

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies Official Conference Proceedings

accs

2
0
1
2



i
a
f
o
r



ISSN: 2187-4751

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies

Osaka, Japan 2012

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies

Conference Proceedings 2012

Dr Shamir Ali, Lecturer, National University of Modern Languages, Pakistan

Professor David N Aspin, Professor Emeritus and Former Dean of the Faculty of Education, Monash University, Australia

Dr William Baber, Associate Professor, Kyoto University Graduate School of Management, Japan

Professor Don Brash, Former Governor of the Reserve Bank, New Zealand, Former Leader of the New National Party, New Zealand, Adjunct Professor, AUT, New Zealand & La Trobe University, Australia

Lord Charles Bruce of Elgin and Kincardine, Lord Lieutenant of Fife, Chairman of the Patrons of the National Galleries of Scotland, Trustee of the Historic Scotland Foundation, UK

Professor Judith Chapman, Professor of Education, Australian Catholic University, Australia, Fellow, St Edmund's College, Cambridge University, UK, Member of the Order of Australia

Professor Chung-Ying Cheng, Professor of Philosophy, University of Hawai'i at Manoa, USA, Editor-in-Chief, The Journal of Chinese Philosophy

Professor Tien-Hui Chiang, Professor and Chair, Department of Education, National University of Tainan, Taiwan/Chinese Taipei

Mr Marcus Chidgey, CEO, Captive Minds Communications Group, London, UK

Professor Steve Cornwell, Professor of English and Interdisciplinary Studies, Osaka Jogakuin University, Osaka, Japan

Professor Michael A. Cusumano, SMR Distinguished Professor of Management and Engineering Systems, MIT Sloan School of Management, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA

Professor Dexter Da Silva, Professor of Educational Psychology, Keisen University, Tokyo, Japan

Professor Georges Depeyrot, Professor and Director of Research, French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS)/Ecole Normale Supérieure, Paris, France

Professor Sue Jackson, Professor of Lifelong Learning and Gender, Pro-Vice Master of Teaching and Learning, Birkbeck, University of London, UK

Professor June Henton, Dean, College of Human Sciences, Auburn University, USA

Professor Michael Herriman, Professor of English, Nagoya University of Commerce and Business, Japan

Vice-Consul Kathryn Kiser, Cultural Affairs Officer, Lahore, Pakistan, The United States Department of State, USA

Mr Shahzada Khalid, Deputy Director, SAARC Energy Center, Pakistan

Mrs Eri Kudo, Head Private Sector Fundraising, United Nations World Food Programme Japan, Tokyo, Japan

Professor Sing Kong Lee, Director, The National Institute of Education, Singapore

Dr Woon Chia Liu, Associate Dean, Practicum and School Partnerships, Teacher Education, The National Institute of Education, Singapore

Professor Sir Geoffrey Lloyd, Senior Scholar in Residence, The Needham Research Institute, Cambridge, UK
Fellow and Former Master, Darwin College, University of Cambridge, Fellow of the British Academy, Honorary Foreign Member, The American Academy of Arts and Sciences

Dr Robert Logie, Associate Professor of Computer Science, Osaka Gakuin University, Japan

Dr David McLoughlin, Associate Professor, Meiji University, Japan

Professor Vasile Meita, General Manager, The National Institute for Research and Development in Construction, Urban Planning and Sustainable Spatial Development (URBAN=INCERC), Romania

Professor Keith Miller, Louise Hartman Schewe and Karl Schewe Professor of Computer Science
The University of Illinois Springfield, USA, Editor-in-Chief, IEEE Technology and Society

Professor Marjo Hannele Mitsutomi, Head of English Language Teaching Practices and the Language Development Intercultural Studies Center, Akita International University, Japan

Professor Ka Ho Joshua Mok, Chair Professor of Comparative Policy, Associate Vice-President (External Relations), Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, The Hong Kong Institute of Education, Hong Kong SAR

Dr Jo Mynard, Associate Professor & Director of the SALC, Kanda University of International Studies, Japan

Professor Michiko Nakano, Professor of English, Director of the Distance Learning Center, Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan

Ms Karen Newby, Director, Par les mots solidaires, Paris, France

Professor Jerry Platt, Professor of Business, Akita International University, Japan, Dean and Professor Emeritus, College of Business, San Francisco State University, USA

Professor Michael Pronko, Professor of American Literature and Culture, Meiji Gakuin University, Tokyo, Japan

Professor Monty P. Satiadarma, Clinical Psychologist and Lecturer in Psychology, Former Dean of the Department of Psychology and Rector of the University, Tarumanagara University, Indonesia

Mr Michael Sakamoto, Interdisciplinary Artist, UCLA, USA

Mr Mohamed Salaheen, Director, The United Nations World Food Programme, Japan & Korea

Mr Lowell Sheppard, Asia Pacific Director, HOPE International Development Agency, Canada/Japan

Professor Ken Kawan Soetanto, Professor and Director of CLEDSI, Waseda University, Japan

Dr Jeffrey Sommers, Associate Professor of Economics, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, USA, Visiting Faculty, Stockholm School of Economics, Riga, Latvia

His Excellency Dr Drago Stambuk, Croatian Ambassador to Brazil, Brazil

Professor Mary Stuart, Vice-Chancellor, The University of Lincoln, UK

Professor Gary Swanson, Distinguished Journalist-in-Residence & Mildred S. Hansen Endowed Chair, The University of Northern Colorado, USA

Dr David Wilkinson, Associate Dean (International & External Programmes), Faculty of Law and Management, La Trobe University, Australia

Professor Kensaku Yoshida, Professor of English, Director of the Center for the Teaching of Foreign Languages in General Education, Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan

Mrs Elly Zaniewicka, Political Correspondent, BBC Political Programmes, London, UK

© The International Academic Forum 2012
The International Academic Forum (IAFOR)
Sakae 1-16-26-201
Naka Ward, Nagoya, Aichi
Japan 460-0008
ISSN: 2187-4751
http://iafor.org/accs_proceedings.html

iafor

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies

Official Conference Proceedings 2012

- Unfortunately Funny - Laughing out Loud at Life Misfortunes: Signifying Dark Humors in Jakarta Street Motorcycles Stickers*
Andreas Akun pp. 1-10
- Diasporic Identities in V.S. Naipaul's The Mimic Men*
Chia Ping Weng pp.11-23
- Magical Transformation in the Film of Hayao Miyazaki*
Jane A. Lightburn pp. 24-35
- Growing up Australian: Exploring the Ethnic Identity Negotiation of Second Generation Vietnamese Youth*
Selina Tang pp. 36-47
- Stereotyped Female Characters in Fairy Tales: A Comparison of English and Chinese Fairy Tales*
Shu-Hu(e)i Lin pp. 48-57
- Managing a Plural Society: Issues and Challenges of Multiculturalism in Malaysia*
Tan Cheng Im pp. 58-68
- Showa Women Writers on Food: Koda Aya*
Ekaterina Phartushnaya pp. 69-79
- Confinement and Transgression in Eugene O'Neill's The Hairy Ape and Arthur Miller's The Crucible*
Hui-Chun Li pp. 80-91
- Reconciliation As the Transformations of Self and Place in A New World Order*
Adelle Barry pp. 92-101
- Re-presenting Black Culture: A Case Study on 6 Chinese Versions of the Novel The Color Purple*
Elaine Tzu-yi Lee pp. 102-113
- Identity Negotiation and Image of Dutch-Indonesian Descents in Mass Media and Contemporary Indonesian Postcolonial Film*
Yusri Fajar pp. 114-122

- Thai Graphic Design Culture: A Review of Thai Graphic Design History and The Role of Graphic Designers in Thai Society*
Khemmiga Teerapong
Marsha Berry
Yoko Akama pp. 123-135
- Cultural Reconstruction Through Science Communication in Indonesia: A Rhetorical Approach*
Suranti Trisnawati pp. 136-144
- The Style of Interiority: The Zen-Modern Self in Shiga Naoya's An'ya kōro*
Jacob Lee pp. 145-151
- Goan Temples: Symbols of Cultural Annihilation and Resurgence*
Padmaja Kamat pp. 152-160
- Thai Boxing and Embodiment: The Construction of Masculinity through Sportsmanship*
Jakkrit Sangkhamanee pp. 161-172
- Listening To The Waves Chanoyu Outside Japan*
Alexandre Avdulov pp. 173-181
- Conceptualization Of Ueban Space in Wu Jingzi's The Scholars*
Fang Xie pp. 182-193
- The 'Gambatte ' Project; An Action Research Applicatio: The 2010 South Africa World Cup Media Publicity and Cultural Exchange Initiative Project Conducted in Japan between 2007-2010*
Bheki Hlabane pp. 194-209
- The Gay Artists Journey between France and Thailand through Diverse Art Forms in Contemporary Dance Theatre Performance*
Sun Tawalwongsri pp. 210-221
- Chinatown as a Mnemonic Site: Restaurant and Chinese Canadian Special Stories in Fred Wah's Diamond Grill*
Fang Jeng Liu pp. 222-232
- An Encounter with Difference: Images of Macao and China in the Works of two Portuguese Writers (Ferreira de Castro and Miguel Torga)*
Dora Gago pp. 233-240

Corporeal Politics of Shadow Globalization: The Invisible Other and Dark London in Monica Ali's "In the Kitchen"

Pei-Chen Liao

pp. 241-251

From Official Nationalism to Popular Nationalism: Eating Culture in Contemporary Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas

Linden Yu-sheng Chen

pp. 252-267

Crossing the Boundary: Towards Harmonisation in East Asia

Seiko Yasumoto

pp. 268-281

*Unfortunately Funny - Laughing out Loud at Life Misfortunes: Signifying Dark Humors in
Jakarta Street Motorcycles Stickers*

Andreas Akun

0009

BINUS University, Indonesia

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2012

Official Conference Proceedings 2012

A large, faint watermark of the iafor logo is centered on the page. It consists of two overlapping circular arcs, one light blue and one light red, forming a partial circle. The text 'iafor' is written in a light blue, lowercase, sans-serif font across the center of these arcs.

iafor

iafor

The International Academic Forum

www.iafor.org

INTRODUCTION

Lisa Colletta (2003: 1) quoted two interesting insights:

- *“The increasing seriousness of things, then —that’s the great opportunity of jokes”* (Henry James).
- *“Human is not resigned; it is rebellious. It signifies not only the triumph of ego but also of the pleasure principle...”* (Sigmund Freud).

The street experience while commuting in Jakarta is something unfortunately funny yet undoubtedly tough. The tough side will be so complicated; all rooted from the traffic jam resulted from the uncontrollably enormous number of cars and motorcycles, city life mismanagement and weak enforcement of street rules. The number of the vehicles is unstoppably escalating because of the fact that to own a vehicle is so easy and tempting that so many people fail to reject it. Then there are no working days without traffic jam, and therefore it is better to narrow down the issue and discuss the other side of the reality—thus the topic of this study: the funny side where commuters, the motorcycle riders, cope with the dark situation and still manage to survive it through a seemingly trivial way of expressing themselves i.e. stickers, a smart way of dealing with the harsh side of reality. The traffic problem is serious. It is estimated that 1000 new motorbikes and 200 new cars flood Jakarta every single day

(<http://arsip.monitorindonesia.com/2011/03/22/setiap-hari-1000-unit-motor-baru-padati-jakarta/>).

There is a new trend of switching to motorcycle as the most dominant working transportation from public transport such as buses and trains, or even private cars. The sole reason is that this motorcycle is considered as more agile and practical in ‘ramming’ through the stuck traffic.

The number of motorcycle is then beyond expectation, superfluously swarming like bees all over Jakarta and its neighboring streets such as Tangerang, Bekasi, and Depok. As mentioned earlier, the ownership of motorcycle is so easy and tempting, and this is the main reason of the motorcycle superfluity. Anyone can bring a motorcycle home by only down-paying IDR 200,000 (USD 20) through very friendly installment programs. Mostly people can have 33 months to deal with their installment. This installment is for many riders another vicious circle because it provides facility of easy ownership but at the same time traps them for a long time with about 50% additional price. Another program along with the installment is some kind of forced protection through insurance program. Therefore, cash ownership is not encouraged because the insurance business will lose its business opportunity.

What is interesting for me is the way commuters respond to their life hardship funnily, without being necessarily serious. This is shown through their sticking of stickers on their rear part of their motorcycle revealing many everyday realities in commuting from home to their working place.

The goals of this study are to discuss how street commuters, despite the terrible unfriendly situation, express themselves through stickers and ideologies signified in their everyday encounters with job, street, and life. This is a library research of 40 stickers using Barthes’ ideas on myth and ideology to reveal the possible meanings.

DARK HUMOR

“Defining dark humor is virtually impossible because its manifestation in great literature necessarily involves irony, the trope in which you say one thing and mean another, sometimes the opposite of what is said” (Bloom & Hobby, 2010:xv). It seems that to define dark humor in literature –especially concerning great dark humorists such as Aristophanes, Shakespeare, Beckett, etc. – is not simple because it covers so many interconnected elements as the book has thoroughly discussed. However, for the purpose of this study, a simple definition as *“a form of humor that regards human suffering as absurd rather than pitiable, or that considers human existence as ironic and pointless but somehow comic”* (<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/black+humor>) will suffice.

Laughing at one’s misfortune is a good way to treat life as not too serious. This is a way where a humor dimension of someone is utilized well to face reality in a light way. Humor is then seen as having a therapeutic capacity, and what matters more here is that someone is capable of laughing at his own misfortunes, thus showing his superiority over the hardship. Freud has called this “humor on the grand scale” because it “acknowledges pain, suffering and futility”, but at the same time shows “magnificent superiority over the real situation” (Freud as quoted by Colletta, 2003:7). It is obvious that the capacity to LOL (laugh out loud) over one’s unfortunate position in life has positioned him or her as the superior master of life; that life can be so tough but still the one can smile along the way.

Humor makes it possible for someone who confidently treats life misfortunes as comic and deserves to be laughed at to be superior at least over his own fate. The confidence in him constitutes the source of strength because this confidence involves narcissism that rejects vulnerability of one’s ego to surface and thus rejects to suffer upon the pains and misfortunes. The capacity to LOL over the pain has let the person triumph through the jokes expressed in any media (i.e. motorcycle sticker - in this study) so that all fears that he is powerless, lonely, ignorant, authoritarian, chaotic, nothing, and even “dead” are for a moment powerless and transformed into the source of power to create temporary survival pleasure. This is the function of narcissism of humor because it *“protects individual from threat and pain”* (Colletta, 2003:7).

Additionally, Colletta has emphasized that beyond all modern absurdities, to laugh at realities seems to be absurd but at the same time the only realistic thing to do. Even though this sounds submissive, it is actually self-assured and insistent, that this response will be used as life defense or weapon against misfortunes.

In Modernist dark humor, all seems absurd, all seems inscrutable, and, therefore, there is little else to do but laugh. This response may appear resigned, but it is in fact a powerfully assertive and aggressive reaction, for the dark comedic imagination casts off pain and suffering and refuses them their power to overwhelm and destroy. If humor can no longer be used for a moral purpose, it can be employed as a defense and a weapon, a formula of personal survival that suspends the consciousness of death and dissolution and strengthens, if only momentarily, a hold on life (p. 7).

Berger (Gournelos & Greene, 2011: 233-236) has divided theories of humor into four technique categories that commonly involve four areas: *language* (e.g. *allusion, exaggeration, irony, puns*), *logic* (e.g. *absurdity, repetition, reversal, unmasking*), *identity* (e.g. *burlesque,*

caricature, exposure, parody), or *action* (e.g. *slapstick and speed*). The four theories are superiority theories of humor, psychoanalytic theories of humor, incongruity theories of humor and communication theories of humor. The Superiority theories of humor root from Aristotle's definition of comedy as "*an imitation of men worse than average*" and Hobbes' statement on humor and superiority that "*the passion of laughter is nothing else but sudden glory arising from a sudden conception of some eminency in ourselves by comparison with the infirmity of others or with our own formerly*"(p. 234). These theories emphasize the idea that we laugh at people because we see them as inferior and ridiculous or at ourselves because we see ourselves once as such as well. Psychoanalytic theories stem from Freud's idea that humor is based on veiled aggression, that presents us gratifications which all of us wish for. Freud has noted that, "*...and here at last we can understand what it is that jokes achieve in the service of their purpose. They make possible the satisfaction of an instinct (whether lustful or hostile) in the face of an obstacle that stands in its way*" (p. 234). While widely accepted Incongruity theories rely on the difference between what people expect and what they finally have through humorous texts or encounters. Schopenhauer has written about incongruity as the source of humor: "*The cause of laughter in every case is simply the sudden perception of the incongruity between a concept and the real object which have been thought through it in some relation and laughter itself is just the expression of this incongruity*" (p. 235). Finally, Communication theories, as stressed by Berger when quoting William Fry, focus on the fact that humor is a form of communication. Berger has written that humor is "*a form of communication that forces us to confront paradoxical aspects of reality. One way we deal with the paradoxical nature of reality, Fry suggests, is to laugh at it*" (p. 236).

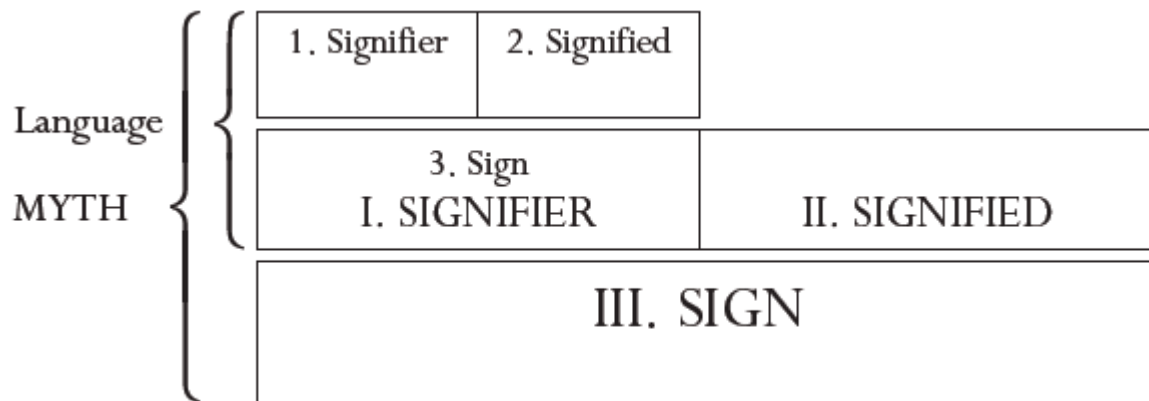
It is interesting to find Berger's idea that jokes are not simple texts, but rather complex texts, and therefore need different approaches. He has summarized four techniques of humor when he discussed an interesting example of joke called "The Tan" (p. 236). The four techniques are eccentricity, mistake, exposure, and repetition. Berger discussed the necessity to use The Why Theories (pp. 236-7) which focus on four elements in the humor i.e. *superiority* (our feelings about the silly people in the joke), *masked aggression* (ridiculing people in the joke), *incongruity* (the surprising pun line or other imbalance), and *play and paradox* (recognition of the fact that it is only a joke, not reality). The last note here is related to the definition of joke as "*a narrative with a punch line meant to cause mirthful laughter*" (p. 237) and the fact that laughter is shockingly not resulted from a response to structured attempts at humor, such as jokes or stories, but to anything resembling an effort at humor through everyday expressions such as greetings, questionings, small talks, etc. I believe, choosing and sticking a sticker on a motorcycle belongs to this last category.

SEMIOTICS

Stickers are not merely words -sometimes with illustrative pictures- attached somewhere on motorcycles. They are undeniably a way of communicating something, a way of putting across one's social identity. Chandler (2002:154) has put forward that "*We communicate our social identities through the works we do, the way we talk, the clothes we wear, our hairstyles, our eating habits, our domestic environments and possessions, our use of leisure time, our modes of travelling and so on*". Sticker is no exception and it is closely related to our modes of travelling, and it is for a way of communicating identities which in turn reflect multi-layers of meanings.

The possibility of generating layers of meaning is the nature of any text where "*language use acts as a key marker of social identity*" (p. 154). Roland Barthes has used the popular term

“orders of signification” consisting of denotation and connotation as two basic levels of meaning or representation.



(Allen, 2003:43)

Chandler (2002:140-4) has summarized that denotation (definitional, literal, obvious, or commonsense meaning of a sign) is produced in the first level of signification where there is a sign consisting of a signifier and signified. While connotation (the socio-cultural and personal associations—ideological, emotional, etc.—of a sign) is produced in the second level of signification where there is a sign deriving from the signifier of a denotative sign. In the development, it is not easy to separate the signifier from the signified, the ideological from the literal because “*what is a signifier or a signified depends entirely on the level at which the analysis operates: a signified on one level can become a signifier on another level...This is a mechanism by which signs may seem to signify one thing but are loaded with multiple meanings*” (p. 143). There is another level beyond the two basic levels called the third order of signification. This next level of connotative signs is referred by Barthes as myths that consist of ideologies of our time. Myth transforms history into nature, it hands round the ideological function of naturalization. It is further called ideology i.e. the naturalization of culturally specific phenomena (Allen, 2003: 35). The functions are obvious: “*For Barthes, myths serve the ideological function of naturalization (Barthes 1977, 45-6). Their function is to naturalize the cultural - in other words, to make dominant cultural and historical values, attitudes and beliefs seem entirely 'natural', 'normal', self-evident, timeless, obvious 'commonsense' - and thus objective and 'true' reflections of 'the way things are'* (<http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/S4B/sem06.html>).

Although the differences between the three orders of signification are not always clearly cut, they can be summed up clearly in the following quotation:

“The first (denotative) order (or level) of signification is seen as primarily representational and relatively self-contained. The second (connotative) order of signification reflects ‘expressive’ values which attached to a sign. In the third (mythological or ideological) order of signification the sign reflects major culturally variable concepts underpinning a particular worldview—such as masculinity, femininity, freedom, individualism, objectivism, Englishness, and so on” (p. 145).

As a text is always capable of producing layers of meaning, therefore beyond the denotative meaning that we can immediately understand without ambiguity, there are layers of other possible meanings that belong to connotation and metalanguage (metaphor)-as Hjelmslev and Barthes called it-i.e. “*an aspect of signification that occurs when an initial denotative sign*

(signifier and signified) is taken as the signified of a different signifier” (O’Neill, 2008:75). Allen (2003:44) has further mentioned about myth: “Myth is a metalanguage: a second-order language which acts on a first-order language, a language which generates meaning out of already existent meaning. However, as Barthes also reminds us, the original, first-order meaning is not completely forgotten”.

STICKERS

Moetidjo, et. al. (2008) in their book entitled *Stiker Kota (City Stickers)* have classified stickers simply based on a famous sticker “Free but Proper” into the ‘Free’ and the ‘Proper’ category. The image and ideology behind all the stickers keep changing, but they quoted Agustinus’ statement about the lasting one: *“the only image that can survive through each and every whims and wills of the market is the image of hope...that never departs from that of the communal hope, or communal memory, which has been reconstructed in the mind of the mass, handed down from generation to generation...those who can free them from pain”* (p. 276). The stickers are then produced based on the belief presupposing the fact that there are two groups of people: those who believe in hope (the ‘Proper’) and those who play with it (the ‘Free’). Who are they? They are lower and low-middle class people because historically the term city stickers comes from *stiker angkot* (public transport stickers) that are often considered as lowly because the public transportation vehicles in Indonesian context are associated with the commoners (p. 290).

Jakarta has been imagined through the stickers as a prosperous place where dreams can take their real forms, especially for those coming from the villages where job opportunities are so limited, despite the fact that Jakarta has so many problems which will actually transform those dreams into illusions. However, the image making efforts over Jakarta done endlessly through television series and movies since 1970s up to this day have resulted in the illusions of Jakarta image as a symbol of prosperity. No matter what happens, Jakarta keeps its magnetism from time to time so that now millions of people have overpopulated the city, creating various social problems such as traffic jam, just to mention one. And the dreams are then forced to take form into temporality. What is shocking is the reality that, according to Moetidjo and friends’ research, these stickers about city life are produced in a small village in Malang and Bandung. But it strengthens the idea of the imaginary Jakarta where the crowded metropolitan city is imagined from the remote suburban places.

The last issue is the question why these stickers exist. Moetidjo has summarized the reason:

“...what the producers have in mind are the immigrants in the big cities who somehow still cling to the memories of their villages of origin. This is apparent in the city stickers that are found in greater abundance in the public transportation in Jakarta than in any other cities. This is exactly the locus where the city stickers play their role. All the defining traits of identity of the people cannot materialize amid the lack of public spaces, which would consequently block various channels of expressions. The stickers are required to express all the things that have been silenced, to serve the media for stuttered speeches...As soon as the buyer affixes his or her sticker, identification takes place. It is as if the act of affixing the sticker has restored stifled identity” (2008: 289).

Identification of one identity, especially the silenced and stuttered one, can materialize in the stickers affixed on one's vehicle as a personal yet universal medium of expression, especially of the urban harsh realities.

ANALYSIS

The analysis of the stickers is divided into five parts that signify different meanings but are still somehow related to one another as elaborated in the following discussion.

SILENT COMMUTING VOICE

The commonly found view of motorcycle stickers has colored the daily commuting activities of millions of people in Jakarta for the last few years, especially since the increase of subsidized fuel price by 1 October 2005 from IDR 2,400 into 4,500, the point in time when people started turning to motorcycle as a more reasonable means of transportation. Commuting is an alternative way—though not a convenient one—to reach the work place. Most working people, especially employees, live on the outskirts of Jakarta but work in the center of the city, while some living in the center of the city work on the outskirts. What makes it worse is the fact that several people living on the outskirts (called *[Ja]bodetabek*: [Jakarta,] Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, Bekasi) work on the other outskirts, travelling through the center. This reality itself is actually funny: the wrong working and living place; what a mismanagement of earning a living! Living on the outskirts is a better choice for it is much cheaper and more humanized – less polluted and crime, a bit more space with still existing social interaction.

These stickers are stucked at the back of many motorcycles; they are there in the noisy streets, but silently voice many responses towards life hardships, still with the capability of taking them lightly. Besides, they are “commuting” along the way, never stop at one point of expression. They voice their identity, position, sufferings, and how to cope with them. Moreover, they are on the first place targetting themselves most of the time through light self mockery before criticizing others. Various life topics are addressed, but this study will only focus on one interesting target: CR3DIT or HP: Hire Purchase from humor perspective, though still interconnected with other modern life intersections such as endless traffic jam, low payment, unemployment, and modern capitalist traps.

STICKING IDENTITY – LOOSENING TENSION

Who are these commuters? Roughly labelled, they are workers, but it is not specific enough, some of them feel the need to label themselves with a clear identity. Thus, they stick stickers on their motorbike. Some stickers are absolutely serious, but most of them are not. They take them jokingly, even on the bitter realities. Humor is believed to be an effective way to deal with the harshness of street and life.

Sticking a sticker is at the same time revealing one's social existence in a limited city space where voices almost have no room. A yellow-black-red sticker of 8x5.5 cms in size is a big and eye-catching medium of stutteringly uttering one's identity, especially because the stickers represent the biggest portion of the society i.e. the lower and low-middle class people who flood Jakarta streets every single day. The stickers represent their problems and dreams,

and most of all their need to show them to the public so the repressed problems and dreams are brought to the open space, loosening all the tension. It is true that it is somehow a form of resistance against destiny and authority, but without the desire and power to actually resist. So it is more a form of social and psychological therapy for them because to be able to expressively show their identity indicates the acceptance, and furthermore, to be able to laugh at the harsh reality indicates superiority because as Freud said they are the master of the powerlessness temporarily and thus transforming the harsh realities into a source of pleasure through the humor dimension. The riders and others who read the stickers are made aware of their existence with all the problems, but at the same time feel temporarily relieved when knowing that they can laugh at them. Therefore, a sticker “Warning: Masih Nyicil? Capek Dech!!” (24) or “KR3DIT: Capek Dech” (21) show the harsh reality of inability to own a motorbike by cash, that installment is the only choice but taking a long time to settle, thus it is so tiring, but the friendly informal expression “Capek Dech” signifies the joking attitude toward the reality. After all, the whole expressions are joking. What matters is the light acceptance of the bitter reality by laughing at it so that all the tension is loosened.

BACK POSITIONING

The stickers are mostly placed at the back bumper of the motorbikes. It is funny to find the fact that the riders seem to mockingly target their message to others while they themselves belong to the same group all the way. So it is actually safe to say that the riders target it to themselves and their group.

This back positioning is obvious from the contents of the stickers indicating the position such as “Motor Kredit Dilarang Nyalip” (25) or “Sesama Motor Kreditan Jangan Saling Mendahului” (36). The words “Nyalip” and “Mendahului” (Overdrive) clearly show that the target readers are behind the sticker owners.

The next idea concerns who are behind the riders. Some stickers mock on other riders behind them, for instance, “Kredit? Elo Aja Kali, Gue Kagak!” (20) who jokingly stress that they don't HP or credit the motorbike, or “Lebih Baik Over Gigi daripada Over Kredit” (23, 33) which state that it is better to ride a two or four stroke motorbike with manual transmission (less practical yet cheaper) rather than automatic one (more practical but more expensive). This is a twofold criticism: on installment ownership and automatic transmission choice because we have the counter stickers: “Biar Bekas tapi Cash/Bebas Kredit” (4,5). But, are the other riders the only target? It seems clear that some stickers target other group of people—higher positioned people. The motorbike mobility has made this vehicle a much preferred choice than public transportation as it can go through narrow paths besides the main roads, including the narrow space between cars, trucks, containers, etc. along the jammed streets. Again this mobility has undeniably positioned motorbike as a number one choice (even the last few years, so many city comers go back to their hometown annually, called “Mudik”, riding their motorbike, travelling hundreds or even thousands of kilometers, especially during Lebaran/Idul Fitri time). Then, going back to the other target, it is interesting to see that they silently target the jokes (read criticisms) on car owners, especially luxurious cars. Stickers like “Biar Jelek, Hasil Keringat Sendiri” (6, 8, 9) or “Bukan Hasil Korupsi Gitu Loh!” (14) or the mocking counter “100% Bukan Hasil Sendiri” (40) obviously target their jokes toward higher class people with nice cars because these people are the only target of the struggling KPK (Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi = Corruption Eradication Commission). The expressions “Hasil Keringat Sendiri, Halal, Berkah, etc” are synonymous with non-corrupt way or earning money.

LAUGHING AT SUFFERING – MASTERING POWERLESSNESS

Most stickers depict misfortunes of lower and lower-middle class society where hardships of living in metropolitan city need extra effort even during the way to and from work place, not to mention the powerlessness in the work position itself. A very popular sticker “P6: Pergi Pagi Pulang Petang Penghasilan Pas-pasan” (34) is so true for so many people. This sticker voices a lot of social problems of urban living where the yawning gap between have and the have not is undeniably bitter everyday reality. The motorcycle people have to struggle from dawn (“Pergi Pagi”) to avoid the sometime unavoidable traffic jam, through the crammed streets with private luxurious cars the left and right, plus huge-spacious malls and sky scrapers also on both sides, just to reach the factory or office for work and then do the same thing after dusk (“Pulang Petang”) and reach home late with insufficient earning for a decent life. Bitter words such as “kere (19), susah (17), sengsara (12), tidak punya biaya (11), capek dech (21, 24), nyicil (1, 24), kredit(an)-over kredit (5, 8, 9, 10, 18, 20, 21, 23, 25, 26, 30, 33, 36), pengawasan bank (29), buronan (15), macet (38, 39), susah bensin (37), pacar kandas (28), tua (3)” all show how hard life is treating them.

However, those sour expressions don't mean that life is only cruel to them. These people can see the other side of the reality—the bright side—where with awareness they accept their position, and then take this lightly by showing their identity, and having a braveheart to laugh at it. This is where they become the master of their sorrows—this is how the riders “ride” their life with triumph as Freud has stressed—these brave riders have refused to let themselves be compelled to suffer and use the instances of pain as a space to gain temporary pleasure through the humor so that their greatest fears, powerlessness, or perhaps loneliness are mastered for a moment. This is done through their bridging expression “biar”, “tapi” (even though): “Biar nyicil (1), biar bekas (4), biar jelek (5, 6, 7), biar kredit (8, 9, 10), biar tidak punya biaya (11), biar sengsara (12)”. These expressions ideologically reflect acceptance with confidence of the hardships. Thus no wonder that they are superior because they have no other choices but to laugh at the suffering, and then temporary release is with them to go on cramming through the next days. They are capable of buoyantly taking the “jammed life” (traffic jam, polluted air, emotional riders, everlasting credits, etc.) with self mockery.

Some even dare to ridicule themselves by jokingly say “Biasanya saya bawa mobil mbak” (13) or “(Sorry gue) lagi nyamar jadi orang miskin” (22), signifying urban dreams of becoming rich and owning car in the middle of hardship of owning a motorbike through years of installment. Others show their powerlessness by criticizing the expensive petrol price by playing with the abbreviation “BBM=Bagan Bakar Mahal” (2) instead of the original Bahan Bakar Minyak (fuel) or even ridicule nation leaders such as “SBY-JK=Susah Bensin Ya Jalan Kaki” (37). SBY-JK is the famous campaign slogan for Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Jusuf Kalla (RI President and Vice President). All show their mastery of the unfortunate situations.

HP LIFE: A WARNING

The growing phenomenon of owning a motorbike through credit as most of the stickers have implicitly showed is undoubtedly amazing: 1000 new units are registered per day! The stickers show two responses to this installment ownership: as a helpful facility and as a helpless oppression.

The first group perceive credit as a smart opportunity to own a motorbike, overcoming the powerless condition such as insufficient earning “tidak punya biaya” (11), “sengsara” (12),

“susah” (17), “kere” (19) and others. This is a true blessing because it is so easy, by only spending US\$20 (IDR200,000) someone can bring home a brand new motorbike and the offer is everywhere. This has at the same time caused many of them fail to finish the instalment and the motorbike is finally taken by the credit company (15). The facility is also accompanied by protection through “forced” insurance application integrated in the installment which is also a big business for insurance companies. Therefore, it is understandable if the cash purchase is not encouraged.

The second group see credit as tiring life burden and as a trap. They need the bike for commuting but after the installment is dealt, the next process of paying monthly payment is tiring and with fine if the due date can't be kept. That's why the expression “Capek dech”, though sounds joking, is a reflection of long long process of settling the installment, as if life is gone through it.

What is more interesting is the fact that almost all stickers use “Warning” format (the other words are “Caution” or “Danger”) in letter font, color and design, jokingly signifying that there is a warning (not to take one installment plan) but still many of them can't refuse the temptation.

LAYERS OF MEANING – A SEMIOTIC CONCLUSION

The stickers are denotative in as much as they stand as a physical or verbal expression of conceptual contents of motorbike riders' humorous responses toward misfortunes whether they are the tiring credit ownership, the mockeries on other riders' HP or other street problems such as traffic jam, P6, etc. The connotative aspects would be the additional meanings above the verbal denotative level where the motorbike stickers as a whole become an expression of social voices showing attitudes of superiority against powerlessness using dark humor. Meanwhile, the metalanguage (metaphor, myth, ideology) might occur when the stickers become metaphorical contents which reflect major culturally concepts underpinning a world view of modern capitalist traps i.e. the fact that credits are so commonsense, normal, and natural so that riders are capable of laughing at themselves a long the way

REFERENCES.

- Allen, Graham. (2003). *Roland Barthes: Routledge Critical Thinkers*. New York: Routledge.
- Bloom, Harold & Hobby, Blake. (2010). *Bloom's Literary Themes: dark Humor*. New York: Infobase Publishing.
- Chandler, Daniel (2003). *Semiotics: The Basics*. New York: Routledge.
- Colletta, Lisa (2003). *Dark Humor and Social Satire in the Modern British Novel*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Gournilos, Ted & Greene, Viveca (eds) (2011). *A Decade of Dark Humor: How Comedy, Irony and Satire Shaped Post- 9/11 America*. Mississippi: University Press of Mississippi.
- Moetidjo, Ugeng T. (2008). *Stiker Kota*. Jakarta: Ruang Rupa.
- O'Neill, Shaleph (2008). *Interactive Media: The Semiotics of Embodied Interaction*. London: Springer-Verlag.

<http://arsip.monitorindonesia.com/2011/03/22/setiap-hari-1000-unit-motor-baru-padati-jakarta/>

Diasporic Identities in V. S. Naipaul's The Mimic Men

Chia Ping Weng

0011

National Kaohsiung Normal University, Taiwan

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2012

Official Conference Proceedings 2012

A large, faint watermark of the iafor logo is centered on the page. It consists of two overlapping circular arcs, one in light blue and one in light red, with the lowercase text 'iafor' in a light blue serif font in the center.

iafor

iafor

The International Academic Forum

www.iafor.org

Jean-Pierre Durix observes that certain postcolonial novelists need to write “against ready-made representations and reclaim their personal image of the past before they can be comfortable with contemporary subjects. Because their past has been eclipsed or devalued, they need to reclaim their colonized youth before they can move on to their postcolonial adulthood” (12). Such an analysis illuminates Naipaul’s motive and message in *The Mimic Men* (hereafter abbreviated as *MM*). It is a novel of education about a sensitive middle-class Caribbean East Indian and, inescapably, a fictionalized portrait of an artist as a young man. A paradoxical agenda based on an evolving quest and questioning of the cultural origin is underwritten in *The Mimic Men*. In this paper, I look at Ralph Singh’s identity formation as a process which begins from the negation of the home land to the anxiety towards the complex cultural background of the colonial. The process continues with the stage of mimicry, alienation, ambivalence, and the recognition of the necessity for the colonial to reconstruct anew an identity out of the multi-cultures. He feels abandoned personally, culturally, racially, and has the feeling of abandonment at the end of the empty world and is driven by restlessness and the need for a new idea of self through the act of writing. This paper examines Ralph’s negotiation of shifting identities, his rapid disintegration when facing with the solid city, London, and his painful submission to the diasporic in the end.

Ralph in Isabella: Shipwrecked Island

“To be born on an island like Isabella, an obscure New World transplantation, second-hand and barbarous, was to be born to disorder” (*MM* 141). Ralph, the protagonist as a memoir writer, composes in his premature autobiography his bewildered childhood on the island Isabella¹, his unhappy marriage to a white woman, his sterile political involvement, his gradual dissociation from his home island, and finally his life as an exile in the metropolis. Ralph is at once fascinated with his Aryan² origins and he keeps on romanticizing his ancestral heritage, visualizing a mental landscape of snowy mountains and Asian plains: “I preferred land; I preferred mountains and snow” (128), and his mind keeps on roving back to a distant past:

¹ Isabella is not a real place. Naipaul’s decision in calling his fictional island ‘Isabella’ implies a historical irony. Isabella is originally the name of the first island in the Caribbean Sea founded by Christopher Columbus in honor of Queen Isabella of Spain. It proved to be a calamitous settlement, a total failure. Isabella is too small and lacks the economic resources, skills and knowledge to be free of domination by the West. It lacks the homogeneity of population, culture and traditions that might provide unity of purpose. Because the nationalist movement has been driven by racial hurt, nation and race have become confused, and those who do not share in the dominant vision are treated as enemies. While the whites move to safety elsewhere, the Asians, especially the Indians, are left as victims of the new black rulers.

² The term *arya* is often found in Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain texts. In the Indian spiritual context it can be applied to someone who has mastered the four noble truths and entered upon the spiritual path. The religions of India are sometimes called collectively *arya dharma*.

“what was an unmarked boy doing here, shipwrecked chieftain on an unknown shore, awaiting rescue, awaiting the arrival of ships of curious shape to take him back to his mountains?” (134). He tries to escape from a stifling society through a life of fantasy. For a West Indian who keeps revolving back to his snowy ancestral land though he has lived his life on the tropical island, snow is enshrined in his quest of cultural autonomy. When he first sees snow in England he says that: “Snow. At least; my element” (8). Ironically, there is no snow either in Isabella or in India; snow exists in a country like England. The desire for life elsewhere signals two things at once: abjuration of one’s own homeland and embrace of the reality other than one’s. This disjunction between past and present, between here and there, makes home seem far-removed in time and space, available for return only through an act of the imagination. Ralph creates fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, India of the mind. In this formulation, home becomes primarily a mental construct built from the incomplete odds and ends of memory that survive from the past. As Iain Chambers explicates:

To live “elsewhere” means to continually find yourself involved in a conversation in which different identities are recognized, exchanged and mixed, but do not vanish. Here differences function not necessarily as barriers but rather as signals of complexity. To be a stranger in a strange land, to be lost, is perhaps a condition typical of contemporary life. (18)

The colonial’s own homeland cannot provide him with a sense of belonging and of place. Ralph does not regard his island as important because of its smallness, so he not only reconstructs an imaginary homeland but also expects to go to the “mother country,” England, where he hopes to find his place in the world. To long for the reality which lies elsewhere is to assume the fragmented and contradictory identities engaged with a multiple-identifying existence. Given his simultaneous fascination and disavowal, it is unavoidably that Ralph should endlessly negotiate between two modes of identification—the Western and the Hindu.

Receiving Western education in the British Isabella Imperial School, Ralph is apparently unable to resolve the tensions of the bi-cultural experience. He has an enigmatic memory of his school days: “My first memory of school is of taking an apple to the teacher. This puzzles me. We had no apples on Isabella. It must have been an orange; yet my memory insists on the apple. The editing is clearly at fault, but the edited version is all I have” (*MM* 109-10). It is colonial schizophrenia that colonial children grow to distrust everything about themselves. If the first exile is from the mother’s breast and progressively from the father and family, the second

exile is brought about through education. At school the colonial children are prepared to be “Mimic Men” of the New World. They have been educated to believe that the center of the world is somewhere else and they have been taught to be inferior to those of the colonizer; they therefore attempt to identify with the authority of the whites. The young Ralph subjectively adopts a white man’s attitude (“apple” here represents the fruit of white civilization; taking an apple to the teacher is what schoolboys in England do). He is brainwashed ideologically with respect to the colonizer’s culture and history. The colonized inherits the memories created and implanted by the white and these memories determine how they both perceive and behave. These patterns of memories which reside as energy within the collective unconscious are inborn within them and they are part of the psychological life of the colonized. In Ralph’s case, he cannot distinguish between “oranges” and “apples” and though he thinks the “orange” version is more correct he cannot persuade himself to believe so.

Another example of the ambivalence of being the mimic men is that the protagonist changes his original name “Ranjit Kripalsingh” into “Ralph Singh:”

RALPH. Ranjit is my secret name. This secret name is my real name but is ought not to be used in public.

SCHOOL TEACHER. But this leaves you anonymous.

RALPH. Exactly. That’s where the calling name of Ralph is useful. The calling name is unimportant and can be taken in vain by anyone.

(113)

A name is given by the parents to inherit the blood and history of the family. The Indian name of “Ranjit Kripalsingh,” an Indian identity, means a connection between father and son. Ralph endows himself with a Western name which is unimportant but useful; his Indian identity is denied and he would rather be anonymous. As a matter of fact, the Western name is hollow because he cannot possess a Western identity simply by possessing a Western name. Identifying with the Western name and dismantling his Indian name symbolize the loss of Ralph’s original culture. The result of Anglicization is mimicry, which produces and is produced by the layering of fake existence and sensibility in a manner that turns Ralph to be a performer of the void.

In *The Location of Culture* Homi Bhabha argues that: “Mimicry emerges as one of the most elusive and effective strategies of colonial power and knowledge” (85). Mimicry is an ironic compromise; the discourse of colonialism attempts to domesticate colonized subjects and abolish their radical otherness, bringing them inside Western

understanding through the project of constructing knowledge about them; on the other hand, the colonizers must never admit that other peoples are not really very different from themselves: “Colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite” (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 86). Therefore, mimicry is the sign of a double articulation; the colonized subject is always in motion, sliding ambivalently between the polarities of similarity and difference. The notion of mimicry has been seen as a condition of the colonized’s subservience and crisis, the measure of their powerlessness. The mimic men are deprived of real existence and authentic subjectivity. In a turning point Ralph discloses the circumstances of mimic men in colony: “We, here on our island, handling books printed in this world, and using its goods, had been abandoned and forgotten. We pretended to be real, to be learning, to be preparing ourselves for life, we mimic men of the New World, one unknown corner of it, with all its reminders of the corruption that came so quickly to the new” (*MM* 175). The reason that Ralph and his friends “pretended to be real, to be learning” is that they do not have an authentic culture, a greater past, a past other than slavery, indentured servitude, colonial brutality, and colonial neglect. It is a painful remembering, a putting together of the dismembered past to make sense of the trauma of the present. This leads to a meditation on the experience of dispossession and dislocation—psychic and social—which speaks to the condition of the marginalized, the alienated, those who have to live under the surveillance of a sign of fantasy that denies their difference.

Ralph is aware of the unhappiness and anger in the family: his maternal grandparents, owners of Bela Bela Bottling Works, the local bottlers of Coca-Cola, are wealthy, while his father, a poor schoolteacher, resents and despises them. His relationship with his father influences Ralph deeply. Ralph’s father’s sudden transformation into a Guru, the leader of a spiritual/political movement perplexes Ralph. He hesitates to accept the role of being the son of the already famous Gurudeva³ (the name his father takes for being a Guru), the millenarian prophet, who preaches the villagers to “[abandon] the foreign city and withdraw to the forests to rediscover glory and a way of looking at the world” (151). Indian males who face the wounds to his masculinity inflicted by colonial subordination are so burdened with the legacy of colonialism that they cannot rise above feelings of powerlessness and apathy. Ralph’s father’s

³ The name Gurudeva evokes the dubious hero of Seepersad Naipaul’s *The Adventures of Gurudeva* (1976). Seepersad, Naipaul’s father, writes about a character who starts out as a hoodlum and ends as a lonely aspiring Brahmin. This creates an ambiguous connection between Ralph’s father and both Seepersad and his creation. Like Seepersad, Ralph’s father endures emotional distress before his radical departure from his customary life.

insecurity and distress is passed on to Ralph who is shamed by his father's incompetence and abandonment of the family for a futile political gesture. The son then attaches himself to a wealthy branch of the family which can provide him with a solid, seemingly secure house.

