz Zeki Taşkın was performed in the State Theatre of Turkey on January 31, 1948.

The works of Ülker Köksal, Hasan Erkek, Ülkü Ayvaz, Bilgesu Erenus etc., represent the second half of the 20th century. In her play *Tomorrow Depends on Mind* (1973) Ülker Köksal tried to prove that happiness, joy and truth could be obtained only by means of mind. Within 1975–1985 Ülker Köksal created five plays

that were successfully staged in Bursa, Ordu, Izmir and Istanbul (*The Planet of Peace*, *A Palace Made of Glass*, *The Guards of the Forest*, *Our Favorite Shack* and *The Order of One Rose*). During 1994–1996, the author prepared two collections, each consisting of 31 short dramas, for publication (Köksal). Ü. Köksal wrote her playwrights on different subjects. For instance, *A Palace Made of Glass* and *The Order of One Rose* are dedicated to so-called "adult" issues (unlimited power of politicians and fight against injustice). At the same time, the author did not forget to take into consideration the specificity of children's reception. The writer named one of her children's dramas *The Planet of Peace* to appeal to the audience claiming that if people manage to live in peace and harmony, the Earth will become a planet of peace. Ülker Köksal's short plays are quite didactic: her works are widely used in kindergartens and primary schools to teach children colors, figures and numbers and to tell them about such outstanding representatives of Turkish nation as Mimar Sinan, Koca Seyit Onbaşı and others (Maden 223). The majority of Ülker Köksal's plays deals with universal concerns, family problems, youth issues etc. She gets inspired by everyday life stories and has a clear idea about what her characters will be like. While the majority of dramatists mentioned in our research try themselves in other genres (prose, poetry), Hasan Erkek is one of a few artists who devoted his life to both drama and science. Being an author of radio plays, H. Erkek wrote two theatrical plays for children *Let the Peace Be* (1995) and *The Ring of Love* (2004). These plays made him famous not only in Turkey but also abroad. Due to them, he was honored with numerous awards. The plays mentioned above were translated into ten European languages and staged in theatres of Croatia, Kosovo, Georgia, Tunisia, Algeria and Cyprus. Since his works are written upon universal issues, they consider such crucial themes as peace in the whole world and comfort of children, supposed to be the future of any state.

Ülkü Ayvaz granted nine dramas to Turkish children: *A Wonderful Amusement Park* (1982), *Hurrah, Rainbow* (1986), *The Chamomile* (1989), *The Knights of Iron Washtub* (1996), *A Blue Star* (2002), *My Dwelling* (2000), *A Girl with Golden Eyes and Silver Hair* (2004) etc. In 1989, Turkish Radio and Television Corporation "TRT" awarded Ülkü Ayvaz as the best children's playwright for his drama *The Chamomile*. In this work, the author demonstrated children's intentions to help a chamomile, that managed to make its way through a crack in the asphalt, survive. The writer illustrated this in quite a dramatic way. Due to its deep morality and philosophy revealed through the image of flower ready to overcome any obstacles in order to survive and understand the value of life, this play is still widely performed in Turkey.

Thus, modern Turkish children's drama is mostly addressed to students of primary and secondary school. Such dramatic works have dynamic plot with plenty of events. Authors reveal their characters' nature with the help of dialogues between them and their deeds rather than by means of depiction of their characteristics. Each work has vivid didactic and moral elements usually not being expressed directly but more with the development of its plot. Dramas that appeal to students of high school usually consider such global issues as human nature and the sense of life making psychological peculiarities of the personages deeper. Didacticism of Turkish children's drama is called to contribute to Turkish youth's spirituality, morality and aesthetic preferences' formation.

Conclusion

As a result of the study, we came to the following conclusions: at the beginning of its development under the active influence of European literary traditions the Turkish drama was represented by the main genres (comedy, tragedy, drama). In the development process, the genre paradigm of the Turkish drama gradually expanded (the emergence of epic, historical, biographical, children's dramas) there is a modification of some genres, as, for example, monodramas.

This research enabled us to distinguish the chief genres and types of Turkish modern drama. As a result, we may conclude that historical and biographical dramas are the main genres of the Turkish drama. The majority of modern Turkish dramas embrace creative and quasi-biographies of famous figures etc. (T. Özakman, R. Özçelik, T. Oflazoğlu, D. Sümer). The genre of biographical drama is also widely represented by works telling the life stories of historical figures who made a strong impact on culture's development (Selim III, Suleiman the Magnificent, Mevlana, Yunus Emre, Roxelana, Mimar Sinan). Those Turkish dramatists who started to write more actively at the end of the 1990's (O. Asena, M. Baydur, T. Cücenoğlu) tended to follow the aesthetic values of postmodernism. Such writers as T. Özakman, T. Oflazoğlu and Ö. Yula added new topics and diversified the genre paradigm of drama by means of almost full elimination of traditional genres. While such types of drama as children's drama (Ü. Ayvaz, H. Erkek, Ü. Köksal) keep developing, the topics that are typical for Turkic culture are being rethought.

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The Use of Literary Metamorphosis in Clarice Lispector and Sevim Burak

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Abstract This essay discusses two texts by two literary avant-garde women writers in terms of their use of literary metamorphosis. Although coming from different geographical, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds, interestingly, Turkish author Sevim Burak (1931-1983) and Brazilian author Clarice Lispector (1920-1977) share a common interest in their tendency towards the modernist aesthetic geared towards an experimental literary style. This essay aims to bring Lispector's experimental novel *The Passion According to G.H.* (*A Paixão Segundo G.H.*; 1964) and Burak's short story "The Window" ("Pencere"), from her short story collection titled *Burnt Palaces* (*Yanık Saraylar*; 1965), together in light of their use of the metamorphosis trope. Both texts challenge desire in fixed signification and closed interpretation, calling instead for a decentered and displaced hermeneutics. In this study, I discuss the use of metamorphosis as a literary trope in *The Passion* and "The Window" as their major literary tool in the deconstruction of subjectivity in different ways. The study argues that the trope of literary metamorphosis can also be an effective narrative vehicle for opening oneself to different forms and positions of alterity, be it ontological or epistemological alterity.

Key words Clarice Lispector; Sevim Burak; metamorphosis; alterity

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Introduction

The aim of this article is to bring together two texts produced by two contemporary Jewish women writers from two different linguistic traditions: the novel of Ukrainian-born Brazilian writer Clarice Lispector (1920-1977) *The Passion According to G.H.* (*A Paixão Segundo G.H.*; 1964) and the Turkish writer Sevim Burak's (1931-1983) short story "The Window" ("Pencere"), from her short story collection titled *Burnt Palaces* (*Yanık Saraylar*; 1965). Although coming from different geographical, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds, interestingly, Burak and Lispector share a common interest in their tendency towards the modernist aesthetic geared towards an experimental literary style. Clarice Lispector did not enjoy the global reputation that she has now during her lifetime. Her international fame came especially after her work was used by Hélène Cixous in her promotion of "feminine writing" (for a review of Cixous's interest in the writings of Lispector, see Klobucka). Cixous finds in Lispector's texts a kind of literary fluidity and openness that she associated with "feminine writing." Sevim Burak's texts, unfortunately, still do not enjoy the privilege of an international readership since there are neither translations of most of her works into other languages nor a wide critical scholarship of them my frame of discussion in this study will be the use of metamorphosis as a literary trope in these two texts. The article will discuss how women writers from two different contexts use metamorphosis as a literary tool to deconstruct subjectivity. As will be explored in the rest of the article, the study argues that the trope of literary metamorphosis can also be a narrative vehicle for opening oneself to different forms and positions of alterity, be it ontological or epistemological alterity.

Metamorphosis as a Literary Trope

In stories of metamorphosis, in one way or another, human beings escape their imposed forms that put restrictions on the body and the self. In several examples of metamorphosis in literature, people turn into animals (as in Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, for instance), into other beings, or even parts of themselves, as we see in Gogol's *The Nose*. Irving Massey, one of the earliest major scholars working on forms of literary metamorphosis, for instance, states that

> metamorphosis is . . . a process of exchange, in which 'body' connects the two forms. . . . [in stories of metamorphosis] form changes directly into another form, circumventing the process of conceptual translation that we usually think of as necessary for the grasping and the effecting of change. Man is reborn by himself without having made the excursion through the 'other' (through language). (51)

Therefore, Massey reads the classic examples of metamorphosis as a character's way of reacting to problems in language.

In another study on the theory of metamorphosis, Kai Mikkonen, in his article "Theories of Metamorphosis: From Metatrope to Textual Revision," gives a brief survey of the "theorization of the literary or artistic representation of metamorphosis" (309). Mikkonen states that in recent years there has been a great interest in the theorization of literary metamorphosis; according to him, this is partly due to metamorphosis's potential to pose complicated questions in relation to not only subject and language but also perception, knowledge, and textuality. He asserts that "if metamorphosis problematizes the boundaries between the subject and its other or between language and nonlanguage, it also challenges the limits of conception" (310). Therefore, he says, most of the studies of metamorphosis emphasize "epistemological and ontological questions concerning the subject's relationship to the world and to others, as well as the subject's knowledge of itself and the world" (310). These ontological and epistemological implications in relation to perception of the self and the other offer very exciting possibilities in narrative. That is, metamorphosis as such can be not only the exploration of the limits of being but also the vehicle of potential agency of the suppressed, the other, and the unconscious. Both *The Passion According to G.H.* and "The Window" narrate the female subject's questioning of herself and the identity as a given fact to her, and the literary means for this is metamorphosis. In both works, metamorphosis not only exposes an awareness of the female subject of her confined position in the world but also offers possibilities for subject positions open to encounters with the other.

Rosemary Jackson's book *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion*, on the generic features of fantastic literature, also offers stimulating insights for the study of metamorphosis as a trope. There is, in fact, an inevitable relationship between metamorphosis as a trope and fantasy as a genre. If metamorphosis is essentially the trope of underscoring the mobility of one form into another, then the narrative tool of this is mainly the fantastic. According to Jackson, "the fantastic exists in the hinterland between "real" and "imaginary," shifting the relations between them through

its indeterminacy" (35). Thus, metamorphosis can be seen as the hinterland where normally disparate realms intermerge with each other as metamorphosis as a trope plays with received notions of "appearance" and "disappearance" and "interiority" and "exteriority." Jackson states that fantastic narrative has a metonymical rather than a metaphorical process in that "one object does not *stand for* another, but literally becomes that other, slides into it, metamorphosing from one shape to another in a permanent flux and instability" (42). She categorizes the themes of the fantastic mainly into four, and it seems that at least the first three of these themes apply to the nature of metamorphosis as well: "1) invisibility, 2) transformation, 3) dualism, 4) good versus evil" (49). The metamorph in its new form, most often, is invisible. When we think of the earliest examples of literary/mythological metamorphosis, in many cases, characters are transformed so that they become invisible — as is the case in Ovidian metamorphosis, for instance. The second item, the transformation theme, constitutes the core of metamorphosis. The third theme, duality, is the very nature of metamorphosis in that the metamorphosed character carries, to a certain extent, its former body/self, in addition to its possessing a newly gained form. As Jackson asserts:

> Behind metamorphosis (self becoming another, whether animal or vegetable) and pandeterminism (everything has its cause and fits into a cosmic scheme, a series in which nothing is by chance, everything corresponds to the subject), the same principle operates, in a sense of correspondence, of sameness, of a collapse of differences. Doubles, multiple selves, are manifestations of this principle: the *idea* of multiplicity is no longer a metaphor, but it is literally realized, self transforms into selves…. Other persons and objects are no longer distinctly other: the limit between subject and object is effaced, things slide into one another, in a metonymical action of replacement. (50)

Metamorphosis, as a literary trope, may underscore two different ontological positions. The first can be to underline the subject's exile from the usual body/self as the self is imprisoned and framed to another form, generally an unwanted and undesired one. This might also suggest alienation of the self, as we see in some of the classical examples of metamorphosis such as Apuleius's *The Golden Ass*, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and Kafka's *Metamorphosis*. However, metamorphosis can also be a trope for subversion, enabling the self's freedom, self-assertion, breaking the frame, and deconstructing the given identity, thus possessing the real identity/self. In this paper, I will focus on the second category of implications: metamorphosis as a literary tool

for exploration of the limits of being/self and as a vehicle for giving a voice to the suppressed, the other, and the unconscious. It seems that especially female writers (since being female, most of the time, entails existing within a historically, socially, and politically oppressed and framed position) use metamorphosis in this sense, as a strategic way of expressing issues such as breaking the given identity/frame and asserting a different self/identity. In both of the texts that I discuss, both of which not only have female authors but also are about the experiences of female characters, metamorphosis has this subversive function.

Reading Clarice Lispector with Sevim Burak

Though they come from very different cultural contexts (Burak coming from a majority Muslim country and Lispector from a majority Catholic country, for instance), similarities between Lispector and Burak in terms of their author and subject positions in their own literary cultures and their approach towards literature and the literary are striking (on Lispector's life and works, see Moser and Peixoto; on Burak's life and works, see Güçbilmez). Likened to Kafka in their respective literary cultures, both Lispector and Burak are considered literary modernists, producing aesthetically challenging and innovative works. Associated with avant-garde literature that does not necessarily aim at direct communication but instead is associated with transgression at many different levels, both writers opted out of social realism, the dominant literary styles of their periods and literary contexts. In Lispector's case, she was removed from the mainstream Brazilian fiction of her times, in which "regionalism," which tended towards social realism, was the preferred narrative mode; instead, she explored more experimental forms of writing. Similarly, the works of Burak have been associated with "avant-gardism" and found by many radical, experimental, and, at times, even idiosyncratic.

Both Lispector and Burak bring an original, different, and foreign voice to the mainstream literatures of their own literary traditions at the time. Both of their prose styles are characterized by their unconventional use of language and their linguistic and structural experiments. As such, they move away from a mimetic representation and develop open, mystical narratives. Interestingly, as they developed a new way of using language and constructing a text, both writers relied on several aspects of Jewish cultural heritage and literary expression (for a short piece on the influence of the language of the Old Testament on Burak's short stories, see Koçakoğlu; for the impact of her Jewish background on Lispector, see Vieira). Their uniqueness in their respective literary traditions originates from an unsettling writing style, which is based on indeterminacy. By examining their works from a perspective of their use

of literary metamorphosis, we can gain insight about the possibilities that this trope brings to women writers who write from a position of alterity. In offering a reading of texts produced by two authors from different linguistic and cultural contexts, I claim not only an ontological and literary kinship between the two writers, but also a similar perspective on their understanding and practices of writing and literature as two women of Jewish heritage writing outside the dominant literary and cultural hegemonies of their times. The "otherness" both felt and experienced in their own cultures is also infused in their literary and linguistic styles. Both share a deep distrust in the capacity of language in being able to express the human experience; both see the language as a "strange" medium that cannot be trusted for meaning.

Both texts under study here challenge desire in fixed signification and closed interpretation. Instead, they call for a decentered and displaced hermeneutics. It is stated that Lispector's own Portuguese sounds strange in Brazilian Portuguese (Klobucka 47). Her English translator, Pontiero, notes the peculiarities of her writing style. He refers to her "unorthodox use of syntax and punctuation. These are subordinated to the demands of her fleeting perceptions, her own idiosyncratic rhythms, the subtle patterns of sound that have become the hallmark of her prose. Even the pauses create what Benedito Nunes has defined as an 'awesome silence' — the refuge of a writer who sees and knows too much" (Pontiero 78). Her inspiration for writing is also generally considered "idiosyncratic": in one of her interviews, she says that while writing, "I use my intuition rather than my intelligence. One writes as one loves. No one knows why they love just as they do not know why they write". She also says "I have a real affection for things which are incomplete or badly finished, for things which awkwardly try to take flight only to fall clumsily to the ground" (Pontiero 75). Lispector was interested in the breakdown of structures and unities: "What cannot be expressed only comes to me through the breakdown of language. Only when the structure breaks down do I succeed in achieving what the structure failed to achieve" (Pontiero 78). Similarly, Burak's working process often involved a cut-and-paste technique that she developed during a period before word processors and computers (for details on her idiosyncratic writing process, see Güngörmüş). Her texts were truly a collage, not only in terms of their production processes but also their inclusion of different kinds of texts, including non-literary ones, such as drawings, advertisements, recipes, texts from prayer books, and medical reports.

Hélène Cixous studies women's complicated relationships with writing and their subject formation in her various works. As she remarks:

> If woman has always functioned 'within' the discourse of man, a signifier that has always referred back to the opposite signifier which annihilates its specific energy and diminishes or stifles its very different sounds, it is time for her to dislocate this 'within,' to explode it, turn it around, and seize it; to make it hers, containing it, taking it in her own mouth, biting that tongue with her own teeth to invent for herself a language to get inside of. ("The Laugh of the Medusa" 316)

Within this context, I consider both *The Passion* and "The Window" as examples of female writers deconstructing given identity and existing linguistic conventions, mainly through their original use of language, narrative structure, and the use of metamorphosis as subversion. Both *The Passion* and "The Window" poeticize prose in such a way as to give a voice to the uniqueness of the female characters' experiences, which would not be properly and effectively expressed with the legitimated words and the conventions of the patriarchy. Because they have often been decentered and muted, fragmented on the periphery of the dominant discourse, women writers usually take refuge in poetic discourse in order to subvert the inherited language of men. This is why women's texts often tend more towards the poetic in search of a unique way of expressing the female experience.

In an attempt to establish her own language, not tainted by the patriarchal view of the world, Sevim Burak's radical technique of subversion is to poeticize prose. Language as a unifying principle, language as something to make one an integrated whole, fails. Language in Burak's text cracks, and with it, the illusion of integrity cracks. The languages of others creep in, destroying the poetic nature of the narrative. Paradoxically, the reconstruction of a unified self is possible only after complete fragmentation.

"The Window" is a story of a split self. Clarke remarks that "Transformation narratives are regularly produced by the uncanny doubling or bifurcation of an individual character" (104). Similarly, in "The Window," the narrative gives the impression to the reader that two women exist in the story; only at the very end of the story do we understand that there is only one woman. This narrative strategy provides the writer with an effective way of voicing fluctuations within the self. This technique of the split self also enables the writer to give voice to both of the selves, one monitoring the other: "I have an idea that she deliberately started playing this game because she knows that I'm spying on her behind the window" ("The Window" 7); "Whatever I can see — I can grab — FROM HER LIFE is enough for me; I make a tiny hole in the middle of my curtain — so she can't see me — and I observe HER"

("The Window" 7-8).

"The Window" is built on the conflict between integrity and fragmentation, unity and dissolution, which finds its expression not only in images but also in the way Sevim Burak handles language. The movement of the contraction and expansion of the self creates a rhythm in the story, which finally culminates in the scattering of the self into a thousand pieces when the narrator jumps. The female narrator in "The Window" is torn between the inherited discourse of patriarchy and her own voice, which she strives to make heard and fails to do so within the inherited patterns of patriarchal discourse. Here the desire is not to insert her feeble voice into the dominant discourse, but to dominate it throughout. As Foucault has very convincingly shown, "speech is not merely the medium which manifests – or dissembles – desire; it is also the object of desire. … [it] is no mere verbalization of conflicts and systems of domination, but it is the very object of man's conflicts" (149). Because discourse makes possible disciplines and institutions, which, in turn, sustain and distribute their discourses, it is closely related with power. Patriarchy, as a system of domination, imposes its own discourse on women. Women who try to encode their own meanings and experiences within the legitimated language of patriarchy have to use subversive strategies like poetic language in prose or the use of metamorphosis.

"The Window" is the story of a woman who is on the brink of suicide, living on the dangerous borderline between life and death. The story opens with a scene in which the woman narrator watches from her "window" another woman who lives across the street, hoping that she will commit suicide. However, it soon becomes apparent that the two women are the same self, split into two. One aspect of the self, which is embodied in the woman across the street, is ready to die, while the other aspect, which is embodied in the narrator, is willing to monitor the act. The only time the narrator finds her voice in the story is the moment of identification:

> I see the woman for the first time-
> Without lies
> Without a curtain (9)

But it is also the moment when she sees in the other her own mirror image:

> She appears in front of the window like a puppet moved by strings.
> Her mouth is distorted; she is saying things that are incomprehensible. (9)

Speech, then, when it truly belongs to her, is simply illogical and incomprehensible. On hearing her speak like this, two fat women rush upstairs, holding onto the woman's arms, imploring her to go back to her apartment. They finally take her away, but grotesque images of the distorted mouth and the "empty and impassive eyes" saying "help me" remain in the memory of the narrator (11). She knows that the woman across the street is saved only to scream again:

> In the dining room
> In the kitchen
> In the storage room

She will go back to her daily routine of self-effacement, doing the housework and hanging her laundry on the terrace – a set of activities which the world calls "wisdom" (10).

However, during that brief moment of contact, before their communion is interrupted, they both realize that true wisdom would be death — that is, abandoning language altogether. Only then would the woman across the street be able to make a statement. But this is not just any kind of death. "The most beautiful death for her among the innumerable deaths that occupy" the narrator's mind is jumping from that high terrace, because it must be a literally revealing death:

> I think about how her body would fall onto Streetcar Avenue with a big thud and cover the whole avenue, stopping the passers-by. In a magical couple of seconds her body would become sacred and it would grow bigger and everything would end happily.
> . . .
> Soon her body would be broken into pieces; she would tell her friends: "See, you didn't know me …;" she would bare her secret, covered parts to those gathered around to watch her die, and she would make the parts of her face, hands and knees quiver with passion. Everybody would run to see this uncovering—they would only be able to take it for a few minutes but they would never forget it… (8)

This fascination with physical disclosure is also expressed in the following: "The bandage will be removed, and underneath I'll see some truth that I've been searching for for a long time. My whole being is shaken by quivering pink flesh of a wound not yet healed and bones not yet set" (8). The obsession with the physical

wound, the almost sadistic delight taken in the destruction of the body, is symptomatic of the intense desire to destroy the image of the self-constructed by others — something that cannot be done through others' language.

However, the narrator makes one last attempt to use language in order to reconstruct a unified self before she yields to the idea of suicide. After the unmediated confrontation of the narrator with her true self, the sporadic eruptions of poetic discourse in her narrative become systematic and she retreats more and more into the unifying discourse of the poet. The narrative line is disrupted altogether and time is dislocated. There is neither a chronological nor a causal relationship in the traditional sense between the events that follow. The story is taken out of the temporal plane of narrative discourse and placed on the spatial plane of poetry, a movement that culminates with images like "I hang around my feelings, fine as hair, I'm like a spider, face to face with the flowers of death," or "I spread over the house like a huge stain" (11). What is happening in this climactic part of the story can be summed up as the narrator's failed attempt at appropriating language for her own intentions.

"Language, for the individual consciousness," says Bakhtin, "lies on the borderline between oneself and the other …. It becomes one's 'own' only when the speaker populates it with his own intentions, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention …." but "not all words for just anyone submit equally easily to this appropriation, to this seizure and transformation into private property: many words resist, others remain alien, sound foreign in the mouth of the one who appropriated them and who now speaks them; they cannot be assimilated into his context and fall out of it; it is as if they put themselves in quotation marks against the will of the speaker" (293-294). It is doubly difficult for a woman to appropriate language, to make it her own, because all language is male, and it is inevitably put in quotation marks in her mouth. This is why the narrator in "The Window" is defeated by language and the idea of baring "her secret, covered parts" to the world with her dead body broken into pieces on the pavement seems more appealing than striving "to get a reading on [her] own word and on [her] own conceptual system that determines this word" (Bakhtin 282). She finally submits to the call of the ever-growing crowd in the street to join them and jumps from her window. She jumps because she can establish her integrity only after complete fragmentation, and her final act of self-destruction turns into a powerful act of self-assertion.

Similar to the closed narrative space of "The Window," *The Passion*'s narrative takes place almost exclusively in a closed room, in which the female protagonist, G.H., the eponymous narrator of the novel, experiences a transformative encounter

with a cockroach; she becomes one with it, in a sense. The novel includes very few characters: G.H., a black maid named Janair who has left but is referred to, and a vague reference to a "you." There is no dialogue. The whole narrative is told a day after G.H. entered the maid's room. Lispector does not try to give any overt meaning to her narrative. G.H. claims that she does not even try to make sense. As she states, her narrative is a resistance to "start 'making' a sense" (7). Her writing is what she calls "graphism" (13), which seeks "an effort … to let a sense, whatever it may be, rise to the surface" (7).

In contrast to the unnamed narrator in "The Window," about whom we have no identifying or descriptive details, relatively more detailed information is given about the narrator in *The Passion*. G.H. is a middle-class, financially independent woman, as she declares herself to be; she is a sculptor who lives in an "elegant" penthouse (22). When G.H. enters the room that belonged to her previous maid, she is forced to think about her relationship with her. As she enters the surprisingly clean room that she was expecting to be dusty and messy, G.H. is confronted with her own otherness. She sees a cockroach, which makes her confront her animal other, with which she experiences a "communion." She tastes the body or the excrement of the body of the cockroach. The narrative circles on itself, where, at its most crucial moment, G.H. confronts her nonhuman other.