However, the link between father and son is unbreakable. Ralph remembers on a rainy afternoon on the way home from school his father rides him on the bicycle and both are soaked but enjoy the time being together without saying a word: "that was to be our last contact, that afterwards we were both to follow our separate destinies and that mine, for all my unwillingness, was to be linked to his" (149). As the child emerges from the shadow of his parents, Ralph finds himself once more among the same laws, the same principles, and the same fates. Ralph never entirely rejects his father; in fact, he comes to realize that his own destiny "was to be linked to his" (149). As a boy, reading in *The Missionary Martyr of Isabella*, Ralph conceives an ideal image of his father, a young missionary with oratorical skills, who has come from a glorious place and has been shipwrecked on the island: "I used to get the feeling that my father was a man who had been cut off from his real country. . . over the years the hope of rescue had altogether faded" (107). On one hand, Ralph imagines that both his father and he are shipwrecked and feel lost on the island; on the other hand, the alienation manifests itself in a shame and humiliation that is far more than just a child's embarrassment about parents at a certain age, for it seems to take on the dimension of a profound disability.

Ralph's feelings toward the island are built on the lie, or metaphoricity, of the phenomenon rather than its sociological bearings: "We were a colony, a benevolently administered dependency. . . our politics were a joke. . . . We offered drama. . . . We didn't know whether we had created the movement or whether the movement was creating us. . . . We began in bluff. We continued in bluff" (227). When faced by a situation in which he can actually become an authentic leader of his people Ralph withdraws into passivity, generalities, distancing the actual world. Seeking the ideal, he rejects the actual and is incapacitated from actions that might lead to any self-surrender and involvement: "I struggled to keep drama alive, for its replacement was despair. . . I would have nothing to return to. . . I longed to leave" (264). His performances in his political career are play-acting: "I knew my role. . . a semi-politician, a semi-ideologue, a joker, a toad becomes the prince" (232). He is afraid of responsibility and when facing difficulties he chooses to escape. The career

ends with the disappointment of himself who has been denied the chance of making a fresh start:

I was too far sunk in the taint of fantasy. I wished to make a fresh, clean start. And it was now that I resolved to abandon the shipwreck island and all on it, and seek my chieftain-ship in that real world from which, like my father, I had been cut off. . . . I was consciously holding myself back for the reality which lay elsewhere. (141)

He abandons his island as his father abandons his family. It is only after his being deported from the island and leading a life as an exile in suburban hotel in London that Ralph turns to another journey of self-making. A migratory subject he has no home to return to; home is nowhere for him and it becomes merely location.

Ralph in London: Imaginary Ordered Island

His interpretation of his student days in London reveals how Ralph survives and suffers the bitter experience of identity crisis: “In London I had no guide. There was no one to link my present with my past, no one to note my consistencies or inconsistencies. It was up to me to choose my character, and I chose the character that was easiest and most attractive. I was the dandy, the extravagant colonial, indifferent to scholarship” (24). Ralph possesses no authentic identity, so he poses as a “dandy” and needs other men’s guidance and becomes what he sees of himself in the eyes of others in England; he becomes a mimic man, the person people expect him to be. The way of enforced movement, adventures and encounters triggers a re-fabrication of the self and Ralph comes to be a nomad, a new being, that is situated between an old world that can only be memorially constructed and a new one that begins to heterogenize him and his past. Bhabha defines “beyond” as such:

The ‘beyond’ is neither a new horizon, nor a leaving behind of the past. . . . Beginnings and endings may be the sustaining myths of the middle years; but in the fin de siècle, we find ourselves in the moment of transit where space and time cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion. (*The Location of Culture* 1)

“Beyond” is a sense of disorientation, a disturbance of direction, and an exploratory, restless movement. It is also like “in-between” spaces that initiate new signs of identity and emerges the overlap and displacement of domains of difference. This in-betweenness estranges any immediate access to an originary identity or a received tradition and it has a lot to do with a kind of fluidity, a movement back and forth, not making a claim to any specific or essential way of being. Ralph is being remade; his

ancestral memories are replaced by the bright streets and the crowded signs of alien landscape.

However, the old world along with memories does not die; it is transformed and re-inscribed into the landscape of the metropolis through a migrant's perspectives. Coming to London seeking order his attempt at locating cultural identity through a re-negotiating of the problematic connection both with the island and with London ends in a rejection of the confinement of cultural boundaries:

In the great city, so three-dimensional, so rooted in its soil, drawing color from such depths, only the city was real. Those of us who came to it lost some of our solidity; we were trapped into fixed, flat postures. . . the panic of ceasing to feel myself as a whole person. . . . I had long for largeness. How, in the city, could largeness come to me? (*MM* 32-3)

Ralph is "swallowed up" by London; he becomes susceptible to the inferiority complex due to his colonial background. He is disillusioned when he fails to find the orderly city of his dreams in the real, chaotic, London. The educated colonized discovers that he is rejected by a civilization which he has none the less assimilated; therefore, the arrival in London, white men's city, shatters not only Ralph's horizons but also his psychological mechanism.

Another incident is also provided when Mr. Shylock, his first English landlord, serves as a model for the young student to emulate: "[Mr. Shylock] had the habit of stroking the lobe of his ear and inclining his head to listen. I thought the gesture was attractive; I copied it" (7). Ralph takes on dependent behavior; he mimics the white man Mr. Shylock. When he has succeeded in forming the relation of dependence with his superiors, his inferiority no longer troubles him; when his feeling of insecurity is not assuaged in this way, he suffers a crisis. His psychic structure is in danger of disintegration. If he is overwhelmed to such a degree by the wish to be white, it is because he lives in a society that makes his inferiority complex possible, in a society that derives its stability from the perpetuation of this complex, in a society that proclaims the superiority of one race. Because of the lack of self-esteem and the lack of affective security there is an overwhelming feeling of impotence in relation to Ralph's life in London. Affective self-rejection invariably brings the abandonment-neurotic to an extremely painful and obsessive feeling of exclusion, of having no place anywhere.

Ralph's exile is apocalyptic in the way that testifies to the exposure of a transient space—the tracing and retracing of deterrance of cultural identity in the postcolonial existence. He continually shapes and reshapes his own version of London and his character in the postcolonial metropolitan space. Such a sense of helplessness is diluted by a fantasy linked to the past and rooted in the ethnic heritage: “I have visions of Central Asian horsemen, among whom I am one, riding below a sky threatening snow to the very end of an empty world” (98). The dreams console him and provide a kind of relief from the trauma caused by the voyage that brought his family from India to the Caribbean island of Isabella and then expatriated him to an anonymous London suburb hotel as an exile. The heroic horsemen represent those who are capable of tramping through emptiness; they are nomads, they are drifting toward the end of the world under a threatening sky. Now, in the unnamed suburbs of the former Empire, Ralph narrates his wandering: “I felt I had not past. . . in a London to which I was drawing no nearer, to attempt to do either was to be truly lost, to see myself at the end of the world” (299). Being a man without a country, Ralph is decontextualized. As he is left totally cast away in London at the end of his narrative, he keeps traveling from unnamed station with the train stopping for him or leaving without him to another anonymous station. Towards the end, his homelessness becomes emblemized. He is truly on the periphery; he is a stranger, a foreigner, an outsider. His quest of cultural identity that is based on a reclamation of cultural heritage has shifted for the other vector: “Not an essence but a positioning” (Hall, “Cultural Identity and Diaspora” 237). The relinquishing of an origin, a rupture with either Center or Periphery, and an absence of the desire to return are insinuated. As an Indian exile neither totally in harmony with the Caribbean environment nor with the postcolonial London, Ralph has been from the outset isolated from the root of culture and unsupported by a true tradition.

Ralph's confessions of sexual failures are similar to his inability to be part of or to lose himself in someone or some group beyond him. When he does become involved it is superficial, brought about by the will of others, and he will eventually withdraw into himself or be pushed aside by those with more energy and purpose: “We become what we see of ourselves in the eyes of others” (*MM* 25). This is Ralph's desire to be part of something larger and his concern with how he appears to others. He is not certain whether his character has been created by others or whether it is one and indivisible. “To attach myself to [Sandra] was to acquire that protection which she offered, to share some of her quality of being marked, a quality which once was mine

but which I had lost” (56). Ralph’s gradual deracination into cosmopolitanism is played out in the sexual territory of his encounters with neighbors, prostitutes, and Sandra, his English wife. He shows the fetishistic and anxious nature of his sexual liaisons. This sexual myth—the quest for white flesh—is perpetuated by Fanonian alienated psyches:

Out of the blackest part of my soul, across the zebra striping of my mind, surges this desire to be suddenly *white*. I wish to be acknowledged not as *black* but as *white*. . . but a white woman can do this for me? By loving me she proves that I am worthy of white love. I am loved like a white man. I am a white man. Her love takes me onto the noble road that leads to total realization. . . . I marry white culture, white beauty, white whiteness. When my restless hands caress those white breasts, they grasp white civilization and dignity and make them mine. (Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks* 63)

Ralph wants to prove to the others that he is a man, their equal; he bleaches himself by marrying an English woman in London. Thus, he can become more completely a part of English society. The black man hopes to get a white woman’s love and respect in order to gain his own place and to convince himself that he is a man. Still, Ralph cannot be an authentic English person through his bleaching and mimicry; those only serve to bring him greater anxiety and restlessness.

Ralph, an uprooted colonial, a permanent homeless exile, wedded to his writing and his desk, seemingly writing about the upheavals and turmoil of the postcolonial world, but in actuality giving order of his own life through writing. He opens a new space for himself through writing which opens a dialogue between the Third and First Worlds. Ultimately it is in the assertion of the emancipation of writing as well as the independence of a writer that Ralph anchors an emancipated and emerging identity rooted in words: “There was my sense of intrusion which deepened as I felt my power to be more and more a matter of words. So defiantly, in my mind, I asserted my character as intruder, the picturesque Asiatic born for other landscapes” (*MM* 248). Through writing, Ralph links himself in a more self-reflexive way to an imaginary ancestral land, inscribing the motherland into the new geographical space, London. Naipaul often speaks of writing as a vocation and as the best means of investigating and making sense of life:

And what is astonishing to me is that, with the vocation, [my father] so accurately transmitted to me—without saying anything about it—his hysteria from the time when I didn’t know him: his fear of extinction. That

was his subsidiary gift to me. That fear became mine as well. It was linked with the idea of the vocation: the fear could be combated only by the exercise of the vocation. (*Literary Occasions* 110-1)

Ralph is a parody of the writer, someone who thinks writing is easy, but he is also a Naipaul-like figure who has made writing his life and who in writing about the world really is writing about himself and his discontents. He withdraws into his vocation as a writer where the violence and political disorder become fiction and tries to find the only order given to the chaos of individual lives by writing about them and by creating narratives. It is never clear what Ralph intends by writing his book, as his purpose keeps changing until the act of writing itself becomes his existence, a mimicry of a life. Imprisoned in himself and locked into his art reserve, the negative-aggressive feeds his feeling of irreparable loss with everything. Bhabha argues that: "What emerges between mimesis and mimicry is a *writing*, a mode of representation, that marginalizes the monumentality of history, quite simply mocks its power to be a model, that power which supposedly makes it imitable" (*The Location of Culture* 88). Naipaul's fixation on writing implies that the frame of the memoir is Naipaul's way of preventing rather than allowing his protagonist to negotiate his way out of the role into which he has written himself; it apparently originates in self-deception, not self-invention. Ralph, having evaded self-knowledge for much of his life in compromise and betrayal, faces his deceptions in writing his memoir. He approaches the truth regarding his personal and professional life warily, sometimes contradicting himself, changing his position, and in the end he has earned the perception he shares with his creator that: "Writing, for all its initial distortion, clarifies, and even becomes a process of life" (*MM* 301). Writing is only a way of escape; ironically it "becomes a process of life," a life exists only in words.

Ultimate Exile

When people move, identities, perspectives, and definitions change. *The Mimic Men* extends beyond a simple identification of man and landscape to encompass a diasporic vision of eternal displacement. The embrace of the shifting identification might end up deracinating an individual or national identity. R. Radhakrishnan suggests that: "The diasporan hunger for knowledge about and intimacy with the home country should not turn into a transhistorical and mystic quest for origins. . . . Feeling deracinated in the diaspora can be painful, but the politics of origins cannot be the remedy" (128). It is Ralph's drifting in the diasporic space that enlightens him with the necessary perspicacity in his pursuit of cultural identity, a search that leads not only to exploring the core of his disillusionment but also to a re-evaluation of

rootlessness. The shifting between Isabella and London, provides a transitional third space, making evident the inevitability of cultural transplantation.

John Thieme discusses the inevitability of needing to escape for the ex-colonial:

Escape has become a way of life and displacement a perennial condition. For the dispossessed colonial, political independence solves no problems. A kind of cyclic determinism makes it impossible for them to find a home. Neither colony nor mother country provides a matrix. Dependency and displacement are his ultimates, escape his only answer. (16)

Trauma of mimicry annihilates the person as subject or agent. The dispossessed colonials have no real identity; they are merely bodies filling outposts of grand imperial designs. With the disappearance of that imperial design there can be no sense of homeland redeemed; rather, there is a sense of drifting. There is not even a sense of loss; worse, it is a sense of never-having-had. These people are caught between a present reality for which they have no models and a set of models which do not fit their reality. In Naipaul's first travel book, *The Middle Passage*, he gives insight into the West Indian condition:

Everyone was an individual, fighting for his place in the community. We were of various races, religious, sists, cliques, and we had somehow found ourselves on the same small island. . . . There was no profound anti-imperialist feeling; indeed it was our Britishness, about belonging to the British Empire, which gave us an identity. (43)

The colonized try to mimic their colonizer but fail. Therefore, "escape" seems to be the best means of finding an order in their life. In an interview with Ian Hamilton, Naipaul says, "London is my metropolitan centre, it is my commercial centre, and yet I know that it is a kind of limbo and that I am a refugee in the sense that I am always peripheral" (16). Failing to find a geographical home and failing to confirm his cultural identity, the exile seeks to create a sense of his own identity through the vision of home constructed in fiction. Ralph originally thinks that he will feel no more isolation once he leaves Isabella: "I thought that this absurd disorder, of placelessness, was part of youth and my general unease and that it would go away as soon as I left Isabella" (*MM* 184). Unexpectedly, he is still plagued by the same feeling of placelessness in London. His "shipwreck" is still greater, still more disastrous in the 'promised land' of London; no place is home. Everywhere he is shipwrecked, washed up. Ralph's position between home and homelessness reflects that his identity is unfixed, unstable and changing. He has gained an identity as a permanently exiled writer without a fixed home; his identity is open, not limited. But his "open" and fluid identity brings not ecstatic freedom but ultimate trauma of being an ultimate exile.

Works Cited

- Barnouw, Dagmar. *Naipaul's Strangers*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2003.
- Bhabha, Homi. *The Location of Culture*. London; New York: Routledge, 1994.
- Chambers, Iain. *Border Dialogues: Journeys in Postmodernity*. London; New York: Routledge, 1990.
- Durix, Jean-Pierre. *Mimesis, Genres and Post-Colonial Discourse: Deconstructing Magic Realism*. New York: St. Martin's, 1998.
- Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin White Masks*. London: Pluto, 1967.
- Feder, Lillian. *Naipaul's Truth: The Making of a Writer*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001.
- Greenberg, Robert M. "Anger and the Alchemy of Literary Method in V. S. Naipaul's Political Fiction: The Case of The Mimic Men." *Twentieth Century Literature* 46 (2000): 214-38.
- Hall, Stuart. "Cultural Identity and Diaspora." *Theorizing Diaspora: A Reader*. Ed. Jana Evans Braziel and Anita Mannur. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003. 233-46.
- Hamilton, Ian. "Without a Place." *Conversations with V. S. Naipaul*. Ed. Feroza Jussawalla. Jackson: UP of Mississippi, 1997. 14-21.
- Hayward, Helen. *The Enigma of V. S. Naipaul: Sources and Contexts*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.
- King, Bruce. *V. S. Naipaul*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.
- Naipaul, V. S. *The Middle Passage*. New York: Vintage, 1962.
- . *The Mimic Men*. New York: Vintage, 1967.
- . *Literary Occasions*. New York: Vintage, 2003.
- Thieme, John. "V. S. Naipaul's Third World: A Not So Free State." *Journal of Commonwealth Literature* 10 (1975):10-22.
- Radhakrishnan, R. "Ethnicity in an Age of Diaspora." *Theorizing Diaspora: A Reader*. Ed. Jana Evans Braziel and Anita Mannur. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003. 132-55.
- Rowe-Evans, Adrian. "V. S. Naipaul: A Transition Interview." *Conversations with V. S. Naipaul*. Ed. Feroza Jussawalla. Jackson: UP of Mississippi, 1997. 24-36.

Magical Transformation in the Film of Hayao Miyazaki

Jane A. Lightburn

0017

Aichi Gakuin University, Japan

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2012

Official Conference Proceedings 2012

A large, faint watermark of the iafor logo is centered on the page. It consists of two overlapping circular arcs, one light blue and one light red, forming a partial circle. The text 'iafor' is written in a light blue, lowercase, sans-serif font across the center of these arcs.

iafor

iafor

The International Academic Forum

www.iafor.org

I

Magic and transformation are two concurring motifs that feature significantly in the film stories of Japanese animator and director Hayao Miyazaki. With magic as a catalyst, transformation occurs throughout several of his major film stories. External transformation is evident on the gross visual level while the transformation of self is recognized and understood from change in the spiritual realm of the hero/ine's heart. Magic as a motif in myth, literary fairy tale, or folktale is known to accompany transformation in the narrative, whether it be due to the nature of the place, a magical foe, helper or object, or a self-willed or natural ability of a character in the story. This dual aspect also appears in contemporary fairy tale animation film such as those of Hayao Miyazaki.

The films of Miyazaki, while being insufficiently labeled as contemporary Japanese visual culture, or even modern anime, are perhaps more appropriately placed in a genre that is referred to as fairytale cinema. Jack Zipes, in his excellent study on this genre, "The Enchanted Screen: The Unknown History of Fairy-Tale Films," says that most of these films have "deep roots in oral and literary tales and re-create them with great imaginative and artistic power. (Zipes, xi, 2011) He acknowledges the integral element of magic in these films and explains that magic is paradoxically used not to deceive us but to enlighten and this aspect betrays our repeated attraction for the uncanny in such tales, and so the films that are inspired from them.

Transformation is plentifully featured in the Thompson motif index in section D. Magic. From this group are motifs that are found in Miyazaki's film stories. These include bewitchment (D2070), shape-shifting (D40), magic flight (D670), loss of magic power (D1740), and magic aging (D1890), which occur together with various transformational events in the narrative. Among these are transformation of man to animal (D130), man to bird (D150), man to fish (D350), and transformation through power of word (D520). In Thompson's classic work on the folktale, he explains "The ability to transform and disenchant is only one of the magic powers familiar in popular tradition and folktales. The world of magic is so well established a background of such tales that frequently magic powers of all kinds are assumed without much comment, and nearly always they are only subsidiary motifs quite incidental to the main action of the tale." (Thompson, 260, 1946).

As a scholar who took an unlimited approach to analyzing the folktale, Thompson believed that transformation is also a commonplace feature in the folk tales of many cultures. "Stories of transformation almost always imply eventual disenchantment if not a periodic shift from one state to another. Disenchantment usually involves some kind of

breaking of a magic spell. (Thompson,259,1946). This concept is seen in three examples of Miyazaki's characters—Ponyo, who exchanges her immortal life for a human one, Sophie, who finally breaks the heavy spell on herself and the one on Howl's heart, and Chihiro, who perseveres and escapes from the sorceress Yubaba's enchanted confinement, and returns to the mortal world.

Secondly, and perhaps even more intrinsically valuable than the visually stimulating magical transformations is the subtle transformation created by the change from merged into the emerged state of the hero or heroine's virtues, their presence being acknowledged through action or dialogue in the film story narrative, portraying a transformation of self for the heroine.

As found in the anime film stories of Miyazaki, the virtues, when emerged from within the hero or heroine serve as spiritual compasses that provide guidance to them in their quests. They also provide the heroine with power needed to cope with an overwhelming situation or obstacle. Virtues are an expression of the very inner core of the human being and certainly the heroines in Miyazaki's stories. In considering the magical transformational aspects of Miyazaki's stories, I suggest that it is possible to take a virtues-based interpretation because of this repeated presence of the virtues as a key aspect to the heroine's positive self-transformation in the narratives.

II

Three examples of Miyazaki's films illustrate these ideas regarding magic, transformation and virtues. *Ponyo on the Cliff by the Sea* (2008), based on the Hans Christian Andersen tale *The Little Mermaid*, is a tale of transformation. Ponyo is the little goldfish with the face of a human who wants to become a human girl. One motif in this story is that of Ponyo's magical transformation as a shape-shifter, from animal to human form.(D370)

The initial transformation occurs when she encounters the human boy Sosuke. He rescues her from a jar by the water's edge. When he breaks the jar he cuts his hand. Ponyo tastes his blood after which she is able to communicate. We see the power of Sosuke's human blood, which has magically transformed her from a mute fish to one who can speak as a human.

From this point throughout the story we see Ponyo transform between three different states: original fish-like, composite chicken-leg like human, and the final human form. When in the form of a human girl she is easily able to employ magic to accomplish things needed at the moment—turning on the generator, making Sosuke's tiny toy boat full size so they can search for his mother, making a candle light, and so on. These exemplify Ponyo's power to

transform mundane objects using magic(D480), and it is visually executed through her facial expression of concentrated willpower.

The last frame in the film features the use of magic for the final transformation in which Ponyo changes herself into a real human girl through the magic kiss(D500). The irony of this being that Ponyo's kissing Sosuke to become human ends her magical power forever in which she exchanges the magical life for a mortal, human one. Ponyo's becoming human is almost like a giving away of her enchanted life, a dis-enchantment by choice, It is a radical transformation of self, yet leading to a happy ending.

Woven within the fabric of the colorful and captivating magical visual transformations are many subtle examples of the children's childlike portrayal of pure love, determination and responsibility as they respond to various challenges in the story. The portrayal of virtues are simple, direct and childlike, and are worked into their words and actions. For example, Sosuke expresses his sense of responsibility for Ponyo's safety when she is still in a vulnerable fish form. "Don't worry. I'll take good care of you," he tells her in the car, as his mother Lisa drives him to school. (Miyazaki,229,2008) In another scene we see the key declaration of love between the children when they are down by the water's edge alone. In this moment Ponyo, still in fish form, tells him, "Ponyo loves Sosuke." Sosuke responds "I love you too."(Miyazaki,234,2008)

Ponyo's father, wizard Fujimoto is against Ponyo becoming human. At one point Ponyo is retrieved by her father from Sosuke and put back in her underwater bubble, but Ponyo bravely defies him. Her power of determination and love for Sosuke clearly evident as she magically uses her own will-power to shape-shift into a chicken-like human form and tells Fujimoto, "Ponyo! Ponyo loves Sosuke! I'll be human too!"(Miyazaki, 238,2008) Her declaration is simple and powerful with no expansion of rhetorical defense. Her surprised wizard father swiftly returns her back into fish form only to have her escape again soon after.

In the latter part of the story, the children must make certain promises to Ponyo's mother, a sea goddess. Gran Mamere asks Sosuke if he can love and accept Ponyo for who she is and Sosuke replies that he "loves all 3 of the Ponyos". From her side, Ponyo must agree to "give up her magic power forever" to become a human like Sosuke, which she does. Their bond of pure and innocent love is stronger than the cost of their sacrifice. Two important points here are that Ponyo possessed natural magical powers from her origins as the daughter of the ocean goddess Mamere and the wizard Fujimoto which we see used repeatedly throughout the story in her ability to transform herself and other things.

Secondly, Ponyo as well as Sosuke used important virtues throughout their adventure to achieve success of being together—love, determination, responsibility and simplicity.

The essence of their story is explained by Miyazaki in his simple introduction: “A little boy and a little girl, love and responsibility, the ocean and life—these things, and that which is most elemental to them, are depicted in the most basic way in Ponyo. This is my response to the afflictions and uncertainty of our times” (Miyazaki, 2008).

The second film, *Howl's Moving Castle* (2004), is based on the fantasy novel of the same title by Diane Wynne Jones. Miyazaki re-versioned and reconstructed the world of high fantasy in which magic and those who are magical are an accepted part of life in their world. Many things, places, and people transform in this story. The story revolves around Sophie and Howl, who are both suffering from magic spells either self-imposed or inflicted by an antagonistic magical agency. Their drama is set against the background of an ensuing war between neighboring countries.

Most of the transformations are caused by one form of magic or another. Some of the characters which illustrate this are Sophie Hatter, the heroine, the Wizard Howl, Witch of the Waste, and the boy-apprentice Markl. Sophie Hatter is the 19-year-old hat maker in Market Chipping. She is first transformed into a 90-year-old woman by a powerful spell from the Witch of the Waste who is jealous of Howl's attention to Sophie and not herself. This is an example of transformation by enchantment or bewitchment.

Although she is seen drastically changed from her youthful form into the elderly one in the early scenes of the film, Sophie later continues to shift back and forth from youthful to old woman form throughout the narrative. When she feels confident, loved or empowered she seems to shift back to a youthful version of herself but with gray hair. When she loses her courage or confidence in solving a situation or feels inferior about herself she changes back into the old woman form. This happens in various situations throughout the narrative which represent emotional hurdles inside herself that must be overcome on her path towards finding her place in life as well as resolving Howl's confining contract-spell with the fire demon Calcifer as well.

One scene that illustrates Sophie's corporeal shifting or transforming is the dialogue that occurs at the royal palace meeting of Madame Suliman (the King's royal sorceress and Howl's mentor) and Sophie. Sophie learns how cruel and controlling Suliman really is, so she stands up for Howl and declares: “Howl would never be so heartless...he may be selfish and cowardly and sometimes hard to understand. But his intentions are good. He just wants to be

free.” (Miyazaki, 233, 2004).

As she speaks the words with faith and integrity she visually shifts to a younger, confident self, even the voice changes. The powerful and fickle Madame Suliman, amused smugly replies, ‘I understand you are in love with Howl!’ at which Sophie quickly reverts to the 90 year old form once again. The transformation of an elder Sophie here, while originally manifested through magical agency, is yet subject to the subtle power of her love and faith in Howl. It is when she loses this faith and courage the older version quickly overtakes her, indicating an interior struggle within the self.

We see here how motif of bewitchment and magical shifting to old age has been creatively applied for the external, visual portrayal of transformation, while at the same time allowing that to connect to the more implied subtly realized transformation reflecting the heroine’s shadow play of wavering self- worth. In so doing Miyazaki created a visually multi-layered narrative that is stimulating and provocative in a both a subtle and visual sense.

Howl, as the wizard- hero, transforms into various forms. His ability to change is not from bewitchment but rather of being the main character of magical agency (D711), as well as the magic helper personae in the story. Examples of magical transforming are when Howl becomes a giant anthropomorphic black bird of prey needed on his war duty forays, and is an example of shape shifting motif of human into animal(D 150). He is also shape-shifts into other human disguises (the king) as he did when he had to face powerful Madam Suliman at the royal palace. (D40) Moreover, Howl also relies on his connection with the fire demon Calcifer. The fire demon is one agency of magic who amplifies Howl’s powers, enabling him to achieve great transformational feats that are key to the narrative. For example, he used Calcifer’s power along with this own spell to move the castle to Market Chipping in order to escape from the Witch of the Waste at the needed time. Not only was the castle moved, but the interior transformed and improved as well.

On the subtle level, Howl also undergoes an inner transformation of self in course of the story. He changes from being solitary, mysterious and selfish to mature, responsible and loving because of the influence of Sophie who understood the true heart of Howl, not just the flamboyant wizard persona. In one scene the peak of his habitual affliction of attachment to vanity and personal insecurity is vividly portrayed when he fell into a state of self pity oozing green slime by calling on demons of darkness. His hair had gone to the wrong color and he blamed Sophie’s bathroom cleaning up. “What’s the purpose of living if one cannot be beautiful!!” he wails to her in a raging fit of selfish pity. (Miyazaki,228,2004).

However, later in the story, when the town is on the verge of war, Howl has a change of heart and decides to use his magical powers to protect Sophie when bombs descend upon the town of Market Chipping. One scene depicts the moment when Howl must leave Sophie at the Market Chipping-castle location to fight in the ongoing battle. He openly confesses to her as he leaves, "I've had enough of running away. Now I've got something I want to protect. It's you." (Miyazaki,245,2004). This turning point illustrates his emotional transformation from a rather juvenile selfish person and heralds the emergence of mature responsibility and determination through his decision and words to Sophie. Howl leaves, transforming into the giant bird of prey to enter the fray of the air battle above.

Two other characters who display transformation through magical means are the Witch of the Waste and Markl. The former is the powerful and mature witch who put the aging spell on Sophie. However, she herself becomes subject to the effects of disenchantment by Madame Suliman, who strips her of her magical powers at the palace in Kingsbury through a mechanism of light and shadow which produce spirits that devour all of her energy and return her to her true very advanced age.

While she was the gaudy powerful witch, she was sarcastic and abusive to all, but once the visually dramatic transformation to an old woman occurred, she became a seemingly-senile personality which still has intense attachments to power and control over others.

Markl is the orphan boy apprentice of Howl. He helps Howl in the castle and is studying to be a wizard. He uses a magical object to achieve his visual transformation. When a customer comes to the door or he goes outside he often dons a cloak which changes him into a long bearded looking hooded wizard form. (D1052)

As the above examples show, in this film both the heroine and hero display gross visual transformations that occur through magical means, and secondly, much deeper and subtle ones of a spiritual transformation, springing from the play of virtues that both characters possessed which inspired them to persevere in dangerous circumstances and emerge with their integrity intact. In the end disenchantment is achieved for both Sophie and Howl. They are free to start a new life together.

While the bedazzling and entertaining tale of magic effortlessly captures the eye's attention, the deeper narrative in this film also demonstrates how the experience of subtle transformation actually remakes the separate lives of the heroine and hero into a shared life with a future. Their subtle transformations of self are reflected and understood through their words and actions making a new life possible and hinting at a deeper delightfully woven thread of virtue which lyrically flows throughout the entire story.

The third film is *Spirited Away* (2001). The heroine is Chihiro Ogino a 10 year old girl who gets stuck accidentally in a world of spirits and otherworldly creatures, and sorceresses. She must rescue herself and her parents who are trapped there in the form of pigs.

The first example of visual transformation we see is when Mr and Mrs Ogino are changed from human into pig form as they uncontrollably eat the food meant for spirits and bathhouse guests from the pub in the abandoned theme park, a startling and disturbing image of magical transformation of human into animal. They are taken away and Chihiro flees in fright and disgust mistakenly arriving on the bathhouse grounds itself. Chihiro is unwittingly trapped, or “enchanted” inside the magical bathhouse world of Yubaba and the spirits.

In this world she is befriended by Haku, the sorcerer apprentice of Yubaba. He is a magical helper who assists Chihiro in saving herself and her parents from a dismal fate in the spirit realm. His role as magical helper throughout the story acts as a trigger for Chihiro’s own transformation from a weak victim to one of confident individual who learns how to manage in every situation.

For example when Chihiro first enters the bathhouse, Haku gives her a magical berry in order to safely keep part of her in the human world. “You have to eat some food from this world or else you’ll disappear,” he tells her. (Miyazaki, 200,2001). Later on, he gives her rice balls to eat that he has magically empowered which helps Chihiro gain strength and empowers her to work hard in the onsen. “I put a spell on it so it’ll give you back your strength. Just eat it,” he said to Chihiro. (Miyazaki,211,2001) Haku by himself is a magical shape-shifter who can change into a white dragon when he needs to do certain magical tasks for the sorceress Yubaba, the cruel bathhouse boss. He transforms several times throughout the story.

Through this encounter with positive white magic provided by Haku, Chihiro is encouraged to manifest her own remarkable transformation through using determination, courage and humility when she successfully pleases the stink god who changes into a mighty river god in the onsen bath she makes for him. This was a big success for the small girl heroine and gave her the confidence she needed to survive in the spirit-world bathhouse.

On the other hand, Chihiro also meets with the darker side of magic and transformation through Yubaba who employs magical power over others by stealing their names, as this is how she maintains control other beings. Regarding this, one interesting transformation takes place when Chihiro meets Yubaba who is portrayed as the malicious sorceress. Chihiro must ask her for a job there in order to survive. Yubaba verbally abuses her into a submissive state

and then makes her sign a contract. While doing so she magically takes away the girl's real name from the paper and draws it into her hand, making Chihiro into "Sen" only. Chihiro looks the same but her transformation is subtle, indicating a control over her by stealing her individuality, or sense of self.

However, the paradoxical aspect is that though her sense of self had been taken away through Yubaba's enchantment, Chihiro showed throughout her trials in this world that it was the human girl, not a powerful witch, who finally broke the spells with the agency of virtue, in itself a powerful magic. It was through the emergence of virtues that Chihiro possessed—determination, love, intuition, and the powers to face, judge and discriminate—that helped her to find her way through the maze of the other challenges in the spirit world-onsen and secure her freedom for herself and her parents. Along with this was magical help by her bathhouse allies and friends. This is seen and heard in the action and dialog in several scenes.

For example, after the harrowing chase scene of Zeniba, the twin sister of Yubaba, and Haku in dragon form, he lies injured in Kamaji's boiler room area. Chihiro gives him the herbal medicine ball she had received from the river god in order to save his life. She also decides to visit the isolated cottage of Zeniba, and apologize for Haku, who had stolen her magical stamp. The by-standing onsen worker Lin asks "What's going on?" in surprise. Kamaji, the spiderlike boiler room boss replies, "Something you wouldn't recognize. It's called love." (Miyazaki,227,2001).

In later scene Haku goes to bring Sen back from the cottage to the bathhouse. During their return flight, she remembered Haku's true name,(Kohakukawa) when she recalled a childhood event of him rescuing her from drowning in a river. Haku was the spirit of that river. As they flew back to the bathhouse, she spoke his true name and magically Haku transformed back into human shape, as Yubaba's spell on him was finally broken. Through the innocent love of Chihiro the magic spell on Haku from Yubaba was broken, the disenchantment achieved, and the subtle transformation transforms the life of Haku. In this case it was the human girl who used the power of virtue to overcome the power of magic and achieve the disenchantment. In the end, Haku as well as Chihiro, obtains freedom from the control of Yubaba.

Finally, the key point remains that Chihiro herself had achieved an important personal transformation that initiated from the beginning of the story where she acted like a spoiled child, until the end where she emerged as a confident and more positive young girl, indicating that she had learned something of self-worth and growing up, one of the biggest

transformations that we all have to go through in our own lives as well.

III

Through this brief look at Miyazaki's film stories we can see how magic serves as a pivotal motif to enable transformation to occur in the narratives of each film. It is executed visually in the actions of the heroes and heroines, and audibly experienced through their dialogues. Moreover, one can feel other transformation on a much deeper level due to the portrayal of virtue in the narrative. These films reveal how virtues are an essential element for the *dramatis personae* in terms of their function in the story and the information through the hero or heroine that is carried to the viewer. If we look closely at Miyazaki's stories from the perspective of the hero or heroine they will show us how the admission or virtue, or its denial impacts the outcome of the lives of the characters in their anime worlds.

It is also admittedly true that each story has been created, adapted or limited by the creativity and imagination of its creator, its filmmaker. In that sense one might argue that it does tie them to a time and a place. However, the universality of these virtues allow them to be carried into such narrative vehicles as Japanese popular visual culture and yet appreciated by audiences in many other cultures, languages and countries. This is because they are a part which belongs to the very heart of who we are inside, just as the vices on the other hand, can be described as the accumulated negative patterns of behavior that seduce and weaken the will to create various conflicts in life.

There are obviously many valid ways in which to interpret the films of Miyazaki—socio-historical, structural, technical, religious, comparative cultural thematic view, etc. In considering a virtues-based interpretation it is possible to rise above the danger of dogmatic and partisan codifying in his work because virtues in their essence are universal and transcend cultural and time-limits as a basic feature of human identity. Miyazaki in discussing his work seems to show that he strives to create film that will not only entertain but touch the human heart. In one of the various interviews in his landmark book on his anime work, "Starting Point", he wrote, "I want to create the sort of film that a young boy sees in a theatre and then goes home from so amazed he's temporarily rendered speechless; he doesn't say anything to anyone out of fear he'll dilute the experience. I want to make a film that creates such a sense of yearning and admiration that it brings people to tears." (Miyazaki, 2009). The depth of narrative, heroines and the adventures that are created in the imaginary worlds must be more than just a jumble of technical mastery for Miyazaki. He alludes to a greater and more humanitarian need for films such as his. He wrote "To my way of thinking, creating animation means creating a fictional world. That world soothes the spirit

of those who are disheartened and exhausted from dealing with the sharp edges of reality, or suffering from a nearsighted distortion of their emotions. (Miyazaki, 25,2001).

In another interview he refers to young people's yearning for a lost world, nostalgia in adults and the need by today's human being for the fantasy of truly unique imaginary worlds and characters. In his films, Miyazaki imbues the stories with a stunning array of uncanny elements which flourish on the screen through the interplay of magic and transformation, yet he frames the narratives in such a way that the story is sufficiently and realistically captivating to the viewer in some way to betray at its core a certain worldly realism. The balance of these two elements—the uncanny and the real world—support the magical transformations in his stories and are empowered by the virtues in the heroines that he has masterfully created.

iafor

References

Film Bibliography

Spirited Away, Director Hayao Miyazaki, Studio Ghibli (2001)

Howl's Moving Castle, Director Hayao Miyazaki, Studio Ghibli (2004)

Ponyo on the Cliff by the Sea, Director Hayao Miyazaki, Studio Ghibli,(2008)

Studio Ghibli References

The Art of Ponyo, A Film by Hayao Miyazaki, Studio Ghibli, Inc.2008, Tokyo.

The Art of Howl's Moving Castle, Studio Ghibli, Inc. 2004, Tokyo

The Art of Miyazaki's Spirited Away, Studio Ghibli, Inc. 2001, Tokyo

Selected References

Cavallaro, Dani, *The Anime Art of Hayao Miyazaki*, McFarland & Company, London,2006

Garry, El-Shamey, editors' *Archetypes and Motifs in Folklore and Literature*, M.E.Sharpe, London, 2005

Guroian, Vigen, *Tending the Heart of Virtue, How Classic Stories Awaken a Child's Moral*

- Imagination*, Oxford Univ. Press, Oxford, 1998
- MacWilliams, Mark, edit, *Japanese Visual Culture*, M.E. Sharpe, London, 2008
- McCarthy, Helen, *Hayao Miyazaki, Master of Japanese Animation*, Berkeley, Stone Bridge Press, 1999.
- Miyazaki, Hayao, *Starting Point*, San Francisco, Viz Media, 1996
- Napier, Susan, *Anime, from Akira to Howl's Moving Castle*, Palgrave, New York, 2001
- Narayana, *The Hitopadesa*, trans. A.N.D.Haksar, Penguin Books, London, 1998
- Thompson, Stith, *Motif Index of Folk Literature*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1955.
- The Folktale*, University of California Press, Los Angeles, 1946
- Zipes, Jack, *The Enchanted Screen, The Unknown History of Fairy-Tale Film*. Routledge, New York, 2011
- Why Fairy Tales Stick, The Evolution and Relevance of a Genre*, Routledge, New York, 2006

The logo for the International Association for Cultural Studies (iafor) is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a large, light blue circular arc that is partially obscured by a red arc on the left side. The background of the page is white, and the overall design is minimalist and academic.

Magical Transformation in the films of Hayao Miyazaki

Jane A. Lightburn

Aichi Gakuin University, Nagoya , Japan

jligh@dpcaichi-gakuin.ac.jp

*Growing up Australian: Exploring the Ethnic Identity Negotiation of Second Generation
Vietnamese Youth.*

Selina Tang

0035

Curtin University, Australia

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2012

Official Conference Proceedings 2012



iafor

iafor

The International Academic Forum

www.iafor.org

This paper is an exploration of the ethnic identity negotiation of a group of second generation Vietnamese youth in Australia. Existing scholarship has largely concentrated on the refugee experience (Klimidis, Minas & Ata, 1994; Thomas, 1999; Vivian, Coughlan & Rowland, 1993), with little examination on individuals who were born in Australia or had arrived in Australia at a young age. Bearing little or no memory of Vietnam, the second generation Vietnamese youth in Perth may have very different experiences growing up in Australia compared to those arriving under refugee status. Given that 55 per cent of the Vietnamese population in Australia is between the ages 15 and 30 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006), it is imperative to engender a deeper knowledge and understanding of their experiences and how they negotiate between two cultures.

Research has suggested that part of an adolescent's learning process involves discovering the range of ethnic options available to them. Adolescents also have to negotiate how they feel about these options and the extent to which their ethnicity is going to be an important part of their overall sense of self (Fuligni, Witkow & Garcia, 2005). Defined as an aspect of an individual's self-concept that is derived from membership and belonging to a social group, ethnic identity is viewed as highly important to the self-concept of members of ethnic minority groups (Tajfel, 1981).

Through questions such as 'Where are you from?' Australians of Asian background are continually reminded of their bodily difference from the European-Australian mainstream; through such questions an outsider status is suggested. While I acknowledge that the question may imply foreign-ness, I argue that the question may also serve as a measure of their Australian-ness. With this in mind, the present study posed the question "What do you say when people ask where are you from?" to this group of second generation Vietnamese youth to explore their perception of belonging to Australia, and perhaps, Vietnam.

Largely quantitative in nature, existing scholarship has overemphasized the process of ethnic identity negotiation, and do not necessarily enrich our understanding of the content of ethnic identity. In light of this, I sought to discover the ethnic identification of the Vietnamese young person in Perth, and the content of their ethnic identity negotiation. In other words, what it means to be "Vietnamese" or "Australian". Through the narration of their lived experiences, this paper uncovers how one's cultural values and practices, as well as language spoken contributed to their ethnic identity construction. It also argues that one's ethnic identity is but one of a multitude of social identities.

Setting the Scene

The Vietnamese in Australia are relatively recent migrants, with the bulk of the Vietnamese community arriving between 1977 and 1992. Arriving under refugee status or via sponsorship by family members that had arrived earlier, the migration of the Vietnamese community was unique in that they arrived in large numbers within a short period of time. At the time of the 1981 census, persons born in Vietnam constituted 0.3 per cent of the population of Australia. By 2006, the ABS Census recorded almost 160,000 Vietnam-born people in Australia (0.8 per cent of the total population). The 2006 Census also indicated that 30 per cent of the Vietnamese community were born in Australia.

It needs to be noted that most of the available research has been conducted in Victoria and New South Wales, despite the fact that the Vietnam-born population in Western Australia accounts for 6 per cent of the state's population. With little recent statistics or research

available on Vietnam-born youth living in Perth, this study aims to fill this void by exploring the stories of a group of second generation Vietnamese youth living in Perth.

Traditional Vietnamese Values

Traditionally communal in texture, the Vietnamese culture is one in which family interests often take precedence over personal interests. Vietnamese families are characterized by a strong solidarity, a mutual helpfulness, a patriarchal structure, and an unquestioning obedience to parental authority (Matsuoka, 1990; Nguyen & Williams, 1989). The Confucian ideal of *dao hieu*, translated as filial piety, is one of the most important ethics in the Vietnamese culture and has shaped parenting within Vietnam over several centuries. Described as “a guiding principle governing general Chinese patterns of socialization, as well as specific rules of intergenerational conduct” (Ho, 1996, p.155), it dictates a system of age respect and patriarchy.

While there is little doubt that the family is of utmost importance within the Vietnamese system of values, it is acknowledged that existing research is not recent. Based on a different profile of youth, it is surmised that some dynamics within the Vietnamese family have changed over the years; yet much of the research continues to reinforce the stereotype of the Vietnamese family and individual. It is thought that urban living favours fragmentation and dispersion, and that Western culture promotes individualism, reducing the need for interdependence. The mainstream emphasis on individuality, self-assertion and egalitarian relationships in Australia may then challenge many of the traditional values in the Vietnamese culture (Nguyen, Messe & Stollak, 1999). This study explores whether these youth continue to adopt traditional Vietnamese values, and if they contribute to the negotiation of an ethnic identity.

What We Know about Ethnic Identity

The topic of ethnic identity is a broad topic characterized by a lack of theoretical coherence and many definitional problems (Ward & Kennedy, 1994). Defined as a process of coming to terms with one's ethnic membership group as a salient reference group, ethnic identity has been viewed as a learned aspect of an individual's overall identity development (Erikson, 1959). Other studies have defined ethnic identity as the ethnic component of one's social identity; as defined by Tajfel (1981, p.255) “that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from [his] knowledge of [his] membership of a social group or social groups together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership.”

Some writers have also suggested that ethnic identity can be assessed as the subjective sense of belonging to a group or culture, and involves an exploration and commitment to a cultural group (Le & Stockdale, 2008; Masuda, Matsumoto & Meredith, 1970; Ting-Toomey, 1981). In contrast, the active role of the individual in developing an ethnic identity as a result of individual choice and negotiation has also been suggested (Hall, 1998; Nagel, 1994; Waters, 1990). In light of the lack of theoretical coherence, I chose to embark on my research journey without adopting any particular framework of ethnic identity.

Methodology

Due to the lack of an emic understanding of the Vietnamese youth in Australia today, this study has employed an interpretive, narrative approach in the hope of gaining a deeper understanding of the ethnic identity formation in this group of second generation Vietnamese youth as they negotiate two cultures. To better understand different ethnic minorities and sub-

cultures, such as second generation Vietnamese youth growing up in Australia, researchers need to pay attention to the individuals' own voices that represent unique characteristics related to their ethnic culture. For the purpose of this study, second generation Vietnamese youth refer to female and male persons aged 18 to 25 years, born in Australia or born in Vietnam and migrated to Australia between 1985 and 1990.

The narrative research method was chosen because I wanted to record the voices of these second generation Vietnamese youth in Perth. Stories of lived experience were shared and collected, and re-interpreted into new narratives. Differing from traditional research approaches, narrative research views the reality of knowledge as embedded in its immediate social and cultural context. I believe that to study whole persons, one cannot rely on positivist methods that isolate simple factors and trace their effects through statistical means. Adopting an interpretive approach and using narrative interviews has allowed me to discover, rather than seek confirmation of pre-existing truths.

Rather than concentrate on the size of the sample, the participants were chosen based on their relevance to the research topic (Neuman, 2003). The inclusion criteria for participation in the study were: (1) be a second-generation immigrant; that is, born in Australia or born in Vietnam and have lived in Australia from a young age, (2) be aged 19-30 years; and (3) be fluent in English. The amount of time spent in Perth is considered a definitive factor in the process of ethnic identity formation, with the assumption that the length of time spent in Australia would influence the level of acculturation in both the youth and their parents. Therefore, participants who were not born in Australia had to have arrived in Perth after 1985 and before 1990. This ensured that the youth migrated to Perth at a young age, and had attended both Primary and High school in Perth along with other Australia-born youth. This allows for similar experiences growing up in Perth, with the relatively same amount of exposure to Australian culture, ensuring similar linguistic, cultural and developmental experiences to those of Australia-born children.