The transformation of G.H. takes place through her encounter with both her racial other (i.e. the absent presence of her maid) and her nonhuman other (the cockroach). In a racialized Brazilian society, G.H. is a white employer of a black maid; in that sense, encountering the memory of the black maid also means an encounter with the racial other. It is also significant that this encounter with the racialized other, the maid, is realized only when she does not occupy that space anymore and only through an encounter with the nonhuman other, i.e. the cockroach, and perhaps through the nonhuman. Blind to the existence of the racial other, G.H. acknowledges her position: "It wasn't surprising that I had used her [Janair, her maid] as though she had no presence: under her small apron she always wore dark brown or black, which made her all dark and invisible" (33). Invisibility of the racial other is closely linked with the encounter with the animal other. Referring to her ignorance of the racialized other, G.H. realizes that "I … discover that till now I hadn't noticed that that woman [Janair] was an invisible woman. Janair had what was almost only an external form, the features with that form were so refined that they barely existed: she was flattened out like a bas-relief frozen on a piece of wood" (33). In *The Passion*, reaching a nonhuman awareness of being requires the encounter with the cockroach. As G.H. states towards the end of the text: "Through the live cockroach I

am coming to understand that I too am that which lives" (165). In this sense, rejecting the human vision, *The Passion* is also a deep criticism of the human-centered approach to life. Stepping outside of her white, privileged human self, merging with the racial and animal others, G.H. experiences the dissolution of the self, to the point that there is no self to refer to. Therefore, *The Passion* explores not only the mystical transformation of the self (as the title of the novel clearly refers to the passion of Christ), but also an epistemological and ontological transformation, where G.H. becomes literally her ontological other, the nonhuman, and, metaphorically her epistemological other, her black maid, Janair.

Both G.H. and the unnamed female character in "The Window" capture their "real" selves through transformation, although their transformations are different from each other's and unique in the "metamorphosis literature." Through their attempts to break their socially given frame/identity, both of these women express the loud cry of their body or other selves. They deconstruct the already-given identity and try to construct their own by confronting the other. In G.H.'s case, this other is an abject being, a cockroach, and for the female character in "The Window," it is confrontation with her own other. As Clarke points out, "some literary metamorphoses emblematize their textuality simply by literalizing the *pharmakon*, reifying the agent of metamorphosis as something eaten or absorbed" (6). G.H.'s eating or attempt to eat and absorb the cockroach has such a 'pharmakon' function. Clarke also states that "Metamorphic stories reify the daemonic power of writing by making virtually deconstructive scenes that narrate the displacement or decomposition of prior determinations of bodily identity and psychological value" (21). Both *The Passion* and "The Window" are stories of decomposition of earlier bodily identities. G.H., after her drastic encounter with the other, the inanimate, disclaims her previous self and celebrates her new material being: "Up to then, I had never been mistress of my powers, powers that I neither understood nor wanted to understand, but the life in me had stored them up so that one day there would blossom forth this unknown happy, unconscious matter that was, finally, me! Me, whatever that might be" (45). For the unnamed woman in "The Window," the idea of "decomposing" is valid in the most literal sense since, with her last act, her body literally decomposes. As Braidotti claims, "Discursive practices, like ideological beliefs, are tattooed on bodies, and unless women can change skin, like snakes, they have to take care that the process of subverting identity does not take too heavy a toll on them" (122). G.H. could change her skin successfully after her encounter with the cockroach. After her attempt to face the other, the abject, and to become the inanimate, she is ready to return to her human life refreshed. However, the woman in "The Window" is not as

successful or lucky as G.H.; she can get rid of the identity "tattooed on her body" only by dispossessing her body totally, letting it shatter into a thousand pieces.

Both "The Window" and *The Passion* play with the idea of "madness"/"schizophrenia" or "transcendence" as a new existence or vision at the expense of losing oneself within this overwhelming experience. It is going beyond the permitted border, losing the ties with the illusory reality of the "real" world that these narrators in the two texts discussed explore. By jumping out of the window, Sevim Burak's unnamed character virtually goes beyond the borders of this world. As for G.H., like the experience of the mythological phoenix, she should burn in "the core of life," in the "Hellish laboratory," so that she can reborn: "The first tie had already involuntarily broken, and I was loosening myself from law, even though I suspected that I would be going into the inferno of living matter—what sort of inferno awaited me? but I had to go. I had to fall into my soul's condemnation, curiosity was consuming me" (*The Passion* 51). According to Deleuze and Guattari, "the anomalous is neither an individual nor a species … It is a phenomenon, but a phenomenon of bordering….If you change dimensions, if you add or subtract one, you change multiplicity….Moby Dick is neither an individual nor a genius; he is the borderline, and I have to strike him to get at the pack as a whole, to reach the pack as a whole and pass beyond it" (245). The cockroach for G.H. is what Moby Dick is for Captain Ahab; it is the borderline. In this context, as Braidotti claims, G.H.'s killing of the cockroach is "as much a gesture of connecting as of destruction"; it is the "transgression of all boundaries" (130). According to Hélène Cixous, "in *The Passion according to G.H.*, there is a step-by-step deconstruction of morals and of metaphysics" ("Writing and the Law" 26). Based on G.H.'s allusion to the Biblical prohibition of the unclean as a possible reason for her fear and disgust of cockroaches, Cixous links Lispector's cockroach with the feminine and the unclean, excluded from the masculine world of the Law (*Three Steps* 111-113). In fact, as Luisa Valenzuela explains, South American women writers, writing in search of another form of writing, are fascinated with "the disgusting": "The body has to know the disgust, absorb it meaningfully, in order to say all its words" (cited in Bassnett 4). Challenging anthropocentric and anthropomorphic subjectivity, as Pontiero remarks, in Lispector's fiction "The ebb and flow of human passions when contrasted with the primordial existence of plant and animal tend to reveal less consistency or harmony in human beings. Animals appear to possess greater ontological integrity" (75).

Parallels between *The Passion* and "The Window" are numerous. In both texts, the characters are detached from the outside world; both of their "inner" experiences take place inside a room, suggesting their isolation from other people. Both

The Passion and "The Window" are characterized by discursive indeterminacies. In both of the texts, there are inconsistencies, paradoxes, and repetitions. They violate language conventions and are not organized linearly. Both texts are trying to find an appropriate medium that would express the intensity of the female character's experience truly, which seems to be only possible through a non-systematic, unconventional use of language. G.H. explains this as follows:

> I am going to create what happened to me. Only because living isn't tellable. Living isn't livable. I shall have to create upon life. And without lying. Yes to creation, no to lying. Creation isn't imagination, it's running the huge risk of coming face to face with reality. Understanding is a creation, it's my only way. I shall have to painstakingly translate telegraph signals — translate the unknown into a language that I don't know, and not even understand what the signals amount to. I shall speak in that sleep-walker's language that if I were awake wouldn't even be a language. (*The Passion* 13)

The belief that one can capture the truth only with a "dream-language" is expressed again in another place in *The Passion*: "Like in dreams, the 'logic' was other, was one that makes no sense when you wake up, for the dream's greater truth is lost" (96). Similarly, Burak states that characters in her stories are dreaming, seeing the dreams of reality ("Hikâye" 103). The reason for this could be, as Clarke explains, the fact that "Metamorphosis plays out a dream logic undercutting imposed identities and asserting a nonverbal level of individual authenticity" (55). As Pontiero states, for Lispector the intensity of an experience can only be expressed through subversion, as she herself indicates: "What cannot be expressed only comes to me through the breakdown of language. Only when the structure breaks down do I succeed in achieving what the structure failed to achieve" (Lispector, cited in Pontiero 78).

While Sevim Burak`s female character is not able to reconstruct her "self" successfully, G.H. is lucky enough to embrace life and her newly gained self/consciousness with an affirmation of life. As Braidotti claims, "the subject is not a substance but rather a process of negotiation between material and semiotic conditions that affect one's embodied, situated self.…The subject is a process, made of constant shifts and negotiations between different levels of power and desire, constantly shifting between willful choice and unconscious drives. Whatever semblance of unity there may be is no God-given essence but rather the fictional choreography of many levels into one socially operational self" (118-9). For G.H., the time that she spent with the cockroach is a version of this reconstructing process of the self. Within this

process, the first step is being able to see the abject body, the cockroach, as it is — without having any positive or negative presumptions of it: "I, neutral cockroach body, I with a life that at last is not eluding me because I finally see it outside myself — I am the cockroach" (57). Deleuze and Guattari state that "We know nothing about a body until we know what it can do, in other words, what its affects are, how they can or cannot enter into composition with other affects of another body, either to destroy that body or to be destroyed by it, either to exchange actions and passions with it or to join with it in composing a more powerful body" (257). G.H.'s second step of constructing the self is her attempt to exchange passion with the cockroach to be able to know its body, and as a result of this exchange she composes a literally and metaphorically transformed self that is redeemed and attached to life more powerfully.

Before her encounter with the cockroach, G.H. was not a whole person. As she indicates: "I'm not up to picturing a whole person because I'm not a whole person myself" (10). And before she entered the maid's room that morning, her conception of her own identity was based on what other people carved out for her: "That morning, before I went into the maid's room, what was I? I was what others had always seen me as, and that was the way I knew myself" (15). She has taken others' conception of her so seriously that "she ends up only being her name" (17), and "she treats herself as others treat her, she is what others see in her" (18). Nothing more, nothing less. Her life before the turning point of meeting the cockroach was only something made, an artistic creation like her penthouse apartment, as she says (22). Until her confrontation with the borders of becoming through her experience with the cockroach, she was not even critical of the identity given to her by others: "That image of myself between quotation marks used to satisfy me, and not just superficially. I was the image of what I wasn't" (23). It is like accepting the illusory reality created by the ideology as if it were real. It is only after her encounter with the materiality of life, which found its representation in the primordial abject figure, the cockroach; in this case, she will be able to turn this relationship into reverse. The effect of her experience with the cockroach is both radical and fundamental for her because for her the cockroach symbolizes the essential and the ever-present element in life; it is almost like a God figure: "A cockroach is larger than I am because its life is so given over to Him that it comes from the infinite and moves toward the infinite unperceivingly, it never becomes discontinuous" (119).

Conclusion

To conclude, although they come from different geographical, linguistic, and cultur-

al backgrounds, interestingly, Burak and Lispector share a common interest in their tendency towards the modernist aesthetic and an experimental literary style. This essay discusses highly elusive texts by these literary avant-garde women in terms of their representation of different forms of alterity. The enigmatic linguistic and narrative structure of both texts invites readers to share in the uneasy experience of the encounter with the other within the self (as we see in "The Window") or the racial other and the nonhuman other (as seen in *The Passion*). The self that seems to be embodied in both texts is a decentered self. In "The Window," the narrative technique dissolves any possibility for an integrated authentic self as the narrative voice has no fixed center. The unknown narrator's corpse in "The Window" signals the presence of an absence. For G.H., existence consists of a total immersion with the being of the other. The atmosphere in both texts is wrapped with an ontological insecurity in that one expects either an annihilating or a transformative end of the narrator, as actually happens at the end of "The Window" and *The Passion*, respectively.

In this study, I discuss the use of metamorphosis as a literary trope in *The Passion* and "The Window" as their major literary tools of deconstruction of subjectivity in different ways. Defying categories and traditional forms of writing, and resisting historicity and mimetic representation, both Burak and Lispector celebrate the ambiguity of life and literature in their encounters with alterity. Both writers, haunted by a sense of incompleteness, explore new forms of writing open to different forms of alterity. "The Window" and *The Passion* attempt to question all subjectivity, aiming to uncover the self, hidden under several other social selves constructed by others through their use of metamorphosis. In this sense, *The Passion*'s epigraph from Bernard Berenson reflects the representation of the dissolution of the self in both of the works: "A complete life may be one ending in so full identification with the non-self that there is no self to die."

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Leo Tolstoy's *Resurrection* and English Crime Fiction: Between Western Tradition and New Ideas

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Abstract The article deals with analysis of typological similarities of the English social-criminal novel and Leo Tolstoy's *Resurrection*. Its relevance is conditioned by the opportunity to extend the background of Russian-English literary cross-cultural relationships in order to specify the points of attraction and repulsion between the English criminal novels and that by Tolstoy as well as their different national traditions and literary epochs. The similarities of English and Russian novel models are obvious at various levels: focus on a fact, social determinism of the heroes, criticism of unjust social system, trial scenes, origin of hero-criminal, system of characters, oppositions in time and space depiction, descriptions of prison. However, taking into account the differences in historical periods, conditions of literary evolution and individual development, one could say that these features were incorporated into a new context of the Russian classical novel with great modifications.[1]

Key words William Godwin; *Caleb Williams*; Leo Tolstoy; *Resurrection*; English crime fiction; social-criminal novel

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Introduction

Many works have been devoted to the study of the genre peculiarities of Leo Tolstoy's novel *Resurrection*, but only a few scholars have paid attention to its connections with Western literature. Irina F. Gnyusova has recently argued that its ties to English novels which often seem to be superficial are actually much more profound. Deeper analysis "allows us to assert [that] a genuine creative dialogue" (Gnyusova 14) exists between Tolstoy and English authors. N.D. Tamarchenko has suggested that "both Dostoyevsky and Tolstoy, especially in his last novel, were connected to the tradition formed in the late Romantic period of the 'social-criminal' novel (Balzac, E. Sue, partly A. Dumas, Hugo, Dickens)" (Tamarchenko 387), simultaneously noting that "the issue of Tolstoy's connection with it [the tradition of the social-criminal novel — I.M., I.A.], as far as is known, has not even been raised" (Tamarchenko 364). Jeffrey Brooks has also commented on this connection: "Tolstoy had often visited prisons and met with political prisoners, and he was known to have admired works about the urban underworld of crime and punishment. He was raised on romantic and realist traditions replete with novels of crime and punishment, from Eugene Sue, Alexander Dumas and G.W.M. Reynolds to Victor Hugo and Charles Dickens" (Brooks 228). Nevertheless, the typological links between *Resurrection* and English crime fiction have gone mostly unnoticed by literary scholars. The purpose of our article is to consider these links revealing similarities and differences in the depiction of social problems represented in its characters, composition, and spacial-temporal coordinates.

In Russia, interest in the criminal novel arose in the middle of the nineteenth century and increased at the end of the century. This may be explained by the dissemination and promotion of democratic and socialist ideas; by the increasing focus on the needs of low social strata; as well as by the democratization of literature and book publishing. In this period adaptations and retellings of foreign writing for children and young people also became very popular, and fiction, issued in ever-greater quantities, highlighted existing social contradictions for a wider readership. In these years, for example, Dickens's *Oliver Twist* (1837) and Bulwer-Lytton's *Eugene*

Aram (1832) were re-translated into Russian and discussed in the press as if they were new. Y. A. Bahnova has noticed that "foreign interpretations in translations often help to understand and appreciate the writer's work more deeply, to discover in this work those features and to evaluate the features that would remain hidden, if we consider only its internal assimilation" (Bahnova 137). In general, Russian writers were interested either in particular aspects of the crime novel (as in the case of Tolstoy, who in *Resurrection* was particularly interested in the depiction of jail and juridical injustice) or in the broader poetics of the so-called Newgate novel (as was the case in the 1860's with F.M. Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment*) (Aizikova, Matveenko).

Evidences of Tolstoy's Familiarity with English Crime Fiction Tradition

Tolstoy's diaries and letters demonstrate his familiarity with English crime fiction, and taking into account his interest in Russian periodicals (in which most translations of English criminal novels were published), we can assume that Tolstoy probably read the novels involved. His diaries and letters include numerous references to, statements about, and citations from these works. His statements are mostly concerned with the judicial system and people's responsibility for their actions, and most often refer to the works of William Godwin. This article will focus on Godwin's novel *Caleb Williams* and on the tradition of the English crime novel (in Newgate novels and those by Dickens) as they relate to Tolstoy's *Resurrection*.

As is well known, Godwin (1756-1836) was one of the creators of the English crime novel with his *Things as They Are, or the Adventures of Caleb Williams,* written in 1794. The main ideas of this novelistic treatise include the denial of private property; criticism of the existing state power and the injustice of its legal system; and a proclamation of every citizen's individual rights and independence; these ideas also inform the novel's plot. *Caleb Williams* depicts social relations among different social strata and exposes social contradictions from a new perspective, via a virtuous, innocent hero who investigates a crime and reveals the need for justice. According to A. Rounce, in the novel Godwin thus "proclaims his all-encompassing faith in the powers of human reason to overcome the evils that have accreted around tradition and custom" (Rounce 2). The novel laid the foundation for the subsequent development of crime fiction, in particular, of the detective novel, and not only in Great Britain. In Russia Godwin's work had a rich reception history. In 1838 it was first translated into Russian, received numerous reviews in Russian periodicals and even had an influence on A.S. Pushkin (Aizikova, Matveenko). There was renewed interest in the 1860's, and scholars have seen echoes of *Caleb Williams* in N.G.

Chernyshevsky's *What is To Be Done?* and F.M. Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* (Matveenko).

As for Tolstoy, in his essay "On the Annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria" (1908) he chose Godwin's statement from his article "Enquiry Concerning Political Justice and its Influence on Modern Morals and Manners" as the epigraph: "Often we call laws the wisdom of our fathers, but it is just a mistake. The laws were often a consequence of our ancestors' passion, their timidity, jealousy, narrow selfishness, their lust for power. Our duty is not to slavishly follow them, but to discuss them, correcting their mistakes" (Tolstoy, *On the Annexation* 222).[1] Tolstoy noted that "In the epigraphs that do not belong to me, I took the opportunity of making a few changes to simplify the language and publish them not with a complete article, but as a separate thought," (Tolstoy, *On the Annexation* 223). As for the citation from Godwin's article, the statement was only changed insignificantly. The original was: "Law we sometimes call the wisdom of our ancestors. But this is a strange imposition. It was as frequently the dictate of their passion, of timidity, jealousy, a monopolizing spirit, and a lust of power that knew no bounds. Are we not obliged perpetually to revise and remodel this misnamed wisdom of our ancestors? To correct it by a detection of their ignorance and a condemnation of their intolerance?" (Godwin 773). Only the final phrase about the duty to review and correct the mistakes of one's ancestors was added by Tolstoy. Characteristically, Tolstoy chose a statement from Godwin about problems with the judicial system.

In another article by Tolstoy, "To the Politicians," written as an epilogue to the article "To Working People" (1902) he argues about the necessity to destroy the ruling power as it is, and considers the interaction between power and an individual. Tolstoy discusses the opinions of various philosophers and politicians (Godwin, Proudhon, Bakunin, Kropotkin, Max Stirner etc.), and concludes that "the doctrine of anarchism, that adheres to non-religious, materialistic views <…> does not have a spiritual tool to destroy power." Tolstoy takes the anarchist position of Godwin and Proudhon as a contrast to his own: "The Englishman Godwin, living at the end of the eighteenth and at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and the Frenchman Proudhon, writing in the second half of the last century, < assert …> that to destroy power it is enough for people to realize that the *general welfare* (Godwin) and *justice* (Proudhon) are violated by power and that if one disseminates the conviction among the people that the *general welfare* and *justice* can be attained only in the ab-

1 Tolstoy's article was written on the occasion of the Hapsburg empire's announcement that it was annexing the Slavic states of Bosnia and Herzegovina and as an answer to a letter by the Serb Anda M. Petrobuteva.

sence of power, power will be destroyed by itself" (italics by L.N. Tolstoy) (Tolstoy, *To the Politicians* 206). It is notable that Tolstoy again cites *Caleb William's* name in the context of a discussion of social justice and the necessity to reform the existing social order**.**

Tolstoy's statements about another writer of English criminal novels — E. Bulwer-Lytton — are rather remarkable. Without specific evaluations of the writer's Newgate novels Tolstoy writes about Bulwer-Lytton's works in general and demonstrates his familiarity with some of the English crime fiction writer's works. For example, in one of his letters to N. N. Rubinshtein Tolstoy expresses his opinion on the quality of Ivan Sytin's editions[1]: "The so-called *novels* of Sytin's edition, like [the lubok] *Milord* and others, have already been sent to people wishing to remake them. It is very possible that most of them will be sent back. But it is even more necessary to translate, condense, and simplify the good classical novels by Dickens, George Eliot and even the good novels by Bulwer, Wood, Braddon and others" (Tolstoy, *The Letter to N.N*. 30). It is notable that Tolstoy positions Bulwer-Lytton's name alongside Dickens and G. Eliot and expresses a high opinion about his writing. On the other hand, he also mentions his name together with those of Ellen Wood and Mary Elisabeth Braddon — English writers of so-called "sensation novels." Mentioning Bulwer in such a context reveals Tolstoy's associations of his name with a definite literary tradition, namely, with a form of the criminal novel.

Another evidence of Tolstoy's familiarity with Bulwer's writing is found in his diary. In October 26, 1853 he wrote: "Read a new, rather good *Sovremennik"*[2] (Tolstoy, *Diary 1950* 473), where among the most significant publications there was a translation of Bulwer's novel *My Novel, Or, Varieties in English Life***.** Thirty years later, on March 4, 1882, Tolstoy wrote the following: "When I'm tired of this reading, I take *Revue Etrangère* from 1834 and read the stories there, — it is also very interesting" (Tolstoy, *Diary 1938* 325). Notably, in *Revue Etrangère* (№№ 9 and 12 of 1834) published in Saint-Petersburg, among other writings Bulwer's novel *The Last Days of Pompeii* was published. Hence, despite the lack of facts about Tolstoy's reception of the Newgate novel, it is possible to claim that the Russian writer was familiar with the authors working in this genre.

The issue of Tolstoy's interest in Dickens's writing has been considered by

1 Ivan Dmitrievich Sytin (1851–1934) made a fortune through printing millions of almanac-type calendars containing miscellaneous practical information. They were cheap and attractively illustrated. He was the first publisher to reach the peasants all over Russia and to shape popular taste in the entire country.

2 Sovremennik (The Contemporary) — a leading "thick" journal.

many scholars, but we are interested in the authors' interaction in the aspect of criminal novel. There are numerous statements by Tolstoy in which he gives Dickens's novels a high appraisal. Suffice it to recall Tolstoy's letter to James Ley, where the Russian novelist characterizes Dickens as "the greatest novel writer of the 19th century," and says that "his works, impressed with the true Christian spirit, have done and will continue to do a great deal of good to mankind" (Tolstoy, *The Letter to James Ley* 24) or Tolstoy's list of authors whose works made the greatest impression on him, where the name of Dickens is mentioned. As we have seen, Dickens's name is also often cited along with others connected with the criminal novel. Tolstoy published Dickens's novels in 'Posrednik' particularly in the 1880's, the period of writing *Resurrection*. He supplied them with changed titles which straightforwardly appealed to a mass readership and underscored their status as criminal novels. These were: *Oliver Twist* became *The Thieves Gang. The Adventure of Poor Oliver Twist* (Moscow, 1900), *Little Dorrit* became *Love in Prison, and Little Dorrit, Great Expectations — The Convict's Daughter or From Blacksmith's Shop to Riches.*

With all Tolstoy's interest in Western literature he explicitly rejected the form of the European novel, which he considered an unacceptable model for depicting Russian reality: "The European form of the novel is not suitable for the expression of [our] national content. Russian artistic thought goes beyond this framework and seeks a new one" (Tolstoy, *Drafts for Introduction* 53). However, rejecting these forms, the writer subconsciously focuses on previous samples of both Russian and foreign works, interpreting them in a new way and introducing them in a new context. Observing similarities in Thackeray and Tolstoy's writing, I.F. Gnyusova underlines that "beyond the both authors' negation of preceding genre tradition there is deep knowledge of this tradition — that in poetics and structure of their works manifests itself as memory of genre (according to M.M. Bakhtin)" (Gnyusova 13).