Due to a lack of Vietnamese professional organisations in Perth and referrals from other organisations, my personal network was used to access participants. It is recognised that by relying on snowball sampling, the participants may not be representative of all second generation Vietnamese youth in Perth. As the participants were nominated by a friend, it is highly possible that they share similar lived experiences, and characteristics. In turn, there may be a segment of the Vietnamese population in Perth that this research has failed to sample. However, despite the limitations of snowball sampling, it has allowed for data collection from different backgrounds, demographics and work settings. It was determined that having participants from different socio-economic status (SES) would provide a myriad of valuable insights to the research topic and add considerable richness to the data.

A total of twenty participants contributed to this study – ten males and ten females. While twenty participants may seem like a small number, unstructured narrative interviewing allows for thick descriptions to evolve, providing a rich, yet nuanced understanding of the topic. According to Geertz (1973), the use of thick descriptions allow for an exploration of significant connections between the individuals' experience and action, about views on family relationships, social relationships, as well as their inner experiences and emotions. Although they were happy to share their experiences for this study, I used pseudonyms to protect their privacy. In choosing their pseudonyms, I made the decision to use pseudonyms that reflected their names; participants with Anglicised names were given Anglicised pseudonyms, and participants with Vietnamese names were given Vietnamese pseudonyms.

This was to respect aspects of their ethnic identity that may or may not be reflected in their names.

For the purpose of this study, I conducted a series of unstructured narrative interviews with the participants at a venue and time of their choosing. The narrative interview was viewed as an opportunity for the participant to think about their experiences and lives, and to share rich, in-depth stories in ways that other methods may not allow for. The questions used were designed to evoke thick descriptions, rather than confirm theoretical hypotheses. To ensure that my interpretation of the participants' stories mirrored theirs, I constantly reframed and re-worded their stories to allow for cross-checking. This was to ensure that the information reflected the informant's perspective and to identify and classify distortions (Minichiello, Aroni, Timewell & Alexander, 1995).

Some participants were chosen to participate in a second interview. Participants were selected based on their first interviews, and on the quality of their thick descriptions. To establish research credibility and trustworthiness, they were presented with their transcripts in the second interview. Participants were encouraged to read their stories, reflect on them and make any changes. The second interview explored in more detail themes that arose from the previous interview. In particular, "what makes you Vietnamese / Australian" and "are there times that you feel more Vietnamese / Australian".

The analysis of the data involved two analytical processes; a theory-driven top-down process that allowed for the development of an interview guide, and a data driven bottom-up process that allowed for the theory-driven categories to be further refined inductively by the data. The information gathered was interpreted and analysed utilizing paradigmatic analysis - in particular, inductive thematic analysis. Paradigmatic analysis was chosen not only because it allowed for the discovery or description of the categories that identify particular occurrences within the data, but also to note relationships among categories (Polkinghorne, 1995). Inductive thematic analysis was employed to locate common themes or conceptual manifestations among the stories collected as data. Common themes across all interviews were identified and noted. Global themes were also revisited across individual interviews, to ensure a clear description of the phenomenon. The rationale for looking across interviews is not to produce generalizability but to improve general vision (Pollio, Graves & Arfken, 2006). This generated an emergent set of categories and properties.

In this study, I sought to provide an account of the participants' stories that contextualizes their story as second generation Vietnamese youth in Perth. None of the stories were presented as discrete units, with a clear beginning, middle and end. Rather, they were offered in bits and pieces and the fragments of narratives had to be weaved together to derive meaning. Verbatim accounts are presented to prevent misinterpretation or misunderstanding; extensive quotations are used so that the participants' voices can be heard through my interpretation. As narrative research may be considered dialogical, with the author in dialogue with the audience, I want the reader to hear the details of the participants' lives and to be guided by their stories, as the reader participates in making meaning of the text. The emergent themes reflect efforts to make meaning of the stories that were told along the research journey, and a subsequent weaving of convergent threads with existing literature into a tapestry that tells the story of this group of second generation Vietnamese youth and their ethnic identification as they negotiate between two cultures.

Where are you from?

As previously mentioned, I sought to explore the participants' perception of belonging by starting the conversation with "What do you say when people ask you where you're from?" Debbie shared,

"I'm Australian but I'm Vietnamese. I was born here but I'm Vietnamese."

In explaining what she believed was "Vietnamese" about her, Debbie reflected,

"I guess my background, my culture, the way I see things is different from other families, cultures and kids will see things. Like the whole family thing, the values, and stuff like that. I guess I'm more respectful to elders than other people would be, like other cultures wouldn't see it as much. Like people just call their aunties by name, they don't really go 'Aunty' and stuff. I have to do that..."

Making reference to "my" background and "my" culture", and how her values and practices are different from "other" cultures, Debbie's narrative alludes to a strong sense of belonging and membership to her ethnic group; and in turn, the salience of her Vietnamese ethnic identity. Her narrative also highlights cultural practices and values, such as the importance of family and respect for elders, as dimensions that contribute to the construction of her ethnic identity. In other words, she is Vietnamese because she embraces traditional Vietnamese values. The pertinence of cultural values and practices to the construction of their ethnic identity was echoed by Lisa. As she shared,

"If I see a Vietnamese older person, I wouldn't just say Hi, I would bow, quite properly, cross my arms and bow down... We don't call people by their first name and things like that. I still do all of that and at the dinner table and you're eating with a whole bunch of older people always ask them to eat first and then eat, like it's rude to eat before them. Just things like that..."

Similarly, in exploring her response to the question, Sharon shared,

"It just feels right to say Vietnamese. I'd say I was born here, I'd still call myself Vietnamese, I don't know."

Further reflecting on what it means to her in identifying as "Vietnamese", Sharon shared,

"I'm not sure actually. I think when I get married I would still live with my parents just cause I don't want to put them in an old folk's home, I think that's sort of Viet. I don't think that's very Australian. I would still want to buy them tickets on holiday or something. I wouldn't make them pay for anything once I'm older. I'm not sure what else. With money-wise, I think Australian views are like they're equal, so they'd have separate bank accounts or something, or you'd pay for half the bills. But I think if you're married to someone, you'd share the money. It doesn't matter how much each person makes... When I have kids, I still want to work because I don't want to stay at home, which I guess is Australian. I can't think of anything else at the moment."

It is of interest that Sharon's narrative represents an adoption of both Australian and Vietnamese values and cultural practices. Although she comments that she "is not sure" what makes her Vietnamese, her narrative indicates that she is aware of what are "Vietnamese" values, and similarly, what are "Australian" values. I put forward that Sharon's narrative alludes to an amalgamation of identities; that is, she is both Vietnamese and Australian. Within

her portfolio of identities, Sharon embraces different values that are only salient depending on context and situation. In other words, she is “Viet” because she would like to continue living with her parents, but is “Australian” in that she would like to continue working after having children. I put forward that this combination of values and cultures reinforces the notion that these second generation young persons are active agents in choosing the best of both worlds, and have skillfully negotiated between the two cultures. This is evident in Long’s narrative.

Believing that his “Australian” values and practices complement his “Vietnamese” values, Long reflected,

“What makes me Vietnamese? Family, religion, I’m a religious guy, I’m a really family-type guy. Family means a lot, and sometimes I put family ahead of work. That’s one thing that’s culturally different as well. I do like the western culture as well. It’s great, freedom, right of speech, when you grow up, your parents want you to leave home, Asians are different. When you grow up they want you to stay with them. That’s one difference that I like about the Western culture, when you hit a certain age, they’ll support you only until a certain level then you’ll have to do everything on your own.”

Interestingly, many of the participants “don’t know” why they identify as Australian or Vietnamese – I argue that this is because the development of their ethnic identity was relatively uncomplicated and conflict-free. In addition, I posit that the inability to separate their Australian and Vietnamese identities further highlights the contextual and situational nature of identity salience; the participants possess both Australian and Vietnamese identities, and the emergence of a particular identity is dependant on the situation, and audience. However, it is acknowledged that their identity negotiation is not representative of all second generation Vietnamese youth in Australia.

It is plausible that growing up in Perth, a city that is without a strong Vietnamese community nor a Vietnamese town, had abetted in their negotiation of an ethnic identity. Without an ethnic enclave, the participants had no choice but to adopt English as a first language. Also, the participants grew up within the Australian school system and were introduced to children from other ethnicities. The lack of a strong Vietnamese community could be a reason for identifying as Australian. On the other hand, the Vietnamese in Perth continue to be a minority, and it is plausible that this has contributed to the salience of their Vietnamese identity. Furthermore, because they are relatively recent migrants, their parents would continue to identify strongly as Vietnamese and be more inclined to socialize them to Vietnamese traditions and values. In other words, I argue that growing up in Perth has encouraged integration into the larger society through daily interaction with individuals from the dominant culture and other ethnic groups. At the same time, Perth has a sufficiently strong Vietnamese presence that encourages maintenance of one’s ethnic culture and thus, ethnic identity.

Language Spoken

In reflecting on their ethnic identification, many of the participants referred to language use as a determinant of their ethnic identity; i.e. “I am Australian because I speak English” and “I am Vietnamese because I speak Vietnamese”. Growing up in Australia, an English speaking nation, all the participants speak English fluently and identify English to be their first language. This raises the question: what does speaking English mean in terms of their ethnic identity negotiation?

Identifying as Australian, Sue reflected, “*English... is my hometown*”, alluding to the importance of language to the construction of her identity. Similarly, Simone grew up speaking only English, and never needed to learn to speak Vietnamese;

“I am Vietnamese, but I don’t speak it, so I consider myself Australian. I was born here, I only speak English, so yeah, I’m Australian.”

It is interesting that in her narrative, Simone identifies as both Australian as well as Vietnamese. Alluding to the nature of language as a marker of one’s identity, Simone is Australian because she was born here and because she only speaks English. Yet, she is Vietnamese, and proud of being Vietnamese, despite not speaking the language. Rather than it being contradictory, I reiterate that her narrative of her ethnic identification hints at the multiple dimensions of her identity; that she is both Australian and Vietnamese, without having to be one or the other.

Language is proposed to have an effect on ethnic identity in that language retention of one’s mother tongue acts as a stronger connector to the ethnic community. Perhaps in Simone’s case, speaking Vietnamese is not a determinant of her ethnic identity as she was not encouraged to interact with other Vietnamese by her parents while growing up; kept separate from the Vietnamese community, Simone did not need to speak Vietnamese. Even though her current group of friends are all of Vietnamese descent, they converse only in English. I propose that Simone’s inability to speak Vietnamese does not play a role in maintaining a connection to the ethnic community as it exists through her friendship with other Vietnamese youth. In addition, as Simone’s parents did not enforce that she learn Vietnamese at a young age, she never achieved the level of fluency needed to regard it as an essential element of their identity. Coupled with the lack of necessity in attaining fluency, the meaning of being Vietnamese may not be tied to her fluency in their heritage language.

However, most of the participants continue to speak Vietnamese at home. In exploring the participants’ ethnic identity, many of the participants mentioned that they are Vietnamese because they speak Vietnamese. As Debbie laughingly shared, “*I don’t know why. I speak it?*”

Similarly, Emma shared in reflecting on what “made” her Vietnamese, “*I don’t know. Nothing, really. I can’t really think of anything at the moment. Maybe when I’m at home, and speak to my mom in Vietnamese, that’s about it.*”

I argue that the significance placed on their ability to speak Vietnamese is an indication of the salience and importance of heritage language fluency in ethnic identity development. This is consistent with existing scholarship that suggest that language based factors is a reflection and contributor of ethnic identity (Giles, Bourhis, & Taylor, 1977; Imbens-Bailey, 1996; Laroche, Kim, Tomiuk & Belisle, 2009). The salience of heritage language to one’s ethnic identity development is evident in Mai’s pride in her fluency in the Vietnamese language. As she shared,

“My friends speak in English but when we can, like I really enjoy finding somebody who can speak Vietnamese, especially if they can speak fluently... I watch Vietnamese stuff and talk in Vietnamese. There are times when I’m a big fob, like me knowing all these proverbs in Vietnamese, and every now and then i’ll slip it in. People are like “geez man, I don’t even know that kinda stuff” and you just say a proverb and like people look at you weirdly and you’re like ‘come on! Come on!’ Seriously there are times when people go ‘can you stop being so Vietnamese, God!’ I do like being a fob sometimes, you know, get in touch with your own roots. I’d

never want my kids not to know Vietnamese. I would want them to know the proverbs. Everything I've learnt. There are certain values that you keep."

The findings from this section indicate that some of the participants identify speaking Vietnamese as a reflection of their ethnic identity; they are Vietnamese because they speak Vietnamese. They also speak Vietnamese because they are Vietnamese. The importance the participants' placed on their ability to speak Vietnamese is consistent with Cho's (2000) finding of a positive relationship between heritage language competency and ethnic identity. However, the findings from the present study suggest that proficiency in heritage language is not an indicator of the strength of their ethnic identity; describing his Vietnamese as "very broken", Nick shared,

"Most of my friends even though we're Viet we speak English to each other. So even with my brother, I speak English to him. Even since when I was a kid, there's a lot of English in the Vietnamese. So say for an example, if I spoke a sentence with 10 words, 3 or 4 of those words would be English words..."

Despite the lack of fluency in his heritage language, Nick identifies strongly as Vietnamese.

Rather than challenge the assumption that heritage language fluency is an essential component of ethnic identity, I posit that perhaps the acquisition of heritage language and strength of ethnic identity are two parallel developmental processes. Perhaps the participants' experiences of being firmly planted in Australia, while maintaining strong ties to other Vietnamese-Australian friends and families have created positive associations with the use of both languages.

Consequently, I argue that proficiency in one's heritage language is neither a determinant nor marker of one's ethnic identity for all participants. As previously mentioned, the Vietnamese community in Perth is small, and while proficient in Vietnamese, all the participants speak English to their (mainly Vietnamese) friends. With little need and little opportunity to speak Vietnamese, perhaps this group of second-generation Vietnamese youth do not see the relevance in achieving proficiency in their heritage language, and therefore do not perceive it necessary to their ethnic identity construction. Conversely, fluency in English does not de-emphasise one's ethnic identity. As Phil shared *"So what if I speak English, I don't sound Asian. But I have an Asian heart. I'm always Vietnamese, always Asian. Strongly Asian."*

Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated how cultural values and language spoken are salient to the construction of ethnic identity in this group of second generation Vietnamese youth. The participants' narratives revealed an amalgamation of values that represent their identities as Vietnamese and Australian; for example, they are Vietnamese because they respect and show deference to their elders, and they are Australian because they value independence. Language was also demonstrated to be an expression of their ethnic identity; some participants identify as Vietnamese because they speak Vietnamese, in contrast, others are Australian because they speak English. However, I posit that proficiency in one's heritage language is not necessarily an indicator of one's ethnic identity; that is, one may not be fluent in Vietnamese yet identify positively as Vietnamese.

Identifying simultaneously as Vietnamese and Australian, the participants' narratives highlight the multitude of identities that contribute to their global self. Traditionally, identification with one's own ethnic group was considered to be inversely related to

identification with the majority group. However, existing research into ethnic identification employed forced-choice tests to measure ethnic identification, such as in studies using black and white dolls (Verkuyten, 2005). For one to identify with their own minority group, the more they would appear to dis-identify with the other. As a result, identification was studied as an either/or phenomenon and the possibility of multiple identities was disregarded.

Alternatively, findings from cross-cultural studies suggest that ethnic identification may be constituted of hyphenated identities, such as Australian-Vietnamese or Vietnamese-Australian, that indicate varying degrees of identification with both the ethnic minority group and the majority group simultaneously (Verkuyten, 2005). However, in a situation where people are free to describe themselves, they may not always subscribe to this dichotomous scheme of ethnic identification.

The emic nature of the present study has allowed for the participants to describe themselves without pre-determined categories. The findings from this study demonstrate that in negotiating their ethnic identity, this group of second generation Vietnamese young persons identify as both Vietnamese, and Australian, and deem themselves full-fledged members of the majority group.

The findings of the present study also reinforce the notion that the participants' ethnic identity is but one of a multitude of social identities. Previous research has proposed that every individual simultaneously belongs to a number of social categories (Deaux, 1991). These social identities are usually not independent of each other, but are closely connected or articulated in relation to each other. The participants' narratives indicate that their academic grades, family relationships, ethnic identity and gender roles are all intimately intertwined and cannot be explored in exclusivity. In exploring if she perceived to be a minority in Australia, Debbie shared "*It was an all girls school so like, we were all girls, I didn't really feel left out.*" Similarly, Phuong reflected, "*No. I'm straight. I'm male. That's 50-50 in the world. I'm definitely not a minority. I never feel like I'm one.*"

References

- Cho, G. (2000). The role of heritage language in social interactions and relationships: Reflections from a language minority group. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 24, 369-384
- Deaux, K. (1996) Social identities: Thoughts on structure and change. In R.C. Curtis (Ed.), *The relational self: Theoretical convergences in psychoanalysis and social psychology* (pp. 77-93). New York: Guilford.
- Do, M.V. (1962). *Vietnam: Where East & West Meet*. Rome, Italy: Edizioni.
- Erikson, E.H. (1959). *Identity and the life cycle*. New York: Norton
- Fulgini, A.J., Witkow, M., & Garcia, C. (2005). Ethnic identity and the academic adjustment of adolescents from Mexican, Chinese and European backgrounds. *Child Development*, 41, 799-811.
- Geertz, C. (1973). Thick description: Toward an interpretive theory of culture. In *The interpretation of cultures: Selected essays*. New York: Basic Books.
- Giles, H., Bourhois, R., & Taylor, D. (1977). Toward a theory of language in ethnic group relations. In H. Giles (Ed.), *Language, ethnicity, and intergroup relationship* (pp. 32-65). London: Academic Press.
- Hall, S. (1998). Cultural identity and diaspora. In J. Rutherford (Ed.), *Identity: Community, culture, difference* (pp. 222-237). London: Lawrence & Wishart.
- Ho, D.Y.F. (1996). Filial piety and its psychological consequences. In M.H. Bond (Ed.), *The handbook of Chinese psychology* (pp. 155-165). Hong Kong: Oxford University Press.
- Imbens-Bailey, A.L. (1996). Ancestral language acquisition: Implications for aspects of ethnic identity among Armenian American children and adolescents. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 15, 422-445.
- Klimidis, S., Minas, I.H., & Ata, A.W. (1994). Vietnamese refugee adolescents: A preliminary descriptive analysis *Victorian Transcultural Psychiatry Unit*. Melbourne.
- Kvale, S. (1996). *InterViews: An introduction to qualitative research interviewing*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Laroche, M., Kim, C., Tomiuk, M.A., & Belisle, D. (2009). Similarities in Italian and Greek multi-dimensional ethnic identity: Some implications for food consumption. *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences*, 22, 143-167.
- Le, N.T., & Stockdale, G. (2008). Acculturative dissonance, ethnic identity and youth violence. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 14(1), 1-9.
- Maldonado, D. (1975). Ethnic self-identity and self-understanding. *Social Casework*, 56, 618-622.
- Masuda, M., Matsumoto, G.H., & Meredith, G.M. (1970). Ethnic identity in three generations of Japanese Americans. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 81, 199-207.

- Matsuoka, T. (1990). Differential acculturation among Vietnamese refugees. *Social Work, 35*, 341-345.
- Nagel, J. (1994). Constructing ethnicity: Creating and recreating ethnic identity and culture. *Social Problems, 41*, 152-176.
- Neuman, W.L. (2003), *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative methods*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Nguyen, H., Messe, L. A., & Stollak, G. E. (1999). Toward a more complex understanding of acculturation and adjustment: Cultural involvements and psychosocial functioning in Vietnamese youth. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 30*(1), 5-31.
- Phinney, J.S. (1996). When we talk about American ethnic groups, what do we mean? *American Psychologist, 51*, 918-927.
- Phinney, J.S., Romero, I., Nava, M., & Huang, D. (2001). The role of language, parents, and peers in ethnic identity among adolescents in immigrant families. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 30*, 135-153.
- Pollio, H.R., Grave, T.R., & Arfken, M. (2006). Qualitative methods. In F.T.L. Leong & J.T. Austin (Eds.), *The Psychology Research Handbook: A Guide for Graduate Students and Research Assistants* (2nd ed.). California: Sage Publications.
- Polkinghorne, D.E. (1995). Narrative configuration in qualitative analysis. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 8*, 5-23.
- Ting-Toomey, S. (1981). Ethnic identity and close friendship in Chinese-American college students. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 5*, 383-406
- Nguyen, N.A., & Williams, H. (1989). Transition from East to West: Vietnamese adolescents and their parents. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 28*, 505-515.
- Tajfel, H. (1981). *Human groups and social categories: Studies in social psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Thomas, M. (1999). *Dreams in the shadows: Vietnamese-Australian lives in transition*. New South Wales: Allen & Unwint.
- Verkuyten, M. (2005). *The social psychology of ethnic identity*. East Sussex: Psychology Press.
- Viviani, N., Coughlan, J. E., & Rowland, T. (1993). Indochinese in Australia, The issues of unemployment and residential concentration: Report to the Bureau of Immigration Research, AGPS, Canberra.
- Waters, M. (1990). Ethnic and racial identities of second-generation black immigrants in New York City. *International Migration Review, 28*, 795-820.

*Stereotyped Female Characters in Fairy Tales: A Comparison of English and Chinese
Fairy Tales*

Shu-Hu(e)i Lin

0046

Aichi Gakuin University, Japan

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2012

Official Conference Proceedings 2012



iafor

iafor

The International Academic Forum

www.iafor.org

Introduction

Today, television and mass media provide us with a variety of visual entertainment which improves human life. It is different from the days when the mass media was not as popular. Human's activities might have been limited and narrowed, especially in the eighteenth and the nineteenth century. At the end of the 20th century, science and media industries have developed at a quick pace and succeed to bring great convenience and a more comfortable life. People for example can travel by car or airplane within their own country or go abroad as much as they like; we can watch and get the world news from TV; and we can talk with friends via the internet. People's connections have become global, it is not difficult for us to get whatever information we need from the internet whenever we like. Foreign countries are not so far away. Truly, transportation offers us the chance to meet here in Osaka today. None of us can neglect this, right! Let us return to my theme.

Recently, I was amazed at an interesting movie entitled "Shrek". I am interested in how its director successfully injects many old characters from some familiar fairy tales into the movie to create another interesting story. I asked my foreign students in class to count how many characters they knew? And asked them to notice how many stories they have read in their childhoods? It confirms my impression that there are some connected points between the English fairy tales and Chinese fairy tales. And I noticed that students read different versions though the title was the same title. And the heroine of "Shrek" is a strong character with power which not only feminists request but feminine and charming type is respected and required by her partner. Second, the movie confirmed my feeling that ancient fairy tales play an important role when a new one is created. It is the new one which is developed and is rewritten. And a successful and accepted new one must be always re-published to satisfy its audience's requirement for entertainment.

One theme in this presentation is to study the female characters in fairy tales. And I will try to compare the stereotyped female characters in English fairy tales and Chinese fairy tales in order to find a method to decrease the cultural conflict we experience in other cultures.

English "Little Red Riding Hood" vs Chinese "Hokoupou (Old Tigress)"

As I study English fairy tales, I notice that many female characters fall into two stereotypes, one is beautiful, dependant but powerless, and the other is homely, independent but powerful. Are these female characters realistic or are they simply creatures from the writer's imagination? And what female characters in English fairy tales are depicted? And what female characters in Chinese (Taiwanese) fairy tales are illustrated? Are they the same or are they different?

In English fairy tales, the princess Snow White learns how to be an independent girl and survive in the woods with seven little dwarves; Cinderella achieves happiness overcoming the bitterness of being compelled by her step-mother and step-sisters to do household chores; Sleeping Beauty kept her purity in sleep until her brave prince came. In Chinese fairy tales, "Hokoupou (Old Tigress)", a similar version to "Little Red Riding Hood", is a story which two little girls face the terrible Tigress at night while their mother was absent from home; "The Black Oxen" is a Chinese story like "Cinderella",...etc.

Charles Perrault is a representative author of fairy tales. His tales were translated into English and come to be known as the original model for English fairy tales. Lately, Joseph Jacobs edited those fairy tales for wide distribution. Others such as Grimm Brothers, Walt Disney, are also popular today. Their excellent tales entertain the human heart and have been read for years and years. "Little Red Riding Hood," "Cinderella," "Sleeping Beauty," and "Snow White," are famous. Perrault, Grimms and Walt Disney have edited similar versional stories in their works. But whose version is the original one? Is it important for us to think whether the text is original or not?

Here I choose "Little Red Riding Hood" to discuss the female characters, particularly about their positions in family and society.

(a) English "Little Red Riding Hood"

The scholars like to discuss themes in Little Red Riding Hood such as (1) guilt of beauty, (2) stranger's temptation (3) sexual violence ...etc., especially within feminist theory. Sometimes the teased woman's weak situation seems to be over-conceived by the feminist's theory as Gilbert & Gubar asserted. In *The Madwoman in the Attic*, Girbert & Gubar suggest that women are framed in the domestic field by the patriarchal concept in fairy tales. Gilbert & Gubar encourage woman's writers to write their own

works about women. Jack Zipes suggests other aspects to amuse the fairy tales from the historic developments. For example, Zipes comments that the purposes of “Little Red Riding Hood ” are to teach a country girl how to learn the basic life skills, for example cooking, sewing etc., and to adjust the proceeding change in social circumstance, or how to learn to protect herself from strangers, or how to keep relationships with men. In *Postmodern Fairy Tales: Gender and Narrative Strategies*, Christina Bacchilega similarly interprets that

“As an initiatory tale in the oral tradition, “Little Red Riding Hood ” did more than symbolize the child’s ability to defeat danger and evil by resorting to cunning: it also demonstrated the importance of women’s knowledge to survival” (56).

Most critics have paid attention to the little girl and the wolf. Such as Yvonne Verdier for example considers its relation with Cannibalism.

However, here I try to talk about the positions of girl’s grandmother, girl’s mother and the little girls themselves. Female characters often occupy an important situation in fairy tales. In the case of “Little Red Riding Hood,” the existence of the heroine’s mother and grandmother is usually forgotten by critics. These women transfer traditional woman’s skills and concepts from generation to generation. On the globalizing progress, it is important to think about their relation daughter and granddaughters. Women have less experience cooperating with their siblings than men do. That is why women usually try to get rid of her female siblings as a rival that are illustrated in many fairy tales, such as “Cinderella”, “Snow White” or etc. It is important theme to think about the relation between woman and woman especially as globalization progresses. Women’s positions in society have changed and women have more chance to work outside the home with other men and women. It is necessary for women to learn how to cooperate with their female partners.

“Once upon a time there was a sweet little maiden. Whoever laid eyes upon her could not help but love her. But it was her grandmother who loved her most. She could never give the child enough. One time she made her a present, a small, red velvet cap, and since it was so becoming and the maiden insisted on always wearing it, she was called Little Red Riding Hood.

One day her mother said to her, “Come, Little Red Riding Hood, take this piece of cake and bottle of wine and bring them to your grandmother. She’s sick

and weak, and this will strengthen her” (p.8-9).

The traditional female position is clearly illustrated. Three female characters represent different generations and they express their own love in varied ways. Grandmother makes her granddaughter a present; mother takes care of the Little Red Riding Hood; and the little Red Riding Hood appreciates her grandmother’s present and brings her mother’s cake and wine to grandmother while the grandmother is helpless. And the three generations are connected in such invisible moral instruction.

In “Little Red Riding Hood” the female characters’ connections from generation to generation is well defined. Grandmother sews dress for the protagonist, mother makes cake and wine for the grandmother and asks the protagonist to bring them to her grandmother, and the protagonist takes food for mother to grandmother. Thus, the moral imagination exists and human lives continue eternal.

In *Tending the Heart of Virtue*, Vigen Guroian states “We want our children to be tolerant, and we sometimes seem to think that a too sure sense of right and wrong only produces fanatics(p.4).” Truly, in the real world, we parents or adults always try to teach the young how to judge what is right or wrong or what is good or evil based on the conventional moral concepts which should have been learned, taught, valued and chosen by our own experience. Is it really correct? None of us can say “yes”, firmly.

Mother teaches her young daughter “Get an early start, before it becomes hot” (9), and advises her how to keep food safely on her way and “when you’re out in the woods, be nice and good and don’t stray from the path, otherwise you’ll fall and break the glass, and your grandmother will get nothing”. Mother teaches the little one the moral, “to say good morning” and the virtue, “don’t go peeping in all the corners” as a girl should learn.

Unfortunately, Mother forget to teach her daughter to protect herself from dangerous characters. That’s why Little Red Riding Hood is not afraid of the wolf and is amused by the wolf’s words. She is also entertained by the beautiful flowers growing around her and enjoys the delightful world in the woods. Guroian points out that

“When we tell our children that standards of social utility and material success are the measurements of the value of moral principles and virtues, then it

is not likely that our pedagogy is going to transform the minds or convert the hearts of young people” (p.23-24).

Similar to English “Little Red Riding Hood”, Chinese fairy tales have “HOKOUBOU (Old Tigress)” in Taiwan and other patterns in many cities.

Here I will take some time to talk about “Hokoubou”. When I was a child, my grandmother liked to tell me the story of “Hokoubou”. Unfortunately, after I studied English fairy tales in school and I almost forget the local fairy tales I learned in Taiwan. Preparing for this presentation gave me a wonderful opportunity to reread Taiwan’s fairy tale literature.

(b) Chinese: “HOKOUBOU (Old Tigress)”

Once upon a time there were two little sisters, sometimes it was three sisters, in a small country. One day, their mother had to go to a far village. Before leaving home, the mother warned her daughters not open the door for unknown or strange people because “the old tigress” will come to catch small children for food.

After their mother left home, the “Old Tigress” came to knock the girls’ door. The “Old Tigress” guised as a poor woman who was lost her way requested to stay at the girls’ house. The girls with pure heart forgot their mother’s warning and opened the door letting the “Old Tigress” come in. At midnight, the “Old Tigress” first killed the elder sister and tasted her bones slowly. The young one woke up by the crunchy sounds. And she asked the old Tigress

“What are you eating, my dear grandmother?”, said the young girl.

“I am eating delicious bone stick, would you try one?”, said the old woman.

The young sister took one and found it was her elder sister. The younger sister felt afraid but she used her wits to save herself from being eaten by the old tigress.

Comparing the difference between “Little Red Riding Hood” and “Hokoubou”, there are some interesting social and cultural aspect that distinguish the two (stories).

Wolfram Eberhard analyzes variations of Hokoubou among Taiwanese families of four different educated level. According to Eberhard’s essay, he clearly explains Hokoubou’s social background, colonial circumstance, number of children, and education levels etc.

The little girl in “Little Red Riding Hood” went into the woods and met the big bad wolf. In contrast, in “Hokoubou”, the sisters faced the dangerous tigress at home. The invader and the visitor met in different situations in the two stories. Here, the female relationship between mother and girl is stressed.

Mein-ar Ryann comments: Taiwan’s “Hokoubou” or Chinese “Little Red Riding Hood” usually features two or three sisters and very seldom only one-child. It is because Taiwan’s or Chinese’s families usually had two or more children during the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries.

Let’s try to think about the female position in society or in home today. In modern times, a woman has opportunities and the right to decide what kind life she wants to live. Woman can freely choose to be a housewife, a teacher, a scientist, a doctor or politician if she wants. Most of us know that women’s lives used to be very limited, particularly in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. The social and cultural backgrounds set numerous limitations to women. Women could only get education or learn skills from her female comrades: grandmothers, mothers or sisters. Patriarchal and male-centered opinions felt that passive and weak objects as women should be protected and kept at home. Men thought home was a safe place for woman to stay. Thus, mother teaches her daughter how to protect herself from danger, in other words, grandmother teaches the living skills to mother, and mother transfers to her daughter, the wisdom from generation to generation. It is an invisible tool to pass wisdom from a woman’s ancestors to her descendants. The sister relationship or womanhood is praised by Christina Rossetti (1830-1894).

Christina Rossetti, in her “Goblin Market” praises this sister relationship:

“For there is no friend like a sister
In calm or stormy weather;
To cheer one on the tedious way,
To fetch one if one goes astray,
To lift one if one totters down,
To strengthen whilst one stands.”(Crum.I, p. ll.562-567)

Rossetti insists through her works how important it is for a girl or a woman be gentle to her female siblings. In real life, the relationship between woman seems

difficult to keep gentle or maintain generosity because of the jealousy, greedy etc.

Conclusion

Many professors are interested in discussing fairy tale from various points of view. They press us to improve the unfair treatment and relationships between man and man, woman and woman or adult and children. “The Little Red Riding Hood” is a famous English fairy tale of a little girl and “Hokoubou” is a Taiwanese fairy tale of two sisters. Both of them tell about how she protects herself or they protect themselves from danger. In other words how to be an independent woman. Zipes predicates

“All the tools of modern industrial society (the printing press, the radio, the camera, the film, the record, the videocassette) have made their mark on the fairy tale to make it classical ultimately in the name of the bourgeoisie which refuses to be named, denies involvement; for the fairy must appear harmless, natural, eternal, a historical, therapeutic” (7).

Shouldn't we be careful to read the fairy tale simply? Zipes insists the fairy tale exists in our daily lives. Zipes asserts the importance of fairy tale:

“We are to live and breathe the classical fairy tale as fresh, free air. We are led to believe that this air has not been contaminated and polluted by a social class that will not name itself, wants us to continue believing that all air is fresh and free, all fairy tales spring from thin air” (7).

Stories such as “Little Red Riding Hood” and Taiwan's “Hokoubou”, narrate the little protagonist's learning progress. Although the two stories have different cultural backgrounds, they have the same theme to teach us the moral and values.

Little Red Riding Hood experiences the moral and values both in the home and outside of home; on the other hand, in Hokoubou, the sisters face the danger at home and learns to survive by escaping out of harm's way.

Both stories suggest girl to adapt themselves by varied circumstances. It is better to nourish children's abilities to judge than to teach them what is right or wrong in each circumstance. It is dangerous to teach children that home is safe or the world outside of

home is exciting. What we adults or parents should do is to nurture children skills to judge for themselves.

Guroian states

“Children cannot learn these skills on their own. The moral imagination needs to be cultivated like the tea rose in a garden. Left unattended and unfed, the rose will languish and thistle will grow in its place” (p.178).

As a foreigner living in Japan with my family, the different cultural experiences and values around me make me confused and excited. Here, I remember much knowledge that has been taught me by my grandmother and mother as I teach my daughters. And in another way, behaving as the little girl in Little Red Riding Hood or the young sister in Hokoubou, I face very different cultural habits from my Japanese friends around me and have to adjust myself to suit this varied value existing where I live.

To be a girl at home, I follow my mother's advice to learn how to be a grown-up at home. After marriage, I have to manage my own family with a man who has values different from my own. In growing up, girl or woman behaves or experiences many new trials and allusions as Little Red Riding Hood did if she pays attention to it. To be a mother with two daughters, I imitate somehow as the mother does for the little girl in “Little Red Riding Hood”. In fact, I conceive the importance of the fairy tales. Fairy tales are not simply stories for the young girl only. Most fairy tales pass on conventional wisdom. And the authors transfer them into their works to cherish human's imagination to live. Thus, how can we ignore the fairy tales.

Living abroad, as Little Red Riding Hood, I experience cultural conflicts. Japanese around me sometimes assume the role of my grandmother to help me or as my mother to teach me how to live here. Thanks to Japanese friends and neighbors who help me to enjoy their culture. Sometimes, like Cinderella, I have to face teasing from the powerful Japanese women who behave like the step mother in “Cinderella” or evil sisters and I learn how to solve my problems caused by these culture conflicts.

Scientific progress grows speedily. People are connected by the convenient transportation and the global economics. Living abroad is not a dream.

Daily, we play as the Little Red Riding Hood is exciting by new challenge. Each person has his or her own family culture. Every day we face varied cultural conflicts with different people. It is important to nurture in ourselves a heart of virtue and creation. Behaving like Little Red Riding Hood nourishing yourself with the creation of fairy tales. And why not keep a creation in amusing your own fairy tale in your life? Then, not only will men be friendly, but also woman will be kind to their female comrades as was grandmother of “Little Red Riding Hood” who loved the little heroine instead of teasing her as the stepmother and evil sisters in “Cinderella” do. The other woman is not your rival, looking her as your female sibling. In *Fearless Girls, Wise Women & Beloved Sister*, Kathleen Ragan convinces “we women must discover, understand, accept, respect, and love who we are” (xxvii). Finally, let we women love our female siblings more than tease our female comrades. Is it a true global figures for an intelligent woman to do, isn't it?.

Notes:

- Bacchilega, Christina *Postmodern Fairy Tales: Gender and Narrative Strategies*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Pennsylvania 1997
- Crump, R.W. *The Complete Poems Christina Rossetti*, Louisiana State University Press, London, 1990
- Dundes, Alan. *Little Red Riding Hood: A Case Book*, the University of Wisconsin Press, England 1989
- Ryan, Mi-ar *A Guidance of Fairy Tales (經典童話入門)*. Taiwan Students Press, Taipei, 2009
- Regan, Kathleen *Fearless Girls, Wise Women & Beloved Sisters, Heroines in Folktales from around the World*, Norton, 2000
- Zipes, Jack. *Fairy Tale As Myth, Myth as Fairy Tale*, The University press of Kentucky, 1994
- *Breaking the Magic Spell, Radical Theories of Folk & Fairy Tales*, The University Press of Kentucky, 1979

Managing a Plural Society: Issues and Challenges of Multiculturalism in Malaysia

Tan Cheng Im

0054

IPGK TUANKU BAINUN, Malaysia

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2012

Official Conference Proceedings 2012

Abstract:

Malaysia is a multi-racial country which comprises different ethnic such as Malays, Chinese, Indian and indigenous people. Each ethnic has its own religion, language and culture. To foster a better relation between people of different cultural and religious background is not a straightforward job. It needs to nurture within the various religious and cultural groups and communities with a deeper sense of understanding, togetherness and sharing of common values. This paper discusses some of the issues and challenges occur among various communities in Malaysia, and efforts to eliminate these barriers.

iafor

The International Academic Forum

www.iafor.org

1. Introduction

Malaysia is a multi-racial country which comprises different ethnics. Among the population, 67.4% of them are Malays, Chinese make up 24.6% of the population, Indians comprise 7.3% of the population, and 0.7% are the multiple groups of “natives” of Sabah and Sarawak, and the “*Orang Asli*” or indigenous groups of the peninsular (Malaysia, 2012).

Although Malaysia is a “Malay dominated plural society”, the freedom of practicing other religions is granted to everyone (Shamsul, 1998). Each ethnic group has its own religion, language and culture. All the Malays are Muslims, most of the Chinese are Buddhists, Taoists, Confucian practices, Christians, and a small number of converted Muslims. Majority of the Indians are Hindus, with a small number of Christians or converted Muslims.

Malaysia has gained its independence since 1957; however, the question of a national identity that should form the backbone of unity is still vague to the citizens. The different ethnic groups continue to live in the same society but each group effectively operating within their own separate 'compartment'; they may celebrate different festivals together, but the celebrations sometimes seem to go on without embracing the values of total unity (Najib Tun Razak, 2008). The sense of 'ethnic identity' amongst many members of these ethnic groups is still very strong, and there is little indication that this will simply dissolve in the face of festivals celebration. Certain features of the ethnic identity, most notably perhaps skin colour, which individuals cannot change even if they so wish, continue to distinguish them from other members of the society. Therefore, to foster a better relation between people of different cultural and religious background is deemed necessary.

In fact, managing ethnic relations in Malaysia remain one of its' main challenges. There is a need to understand the dynamics, patterns and trends of how each ethnic group relate, perceive and act towards each other in the process of managing and stabilizing the differences among the multi-ethnic groups (Salfarina, Mohd. Zaini, Azeem Fazwan, 2009). It is not a straightforward job. It needs to nurture within the various religious, cultural groups and communities with a deeper sense of understanding, togetherness and sharing of common values.

This article looks into the stumbling blocks or issues and challenges faced by Malaysia in managing a plural society, and ways of eliminating the barriers. It comprises three sections: (1) Malaysian society - issues and challenges; (2) efforts on eliminating the barriers; and (3) a final conclusion.

2. Malaysian Society - Issues and Challenges

There are issues and challenges that are peculiar to any multi-racial, multi-religious and multi-cultural country, Malaysia is no exception. Among the issues and challenges that often take center stage in managing a plural society in Malaysia including political, ethnic diversity, as well as education and language.

2.1 Political

Malaysia was granted independence in 1957 after nearly two centuries of colonial rule. With more than 50 years of independence, multi-culturalism as a socio-cultural and political

construct is still debated at various levels of society, as well as in different domains (Raihanah, 2009).

In order to understand the state of pluralism in Malaysia, it is important to first understand the pre and post-colonial brief history of Malaysia. According to Hefner (2001),

“Early nineteenth century Malaysia represented a period when it was covered with “vast forest expanses and [a] relatively small Malay population who were mostly situated in the peninsula’s few fertile rice growing regions” (Hefner 2001, p.18).

Malaysia (the then Malaya) was rich with natural resources like mining and plantations. The British did not teach the Malays the skills of trade as they worried the Malays might revolt their colonialism. Malaysia was the largest tin producer in the world during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. As a result of the shortage of the labourers, the British invited the Chinese to share their expertise in tin mining, and the Indians to work in the rubber industry.

The coming of the Chinese and Indian ethnic groups altered the ethno-pluralistic setting of Malaysia. In addition, these different ethnic groups did not intermingle with each other, but mainly within their own ethnic groups under colonialism. The Malays were in the rural areas, most of the educated Malays were hired as government servants, while Chinese people were in the trade industry, and Indians people in the plantation (Yeoh, 2007). The lack of interaction between these different ethnic groups resulted in each ethnic group’s lack of knowledge of each other, and lack of a common social will. This type of social segregation give rises to unsettling political trait (Hefner, 2001).

Apart from that, the “vernacularization” of Malaysia’s electoral politics were ethnic based since pre-independence – United Malays National Organization (UMNO) that represent the Malays, Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) which stand for the Chinese and the Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC) that represent the Indians (Wan Norhasniah, 2011). As a result of the political bargaining between the major ethnic political groups of Malaysia, Malays retained their special position, their language as the official language, and their religion Islam as the national religion (Ibrahim, 2006).

As mentioned by Hefner (2001),

“According to Article 153, those who “profess the religion of Islam, habitually speak the Malay language, and conform to Malay customs” are entitled for special reservation of quotas in three specific areas: public services, education, and business licenses, without harming the rights of other ethnic groups. Thus it is important to emphasize that Malaysia is founded “not on individual rights but on what political theorists have come to

refer to as ‘ethnically differentiated citizenship’ (Hefner, 2001, pp29).

On the other hand, non-Malay ethnic groups such as the Chinese and Indians were granted citizenship, their rights of residence, as well as their freedom to preserve, practice and propagate their religion, culture and language (Ibrahim, 2006).

However, as the ethnic stability of the country was destabilized under the “divide and rule” policy, the Chinese was perceived as a threat to the Malays (Hefner, 2001), they were perceived as being wealthier than others. Thus the different ethnic groups of Malaysia built a silent wall between them because of the misperceptions. There have been cases in Malaysian history in which the ruling party has allowed racist reactions to be used against the non-Malay communities (Kua, 2007). For example, the appeals by the Chinese Associations of Malaysia (Suqiu) is one of the case.

In short, whatever attempts taken by the government in order to protect the unique ethnic and racial diversity of Malaysia, the ethnic-based political parties and the political leaders which survive on ‘ethnic support and loyalties’, indirectly insulated, segregated and ethnicised individual Malaysians. Till date, Malaysians are usually united or homogenized within their respective ‘ethnic psychic’ realms within everyday-life.

2.2 Ethnic Diversity

Peoples and Bailey (2006) said,

“An ethnic group is a named social category of people based on perceptions of shared social experience or ancestry. Members of the ethnic group see themselves as sharing cultural traditions and history that distinguish them from other groups. Ethnic group identity has a strong psychological or emotional component that divides the people of the world into the categories of ‘us’ and ‘them.’ In contrast to social stratification which divides and unites people along a series of horizontal axes on the basis of socioeconomic factors, ethnic identities divide and unify people along a series of vertical axes. Thus ethnic groups, at least theoretically, cross-cut socioeconomic class differences, drawing members from all strata of the population.” (People & Bailey, 2006, p355).

As mentioned earlier, the British policy had changed Malaysia from a ethnically homogenous society to a more pluralistic society. Thus, ethnic domination becomes the most important consideration aspect, either in social, political or economic.

People carry with them socially and individually derived representations of themselves, either the way they view others, or their preferred modes for interactions. These types of unconsciousness have a tremendous influence on people’s behavior and the ways in which they interpret the environment. Therefore an ethnic diversity environment would create challenges which might result in conflict, negotiation and self-reflection.

Malaysian well-known historian, Professor Khoo Kay Kim in a public discourse on ethnic relations, expressed his concern that the ethnic relationships in Malaysia was still in a “fragile state” (*The New Sunday Times*, 19 February 2006). His concern in fact also reflected most of the Malaysians’ concern, where each ethnic group knows very little about one another beyond the prejudices and stereotypes that they learnt from the rumour ‘tradition’ at the family and grassroots level in Malaysia.

Ethnicity has been asserted as the dividing line in Malaysia, while the culture, mother tongue, the religion and the locality become the identification of the populations. Hence the strong link to the traditions influence each ethnic to defend their rights, and this lead to changes in national entities like culture, politics and economy to suit each community’s interests (Deutrsch, 1963:11).

In fact, the colonial policy of ‘divide and rule’ has created a society that was only symbolically plural. The lack of interaction between different ethnic groups resulted in each ethnic group’s lack of knowledge of each other. In the most important religious and cultural areas, there are still substantial boundaries. For example, Islam is still considered the religion of the Malays. Indians are expected to be Hindus, and Chinese to be Buddhists/Taoists/Confucius practise or Christians. In addition, Muslims consider pork unclean, and Hindu will not eat the venerated cow. For the aspect of language, the Malays speak Malay language, Indians usually speak Tamil, and the Chinese speak a variety of dialects, and on publicly, speak Mandarin.

In addition, the significantly different languages and religious traditions in one way or another have created barriers among the Malaysians. Different ethnic groups live in a segregated physical location, thus it is not uncommon for young Malaysians to grow up in their specific ethnic socio-cultural environment, be it Malay, Chinese or Indian. Each ethnic group would fight for their right to practice their traditional cultures such as rituals, language, education system, politics, economics and arts. A conflict would ignite if there were discrimination or any attempt that threaten them as they regard as signatory to their being Malay, Chinese, Indian or other groups (Kua, 2007).