Tolstoy's undoubted interest in criminal issues is proved by the large number of books on the issues of criminology housed in the library of Yasnaya Polyana, among which mention should be made of works by both the Russian and foreign scholars and layers: Kazansky P. *Law and Heredity as a Phenomenon of International History*. Saint-Petersburg, 1902; Shilovsky P. *Juridical Essays*. Issue 1. *English prisons. London Justice of the Peace. Three articles about the Russian Proceedings. English assize court. English Senate*. *On the Fate of Saint-Petersburg*, 1899; Malinovsky I. *Bloody vengeance and death penalty.* Issues 1-2. Tomsk, 1908-1909; Malinovsky I. *The Russian writers-artists about death penalty*. Tomsk, 1910; Yadrintsev N. M. *Russian Community in Prison and Exile*. Saint-Petersburg, 1872; Yanzhul I.I. *In the slums of England*. London, 1890; The writer was acquainted with prominent

representatives of Russian jurisdiction, such as Muraviev Nikolay Konstantinovich, Maklakov Vasiliy Alexseevich, Davydov Nikolay Vasilievich, Rusanov Gavriil Andreevich, and definitely, Koni Anatoliy Fedorovich, who told Tolstoy the case that served as a plot basis for *Resurrection.* It is known that Tolstoy met with foreign researchers and forensic experts, publicists and psychiatrists, such as Ch. Lombroso, G. Kennan, W. Bryan etc., visited Russian prisons, was present at proceedings and even participated in trials as a juryman.

Tolstoy and English Crime Fiction: Attractions and Repulsions

These facts support our concept about the writer's actual interest in the wide range of crime and punishment issues as well as profound knowledge in the depicted phenomena, which are reflected in the poetics of *Resurrection*: "Tolstoy introduced into his plot a great number of entirely new themes: Russia's cruel and ineffective penitentiary system, the hard life of convicts, pointless political and religious repressions committed by the government, the workings of Russia's legal bureaucracy, etc. Nevertheless, the novel preserved its court-related focus" (Arnold 236).

The focus on social-criminal issues was made by Tolstoy in his earlier works (*The Power of Darkness (1887), Devil (1889), The Kreutzer Sonata (1890), Anna Karenina* (1873-1877)), where he tries to understand the causes of crime in his own way, including moral offense, and to find the ways of solving social and ethic problems. Here one can see the formation of the writer's personal original view on the considered questions.

By the 1880's Tolstoy, as is known, had completely rejected the institution of church and seen the way-out from the social crisis in knowing the Gospels by every member of society. As is noted by D. Patterson, "the truth that Tolstoy expounds in the text of *Resurrection* is, in his view, the truth of the holy text — that is, the Gospel. This is his supertext; it stands above his polemic as the position from which the truth of his own position, over against that of the Church, is determined" (Patterson 124).

However, by the time of the novel's writing there has been deep writer's block leading Tolstoy to the review of all previously used artistic principles. The new novel should be conceptually different from all previous writer's works. Tolstoy decides to tailor the literature for the public demands, create a novel capable of re-educating, changing the society. For this purpose he created the novel-treatise, in which, in accordance with the author's position, there should not be any fiction that defines the poetics of the novel and that, on the whole, is likely to cause Tolstoy's interest in tradition of English criminal novel, constitutes of which allowed the Russian writ-

er's vision incarnation.

To begin with, English criminal novel focuses on a fact and relies on documentary sources (regarding plot, narration). As is known, Newgate, and later, sensation novel firmly rooted in factual material introducing adventure and criminal's idealization into the narration. Having taken **'**Konev's plot, Tolstoy, on the contrary, deprives it of any adventure, making the novel narration extremely trustworthy. The plot of *Resurrection* is within the simplest frame, owing to which, in V. G. Odinokov's opinion, "there was a definite 'simplification' of the novel structure due to very clear theoretical 'frame' having the character of an investigation, a 'treatise'" (Odinokov 129), that makes Tolstoy's novel even closer to Godwin's *Caleb Williams* and reveals typological similarities of these writings at the ideological level mentioned above.

Nevertheless, it is this simplified plot that allowed the Russian novelist to pose extremely vexed social questions, in which one can see the interchange with the poetics of English criminal novel. The main idea of most Newgate novels is to attract attention to the urgent social problems and show that definite burden of crime is always shared by society.

As D. Gillespie claims, "Tolstoy's interest lays not so much in the fallen woman motif, a common one in nineteenth-century Russian literature, or even the inner torment and regeneration of Nekhliudov, but rather in broader questions of social justice, the corruption of the criminal justice system, and the hypocritical ways of the upper classes" (Gillespie 12). Tolstoy explains the formation of Nekhliudov's character and that of Katusha by social determinism. Both protagonists are prompted to crime by their environment: in case of Nekhliudov it is a moral crime, whereas in the life of Katusha Maslova — a misdemeanor offence, for which she pays an unjust penalty from the court.

By the example of the main heroine Tolstoy shows a common fate of an ordinary Russian citizen: "In the prisons of Tamen, Ekaterinburg, Tomsk and at the halting stations Nekhliudov saw how successfully the object society seemed to have set itself was attained. Ordinary, simple men with a conception of the demands of the social and Christian Russian peasant morality lost this conception, and found a new one, founded chiefly on the idea that any outrage or violence was justifiable if it seemed profitable. After living in a prison these people became conscious with the whole of their being that, judging by what was happening to themselves, all the moral laws, the respect and the sympathy for others which church and the moral teachers preach, was really set aside, and, therefore, they, too, need not keep the laws" (Tolstoy 284-285).

Similar ideas constitute the basis for *Caleb Williams* by Godwin and *Eugene Aram* by E. Bulwer-Lytton. They are also obvious in *Oliver Twist* by Dickens. In particular, Godwin's protagonist, the criminal Raymond, criticizing existing legislation system, proclaims: "Those very laws, which by a perception of their iniquity drove me to what I am, preclude my return. God, we are told, judges of men by what they are at the period of arraignment, and, whatever be their crimes, receives them to favour. But the institutions of countries that profess to worship this God, admit no such distinctions. They leave no room for amendment, and seem to have a brutal delight in confounding the demerits of offenders" (Godwin 227).

Nekhliudov, like Raymond, argues about the reasons and consequences of an unjust social system, and similar to Raymond, the Russian hero accuses the powers that be: "But what do we do? We seize one such lad who happens to get caught, knowing well that there are thousands like him whom we have not caught, and send him to prison, where idleness, or most unwholesome, useless labour is forced on him, in company of others weakened and ensnared by the lives they have led. And then we send him, at the public expense, from the Moscow to the Irkutsk Government, in company with the most depraved of men" (Tolstoy 81).

Typical for the English criminal novel is a trial scene. From the first passage of *Caleb Williams*, according to D. McCracken, "the numerous trials in the novel, besides instigating a literary fad, act cumulatively to condemn the general system of justice. They are in some cases so obviously corrupt that they stand close to being the "faithful delineation," promised in the preface, which the reader may judge for himself" (McCracken XIV). Writers of criminal novels introduce scenes of proceedings and trials to show the inconsistency of the existing penitentiary system, the injustice of sentences, and the incompetence of judges.

In this context it is relevant to recall the accusing speech of Paul Clifford from Bulwer-Lytton's Newgate novel *Paul Clifford*, which resembles Nekhliudov's thoughts: "I hesitate not to tell you, my lord judge, to proclaim to you, gentlemen of the jury, that the laws which I have broken through my life I despise in death! Your laws are but of two classes; the one makes criminals, the other punishes them. I have suffered by the one; I am about to perish by the other" (Bulwer-Lytton 433).

The authors of the given genre strove to consider the problem of crime not only from the social but also from the moral, metaphysical and religious points of view. As a consequence, the search for a new hero of the English social-criminal novel became of particular importance and, what is more, a special emphasis was made on the origin of hero-criminal. A hero of English crime novel, Newgate particularly, most often appeared to be of noble origin. In choosing such a protagonist,

the authors of crime fiction focused on the privileged and middle readership. This tendency started with Godwin's *Caleb Williams*, where the protagonist-criminal is a nobleman whose knightly principles prevent him from confessing his guilt.

Tolstoy's work also manifests differences from the poetics of the English criminal novel. The theme of crime itself was differently interpreted in the English and Russian literary traditions, which clearly affected the depiction of characters. Even though Nekhliudov is a nobleman, as are the protagonist-criminals of English criminal novels, unlike them, his guilt is undisputed. Tolstoy has Nekhliudov see the suffering of his victim, whom he set on a life of crime but who is essentially a criminal only in the eyes of society. Following Katusha to Siberia, Nekhliudov enters the outcast society and it is through his eyes that Tolstoy shows the injustice taking place in all spheres of the simple people's life: "With Nekhliudov's journey to Siberia, the reader gets a panoramic view of Russian life, from the upper classes, the privileged ways of the legislature through the police and warders who serve them, right down to the peasants and convicts, the lowest of the low" (Gillespie 13).

Like a protagonist of a criminal novel, Nekhliudov enters various social circles and has entry to various institutions. Tolstoy makes his hero suffer and bear responsibility for all of the imperfections of society. Taking the system of characters typical for English criminal novel (a protagonist-benefactor and a protagonist-victim), Tolstoy tailors it to his literary needs.

According to scholars, the chronotope of the English criminal novel is based on antithesis. As V. G. Ugrekhilidze noted, "the set opposition develops both horizontally and vertically. As for the space the categories of "society" and "bottom," as well as city and rural world, they simultaneously serve as a characteristic of the entire civilization, presented at a definite historical moment of its existence" (Ugrekhilidze 25). Something similar is observed in *Resurrection:* from the first pages, readers can see both horizontal and vertical spaces: society and prison, gentlefolk and poor people, city and village, clerks and convicts. Using the literary principle of antithesis, the author of *Resurrection* broadens the scope of his novel to achieve maximum ethical and aesthetic effect.

Opposition as a literary device is also revealed in the temporal structure of the English criminal novel, where "the past in all novels of this type is connected with a crime, sometimes committed by a protagonist-benefactor <…>, sometimes against him <,… whereas> the present is a disclosure of the past and restoration of justice" (Ugrekhilidze 37). It is just this antithesis that is observed in *Resurrection*: Nekhliudov's meeting with Katiusha reminds him about his crime that becomes the turning point for his resurrection. After this, Nekhliudov strives to wash away his guilt for

the sake of the future, "to restore the justice" violated by him and by society in the past. Thus, the opposition device typical for the novel involved is introduced at a more general level of narration in comparison with traditional crime fiction, which allows Tolstoy to distance from the events depicted in the novel.

In the poetics of English criminal novel the loci of prison, exile, and court are of particular significance. Tolstoy also depicts the place of imprisonment, but with his own intentions: "The cell in which Maslova was imprisoned was a large room 21 feet long and 10 feet wide; it had two windows and a large stove. Two-thirds of the space were taken up by shelves used as beds. The planks they were made of had warped and shrunk. Opposite the door hung a dark-coloured icon with a wax candle sticking to it and a bunch of everlastings hanging down from it. By the door to the right there was a dark spot on the floor on which stood a stinking tub (Tolstoy 107). Compare description of the cell from Godwin's novel, juxtaposed to a passage from Dickens's *Oliver Twist*:

W. Godwin *Caleb Williams*	**Ch. Dickens *Oliver Twist***
…the massy doors, the resounding locks, the gloomy passages, the grated windows, and the characteristic looks of the keepers, accustomed to reject every petition, and to steel their hearts against feeling and pity. <…> It is impossible to describe the sort of squalidness and filth with which these mansions are distinguished. I have seen dirty faces in dirty apartments, which have nevertheless borne the impression of health, and spoke carelessness and levity rather than distress. But the dirt of a prison speaks sadness to the heart, and appears to be already in a state of putridity and infection. (Godwin 177)	his cell was in shape and size something like an area cellar, only not so light. It was most intolerably dirty; for it was Monday morning; and it had been tenanted by six drunken people, who had been locked up, elsewhere, since Saturday night. But this is little. In our station-houses, men and women are every night confined on the most trivial charges-the word is worth noting-in dungeons, compared with which, those in Newgate, occupied by the most atrocious felons, tried, found guilty, and under sentence of death, are palaces. Let any one who doubts this, compare the two. (Dickens 92)

In Tolstoy's description of the prison the text is saturated with numerals and prosaic

interior detail and the absence of any color; it is of the utmost simplicity and has an almost documentary quality, a kind of photo. In contrast to descriptions of prisons such as the one from *Caleb Williams*, Tolstoy uses only one epithet in his depiction of the prison interior — a "stinking tub," the rest space is described with matter-of-fact adjectives "large stove," "dark-coloured icon," "dark spot," even "wax candle." The Russian author focuses more on the prisoners confined to the cell, describing every personage in detail and objectively. Nevertheless, in all three descriptions there are some common features: the authors render the size, illumination, and filth of the cell, with the obvious intention (expressed both implicitly and explicitly) of showing that this place of imprisonment does not heal the prisoners' souls, but, on the contrary, cripples them.