There was deterioration, some provocation and fractionalisation through words and actions because the country’s leadership was tolerating. For example, in September 2009, some protesters carried the decapitated head of a cow, a sacred animal in the Hindu religion, to an Indian temple. No action been taken against the protesters’ actions, on the other hand, they were defended by the country’s leadership (Malott, 2011).

Apart from that, two months later after the above protesters’ action, there was fractionalising words during the senate meeting in the Parliament, where other ethnic groups were low spirit of patriotism as there were overwhelmingly Malays in the armed forces. Later, due to the public pressure, the minister had to apologize (Malott, 2011).

2.3 Education and Language

The different ethnic groups in Malaysia often defended the preservation of their culture through the field of education and language usage. In the early years of independence, education and language policies were formulated with communal identities and interest in mind. For example, in the context of Malaysia as a Malay nation, “the sovereignty of the Malay language” was considered a symbol of the Malay nature of the state.

Razak Report which was outlined in 1956 proposed and established the policy below: (i) a national education system, the Malay language as the national language, and the medium of instruction; (ii) an environment-oriented curriculum with a local flavour with English language, Mandarin and Tamil language to be the medium of instruction for all national-type schools; and (iii) a common syllabus for all schools. However, the implementation of the Malay language as the medium of instruction was not enforced with immediate effect. Selected pupils from national-type primary schools were given a grace period of one year (Remove class) to intensively study the English language before proceeding with the English language as the medium of instruction (Choong, 2008).

Malay as the national language was endlessly debated subject. In order to help quell the feeling of dissatisfaction among the Malays, and making Malay the sole official language of the country, the National Language Act of 1967 was formulated. Many Malay leaders demanded immediate implementation of the National Language, in addition, the UMNO members and Alliance parliamentarians who formed the National Language Action Front (NLAF) strongly opposed the 1967 Bill, and commented that UMNO had sold out the Malays by being gradual towards the implementation of the national language and too liberal towards the use of other languages. The main concern underlying the strong opposition of the National Language Action Front (NLAF) was with the promotion of English vis-à-vis Malay.

One of the justifications for the implementation of a National Language in the past was that it would facilitate easier access to employment. Today, the Malay language has surpassed English in its usage in Malaysia because it has been deeply ingrained within the community. In addition, it also functions as a common language which has been widespread use and unites a multiracial community. Different ethnic communities cannot communicate effectively if they only emphasize on their distinct language.

However, with the rapid progress of information technology, the importance of English as the international lingua franca has been reemphasized. One of the important requirements that the employers seek today is the ability to speak and communicate in English.

In order to produce a Malaysian nation builds on a love for the country and the abolition of ethnic differences amongst its citizens, and in line with the country’s aspiration to achieve Vision 2020, the government initiative and introduce a new concept school, the Vision School. Under the Vision School concept, three schools clustered in one common area, that is national primary school, national type Chinese primary school and national type Tamil primary school. These schools are connected to one another by a link-way. In other words, pupils of different ethnics study together in a common area (Choong, 2008).

However, various Chinese associations strongly object the proposal because they fear that the use of Malay language as the medium of instruction will imposed and threaten the development and the future of the vernacular schools and their own mother tongue. These realities are because the ruling elite is strategically placed to reap the full benefits of the Malays' special right policy, and the reluctance of the government to allow development of the mother-tongue schools of the non-Malays (Kua, 2007).

Language is function as a tool of communication for the basic understanding between two persons; however this simple matter at times have been converted into racial issues by some ambitious politicians, and language has become a major symbol that reveals the identity of an ethnic which portray an ethnic's internal values (Edwards, 1985). Hence the topic of education and language has been highlighted and became sensitive.

It is understandable that there are obstacles to achieve a common ideology between majority and minority ethnic groups regarding the school system. The Malay would not agree to any ideology that was not entirely Malay, while the Chinese and Indians struggle for equality, justice and their rights towards identity and culture (Hazri, 2010).

3. Suggestions on Eliminating the Barriers

While Malaysia aspires to become a role model to other countries, the solution to the Malaysian dilemma must first be confronted and solved. Steps have been taken in order to eliminate the barriers among the ethnics in Malaysia through (i) New Economy Policy (NEP) which meant to restructure the society and eradicate the poverty; (ii) 1Malaysia concept; and (iii) education.

3.1 New Economy Policy (NEP)

Malaysians understand that ethnic conflict could reverse the positive outlook on religious and ethnic harmony, driving off the foreign investment, tourism and multinational corporations that have carefully courted (Heim, 2004).

In order to eradicate the poverty and restructure the society, the New Economic Policy was introduced in 1971. It is important to emphasize that despite NEP's strong bias toward the Malays, it also aimed to improve the conditions of non-Malays as well, the economic pie has to be divided equally, to not single out any race so that the pie is shared by all races. As mentioned by Heng (1998),

“Through the NEP the nation was committed to an ambitious 20-year policy of not only reducing the level of (Malay) poverty, but more significantly, to increasing the Malay share of the national wealth while integrating the Malays into the urban economic sector. The success of the policy was to be measured chiefly in terms of numerical targets set for Malay and non-Malay ownership of corporate equity: between 1970 and 1990, the Malay share was to increase from 2.4 percent to 30 percent., the non-Malay (mainly Chinese) share from 32.3

percent to 40 percent, and the foreign share to drop from 63.3 percent to 30 percent” (Heng 1998, p.67).

Malaysia has been succeeded, at least to one large extent to restructure the society. In addition, government policies should be strategically aimed at reducing income disparity between the rich and poor regardless of race, religion, gender, disability or political affiliation (Kua, 2007).

3.2 Through 1Malaysia Concept

A genuinely pluralist society cannot be achieved without the social integration of ethnic communities within a common whole. In order to inculcate the sense of belongings, as well as the spirit and values of togetherness regardless of race and religion, Malaysian Prime Minister Dato Seri Najib Razak had launched the “1 Malaysia Concept” on 16 September 2008.

During the launching of 1 Malaysia concept in 2008, the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Mohd. Najib Razak said,

“Under the concept of 1Malaysia, being tolerant is just the beginning; the next paradigm is to move from tolerance to total acceptance. In other words, when we accept the differences in our society we accept diversity as something unique, something that provides us with a very colourful tapestry in our society, something that actually can give us strength and not otherwise.”
(Najib, 2008).

“1 Malaysia Concept” is a guiding principle to build a united and progressive nation; it is looking to recast the mould into a form which retains the fundamental principles of the original but within broader pluralist conspectus diversity within unity.

In addition, Malaysia has decided on integration as opposed to assimilation. By leveraging the robustness and dynamism of the diversity, Malaysia has created a foundation for the national resilience. Malaysians already accept their diversity, and the nation does not merely tolerate each other, but also embrace and celebrate.

3.3 Education

One of the ways in the integrating and uniting the various races and ethnics is through education by inculcating the values to respect the differences such as culture and lifestyle among the citizens.

The first step to creating a solution is to *know* the “other”, engage themselves in discussions concerning ethnic and religious pluralism, because more contact between different ethnic groups will lead to more understanding and better relationships. Therefore “Ethnic Relations”

has been introduced as a compulsory university course to the newly enrolled university students since 2007 (Shamsul A. B, 2008).

In fact Malaysian population have changed their perception of their identity and status, especially among the younger generation which have been born directly into a multiracial community, where they regard Indonesians, Bangladeshis, Filipino or Vietnamese as immigrant workers, while Chinese and Indians as Malaysians (Leigh & Lip, 2009). Within Malaysia, people identify themselves according to their ethnic groups; outside Malaysia, they place country above ethnicity and introduce themselves as Malaysian (Lukman, 2001).

Accepting Malaysia as a multi-ethnic country with conflicting cultural values, education continues to play an important role of unifying and integrating the multi-ethnic groups in Malaysia. In order to equip the society for the challenges and demands of development and globalisation in the twenty first century, the need to inculcate unity and reduce conflicts between ethnics has been emphasized.

4. Conclusion

Malaysia has developed its own mould as a multiracial country, it is blessed not only with ethnic diversity but also of culture, language and religion. Diversity, dialogue and peaceful co-existence are important themes in Malaysia, and national unity continues to be the overriding objective.

Although plurality and diversity remain one of Malaysia's main challenges, it is not the end ; on the other hand, it also offer heightened interaction among intercultural and inter-racial groups which leads to the development of intercultural harmony and sensitivity, inculcate tolerance as well as sense of reciprocity among the Malaysians (Zaid Ahmad, Nobaya Ahmad, Haslinda Abdullah, 2009).

“Malaysia is a country rich in such juxtapositions [combining development with old Islamic traditions], sometimes jarring to sensibilities formed in other cultures. The juxtapositions suggest that historical processes rarely repeat themselves identically and that our familiar constellations of ideas and movements are not fixed. They are subject to reformulation. What is under way in Malaysia is one possible future for Islam. And with that Islamic future Christianity may, God willing, have a fruitful and a peaceful appointment “(Heim, 2004).

Heim's (2004) perception revealed the various forces of Malaysian society have been, and indeed are still at work within it.

In short, although Malaysians have been living in a society dominated by many contradictions, they have managed to solve most of them through a continuous process of consensus-seeking negotiations.

References

- Choong, L.K.(2008). *Philosophy and Education in Malaysia*. Kumpulan Budiman Sdn. Bhd, Kuala Lumpur.
- Deutsch, K.W. (1963). The Study of Nation-Building, 1962-1966, in *Nation-Building*, ed. Deutsch, K.W. & Foltz, W.J. Chicago: Adline Atherton Press.
- Edwards, J.R, (1985). *Language, Society and Identity*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Ibrahim, Anwar. (2006) . 'Islam in Southeast Asia', in an interview given at The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, Washington D.C. (April 7, 2006), [Online] Retrieve 20 April, 2012. Available: <http://pewforum.org/events/index.php?EventID=110>
- Ibrahim, Zawawi. (2006). 'Globalization and National Identity: Managing Ethnicity and Cultural Pluralism in Malaysia' *Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies (APCSS)*, [Online] Available: [http://www.apcss.org/Publications/Edited%20Volumes/GrowthGovernance files/Pub_Growth%20Governance/Pub_GrowthGovernancech9.pdf](http://www.apcss.org/Publications/Edited%20Volumes/GrowthGovernance%20files/Pub_Growth%20Governance/Pub_GrowthGovernancech9.pdf)
- Kua, K.S. (2007). Racial Eyesores on the Malaysian Landscape. Retrieve 10 May 2012. Available: <http://malaysiakini.com>.
- Hazri, J. (2010). Historical Overview of Malaysia's Experience in Enhancing Equity and Quality of Education: Focusing on Management and Mediation of Multiethnic Issues. Africa-Asia Experience Sharing Seminar, Accra Ghana 19-21 Jan 2010.
- Heim, S. Mark. 2004, 'A Different Kind of Islamic State', *The Christian Century* (October 5, 2004) used by permission in Religion Online [Online] Retrieve 22 April, 2012. Available: <http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=3136>
- Hefner, R. W. (2001). 'Introduction: Multiculturalism and Citizenship in Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia' in *The Politics of Multiculturalism*, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu.
- Heng, P.K. (1998). 'Chinese Responses to Malay Hegemony in Peninsular Malaysia (1957-1996)' in *Cultural Contestations: Mediating Identities in a Changing Malaysian Society*, ed. Z. Ibrahim, Asean Academic Press, London.
- Leigh. M & Lip. B. (2009). Transitions in Malaysian Society and Politics: Towards Centralizing Power. Pp 300 – 322.

- Lokman Z. Mohamad. (2001). "Tranformasi Bentuk Malaysia dan Identiti Nasional", Conference paper, August 2001. (<http://phuakl.tripod.com/pssm/conference/LukmanMohamad.doc>).
- Malaysia. (2012). *Department of Statistic, Malaysia*. Retrieve 20 April 2012 at <http://www.statistic.gov.my>
- Malott, J.R.(2011). The Price of Malaysia's Racism. *The Wall Street Journal*.
- Najib Tun Abdul Razak. (2008). *1Malaysia*. Bahagian Penerbitan Dasar Negara
- Peoples, James and Garrick Bailey. (2006). *Humanity: An Introduction to Cultural Anthropology* 7th ed. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth,
- Raihanah M.M. (2009). Malaysia and The Author Face-to-Face with the Challenges of Multiculturalism. *IJAPS*. Vol.5 No.2. pp 43-63.
- Salfarina Abdul Gapor, Mohd. Zaini Abu Bakar, Azeem Fazwan Ahmad Farouk. (2009). Explaining Ethnic Relations in Malaysia Through the "Concentric Circle Model": Case Studies of the States of Perak and Kelantan, Malaysia. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. 12, No. 2, 252 – 258.
- Shamsul Amri Baharuddin. (1998). Debating about identity in Malaysia: A discourse analysis. In Zawawi Ibrahim (Ed.). 1998. *Cultural Contestations. Mediating Identities in a Changing Malaysian Society* (pp 17-50). London: ASEAN Academic Press.
- Shamsul Amri Baharuddin. (2008). *Many Ethnicities, Many Culture, One Nation: The Malaysian Experience*, KITA, UKM.
- The Star. (2006). 'Ethnic Relations module withdrawn', *The Star Online* (July 20, 2006), [Online] Retrieve 5 May, 2012. Available: <http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2006/7/20/nation/14893179&sec=nation>
- Wan Norhasniah Wan Husian. (2011). Nation Building and 1Malaysia Concept: Ethnic Relations Challenges in the Educational Field. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*. Vol. 1 No.9, 228-237.
- Yeoh, C.R. (2006). Malaysia, Truly Asia? Religious Pluralism in Malaysia. *The Pluralism Project Research Report*. pp1 – 37.
- Zaid Ahmad, Nobaya Ahmad & Haslinda Abdullah. (2009). Urbanism, Space and Human Psychology: Value Change and Urbanization in Malaysia. *European Journal of Social Science*. Vol 11. No 3, 464-469.

Showa Women Writers on Food: Koda Aya

Ekaterina Phartushnaya

0055

Hokkaido University, Japan

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2012

Official Conference Proceedings 2012

A large, faint watermark of the iafor logo is centered on the page. It consists of two overlapping circular arcs, one in a light blue color and one in a light red color, with the lowercase text 'iafor' in a light blue font positioned in the center where they overlap.

iafor

iafor

The International Academic Forum

www.iafor.org

The tradition of women writers in Japan established its roots in the 10th century. Peculiarities of Japanese female writing are often depicted by the inspired descriptions of familiar things of everyday utilization known to their closed-world household environments rather than items associated with the unknown, outside world. In this research we examine the essays of a most unique Japanese woman writer from the Shōwa period; one almost undiscovered outside Japan: Kōda Aya.

We investigate the concept of food in her writings while adjusting our focus to Kōda's usage of food for the purposes of non-verbal communication within a family. Food provided family members the ability to indirectly express mutual feelings towards each other whilst maintaining strict family hierarchical structures. In reviewing Kōda's works, we discovered that certain utilization of food had a synergetic role in the Japanese family and often stood as relationship mediator between its members.

We will review two essays by Kōda Aya: "Zen Table" (*Zen*) and "Daily Dish" (*Sōzai*). Our research will outline the role of food depicted in her works as a precursor for understanding new perspectives on the family in a transitional Shōwa period.

Keywords: Shōwa, Japanese women writers, food, family patterns, family relationships

1. Introduction

One remarkable trait of Japanese literature is the appearance of the women writers in a very early era (Sei Shōnagon, Murasaki Shikibu were writers in the 10th century). Ever since their initial recognition, Japanese female writers have managed to maintain a stable literary position otherwise known as *josei sakka* in Japan.

Another peculiarity where Japanese literature stands out in comparison with Western traditions is its long tradition of *zuihitsu* ("following the brush") genre. The aforementioned Sei Shōnagon became famous for her "Pillow Book", which is a collection of *zuihitsu*. Traditionally, in Western literature genres such as novels, plays, poetry, etc. have become the mainstream that defines the literary tendencies. However, in Japan, the *zuihitsu* has widespread readership supported by a variety of popular writers. Keene, a renowned researcher of Japanese literature, poignantly defines *zuihitsu* as "the miscellaneous jottings that formed a prominent part of the Japanese literary heritage".(1999, p.561) Hence, *zuihitsu* is a recognized Japanese literary phenomenon with a strong emphasis on free writing structures that are

similar to those found in published memoirs, diaries, travel notes, and other genres in the West generally referred to as "essay." Consequentially, in Western culture, the essay is traditionally considered to be a secondary form of literary prose. Thus, we can say, that the long-time flowering of the essays written by Japanese female writers is a literary phenomenon.

A distinct feature of the Japanese women writers' essays is the structure, wherein the narration is often built around particular physical objects, primarily houseware or food as said objects. There are many examples of houseware and food depictions in Western literature as well, but Japanese female writers are well-known for their very unique narration when describing such objects. Western literature plotlines are traditionally developed through characters dialogues and monologues or by means of describing their psychological state whilst interacting with other characters and objects. In Japanese female writers' essays that role is often fulfilled by the descriptions of certain material objects, foods, and their existence encompassing overall presence. Curiously, these relationships are often bigger than the protagonist's own individual role often even claiming the title of the story; for example "Sweets" (*Kashi*), "Roasted Soybeans" (*Irimame*), "Lie and Bread" (*Uso to pan*), "Daily Dish" (*Sōzai*), "Onigiri Imprints" (*Onigiri-shō*), etc. There are numerous examples when the description of material objects and food becomes the main structural principle behind the narration while the message from the author has nothing to do directly with either of those objects or food item.

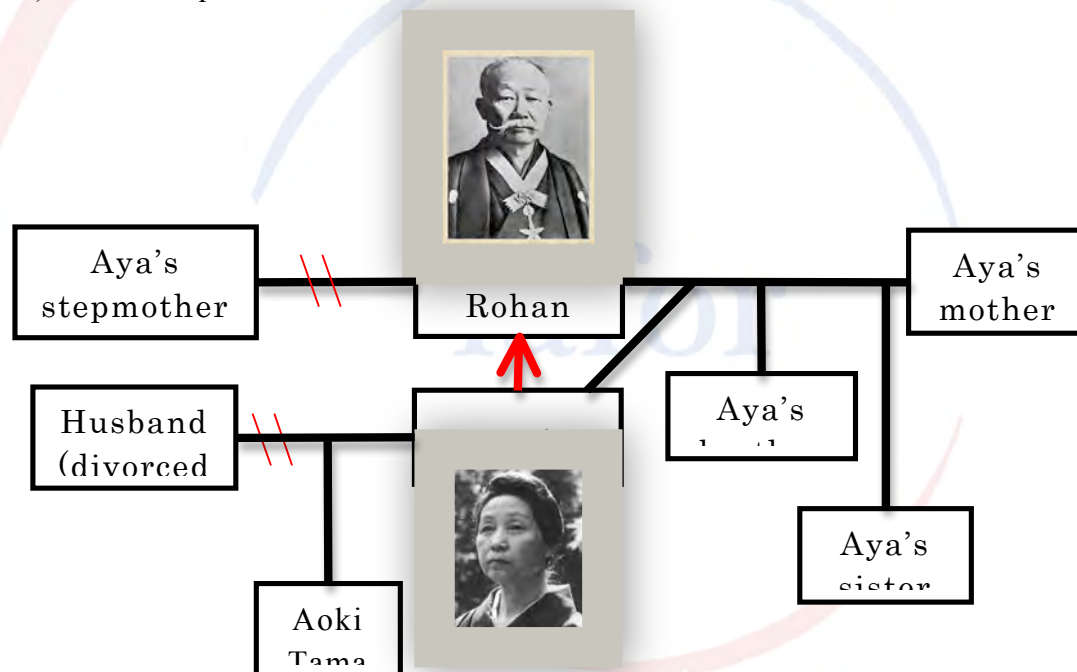
In this study we will introduce a famed Japanese woman writer Kōda Aya (1904 – 1990) whose food narration stands out most recognizably. In many cases her depiction of food surpasses food as a physical commodity insofar that it becomes a backdrop for abstracting inter-family relationships, gender aspects, personal value systems, and other vital phenomena.

1.1. Methodology

For this study numerous Kōda Aya essays about her family were reviewed while paying close attention to her metaphoric references and depictions of food and other related topics. Furthermore an extensive review of both Japanese and foreign critiques on Kōda's works was conducted. The information provided in the literature review supports many of the findings in this study. All literary quotes arranged in this study were selected from essays by Kōda Aya and then translated from Japanese into English by the author.

2. Introducing Kōda Aya

Kōda Aya was born at the end of the Meiji period, reared in Taishō, and lived through a long Shōwa period until her final days met in Heisei. Kōda Aya was primarily a Shōwa writer, during which Japan experienced numerous happenings, including a world conquest that ended in surrender, a post-war economic boom that was built on the shoulders of the "corporate samurais" (*kigyō samurai*), followed by a bubble-burst economy that still haunts modern Japan today. These dramatic events inevitably reflected major impacts on the mindset and values of the Japanese society including new family patterns which experienced many changes both structurally and relationship-wise therein. Here, we believe that by investigating the roles of food in Kōda's works we can track the peculiarities, differences, and trends in the family patterns of the Japanese household from late Meiji through Shōwa. For the brightest examples of how Kōda uses food to express the aforementioned we shall investigate two short essays by her: "Zen Table" (*Zen*, 1950) and "Daily Dish" (*Sōzai*, 1956) and also quotes from her interviews.



- The second daughter of famous Meiji period novelist Koda Rohan. At the age of five, she lost her mother, and later her older sister and younger brother.

Figure 1: The Kōda Family Tree

3. Functions of Food in Kōda's Works

3.1. Parent-child Ties

Kōda Aya only wrote about personal experiences. The essays discussed in this study directly involve interactions with her family members, and in order to understand her literary standpoint, we found it necessary to provide a brief description of her personal life and family tree shown in Figure 1. When it comes to the discussion of food-related issues in Kōda's works, the first thing that comes into view is her father's existence – Kōda Rohan, a renowned Meiji writer. Having lost her mother at

a young age, Aya learned everything about maintaining the house, including cooking and cleaning, from her father. And after her mother-in-law became sick with rheumatism, even breakfasts became solely Aya's responsibility. Later in life, after Aya's failed marriage ended in divorce, she returned to her father's house and, naturally, picked up where she left off in regards to his dining schedules.

Aya started her career as a writer from composing essays about her famous father, and she inevitably brings up food and kitchen themes throughout many of her works. Interestingly, those kitchen depictions do not appear as just sporadic snippets of everyday life, but play a role of revealing Aya's feelings and thoughts about her own life as she often reflects on her memories and interpersonal relationships. We shall review a few elegant passages by Kōda Aya and analyze her keen usage of food in this context.

For example, in the very beginning of her short essay "Daily Dish" she depicts her father's insatiable demands for tasty dishes as follows: "When it comes to gourmets, I think there are two types of them. First one relishes unique delicious things or food prepared by high-class chefs. The second one of course also enjoys delicatessen, but at the same time cannot eat any food unless it's cooked to the highest possible palatableness on all levels. Furthermore, the latter throws complaints at every opportune moment during each meal and tortures women who cook at home. My father was exactly the latter." (*Bancha gashi* 1993, p.116) To satisfy the culinary liking of this type of person was obviously not an easy task for Aya. Not only the taste of the served meal mattered to Rohan, but he was also very sensitive to the atmosphere in which it was served and eaten. If his daughter became too enthusiastic and made too much fuss when preparing a routine lunch she was scolded by her father for ruining the afternoon harmony. Aya apparently understands his complaints thinking though that it was Rohan himself who was partially at fault for noisily disturbing the harmony. Here she writes, "Oh, I see. I guess, noisy service damages the taste, but on my behalf I couldn't help blurting out, 'Daddy, aren't you being a little too harsh on me here?!'" (p.116) However, taking father's remarks personally and trying hard to satisfy his needs, Aya eventually became accustomed to his demands and gradually adapted her style. These personality adjustments had deeply influenced her values in future life.

Whenever Rohan appears in her essays, Aya never discusses his glorified literary works; rather she focuses on his opinions towards cleaning, cooking, serving, and other mundane issues. Of course, those nuggets of wisdom were not the only thing Aya learned from her father. Rohan often discussed the arts and literature, but he never directly lectured Aya on these topics. Thanks to her father, Aya was passively

exposed to various critical opinions of literary works by contemporaries in Rohan's writing circles. Consequentially, this laudable disposition inadvertently greatly influenced her literary preferences and writing style for the future. Nevertheless, Aya feels grateful to Rohan not for the opportunity to absorb his deep knowledge regarding lofty matters, but rather for eating her food thereby showing his love and acceptance to her. A discussion on arts and literature would only be a one-way action from Rohan which could not establish a proper dialogue with a daughter who had little to say back if anything at all. But watching her father happily eating the food she served filled Aya with happiness as it was proof of their bond, and she was clearly aware of that. Aya sums it up as follows: "What strongly connected me and my father was never writing or arts. It was a simple kitchen and food." (*Daidokoro-chō* 2009, p.12) – the last line from Aya's short essay "Zen Table". This heartfelt story begins with how after her mother's death it was her father who reared her on the daily processions for preparing rice and tea for her mother's Buddhist altar. These responsibilities later included preparations for the small *zen* table for death anniversary offerings – all dishes were strictly made from scratch. Aya's strongest flashback from those days seems to be of her accidentally dropping rice grains while rinsing them under the tap water. Aya describes an angry Rohan who left a life-scarring impression on her saying: "One must have no heart to do a thing like that..." (p.11) As time went by, Aya mastered cooking and other *zen* table processions. She further states that her mishandling of rice that led to her father's fierce uproar was perhaps the one incident which gave Aya the strongest sense of mission and an even deeper dedication to her lost mother while preparing the *zen* table. (p.11)

In one of her interviews, describing their everyday exchange of loving feelings at home, Aya laughs talking about her dazzling excitement when Rohan quickly ate the hot mackerel she had prepared for him: "I did my best to fry a mackerel filet for my father and then I would quickly dash him the plate while it was still blisteringly hot. My father would devour it right there without skipping a beat. You could say that exchange made our connection." (Muramatsu 2009, p.192–193) In many of her works Aya vividly depicts the process of cooking and serving from different aspects, revealing an almost innate dignity within it. The relationship between a parent and a child in this case is more than simple subordination; one when the younger serves the older. This is a much stronger concept of *give and take* that could be summarized as a "I will serve for you – I will eat for you" type of exchange expressing mutual feelings between the food preparer and the partaker.

It is common knowledge that any child is born with a natural need to seek his or her parent's favor, and for Aya, who was considered by her father to be neither pretty nor smart, *service* – mostly that of cooking – became the means to gain that favor.

However, when her good intentions met hard realities, Aya's mood was known to turn darker as her negative perceptions of herself would often impress inerasable scenes in her own memory (as described above in the essay "Zen Table").

One communication peculiarity found in Japan is that of nonverbal culture. Putting one's feelings directly into words and then conveying those naked emotions to a partner has traditionally been considered a vulgar mode of communication for Japanese society. Regarding nonverbal communication, an indirect manner of expressing one's feelings is therefore necessary. The social norms surrounding the nonverbal culture still remain in modern Japan, but back in Kōda's Shōwa it was even more unnatural to verbalize one's emotions and attitudes.

Here we can conclude that in Kōda's essays food extends the meaning associated with an everyday household routine as it assumes a sort of mediator role for revealing the relationship between a father and a daughter.

As we can see thus far, their father-daughter relationship is symbolically portrayed through food and based on the subordinate pattern where one serves whilst the other one is being served. On the contrary, however, after Aya married, she found herself in a starkly different family pattern. And, as expected, once again she reveals that difference through food in yet other writings.

3.2. Traditional vs. Modern Family Patterns

After marriage Aya moved to her husband's house, and the relationship pattern within her new family was considerably different from Rohan's house in many aspects. Cooking and serving food for everyone was still Aya's duty, but in this new environment she was not treated as an unappreciated servant since women in her husband's family were treated more equally with their male counterparts. In her essays Aya often compared her new family to her old one. At Rohan's house, she assumed two interweaving roles, (1) regular family member, and (2) servant's position in her own family. The following passage from "Daily Dish" depicts her juxtaposition, "apart from the family's table, holding the kitchen all by myself, cooking and serving plates one after another". (*Bancha gashi* p.117) Then when Aya describes having dinner equally with her husband she quips, "The sauce grew cold, so did the broiled fish, and the deep fried morsels. Yet we all just sat at the table at the same time and went on with our eating." (p.118)

Perhaps for Aya food overlaps with basic human relationships. She had been treated

as a servant most of her life in her father's house, where meeting high demands forced her to endeavor to turn even simple foods into gourmet dishes. It was Aya's move to her husband's house where she finds herself released from that master-servant relationship and thrust into one where she could rest as an equal. On the contrary, however, Aya finds this realization less pleasant than anticipated as she says in the same essay: "Staying in my father's house you had to trade your place at the table next to your family for enjoying tasty food – you become a fixture of the kitchen. In my husband's house, however, selfless dedication to the kitchen was no longer expected of me, and as a result, all of a sudden I noticed myself no longer enjoying tasty dinners with my family." (p.119)

Being *upgraded* to a family member with more equal status can be seen as a critical factor that led Aya to forming her own independent persona. Notwithstanding, her case was obviously not as simple and logical. The kitchen was a special place for her, and the relationship with that topos was as complicated as her relationship with her father. Aya notices that her father's demands for tasty food served properly – sometimes so high that it only resembled extreme egocentrism – actually worked for enhancing the overall taste and enjoyment. Perhaps, as for Aya, pure joy is directly related to eating, and is not only limited to sharing the table. Rather it is a harmonic combination that derives from thinking thoroughly about the season, the original taste, cooking and serving with all your heart, then enjoying it all mindfully – she considers all these factors. Namely, throwing away certain principle values she had been developing since a young age whilst under the influence of her father was the price she had to pay to be treated equally as a family member in her husband's house.

After her husband failed to maintain the family *sake* business, Aya started to work just as hard as him (and sometimes even harder) in order to maintain living wages. In other words not only did she have to work inside the house as most women of her class, but also *outside*, which also solidifies her equal state with men. However, during this time in Japan it was very rare for women from middle and upper class families to enter the traditional workforce, let alone someone like a famed writer's daughter.

These new living patterns and concept of equality between men and women inside the family seemed to have never reached Aya's heart. For Aya, who based her writing on the inner world of the household, the harmony *inside* was much more important, than anything *outside*, in surrounding society. Aya, who never became accustomed to the eating all together at the same table and time, felt like she was losing her own value as a person. The equality of the family members was prioritized, and the food she cooked for everyone became cold and unpalatable, losing its desired flavor. It is almost as if at the point when Aya's family relationship became equal,

she naturally lost the means for expressing her feelings and, additionally, may have felt as if she was being deprived of her roots.

3.3. Kōda's Critiques

The egalitarian shift in the Shōwa family surfaced often throughout many of Kōda's works. In fact, she develops reservations towards expunging traditional values for uncharted relief and happiness. On these objections, critics of Kōda often report her attitude and world view as controversially conservative. While some critics such as Akiyama Shun honored her as a keeper of good old Japan by stating that "women's literature has continually clarified for us that certain something about our traditional Japanese disposition that is being undermined under radical modernization" (Tansman 1993, p.7), literary contemporaries of progressive proletarian views such as Hirabayashi Taiko went so far as accusing her of being a suppressor of women's social progress. Here Hirabayashi speaks critically of Kōda's ilk calling such women "chained to their room and kitchen", and "the brake for women's tidal wave towards a new dawn" (1979, p.254). The contemporary Japanese literature researcher Kishi Mutsuko cogitates Kōda's traditional relationship with her father and summarizes modern Japanese critics' opinion of Kōda's literary rhetoric as veraciously "anti-modern" (2007, p.3). Perhaps these critics mainly focused on the ideological issues of the text often disdaining its literary value. Keene comments on this type of literary dispute between Japanese literary critics of that time emphasizing that the "necessity for writers to abandon their private views in the interest of the people as a whole" (1999, p.503) was a typical theme of it.

4. Conclusion

In closing, it is important to point out that in Kōda's essays food plays a meaningful role for establishing and symbolizing the existence of a strong relationship between Aya and her father, in addition to the relationships between Rohan and his two wives, one marriage after the other.

Food was also employed to show the difference between two types of families: (1) *a traditional type* → in her father's home where Aya, being a woman, assumed a servant-like role for the family and (2) *a modern type* → in her husband's home, where Aya discovered herself as an equal. It was outside of Rohan's home where she unexpectedly discovered that new age equality does not necessarily lead to happiness and overall satisfaction in life.

Through cooking and serving Kōda Aya shows the changes in post-war Japan concerning the social position of women via her step-mother's example, who was

educated, had a progressive modern mindset and cared more about working outside rather than at home. Therefore it may be suggested that progressive ideas behind self-development and individuality were given priority over old family values which again did not lead to happy relationships in her family life.

As we can see, food was an integral component of Kōda's brilliant writings fulfilling a variety of functions, and thus pushing the boundaries of food in an otherwise mundane daily routine.

4.1. Future work

Kōda Aya's perspectives on the family pose many important questions regarding Shōwa women and their attitudes toward exchanging their positions at home with career-driven ones. Here it is believed, new dialogue in regards to the Western feminism movement may be established. Moreover, in recent years Western researchers have attempted to shed new light on Kōda's writings whilst maintaining Kōda's dignity in post-war Japan by applying non-conventional and less gender-focused models. For example, Sherif praises Kōda by stating, "Kōda offers a model of wisdom and the means by which to survive traumatic periods of change. The maturity and generosity of spirit evident in her narratives are qualities valued in times of great self-doubt whether personal or national." (1999, p.105) Furthermore, Tansman applauds Kōda's unique insights on life with the following: "Aya's writing thus elicits broad questions about modernity and gender in modern Japanese intellectual life, illuminating their interaction at a specific moment in postwar Japan." (1993, p.2)

Future research opportunities will allow us to investigate other popular Shōwa women writers who stressed opposing viewpoints (e.g. Hirabayashi Taiko, Hayashi Fumiko et al.) to Kōda's. These authors were strong Women's Rights advocates and maintained more presence in international media and publications. A comparative study here would provide insight on how Japanese women's attitudes towards their household duties and position in the family evolved in Japan during the dynamic period that was Shōwa.

Bibliography

Note: All Japanese books, except as otherwise noted, were published in Tokyo.

Hirabayashi, T. 1979, complete works, 10th vol.. Ushio Shuppansha.

Kanai, K. et al. 1998, *Kōda Aya no sekai*. Kanrin Shobō.

Keene, D. 1999, *Dawn to the West, A history of Japanese Literature*, vol.4. New York: Columbia University Press.

- Kishi, M. 2007, *Kōda Aya. Hito to bungaku*. Bensei shuppan.
Kōda, A. 1993, *Bancha gashi*. Kōdansha bungei bunko.
Kōda, A. (edited by Aoki T.) 2009, *Daidokoro-chō*. Heibonsha.
Muramatsu, T. 2009 *Kōda Aya-no macchi bako*. Kawade bunko.
Tansman, A.M. 1993, *The Writings of Kōda Aya. A Japanese Literary Daughter*.
New Haven & London: Yale University Press.
Sherif, A. 1999, *Mirror: The Fiction and Essays of Kōda Aya*. Honolulu: University
of Hawai'i Press.

The logo for the International Association for Cultural Studies (iafor) is centered on the page. It features the lowercase letters "iafor" in a light blue, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a circular graphic composed of two overlapping, brush-stroke-like arcs. The upper arc is a light red color, and the lower arc is a light blue color, creating a sense of movement and depth around the central text.

iafor

Confinement and Transgression in Eugene O'Neill's The Hairy Ape and Arthur Miller's The Crucible

Hui-Chun Li

0072

National Sun-Yat Sen university, Taiwan

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2012

Official Conference Proceedings 2012



iafor

iafor

The International Academic Forum

www.iafor.org

Eugene O'Neill's *The Hairy Ape* (1922) portrays a group of workers in the stokehole of a ship who are disciplined to power up the engine. The leader of the force, Yank, is represented as someone who views the privileged class as idlers who do not belong to his world. Douglas Mildred,¹ daughter of the corporate steel company owner, who considers herself useless and wants to make herself useful to the society, startles Yank by visiting the stokehole. She, in turn, is shocked by his primitive nakedness. Each a mirror² to the other, they³ reveal to each other unseen aspects of their own worlds. When she faints at his appearance, he feels insulted and angry. Yank decides to land on the metropolis where she belongs "in de window of a toy store" (183) and prove to the world that he is not an ape. He enters a world governed by unconscious desires for commodity, rationality and bureaucracy, and ends up being caged in the zoo and killed by an ape. His death is an ultimate transgression, of not given in to a living-dead life (either as workers on assembly-line, or as commodified humans), and a protest against a living confinement.

The self's protest against society is also depicted in Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* (1953). Where Yank protests against commodified life, Miller's protagonist John Proctor's will to transgression is directed against Salem's theocracy. Set in the seventeenth century, Miller rewrites the event of a Salem witch trial and exposes the conflicts between two antagonistic powers: the Topsfield-Nurse faction and old Salem, the deviant and the norm. Between these two opposing factions an absolute religious doctrine functions as an operational instrument for those in power. Thomas Putnam's clan conspires to overthrow Rebecca Nurse's clan because of Abigail Williams's behavior—dancing at night in the forest, an act the theocratic society deems demon and thus deviant from God's will. Just as Yank is being rejected and confined by the metropolis, so Proctor (representative of those who are victimized in the witchcraft scandal) is put to jail and excommunicated from the church of Salem. The metropolis's utopian goal is to achieve industrial progress and economic prosperity; that of Salem is to establish a totalitarian theocracy, manipulated by Putnam's clan and manifested through judicial practices. This paper aims to situate both Yank and Proctor as cultural products manufactured by utopian desires, under the cultural conditions of, respectively, industrial society and puritan theocracy. Societies always find ways to remove or confine the deviant; the types of society O'Neill and Miller depict achieve their goals by executing egregiously violent

¹ Her pretentious act of visiting the stokehole is ridiculed by her aunt as aggravating slums into international scale (2.155).

² Each of their selves is defined by the mirror, constituted by the looks of others.

³ The difference between nature and culture is only an optical illusion.

measures to do so. In reaction, such society will trigger a will to transgression and truth in the deviant self.

In his “O’Neill and the Future of the Theatre” Eugenio Montale mentions that with the influences of Synge, Ibsen and Strindberg, O’Neill’s themes oftentimes can be related to “classical myth and the spiritual dimensions of Greek tragedy” (71). Ralph A. Ciancio in his “Richard Wright, Eugene O’Neill, and *The Beast in the Skull*” sees a similarity between Richard Wright’s *Native Son* and Eugene O’Neill’s *The Hairy Ape*: the underlying message in both plays is that life is a struggle between Heaven and Hell. Both Yank and the protagonist in the *Native Son* are representatives of the working-class who protest against a society that favors capitalists. Ciancio takes the two protagonists as “symbolic Everyman who dangles between animalistic instincts and inchoate, spiritual yearnings” (46). He argues that *The Hairy Ape* is a source for *Native Son*, and that the issues with which Richard Wright and Eugene O’Neill are concerned share many similarities: racial issues, working-class’ living conditions as well as compassions for the hardship of human beings. Hugo Von Hofmannsthal discovers an analogy between Naguib Mahfouz’s *The Beggar* and *The Hairy Ape*. He thinks that the beggar and Yank are both marginalized people who are “excluded from the ordered world” (9) and cannot find a place where they belong. Wright, O’Neill and Mahfouz’s works all express compassion for the marginalized people and concern for the sentiments of alienation that all human beings experience since the Industrial Revolution. In an interview with Carol Bird, O’Neill says: “I care only for humanity. I wish to arouse compassion. For the unfortunate. The suffering. The oppressed” (52).

In addition to discussing the protagonist’s sense of not-belonging, Hubert Zarf analyzes the Hegelian-Marxist pattern in his “O’Neill’s *Hairy Ape* and the Reversal of Hegelian Dialectics.” He remarks that Yank’s anti-industrial action and his brotherly hug with the gorilla in the final scene shows the impossibility of belonging. Most critics suggest that Yank cannot find a place where he belongs because good living conditions on earth and the existence of heaven are essentially illusions. As the play unfolds, Yank goes on a madman’s journey in search for a solution of the problem of society—capitalist control of labor and commercialization of the society.

Heterotopia as a Critique to a Degenerated Utopia

While some critics focus on Yank’s sense of belonging and his struggles, I intend to bring to bear Michel Foucault’s concept of utopia and heterotopia on Yank’s transgression and his critique of bourgeois society. In this light, the commercialized bourgeois space is a realized utopia whereas the cage on the ship, the prison, and the

zoo are heterotopias which serve as a critique of degenerated utopian society. Before looking at Yank's transgression, let me return to the scene where Yank encounters Mildred. They are enclosed respectively within spaces of proletariat and bourgeoisie before each serves as a lure that entices the other to cross the border.

Foucault's concept of utopia and heterotopia is useful to interpret this crossing. For Foucault, utopia is a conceptual space encoded with unconscious desires that can never be fulfilled. Any utopia that can be realized is ideologically formulated. Contrary to utopia, heterotopia is a real space that is opposed to a manifested utopia. He states: "The mirror is, after all, a utopia, since it is a placeless place" (24). Heterotopia, by contrast, is a mirror that reflects reality, and even questions and criticizes it. This makes the cage on the ship a heterotopia which serves as a critique of commercialized society, a realized utopia governed by bourgeois ideology.

Before looking further into the heterotopic cage, let me first point out the realized utopia in the play. In Act V Yank finally reaches New York, one of the most prosperous cities of the twentieth century, to which Mildred belongs. Through Yank's eyes, we observe features of modernity in New York, reminiscent of Walter Benjamin's nineteenth-century Paris: a society of commodified, dehumanized time and spectacle, a utopia turned upside down. The Bessemer process best exemplifies Yank's subjection to the administration of time, as he cries out: "Speed, dat's her middle name" (3.161)! In addition to being subjected to the administration of time, human beings are also commodified in an economy that only counts exchange value. As Long exclaims against capitalists, "What right 'as they got to be exhibitin' us 's if we was bleeding monkeys in a menagerie? Did we sign for hinsults to our dignity as 'onest workers?'Er old man's [Mildred's father] a bleedin' millionaire, a bloody Capitalist!....And she gives 'er orders as 'ow she wants to see the bloody animals below decks and down they takes 'er" (3.167)! Long observes the secret of a capitalist's utopia, that is, commodification of everything, even of human beings. And the working class is depicted as animals to be observed, usurped, and framed into the gaze of the wealthy class.

At the corner of Fifth Avenue, Yank the stranger of the metropolis experiences cultural shocks in a commercialized space: "In the rear, the show windows of two shops, a jewellery establishment on the corner, a furrier's next to it....Rich furs of all varieties hang there bathed in a downpour of artificial light" (5. 173). As the play progresses, Yank is not only disillusioned, but also taken as a caged animal, whose "furs" are to be circulated in the market. As if trying to ward off the artificial quality

of the capitalist constructed space, he keeps making claims to his “natural” skin colors, and seems to be proud of his nakedness and his coal dust make-up. By contrast to Yank’s confinement in the cage and in the zoo, ironically the wealthy class is institutionalized and disciplined in the Church and confined in Protestant values: work more and you will get salvation. They are rendered “A procession of gaudy marionettes, yet with something of the relentless horror of Frankensteins in their detached, mechanical unawareness” (5.177). Benjamin explains that this mechanization and dehumanization of individuals into a collective automatic machine is the ideological counterpart of the industrial process where “workers learn to coordinate their own ‘movements to the uniform and unceasing motion of an automation’” (133). In other words, in a degenerated utopia, spiritual wealth is sacrificed to economic and industrial progress.

The analysis of a degenerated utopia conveys to us that Yank’s class solidarity is crushed by the aspects of modernity that subject all beings to the laws of commodity and the ideology of “speed,” that is, by the bourgeois administration of time in the service of efficiency. Contrary to the bourgeois society with which the “white” visitor Mildred identifies is the stokehole that displays exploitation of laborers. The ship simply cannot move without stokers exhausting themselves to keep up with the speed of the ship. Here the stokehole is the reverse of utopia, serving as a critical mirror to Mildred’s capitalist society. In addition to heterotopia’s function as a mirror to the established utopia, heterotopia is also a structure of confinement because of its systemic exclusion from the realized utopia. Thus the stokehole is not only a confinement of white immigrant laborers but also a mirror-text to the mythic narrative of the bourgeois utopia.

Foucault remarks in his “Of Other Spaces” that a boat is a heterotopia because it “is a floating piece of space, a place without a place, that exists by itself, that is closed in on itself and at the same time is given over to the infinity of the sea ..., the greatest instrument of economic development..., but has been simultaneously the greatest reserve of the imagination” (27). Yank’s stokehole is located on a ship, which is an other space that is not of the white capitalist world, but a space that confines the madman, whose labor is used to provide economic progress. The structure of the cage confines the body of a collective labor which carries certain traits of madness and bestiality. As depicted in Act I: “The room is crowded with men, shouting, cursing, laughing, singing—a confused, inchoate uproar swelling into a sort of unity, a meaning—the bewildered, furious, baffled defiance of a *beast in a cage*” (1.141; emphasis mine). The bestiality is the obverse of the dehumanization in the

commodified world, in which the Dionysian spirit is repressed by the Apollonian spirit in order to achieve the progress of a civilization. Their bestiality thus can be related to disruptive madness that a society governed by ultimate reason has to administer. As a result, the structure of the room symbolizes bourgeois ideology that carves their bodies and inscribes their minds. “Rivulets of sooty sweat have traced maps on their backs” (3.161). This explains why Yank tries to think, but does not succeed. “The effect sought after is a cramped space in the bowels of a ship, *imprisoned by white steel*....The ceiling crushes down upon the men’s heads. *They cannot stand upright*. This accentuates the natural stooping posture which shovelling coal and the resultant over-development of back and shoulder muscles have given them” (1.141; emphasis mine). The white ideology not only confines their body and mind but also disciplines their labor into a unity of body and machine on the ship where “there is order in it, rhythm, a mechanical regulated recurrence, a tempo” (3.160). Thus the immigrant laborers’ mind is disciplined by the structure of the confinement on bodies. Rather than the Cartesian subject’s rationality--I think therefore I am—there can be no thinking at all.