However, in keeping with his Christian position, Tolstoy is not satisfied with negation or criticism of the social order, as was usually the case with authors of criminal novels. Rather, he pushes his protagonist to find the highest truth, to define the law of human existence: "The thing is, he continued, that these people consider lawful what is not lawful, and do not consider the eternal, immutable law, written in the hearts of men by God, as law" (Tolstoy 243). Such an ideological difference in the heroes' outlook constitutes, in our opinion, the principal difference between Nekhliudov and the protagonists of English criminal novels. Such is the "perspective on the world and his [the author's] utterances," — as was noted by N. D. Tamarchenko,: "on the one hand, [these are] perceived as the author's explicit opinion; on the other hand — [they] merge with that highest truth that is accessible to the hero's consciousness, and was defined (by M. M. Bakhtin) with the term 'monological novel'" (Tamarchenko 364).

Conclusion

Thus, Tolstoy's novel actualized those features of English crime fiction poetics which were necessary, from his point of view, for both the execution of his literary plan and the Russian literary process at the given stage of development. It is obvious that the Russian novelist was not influenced by Godwin himself, but the form of the criminal novel which he helped create. Taking this into account it is appropriate to speak about Tolstoy's reception of Godwin's form of novel and its basic features, which were perceived by Tolstoy indirectly, through the prism of the history of development that the English and Russian novel had experienced by the end of the 19th century. In other words, *Resurrection* is not the result of cross-cultural dialogue with definite English novels, but it is a dialogue of the Russian novel tradition with the English novel tradition taken in its evolution, beginning from Godwin.

In *Resurrection* one can find a number of elements from the English social-criminal novel both at the level of plot structure, narration, system of characters and in chronotopic structure of the novel, which is based on the similarity of the Russian writer's and the authors' of English criminal novels ethical and ideological goals. However, taking into account the period, conditions of literary evolution and individual development, we can say that these features were incorporated with modifications into a new context, that of the Russian classical novel.

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Nationhood and Justice in J.M.Coetzee's *Disgrace*

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Abstract Coetzee's *Disgrace* is a controversial novel as it rakes over a past haunted by memories of rape, racism and the fight for land ownership. By depicting the lingering instances of injustice, *Disgrace* seems to be holding fast to the memories of a troubling past that cannot be easily erased or ignored. This unwillingness to let go of the past is problematic because it keeps interfering with the remedial process of nation-building pursued by the TRC and implemented under the aegis of the Constitution after the collapse of apartheid. The publication of the novel seems ill-timed, as the nation is going through a healing process. My argument in this paper is concerned with the way the novel challenges the conciliatory efforts of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) by undermining the idea of nationness and restorative justice. The novel, I would like to argue, seems to present two opposing views about nationness and justice: one ethical, the other non-ethical. These opposing discourses are reflected in the beliefs and the attitudes of the two main characters, Lucy and David Lurie. My purpose is to show that *Disgrace* tends to valorize an ethically-informed approach to the question of nationness and justice. By an ethical approach, I mean the rejection of totalizing and impersonal views which is often reflected in the construction of nation and the implementation of justice. The paper is divided into sections devoted to the exploration of ethical and non-ethical views represented by the ideas of Homi Bhabha, Emmanuel Levinas and Zygmunt Bauman.

Key words Homi Bhabha; Emmanuel Levinas; Zygmunt Bauman; the performative; the saying

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Introduction

Written after the second democratic election *Disgrace* depicts a nation troubled with rankling issues. I would like to show that this novel is inextricably bound up with a vision of national discourse and the dispensation of justice which is at variance with the mission of post-apartheid administration whose goal was to foster unity and oneness. What loomed over the dream of national solidarity was a gloomy past haunted by injustice and inequality. By dredging up the memories of such a painful past, *Disgrace* seems to lucidly frustrate the common efforts toward the realization of such a goal pursued by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the African National Congress (ANC).

Since its publication, *Disgrace* has drawn critical attention to itself. Critical views about the novel ranges from favorable to disparaging ones. Without a doubt, part of the notoriety of the novel is related to its alleged undermining of nationalism in the wake of the overthrow of the white South African regime. This has resulted in the scathing criticism of the novel by the ANC due to its reflection of a society where the "views of the white characters in *Disgrace* may be equated with those of the white South Africans in general" implying that the black rapists represent the majority of black people in South Africa (Graham 435). *Disgrace* thus deliberately drags up memories that have been suppressed in the reconciliatory efforts of the TRC and the Constitution which sought to consolidate national unity and reconciliation. The novel owes its ill-fame to raising issues as contentious as the rape of a black girl at the hands of a white middle class man and the gang-rape of a white woman by black men. The novel was published in a time when South Africa, a fledgling nation, was striving to resign herself to a scandalous past through a general amnesty encouraging people to forgive and forget. The other debatable point about this novel is the reaction of the two main characters to the incidents in the story. David's refusal to repent for abusing his female student is as flabbergasting as Lucy's inanity to relinquish the possession of the land to Petrus whose complicity in the attack on the smallholding seems irrefutable.

Lucy's way of handling the situation entails not only personal but also socio-political implications that allow *Disgrace* to incorporate its moral undertones into broader historio-cultural issues. These issues mainly bring to the fore the problemtics of conceiving nation and administrating justice. My purpose here is to open up a discussion on these two concerns of the novel from an ethical standpoint. By ethical I mean a non-totalizing approach which regards justice and nationhood not in universal and foundational terms but in light of the singularity and exception

of the other. To this end, I would like to focus on the two major characters of the novel that in my opinion represent the opposite poles of ethical versus totalizing perspectives. In their approaches to the administration of justice and the conception of nation, David and Lucy have diametrically opposed views about the ordeals they experience. This paper is an attempt to explain their differences by drawing on Levinas's account of the relationship between the self and the other through the distinction he has made between the saying and the said. In short, for Levinas, the saying represents the interpersonal and the said the impersonal and universal aspect of the relationship between the self and the other. Next, Bhabha's view about the national culture which is embodied in the tension between the pedagogical and the performative will be explored. Then, I will present my discussion on the idea of justice using Bauman's argument in this area. In the end, through an analogical perspective, and based on the reading of the novel, I would like to conclude that Bhabha's performative is comparable to Levinas's saying as the former is inclusive of contingency, difference and moral responsibility.

The Question of Nation in *Disgrace*

In his paper, "Negotiating Foundations: Nation, Homeland and Land in J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*," Gilbert Yeoh (2004) argues that *Disgrace* contests the national discourse that the TRC and the Constitution propagate by substituting the idea of nation with homeland. He asserts that the subtext of *Disgrace* is *Odyssey* in which the homecoming of Ulysses is identifiable with the reclamation of land by Petrus and the rapists. In his argument he maintains that *Disgrace* contrasts the regaining of South Africa as homeland by the blacks with an idea of nation relying on "national reconciliation through the tools of forgiveness and amnesty" as recommended by the Constitution and TRC (6). By pitting the discourse of nationness which presupposes a neutral sense of belongingness against the intruding discourse of homeland played out in the rivalry between white South African pastoral and black epic, *Disgrace* reveals the underlying competitive narratives that lurk in the discourse of South African nationalism. While Yeoh's reading strives to demonstrate that Disgrace exposes the falsity of whites' "claim to South Africa as homeland" by criticizing "the foundational discourse of white South Africans as duplicitous rhetoric" (1), Patrick Hayes (2010) believes that *Disgrace* adopts a noncommittal stance by including two divergent political positions without giving pre-eminence to neither of them. Hayes contends that there are two political divisions in *Disgrace*: the politics of difference and the politics of recognition. He identifies the same divergent political divisions in the South African Constitution which shows a

simultaneous commitment to "democratic values" i.e. politics of equal dignity and to "the achievement of social justice" i.e. politics of difference (195). Hayes clarifies that the aim of the constitution is to create reconciliation between the incompatible political approaches. In the novel, David with his liberal humanism and universalism represents the politics of equal dignity and Lucy, the politics of difference. However, much to everyone's disappointment, *Disgrace* displays the profound mistrust of the compromise between the two political trends. As Hayes argues this is attributable to the playfulness of the text in constructing a right image of the nation. This playfulness is realized through the "neither wholly serious nor entirely parodic" (Hayes 214) quality of *Disgrace's* storyline as a political allegory in which Lurie and Lucy switch positions after the rape scene. Lurie's seriousness gives way to a comical gesture and foolishness of behavior and Lucy's "witty playfulness" is replaced by an "unassailably serious character" (Hayes 207). In the end Hayes concludes that Disgrace is absolutely reticent about "the claims for representational authority, objectivity and shared humanity that underpin the classic novel's image making", the outcome of which is "to open its readers to the complex political demands placed upon the nation's future" (216).

Hayes's discussion about the duality of political visions is similar to my argument about the two discourses of nationness represented by David's and Lucy's outlooks. Their attitudes are analogous to Bhabha's view about "the Janus-faced discourse of the nation" (Bhabha, "Introduction" 3). Bhabha's formulation deviates from totalizing conceptions of nationality by adopting a poststructuralist perspective through which nations like narrations are torn between a static and dynamic status. The classical image of nation stems from a mentality that was imbued with the desire to form totality through exclusionary procedures. Benedict Anderson's definition of nation as "an imagined political community–imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (6) with its emphasis on "deep horizontal comradeship" (7) and "homogeneous, empty time" (24) is a good case in point. For Anderson, it was the novel and the newspaper that contributed to a homogeneous and horizontal imagining of the community in the eighteenth century, a period which embraces the inception of the nation-state. Anderson's argument presupposes the need to view nations as free-standing and monolithic entities. Though Anderson's argument tends to reject any *a priori* and originary conception of nation, it lacks the potency to account for the current cultural hybridity that constitutes today's nation-states especially the postcolonial ones.

It is for this reason that Bhabha speaks about the redefinition that is happening to the "very concepts of homogeneous national cultures" which intimates the

existence of "overwhelming evidence of a more transnational and translational sense of the hybridity of imagined communities" (Bhabha, *Location* 5). Though Bhabha has acknowledged his debt to Anderson's work which "significantly paved the way for" ("Introduction" 1) his book, *Nation and Narration* (1990), he attempts to cast a revisionary look at Anderson's discussion about the emergence of nations. In the following pages, I will try to demonstrate the way *Disgrace* promotes a form of the discourse of nationalism which contradicts the vision of a unified nation endorsed by the post-apartheid administration. Bhabha's conception of nation as a hybrid cultural product is of note here as his theorization of national culture is not premised on the binary structuring of inside/outside. The image of the nation as an enclosed impenetrable totality does not hold water in Bhabha's opinion.

In the introduction to *Nation and Narration*, Bhabha speaks about the ambivalent role of the margin of the nation-space and argues that the nation is "one of the major structures of ideological ambivalence within the cultural representation of modernity" (4). Nations, as Bhabha observes, are like narrations which are limitless and uncontainable. Seen from a poststructuralist point of view, the image of a unitary nationness is as unrealizable and elusive as the idea of a achieving a unified meaning by soldering the signifier with the signified. There is always an excess or slippage that thwarts the completion of signification. Thus nations are always in the making and this turns the totality of the national culture into what Bhabha calls "the locality" of the national culture which is "neither unified nor unitary in relation to itself nor . . . as [an] 'other' in relation to what is outside or beyond it" ("Introduction" 4). Boundaries in the locality of national cultures do not represent the limit but engender an "in-between space through which the meanings of cultural and political authorities are negotiated" (Bhabha, "Introduction" 4). Based on the logic of such a non-exclusionary view of the nation, 'the other', the outsider or the stranger are all indispensable presences within the nation. The inside becomes inseparable from the outside as a result. Bhabha believes that nationhood emerges from the "the articulation of cultural differences" which are "in-between spaces" that "provide the terrain for the elaborating strategies of selfhood — singular or communal — that initiate new signs of identity" (*Location* 1). Bhabha's conception of the nation is an ethically imbued argument because it denounces totalizing approaches. His argument is thus analogous to the way Emmanuel Levinas describes the language of ethics. The impact of Levinasian thought can be felt in the overall spirit of Bhabha's argument about the image of nation which uncannily resembles Levinas's explication on ethics as the questioning of the self exposed to the irreducibility of the other. Just as Levinasian philosophy

of ethics is contingent upon an undeniable acknowledgement of the other and the recognition of his anteriority to the self, Bhabha's theorization of nationness posits the performative negotiation that exists within the nations.