The control of labor not only disciplines workers’ minds, but also provides the economic prosperity of the state, in other words, the base supplies for the superstructure. As the play proceeds, Yank’s solidarity put to the test among various institutions. In Act One, he holds on to the solidarity of manpower. When Mildred evokes an uncanny feeling towards Yank, he tries to confront it and traces it back to where it or the Other comes from. In seeing the dehumanization, commodification, and bureaucratization of the metropolis, he determines to destroy the city in protest to it. His attempt is brave, but to no avail: he is first put in prison, then in the zoo, and lastly to death. At the end of the play we witness that his subjectivity is not defined by his physical power; rather, it is shaped by the institutions. Nevertheless, his search for subjectivity and his challenge of the institutions transgresses various confinements of life. His death is the ultimate transgression, an act of not given in to a dehumanized society, and a protest for a living confinement. Yank’s Nietzschean will-to-transgression shapes him as a madman who speaks the truth nobody wants to hear. Quarantined as an animal in the zoo, he is a threat society buries rather than deals with. The play’s audience, though, might turn their gaze onto the society itself.

Subjection and Subversion of Discourses

Yank transgresses the confinement of bourgeois ideology by venturing out of the enclosure on the ship. Without his Dionysian force, western culture will be the bourgeoisie’s phantasmagoria but the working class’s nightmare. The system of

confinement at work in *The Hairy Ape* will be seen in *The Crucible* (1953) in the form of McCarthyism, a prevalent theme of the 1950s in American theatre and history. They both unveil the dominant power's utopian desires and their opponents' traumatic experiences. Yank transgresses the confinement of prison, zoo, and existential inertia; the protagonist of *The Crucible*, John Proctor, resists to death the dominant social power in Salem.

Critics tend to focus on female characters in the play and I certainly do not underestimate the feminist yearning for power, but my focus will be on the dominant power's violent judicial subjection on a larger social scale. As recounted by the narrator: "...for good purposes, even high purposes, the people of Salem developed a theocracy, a combine of state and religious power whose function was to keep the community together, and to prevent any kind of disunity that might open to destruction by material or ideological enemies. It was forged for a necessary purpose and accomplished that purpose" (1. 6). By probing into the utopian desire of Salem, we will discover that it is their "Land-lust" (1.7) that triggers a series of divisions, inquisitions, and exclusions. Their aim is not to know the truth of witchcraft, but to exclude the deviant from the utopia. We witness how the utopian desire provokes those in power to charge the innocent by imposing the judicial system's "order of discourse" on their behaviors. The suspects, therefore, are executed based not on legal laws but on vengeance.

I take Salem as a degenerated utopian society based on Puritan doctrines in which witchcraft is a demonic as well as transgressive force. In *The Crucible* religious doctrine serves as myth that neutralizes two antagonistic societies. In time of crisis, those in power establish judicial measures not so much to find neither justice nor truth, but to eliminate subversion. This neutralization process can be analyzed, with Foucault, in terms of subjection of discourse through judicial inquisition and exclusion of the deviant—witches. The subjection of discourse makes clear how history is being written and edited among networks of power.

In his "The Discourse on Language," Foucault writes:

What is 'writing' (that of 'writers') if not a similar form of subjection, perhaps taking rather different forms, but whose main stresses are nonetheless analogous? May we not also say that the *judicial system*, as well as institutionalized medicine, constitute similar *systems for the subjection of discourse*? (227; emphasis mine)

Foucault further notes that "in every society the production of discourse is at once

controlled, selected, organized and redistributed according to a certain number of procedures, whose role is to avert its powers and its dangers, to cope with chance events, to evade its ponderous, awesome materiality” (216). If History is a complete project and discourse is the dominant power’s operational plot, then the violence is only detectable between the gap of the norm and the deviant. According to Foucault, will-to-truth is the most pervasive and dominant form of exclusion that has “been attempting to assimilate the others in order both to modify them and to provide them with a firm foundation” (219). In the play, Hale’s inquisition to Proctor’s belief is conducted based on an order of discourse that leaves the subject no other chance to defend himself but to be subjected by the discourse itself.

Proctor becomes the prey of judicial violence because he stops going to Church. Rather than losing his belief in God, it is Reverend Parris’s preaching of materialism that weakens his faith. He is an avid Church-goer until “Parris came, and for twenty week he preach [sic] nothin’ but golden candlesticks until he had them” (2.62). Given Parris’s worship of gold, a just investigator would shift his subject of interrogation from Proctor to Parris; nevertheless, as an instrument of judicial discourse, Hale carries on questioning Proctor. Hence, the Inquisition is not based on will to truth, but truth as an established Order inscribed in the discourse. The inquisition seeks deviation from norm, not truth. Hale proceeds to ask Proctor’s wife: “*Then, with the voice of one administering a secret test: Do you know your Commandments, Elizabeth*” (2.63)? This question is coded with the message that your belief in God is decided upon your memory of the Commandments. When Proctor is asked the same question, he cannot ace the secret test and goes on to interrogate Hale’s purpose of this inquisition. As a representative of the Church and the Court, and vested with the power of interpreting God and the law, Hale replies: “Theology, sir, is a fortress; no crack in a fortress may be accounted small” (2.64) In other words, there is no deviation allowed and every deviation has to be managed by judicial Order. After Proctor’s failure to provide the correct code for the first interrogation, “*Hale only looks at Proctor, deep in his attempt to define this man*” (2.64). Does he belong to the Old Salemites or its antagonist? At this stage, although the inquisition is not conducted at court, he is already being branded with the mark of the convicted. The invisible marking on the suspect can be taken as a form of punishment, as Foucault argues in his “The Spectacle of the Scaffold” that “The right to punish, therefore, is an aspect of the sovereign’s right to make war on his enemies...” (48). The inquisition then is not a means of seeking truth, but a means of punishment that “reign[s] the active forces of revenge” (48).

Besides reducing will-to-truth to order of discourse, Hale's inquisition adds to, interprets, and edits speech, which suggests his power to *overwrite* Proctor's statements. As Hale remarks: "I do not judge you. My duty is to add what I may to the godly wisdom of the court" (2. 64). Since only those in power have the right to speak, Proctor's speech, no matter how truthful, will be ignored, silenced, erased, or defined as lies. When Proctor tells him that those who have confessed do it to avoid death, Hale hesitates, but resists penetrating the truth. In Hale's following question he fulfils his part in the dominant power's plot to set up the innocent suspect into the convict. It is apparently a rhetorical question that aims to link up Proctor's relation with witches: "It's said you hold no belief that there may even be witches in the world. Is that true, sir" (2.66)? This is a trick question since positive statement proves that Proctor disbelieves God (because witches testify God's power), and negative statement suggests his alliance with witches. This question also maps out Proctor's stand in political sects, since Salem is governed by theocracy, so an issue regarding religion is political.

Since the first inquisition has convicted him as pagan, later in the day the Old Salemites transcribe their utopian desires into a needle-in-the-poppet plot and stage in Proctor's house. Proctor's faith is shattered when he realizes that religious doctrines and judicial procedures are subjections of discourse that intend to exclude him—a potential threat to the dominant discourse. In the following we will witness how he subverts the order of discourse. Proctor's act of "ripping the warrant" (2.72) transgresses subjection of discourse and reveals the naked truth in Salem. He cries out: "Is the accuser always holy now? Were they born this morning as clean as God's fingers? I'll tell you what's walking Salem—vengeance is walking Salem. [It is the] common vengeance [that] writes the law! This warrant's vengeance" (2.73). Is not the written warrant a symbol of violation that is found in every culture? Are not our civilization and history built upon and written by the myth of the state as enforced in Salem and in O'Neill's metropolis? The secret of utopia is voiced out by Proctor: "*And now, half to himself, staring, and turning to the open door: Peace. It is a providence, and no great change; we are only what we always were, but naked now*" (2.76). His message alludes to that every peaceful state is under the administration of the dominant power while closing up or orchestrating the disorder into order. In the case of Salem, the discrepancies between discourses of accusers and the accused, the signs of witchcraft activity and the meaning of the suspects' statement are closed up by Deputy Governor's signature in written form, as in "sealed," which grants him the power to prosecute them: "And do you know that near to four hundred are in the jails from Marblehead to Lynn, and upon my signature" (3.81)? Served as the same

purpose as the warrant of the court, Deputy Governor's signature is also the means of judicial violence which is "*letters de cachet* and arbitrary measures of imprisonment" (38) as Foucault pointed out in "The Great Confinement."

If inquisition manifests the violence of the judicial procedure, confession completes this violation. As Foucault further remarks in "The Spectacle of the Scaffold," "the confession had priority over any other kind of evidence [because the act of confession means] the accused accepted the charge and recognized its truth [and through which] the accused himself took part in the ritual of producing penal truth" (38). Even though Foucault considers the confession as an accomplice of judicial violence, he nevertheless argues for the production of power in the suspect's speech. This reversal of power is exemplified in Proctor's confession. He confesses his adultery with Abigail to charge her as a whore, using the only thing he has left—speech. "...I lusted, and there is a promise in such sweat. But it is a whore's vengeance, and you must see it..." (3.102). By discoursing back to the law, Proctor opens up the closure sealed by the signature, and reveals how Abigail manipulates the others to take her as a saint.

He implies that a saint is the one who accuses the other so that he or she can protect him or herself from being identified as devil. "I cannot mount the gibbet like a saint. It is a fraud" (4. 126). If he is not a saint, what is he? What does a speaking subject do in a society that subjugates his act and his speech that defines himself as a social being? "...what is John Proctor? *He moves as an animal, and a fury is riding in him, a tantalized search...*I am no saint" (4. 127). Proctor's question is not only for him, but also for the society, and for all human being: What is the significance of Proctor's position in the society? Why is Proctor censored by the law? The reason might be that he poses as a threat to the dominant discourse. After he confesses verbally, he is asked to sign the confession. In addition to making example out of Proctor and laying down the law, the act of signing makes the confessor an embodiment of truth. Proctor understands the connotation of the signature and finally strives to destroy it. "Proctor tears the paper and crumples it" (4. 133). This act subverts the judicial discourse and opens the closure of written violence repetitively perpetrated in our history. At the end of the play, Proctor sacrifices his own life for that of others. Hale's judgment on Proctor's act conveys to us that he is analogous to Satan, whose ultimate sin is his pride that bids defiance to God's will. "It is pride, it is vanity" (4. 134). What we see in Proctor's satanic forces is also embodied by Nietzsche and Yank, whose Dionysian spirit and knowledge, though forbidden, will find ways to articulate itself. By rewriting the Salem witch trial, Miller implies that this pattern is to be observed in the opposition between Communists and capitalists. He states: "...while there were no

witches, there are Communists and capitalists now, and in each camp there is certain proof that spies of each side are at work undermining the other” (1. 33). Inasmuch as Yank’s death subverts a capitalist space incessantly silencing his voice, Proctor’s defiance to the court’s Order and God’s will transgresses theocracy and strive to give voice to truth.



Works Cited

- Ciancio, Ralph A. "Richard Wright, Eugene O'Neill, and 'The Beast in the Skull.'" *Modern Language Studies* 23.3(1993): 45-59. Print.
- Foucault, Michel. "The Discourse on Language." *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*. Trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith. New York: Pantheon Books, 1972. 215-37. Print.
- . "The Spectacle of the Scaffold." *Discipline and Punish and The Birth of the Prison*. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage Books, 1977. 32-69. Print.
- . "Of Other Spaces." *Diacritics*. Trans. Jay Miscowiec. 16.1(1986):22-7.
- . "The Great Confinement." *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*. Trans. Richard Howard. New York: Vintage Books, 1988. 38-64. Print.
- Hofmannsthal, Hugo Von. "The Beggar and *The Hairy Ape* (1923)." *Eugene O'Neill's Critics: Voices from Abroad*. Illinois: Southern Illinois U, 1984. 9-10.
- Miller, Arthur. *The Crucible*. New York: Penguin Books, 1995. Print.
- Montale, Eugenio. "O'Neill and the Future of the Theatre." *Eugene O'Neill's Critics: Voices from Abroad*. Illinois: Southern Illinois U, 1984. 70-3.
- O'Neill, Eugene. "The Hairy Ape." *The Emperor Jones; Anna Christie; The Hairy Ape*. New York: Vintage Books, 1972. 137-98. Print.
- Zarf, Hubert. "O'Neill's *Hairy Ape* and the Reversal of Hegelian Dialectics." *Modern Drama* 30.1(1988): 35-40.

Reconciliation As the Transformations of Self and Place in A New World Order

Adelle Barry

0074

Deakin University, Australia

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2012

Official Conference Proceedings 2012



iafor

iafor

The International Academic Forum

www.iafor.org

Reconciliation may be thought as a private or personal experience with another, its material existence can be traced in the discussions, reviews and interpretations of specific texts. Literature has always provided a much greater value and purpose than simply providing enjoyment and pleasure for readers. It has served to be political, functional, dissident, empowering; calling to be eternally discussed. When Literature fails to be inherent of these qualities it fails to be understood as literature. On many levels texts require readers to 'do' something with the messages, symbols and language offered up in creative writing. Thus modern Australian fiction writing is pivotal to transforming race relations between Australian Indigenous and non-Indigenous subjects through continual contributions to and development of specific discursive areas such as self, place and history. These are the literary tropes identified in Australian Indigenous writing over the last two decades which have informed the body of knowledge recognised as the reconciliation debates. The thematic representations of self, place and history sets particular writing apart, belonging to a genre termed 'reconciliatory texts'. Various Australian texts published since 1990 have been the space in which negotiations and articulations about relations have established purpose, meaning and ownership; where readers have encountered the power of a text and its calling to reflect on deeper issues of nationalism and race relations. The exchange between a reader and a text is often hinged upon a compelling engagement with characters and the narrative's ability to question colonial assumptions about history, belonging and white hegemony, while at the same time, postulating the possibilities for social transformation. When realising literature's full potential, writing can deliver fresh possibilities about the future of reconciliation by constructing its material design, calling readers to analyse, consider, think about, dream of, process, discuss, initiate, enliven, become.

This essay will discuss the history of Australian Indigenous writing as a burgeoning genre which came about in the 1960s as 'resistance writing' and later evolving into types of writing which reflected themes of reconciliation. This discussion will include a textual analysis of Australian Indigenous author, Bruce Pascoe's short story *Tired Sailor*, detailing how his creative work challenges, debunks and re-members the past in order to reconstruct understandings of self, history and place within a context of reconciliation with 'Others'. The second part of this essay will explore how Black or Indigenous bodies are not always represented as a symbol of oppression as they once were, and that Indigenous characters are sometimes portrayed as benefactors for healing and 'for-givers' of hope in a willing exchange of love as depicted in Meme McDonald's *Love Like Water*. Do these texts portray reconciliation as having a positive, lasting and transformative effect on the world or do they show how social-relations continue to reflect the colonial status quo in our encounters and exchangers with 'Others' simply because history cannot be undone? When we encounter the 'Other' do we always bring to this encounter preconceived historical interpretations and colonial understandings about sovereignty, self and place? Or is there really an opportunity for new and meaningful exchanges of history, self and place to be made through the art of reading and writing?

It is no coincidence that Australian Indigenous writing proliferated during the 1960s in a political climate which saw the 1967 Referendum and the 1966 Wave Hill strikes, led by Vincent Lingiari. Such protests punctuated the consciousness of Australians and reflected a type of literature being written at the time. Indigenous literary representation proliferated during the 1960s with publications by Kath Walker such as, *We are Going* (1964) and Mudrooroo's *Wild Cat Falling* (1965). Since these publications there was a significant rise in Australian Indigenous publishing houses such as Aboriginal Studies Press, University of Queensland Press, Magabala Books, IAD, Black Inc, and Fremantle Centre Press. By 1988

seven novels, twelve plays and eighteen collections of poetry had been published by Australian Indigenous writers.

Particular Indigenous Australian texts published from the 1990s are however significantly different to the writing of Indigenous authors such as Mudrooroo and Judith Wright in the 1960s, 70s and 80s. After an era of 'resistance literature' Indigenous writing has continued to augment dynamism still fiercely connected to socio-political contexts during reconciliation marches over Sydney Harbour Bridge, the Mabo decision, Paul Keating's Redfern speech and former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's national apology to the Stolen Generations.

Since the 1990s reconciliation has been a thread belonging to the patchwork of a dreamed 'reality' with implications for reconciliation when writing to transform self, place and history. How is language being used to pledge relationships with 'Others'? The work of Australian theorist in Literary Studies, Bill Ashcroft is particularly important for understanding this recognisable shift in literary themes encountered in later Indigenous texts. In *Caliban's Voice: the transformation of English in post-colonial literatures* he argues that Black writers use English, (the language of their oppressors) to write their way 'out' of an oppressed subjectivity. Ashcroft's 'theory of transformation' advocates that the world in which we live can be altered, reconstructed and transformed through the creative articulations postcolonial writers use to dream their realities anew. He denotes that:

Language has power. It provides the terms by which reality may be constituted, it provides the names by which the world may be known....This power is crucial to ideas of identity, whether personal, national or cultural, because identity is neither "revealed nor "reclaimed" but constructed as part of the social experience of language itself.¹

In his short story *Tired Sailor* Bruce Pascoe takes his readers back to the first arrival of Europeans to Australian shores, exploring early colonisation from an Indigenous point of view. Although he was not of course there, Pascoe assumes fiction writing can tell of Indigenous peoples' experiences differently than those settlers who may have first noted them through empirical eyes. His text explores feelings rather than geographical contours – wondering how Indigenous people might have felt about the arrival of foreigners to their land in 1788. Pascoe's imaginative engagement with historical discourses is a way in which social and structural changes may be possible for Indigenous people, offering a paradigm for understanding that reconciliation is an issue which concerns constructions of the past as much as it does the future.

Pascoe begins his story by describing the location and people of Weeaprounah in contrast to its new incongruous renaming by Europeans as: 'Tired Sailor'. The first people, as he describes them are the antithesis of 'tired', describing them as 'quiet, peaceful, happy and industrious', never thinking of themselves as 'tedious' (p.111). The colonists, however, have named this town in order to impose their own construction of place. 'Laziness' is a constructed identity forced upon Indigenous people according to this text. Pascoe writes: 'They were interrupted by noise, conflict, death and laziness in sufficient regularity for the people to seek out ways of inhibiting the latter events and promoting the more enjoyable former.' (p.111) The Europeans wanted to construct a place which was 'peaceful' and 'happy' for fishermen to retire, the great paradox being that these very qualities already existed in Weeaprounah before the place was 'interrupted' in order to be rebuilt for Europeans. This offers an insightful view for understanding colonisation and the desire for reconciliation:

¹ Ashcroft, Bill. *Caliban's Voice: The transformation of English in post-colonial literatures*. Routledge, New York, 2009, pp.1 & 13

what if the foundations for a peaceful society already existed in Indigenous societies before they were interrupted and rebuilt under policies of assimilation? Can fiction writing return readers to the past, if not physically then at least ideologically in order to understand reconciliation as it may have already existed, or could have been brought about in the beginning?²

The first Australians' strong connection with land was evident from the first year Europeans arrived, yet despite this, land continued to be cleared because farming and construction represented progress and would one day give Whites a sense of historical belonging and ownership of country. This ruinous clash of fundamental ideologies would be adverse to reconciliation and implicitly stunt race relations into the twenty first century. It has taken almost two hundred years for non-Indigenous Australians to begin reconciling with the first people because clearing the land left no meaningful 'place' to encounter one another and where relationships could be built. Paul Carter makes this point in 'The Lie of the Land' when he writes, 'It was as if the colonists set out to erase the common ground where communication with the 'Natives' might have occurred'.³

In Pascoe's short story, *Tired Sailor* has replaced *Weeaprounah*. The land has been cleared and native plants replaced with foreign flora. Houses stand incongruously in the bush:

A row of small slab houses led down to the wharf and cow pastures velveted the rising ground behind them. Women brought in fruit trees, daffodils, lavender, honeysuckle and roses and the warm air of the estuary began to savour the new fragrances and mingle them with the old perfumes or pittosporum, bloodwood, bursaria and blueberry ash. (p.112)

The land was cleared and places were constructed to institute both British ways of living and thinking. The colonisation of Australia took the form of plants, flowers and garden beds. In her paper titled 'Remembering the self in the colonial garden: gardens and subjectivity' Susan K. Martin argues that 'in contemporary critical terms gardening might then be read as one aspect of the performance of a colonial subjectivity'.⁴ Does a post-colonial subjectivity therefore depend on the clearing of English gardens and the restoration of Indigenous plants? Martin argues that finished gardens can symbolise a 'static colonial identity' and transform Indigenous wilderness into the new world.⁵ Pascoe's narrative reminds us of the great cost associated with the early clearing of the Australian landscape. Juxtaposed with the glorious garden built by the sailors is a harrowing interpretation of Australia's violent settlement. His words are intended to shock readers, and represent a history which is itself shocking: 'Of course, it was these same old men [who built these homes and gardens] who had shot and poisoned the black people, fucked their wives and drowned their children.' (p.112) In *Tired Sailor* the English garden does not however please characters belonging to later generations. In his literary world, gardens once developed by Europeans are left unmaintained and Em Frazer – the great-granddaughter of settler, Craypot Frazer, becomes a metaphor for reshaping Australia's social landscape, becoming inherent of postcolonial subjectivity.

2 See Kim Scott's most recent novel *That Deadman Dance* (Picador Pan Macmillan, Sydney 2010). This story is set in the 1800s in a Western Australian community and as the blurb reads: '...it is a story which shows that first contact did not have to lead to war.' Convict, William Skelly is described by Scott as a character with a 'willingness to let bygones be bygones' and that 'he had created the friendship of white and black here.' p.94

3 Carter, Paul. *The Lie of the Land*. Faber and Faber, London, 1996, p.63

4 Martin, Susan K. 'Remembering the self in the colonial garden: gardens and subjectivity' in *Memory, Monuments and Museums: The Past in the Present*. Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 2006, p.184

5 Ibid. p.186

Em for example, is burdened by her great-grandfather's history and has inherited not only his possessions, but his violent past as well. We read how Craypot once tied an Aboriginal child to the bottom of a craypot for bait while the child was still kicking and screaming in the net as he was lowered into the water. This image from the past is then juxtaposed with a future image of Em making love with a man who returns from the sea: Em is 'waiting in certainty for him who would come with the hands shaped to the geography of her own undiscovered land.' (p.114) Her place within Australia is not one which is inherited from her ancestors but learned from those around her and those to come. She refuses to maintain the place her great-grandfather left behind and instead allows social relations to constitute the geography of this place. In 'Tired Sailor' we see how each generation is connected to the past but in a way that does not limit the construction of their future. Similarly, Carter advocates that Australia's history moves along a continuum which sees our national identity 'settled' and 'resettled' again and again. Reconciliation has become part of a shifting and changing identity, being named in political ways which reinforce the principles of reconciliation by writers such as Pascoe. Australia's identity will thus continue to change, and perhaps in the future our relations will inevitably be renamed as something other than reconciliation. Relations are continually constructed rather than passively brought into being and are done so by those who choose to be part of its construction, in ways for instance which are polemical.

The ways in which Indigenous people were first imagined and written about by the first settlers has underpinned the construction of nation. Writing about the 'Other' (in English) was the quintessential tool in the production of a colonial society and the handing down of Empirical frameworks. Indigenous writers have, however, taken up English as a tool for their own use, and as a primary example, Pascoe's writing works to inform the world that colonisation was not a process of diffusion, but a violent exercise met with resistance and long-standing opposition. Without understanding how the 'Other' interprets past events in Australian history there cannot be reconciliation. To write the future in view of better race relations first requires Indigenous people to rewrite themselves, their place and their history differently. The impression they leave today will transform relations tomorrow.

Bodies are impressionable. Whether collective or individual, bodies are impressed upon through Art and literature to produce culture which draws bodies together or separates them. Texts published since 1990 have created a postcolonial culture aware of others, self and place. It is a culture belonging to 'reconciliation' of Indigenous and non-Indigenous subjects which is both personal and political but encountered textually. Bodies are touched through creative writing, showing how Black, White and Australian migrant bodies are impressionable. The eloquent articulation of 'Otherness' and belonging by particular authors is an example of how the once constructed distance between Indigenous and non-Indigenous bodies is being significantly narrowed, illustrating that Indigenous and non-Indigenous bodies may be seen, touched and enabled differently since colonisation; borne, dreamed and inspired as a site for love and peace making rather than being held in literary contrast.

The concept of reconciliation has emerged in postcolonial Australia and found its 'flesh' (or definition) in the body politic through the use of language and textual representation. The proliferation of Australian Indigenous writing and writing about Australian Indigenous characters is evidence that bodies have been represented in new ways; used to write, perform and express bodily encounters which reflect love, respect for people, places and objects/concepts. The articulation of these encounters has profoundly affected race relations to date and transformed the long held position that the Indigenous body is only ever a site for oppression and struggle, and that it is recipient of love and open to forgiveness in the same breath. Bodily transformation has been written into being and witnessed in the modern-day

writing and polemics of few Australian authors, who through their craft and literary talent, challenge physical, social, cultural and historical 'distances' between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Meme McDonald's novel *Love Like Water* (2007) is about Jay, a young Indigenous man who encounters a non-Indigenous woman, Kathy in the Australian town of Alice Springs. In a space of only a month, both characters exchange parts of themselves, the places they are from and their family history with each other to reach new understandings about country and race relations. Moreover, McDonald's text shows how through the vicarious encounter and exchange of characters leads to an emotional response in readers, bringing about closer ideological proximity with 'Others'.

The bodily encounters between these two characters in McDonald's text significantly implicate the larger social and cultural body they represent, shape and transform. In her work, Sara Ahmed argues that 'emotions work to shape the "surfaces" of individuals and collective bodies.'⁶ She believes that 'emotions become attributes of collectives' and that the "national character" (what the nation *is like*)' is a direct result of how bodies move away or towards other bodies in culture.⁷ A reader's emotional 'side' may be 'touched' by the encounter of a text, stimulating his or her perception, memory or imagination. Writing and reading are an encounter between bodies and texts. Texts allow for one to be 'touched' by the evocation of a story and 'stirred' by the struggles faced by characters as readers witness their lives vicariously. Reading about another can have a significant effect on an individual. As Stephen Frosh proposes, texts have the ability to map the coordinates of a reader's 'inner space', arguing that imaginary worlds should be scrutinised as much as the 'outside world' because by 'reading the other, we reconstruct ourselves.'⁸

McDonald's imaginary world mirrors an emotional body politic – showing how emotions appear on characters' bodies to become social and political marks on the body politic or 'nation's flesh'. When two Indigenous and non-Indigenous subjects get close enough to see and touch each other there is a movement between social and political spaces because as their Black and White bodies encounter one another they disrupt understandings of two cultures and produce new understandings of the nation for readers to also construct and divulge. Ahmed argues that upon a bodily encounter with the 'Other' each subject undergoes significant transformation, which she terms 'hybridisation': each subject is not entirely absorbed into the other's world but is never the same.⁹

McDonald's text points to the complexities of reconciliation modelled on embodiment. Her characters' bodily encounters are powerful but do not always establish a hybrid identity between two subjects, nor leads to an everlasting friendship or the sharing of one life. In her imaginary the 'Other' is not expected to change or 'transform' (as this would only be another form of imperialism and a colonial desire reminiscent of assimilationist politics). She demands each individual character reflect on their own feelings and emotions in order to understand the world in which they live in. The characters' bodily encounters in this text show how one can indeed get 'under the skin' of the 'Other' but it is the individual who, through this encounter, works to reconstruct themselves and that this reconstruction is a conscious rather than passive exercise. Even though transformation of one's prejudices depends on another subject to cause an effect, the transformation which occurs is within: it is an individual experience and very much private. The personal transformation of one character

6 Ahmed, Sara. *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2004, p.1

7 Ibid, pp. 2 & 130

8 Frosh, Stephen. 'Time, Space and Otherness' in *Mapping the Subject: geographies of cultural transformation* (Steve Pile and Nigel Thrift (eds.), Routledge, London, 1995, p.289

9 Ahmed, Sara. *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality*. Routledge, London, 2000, p.12

is used to gesture towards the issues surrounding reconciliation as a communal process which effects and involves everyone as one nation. What translates as reconciliation in this text is, however, the one-to-one encounter *with many many others throughout time*.

Love like Water incorporates the textual theme of neighbours as strangers. In McDonald's representation of Alice Springs, people's bodies are defined by the surface of their skin colour and the difference between Black and White becomes a point for division and segregation. For instance, Black and White bodies are separated in particular social spaces: the Australian Hotel where Cathy works is segregated into two areas for drinking: The Lounge is a place where 'Blacks' can drink and the Spinifex Bar is exclusive to only 'Whites'. As Cathy collects glasses from The Lounge she feels as if she is wandering through 'foreigners' and cannot help but notice that she is 'in a crowd of strangers...everyone seemed to be from somewhere else.' (p.55) She is drawn to the mystery of The Lounge, however, as if 'it was another country...The music was new to her. Radical stuff with Australian accents singing songs about deserts and treaties and the white and the black and belonging.' (p.53) In this section of the pub she meets Jay. 'He said hello when her back was turned' (not yet face-to face) and when she turned around she was surprised to see it is not someone she already knew as 'he sounded like a friend.' (p.54) Cathy and Jay experience their first bodily encounter as their hands touch for a moment longer than they felt they should, and Cathy admits to herself that she 'was not expecting to shake hands with a stranger'. (p.58) Their bodily encounter shifts the dynamics of their relationship from being strangers in The Lounge to something more like neighbours reconstructing space, time and place.

Jay is a character who is particularly aware of the affect 'touch' can produce on one's self and 'Others'. He purposely sets out to deliberately 'touch' those around him by literally embracing them with a 'hug'. His is a unique way of engaging the 'Other' in an emotional struggle for reconciliation and offering a way to transform society by coming face-to-face with one individual at a time. Jay's antics are a lot different to those practised by older family members who fought for political change during the era known as resistance and protest. But although their ways were different, he admits they were fundamental to the changes made for Indigenous people at that time. Jay recalls how:

He'd always been a lover more than a fighter...When he got game to test the hug beyond the safety of family, it had powerful results. As a DJ in the clubs he didn't find it hard to get brave, hugging...when people got ripped or boozed or both, his hugs were a life raft to keep sinking ships afloat. From the nightclubs, he got game to take the hug further. Now, when he got introduced to men, women, young or old, cats or dogs, he's lay a hug on them. From one hug he could tell a lot about a person. It was his most reliable weapon. Even lost souls rarely resisted one of his hugs, if he was game to give it. Giving hugs was about overcoming fear. His elders had fought with their fists and with everything they had, to stay alive. He knew they were the only reason he was here today. He was carrying on the fight, in his own way, with the Battle of the Hug. (p.20)

Jay continues to work for the plight of Indigenous people in a way which belongs to a new era in post-colonial race relations. This era implicates non-Indigenous people in an even more direct way than was seen during the 1960s and 70s and is not about directing rage and passionate lament towards the 'Other' but getting 'in-touch' with them and exploring alternate responses to feelings of emotion. Yet, responding to colonisation in a way which is tactile and personal is a radical way of seeking better race relations – particularly when some forms of touch have been used to subjugate others in the past. For instance, power was structured

and emphasised through 'touch' on outback cattle stations in Australia in the early 1800s. Few drovers 'touched' Indigenous cattle-hands inappropriately as a way of investing fear and vulnerability in young women through sexual violation and possession. They commonly referred to the role of Indigenous women on their stations as being 'all day in the saddle and all night in the sac'. The concept of 'touching' and 'feeling' the 'Other' as a praxis for reconciliation is difficult to understand when 'touch' is implicit in the very fear of touching others who are strangers to ourselves. The hypocrisy is that we do not like to touch those we do not know, yet we will never know the 'Other' as long as there are boundaries which prevent us from 'touching' and from being 'touched' by them. Thus according to Ahmed: 'the recognition of strangers involves the demarcation, not only of social space, but also bodily space' as well.¹⁰ To realise the potential of reconciliation and get closer to the 'Other' in a space which is social and political also requires the exploration of bodily space and the coming to know, love and understand the other on a much more personal level – social, political and personal spaces are interlocked and embedded in a politics of emotion that is deeply affected by Australia's history of colonisation.

Jay certainly exemplifies the difficulty of executing his own philosophy of touch when he faces a number of interior challenges before living out 'The Battle of the Hug'. For example, Jay feels he needs to confront Max (the owner of the pub) about his exclusion from the Spinifex Bar because if he did not confront him, 'He'd store it [his memory] on the shelf marked Reason to Hate.' (p.83) Jay tries to tell himself that these negative emotions only make him a 'victim' and he begins to negotiate the need to change his perception and see himself as 'a survivor', and that, 'the first person he met tomorrow he'd be hugging them up just that bit harder, daring something good to happen.' (ibid) However, Jay soon lapses into a state of anger once more and the 'whitefella living inside of him' challenges his ego: 'You're not about to fight no wars...You're a mongrel halfbreed no-good loser. What made you think you could walk into the Spinifex bar?' (p.84) Aware of how the dominant culture has defined him as different, Jay is made a prisoner in his own flesh. The spatial restrictions placed on his Black body emphasise difference and treat him as defiled, dirty, dangerous, contaminated, impure or sick and deny him entry to places such as the Spinifex Bar. Jay realises that entry into the dominant culture is dependent on how White subjects perceive his body and he hears the voice in his head telling him to 'Make some do-good whitefella your mate. Charm him with your Dreamtime stories, then we'll let you poke your butt in the Spinifex Bar. But as long as it suits us, remember that.' (ibid). Relationships are seen here as possible but never equal. Ahmed argues that colonial encounters will always involve conflict, an asymmetry of power and the meeting will always be antagonistic because of a two-way understanding of Australia's history and colonisation.¹¹ If there is reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Jay's world, he believes it will be conditional and the relationship may not be one of friendship but something more like neighbours with unsettled differences.

It is by coming to know, understand and love many 'Others' that characters in this text can challenge racial boundaries and reconstruct themselves and the social and political spaces they inhabit. McDonald's text parallels Ahmed's theory of the politics of emotion but it does build upon one particular point: single encounters are important to shaping the body politic but it is the continuous face-to-face meetings and departures with *many* others in different places which will have the largest possible effect on race relations and the transformation of a peaceful society. Not all encounters lead to transformation (as her character Max highlights) but the opportunity to speak and listen to 'Others' is important if personal transformation of

¹⁰ Ibid, p.15

¹¹ Ibid, p.8

one's self is to be realised. While encounters with 'Others' may not eventuate to a relationship of long-lasting 'friendship' and the sharing of one life, one's life may be 'touched' in many ways and located ideologically side-by-side with many 'Others'. Bodies are impressionable and many creative impressions can be made through the art of reading and writing.

In conclusion, two Australian texts have been discussed in detail: Bruce Pascoe's 'Tired Sailor' and Meme McDonald's 'Love Like Water' constitute the signifying process of reconciliation *par excellence* by using characters, language and narrative to break up empirical patterns of thought and offer readers new ways of living together and negotiating a postcolonial reality for Australian Indigenous and non-Indigenous subjects. Writing from earlier decades show the power Indigenous authors have progressively built upon since the 1960s to critique nation, and empower later Indigenous authors to envisage the nation's social transformation. On the other hand, writers since 1990 have orientated towards a reality aspired to more than equal rights and depicted a complete overhaul of the nation's social order – challenging how Australian History is remembered, how land is represented and named, how cultural belonging is conceptualised, how Black bodies are interpreted, met, loved and in turn opened to loving. How relations will change because of this evolution of language and listening is yet to be seen and altogether articulated, yet in Australia's relatively short history of colonisation, and even shorter history of Indigenous publications, there is evidence to suggest a relationship does exist between rewriting history and an emerging language of reconciliation. This is Australia's story to date but perhaps it is only one reading in many politics and polemics from all over the colonised world. Are Indigenous people from Canada, Japan and New Zealand freeing themselves from oppression through the very language of their oppressors? If so, what a wonderful prospect for reconciliation elsewhere.

References

Ahmed, Sara. *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality*. Routledge, London, 2000

Ahmed, Sara. *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2004

Ashcroft, Bill. *Caliban's Voice: The transformation of English in post-colonial literatures*. Routledge, New York, 2009

Carter, Paul. *The Lie of the Land*. Faber and Faber, London, 1996

Frosh, Stephen. 'Time, Space and Otherness' in *Mapping the Subject: geographies of cultural transformation* (Steve Pile and Nigel Thrift (eds.)), Routledge, London, 1995

Martin, Susan K. 'Remembering the self in the colonial garden: gardens and subjectivity' in *Memory, Monuments and Museums: The Past in the Present*. Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 2006

McDonald, Meme. *Love Like Water*. Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, N.S.W, 2007

Pascoe, Bruce. "Tired Sailor" in *Skins*. Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, N.S.W, 2002

Scott, Kim. *That Deadman Dance*. Picador Pan Macmillan, Sydney 2010

iafor

Re-presenting Black Culture: A Case Study on 6 Chinese Versions of the Novel The Color Purple

Elaine Tzu-yi Lee

0077

Chung Yuan Christian University, Taiwan

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2012

Official Conference Proceedings 2012



iafor

iafor

The International Academic Forum

www.iafor.org

The novel *The Color Purple* not only won the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award for Fiction in 1983, but also attracted considerable attention all over the world. The book illustrates the double oppressions imposed on black women from both white hegemony and black patriarchy, and chronicles black women's growing awareness of self, after suffering and reflection. The story depicts the gradual development of self-confidence on the part of the protagonist — Celie, an uneducated black girl living in a rural black community in Southern America. Meanwhile Celie's sister Nettie, who has been sent away by their father, has become a missionary in Africa. She writes numerous letters to Celie, and in her letters, Celie catches up on her sister's life. Race issues are thus developed in the second half of the story.

The novel *The Color Purple* has been regarded as an historical novel, but its relation to history cannot be established clearly (Lauret, 2000: 95). While it seems the novel does not relate too closely to historical facts, some scenes in the novel correspond to historical events. This is especially so regarding the time when the novel is set, from the turn of the 20th century to the 1930s, and the place in which it is located, a Southern American community. The Emancipation after the Civil War (1861-65) may have brought an end to slavery, but black people in the south were still constrained socially; they continued to suffer and struggle in a racially segregated society. In fact, over ninety percent of the black people in America lived in the southern states, where they were denied most of the rights they had expected to enjoy after slavery had been abolished in 1865 (Mose & Wilson, 1997: 320).

In the story Celie's sister Nettie, who runs away from her stepfather and travels to Africa to preach with a missionary couple, witnesses the richness of black culture when she arrives in New York City. This corresponds to the Harlem Renaissance¹, as black culture was beginning to develop vigorously at that time. In her later letters she expands the background story to Africa, leading readers to the issue of European colonialism. While whites occupy the village of Olingka under the guise of road construction, the villagers' vulnerability and lack of arms suggest a sharp contrast between peace-loving Africans and violent whites. The later formation of the mbeles group indicates an emerging Pan-Africanism in Africa, and a nascent black identity. The practice of female initiation in the group is elevated as a symbol of the fight against white invasion (Mackerras, 1995: 3).

In this study, racial ideologies and ethnic awareness of six translators, three from Taiwan and three China, while handling racial conflict between black and white are investigated. Thus, it is essential to review the literature on translating cultures and to explore any external or internal

¹ The Harlem Renaissance, also known as the Black Literary Renaissance and the New Negro Movement, refers to the developing African American cultural and intellectual life during the 1920s and 1930s. Starting from the black neighbourhood in the Harlem of New York City, the movement had an impact on urban centres throughout the United States. In the movement, many African-American artists and intellectuals refused to imitate the European and white American styles and instead celebrated black dignity and creativity (Carroll, 2009).

influences upon translators in the transfer between two cultures. As intermediary between two cultures, a translator plays an essential role in the re-presentation of other cultures. The strategies or approaches adopted by the translator can at times highlight either the source or target culture (Venuti, 1995) by signalling differences between the two. Taking a case previously raised, the greatly domesticated translation of *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* indicates that the translator, Fitzgerald, adapted his translation to the receiving culture (Abdulla, 1999) at the expense of the Persian culture, and added British values by using a ‘hijacking’ strategy (Flotow, 1997: 78). In this way, Fitzgerald’s version deprioritised the Persian literary style to fit into the target cultural framework of his time. Therefore the original Persian poetry in translation would be looked down upon as the Other, the less cultured, the less educated and the less valued (Abdulla, 1999) as the translator applied Victorian poetics to ‘improve’ the original.

The tendency to adapt to the receptor culture is frequently addressed in translation scholarship. Nonetheless some translators are willing to bring their readers closer to the source culture, distinguishing the foreign culture from the domestic one. A good example is shown by Megan Backus’ English version of Banana Yoshimoto’s *Kitchen* (Venuti, 1998: 84), which overtly favoured the foreignising strategy, which is contrary to the domesticating one. By her approach, the translator deviated from domestic norms and perceptions regarding the foreignness of the original (ibid: 87) and greatly reduced the stereotyped image of an exotic, incomplete and distant Japanese culture.

In the above discussion, we have given examples of re-presentation of the original cultures using opposite approaches. From these cases we can perhaps infer the ideological concerns the translator may have had during the translation process; nonetheless, we believe that there must be cases that fall between the poles, as translators may have had different concerns or took various stances in the course of their activity.

Translators’ Background

In this study we investigated six translators’ Chinese versions of the novel *The Color Purple*. Three translators, two females whose surname are Zhang and Shih, and one male surnamed Lan, are from Taiwan while the other three, Tao, Lu, and Yang, are from Mainland China.

Text Analysis

This section will now proceed to the text analysis of the six versions concerning race relations between white and black people in America and Africa. The examples selected in this chapter will enable us to explore each translator’s attitudes to and understanding of the racial issues from the versions they created. Some possible influences on their decisions are also suggested.

Racial issues in a Southern American community

Refusing the invitation of the white couple to be their maid, Celie's stepdaughter-in-law, Sophia dares to fight back verbally and physically. In response she is violently attacked, brutalised, subdued and put in jail with cuts and bruises all over her body. In a conversation with Celie she shows her anger against the whites, but at the same time she points out the low status that blacks have in comparison to whites in that '[n]othing less than sliding on your belly with your tongue on their boots can even get their attention (Walker, 1982: 84).'

(1b) 只要是你的舌頭是壓在他們的靴子下面，你休想得到注意。(Shih, 1986: 119)

(As long as your tongue is stepped under their boots, don't even think they will notice you.)

(1e) 這等於向他們卑躬屈膝地求饒！我不幹。(Yang, 1999: 89)

The two versions again read somewhat differently, but one version is distinct from the others, who have followed the source in a fairly literal way, indicating that whites would never pay black people any attention unless the blacks were to lie on the ground and lick their boots. However, Shih's version reads rather differently, especially the underlined part which she has translated as, '[a]s long as your tongue is stepped under their boots.' Shih's version has the subtext that whites will look down upon blacks forever since the latter will always be subjugated and under their control. In this regard, Shih's version exacerbates the original image in the story and the status of black people is thus even lower in her version. In addition, her version carries the implication of a call to protest; that as long as your tongue is under their boots, the blacks should revolt. However, the image of the original 'sliding on your belly' is lost in her version, which does to some extent weaken the image of blacks' subordination as seen in the original.

Yang's version shows strong ideological consideration. His version seemed greatly mutated from the original and his version demonstrates black's anger toward the white. While the other two versions from China translated the text literally, Yang's version on the one hand displayed the black's low status to the white in the society and on the other greatly reveals the translator's attitudes, if the manipulated was made by the translator, toward the division between black and white.

Racial segregation

In the second half of the novel the author Walker exposes her reader to different locations and social contexts. These are described by Celie's sister, Nettie, who is sent to Africa as a missionary. On her way to Africa she and her fellow missionaries stop over in New York city where they find a segregated society, saying, '[w]e had to ride in the sit-down section of the train, but Celie, there are beds on trains! And a restaurant! And toilets! The beds come down out of the walls, over the tops of the seats, and are called berths. Only white people can ride in the beds and use the restaurant. And they had different toilets from colored (Walker, 1982: 120).'

(2b) 火車上有床，還有一個餐廳！還有廁所！床貼在壁上。 (Shih, 1986: 172)

(There are beds in train, and a restaurant! And toilets! Beds are stuck to the wall.)

(2c) 火車上我們只能席地而坐，但是塞莉，火車上還有床，還有餐廳和廁所呢，床是從牆上拉下來的，就在座位的上方，火車上的床叫做臥鋪。 (Lan, 1986: 151)

(On the train we can only sit on the ground, but Celie, there are beds in trains, and restaurants and toilets. Beds are pulled from the wall right above the seat. Beds in trains are called berths.)

The surprised tone adopted by Nettie in her narration suggests her developing racial awareness as more and more incidents arise during her journey. In this instance, we focus on Shih's and Lan's versions in a further investigation of their attitudes to racial issues by examining the two underlined sentences presented in their translations. Shih has decided upon a mutation from the original and deleted them, so her version is much shorter than others. It seems she condensed the semantics of racial issues; possibly due to the lack of sensational effect. The deletion in this case has again affected the description of racial segregation, where black people are forbidden from using the facilities of the whites.

It is worth noting that Lan's version reads somewhat differently from the original. In his version, the original '[w]e had to ride in the sit-down section of the train' is translated as, '[o]n train we can only sit on the ground.' Such a mutative change of the original semantics may appear to be a simple error by the translator; nonetheless, it exaggerates the division between blacks and whites.

The European deprivation

While staying in England for a few days, Nettie and her fellow missionaries visit a huge collection of ethnic treasures gathered by the English from other countries. In her letters to Celie she particularly mentions those from Africa. In this passage Nettie's narrative describes her first experience of imperialism; her disbelief foreshadows the forceful exploitation of the African village Olinka by white colonists in the following,

'From Africa they have *thousands* of vases, jars, masks, bowls, baskets, statues - and they are all so beautiful it is hard to imagine that the people who made them don't still exist. And yet the English assure us they do not. 'Hard times' is a phrase the English love to use, when speaking of Africa. And it is easy to forget that Africa's 'hard times' were made harder by them' (Walker, 1982: 124).

(3c) 但是英國人向我們保證，不是他們造成這個結果的！「艱苦歲月」一詞是英國人提到非洲時最愛用的，但是他們也很容易就忘記非洲的「艱苦歲月」其實是他們造成的。 (Lan, 1986:155)

(But the English people assured us that it was not them to make the result! 'Hard times' is the phrase favoured by the English people when mentioning Africa, but it is very easy for them to forget Africa's 'hard times' are actually made by them.)