Levinas: The Saying and the Said

The impossibility of reducing the other to the same constitutes the core of Levinas's philosophy. This resistance is an exteriority which is outside the language of philosophy. For Levinas, initially, the face of the other constituted this point of resistance which defies thematization and representation. The face represents not a kind of infinity but the *infinition* of infinity which exceeds signification and sublation. The face also inspires a face-to-face conversation. This conversation is not initiated by the subject because the subject does not have any subjectivity, any freedom or will before encountering the other. Such an encounter is in fact an address directed by the other to the self. This pre-linguistic address inspires an ethical response which is described as 'the saying' and is in opposition with 'the said'. In fact the saying is more of an act than actual speech. For Levinas, the saying is pre-linguistic, non-ontological while the said is linguistic, and ontological. He describes the Saying as a moving out of the self toward the other: "*Toward another* culminates in a *for another*, a suffering for his suffering" (Levinas 18; emphasis in original). In contrast, the Said is the self-enclosed system, the linguistic system, history with its chronological sequencing of events: "to enter into being and truth is to enter into the said; being is inseparable from its meaning! It is spoken. It is in the logos" (Levinas 45). The Saying is prior to the Said, it is "antecedent to the verbal signs it conjugates, to the linguistic system" (Levinas 5). The Saying is before signification, before an idea is petrified into a theme; it is an instance of "the proximity of one to the other, the commitment of an approach, the one for the other, the very *signifyingness of signification*" (Levinas 5; emphasis in original). The Saying pre-dates the Said just in the same way that the act of signifying is antecedent to significance. Saying is "the anarchical, the non-original" (Levinas 7). It is anarchical in the sense that it is an open becoming characterized by a performative quality which disrupts attempts at unification. Its non-originality stems from the exposure of the self to an address which predates cognition and escapes comprehension.

Before I continue with the relevance of the above discussion to Bhabha's conception of nation, I should remind the reader that both Bhabha and Levinas are antagonistic to essentialist and originary views about the formation of identity be it national (as in nationhood) or subjective (as in selfhood), respectively. Though

Bhabha never directly acknowledges his debt to Levinas, his text uncannily reverberates with Levinasian terminology. He regards postcolonial countries and communities "otherwise than modernity," a phrase reminiscent of Levinas's "otherwise than being." This phrase which constitutes the title of his second magnum opus, *Otherwise than Being: or beyond Essence*, indicates "the very difference of beyond, the difference of transcendence" (Levinas 3) and in this way is not concerned with the polarity of being and nothingness but with what transcends ontology and ontological thinking. In a similar way, Bhabha's "otherwise than modernity" refers to "cultures of postcolonial *contra-modernity*" where "national cultures are being produced from the perspective of disenfranchised minorities" (*Location* 6; emphasis in original). The point of convergence between Levinas and Bhabha is indicated by the fact that both reject the binary division of modern thought and emphasize on the indissoluble relationship between the self and the other. For Levinas, the self being addressed by the other presupposes an asymmetrical relationship of inexorable responsibility on which the self's subjectivity is premised. Subjectivity, in this sense, for Levinas is subjection.1 Responsibility is not defined in the synchrony between the self and the other. Being-for-the-other is always the past of the present of the other. We are always late therefore responsibility is persecution.2 The subjectivity, the one-for-the-other is responsibility for the other "before showing itself as a said, in the system of synchronism, the linguistic system" (Levinas 77). Subjectivity or subjection is incarnated in proximity: "it is in proximity, which is a relationship and a term that every commitment is made" (Levinas 86). Ethics as first philosophy for Levinas creates sociality, a bond among humanity without which humanity is hollow. That is why Levinas claims that humanity is proximity (83). Responsibility for the other, in Levinasian ethics, is an obsession with the other which extends across and through

1 Levinas reverses the formation of subjectivity and identity by locating their origin not in the being of the self but in the otherwise than being. There is no essence, no identity in being; subjectivity is a process of signification which is predicated on the outside/the other/the neighbor; on our being responsible for the other; on our being-for-the-other, that is, on substituting self for the other: "substitution is signification" (Levinas 13). In Levinasian terms, substitution is not a change from one substance to another or enclosing oneself in another identity, nor fusion. Levinas conceives of substitution or "the subjectivity of the subject … as expiation" which is "traceable back to the vulnerability of the ego, to the … sensibility" (14).

2 According to Levinas there is no synchronism or synchronicity between the self and the other. The other predates the self (has already arrived) and thus the latter finds itself eternally late and must belatedly strive to discharge his neglected responsibilities towards the other. In short, he is *de facto* persecuted by this prosecution.

"consciousness countercurrentwise [and] is inscribed in consciousness as [. . .] a disequilibrium, a delirium" (Levinas 101). While the questioning of the self opens it up to the acknowledgement of the other's presence, thus shattering the illusion of self-identity, nations are also subject to a similar questioning which disrupts its image of consistency and coherence.

Bhabha: The Pedagogical and the Performative

Bhabha's revisionary look at Anderson's project of defining the nation originates in his relentless denunciation of any argument that presumes that the self and the other are hermitically sealed off. Anderson's definition of the nation as "an imagined political community–imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (6) characterized by "deep horizontal comradeship" (7) and "homogeneous, empty time" (24), sounds ill-conceived and wrong-headed for Bhabha because it posits the nation or national identity as an entity which is at one with itself. The idea of the nation as a unified whole historically and functionally corresponds to the exclusionary logic of modern intellect that sought to create identity through differentiation. Bhabha's penchant for liminality and the locality of culture undermines "the complacent and pernicious insistence on a simultaneity that tends, of course, to exclude those that do not fit" (Huddard 71). Bhabha problematizes the homogeneity of the national culture by arguing for the existence of a double movement which creates dislocation and disjunction within the time of the nation which disrupts its self-sameness. Put simply, the discourse of the national identity is torn between the past and the present:

> We then have a contested conceptual territory where the nation's people must be thought in double-time; the people are the historical 'objects' of a nationalist pedagogy, giving the discourse an authority that is based on the pre-given or constituted historical origin in the past, the people are also the 'subjects' of a process of signification that must erase any prior or originary presence of the nation-people to demonstrate the prodigious, living principles of the people as contemporaneity: as that sign of the present through which national life is redeemed and iterated as a reproductive process. (*Location* 145; emphasis in original)

What follows from the above argument is that the pedagogical has affinities with the historicist and wholistic view of the nation which strives to present an image of the people as a static entity while the performative is affiliated with the locality

and temporality of the nation-space highlighting the multiplicity of the people and the competing discourses of sexuality, race, and social classes. The conflictual relationship between the pedagogical and the performative is elaborated by Bhabha thus:

> The pedagogical founds its narrative authority in a tradition of the people [. . .] as a moment of becoming designated by *itself*, encapsulated in a succession of historical moments that represents an eternity produced by *self-generation*. The performative intervenes in the sovereignty of the nation's self-generation by casting a shadow between the people as 'image' and its signification as a differentiating sign of Self, distinct from the Other or the Outside. In place of the polarity of a prefigurative self-generating nation itself and extrinsic Other nations, the performative introduces a temporality of the 'in-between' through the 'gap' or 'emptiness' of the signifier that punctuates linguistic difference. The boundary that marks the nation's selfhood interrupts the self-generating time of national production with a space of representation that threatens binary division with its difference. The barred Nation *It/Self*, alienated from its eternal self-generation, becomes a liminal form of social representation, a space that is *internally* marked by cultural difference and the heterogeneous histories of contending peoples, antagonistic authorities, and tense cultural locations. (Location 147-8; emphasis in original)

The pedagogical in the construction of the nation directs attention to an outside "other" in an attempt to create and consolidate a sense of self-identity whereas the performative works to disrupt the outbound-gaze and to turn it into inward-looking one. The split that is caused by such a performance undermines the totality and historicity of nation-space by revealing the conflictual rather than the unitary nature of national narrative. The contestation among different subcultures and minorities creates the space of nation in which the supremacy of one cultural identity over the rest is never realized. There is an ongoing translation between the borders of these minorities that defers the formation of a hegemonic national identity because "the narrative of nationality is continually displaced by other identities, like sexuality, class or race and there can be no end to this displacement" (Huddart 74).

In an interview with David Attwell in 1993, Bhabha elaborates on the ambivalence that exists in his theory of the nation by using the socio-political context of the post-apartheid South Africa. Addressing the problematics of creating a "unified sovereignty," Bhabha points to the difficulty of building consensus and

solidarity in South Africa because

> there is the notion of the nation as the liberatory horizon, which has a national, populist resonance, of the claim to justice, as you say, the claim to a new history, to a reparation for historical excision and exclusion. ("Interview" 108)

This "unificatory notion of nation" (108) embodies the pedagogical, which according to Bhabha, is problematized by the performative as the former is "always overwritten, or underwritten" by

> the difference between the ANC and Inkatha and other groups, and that is underwritten further by the whole question of tribal belonging, so the text becomes a profoundly disjunctive text, and if you have to function with it, even at the liberatory level, you have to work those interstices in constructing a pan-South African national symbol, or national party or vision. ("Interview" 108)

The desire for the perpetuation of national consistency and unity was further reinvigorated by the TRC which assumed the mantle of meting out restorative justice among the victims of apartheid by encouraging them to grant amnesty to the perpetrators of human right violations. As a pedagogical tool facilitating the nation-building process, the TRC has an ambivalent function. It demanded people to relate to a past that was rife with injustice and cruelty only to unlearn it in the name of an expedient national solidarity and reconciliation. The shared sense of victimhood which used to generate a collective identity among the discrete non-white population of South Africa was to be traded with a more comprehensive and inclusive sense of belonging i.e. nationness. However, past is not completely past. The repressed memories uncannily find their way to the consciousness of the public.

As a national and cultural sovereignty, South Africa is haunted by a troubling past to which cultural and literary productions such as novels like *Disgrace* gives expression. Such is the case with *Disgrace* which tries to reveal the festering wounds that cannot be healed through some perfunctory measures and palliatives. *Disgrace* presents a postcolonial perspective for which difference and alterity should be acknowledged as an indelible presence. The novel problematizes the vision of nation as a fixed monolithic construct. The construction of such an image of nationness necessitates dismissing a history of oppression in favor of future gains. However, *Disgrace* does not seem to be acting in accord with this vision, as it reveals the cracks that have been whitewashed in the process of creating an image

of nationhood by the TRC and the ANC. *Disgrace* shows the slippage between the idealistic vision of nation and its reality "in this place, at this time" (Coetzee 112). It brings into light what has been previously tried to be kept hidden and suppressed by the discourse of nation-building. In this way the novel represents "postcolonial perspectives" which according to Bhabha,

> intervene in those ideological discourses of modernity that attempt to give a hegemonic 'normality' to the uneven development and the differential, often disadvantaged, histories of nations, races, communities, people. They formulate their critical revisions around issues of cultural difference, social authority and political discrimination in order to reveal the antagonistic and ambivalent moments within the 'rationalizations' of modernity. (*Location* 171)

By wedging its way into the collective consciousness of the people, *Disgrace* epitomizes the disgrace of the past. Can it be assumed that *Disgrace* is engaged in an act of cultural translation that dissolves the boundaries and creates newness by "refiguring [the past] as a contingent 'in-between' space" whereby the "the past-present becomes part of the necessity, not the nostalgia of living?" (*Location* 7). The answer to this question comes from the way Lucy and Lurie view the current situation of South Africa. Lurie is the one whose feeling of cultural estrangement is obvious from the very beginning of the story. He is morally and mentally out of tune with society. That is why he attributes a sense of post-*ness* to different things displaying a low opinion and a cynical view of the post-apartheid era. He calls the institution of learning "emasculated" and the age he is living in as "post-religious" (Coetzee 4). He mocks the ignorance of his students who are "post-Christian, posthistorical, postliterate" (Coetzee 32). While David has to find ways to resign himself to this post-*ness*, Lucy, by residing on the fringe of the city and adopting the ex-centricity of sapphism, shows resilience in coming to terms with the post-apartheid milieu. Lucy, using Bhabha's words, becomes "part of a revisionary time ... to reinscribe our human, historic commonality; *to touch the future on its hither side*" (*Location* 7; emphasis in original).