We now move on to the two underlined sentences for investigation. The analysis of these again supports our assumption that Lan may have been especially sensitive regarding racial issues and ethnic awareness. The first sentence in the original text describes how Nettie admires some beautiful handicrafts made in Africa, but she learns that the people who produced them no longer exist. Nettie gets an interesting response from the museum staff, '[a]nd yet the English assure us they do not.' Among the three versions, Lan's again seems to demonstrate much more ethnic awareness. Other five translators have followed the original closely, showing the English efforts to stress that those who made the handicrafts are now dead. Lan offers a different version, '[b]ut the English people assured us that it was not them making the result!' Compared with the other versions, Lan's version makes more sense in Chinese. Indeed, he has explicitated the original semantics. His version implies that the English are trying to shirk off their responsibility for looting these treasures from Africa. Lan's version lays some stress on the responsibility the English should take by means of supplementation; his attempt to explain the undertones in the original for the reader again suggests a different ideological stance from those of the other translators.

The other underlined sentence for analysis is the last one in Nettie's narrative, where she indicates that the English are fond of using the phrase 'hard times' to describe circumstances in Africa, '[a]nd it is easy to forget that Africa's 'hard times' were made harder by them.' In contrast to other translator's literal versions, Lan's translation again reflects his view of the world. While the original does not point out the root cause of these 'hard times' in Africa, Lan's version, 'but it is very easy for them to forget Africa's 'hard times' were actually made by them,' states clearly that the English were the source of the Africans' misery.

White colonisation

From this example on, racial issues are discussed in the context of the Olinkan village in Africa as described in Nettie's letters, recording her life as a missionary with this ethnic group. The Olinka treat whites in a friendly way. However, it turns out that the white people actually intend to build a road and to demolish all the Olinkan houses on the way. Sadly, the Olinka are powerless against white mens' guns and can only wait for the fate that has been determined for them,

Well, the morning after the road was 'finished' as far as the Olinka were concerned (after all, it had reached their village), what should we discover but that the roadbuilders were back at work. They have instructions to continue the road for another thirty miles! And to continue it on its present course right through the village of Olinka. By the time we were out of bed, the road was

already being dug through Catherine's newly planted yam field. Of course the Olinka were up in arms. But the roadbuilders were literally up in arms. They had guns, Celie, with orders to shoot.

It was pitiful, Celie. The people felt so betrayed! They stood by helplessly—they really don't know how to fight, and rarely think of it since the old days of tribal wars—as their crops and then their very homes were destroyed. (Walker, 1982: 152-3)

(4b)在路完成的那個早上，我們發現築路工人又回去工作了[...]. 上面只是他們要再鋪三十哩！而這條路的路線是貫穿村子裏。(Shih, 1986: 209)

(On the morning when the road was completed, we found road workers going back to work.[...]Their boss wanted them to pave thirty miles more! And the road ran through the village.)

(4c)這條馬路「完工」後的第二天(歐林卡人對這條路特別關心，因為畢竟這條馬路已經通到村子邊了)，我們發現這批工人又回去工作了。

真可憐喲，塞莉！他們覺得被出賣了，他們無助地站在那兒—自從許久以前的種族戰爭之後，他們已經很少想過打仗的事，他們真的不知道該如何做戰—他們只有無助地站在那兒，眼睜睜地看著他們的農作和房屋被人摧毀。(Lan, 1986: 188-9)

(On the day after the road 'was constructed,' (the Olinka especially cared about this road because this road went through the side of the village after all.), we found these road workers went back to work.

It is a great pity, Celie! They thought they were betrayed. They helplessly stood there—since tribal wars long time ago, they have seldom thought about fighting, and they really don't know how to fight—they just stood there helplessly watching their crops and houses being destroyed.)

(4e)我們起床的時候他們已經在凱瑟琳種的紅薯地上破土動工了。奧林卡人像炸了鍋，吵吵鬧鬧地要打仗，可那些修路工才真地要打呢—他們有槍，而且上面准許他們開槍。(Lu, 1988: 158-9)

(When we woke up, the road was already being dug through Catherine's newly planted yam field. they have already The olinka pissed off just like an exploding oil pot, raising a great hue and crying for war. But the road workers were in arms— they had guns, Celie, with orders to shoot.)

For this example we have two sentences to investigate, in particular the versions by Shih, Lan, and Lu. The first appears in brackets in the original narration by Nettie, giving Celie some background information concerning the progress of the road: '(after all, it had reached their village).' Here Shih has again made a mutative shift and deleted the explanatory note, once more showing her tendency to reduce parts she believes irrelevant or unnecessary. Lan has again used

supplementation to enhance the information given in the brackets, adding a phrase at the beginning of the note '[t]he Olinka especially cared about this road.' His supplement provides additional background information for the reader, and is based on his understanding of the Olinka.

The second item for analysis is a sentence that describes the Olinka's predicament, which reads '[t]hey stood by helplessly.' Lan has again taken a specification approach to emphasise the Olinkan's vulnerability by repeating the sentence in his version which is underlined. This repetition reinforces the idea that the Olinka are helpless and vulnerable, in contrast to the white people.

In Lu's version we also found an addition in her translation. The original was translated as "The olinka pissed off just like an exploding oil pot, raising a great hue and crying for war." The way to amplify the Olinka's anger, possibly from the translator, suggests the translator's ethnic awareness of black and white conflicts and implies in her translation that the Olinkans should definitely gather up and fight against the white invasion.

Group identity

In order to maintain their cultural property, in the story the group members ask their women to undergo genital mutilation and tattooing. Nettie, who as a missionary is trying to help the Olinka, has slowly become aware that the village is being oppressed by the white colonialists. The missionaries have been trying to stop the practices of scarring and female initiation in the village. Nevertheless Tashi, a female member of the group, insists on experiencing the practice as a way to show her ethnic identity, saying, '[o]ne of the things we thought we'd helped stop was the scarring or cutting the tribal marks on the faces of young women. It is the way the Olinka can show they still have their own ways, said Olivia, even though the white man has taken everything else' (Walker, 1982: 202).

(5a) 我還以為我們已經遏止了年輕婦女在臉上留疤或切割部落標記的習俗。雖然白人奪走了一切，這正顯示出歐林卡人仍然我行我素，奧莉維雅說。(Zhang, 1986: 255)

(I thought we had curbed the custom that young women have scars on their faces or cut tribal marks. Although white people rob us of everything, this exactly shows that the Olinka still stick to their old ways, Olivia said.)

(5b)這是我們一直想阻止的事，阻止他們再在年輕女人的臉上刺上部落的標幟。(Shih, 1986: 233)

(This is what we long wanted to stop, stopping those tattooed tribal marks on young women's faces again.)

(5c)原來我們都以為我們已經幫助他們改掉在年輕女人臉上刺青紋面的習慣了。(Lan, 1986: 275)

(It turned out that we thought we have helped them give up the habit of tattooing on young women's faces.)

(5d)Omission (Tao, 1998: 187)

(5e)我們曾經竭力制止過這種在年輕婦女的臉上劃上部落印記的儀式。我以為再也不會發生這種事了。(Lu, 1988: 226)

(5f)Omission (Yang, 1999)

In this case, two items have been selected for analysis. The first appears in the narrative: Nettie and her fellow missionaries 'help stop' the practice of tattooing, for fear of infections (Walker, 1982: 216). The original term 'help stop' is made up of two verbs with different meanings, but is translated with different nuances in the three versions. Zhang, Shih, and Lu have translated the term as 'curb' and 'stop' respectively. All three translators have chosen to present only the term 'stop,' omitting the meaning of 'help.' Lan, on the other hand, has followed the original to indicate both verbs at the same time as, 'help them give up,' which implies that the missionaries are offering suggestions about the practice as friends rather than as superiors. In contrast the two female translators' versions carry the implication that the missionaries are adopting a superior position in relation to the Olinka, as their practices should be 'stopped.' The implied image of the group as inferior is thus re-created in their versions, and this may be seen as confirming the idea that Africans are inferior and powerless and that they need to be taught to be more civilised by the colonists. In this way, the choice by both the female translators could be seen as reinforcing the colonists' attitudes towards Africans.

Another phrase to be examined is underlined at the end of the passage where Celie's daughter Olivia defends the Olinkan practice as, '[i]t is the way the Olinka can show they still have their own ways.' The practice of scarring shows the Olinka maintaining their identity in the face of Western colonisation. Here Zhang's version deserves particular attention, giving the sentence as, 'the Olinka still stick to their old ways'. Other translators follow the original more closely. Zhang may have had to make a very hasty decision, given that the deadline was tight (email correspondence, April 2007). Yet her version carries a relatively negative connotation in Chinese, suggesting that the Olinkans are to some extent obstinate enough to maintain out-dated practices and that they should have accepted the whites' help, or even followed their guidance.

Interestingly, we found omissions in Tao's and Yang's versions. Tao's deletion (or omission) of this short passage indicating the mbele identity, possibly out of a careless mistake during the translation process, somehow mitigated black and white conflicts. On the other hand, Yang's

translation was cut off a lot especially in the second half of the novel regarding racial issues. It is thus assumed that as the racial issues may not be interesting as in the first half of the story, the publishing house could have possibly deleted them all. Or possibly due to marketing and financial reasons, the publisher may have made such a decision.

Race ideologies in six versions

In this research project we have also looked at race issues and chosen examples concerned with racial conflict between black and white in the American South and in Africa. We have selected fewer examples for analysis, the reason being that in all six versions passages covering racial matters are mostly followed faithfully. One reason might be that there was no need for three translators to manipulate race issues; hence all of them may have felt able to translate directly from the original following their own understanding of these matters. In this regard, external influences upon translators regarding race issues were presumably lessened and personal factors, we argue, would have been much stronger. Only in Yang's version did we find the publisher's intervention as a large part of black and white conflicts were deleted. And in this way we can hardly find the translator's ethnic awareness or attitudes in his version. Except for Yang's version, the examples selected for analysis were handled by each of the translators in more subtle and nuanced ways which reflect more of their own philosophy and understanding of relations between black and white and ethnic awareness.

Among the six, the position of Zhang, Tao, and Lu regarding race is scarcely apparent as in her version there are fewer semantic shifts in the re-presentation of such matters. From the examples we considered in the text analysis, in their versions it was found there may have been a slight, not entirely distinct, intention to weaken the idea of European colonialism and group identity while Lu seemed to on the one hand enhance the Olinkan's anger towards the white and on the other mitigated mbele's identity. Yet given their approach to the translation, following the original more faithfully, we do not have sufficient evidence to draw any conclusions about her attitude towards race issues in this study.

Shih's ideas about race were assumed to have engendered the tendency to delete irrelevant descriptions, as seen in the text analysis. This tendency may indicate her personal concern to take a lighter view of racial confrontation in the novel. Her approach may have been out of concern that race relations were not as interesting to the intended readers as gender oppression, and for that reason she may well have hurried through this part of story. If this was so then Shih, transgressing her principle of staying close to the original, domesticated (Venuti, 1992: 5) the racial conflict in the original because of what she perceived to be the most likely response to such issues, which again suggests that she enjoyed some power in translation.

Lan's ideas about race appear to have been different from Shih's. To reinforce the image of racial inequality he created a text world that is different from both the other translators' versions, and

even from the original. Moreover, his efforts to avoid creating a misleading image of the Olinka under their violent white colonisers does to some extent show his sympathy towards those colonised. Compared with the general idea of racial conflict that we may assume most people in Taiwanese society would have held at that time, Lan seems to have had his own particular world view. Perhaps, his background, as an English major in the university and a journalist in the news agency, enhances more awareness of racial conflicts between black and white. Along with the release from constant concern about describing taboo gender matters, Lan seems to have felt free to use his understanding on this subject and tried not to domesticate the stories for the receptor context. His re-presentation of racial issues in the novel appears to be neither domesticating nor foreignising. This treatment helps us to see the translator's ethical position (Lane-Mercier, 1997), and his performance when engaging with the black culture in the process of translation greatly reveals this translator's awareness of ethnic issues.

Concluding remarks

In this study we have analysed race issues in six versions by looking at semantic shifts, and suggested some underlying implications from the linguistic terms each translator has chosen during the process. From the analysis, Lan's and Shih's potential ethnic awareness and attitudes towards racial issues between black and white have been revealed much more clearly than have those of the other four translators. And their versions give different subtexts of black and white conflicts for their readers.

Reference

- Abdulla, A. K. (1999) Aspects of ideology in translating literature. *Babel*45/1: 1-16.
- Carroll, J. (2009) Harlem Renaissance: Multimedia Resource. Website. Available at: <http://www.jcu.edu/harlem/index.htm#>, accessed May 2009.
- Flotow, L. V. (1997) *Translation and Gender: Translating in the 'Era of Feminism.'* Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing.
- Lane-Mercier, G. (1997) Translating the untranslatable: The translator's aesthetic, ideological and political responsibility. *Target* 9/1: 43-68.
- Mackerras, C. (1995) *China's Minority Cultures: Identities and Integration Since 1912.* New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Lauret, M. (2000) *Alice Walker.* Basingstoke : Macmillan.
- Mose, J. & G. Wilson (1997) *Literature and Its Times.* Vol.5 New York: Gale.

Venuti, L. (eds) (1992) *Rethinking Translation: Discourse, Subjectivity, Ideology*. London: Routledge.

---. (1995) *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*. London: Routledge.

---. (1998) *The Scandals of Translation: Towards an Ethics of Difference*. London: Routledge.

Walker, A. (1982) *The Color Purple*. UK: Phoenix.

---. (1986a) ZISEJIEMEIHUA(*The Color Purple Sisters*). Translated by H. Q. Zhang. Taipei: Crown Publishing House.

---. (1986b) ZISEJIEMEIHUA (*The Color Purple Sisters*). Translated by J. Q. Shih. Taipei: Da-Di Publishing House.

---. (1986c) ZISEJIEMEIHUA (*The Color Purple Sisters*). Translated by Z. W. Lan. Taipei: Cosmic Light Publishing House.

---. (1998d) ZIYANSE(*The Color Purple*). Translated by J. Tao. Nanjing: Yiling Publishing House.

---.(1988e) ZISE: XIEGESHANGDIDESING (*The Color Purple: Letters to God*). Translated by S. J. Lu. AnHui City: AnHui Literature and Art Publishing House.

---. (1999f) ZISE (*The Color Purple*). Translated by R. J. Yang. ShenYang City: Shen Yang Publishing House.

*Identity Negotiation and Image of Dutch-Indonesian Descents in Mass Media and
Contemporary Indonesian Postcolonial Film*

Yusri Fajar

0080

University of Brawijaya, Indonesia

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2012

Official Conference Proceedings 2012

Abstract:

In a postcolonial space where people from different ethnic backgrounds create dialectical and intercultural encounters, identity is negotiated and called into question. Indonesia is a former colonized country of the Netherlands and at the moment there are football players, in Indonesia, who have upbringings and roots from the Netherlands. They were born from the mixed Indonesian-Netherlands parents. They have been naturalized as Indonesian citizen in the purpose of escalating the achievement of Indonesian national football team. Seen as the representation of the Europeans, particularly the Netherlands, these descents are regarded superior. In the film entitled “Tendangan dari Langit (A Kick from the Sky)”, released in 2011, the Dutch-Indonesian descendants, who play as football stars in this movie, are considered superior figure whom Indonesian generation and football players should mimic. The superior image of these hybrid descents has been constructed and empowered through advertisements in the television as well. As the result the Dutch-Indonesian descents become the idol of a lot of Indonesians. This paper aims at investigating the identity negotiation and the image of Dutch-Indonesian descents as constructed in the movie. By applying postcolonial and media studies, this paper specifically will scrutinize how the superior image of the Dutch-Indonesians is constructed and how their multifaceted identity is negotiated.

Keywords: *Image, Identity, Dutch-Indonesian, postcolonial encounters*

iafor

The International Academic Forum

www.iafor.org

Introduction

Historically the relation between Indonesia and Netherlands has been developed dynamically since the settlement of the Dutch people in Indonesia centuries ago to colonize Indonesia. The nexus is not merely interwoven with power, political and economical matters, but also cultural negotiation which discursively brings about reconstruction of cultural identity. In the colonial era where the Dutch government succeeded in implanting power, influence and western culture in Indonesia, the construction of Dutch image was embraced by educational institution in Indonesia during colonization whose system and materials were based on Dutch perspective. Allen states that education which is offered by the Indonesian elites (for the natives) is restricted to the ideology and established canonical works from the Dutch (2001: 216). The strategy of shaping the superior image of the Dutch is therefore carried out through education which is regarded as effective tool in disseminating western culture in Indonesia. There are a lot of Indonesians who adopt Dutch culture so that they tend to legitimate the colonizer's 'superiority, to some extents. The identity of the natives is constructed in the inferior level.

The dialectics between Indonesia and Dutch has been continuing in many aspects of life. In modern era, where many Indonesian students go to Netherlands to study, the construction of superiority of Dutch as the former colonizer is still carried out. The Dutch Government for instance gives scholarships to Indonesian students to take master and doctoral programs to assert that the colonizer is still powerful up to the present. In this case it is worth noticing that basically the relationship between the colonized and colonizer is mutual.

Since the emergence of Dutch colonization in Indonesia, there have been conflicting and mutual nexus between the Dutch, and Indonesians which are called 'natives' by the Dutch. One of the examples of mutual relationships is interethnic marriage which results in Dutch-Indonesian Descents. This encounter has become the bridge of the cultural and racial gap between the colonized and colonizer. Many Dutch-Indonesian descendants were born and some of them have spent most of their childhood and adolescence period in Netherlands. Their identities as a consequence represent western root and superiority. Yet, it is paramount to highlight that Dutch-Indonesian cannot avoid Indonesian identity.

Nowadays there is an intriguing phenomenon related to the existence of the above Dutch Indonesian descents. In the purpose of empowering and accelerating Indonesian football team in international competition, Indonesian government has a policy to naturalize good football players from the Netherlands who have Indonesian cultural roots and identity. One of the Dutch Indonesian players is Irfan Bachdim who starts his career as professional football player in the Ajax Amsterdam academy in Netherlands. He was born in Amsterdam on August 11, 1988. His father, Noval Bachdim, is Indonesian while his mother Hester Van Dijk is Dutch. As a decent from the mixed parents, Indonesian and Dutch, Irfan is considered superior. It is undeniable since the image of Indo-European is supported by the construction that the outward and physical appearance of Indo-European is superior. This attribute to some extents pose Irfan Bachdim in high image in the eyes of Indonesians. Looking at the historical perspective, Irfan Bachdim, as other Indo European decents, are classified as Europeans (Stoler, 1997:201). This image is also

embraced by his capability in playing football in the stadium. In this context it is important to realize that European football is the centre in which there are a lot football clubs and European players have shown their achievement and superiority in Football completion. The media in this case also contribute significantly to the image of construction.

The arrival of Irfan Bachdim and other Dutch-Indonesian football players like Diego Michels in Indonesia brings about identity negotiation and image construction. As the Dutch-Indonesian who is not able to communicate in Indonesian and must adapt to Indonesian culture, Irfan is consequently saturated by cultural and identity negotiation. Meanwhile, Irfan Bachdim becomes the central figure that makes mass media is interested in writing and visualizing the news about him. Furthermore, his image is also rendered through his involvement in product advertisements in Indonesian television channels which have been watched by millions of Indonesians.

Irfan Bachdim popularity leads him to become the 'artist'. His Dutch Indonesian outward appearance is considered 'marketable'. According to Juliati having Indo-European face would be the potential source in becoming artist or celebrity in Indonesia (2009). Irfan of course has this potential. He is also selected to join Indonesian national football team and is contracted by Indonesian famous local football team, Persema Malang East Java. Because of his popularity, he is later on casted in the film entitled 'Tendangan dari Langit' (A Kick from the Sky) (2011), a film which tells about Indonesian youth named Wahyu who wants to be a professional football player like Irfan Bachdim. This film is directed by Indonesian famous director, Hanung Bramantyo.

This paper aims at investigating the identity negotiation and the image of Dutch-Indonesian descents, particularly Irfan Bachdim, as constructed in mass media, like advertisement and the movie. By applying postcolonial and media studies, this paper specifically will scrutinize how the superior image of the Dutch-Indonesians is constructed and how their multifaceted identity is negotiated. Furthermore the impact of this construction and negotiation on the contemporary Indonesia society will be delineated.

Indonesian (Contemporary) Postcolonial Film and Dutch-Indonesian Descent

Indonesian films which narrate conflicting and mutual relationship between Indonesia and Netherlands in colonial era have been released. *Perawan di Sektor Selatan (A girl in the South Region)*-(1971), *Janur Kuning (Yellow Leaf of Coconut Tree)* (1979), *Serangan Fajar (Early Attack)* (1981) *Tjoet njak Dien* (1988), *Surabaya '45* (1990), to name a few, are films which portray the struggle of Indonesians to fight against the settlement of Dutch. In this film the characters which are presented are mostly 'pure' Indonesians and Dutch. The presence of these characters of course can strengthen the narrative of opposition between the colonized and colonizer in the colonisation era.

In the above films the dominant messages that are delivered are resistance toward the colonizer, the Netherlands, and the notion of nationalism as it is paramount to construct the awareness of Indonesians toward the history of colonialism in Indonesia and the spirit of Indonesians to fight against the colonialist's policy. The presence of the Indonesian heroic

characters in those films thus is narrated. This is of course due to the primary objective of the films which is interwoven with building nationalism and empowers people's sense of belonging toward Indonesia. Furthermore Indonesian government takes roles in disseminating those films in some important occasions such as when Indonesia celebrate independent day.

In a postcolonial era there is a film which narrates a new identity negotiation and construction of image of the Dutch and Indonesian identity. *Tendangan dari Langit (A Kick from a Sky)* (2011)— the abbreviation of AKFS will be used to refer to *A Kick from a Sky*— delineates the existence of Dutch Indonesian in the era when Indonesia already proclaims its independence. Because of the history of colonization carried out by the Netherlands in Indonesia, the analysis of AKFS cannot be separated from the context of colonization which creates culture and identity negotiation between the colonized and colonizer. The perspective of such an analysis is strengthened by Benyahia et.all claiming that it would be impossible to scrutinize film in isolation without taking into account social, historical, cultural and even political contexts (2006:12). Historically and culturally the relationship between Indonesia and the Netherlands is complicated.

As a film which represents the dialectical nexus of Dutch Indonesian and Indonesians in contemporary era, AKFS however becomes a sign that the superior image and 'high position' of entities which relates to Europe have affected the way how this film treat Dutch-Indonesian descendant. Through this film the Indonesian audience might have the assumption that the Dutch is above the Indonesians. The dependence of the development of Indonesian football on European football players and coaches furthermore depict how the superiority of Europeans is legitimized through football.

However, as minority Dutch Indonesian as shown in the film should adapt to Indonesian society. The involvement in Indonesian film industry and other media are challenging way for the Dutch Indonesians in negotiating their identity. They have got Dutch education, have been living in European society, and have been practicing European cultures. It would not be easy for them to adapt to Indonesian culture. Irfan Bachdim for instance is not able to communicate in Indonesian, even once he arrives in Indonesia he then learns Indonesian step by step. That can be a problem when he plays in soccer match in which his friends in a team are Indonesians who cannot speak English, a language which Irfan used to using for daily communication in Indonesia.

Irfan's superiority and stereotype can also make him difficult to integrate into Indonesian culture. Superiority can result in the construction of otherness. Irfan is the self and Indonesians are the others. However it is important to note that Irfan is not a pure European. His Indonesian cultural and ethnical root, from his father, would be the source for him in attempting to make him accepted in Indonesia.

The Image of Dutch-Indonesian in Commercial Advertisement

Before scrutinizing *A Kick From a Sky* it is important to discuss the construction of Irfan Bachdim's superiority and image in media, particularly in the advertisement broadcasted in

television. Before Irfan played in AKFS, he had become important figures in some advertisement. As a result, Irfan Bachdim's superior image has been constructed effectively through some commercial advertisement.

Guy, F Rachmadi, and Rosadi, as cited by Wibowo, claim that advertisement is able to preserve brand image and persuade the consumers to buy the product because of that image (2003:5-6). Besides economical advantages of the advertisement, it is worth noticing that the advertisement is also powerful media in constructing the image and popularity of the artist who take a role in it. Irfan bachdim, for instance, becomes the artist of some commercial advertisements, like Pocari Sweat (the product of beverages under the Japan Company), Clear Shampoo and also Suzuki (brand famous mark of Motorcyle and cars).

Pocari Sweat advertisement in Television shows Irfan Bachdim as professional football player who always consumes Pocari Sweat drink. In this advertisement Irfan dribble the ball wonderfully. The shoot which focuses on his face indicates that the advertisement relies on his Dutch-Indonesian outward appearance. The paramount point which is related to the image of Irfan is due to the way how this advertisement is broadcasted many times, so that people become familiar with him. *Tribun Jakarta*, one of the famous Indonesian newspapers for example presents news which tell that Irfan Bachdim is not only a star of football, who can play the football beautifully, but also a star that is admired by Indonesian girls (2011). The acceptance as well as admiration of the Indonesian public toward Irfan Bachdim constructs his image as a superstar and superior Dutch Indonesian.

The way how advertisement makers in adjusting Irfan Bachdim into Indonesian culture furthermore can be seen from the advertisement of Pocari Sweat broadcasted during Ramadhan (Fasting month for muslims). In this advertisement Irfan wears Islamic clothes including rimless hat. The way how he clothes signals that the advertisement makers take Indonesian as Islamic country into account. He also gathers in a family whose members wear Islamic dress. In this context the adaptation of Irfan is to some extents carried out through symbolical attribute that is dress. His hybrid identity is mediated through advertisement. Moreover it is worth underlining that the words Irfan conveys in this advertisement, and also in other advertisements, strengthen his Dutch-Indonesian identity. Irfan speaks in Indonesian but the intonation and pronunciation are still influenced by the English and Dutch language he used to using since he was a child in Amsterdam. However, the way how Dutch-Indonesian descent speaks in Indonesian also contribute to the construction of the image and identity of the half European and Indonesian.

The role of media in constructing Irfan Bachdim's image is somehow effective and strong. The company gain profit because of Irfan's image in the media and Irfan also obtain popularity. However, the domination of the European in this case Dutch superior image is rendered and empowered in this case. The recent relation between Indonesia and Dutch thus in contemporary society has been dynamically bridged by Dutch Indonesian generation that is constructed more marketable than the pure Indonesians.

Image and Identity Negotiation in *A Kick From A Sky*

A Kick from A Sky is a film which shows how football becomes magnet for Indonesians. Football has been inspired a lot of Indonesian youths to involve in, not only to build Indonesian football image in national and international level but also to achieve popularity. In General the plot of the film narrates a character named Wahyu, a guy from Tengger wants to be a professional football player but his father does not support him. Wahyu has been inspired by Irfan Bachdim, a Dutch Indonesian football player who plays for Persema Malang (local football club in Malang). Wahyu struggles very hard to be able to go to Malang and involves in Persema Malang team. Irfan Bachdim in Wahyu's eyes is a superstar Wahyu wants to envy.

There are two interesting settings which are juxtaposed and negotiated in AKFS. They are Tengger, a periphery, a village in East Java where Wahyu lives and Malang, a dynamic city, a 'metropolis', and became one of the beautiful residences of the Dutch during colonization, where Irfan Bachdim dwells. As postulated by Ashcroft et.al colonies are by definition constructed as peripheral to the metropolitan 'centres' (2001:138). Tengger to some extents can be regarded as peripheral space under the domination and influence of European modern image which is represented through the city of Malang. Irfan lives in a centre where people from periphery should be inspired and influenced. The discourse of centre and periphery in this film is very important to highlight the spatial dialectics between Irfan and Wahyu.

The image of Irfan Bachdim and Wahyu is constructed differently. There are scenes which are presented in contrast way in the purpose of opposing the image and identity of Irfan Bachdim and Wahyu. For instance, Irfan Bachdim comes to stadium to join football games in his casual modern dress and in his expensive car. Meanwhile, Wahyu heads for Malang from Tengger village by public transportation. Irfan comes on time while Wahyu comes late. Because of this, Timo Scheunemann, Persema coach, that has a German identity warns wahyu to not come late again. These scenes of course construct the superior image of Irfan Bachdim. During the football games the camera shoots for Irfan Bachdim are very dominant. This also shows how Irfan becomes the dominant figure in the team and has a superior position compared to Indonesian players.

The image of Irfan Bachdim is also highlighted and strengthened through poster. Wahyu hangs Irfan's poster on the wall of his bedroom. This indicates that Irfan is Wahyu's idol. The chosen poster is media to show someone's tendency and admiration toward his idol. Along with the football competition which is routinely held in Indonesia, there is an attempt to gain profit from many merchandises interwoven with the existence of football team, including T-Shirt, posters, Jackets, etc. The figure of Irfan Bachdim profoundly engulfs Wahyu and of course other Indonesians to uphold European's superiority. This phenomenon can be compared to the character named Jesminder Bhamra a British Indian girl, in the film *Bend It Like Beckham*, who is very much influenced by the superior figure of David Beckham, a British football player. The postcolonial relationship between India and England to some extents can be compared in terms of postcolonial studies to the nexus between Indonesia and the Netherlands.

Identity negotiation of Irfan Bachdim within Indonesian society is shown interestingly not only in the stadium but also in the community. Irfan Bachdim shows mutual cooperation with wahyu in playing football. In this context, the 'liminal space' has been established. 'In between space' where Irfan and Wahyu can negotiate their identities through football and social

relationship is created. Irfan gives smiles to Wahyu in the stadium when they play games. Smile in this context can be seen as a sign of cultural integration. Irfan does not isolate himself. He tries to adapt to Indonesian society and people through his gesture and symbolic kind cultural response. Moreover, Irfan and Wahyu are also harmony in the team. One of the goal made when Persema Malang plays is the result of Irfan and Wahyu cooperation.

The way how Irfan negotiates his identity and adapt to Indonesian society, particularly the periphery, can be vividly seen when Irfan visits Tengger, A village which becomes Wahyu's cultural roots. According Erikson, as cited by Brah 'identity is never "established" as an "achievement" in the sense of a personality armour, or of anything static and unchangeable' (1996: 20) The fluidity of Irfan Bachdim's identity can be seen through the way how Irfan decides to enter the periphery and makes an acceptance toward Wahyu and Tengger space. Past and present identity of Irfan Bachdim is thus negotiated. As an Indonesian-Dutch descent he is saturated by two cultural roots. In relation to this kind of construction of cultural identity, Stuart Hall states:

Cultural identity belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essential past, they are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture, and power. (1990:475)

In the very beginning of the movie Irfan is very identical with the superiority which constructed through his position in the centre and European identity. This stereotype has been transgressed when he makes a contact with Wahyu. Thus, the identity of Irfan which is constructed through his existence in the centre, in Malang city, has been destabilized. Irfan enters Wahyu's small and cruddy house to see Wahyu who is being sick. In relation to this juxtaposing and unstable identity, it is important to see Wahyu's penetration to the centre. Wahyu's successful attempt in becoming the player in Persema Malang who plays football with Irfan Bachdim signals the fluid identity of Wahyu. As the native Indonesian, Wahyu transgresses the boundary of the centre and periphery by becoming a good football player.

Conclusion

The image of Dutch Indonesian decent is constructed through mass media, like advertisement in television and film. Through this construction the superiority of Dutch Indonesian is legitimized and rendered. The image of Dutch Indonesian is represented through the figure of Irfan Bachdim who has good skills in football as he has joined Amsterdam Football Academy. Irfan's image can be scrutinized through his appearance in some advertisements like Pocari Sweat, Clear Shampoo and Yamaha.

In the film *A Kick from the Sky* Irfan Image as a superior Dutch-Indonesian decent is also empowered. It can be seen from the dominant shoots which are focused on his appearance and

skills in playing football, the way he dress and his possessions. The identity negotiation of Irfan Bachdim is depicted through his relationship with Indonesian player like wahyu, and his decision to visit Wahyu in Tengger. However it is worth noticing that the attempts of Irfan Bachdim to adapt to Indonesian society can be seen as well as his strategy to sustain his domination. In a contemporary postcolonial era the nexus between the former colonized and colonizer is developed through culture and economics as well as education. Irfan shows his domination because of his football culture and his involvement in commercial encounters in Indonesia.



Works Cited

- Allen, Pamela. (2001). *Membaca dan Membaca Lagi: Reinterpretasi Fiksi Indonesia 1980-1995*. Magelang: Indonesiatara.
- Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*. London: Routledge, 2001.
- Benyahia, Sarah Casey, et.all. 2006. *As Film Studies: The Essential Introduction*. New York: Routledge.
- Brah, Avtar. (1996). *Cartographies of Diaspora Contesting identities*. London: Routledge.
- Hall, Stuart. "Cultural Identity and Diaspora". *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*. Ed. Jonathan Rutherford. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990. (435-438)
- Jualiastuti, Nuraini. (2009). *Indis dalam Indonesia Masa Kini*. <http://kunci.or.id/articles/indis-dalam-indonesia-masa-kini/>
- Wibowo, Wahyu. (2003) *Sihir Iklan: Format Komunikasi Mondial dalam Kehidupan Urban Kosmopolit*. Jakarta: Gramedia.
- Koran Tribun Jakarta. 29 Januari 2011. *Irfan Bachdim Bintang Iklan Pocari Sweat Jadi Pembicaraan*
- Stoler, Ann Laura. (1997) "Sexual Affronts and Racial Frontiers: European Identities and the Cultural Politics of Exclusion in Colonial Southeast". *In Tensions of Empire Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*. California: University of California Press

*Thai Graphic Design Culture: A Review of Thai Graphic Design History and The
Role of Graphic Designers in Thai Society*

Khemmiga Teerapong, Marsha Berry, Yoko Akama

0082

RMIT University, Australia

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2012

Official Conference Proceedings 2012

Abstract:

This paper reviews how Thai graphic design has affected Thai society. It describes the development of Thai graphic arts from traditional to modern practice, focusing on graphic design for social development. This includes a very brief history of Thai graphic design and how it has been affected by Thai culture and society, as well as the role of Thai graphic designers responding to social issues. Visual artifacts have been analyzed to find out the power of graphic arts in Thai society. Originally, Thai art and design represented delicate works and master craftsmanship. It embodied the values of Thai culture. The role of artists and designers in Thai traditional art was clearly cultural visualizers; however, this role has been changed by the rise of industrial production and capitalism. Western culture has greatly altered Thai graphic design culture, completely changing design processes and the purposes of design production. Since the arrival of Western culture, Thai graphic art and design artifacts have expressed this East-West hybridity in Thai culture, and they represent cultural transformation across boundaries. This paper draws the connection between the traditional and modern role of graphic arts in the respect of Thai culture and society. This paper is from the literature review chapter of my exegesis.

iafor

The International Academic Forum

www.iafor.org

Introduction

Ken Garland announced in the First Thing First manifesto in 1964 that graphic design can function to the world rather than as a commercial tool (Heller, Bierut & Drenttel 2002). This has raised the issue that graphic design can play an important role in social development. Thai graphic works have driven society for generations as they have been used as a communication tool for public information. To examine the impact of graphic design in Thai society with regard to publicizing social development projects, it is useful to investigate the history of Thai graphic design and its influences. Since Sukhothai period (1250-1450), graphic works have been produced for religious, political, educational and commercial purposes as cultural influences have driven the direction of Thai graphic design industry. This paper reviews a history of Thai graphic design between the 13th Century and the 21st Century. This study analyses important visual artifacts paralleled with political, social and cultural movements. Political and technological movements influenced from other nations were the factors that changed the nature of Thai design culture. Affected aims to produce graphic design works, the mixtures of local and imported cultures were expressed through Thai graphic design and the artifacts also fed cultural influences back into the Thai society as a result. This process shows the cultural circle of the relationship between Thai graphic design and Thai society.

The definition of ‘Graphic Design’

Graphic design can be broadly defined in various terms. In this paper, the definition of ‘Graphic Design’ from American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA) (2012) and Thai Graphic Designers Association (ThaiGa) (2010) are combined. Graphic design is defined as a creative activity combining concept, artistic skills, technology, and information to communicate to the general public by using visuals and texts. Graphic designers deal with visuals and texts as well as work with their skills, theories and thinking processes to solve a design problem in order to improve effectiveness of the communication and access to the information. As a result, this process can communicate effectively with the general public and have a broad impact in society.

In this study, the word ‘Graphic Arts’ is used to describe Thai graphic design before the 19th Century. Frascara (2004) points out that ‘Graphic Design’ needs to link with industrial production; however, Thai graphic design works before the industrial revolution in 19th Century were handmade products and used knowledge and technology embedded in local Thai communities. As a result, Thai graphic works during that time were more ‘arts’ and ‘crafts’ than ‘design’.

Thai Graphic Arts prior to the 19th Century

This section examines the functions and forms of Thai graphic arts prior to the 19th Century in order to provide a historical context for contemporary Thai graphic industry. Many Thai theorists agree that Buddhism and local beliefs have been highly influential on Thai cultural expression (Kislenko 2004; Klausner 1993; Reynold 1976). The majority of graphic works produced during this period often involved in religions and beliefs (Moore 1974). Inspired by the Buddhist faith, the detailed artifacts were produced with delicate processes and high artistic skills. Graphic artists

aimed to educate Thai citizens through stone sculptures and Traiphumikatha¹ which visually informed the Thai people about the rules and laws of the community (Reynold 1976). The first typographic work is a set of the stone inscriptions in the period of King Rama Kamhang's reign (1277-1317). These stone inscriptions are historical evidences of Thai type design because they applied Thai alphabets for the first time (Ambhanwong 1966; Waravetpisit 1959). The stone inscriptions are a very important document giving the details of the Thai citizenship, politics, economics, traditions and the life of King Rama Kamhang. These graphic artifacts provide information how the rulers of the nation introduced the national laws and communicate to the Thai citizens using graphic arts which were to promote Thai good behavior and the value of good citizenship in the Thai language (Ambhanwong 1966; Reynold 1976). Similarly, the inscriptions also show the first Thai typeface which was based on Khmer letters. Khmer typeface are similar with Thai typeface in which they have round heads and round corners with serifs (Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre 2008).

Thai graphic arts were not standing alone in this region because they were influenced by other cultures. Among Asian countries, inner-values are expressed visually through art objects and this is a core concept shared in this region (Thaolthong 1943). Thai traditional art is no exception. The Thai art objects were usually created as expressions of religious faith which brought influences from Indian and Khmer art into Thailand (Leksukhum 2011). For this reason, many Thai graphic artists during the period before the 19th Century produced their works to serve religious purposes; for example, Buddhist wall paintings, sculptures and sacred scriptures (Moore 1974). Thai graphic composition in this period is focused seriously on the perfect balance and symmetry. The left and right sides of design artifacts are mirrored in each other. This composition was applied to different kinds of art including buildings, paintings, illustrations, sculptures and decorations. Moore (1974) also comments that Cambodians² and other nations in the same region had transmitted their artistic influences into Thai traditional art before the art in Thailand was highly influenced from Indian art. He emphasizes that 'To these forms the Thai added their own artistic genius, developing forms and styles that could be readily recognized as Thai productions' (1974, p. 220). The differences between Thai art and others are the applications of the art on Thai local conditions. For instance, the appearance of images of the Buddha took on the facial characteristics of the local Thai. The design of Thai graphics depicted local Thai flora and fauna. In other words, influences from India and Khmere were appropriated and assimilated by Thai artisans. These graphic artifacts clearly differentiate Thai Buddhist art from Indian Buddhist art in terms of contents, designs, details and techniques of production. This follows what Homi Bhabha (2004) mentions wherein the cultural articulation from local community negotiates with the growth of hybrid culture and this leads to historical movement. In the history of Thai art, hybrid culture in the graphic art is clearly seen in pre-industrial era.

The revolution of Thai Graphic Design

¹ The first book, created during 1347-1368, gives full details of Buddhist cosmology

² Cambodia was called 'Khmer' before the mid 19th Century.

In this section, the technological and cultural influences on Thai graphic design will be explored. The coming of printing technology completely changed ‘Thai graphic arts’ to ‘Thai graphic design’. In 1835, the American Board of Commission for Foreign Missions brought the type and press from Singapore to Thailand (Nawigamune 2000). Setting up the letterpress printing in Thailand was a significant shift in Thai graphic design. Following establishment of printing process in Thailand, Dr. Dan Beach Bradley, an American doctor who is one of the most influential persons in the Thai printing history, published the first newspaper (see Figure1) entitled ‘The Bangkok Recorder’ on 4th July 1844 (Ambhanwong 1966). After that, Dr. Bradley released calendars, magazines and textbooks from his publishing house. Those works presented the early age of graphic printing in Thailand. With the imported technology, Thai graphic design shifted to mass production. The design processes, resources and materials changed the look of Thai graphic design since the printing technology available in Thailand.



Figure 1: Example of Thai newspaper typography

This revolution of Thai typography was greatly developed with the arrival of new printing technology. The first newspaper in Thailand, The Bangkok Recorder, was printed industrially using mass production (Ambhanwong 1966; Moore 1974). The letters in The Bangkok Recorder were set by using letterpress technique and printed on paper. They were spaced systematically between each sentence and all paragraphs were justified. There were influences which came with the printing technology such

as using an English punctuation (period) for the first time in Thai language system. Arabic numerals and English letters were also used for the name of the newspaper and printed dates. Nonetheless, Thai numerals and Minor era (Chula Sakarat), a traditional calendar year during the 19th Century, were provided parallel to the Western system. In term of typography, The Bangkok Recorder was designed into 2 columns. The shorter columns made the newspaper easier to read compared with Thai typography in the Thai stone inscriptions during Sukhothai period. This was a result of the imported printing technology which affected Thai reading culture. The development of Thai typography in this case, The Bangkok Recorder represented a ‘hybrid culture’ (Bhabha 2004) in Thai graphic design.

Although mass production was the main factor that drove Thai graphic design industry in this era, the imported printing processes were not for commercial purposes at first. Thai graphic design was laid on a part of national development. During King Rama 5 reign (1868-1910), there was a reformation of the nation and public transportation, infrastructure, communication and law systems were introduced to the Thai citizen (Baker & Phongpaichit 2009; Mishra 2010). To depict Thailand as a civilized country, a lot of visual works were produced during this period of time. The designs of Thai early banknotes and stamps were highly influenced by Victorian art and British imperialism. Similar to British banknotes and stamps, the drawing of the Thai king or his symbols were printed on the documents (Nawigamune 2000). These visual artifacts portrayed that Western cultural influences were major factors in Thai graphic design. Using a similar design to the British shows that Thailand first accepted graphic communication as a reaction to the colonizing powers surrounding the country (Day 2010; Nawigamune 2000). Adopting British design was to depict the civilization of the nation. This resulted in using visual artifacts as a camouflage to preserve Thailand as a nation free from colonial rule.

The age of democratic movement, World War II and Thai Graphic design

Another important event that affected Thai graphic design was the democratic transition in 1932. This was a very important change in Thai political and social system as the authorities were transferred to elected government (Baker & Phongpaichit 2009; Mishra 2010). A number of visual artworks were produced for political purposes which included government announcements, political party advertisements and propaganda. The emphasis of graphic design was for mass communication during this period, and the designers’ works were mainly for political issues rather than commercial purposes.

Thai graphic design had an incredible change in 1938 when the Thai government started to strengthen the national identity through graphic artifacts. Marshal P. Pibunsongkhram, the Thai prime minister, announced a conservative policy ‘Rathaniyom’ which is a new set of Thai traditions to empower Thai nation in the world stage (Baker & Phongpaichit 2009; Mishra 2010). Rathaniyom aimed to westernize and modernize the nation by mimicking the colonizers’ cultures. This was a deliberate strategy. Bhabha (2004) highlights that adopting cultural influences from colonial nations are ‘Mimicry’ which is used as a survival strategy in the face of the power of colonial nations. He also notes that

‘Mimicry reveals something in so far as it is distinct from what might be called an itself that is behind. The effect is camouflage...It is not a question of harmonizing with the background, of becoming mottled-exactly like the techniques of camouflage practiced in human warfare’.

(Bhabha 1994, p. 85)

Rathaniyom was announced and communicated to the general public through wide range of printed media from governmental documents to magazines. Through this policy, Thai typography and fashion were influenced by the West. Western uniforms and dresses appeared in most printed graphic works during this period. However, the usage of English alphabets in graphic design works was less than in the 19th Century. The word ‘Thai’, ‘Puer Chad’ (for the country) and ‘Sang Chad’ (to reform the country) appeared often on the graphic artifacts in this period. This is a significant factor of cultural changes which revealed the government’s propaganda (Nawigamune 2000). The government also simplified Thai alphabets and pronunciation as a part of defining and the disseminating Thai culture (Baker & Phongpaichit 2009). This proves that cultural hybridity was used as a strategy to keep Thailand independent of the colonial powers, specifically France and Great Britain.

Thai graphic design worked very effectively to support political agendas during this period. The role of graphic design for political issues was clearly shown. A number of advertisements was released. They were examples of powerful images and persuasive design. In December 1941, Thailand was involved in the Second World War. Graphic design artifacts produced during this period demonstrate how graphic design was used as persuasive communication for the government to manipulate Thai people on order to support the government to join the Second World War as allies of Japan.



Figure 2: Military recruiting posters



Figure 3 : Cultural hybridity for political purpose

Cultural hybridity in Thai graphic design for political purposes can be clearly seen through a government poster (see Figure 3) published during the Second World War. This poster was designed following the British poster for military recruiting in 1915 by Alfred Leete and the US poster for military recruiting in 1917 by James Montgomery Flagg (see Figure 2). The design compositions of the three posters are a central focus and a person in the poster points directly to the audience. These designs invite emotional engagement and send a direct powerful message to the audiences. The person that appears on the posters can be recognized as belonging to each respective nation by their uniforms and clothes. In the British and US posters, the person pointing directly at the viewers is asking them to join the military. By comparison, the Thai poster is asking the audience to trust the information given by the Thai government. A translation of the heading and sub-heading reads:

‘Brothers Thai citizens!
Have a unity.
Have confidence in the government and its military.
Have confidence that we will win the war.
Remember that information from the enemy is
to defame us and the distorted information
about us is the information from the enemy’.
(Translated by the author)

Thai design adopted a lot of design functions and forms from the British and American posters. This comparison of the three posters shows the links between the

graphic design works and the influences of the British and American poster design to the Thai poster design for public information. The application of British and American design to the Thai poster design was to link the message to the context related to the Second World War and aimed to strengthen the Thai citizen unity during the war time. This proves that the Thai government used cultural hybridity in visual works to be a form of camouflage for Thai national security.

Post-war graphic design industry in Thailand

This section will investigate the cultural influences on Thai graphic design which used for political and commercial purposes during the age of post-colonialism. After the Second World War, Thailand joined the world economy in the 1950s (Elliott 1978). It was the period of the Cold War during which the United States of America (US) played an important role to maintain democratic system in Indochina against Communism (Baker & Phongpaichit 2009; Elliott 1978; Harrison, R 2010). Influenced by the US foreign policy, graphic design in Thailand during the mid-20th century was dominated by hybrid forms drawing on American graphic design.

American popular culture

During the period of the Cold War, Thailand was in the middle of the rivalry among the United State, the Soviet Union and China (Day 2010). The Cold War affected both political and cultural life in Southeast Asia. To protect the Thai Monarchy, Buddhism and national identity, the Thai government cooperated with the US government to raise the level of national security in order to protect Thailand from the Communist powers (Anderson & Mendiones 1985; Baker & Phongpaichit 2009; Harrison, R 2010; Harrison, RV & Jackson 2010). Thailand signed an agreement in 1950 and was influenced in education, culture, economy, military by the US (Mishra 2010). This leads to an acceptance of American-style anticommunism in Thailand with the support from the US. Harrison (2010, p. 199) states that the Americanization of Thailand was further imposed at the level of cinema culture. She also points out that Thai films aimed to raise the anti-communist issues among Thai citizens. Harrison (2010) analyzes that goodness or hero was visualized with American symbols in a popular Thai film *Insri Deang* as the main character of this movie wears a red eagle mask and fights against bandits to protect people. Following the movie, the usage of mass media for American anti-communism in Thailand was not only in film industry but also in graphic printed materials. Posters, handbills, comics and illustrations produced during the period were influenced by the American popular culture (Nawigamune 2000). Hero figures and the American drawing style were applied into some Thai graphic design especially in character design. Realistic drawing, showing muscle and human-like anatomy, were popular in Thai illustrations and this was used for Thai traditional novels. Thai graphic design during the Cold War period was not always symmetrical, but it was in perspective with more dimensional with the arrangements, volumes and depth. These influences show Thai graphic design adopted American popular culture to send a message of anti-communism to the general public. Harrison (2010) emphasizes this visual expression as a hybrid culture in the 'American Era' in Thailand. The use of hybridity in this era was designed to protect the Thai political system and society from Communism. This may be interpreted as a means of camouflage.

The arrival of Japanese popular culture

The departure of the US from Southeast Asia after the fall of Saigon in 1975 eased the Cold War tensions and resulted in the establishment of a liberal market economy (Baker & Phongpaichit 2009; Huynh-Beattie 2010). This allowed international trade and investment between Thailand and other Asian countries especially Japan. Cultural products from Japan arrived Thailand during the 1980s (Tidarat 2002). The huge wave of Japanese popular culture invaded Thailand via entertainment media and industrial investments (Thornton 1993; Toyoshima 2008). Toyoshima (2008) argues that the reason why Thai youths prefer to consume Japanese cultural products is because of 'cultural similarity' related to politeness, kindness and respectfulness. As a result, Thai society easily absorbed Japanese culture through this media consumption.

Japanese animations, comics, games, music and dramas were popular among Thai youths and became a part of Thai popular culture during the late 20th Century (Tidarat 2002). This shows Japan 'soft power' which was to influence cultures and economics in other Asian nations by disseminating cultural products (Otmazgin 2008). The two main Japanese cultural products which were well-known in Thailand were animations and dramas. Toyoshima (2008) explains in detail that Japanese comics and animations represent unrealistic and exaggerated life in Japan, while most dramas portray contemporary Japanese living and lifestyle. He also adds that both kinds of cultural products tend to increase the Thai consumption of products from Japan. Accepting the cultural influence introduced a new visual aesthetic to Thai youths and led to a further change in Thai graphic design culture.

In the competitive global market, Thai graphic design adopted other design influences in order to maintain its position. Majority of Thai graphic design works during the late 20th Century were for commercial purposes. Influences from Japan were applied to Thai graphic design especially for young people (Toyoshima 2008). Hybridity in Thai visuals can be clearly seen in Thai character design. Influenced by Japanese cartoons, Thai characters had similar design (Kurathong 2010). The Thai design shows oversized-eye shapes, large heads and tiny bodies. The cartoon-style visual artifacts were seen as more adorable and preferred to realistic ones. Unrealistic proportions of human anatomy were popular during this period and were distinguishing feature between American and Japanese influences in Thai graphic design (Kurathong 2010; Nawigamune 2000).

Cultural influences from Japan have increased the demand for Japanese products such as cartoons, food and activities (Toyoshima 2008). There are two clear examples of applying Thai-Japanese culture in Thai graphic design as a business strategy. A Thai company named Oishi Group is an example of mimicry in Thai graphic design by applying Japanese image brand into Thai business. Oishi Group has operated a Japanese restaurant in Thailand since 1999. It uses Japanese graphic for their branding strategy. Oishi recently expanded the product lines to launch green tea and beverages to Thai market and these products take a majority share of the Thai beverage market in Thailand (Sunthonpornjalern 2010). Using a Japanese name and a Japanese image, Oishi Green Tea is a very popular product among Thai students. Its packages are designed in Japanese style and some ranges of green tea products have cartoons and popular Japanese cultural artifacts combined with Thai color schemes, mascots and Thai typography on the packages. Second example of effects from Japanese cultural

influences in Thai graphic design is Aki-ko. It is a Thai franchise business with a Japanese name which portrays a Japanese image under Thai and Western goods. Aki-ko, founded in 1999, uses a Japanese girl for its logo and mascot. Selling Western style confectionary with self-service, Aki-ko provides wide ranges of products including candy, dried fruit, nuts, cookies and crackers and they are similar as other Thai snack brands in the market. Therefore, Aki-ko stands out with the concept of 'Modern Japanese' to reach its target audience and this strategy is very successful. The brand is popular among Thai teenagers and becomes a business model for small and medium enterprises (Thamplanon 2000). Aki-ko demonstrates the effective usage of hybridity in Thai graphic design as a branding strategy for market competition. These samples show that Thai businesses use Thai-Japanese hybrid graphic design for their economic survival. In these cases, 'cultural hybridity' (Bhabha 2004) has been used to protect Thai business and economics in the global market.

Thai graphic design in the 21st Century

Thai graphic design in the 21st Century represents the mixture of various cultures. Eastern and Western cultural products are imported to Thailand and these affect Thai local communities and culture. A popular flow which hits Thailand and the rest of Asia can be known as Korean culture. The Korean wave has come through entertainment media as the exportation of Korean culture to the global market (Mahoney 2011; Siriyuvasak 2004; Siriyuvasak & Hyunjoon 2007; Yasumoto 2009; Yoshida 2009). This movement influenced Thai graphic design especially in the area of motion graphics for entertainment (Siriyuvasak 2004; Siriyuvasak & Hyunjoon 2007). However Thai graphic design in the 21st Century is not influenced by only one dominant culture, there still are influences from Britain and the United States of America through music and film industry. These cultural factors inspire Thai graphic designers to create their works as well as their projects in Thailand. For this reason, Thai graphic design in the 21st Century is a new area to be explored in the further study. This will position the identity of Thai graphic design in South East Asia.

Conclusion

The long journey of Thai graphic design development shows the relationship between graphic design and Thai society. Developed from graphic arts to graphic design industry, the Thai graphic design works have been used in different roles and different purposes in each era. In Sukhothai period, Thai traditional graphic arts were used for religious, educational and political purposes. This can be seen from the Thai first stone inscriptions which were to teach the Thai citizens and remain peace in the country. While the development of printing process shifted Thai graphic design to the industrial age during the 19th Century, it shows hybridity in Thai and Western typography in the Bangkok Recorder, Thai first newspaper. Thai typography in the newspaper was adapted for mass production and there was a usage of English letters mixed with Thai language for the first time. Thai early banknotes and stamps were also highly influenced by British design, but they applied the Thai royal symbols and traditional pattern design into the British looks. This hybridity was to depict the national civilization and to hide the core of Thai identity in the Thai modern design. Nevertheless, the Thai design identity still remains a part of cultural hybridity. The cultural influences from the West and the East have been applied and used in regard to Thai circumstances and contexts as a part of localization. For this reason, this study

of Thai graphic design culture is essential to discover the core part of the culture remaining in the digital era.



References

- Ambhanwong, S 1966, 'Major Periods in Thai Printing', *The Journal of Library History*, vol. 1, no. 4, pp. 242-7.
- Anderson, BR & Mendiones, R 1985, *In the Mirror Literature and Politics in Siam in the American Era*, Duang Kamol, Bangkok.
- Australian Graphic Design Association 2012, *What is Graphic Design?*, Australian Graphic Design Association, viewed 10th February 2012, <<http://www.agda.com.au/about/what-is-graphic-design%3E>.
- Baker, CJ & Phongpaichit, P 2009, *A history of Thailand*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge ; Port Melbourne.
- Bhabha, HK 1994, *The location of culture*, Routledge, London ; New York.
- 2004, *The location of culture*, Routledge classics, Routledge, London ; New York.
- Day, T 2010, 'Cultures at war in Cold War Southeast Asia: an introduction', in T Day & MHT Liem (eds), *Culture at war: the Cold War and cultural expression in Southeast Asia*, Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, New York.
- Elliott, D 1978, 'The Socio-Economic Formation of Modern Thailand', in A Turton, J Fast & M Caldwell (eds), *Thailand Roots of Conflict*, 1st edn, Spokeman, Nottingham, pp. 21-50.
- Frascara, J 2004, *Communication Design : Principles, Methods, and Practice*, Allworth, New York.
- Harrison, R 2010, 'The Man with the Golden Gauntlets: Mit Chaibancha's Insi Thorng and the Hybridization of Red and Yellow Perils in Thai Cold War Action Cinema', in T Day & MHT Liem (eds), *Cultures at war : the Cold War and cultural expression in Southeast Asia*, Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, New York.
- Harrison, RV & Jackson, Pa 2010, *The Ambiguous Allure of the West Traces of the Colonial in Thailand*, Hong Kong University Press, Hong Kong.
- Heller, S, Bierut, M & Drenttel, W 2002, *Looking closer 4*, Allworth Press, New York.
- Huynh-Beattie, B 2010, 'Saigonese art during the war: modernity versus ideology', in T Day & MHT Liem (eds), *Culture at war: the cold war and culrual expression in Southeast Asia*, Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, New York, pp. 81-102.
- Kislenko, A 2004, *Culture and customs of Thailand*, Culture and customs of Asia,, Greenwood Press, Westport, Conn.
- Klausner, WJ 1993, *Reflections on Thai Culture*, 4 edn, The Siam Society, Bangkok.
- Kurathong, N 2010, *A brief history of Thai cartoon*, Let's comic, Bangkok.
- Leksukhum, S 2011, *History of Thai Art*, 5 edn, Muang Boran Publishing, Bangkok.
- Mahoney, J 2011, 'The attraction of Korean pop culture knows no borders', *The Gazette*, p. C.6.
- Mishra, P 2010, *The History of Thailand*, Abc-Clio, Santa Barbara.
- Moore, FJ 1974, *Thailand : its people, its society, its culture*, Survey of world cultures ; 15, New Haven : HRAF Press.
- Nawigamune, A 2000, *A century of Thai graphic design*, Thames & Hudson, London.
- Otmazgin, NK 2008, 'Contesting soft power: Japanese popular culture in East and Southeast Asia', *International Relations of the Asia Pacific*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 73-101.
- Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre 2008, *The Inscriptions in Thailand Database*, Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre,

- viewed 25th April 2012,
<<http://www.sac.or.th/databases/inscriptions/en/main.php%3E>.
- Reynold, CJ 1976, 'Buddhist Cosmography in Thai History, with Special Reference to Nineteenth-Century Culture Change', *The Journal of Asian Studies (pre-1986)*, vol. 35, no. 2, pp. 203-.
- Siriyuvasak, U 2004, 'Popular Culture and Youth Consumption: Modernity, Identity and Social Transformation', paper presented to The International Workshop on Feeling "Asian" Modernities, Tokyo, Japan, 23-25 November 2001.
- Siriyuvasak, U & Hyunjoon, S 2007, 'Asianizing Kpop: production, consumption and identification patterns among Thai youth', *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 109-36.
- Sunthonpornjalern, S 2010, 'Marketing strategy' is the heart to drive 'Oishi', *Thai Commerce*, vol. 5, no. 20, p. 98.
- ThaiGa 2010, *Definition of Graphic Design*, ThaiGa, viewed 10th January 2012,
<http://www.thaiga.or.th/about_graphic.html%3E.
- Thamplanon, R 2000, *Cute by Thai*, Marketeer, viewed 5 May 2012,
<http://www.marketeer.co.th/inside_detail.php?inside_id=35%3E.
- Thaolthong, P 1943, *Thai Art Appreciation*, Silpakorn University, Bangkok.
- Thornton, E 1993, 'THAILAND', *Fortune*, vol. 128, no. 11, pp. 145-9.
- Tidarat, R 2002, *The popularization of Japanese youth culture in the media in Thailand (Karn Pueaprae Wattanatham pan Suae nai Prates Thai)*.
- Toyoshima, N 2008, 'Longing for Japan: The Consumption of Japanese Cultural Products in Thailand', *SOJOURN: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, vol. 23, no. 2, pp. 252-82.
- Waravetpisit, P 1959, *Thai Literature*, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok.
- Yasumoto, S 2009, 'Japan and Korea as a Source of Media and Cultural Capital', paper presented to The Sixth Biennial Conference Korean Studies Association of Australasia, The University of Sydney, Australia, 9-10 July 2009.
- Yoshida, K 2009, 'EAST ASIAN POP CULTURE: Analysing the Korean Wave', *Pacific Affairs*, vol. 82, no. 2, pp. 341-3.

Cultural Reconstruction Through Science Communication in Indonesia: A Rhetorical Approach

Suranti Trisnawati

0086

Institute of Technology Bandung (ITB), Indonesia

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2012

Official Conference Proceedings 2012

Abstract:

Science can be communicated to the public through printed and electronic documents including books, magazines, television programs, multimedia courseware and etcetera. Different culture might have different way to communicate science to the public including choosing any elements or objects in the chosen media of communication which can then represent characteristics of the culture. Understanding science is potentially influenced by people's familiarity with them. The science communication itself, to some extent, can be seen as a "bridge" between science and culture which in turn may contribute to reconstruct culture of a society. However, there are still a small number of studies with regards to how a culture is reconstructed in relation to science communication, particularly in the context of Indonesia. This discussion might be related to rhetorical aspects of the culture being studied as the chosen media of communication seek to persuade their audiences through verbal and non-verbal elements represented in the media. Investigating cultural reconstruction in Indonesia which is related to rhetorical aspects is the aim of the discussion in this paper which might then offers an important contribution to the discussions of cultural studies in the context of Asia.

Keywords: cultural reconstruction, science communication, rhetorical perspective

iafor

The International Academic Forum

www.iafor.org

1. Introduction: the scope of discussion

Media of communication which disseminates various kinds of information to the public has great potential to reconstruct culture. The cultural reconstruction process itself is concerned with sharing social meanings. Meanings are, however, generated through signs (Barker, 2010) within the communication system. The terms *science* itself in the context of this paper refers to: (1) systematic studies of the structure and behaviour of the physical and natural world through observation and experiment and (2) a systematically organised body of knowledge on a particular subject or about a universe (Brake & Weitkamp, 2010). In order to communicate science issues there are many devices that communicators use in what they believe to be the most suitable and effective way to their target audiences. The communicators use a set of methods aimed to persuade the audiences by using language within the sign system. In terms of science communication, if the science is addressed to, for example, elementary school students, the language used to deliver the message including its materials (e.g. audio or/and visual elements) and the means of communication should be easy to understand by them, as the intended audiences. The audiences make meanings of information delivered via the media of communication using their knowledge and experience relating to the messages. The messages might, in turn, influence ways the audiences think about their life including their social practices which are possible to change. In a more general sense, the messages have the potential to change people's lives, moreover, to change the culture of society.

Since information about science might change cultures, communicating science to the public is important to take into account in terms of how it can change the cultures. Ways to communicate science, which are ways to persuade people and use of any devices for this purpose, might play an important role as investigating them might help us to explain the process of cultural reconstruction. This means rhetorical aspects of this process of communication is important to explore. However, previous research on science communication with regards to culture focuses on types of media which deliver information about science such as conducted by d'Andrea & Declich (2005), Park and Thewall (2006), and Roundtree (2010). In the study that this paper draws on, however, I will examine how rhetorical perspectives can help us to understand reconstruction of culture through science communication, and why. Firstly, I will explain a short description of cultural reconstruction which is potential to be influenced by science communication. This will be followed by an explanation about how rhetorical perspectives relate to cultural reconstruction. Then, I will describe an implication of the use of rhetorical approach in viewing cultural reconstruction in relation to science communication. Data in this study is obtained from Indonesian national television programs containing science including pure and applied science as well as life and natural science broadcasted in Indonesian national televisions from January to May 2012.

2. How does science communication change culture?

As mentioned previously, the development of media of communication can influence cultural changes as the media including their content generate meanings which can then be shared by members of a society. This means ways people make meaning about their life also change. This process of meaning production is signifying practices (Barker, 2010, p. 7). In order to understand cultural change, we need to explore how meaning is produced as signifying system which is generated through language, whether verbal or non-verbal. This indicates the concept of meaning is core to the explication of culture (Barker, 2010, p. 110). Science communication also means

generating meanings as in this context cultural meanings are formed and communicated through science. In addition, science can be seen as a means and medium through which we form knowledge about ourselves and the social world. In turn, science communication, by the assistance of language, might construct meanings. The process of constructing meanings in this context can be seen as a dialogue between scientists, policy makers, and common people. Ways people interact with a medium of communication might give an impact on their interaction with other media. For example, those who familiar with audio-visual media will use their knowledge and experience in interacting with such media when they interact with other audio-visual media. As well, people's previous knowledge and experience about any audio-visual elements will influence the way they interact with the media containing science. These audio-visual elements, as a representation of culture, bring meanings, and these meanings bring knowledge within science via the media.

It is not easy to see cultural changes if we only look at the media and if we only observe the society for a short period of time. Although the study in this article does not observe the society for certain time period to see the cultural changes, the study in this paper can be seen as a preliminary study which will be useful to see how the culture is changed in terms of science communication in relation to rhetorical aspect. For this purpose, this paper provides general description of science programs in Indonesian national televisions and investigates the programs from a rhetorical perspective to see the potential of cultural changes through science communication.

3. Science communication in Indonesia: television programs

Although recently social media also play a role in communication, in Indonesian contemporary society television is one the important media to deliver messages to its audience which can then contribute to constructing a world in which knowledge and experience are ever present. In terms of communicating science television has become an important site for the production and circulation of a proliferation of knowledge and experience about science. According to Hook and Brake (2010, p. 32), the mission of television is informing, educating, and entertaining its audiences. This means television programs including science programs might have such purposes.

Science as portrayed on television can be classified into two types: (1) *obvious* which broadcasts programs as science in forms of, for example, documentary and (2) *incidental* which shows science in some form as part of everyday interaction of the scientific method with the wider world, for example, scientific film which relies upon forensic scientists which in reality is about the human condition (Hook & Brake, 2010, p. 33). In the study that this paper draws on criteria to choose the television programs refer to the category from Hook and Brake, as noted previously. In addition to those criteria, this paper also concerns any program which is not under those criteria but containing information about science. For example, news programs which have a section containing science. In Indonesian television programs science is broadcasted under categories of news, edutainment, documentary, adventure, and entertainment. Some programs are not specified into those categories but they are classified into 'others'. Figure 1 shows number of television programs containing science from January to May 2012 in Indonesian national television stations. This data indicates that two television stations broadcast ten science programs (i.e. Trans TV and Kompas TV). The rest television stations relay less than half of the

total number of science programs on those two television stations. Table 1 provides information about categories of science programs on the Indonesian national televisions during the same time period.

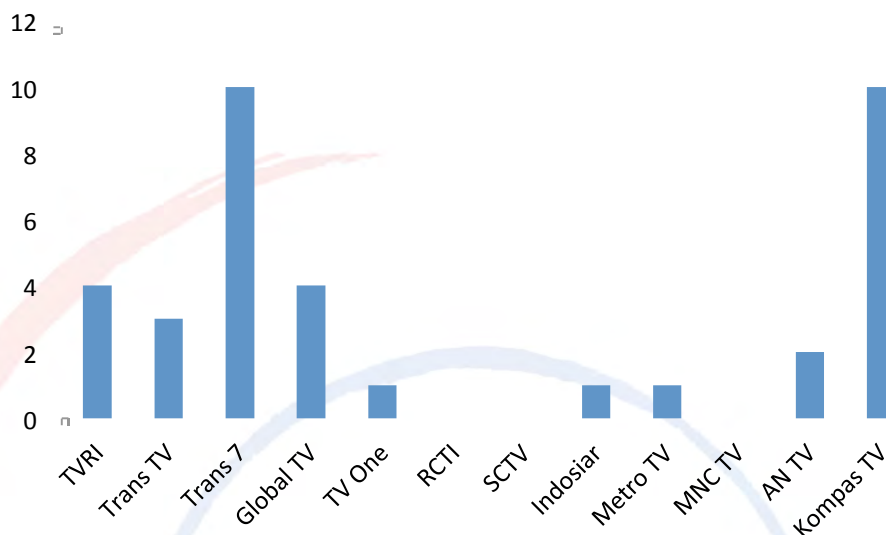


Figure 1. Number of science programs in Indonesian television stations from January to May 2012

Table 1. Names of science programs in Indonesian television stations from January to May 2012

No.	Name of television station	Category of television program
1	TVRI	Education
		Entertainment
2	Trans TV	News
		Entertainment
3	Trans 7	Edutainment
		Documentary
4	Global TV	Entertainment
		Adventure
5	TV One	News
6	RCTI	N/A
7	SCTV	N/A
8	Indosiar	News
9	Metro TV	Documentary
10	MNC TV	N/A
11	AN TV	Others
		Children
12	Kompas TV	Entertainment
		Adventure

Note
 N/A: not available

The science programs above are about natural and applied sciences. In this study, although we can collect and calculate programs depicting science on television, we can see that television tends to ignore social sciences and their practitioners. Also, in such television programs presenters of the program are dominated by male presenters. In addition, the language used in the programs is both formal and informal depending on the target audiences.

The way science is informed to the audiences through the television programs is potential to influence the way the audiences make meaning information about science broadcasted as the programs might inform or advocate the audience to do something related to the portrayed information. Understanding such information might be influenced by audiences' previous knowledge and experience which can be obtained from any sources including museums, films, magazines, and etcetera. This means the process of understanding science in the programs might occur culturally as the way the audiences understand science is formed through their relationships with their culture and community. Customs and traditions including ways of thinking are communicated rhetorically within a society which in turn relates to how the audiences understand science broadcasted through the television program. This means in this process of understanding rhetorical aspects might play an important role.

4. Rhetorical perspective in science communication

The way the producers of the television program deliver information about science to their audiences relates to the way the producers persuade the audience to watch the programs and to understand information delivered through the programs. According to Murcott (2010, pp. 110-112), several television program genres which are used to deliver such information are news, magazine, documentary/features, and fiction. In the study in this paper Table 1 shows that the television programs containing information about science are not only under categories of news and documentary, but also under some other categories such as entertainment and edutainment. The table also shows that in Indonesian television stations categories of education, adventure, children, and others are also used to provide science programs. We also can see that majority of the programs are in forms of entertainment (eleven programs), followed by edutainment (seven programs). The number of program under categories of news and documentary provide four and three information about science, respectively.

In Indonesian television stations information about science is delivered in forms of laboratory demonstration (i.e. *Profesor X* and *Science is Fun*), quiz (i.e. *Cerdas Ceria*), part of news program (i.e. *Tabir* and *Ragam*), and stories with narration (e.g. *Bumi Kita*, *Dunia Air*, *Dunia Binatang*, and *Laptop Si Unyil*). In this article the stories with narration can be classified into several forms based on types of narrator: (1) the narrator is not part of the story (i.e. *Jelajah*, *Bumi Kita*, *Tekno*, *Human Planet*, *Orang Utan Diary*, *Wild Tales*, *Inside Life*, *Ekspedisi CIncin Api*, and *Teroka*) and (2) the narrator is part of the story or one the actors in the story (i.e. *Steve Ewon Sang Pemburu*, *Gadis Petualang*, and *Petualangan Panji*). Within this last form, the narrators are also the presenter of the program and they interview some actors in the story (i.e. *Teropong Si Bolang*, *Dunia Air*, *Dunia Binatang*, *Laptop Si Unyil*, *Buku Harian Si Unyil*, *Si Bolang*, *Si Bolang Jalan-jalan*, *Asal Usul Flora dan Fauna*, and *Asal Usul Cari Tahu*).

The use of rhetorical devices in science television program can be seen, for example, in *Reportase Investigasi* (Trans TV) that investigation about using synthetic dye, which is usually used for textile, for food is described by showing the way people use it for food dough, followed by explanation of the impact of the dangerous food additive on human body. The explanation of this impact is supported by laboratory experiments to examine whether the examples of food contain such chemical substance. Some experts in related fields also explain this impact scientifically and offer solution for the problem on choosing good foods. This kind of program as a news has the simplest narrative style (Murcott, 2010, p. 109) because it is straightforward and has linear structures of who did what, when, where, why, and how, though not necessarily in that order. From the example of *Reportase Investigasi* above it is clear that adding dangerous chemical substances such as synthetic food dye, which is usually for textile, to food dough is done by someone who wants to get benefit because of economic reasons. The program usually show recent cases occurred in Indonesian society. In addition, *Asal Usul Flora dan Fauna*, *Asal Usul Cari Tahu*, and *Inovator* are classified into documentary since these are recording events and sometimes including interviews with the contributors. Providing information about science through documentary program will allow the producers of the program to take the audiences along a much longer and more convoluted (Murcott, 2010, p. 109). For example, in *Inovator* when the producer shows information about fish freshness sensors, the producer of the program show how the inventor of the tool create the tool, what components forming the tool, how to use it including its strengths and weaknesses. Also, the inventor is interviewed to explain his invention including possibilities to apply such invention to the society.

Whether the television programs are classified into news, documentary, entertainment, and edutainment, the way the science is broadcasted in the Indonesian television programs is generally telling stories. Telling story itself is part of Indonesian culture that has been socially constructed in the society (Rodgers, 1995, p. 6). It might be easy for Indonesian audiences to understand information in the programs if it is delivered through that way. Some examples of telling story can be seen in advertisements, school books, and etcetera.

In Indonesian television programs mentioned above information about science is portrayed by using common “tools”, which then is called “persuasive tools”, for example, metaphor (‘analogy’) and metonymy. It can be seen, for example, in explaining the impact of food additives the contributors of *Reportase Investigasi* use bullets to describe human cells. The contributors transfer the meaning associated with the bullets to the notion of human cells. This is similar to what the contributors in *Dunia Air* and *Dunia Binatang* use. They often use bullets to describe Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) chains to explain animal breeding cells. The use of metaphor in this case might persuade the audiences as well as provide heuristic model for our thinking (Leach, 2000, p. 216). In terms of metonymy, it has close relations to metaphor in a way that it allows us to shift attributes and characteristics from one thing to another (Leach, 2000, p. 217). For example in *Sang Kreator* when the contributor is interviewed to explain joints of bamboo slats in a bamboo shelter, he describes how to make the joints and how the joints work in the bamboo shelter to form the shelter by showing an example of two bamboo slats. The joint of two bamboo slats can represent the joints of all bamboo slats in the shelter. The use of persuasive tools in these examples is an aid to our understanding and description by creating an analogy between two concepts (metaphor) and providing the part for the whole (metonymy).

The audiences' potential meaning-making about the way information about science is broadcasted via television programs as described above does not simply exist in the audio and visual elements portrayed in the television programs themselves. The audiences' potential meaning-making is possible to be influenced by their knowledge and experience in interacting with other visual and audio elements, television, and other similar media and electronic devices. This social conditioning relates to conditions or backgrounds of television audiences themselves such as their education, gender, and age (Turkle, 1984) since audiences from different social backgrounds might have different knowledge and experience with television advertisements text. This knowledge and experience is socially constructed during the lifetime of the audiences (Turkle, 1984; Wajcman, 1993) so that such knowledge and experience influences audiences' understanding of the television programs. This process of social construction is culturally embedded in every society, including in Indonesia.

The audiences' previous knowledge and experience in relation to science communication as well as 'persuasive tools' might also play an important role in investigating their potential meaning-making in understanding the science program. Culturally we often speak of taking an argumentative position or of advocating a position, of persuading others to adopt our position, to see things from our place (Darsey, 2004, p. 5). The way we express our ideas such as in those examples is also learnt culturally. Culture itself is communicated rhetorically (Gallagher, 2004, p. 149). Television programs also can be seen as a cultural object which is communicated persuasively to their audiences. The television programs about science to a certain extent might show how the cultural objects reproduce ideologies in the life of society such as the way members of the society deliver messages to other members, the way they live, and et cetera, which in turn might create, sustain, and reproduce certain customs and traditions for their life which can then be generated. For example, as we know from the television program, for example, *Reportase Investigasi*, that some food contains synthetic dye which is usually used for textile, we can avoid such food by determining food characteristics. The television program explains the way to choose good food which has no dangerous chemical substances. We can follow this information and can keep the knowledge in our mind, moreover, can deliver it to other members of our society. When we maintain this knowledge as well as experience and generate them, it means we create, sustain, and reproduce an ideology about healthy life. To some extent this might influence the forming of new culture with regard to healthy life in our society. This is similar, for example, to the discourse of the cult of thinness which creates an ideology that beauty is indicated by thinness. This knowledge has been influenced our society so that many people buy and use some products including diet food or beverages and products of the fitness industry to have an ideal body according to the concept within this discourse that beauty is seen as symptoms of the obsession with weight (Trisnawati, 2012, p. 78). The example of science communication practice in the society as described above indicates rhetorical practice which creates the relationship between rhetoric and community in reconstructing culture.

5. Conclusion: implication of the study

Although it is a preliminary study, the discussion in this paper offers an insight into cultural studies as well as media and communication studies. The importance of the application of rhetorical perspectives in investigating cultural reconstruction is it offers an alternative approach to explain cultural reconstruction processes which are influenced by persuasive tools of science television programs. Apart from its usefulness, applying rhetorical perspectives in such an

investigation has some limitations. This investigation can be subjective while objective at the same time. The approach, however, over-rides its limitations as it can help us to reveal the potential meaning-making which can then be important to investigate cultural reconstruction.

In the context of Indonesia, as the culture of the country is heterogeneous comprising various customs and traditions, investigating cultural reconstruction of Indonesian society should represent the whole cultures within the country. In the context of this country, communicating science via media of communication such as television and understanding the science might be really influenced by cultural diversity of the country which comprises many ethnic groups. The example of analysis in this paper is a general investigation which needs to be developed by providing data from audiences of the television programs and using several methods to support rhetorical analysis. Using several methods of data collection will also support the investigation as limitations of one method can be overcome by the other methods.

References

- Barker, C. (2008). *Cultural studies: Theory and practice* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.
- Brake, M.L. and Weitkamp, E. (Eds.) (2010). *Introducing science communication*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- d'Andrea, L. and Declich, A. (2005). The sociological nature of science communication. *JCOM*, 4 (2), pp. 1-9.
- Darsey, J. (2004). James Baldwin's topoi. In Patricia S. Sullivan and Steven R. Goldzwig (Eds.). *New approaches to rhetoric*. London: SAGE Publications, pp. 5-29.
- Gallagher, V.J. (2004). Memory as social action: Cultural projection and generic form in civil rights memorials. In P.S. Sullivan and S.R. Goldzwig (Eds.). *New approaches to rhetoric*. London: SAGE Publications, pp. 149-171.
- Hook, N. and Brake, M. (2010). Science in popular culture. In M.L. Brake and E. Weitkamp (Eds.). *Introducing science communication*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 29-51.
- Leach, J. (2000). Rhetorical analysis. In Bauer, M.W. and Gaskell, G. (Eds.). *Qualitative researching with text, image and sound: A practical handbook*. London: SAGE Publications, pp. 207-226.
- Murcott, Toby (2010). Broadcasting science. In Mark L. Brake and Emma Weitkamp *Introducing science communication*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 105-127.
- Park, H.W and Thelwall, M. (2006). Website science communication in the age of globalization. *New Media & Society*, Vol. 8 (4), pp. 629-650.
- Rodgers, S. (Ed.) (1995). *Telling lives, telling history: Autobiography and historical imagination in modern Indonesia*. California: University of California Press.

Roundtree, A.K. (2010). The rhetoric of computer simulations in astrophysics: a case study. *JCOM*, 9(3), pp. 1-9.

Trisnawati, S. (2012). Rethinking processes of meaning-making television advertisements: The representation of cultural identity in media research. *Asian Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*, Vol. 1 (2), pp. 720-8.

Turkle, S. (1984). *The second self: Computers and the human spirit*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Wajcman, J. (1993). *Feminism confronts technology*. Cambridge: Polite Press.

The logo for the International Association for Cultural Studies (iafor) is centered on the page. It features the lowercase letters "iafor" in a light blue, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a circular graphic composed of two overlapping, thick, brush-stroke-like lines. The outer line is a light red color, and the inner line is a light blue color, creating a sense of depth and movement around the central text.

iafor

The Style of Interiority: The Zen-Modern Self in Shiga Naoya's An'ya kōro

Jacob Lee

0089

Brigham Young University, USA

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2012

Official Conference Proceedings 2012

A large, faint watermark of the iafor logo is centered on the page. It consists of two overlapping circular arcs, one light blue and one light red, forming a partial circle. The text 'iafor' is written in a light blue, lowercase, sans-serif font in the center of the watermark.

iafor

iafor

The International Academic Forum

www.iafor.org

Shiga Naoya 志賀直哉 is famously known as the “god of the *shōsetsu*” 小説の神様 for his pristine style and commanding personality. While his technical achievements in modern Japanese literature’s colloquial prose style is virtually undisputed, some critics have been less reverential when it comes to the ethics implied in his autobiographical I-novel writing. Yet many, including Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, have attributed Shiga’s lucid style as a direct product of his sincerity in living life: “志賀直哉氏は僕等のうちでも最も純粋な作家——でなければ最も純粋な作家たちの一人である。…志賀直哉氏の作品は何よりも先にこの人生を立派に生きてゐる作家の作品である” (“Shiga Naoya is the most genuine of writers—more genuine than the rest of us. . . . Shiga’s literature is, above all, the work of a writer who leads a respectable and dignified life”; 11; Suzuki 95–6). As Tomi Suzuki explains, a similar sentiment pervaded much of the Japanese critical dialogue on the *shishōsetsu* 私小説 from the 1920s to the 60s—the Japanese I-novel was not only placed at the polar opposite of the Western fictional novel but also favored over it for its greater “truthfulness” as “a factual, direct expression of the author’s lived experience” (3). Yet on the other hand, Edward Fowler’s claim—“[t]hat a writer like Shiga really does sound more sincere than others, then, is a tribute not to his honesty but to his mastery of the rhetoric (the intimate voice, ellipses, allusions, etc.) of authenticity” (66)—demands further investigation into how such sincerity is performed textually, regardless of whether such sincerity is real or contrived.

The critical divide on Shiga’s sincerity is perhaps most apparent in debates on Shiga’s magnum opus, *An’ya kōro* 暗夜行路, where the thematic and narrative issue of the psychological development of the protagonist is scrutinized. If the papers presented at a conference dedicated to the novel and held at the National University of Singapore in 1994 can be deemed representative of the scholarship at large, then the following two-part question emerges as central: does Tokitō Kensaku 時任謙作 achieve an authentic epiphany after his long journey of self discovery? Or does a domineering solipsism compromise his supposed sincerity? Answering yes to this latter question, Cody Poulton criticizes the book for having “absolutely no sense of Kensaku’s internal development” (*Shiga Naoya’s* 23) even while recognizing that as a *shōsetsu* it is not obligated to do so, at least in the traditional Western sense of the novel. He sees, rather, only a stylistic expansion and maturation as the story progresses and no change in the narcissism of Kensaku—or Shiga, for that matter. In contrast, Kin’ya Tsuruta and Janet Walker seek to validate the protagonist’s spiritual journey by applying more traditionally Eastern models, the former in terms of *amae* 甘え ‘dependency wishes’ and *yurushi* 赦し ‘forgiveness’ and the latter using Hindu concepts of pleasure, success, duty, and deliverance as the narrative structure. Walker, in this article and elsewhere, also suggests that Kensaku’s spiritual journey that culminates in an epiphanic, mystical union with nature merits consideration within a global Modernist context (Walker). Susan Napier sees Kensaku developing his identity primarily through his interactions with the women of the story, who allow him to explore “various forms of identity” and “get somewhat outside his self-absorption and link himself with the collectivity” (*Shiga Naoya’s* 146) of a mythic past.

But if this thematic and narrative debate were to be brought back to the more fundamental building blocks of the text in an investigation of style, what could be gained? Tokitō Kensaku, after all, is not Shiga Naoya, despite the autobiographical and confessional nature of the I-novel genre, and remains a textual phenomenon constructed out of language. Examining in more detail

how this protagonist's interiority is structured can, I propose, clarify the nature of the debate on language, self, and authenticity and move away from merely condemning Kensaku's political and interpersonal naiveté.

And where better to start than with a close reading of the explicit statements of Kensaku's interiority? The narrator, after all, very consistently and almost obsessively tells us exactly what the protagonist feels after almost any given descriptive scene, incident, or interaction. Could not a general pattern that emerges here be interpreted as a sort of metaphorical structure of the self? What could the textual stylings tell us about the particular delineations and directionalities of one of modern Japanese literature's canonical selves?

I here submit that such a pattern indeed emerges, and that the most significant aspects of these statements of interiority are (1) what I will call "defamiliarizing" modifiers, such as *nanika* 何か 'somewhat,' *myōna* 妙な 'strange,' *hen'na* 変な 'strange,' and *fushigina* 不思議な 'mysterious'; and (2) the use of the contrastive conjunctions such as *shikashi* 然し 'yet' and *ga* が 'but.' Furthermore, I propose that Shiga uses these defamiliarizing modifiers and contrastive conjunctions to mark or tag moments when the self experiences its own directionality in relation to an absolute other, which, in Shiga's contemporary discourse of Zen, is a paradoxical relation with absolute nothingness. This self can also be characterized as modern in the sense that it provides a longing directionality in the quest for personal and interpersonal authenticity that, while narratively culminating in Kensaku's apparent enlightenment atop Mount Daisen 大山, leaves many questions unanswered in the denouement. But again, whether or not Kensaku achieves authenticity is not as important as considering the limitations and possibilities of the language in which such authenticity is pursued or imagined. I therefore argue that the style of interiority in Shiga's *An'ya kōro* points to a Zen-modern self that problematizes a linear narratology of personal growth and provides a naively rigid yet beautifully fractured textual trail in the search for an authentic selfhood. Questions of sincerity continue to be valid, but so are those of difference, negativity, and persistently imagined possibility on the way to such sincerity.

After detailing the two principle aspects of Shiga's style of interiority, I illustrate how this style or structure functions through some examples from the text. I conclude with a rereading of the epiphanic climax and offer possibilities for future directions.

First, Shiga uses modifiers such as *aru* 或る 'a certain,' *nanika*, *myōna*, *hen'na*, and *fushigina* to defamiliarize the protagonist's feelings, impressions, and intuitions, thereby highlighting passages of deep feeling against the merely descriptive or cognitive. These passages of deep interiority offer a kaleidoscopic exploration of the heights and depths of the self, outlining its contours in relation to the absolute or absolute nothingness. The consistency of these modifiers being used throughout the text suggests a non-linear, non-cumulative narrative progression that nevertheless cuts through peripheral material to reveal the many facets of the self-absolute relation.

Second, Shiga seems to favor contrastive conjunctions like *shikashi* and *ga* throughout *An'ya kōro* in order to specify Kensaku's more important interior experiences; by first making a comparatively general statement of interiority and then negating it or qualifying it, Shiga not only foregrounds the second sentence but also suggests the presence of an intuitive undercurrent

by consistently pointing toward it. Though the use of the conjunctions is arguably habitual—it occurs quite frequently in all sorts of narrative contexts—*shikashi* and *ga* also serve as a kind of marker to signal an important statement of interiority that, paradoxically, points negatively to the relational nature of the self to the absolute that is otherwise inexpressible.

The first vignette recounted in the Prologue, entitled “Shujinkō no tsuioku” 主人公の追憶 (“The Hero’s Reminiscences”), stands out from the other four in that it most clearly establishes Shiga’s descriptive style of Kensaku’s interiority that continues throughout the rest of the story. Consider for example the second paragraph: “或る夕方、私は一人、門の前で遊んでいると、見知らぬ老人が其処へ来て立った。眼の落ち窪んだ、猫背の何となく見すばらしい老人だった。私は何という事なくそれに反感を持った” (“It was evening, and I was sitting idly outside our front gate. A strange old man came and stood over me. He stooped a little, his eyes were sunken, and there was about him a general air of seediness. I took an instant dislike to him”; Shiga 5; McClellan 15). The reasserted first-person subject, *watashi* 私 ‘I,’ the defamiliarizing adverbial phrase *nantoiukotonaku* 何という事なく ‘somehow,’ and the directly stated deep feeling, *hankan* 反感 ‘dislike’—combine to form the prototypical structure of the descriptions of Kensaku’s ever-moving interiority.

The narrative pattern of distilling explicitly stated, deeply intuited feelings from passages of detailed objective descriptions continues in the next paragraph, albeit at a faster tempo, as causation is implied by juxtaposition: “釣上がった口元、それを囲んだ深い皺、変に下品な印象を受けた” (“The turned up mouth, the deeply creased skin around it—everything about him was common”; Shiga 5; McClellan 15). Here a more obviously uncanny adverb, *hen’ni* 変に ‘strangely,’ qualifies the determinant *gehin’na* 下品 ‘vulgar’—a polarized term of good/bad, like/dislike—which in turn modifies *inshō* 印象 ‘impression.’ This sequence of adverb, determinant, and noun repeats in the second sentence of the fourth paragraph with *myōni* 妙に ‘strangely,’ *itatamaranai* 居堪らない ‘unbearable,’ and *kimochi* 気持ち ‘feeling’ (Shiga 5). The conjunction *shikashi* debuts in the eighth paragraph and introduces another similar statement of Kensaku’s interiority: “然しこのうわ手な物言いが変に私を圧迫した” (“The familiarity of his tone filled me with foreboding”; Shiga 6; McClellan 15).

Finally, just before the old man walks away and the scene ends, Shiga summarizes Kensaku’s interior experiences thus far in a couplet of sorts: “この老人が何者であるか、私には解らなかつた。然し或る不思議な本能で、それが近い肉親である事を既に感じていた” (“I had no idea who this old man was; but already I had the premonition that here was someone closely tied to me by blood”; Shiga 6; McClellan 15). Shiga thus seems to privilege certain signifiers by virtue of their function to point away from themselves and towards alterity in order to suggest that authenticity can be approached by intuiting or feeling this alterity within oneself.

Of course, Shiga does not mechanically apply what I call the style of interiority at every juncture of the book. Yet such a pattern or structure that emphasizes the affective and uncannily intuitive does seem to underlie most other narratively significant passages. Late in the narrative, for example, Kensaku finally begins to analyze this structure of interiority during a conversation with a friend:

然し謙作は自身の過去が常に何かとの争闘であった事を考え、それが結局外界のものとの争闘ではなく、自身の内にあるそういうものとの争闘であった事を想わないではいられなかった... 謙作はこれまで、暴君的な自分のそういう気分によく引き廻されたが、それを敵とは考えない方だった。然し過去の数々の事を考えると、多くが結局一人角力になる所を想うと、つまりは自分の内にあるそういうものを相手に戦って来たと考えないわけには行かなくなった... 知らず知らず解決を矢張り自身の内だけに求めていた事に初めて気がついた。実際変な事だと思った。(Shiga 490)

He was nevertheless forced to think that his struggle in the past had indeed been with something inside him, not outside. . . . Kensaku had always allowed his emotions to tyrannize over him; but he had not before thought to describe his own condition quite in these words. Now, as he remembered the various incidents in his life, he had again to grant that more often than not he had been wrestling with himself, that his enemy had been a creature residing within him. . . . All he was saying, he now realized, was that their problem was entirely his to solve. What a strange thing to have said to her, he thought. (McClellan 341)

In a sudden moment of enlightenment, Kensaku realizes that the restless despair of his life thus far has been coming from a misrelation within himself as opposed to various external causes such as the frantic will of modernity, his incestuous origins, his first child dying, and his wife being raped by her cousin. Shiga once again seems to suggest the authenticity of this realization through the use of *shikashi* and *hen'na*, even though he runs the risk of naiveté in using his stylistic pattern to describe his stylistic pattern.

But perhaps where an awareness of this structure of interiority is most crucial is in a reading of the climactic epiphany atop Mount Daisen. In light of this stylistic pattern of pointing to the authentic through words that can only signify a difference and a negativity, what seems to be experienced is not a mystical union with nature but a dissolution of a concretized concept of the self into a relational one with the absolute or absolute nothingness. The self is no longer set up antagonistically against nature, which is compared to a “limitless body of air” but is “restored” to it in some sort of harmonious relation. While the rapturous experience is directly described as a *fushigina tōsuikan* 不思議な陶酔感 ‘strange intoxication’ and a “kotoba ni hyōgen dekinai hodo no kokoroyosa” 言葉に表現出来ない程の快さ (“pleasure beyond the power of words to describe”; Shiga 578; McClellan 400), perhaps the most compelling description of this indescribable relationship is in the gradual unfolding of the panorama of the mountainside and the view below as the sun rises *behind* him. That is, Kensaku does not directly see the sun, but sees the “sharply delineated outline of the shadow [of the mountain] as it retreated from the bay and crept toward him over land” (402). Shiga’s concluding phrase of the chapter, *sore kara Kensaku wa aru kandō o uketa* それから謙作は或る感動を受けた ‘from this, Kensaku was moved to feeling’ (Shiga 580), in a similar beauty of linguistic inadequacy, points strongly and longingly towards the ineffable.

In conclusion, the consistency of Shiga’s style of interiority suggests that a knowing naiveté of the limits of language does not hinder the reader from filling in the gaps or imagining the paradoxically indescribable. Just as words such as *hen'na*, *fushigina*, *myōna*, and *shikashi* are characterized by their ability to signify alterity and negativity yet are concrete in their

typographic and prosodic materiality, the self in *An'ya kōro* is rigidly persistent in its internal structure yet ultimately characterized by its relation with the absolute, a relationship that may be inexpressible but nevertheless intuitable. Perhaps sincerity is a matter of being open to such possibilities as intimated incompletely yet compellingly by the text. If so, *An'ya kōro* still has value for imagining not only our continued encounters with texts but also with our selves.