Seen from Bhabha's viewpoint, Lucy is an unhomely figure. She is unhomely not because she does not possess a house or is an outcast. Unhomeliness as "the condition of the extra-territorial and cross-cultural initiations" happens when the "recesses of the domestic space become sites for histories most intricate invasions" (*Location* 9). That moment befalls Lucy when her home and her body become part of historical interference and negotiation. Such an uncanny moment is also created

by the novel itself. The uncanny also implies the uncomfortable feelings of not being at home when one is at home.1 The uncanny breaks through consciousness to make something undesirable known and to produce the feeling that one is not what one thought to be: because one discovers an alterity in oneself. This is what takes place in *Disgrace* as opposed to the national discourse which struggles to induce forgetfulness about a gruesome past or to sublimate it into an expedient national solidarity. The uncanny leads to the creation of a split time which contests "the homogenous and horizontal view associated with the nation's imagined community" (*Location* 144). As it was explained before, this creates a double vision of the people in two contrary categories of objects and subjects: people are simultaneously the object of an originary, historic discourse originating in the past as well as the subject of a dynamic process of signification in the present. There are two temporalities involved in the creation of nations: there is "the continuist, accumulative temporality of the pedagogical and the repetitious, recursive strategy of performative" (*Location* 145). I believe that this duality is in a sense reflected in the divergent attitudes of David and Lucy in the novel. In a conversation with David, Lucy trying to explain her refusal to press charges against the larcenists and the rapists insists on the singularity of her situation:

> You want to know why I have not laid a particular charge with the police. I will tell you, as long as you agree not to raise the subject again. The reason is that, as far as I am concerned, what happened to me is a purely private matter. In another time, in another place it might be held to be a public matter. But in this place, at this time, it is not. It is my business, mine alone. (Coetzee 112)

Lucy's insistence on viewing the personal and social developments through the urgency of "in this place, at this time" (112) coincides with the image of nation depicted by *Disgrace* as a space where differences and disagreements of counter-narratives of sexuality, race, and homeland should be acknowledged and negotiated. In this way, Lucy's wish to dehistoricize her personal afflictions together with the novel's interpolative revival of obnoxious memories of a past teeming with racial, sexual and territorial violations shares functional characteristics with Bhabha's

1 Bhabha borrows the term uncanny from Freud and applies it to postcolonial situation. There is an ambivalent quality about the uncanny which is implied by its German rendition "unheimlich." The term "unheimlich" contains its opposite "heimlich" meaning also unhomely and homely respectively. Thus as Freud writes: "heimlich is a word the meaning of which develops in the direction of ambivalence, until it finally coincides with its opposite, unheimlich" (Freud 3679).

performative as they conflict with the historicism that is represented by David Lurie's monologic and historicized attitude. *Disgrace* shows that the South African discourse of nationalism cannot be based on the idea of nation as "the sign of modernity under which cultural differences are homogenized in the 'horizontal' view of society" (*Location* 149). Contrary to Lucy's outlook, David's views are enmeshed in the rigidity of the historical discourse of the self vs. the other. He tends to read the attack on his daughter's smallholding and her rape as acts of vengeance that must be read in light of historically embedded paradigms:

> Do you think what happened here was an exam: if you come through, you get a diploma and safe conduct into the future, or a sign to paint on the door-lintel that will make the plague pass you by? That is not how vengeance works, Lucy. Vengeance is like a fire. The more it devours, the hungrier it gets. (Coetzee 112)

Later when David and Lucy are talking about the rape, Lucy reveals how much she was shocked by the amount of hatred that the rapists felt towards her. David justifies this hatred by arguing that the crime must be seen on a non-personal level: "It was history speaking through them . . . a history of wrong. Think of it that way, if it helps. It may have seemed personal, but it wasn't. It came down from the ancestors" (156). According to Mike Marais (2006), David misreads Lucy's passive acceptance of the situation as a desire "to atone for the history of white oppression in South Africa" (83) substantiate his "failure to transcend the discursively-inscribed relations of contestation within his culture" (82). Lurie's understanding of the situation is heavily influenced by his culturally embedded preconceptions that predispose him to interpret events in the totality of mediatory terms such as race and history because he believes that Lucy is trying to humble herself before history (Coetzee 160). For Marais such "reductionist ways of thinking" motivates Lucy's rape as well because her rapists' knowledge and violation of her follow on from "the generic categories of race in South African society" (83) therefore "history speaks through both Lurie and the rapists" (84).

Zygmunt Bauman and the Impersonality of Ethical Justice

Lucy's decision to go with pregnancy and her acceptance of Petrus's marriage offer in return for protection carry both personal and political overtones. On the personal level her decision reflects the inevitability of the concessions that needs to be made "in this place, at this time" (Coetzee 112). However, Lucy's decision —

to remain under the protection of Petrus as a father figure replacing her biological counterpart and to keep the baby — is marked by indeterminacy and contingency. Despite Lucy's insistence on viewing the crime committed against her as "a purely private matter" (112) her decision is informed by a vision that forsakes grand schemes that claim to offer once-for-all solutions in favor of minor, local and temporary ones which are devoid of hyped certainties. Lucy's determination to stay, in other words, can be interpreted in light of postmodern acknowledgement of the ineradicability of uncertainty. Her attitude toward her victimization conflicts with that of her father, whose pathological view of the crime is embroiled in a skewed historical understanding which reads the crime in the closure a historical vision. Obviously there is a chiasmic point in *Disgrace* which revolves around the two rapes. In David-Melanie case, against David's avowal that it was a matter of taking advantage of his "position vis-a-vis Ms. Isaacs" (Coetzee 54), there is an inclination to set the crime within "the long history of exploitation of which" Melanie's rape is a part (Coetzee 53). Such a counterpositional reading occurs once again in the second rape but this time it is Lurie who in a notable switching of position reads the crime in the totality of an enclosed historio-cultural vision which elevates the crime to a public and political level. Lucy, however, as discussed earlier, renounces such a reading. In Melanie's case, aware of the historically-informed approach taken to his transgression, Lurie defies such a reading by refusing to humble himself "and ask for clemency" (Coetzee 54). He extends this way of looking at the matter to Lucy's case and misreads the rape as motivated by historical vengeance and her silence as a "wish to humble [herself] before history" (Coetzee 160). Thus in a jarringly contradictory manner David as a public intellectual betrays the same intellectual myopia that afflicted the disciplinary committee. His ambivalent attitude toward the two rapes is the product of an "unacknowledged duality of a brutalizing enlightenment" that renders the subject simultaneously "exploitative in his relation to the others and yet" makes him "believe himself ethically conscientious" (Williams 23).

Lucy's preference for not taking refuge in the justice administered by the state is analogous to the argument that Zygmunt Bauman (1997) puts forward in discussing the relationship between state justice and interpersonal ethics. He elaborates that justice forms a totality that does away with the uniqueness of the other through the sameness and generalization of the individual as citizen:

> Justice requires the foundations of the State. In this lies the necessity of the reduction of human uniqueness to the particularity of a human individual, to

> the conditions of the citizen. That latter particularly reduces, impoverishes, dissolves, waters down the splendor of ethically formed uniqueness. (*Postmodernity* 49)

Lucy is working out her relationship with the other not by having recourse to a totality (i.e. state-administered justice) which is the impersonal law but by insisting on her moral responsibility which precedes the intervention and formation of the state because "moral drives have a pre-societal origin" (Bauman, *Modernity* 198). Conversely, the collective approach, taken by societal organizations to facilitate the administration of justice, ends in the inevitable elision of the uniqueness of the other. Just as it was the case with the idea of nation, the question of justice, similarly, includes a dichotomy which consists of the impersonal and the interpersonal. *Disgrace* therefore opens a space for observing the inextinguishable weightiness of interpersonal responsibility for the other by contesting the totalizing approaches which advances national reconciliation through the perfunctory display of justice carried out particularly by TRC in the context of post-apartheid South Africa. Lucy's moral responsibility enjoys an anteriority that precedes the impersonality of the law of the state. In this way Lucy advocates an approach that adheres to the privateness and personal*ness* of the moral party of the self and the other without letting it be dissolved in the general terms of the just state. Bauman (1997) observes that ethics "precedes the State, it is the sole source of the State's legitimacy and the ultimate judge of that legitimacy" (52). Lucy's emphasis on the urgency of the present moment compels us to avoid universal and timeless trends and summons us not to keep out of sight the time-boundedness of justice. That is why Bauman (1997) avers that justice is never complacent because "Justice means constant revision of justice … [it] must exist perpetually in … setting itself higher standards higher than those already practiced" (50). The "in this place, at this time" (Coetzee 112) of Lucy contradicts with Lurie's "in this time, in this place" (Coetzee 141). The latter reflects a historicized and rational view stemming from the enlightenment rationality for which conflicts are part of a teleological perception of history. In this context, the resolution of conflicts can occur by resorting to all-embracing totalizing entities such as the state justice. Lucy's refusal to rely on impersonal judiciary system can be taken as her recognition of the singularity of the situation and her irreplaceable and irrevocable personal responsibility. Here is Lucy who informs Lurie of her intention to become a non-person, a cipher by acceding to deed the farm to Petrus:

> "'Yes, I agree, it is humiliating. But perhaps that is a good point to start from

> again. Perhaps that is what I must learn to accept. To start at ground level. With nothing. Not with nothing but. With nothing. No cards, no weapons, no property, no rights, no dignity.'"
> "'Like a dog.'"
> "'Yes, like a dog.'" (Coetzee 205)

Lucy's abnegation of her social privileges is comparable to entering the moral space that Bauman, following Levinas, describes as arriving the moral party of I and the other while "disrobed of our social trappings, stripped of status, social distinctions, handicaps, positions or roles … reduced to the bare essentiality of our common humanity" (*Postmodernity* 46).

Conclusion

My discussion about *Disgrace* was founded on three pairs of binary oppositions. They included the saying vs. the said, the pedagogical vs. the performative and the impersonal vs. the interpersonal. One of the points of similarities between these pairs is that the two sides of every dichotomy are not mutually exclusive. For example, the saying just like the performative does not seek to or cannot supplant the other side perpetually because the saying and the performative as well as the interpersonal can cause only momentary interruptions or disruptions in the opposite side. This means that as interruptive presences they are characterized by spontaneity, immediacy and instantaneity. These qualities fly in the face of the tendency toward closure and totalization which stem from the essentialism, historicity and stasis of the other side of the opposition. The performative's tacit emphasis on spontaneity highlights "the need to re-state the reality of a nation constantly exceeding its definition" because "performativity keeps reminding us that the nation and the people are always generating a non-identical excess" (Huddart 73). The saying, similarly, is marked by performativity as it is "a verbal or non-verbal ethical performance, whose essence cannot be caught in the constative prepositions" of the said (Critchley 7).

Coming back to the main concern of this paper, that is the question of nation and the idea of justice in the context of the novel, once again, I need to reiterate that Lurie's predisposition to analyze events and incidents through a historicist perspective rubs shoulders with that of Lucy's. Lucy rejects the historicist view in favor of contingency and indeterminacy. Lurie's historicist view objectifies the rapists and reduces them to soulless agents of history functioning as mercenaries exacting revenge (Coetzee 156). Lurie's obsession with history is offset by Lucy's

attention to the present requirements of this time and place. It is hard to say which of these two approaches is valorized in the end as the story is open-ended. The uncertainty and the "productive suspense" (Hayes 222) of the kind of image *Disgrace* projects of nation is recreated here through its inclusion of both Lurie's historically-embedded vision and Lucy's spontaneity. Lucy's refusal to leave the farm which is interpreted as her passivity is indeed descriptive of the performative aspect of the narration of the nation which reminds us of the fact that "the national subjects" invent "the nation at every moment, changing its ideas of itself as well as its institutions" (Huddart 81).

Coetzee through *Disgrace* reveals the inadequacy of the definition of nation described and represented by wholistic approaches for postcolonial nations. The incongruity that exits between the idea of people as objects of historical discourse and people as the spontaneous subjects of history in the making disrupts the totalizing conception of cultural structures of modernity. Such a trend is completely in line with the depiction of the inconsistencies of the reality of the everyday life which Walter Benyamin speaks of in terms of the role of the novelist in the modern society: "To write a novel means to carry the incommensurable to extremes in the representation of human life. In the midst of life's fullness, and through the representation of this fullness, the novel gives evidence of the profound perplexity of the living" (qtd. in Bhabha, *Location* 161). There is one point that needs to be elucidated here and that concerns the existence of any convergence between Bhabha's concept of national culture and Levinas's ethics. I believe that Bhabha's and Levinas's idea, presented here, become confluent in Lucy's reaction. Lucy as an ethical subject whose subjectivity is formed in the responsibility for the other and in her being-for-the-other is an embodiment of ethicality.

In the end, I would like to draw attention to the way Bhabha and Levinas are similar in the way both throw light on the way culture, nation, humanity and human subjectivity are not given, complete and self-standing concepts but are contingent upon the ex-centric that interrupts their essential centricity and rigidity by transforming them into a state of becoming, that is, an ongoing process: subjectivity into subjection, nation into narration, and rights into writing.

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