Works Cited

- Akutagawa Ryūnosuke. "Bungeitekina, amarini bungeitekina." *Akutagawa Ryūnosuke zenshū*. Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1978. 3–80. Print.
- Fowler, Edward. *The Rhetoric of Confession: Shishōsetsu in Early Twentieth-century Japanese Fiction*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1988. Print.
- McClellan, Edwin, trans. *A Dark Night's Passing*. By Shiga Naoya. Tokyo; New York: Kodansha International, 1976. Print.
- Shiga Naoya. *Shiga Naoya zenshū*. Vol. 5. Tokyo: Iwanamai shoten, 1973. Print.
- Shiga Naoya's A Dark Night's Passing: Proceedings of a Workshop at the National University of Singapore, December 1994*. Ed. Kin'ya Tsuruta. Japanese studies monograph series, no. 6. Singapore: Dept. of Japanese Studies, National U of Singapore, 1996. Print.
- Suzuki, Tomi. *Narrating the Self: Fictions of Japanese Modernity*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1996. Print.
- Walker, Janet A. "The Epiphanic Ending of Shiga's 'An'ya kōro' (A Dark Night's Passing: 1921–1937) in a Modernist Context." *Japanese Language and Literature*. 37.2 (2003): 166–93. Print.

The logo for the International Association for Cultural Studies (iafor) is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters "iafor" in a light blue, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a large, faint circular graphic composed of two overlapping arcs: a light blue arc at the bottom and a light red arc at the top, creating a partial circle around the text.

Goan Temples: Symbols of Cultural Annihilation and Resurgence

Padmaja Kamat

0090

Goa University, India

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2012

Official Conference Proceedings 2012

A large, faint watermark of the iafor logo is centered on the page. It consists of two overlapping circular arcs, one in a light blue color and one in a light red color, with the lowercase text 'iafor' in a light blue serif font positioned in the center of the overlapping area.

iafor

iafor

The International Academic Forum

www.iafor.org

Centuries before the advent of the Portuguese in 1510, Goa had self-governing village communities called *Gramasamsthas* or *Comunidades* in Portuguese.¹ They were the small republics that functioned on the principle of joint ownership of land.² Dr. J. C. Almeida called the *Gramasamstha*, an agrarian association.³ The business of the *Gramasamstha* was conducted by the *Vangads* or the clans of the original settlers.⁴ Rural life was so organised that it made the temple, the nerve centre of every village. Land distribution was effected in such a way, that building and maintenance including performance of various religious rites and rituals of the temple became a major responsibility of the *Gramasamstha*. Revenues accruing from the best rice fields and *kulagars* or the areca gardens were set aside for the purpose.⁵ Cultivated lands along the river banks were partly used as *nelly* to fund the maintenance of the village temple and to meet other religious expenditure and partly used as *namshi*⁶ for the maintenance of the temple servants, who received *vatans* too; but mainly for the sustenance of the *Gaonkars*, the villagers.⁷

When Goa came under the rule of powerful royal dynasties, the responsibility of supporting and sustaining the activities of the temple was taken up by the Kings and other members of the royal families.⁸ This is evident from the different land grants that were made by different royal dynasties to the temples, *agraharas*⁹ and the *Brahmapuris*¹⁰ from time to time. Perhaps such a situation was prevailing in South India too. The Imperial Cholas granted the *brahmadeyas* in their regions.¹¹ The Kharepatan Grant of A. D. 1008 of Rattaraja made to Avveshwara temple in his capital Balipattana gives information about the administration of temples of the Goa Shilaharas.¹² This grant provides for the maintenance of the family of the temple priest. The Shilaharas continued the system of temple management by employing servants for the temple on regular basis which, was a tradition initiated by the *Gramasamstha*.

¹ Goa, the 25th State in the Indian Union, is situated at 15° 48' – 14° 53' North and 74° 20' 13' – 73° 40' 33' East, has a length of 105 Km. from North to South and a width of 60 Km. from East to West. Known for its verdant climate that attracts a large inflow of tourists, Goa is located between the Western Ghats and the Arabian Sea. The total area of the state is 3700 sq. km.

² Pereira, Rui Gomes. *Goa: Gaumkari*, A. Gomes Pereira, Panaji, 1981, p.1.

³ As quoted in Manohar Sardesai (ed.), *Konkani Vishwakosh*, Goa University, Taleigao, 1991, Vol. I, p. 52.

⁴ T. R. De Souza, *Goa to Me*, Concept Publishing House, New Delhi, 1994, p. 33.

⁵ Antonio Furtado, "Gomantakatil Gramasamstha", Silver Jubilee Committee (ed.), *Ajacha va Kalcha Gomantak*, The Goa Hindu Association, Mumbai, 1954, p. 303.

⁶ *Namshi* is a plot of land given on lease to the temple servant, the income from which could be used for the upkeep of the family so long as he continues in service.

⁷ B. H. Baden Powel, "The Villages of Goa in the Early Seventeenth Century", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1900, pp. 268.

⁸ Queen Kamaladevi with her husband Shivachitta Parmadideva, the King of the Kadamba dynasty who ruled Goa between A. D. 1147-1181, set up institutions of learning and erected quite a few temples. See George Moraes, *The Kadamba Kula – A History of Ancient and Medieval Karnataka*, Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1990, pp. 199-200.

⁹ *Agrahara* was a pool of villages set aside for the maintenance of Brahmin Scholars. The Kadamba Kings took pride in making endowments to these *agraharas*.

¹⁰ *Brahmapuris* were the colonies of learned *Brahmins* dedicated to spiritual pursuits. They were endowed with tax free land grants.

¹¹ R. Champakalakshmi, *Religion, Tradition and Ideology*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2011, p.19.

¹² Shilaharas ruled over Goa for 245 years from c. 760 A. D. to 1010 A. D. initially as the feudatories of the Rashtrakutas and later as those of the later Chalukyas. See V. R. Mitragotri, *Socio-Cultural History of Goa from Bhojas to Vijaynagar*, Institute Menezes Braganza, Panaji, 1999, p. 39. For details of the Grant, see *Epigraphica Indica*, Vol. III, p. 299.

The Portuguese under Alfonso de Albuquerque invaded and conquered Goa on March 1, 1510, but soon they were repulsed by Ismail Adil Shaha of Bijapur, whose royal writ ran over Goa. Second attempt to regain Goa was successfully made on November 25, 1510 and the Goa Islands or the *taluka* of Tiswadi came under the Portuguese. Albuquerque had come to Goa on the invitation of the Hindus, who wanted to drive out the Muslims.¹³ He was friendly with them and even encouraged mixed marriages between the Portuguese soldiers and the Hindu ladies. But his policy of leniency was reversed by his successors.¹⁴

The policy that the religion of the ruler should be the religion of the ruled or *Cajos regio, illius religio* was applied to Goa vigorously.¹⁵ The persecution of Hindus and the movement to destroy the temples and other vestiges of Hindu religion were initiated by Vicar Minguel Vaz and Diego Borba, the Rector of St. Paul's College. *Foral de Ilhas de Goa* of 1534 is replete with information as to how the locals of Tiswadi were emotionally blackmailed to assist in preparing the inventories of temple properties.¹⁶ All these properties were turned over to the church.¹⁷ In 1540 alone, 160 Hindu temples in Goa Island, Divar, Chora and Jua were destroyed.¹⁸ As such, the year 1540 was a watershed year since it saw massive destruction of temples accompanied by mass conversions, erection of crosses, chapels and churches. In 1541 itself it was decided to follow the policy of *Rigor de Misericordia* or Rigour of Mercy.¹⁹

Various measures were taken to convert the natives to Christianity. Concerted efforts were made to make it increasingly difficult for the natives to retain their old religion. Their temples and shrines were destroyed and they were forbidden to erect new ones even outside the Portuguese territories. Hindu rites and ceremonies like marriage, sacred thread ceremony, naming ceremony, etc., were banned. Priests and preachers were banished. Hindus who hindered Christianization were sent into exile. Those who preferred to remain in the village were deprived of their means of livelihood and their ancestral rights in the *Communidades*. Humiliations, indignities and disabilities were heaped upon them. The orphaned children were forcibly taken away for baptism, while the adults were compelled to listen to preaching of Christianity. On the other side, measures were introduced to provide incentives to facilitate conversion. Christians were given the monopoly of public posts. Laws of inheritance were altered to favour the persons who got converted. They were favoured in the matters of rights and privileges in the village community.

Once St. Francis Xavier set foot ashore at Goa on May 6, 1542, the Jesuits did their worst, using every form of bribery, threat and torture to effect conversions.²⁰ The order of D. Sebastião dated

¹³ Timayya Nayak, the Admiral of Vijaynagar kingdom with the consent of the Hindu leaders of the city of Goa had invited Albuquerque to liberate it from the clutches of the Muslims and also to ensure safety for the maritime trade by eliminating the pirates called Nayates, who were the result of the illicit relationship between the Hindu ladies and the Muslim men.

¹⁴ Gerald A. Pereira, *An Outline of Pre-Portuguese History of Goa*, Gerald Pereira, Panaji. 1973, pp. 128-140.

¹⁵ James Brodrick, *Saint Francis Xavier*, London, 1952, p. 201.

¹⁶ *Forals* were the revenue registers compiled under the Portuguese regime that are housed in the Historical Archives of Goa at Panaji.

¹⁷ Francisco Paes, *Tombo Geral*, 1595, Vol. I, *folio* 35-35 v.

¹⁸ The first temple to be destroyed in the Divar Island was that of Saptakoteshvar at Narve. All its income was assigned to the College of St. Paul. On the same site a church was built subsequently. See Francisco de Souza, *Oriente Conquistado a Jesu Christo pelos Padres de Companhia de Jesu de Provincia de Goa. Part I, Conquista I, Divisao II, Lisboa*, 1710, p. 98. Also see Fillipe Nery Xavier, *Bosquejo Historico das Communidades das Aldeas dos Concelhos Ilhas, Salcete e Bardez*, Part II, Imprensa Nacional, Nova Goa, 1950, p. 197.

¹⁹ A. K. Priolkar, *The Goa Inquisition*, Rajhamsa Vitaran, Panaji, 2008, p. 66.

²⁰ A. K. Priolkar, *op. cit.*, p. 482

March 25, 1559, prohibited existence of Hindu temples, private Hindu sanctuaries, images of Hindu gods and celebration of Hindu festivals.

Salcete and Bardez *talukas* were presented to the Portuguese by Bijapur Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shaha in 1543. The Vicar General Fr. Minguel Vaz desired that temples of these areas too should be destroyed. But the Order of Dom Sebastião dated March 25, 1559 did not apply to these areas. Therefore, the Viceroy Antão de Noronha promulgated a new Order applicable to all territories under the Portuguese on August 29, 1566, forbidding erection of new Hindu temples or carrying out repairs to old ones. It was hoped that these temples will in due course of time, fall into ruins.

Initially, the Franciscans had taken lead in the endeavour of decimation of Hinduism and had destroyed 300 temples in Bardez. The Hindus of Salcete appealed to the Viceroy against this order but their plea was turned down. When building and repairing of the temples were prohibited, the people carried their idols to the other side of the river Zuari and hence out of bounds of the Portuguese territories. Priolkar says that it was around this time in 1566, that the cult of Mangesh was shifted from Cortalim to Priol.²¹ However, the process of shifting the deities seems to have begun much before 1566 as the Jesuits who visited the temple of Mangesh on May 1, 1560, had found it without the cult object.²²

The aim of the Portuguese was to uproot the Hindu religion and its influence. They looked upon the shifting of idols with disfavour. Diego Fernandes, the Captain of the Fort of Rachol managed to obtain an order from the Viceroy allowing the destruction of as many temples in Salcete as possible.²³ We get a fair idea about the vengeance with which the temples were destroyed from the letter of Fr. Luis de Goes.²⁴ Graphic details of the drive for temple destruction carried out by the said Captain are available in his own report sent to the higher authorities in Old Goa.²⁵ *Foral de Salcete* of 1568 carries the *Panchanama* reports compiled recording the estates that belonged to all those temples.²⁶

The first target that the Captain chose was the temple of *Malsa devi* of *Alardol* (Mardol) in Verna to inaugurate his crusade against temples in Salcete. It was the main temple in the whole of Salcete, greatly revered by all Hindus. Fr. Luis Goes admitted in his letter that, he had not until then seen, not even in Portugal, a temple so beautiful and suggested that the building should be maintained

²¹ Francisco de Sousa, op. cit., Part II, (Conq. I, Div. I, # 15), p. 14. Also see A. K. Priolkar, *The Goa Inquisition*, RajhamsaVitaran, Panaji, 2008, Second Edition, pp. 74-75.

²² Joseph Wicki (ed.), *Monumenta Histórica Societatis Jesú-Documenta Indica*, Rome, (1566-1569), Vol. VII, pp. 38-71.

²³ Diogo Fernandes, the Captain of the Fort of Rachol had called the residents of village Lotoulim for a meeting, but they did not turn up. As a punishment to them, he burnt down the temple of Ramnath. The villagers filed a case with *Capitão às Justiças de sua Magestad* in Goa. The magistrate ordered the Captain to rebuild the temple. With the support of the Archbishop Primaz and the Provincial Council, the Captain obtained an Order from the Viceroy to burn down en mass the temples of Salcete.

²⁴ Antonio da Silva Rego (ed.), *Documentação Para a História das Missões do Padroado Português do Oriente: Índia*, Agencia Geral das Colonias, Lisboa, 1953, Vol. X, p. 291.

²⁵ Joseph Wicki (ed.), op. cit., p. 394.

²⁶ In 1568, a year after the temples were destroyed, Ambrosio de Souza, the Judge of the Orphans of Native Christians and non-Christians of the City of Goa, on the orders of the Viceroy, went to those villages to conduct the *panchanama* of the properties that formerly belonged to the Hindu temples and the temple servants. One such visit was made to Verna. A meeting was arranged of the *Gāonkars* and the clerks of the village. All the Hindu *Gāonkars* were administered an oath on the holy symbol of wheel, *roda*, while Christians had to swear on the book of the holy Gospel. They were asked to declare all the assets of the temples including the landed properties, monies, jewellerys, dresses and vestments of the images, copper and brass items, cattle etc. and those of all the servants including the *devadasis*, the dancing girls. Those who gave incorrect statements or refrained from making the correct statements were to be penalised according to the provisions made in the Order of the Viceroy. The *panchanama* report was prepared by Pero Cornejo, the clerk.

intact to be converted into a Church of Our Lady of Conception in future.²⁷ For Fr. Sebastião Fernandes, the temple of *Malsa devi* was the richest and the grandest temple of the land.²⁸ The importance of the temple can be gauged from the fact that the Captain of erstwhile *Sashti Mahal* was using the temple as his residence in pre-Portuguese times. The Portuguese, when they became masters of Salcet, made the temple of Verna their headquarters.

It was announced that the Viceroy needed the high quality wood used in the roofing of the temple for the Artillery building. The Viceroy addressed letters to that effect to the people of Verna as well as to the Captain of the Fort of Rachol. This was the pretext for the destruction of the said temple. The Captain Diogo Fernandes descended upon the temple in all fury on 7th March 1567 just at the time when the priest was about to bedeck the idol of Mahalasa with silver ornaments.²⁹ Those ornaments were confiscated along with other valuables of the temple and a proper inventory of the movables was made. And then began the act of destruction. The image in the sanctum sanctorum was broken to pieces allegedly because Fr. Luis Goes had denounced her as a 'bad woman'. The villagers managed to spirit away other idols. Sacred books and works of art that enhanced the beauty of this temple together with the roof were ruthlessly destroyed. The Captain retreated after planting a Cross at the most prominent spot at the site.³⁰ The details of the destruction of this temple are to be found in the Report of Irmão Gomes Vaz dated December 12, 1567 which notes that the temple was totally destroyed on March 14, 1567.³¹

The conflagration of religious hatred created at the behest of Diego Fernandes took toll of 280 temples in Salcet alone. The cults from those temples were shifted mainly to the New Conquest areas where, the *Desais* and the *Sardesais*, the feudal lords of Sultan Adil Shaha of Bijapur, being Hindus themselves, took it as their holy duty to facilitate creation of new abodes for the said cults.

Though the Old Conquest areas comprising of Tiswadi, Bardez and Salcet had experienced the inferno of conversion that engulfed the temples and temple properties and saw the changing character of the *gramasamsthas*, which too were sought to be Christianised; Ponda *taluka* or the erstwhile *Antruz Mahal* fortunately escaped the fury of the proselytization as it entered the Portuguese sphere of influence in 1763 as a part of the New Conquests, when the spirit of the zealots was on the wane. Viceroy D. Manuel de Saldanha e Albuquerque Conde de Ega through his *Edital* (Announcement) of June 5, 1763, promised the people of Ponda all privileges and rights, exemptions and immunities that they enjoyed under the rule of the King of Sonda. The *Bando* of August 6, 1763 promised the people that their religious practices, rites and customs would-be respected. "It is thanks to this change in policy that the Hindu temples of the New

²⁷ Joseph Wicki (ed.), op. cit., p. 390.

²⁸ Ibid., Vol. VIII, p. 74.

²⁹ The fact that the priest was using silver ornaments to decorate the image itself is a proof that the image under consideration was a fake image planted to misguide the avenging Portuguese. It is quite obvious that the Mhal Pai family which was actively involved in the political circle of the capital and having witnessed the reign of terror unleashed in the name of the Holy Inquisition would wait to see the same fate befalling on the temple of their *Kuladevata* or the tutelary deity, Mahalasa. See B. D. Satoskar, *Gomantak Prakriti ani Samskriti*, Sharadiya Prakashan, Panaji, 2009, p. 1178.

³⁰ Vinayak N. S. Dhume, *Devabhoomi Gomantak*, All India Saraswat Foundation, Mumbai, 1988, pp. 57-60.

³¹ Joseph Wicki (ed.), op. cit., Vol. VII, pp. 371-405.

Conquests escaped the devastating hands of the Portuguese missionaries,” says Rui Gomes Pereira.³²

Forced migration of a large section of people who chose to move across the river in search of a safe destination for their gods and goddesses is an event that emphasises the religiosity of Goan psyche. Many Goans reached the shores of other states like Karnataka and Kerala in search for safe havens.³³ Fleeing natives gave up their comforts, lucrative professions and properties and opted for perils of life to ensure that their gods and goddesses were offered ritual service with regularity and due honours. As such, the sacrifices of the forefathers of the present generation need to be duly appreciated and wholeheartedly saluted.

When it was found impossible to wipe Hinduism out of the face of the earth, the Portuguese government attempted to regulate the administration of the temples, the key religious symbols of the subject people, by passing a law, *Para o governo economico e administrativo das mazania dos pagodes aprovado por portaria provincial no. 58, de 30 de outubro de 1886*.

Under the *Regulamento* of 1886 every temple was required to have a written and government approved constitution for its administration and maintain a list of its *Mahajans* or the constituent members.³⁴ It was mandatory to prepare the annual budget showing estimates of income and expenditure and an account of actual expenses incurred with supporting documentary evidence. A register recording resolutions passed by the Managing Committee, a register of resolutions passed by the *mazania* or the general body of *Mahajans*, a logbook listing the landed estates including the buildings owned by the temple, a list of items in the temple treasury and a register recording the deals of leases of temple lands and other properties through the annual and triennial auctions, were also to be maintained. Thus, post-1886, temple administration was systematised and the temple records were organised and maintained in an orderly manner since no budget could be made operational unless it was approved by the Administrator of Temples, who was the Mamlatdar of the concerned *taluka*. Appeals against the ruling of the Administrator were to be filed with the Administrative, Fiscal and Audit Tribunal. The drafts of the bye-laws or *Compromissos* were to be prepared along with a list of members, by special committees appointed by the Governor General. A leading legal luminary of Goa, Mr. Manohar Usgaonkar described *Compromisso* as the constitution of the temple.³⁵ Rui Gomes Pereira called it the private statute of each temple.³⁶

The *Regulamento* of 1886 was strengthened by another law, *Regulamento das Mazanias das Devalayas do Estado da India* of March 30, 1933, better known as the *Devasthan Regulation*, which consisted of 437 articles. It is expressly stated that this Act is adopted in supersession of all other previous regulations concerning temple management.³⁷ According to this Act, the

³² Rui Gomes Pereira, *Goa: The Hindu temples and Deities*. Printwell Press, Panaji, 1978, p. 14.

³³ Varde Valaulikar Shantaram. (ed.) *Samagra Shenai Goembab*, Vol. II. Goa Konkani Academy, Bori, 2003, pp. 163-167.

³⁴ *Mahajans* or *mazanes* are the male descendants in direct line and those adopted according to the respective Code of Usages and Customs.

³⁵ This submission was made by Senior Counsel Manohar Usgaonkar in the Court of the Civil Judge Senior Division, Ponda, in Special Civil Suit No. 52/2008/A wherein the Plaintiff was the *Mazania* of *Shri Navadurga Samsthan* of Madkai and the Defendants were temple priests.

³⁶ Rui Gomes Pereira, *Goa: Hindu Temples and Deities*, p. 27

³⁷ *Devasthan Regulation*, p. 1.

Managing Committee could be dissolved if, its management was proved harmful to the interests of the temple concerned, if it disregarded the legitimate orders of the Administrator, if the budgets were not presented within the given time frame and if the accounts were not rendered in conformity with the law.³⁸ Whenever an amount in the coffer of the Fund exceeded Rs. 500/ it had to be invested in the *Banco Nacional Ultramarino*, Postal Saving Bank or in shares of the *Comunidade*.³⁹ The *mazania* of each temple had to undertake to pay 3% of its income to the Fund of Beneficence and subsidize primary education depending upon the state of the coffer as per the recommendations of the Royal Order dated June 16, 1896.⁴⁰

The Act of 1933 was further improved upon and passed on May 29, 1959 vide Diploma Legislative No. 1898. Subsequently, a Government Order dated July 27, 1962, laid it down that the President of the Managing Committee of every temple should be chosen through the process of election. Earlier, it was the prerogative of the Governor General to nominate the President. It was also laid down that all members of the Managing Committee should be elected every three years through the secret ballot. In 1983, Clause No. 257 was improved upon to make it mandatory for all temples having an income of Rs.5000 and above to get their accounts audited annually by a professional Auditor.⁴¹

Such tight control on temple management enabled the temples to make enormous economic progress. The temples began to grow rich owing to the endowments made during the 18th century. The grant of the *Mokasa* of villages and *Inams* to the temples of Mangesh, Shantadurga and Mahalasa, all in the Ponda *taluka*, put these temples on a sound economic footing.⁴² Peaceful political conditions were responsible for vibrant economic activity in these villages. Money has been pouring into these temples as many of them happen to be on the tourist circuits thus resulting in the creation of wealth. Temple centres like Mardol and Marcel have developed into commercial hubs. Some of the temples particularly of Ponda *taluka* like those of Mahalasa, Mangesh, Shantadurga, Nagesh and Mahalaxmi have registered annual incomes above 10 millions of rupees for the Year 2010-2011. The Temple of Mahalasa at Mardol spent Rs. 8 millions on the special festival commemorating 450 years of shifting of the cult to the present location.⁴³

³⁸ Ibid., p.13.

³⁹ Ibid., Articles 94-99, p. 27.

⁴⁰ *Nagesh Compromisso*, Article 47, p. 12.

⁴¹ This information was collected from Advocate Subhashchandra V. Kamat, Ponda, who is a legal advisor to many of the temples of the Ponda *taluka* and has discharged duties as the President of Mahalasa Temple at Mardol in the recent past.

⁴² Naro Ram Mantri, a *Mahajan* of Shantadurga Temple at Kavale, had risen to be the Cabinet Minister of the Maratha King Shahu. He secured the *Inam* in 1739 for the temple of Shantadurga. Another *Mahajan* Ramchandra Malhar Sukhthankar, an adviser to the Prime Minister of the Marathas, visited the temple in 1754, renewed the grant and made similar endowments to the temples of Mahalasa at Mardol and Mangesh at Mangeshi. *Mokasa* is a grant of vast land or entire villages, which awarded to the grantees, the right to collect taxes from the villagers while *Inam* is an annual cash endowment to meet expenses on cults. See V. R. Sheldekar and M. S. Sheldekar, *Gomantakatil Kaivalyapur yethil Shantadurga Saumsthancha Sankshipt Itihas*, V. R. and M. S. Sheldekar, Chandor, 1912, p. 47. Also see P. S. Pissurlekar, "Shri Shantadurga Devalayacha Purvetihas," in P. S. Pissurlekar (ed.), *Shri Shantadurga Chatuhshatabdi Grantha*, Shri Shantadurga Seva Samiti, Mumbai, 1966, p. 170. For details about the temple of Mahalasa see V. N. S. Dhume, *Shri Mahalasa Devasthan Samagra Itihas*, S. V. Shenoi, Mumbai, 1993, pp. 39-40.

⁴³ These figures of income are drawn from the Annual Budget Statements submitted by each temple to the Office of the Administrator of Temples located in the city of Ponda, for his approval.

When Portugal was proclaimed a Republic in 1910 by Marques de Pombal, he had declared religious tolerance as the State policy. The new regime had loosened government control over temple administration in Goa. It was around this time that the palanquin processions of the shifted deities began to visit their respective original villages once a year to bless the devotees of those localities.⁴⁴ However this republic proved to be short lived. Positive shift in the policy of the Portuguese towards the temples can be gauged from the Agreement signed between the Desais of Cuncolim and João de Silva, the special officer deputed to negotiate with them. Temple of Shantadurga at Fatorpa had been the master symbol that exhorted the Desais to raise a standard of rebellion against the colonial hegemony that tested the muscle of the political masters for nine long years. The said document binds the colonial regime to return the confiscated properties of the servants of the temple, to supply annually a specific quantity of oil to the temple for illumination and sponsor the ceremony of *Rangapuja* in the month of *Shravana* of the Hindu calendar.⁴⁵ Another classic example is that of the temple of Mahalasa, whose spiritual jurisdiction was given official recognition in *Codigo dos Usos e Costumes dos Hindus gentios de Goa* of 16th December, 1880.⁴⁶ Crowning glory of religious tolerance came in 1818 when a new temple was built in Panaji, the capital, with the permission of the Governor Conde de Rio Pardo, for the cult of Mahalaxmi, which had been shifted to Maye in Bicholim *taluka*.⁴⁷ The last Portuguese Governor Vassalo de Silva went to the extent of contributing 50% of the expenses incurred on building the assembly hall for the temple of Radhakrishna at Sanquelim in 1960.⁴⁸

Culturally speaking, the temples of Goa have played a key role as the instruments of integration. The Goan Diaspora created due to the massive migration of the *Gãonkars* in the 16th century has been responsible for making substantial endowments to the temples dedicated to the deities that had to be shifted.⁴⁹ As such these temples have grown to be colossal structures embellished with artistic decorations. They have remained centres where the converts are perennially attracted to seek connection with their roots. They offer the first corn to the Hindu deities after the harvest, invoke oracles of these temples and actively participate in the special festivals designed to mark the annual home coming of the goddess Bhagavati to Chimal in the palanquin procession and the *Satryo Utsav* or the Umbrella Festival celebrated to honour goddess Shantadurga on her coming to Cuncolim from her new abode, Fatorpa.⁵⁰ They are 'the venues for blasphemy and reconversion to Hinduism'.⁵¹ The policy of forced conversion and inquisition has miserably failed to drive a wedge between the Hindus and the Christians. The elasticity of Hinduism appears in full vibrancy when the sibling relationship between *Nossa Senhora dos Milagres* is celebrated with fervour by both, the Hindus and the Christians.⁵²

⁴⁴ Vinayak N. S. Dhume, *Devabhoomi Gomantak*, p. 213.

⁴⁵ S. S. Desai, *Portugeese-Maratha Sambandha*, Maharashtra Rajya Sahitya ani Samskriti Mandal, Mumbai, 1989, pp. 33-35.

⁴⁶ Article 27 of this act states that, if a non-*Brahmin*, accused of crime insists on taking the oath before the goddess Mahalasa, he be permitted to do so provided he pays the travel allowance and other emoluments of the Judge and the Clerk of the Court and the lawyers. It is obvious from this law that the practice of taking oath to resolve a legal suit was a part of the tradition of temple of Mahalasa.

⁴⁷ Sharad Karkhanis (ed.), *Gomantak: Devasthan Visheshank*, Gomantak Pvt. Ltd., Panaji, 2001, p.156.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p.126.

⁴⁹ Religious structures attached to the temple like the shrines for the affiliate deities, the *Kalyana Mandapa* etc. are funded largely by these people.

⁵⁰ Such annual home coming is celebrated at many places in Goa; other notable example being that of goddess Shantadurga who travels from Marcel to Kumbharjua.

⁵¹ Paul Axelrod and Michell A. Fuerch, "*Flight of Deities: Hindu Resistance in Portuguese Goa*", *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. XXX, Part II, 1996, pp. 392-393.

⁵² Originally the seven goddesses honored as the Seven Sisters namely Mhalsa, Ajadeepa, Mabai, Mirabai, Lairai, Morjai, Kelbai and their brother Khetoba descended from the Ghats and reached the village of Maye. Subsequently they settled in Mardol, Anjadiva, Maye, Mapusa, Shirgao, Morji, Mulgao and Vaingini respectively. When the

Thus Goan temples have come a long way from the humble mud and brick structures with thatched roofs to massive buildings embellished with artistic decorations and an administration that is controlled by the government, which is the legacy of the Portuguese. It is obvious that, the temples which were set up by the *Comunidades* have slipped out of their control long ago. Having their private statutes and private funding agencies, they operate like autonomous units though they are still under the tutelage of the Administrator. Systematic management has put these temples on a sound financial footing and today they are known as *Samsthans*, enjoying virtual autonomy. They are the epitomes of cultural resurgence of people of Goa.



temple of Mirabai at Mapusa was destroyed, the *Kalash* or the water pot in which was consecrated the goddess, was stolen and put in the foundation of the church built for Our Lady of Miracles on the site of the temple. The feast of *Milagres* comes within a few days of the annual festival called *Jatra* of Lairai.

Thai Boxing and Embodiment: The Construction of Masculinity through Sportsmanship

Jakkrit Sangkhamanee

0092

Chulalongkorn University, Thailand

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2012

Official Conference Proceedings 2012

Abstract:

Masculinity is one of the most overlooked topics in cultural studies concerned with Thailand; studies of gender and sexuality have been dominated by research concerned with women and with homosexuality. Through an investigation of cultural practices related to Thai boxing, this paper employs the study of masculinity in an effort to understand the ways in which "maleness" is constructed and embodied in accordance with social, economic, and cultural circumstances.

The paper explores the idea of a technology of the body and physical powers pertaining to the way in which masculinity is constructed. Through a study of boxing manuals and real life practices in training camps, the paper portrays the construction process of masculinity in relation to Buddhist ideology and patriotism. Via a close look at the life course of trainee boxers, the paper also illustrates the work and lives of Thai boxers as they struggle to meet social expectations as ideal boxers while trying to ensure their own economic survival. Framed by the sociological study of sport, the paper also explores the dynamics of boxing as a cultural enterprise. Rituals as well as economic and ideological considerations surrounding boxing will be scrutinized in an effort to illuminate the social process of attaining manhood.

iafor

The International Academic Forum

www.iafor.org

Masculinity is one of the most overlooked topics in cultural studies concerned with contemporary Thailand; studies of gender and sexuality have been dominated by research concerned with women and homosexuality. This paper is an attempt to break the impasse in gender studies by looking at the physical roles of men in relation to their devoted physical practice of the national martial art, Thai boxing, which serves not only as a source of pride in being a patriotically masculine man but also benefits their own endurance. Through an investigation of cultural practices related to Thai boxing, this paper will address the topic of masculinity in an effort to understand the ways in which “maleness” is constructed in accordance with social, economic, and cultural circumstances. The paper presents an ethnographic study that looks into the work and lives of Thai boxers in their training as they struggle to meet social expectations as decent boxers while also endeavoring to ensure their economic and physical survival. Framed by the sociological study of sport, the paper also examines the wider context of boxing as a cultural enterprise in which masculinity is constructed and embodied through physical training and the pedagogical practices of the boxers under camp training and competition. Rituals as well as economic and ideological considerations surrounding the boxing activities will be scrutinized in an effort to illuminate the social process of attaining manhood and the articulation of Thailand’s masculine ideology.

Muai thai or Thai boxing is an internationally well known sport that represents a kind of martial art originated in Thailand. This entertaining, and at the same time aggressive, art of fighting is generally perceived as a fight on a prize ring canvas with boxers having their fists in thick boxing gloves and using their feet as major weapons, in addition to their elbows and knees. Nine weapons (*nawa awut*) from one’s body—namely two hands, two elbows, two knees, two feet and a head—are manipulated as potential fighting tools to attack and to defend against one’s opponent. The boxing, however, is more than an act of fighting or an entertaining spectator sport in today’s tourist, recreational and gambling business (Trisdee 1993). For the Thais, the boxing has often been viewed as embodying their great courage, nationalism, historical achievements, performing arts and literatures, rituals and spiritual expressions, and representing their social norms, hierarchy, ethics and ideology. The following sections explore Thai boxing in the forms of written text, physical practices and social process to understand the way in which masculinity is embodied into Thai boxing through different means.

The Manual and Manner of Masculine Ideology

Historically, Thai boxing has closely been linked to heroic and nationalist sentiment. Knowledge about Thai boxing articulated in the spirit of idealistic manhood as national fighters and individual brave men can be easily found and reproduced both for Thai and foreign audiences. There are several means by which the knowledge and ideology of Thai boxing has been promoted, including the production and reproduction of historical narratives, textbooks and training manuals, rituals and cultural symbolic representations, movies, and the organization of boxing events in contemporary modernist style (Pattana 2007). Here the paper will briefly touch upon the aspects of Thai boxing found in written text and physiographic representation to depict how the ideal masculinity is embodied into boxers through the process of physical and social controls.



Figure 1: Reproductions of various Thai-boxing manuals over time

Legends of *Muai Thai* and the Depiction of Heroism

Thai Boxing has long been considered by Thais as their nation’s martial art and culturally and historically significant sport. Despite these generic claims, however, it is difficult to trace back with sufficient evidence how boxing itself first emerged and through time became one of the prides of the nation. Historical archival research shows that there are few systematic records of boxing activities before the Ratanakosin era and much knowledge concerning Thai boxing comes from a diverse and juxtaposed range of traditional literatures, chronicles from

the palace, oral histories and folk scriptures. The common theme found in the depiction of Thai boxing often relates the activity with warfare, capable and fearless fighters, and the expression of patriotism against others. Prince Damrong, a key figure in Thai history, named Thai boxing as one of the 18 branches of arts taught in the pre-modern court of Siam to the king before he could lead his armed forces against obtrusive enemies. In a popular narrative of Thai history, several kings and local heroes have been described as being potent fighters, equipped with boxing skills and tactics, who rescued the country from falling prey to the enemy's menacing weapons and strategies. Whether this popularized historical narrative is justified, Thai boxing has already been generally perceived and employed to serve national pride in the ability of the Thai man to fight for his motherland and for righteousness. Throughout history, this grand narrative of national heroes has often been recalled and reproduced in different times and contexts to suit various purposes covering nationalism, tourism, masculine stereotypes, and the life struggles of rural inhabitants (Pattana 2005 and Vail 1999).



Figure 2: Physiographic narration of body movements in Thai boxing

Formalizing Manhood in Written Texts

Like its diverse legends, Thai boxing has a varied range of manuals written as a medium in training boxers. Despite the fact that most boxing training since ancient times has been conducted in a person to person manner, texts and choreography of body gestures have often been written and drawn so as to record and fix the ideal type of traditional body configuration in place. Most of the texts start with the historical and cultural significance of Thai boxing in relation to the kingdom's legends of warfare and heroism. Some texts also carry folk narratives of how different localities invent and reinterpret the history of *muai thai* to serve their own local narration. The main parts of the texts, however, are comprised of pictures of the body in various postures. These series of physiographic narrations of body movements illustrate boxing patterns and techniques articulated mostly in the traditional style of Thai boxing (see figure 2). Some of the postures are named by matching them with distinctive charismatic animals in Thai literature such as monkeys, horses, elephants, deer, and crocodiles while some are called by different names of gods and deities in Thai folktales.

Some postures are also referred to by making an analogy with natural surroundings such as waves of water. These series of body manipulations in boxing training, however, come after the process of selecting a suitable young man as a trainee boxer under the mentorship of a master. In the manuals, the criteria used in selecting a good young man to be trained as a boxer have often been cited as an initial step for the successful creation of an eminent boxer. These criteria are as follows: genetics, body configuration, conviction to boxing, diligence, physical competence, basic skill in boxing, devotion of time, patience, and the need to enter into boxing (Phosawat 1997).

The boxing manual does not only deal with physical manipulation of a man's body but also instructs on how mental and ethical issues in boxing-related activities and the everyday life of the boxer should be carried out. The process of both training in the camp and boxing in prize rings of either outdoor or indoor stadiums usually involves several kinds of rituals and spiritual activities to give courage and protection to the boxers. These supernatural demeanors require scrupulously strict codes of conduct in which the ideologies of decent manhood are embedded. The performance of the *wai khru* dance prior to the start of each fighting round is one example representing the symbolic relationship between the boxer and his master. During the dance, the boxer wears a *mangala*, a blessing garland placed on the head, to ward off all bad luck, to provide the boxer with good spirits and to recognize the contribution of his mentor. The head garland is usually made from sacred white robes and consecrated by incantations and charms. It is strongly believed that women are prohibited from touching the *mangala* as this will result in the deterioration of all its sacredness (Jiraporn 2004: 32-33). Some boxers also have exquisite talismans and other sacred symbols tattooed on different parts of their bodies. The talismans consist of Thai-styled figures, drawings of mystical animals and ancient alphabets, and are elaborately placed on particular positions to embody the magical power within the body and mind of the boxer (see figure 3).

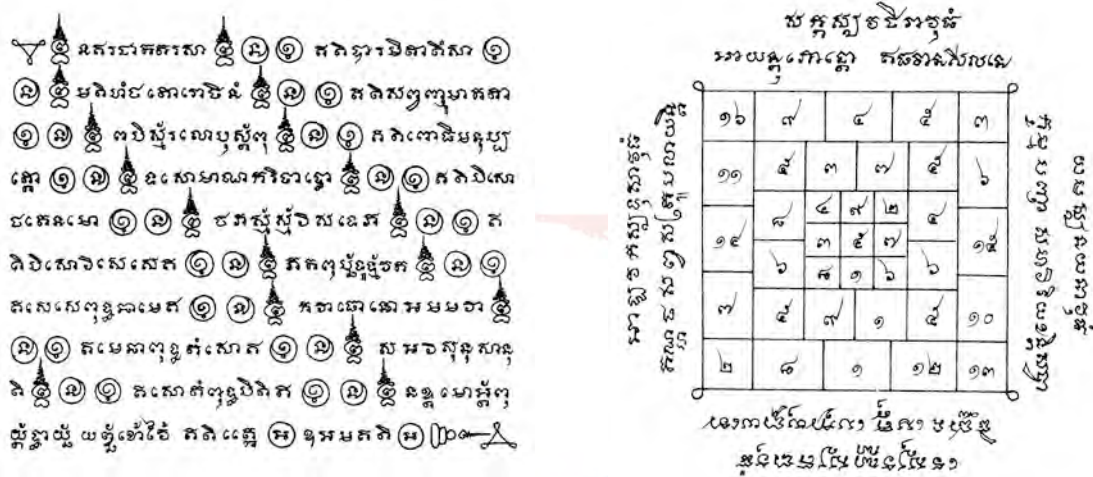


Figure 3: Sacred codes of charms tattooed on the bodies of boxers

Ethics and Identity of Manhood

It has often been assumed that men equipped with boxing skills have an advantage over other men and therefore tend to seek direct physical encounters when personal conflicts with other men arise. However, among the boxers and those who are closely related to the boxing circle it is well recognized that such a claim is not the case. Since the beginning, a man entering

into boxing training has to accept, take an oath, and strictly follow the rules designated by his master. The rules often cover a wide range of behavioral and ethical conduct such as (Panya and Pitisuk 1986: 31):

- The boxer promises to keep his body clean, strong, and to live his life with a clear mind and to live honestly
- The boxer promises not to harm those who are more vulnerable; he has to care for and help others in need
- The boxer promises to make contributions for the benefit of others and his country
- The boxer promises to avoid conflict in any situation
- The boxer who does not keep these promises will be cursed with having bad fortune throughout his life

The promises, the regulations, and the strict schedule of boxing training and body management lead to the formation of an ideal configuration of masculine identity which the boxers are expected to embody. This ideal type of masculinity is closely linked to the ideology of Thai and Buddhist men in which the notions of honesty, filial devotion, obligation to society and nation, and purity of mind and body are integral.



Figure 4: Buddha-like physiographic drawing of a Thai boxer with a balance of bodily strength and purity

Women are also considered harmful to certain aspects and periods of boxing. First of all, women are prohibited from touching all kinds of sacred entities that belong to the boxer such as amulets, charms, *mangala*, and even boxing pants. It is considered a great misfortune to the boxer if this actually occurs. In most of the boxing camps in Thailand, there is a general rule that bars women from outside to enter without getting permission from the camp manager. Of course this kind of rule is set up in order to keep the boxers away from sexual

distraction and allow them to fully concentrate on their physical training. The boxing ring, however, is a more serious space of male territory. Women are forbidden to climb up and enter the boxing ring. Doing so is strongly believed to cause injuries to the boxers. In many boxing camps today, even though more women are trained to become amateur and professional boxers, this belief in the separation of gender space still prevails in most of the camps. Having two distinct rings in the camp, one for males and one for females, is thus the solution. This practice of having separate rings is also applied to most of the professional stadiums. Only in the case that setting up two separate rings is not possible, woman boxers then are halfheartedly allowed to share the same ring with their male counterparts. In this situation, the woman boxers can only enter the canvas by bending under the boxing ropes, while men can jump over the ropes onto the canvas with their dignity (Jiraporn 2004: 33).

Boxing Camp: Training One's Body, Coaching One's Mind

Boxing enterprises and boxers do not exist in isolation, but rather are always being transformed by the changing conditions of society. The changes in the enterprise of boxing and the practices of contemporary boxing training, to a certain extent, reflect the change in economic and social conditions as well as the alteration of the body to serve multiple aspects of sport in our contemporary world. This section explores the business of boxing camps to understand the relationships between the economics of sport, social expectations, and the manipulation and regulation of the bodies of trainee boxers as well as the position of boxing camps in the wider context of sporting enterprise.

It is estimated that today there are more than 100,000 boxing camps operating throughout the country. There are many categories and various sizes of boxing camps. Some camps are set up to train amateur boxers to fight in standard stadiums located mostly in Bangkok and big cities; some are aimed at delivering a short course for foreigners; while some are dedicated to bring up young children and train them to be future boxers. Here the paper looks into a typical boxing camp in Bangkok as a case study to explore into its beginning, its structure and management, and the activities it provides in order to sustain its own business and create capable boxers for tournament fighting.

Kru (teacher) Ped is the owner of Det Rat boxing camp located in the Nongchok district north of Bangkok. He is also a lecturer in one of the universities in Bangkok where he teaches physical education and athletic training. Since his childhood, Kru Ped has been closely involved with boxing activities and in particular he followed and learned some basic skills from his uncle who was a boxer back then. Kru Ped also boxed for a few years before deciding to go into the business of boxing camps. Det Rat camp was set up in 1981 simply by using two trees near the house to hang sandbags and tinned pads as a partition. Most of the trainee boxers at first came through personal connections and several of them were rural dwellers seeking a place to stay in Bangkok. Despite several offers from businessmen to sponsor his camp, Kru Ped insisted on building his own training regime based on his own financial capacity as he wanted to maintain his freedom in his business and teaching style. Concerning the management of the boxing business and his boxers, Kru Ped said that:

“Working as a lecturer makes too little income. Now I have my own camp, I can earn a lot more money. But when the camp has income, we have to be very careful of how to manage our money. I have been in this business for a long time and have seen a lot of boxers. I can say that only 0.05 percent is really successful. I have always told to my trainee boxers

that they have to be careful in using their earned income. Some spend a lot when they get a big chunk from the fight, some use their money to invest into other businesses but they have no skill to operate them, some like to live daydreaming about their future success that will never come, and some are so crazy with girls that they cannot keep their money and body in shape.”

The money used in camp management comes from a 50 percent deduction from the earnings each boxer receives when entering into competition. This money will cover the cost of food, travel, and accommodations within Kru Ped's house. His home-based camp today hosts 10-15 trainee boxers and all reside in the camp. The camp also receives a few foreigners who are interested in taking short training courses from time to time. The charge will be around 30,000 baht (1,000 USD) per month which also covers training costs, food, travel and accommodations. The overall cost to manage the camp is usually around 50,000 baht per month but the income varies depending on the success of his boxers in the fighting ring.

Becoming a Boxer

The path of becoming a Thai boxer is often depicted as a hard road of individuals struggling against poverty and social constraints imposed on rural Thai men (Pattana 2007, 2009 and Vail 1998, 1999). However, there is a study suggesting that the motivation of Thai men to become boxers is also influenced by self-inspiration, the attempt to develop one's physical capacity and health reasons (Dusit 1996). In other words, aside from external factors related to social and economic aspects, there is also an internal drive that has significant influence on a decision to enter into this prize-ring activity. Here I use study cases from two boxers in Kru Ped's camp to illustrate their life paths in becoming Thai boxers.

Bao came from Songkhla province in the south of the country to become a boxer in Kru Ped's camp when he was 16 years old. He was accepted into the camp because his uncle, a sports reporter, and Kru Ped are friends. Now Bao is also attending the last year of high school but he admits that he often misses class due to fatigue from his tight training schedule. Bao prefers boxing to study. Over the past 3 years, he has fought in more than 70 contests, both in Bangkok and in outside provinces. Bao considers fighting in Bangkok stadiums more demanding than when going out to rural competition. He said that “boxing in Bangkok stadiums is difficult. In provincial matches sometimes you get a weak and unprepared opponent and you don't get to challenge yourself much. In Bangkok, boxers have to study their opponents prior to the match to be able to arrange their techniques and strategies.” The only downside from fighting in a standard stadium is that the boxer is prohibited to box in any competition again within a 3 week period after the match. This rule is to allow the boxer to fully cover from the exhaustion and minor injuries he might receive from a big match. Bao now earns 33,000 baht per match. His income has recently been increased by his fame from winning three standard competitions in a row. While provincial and not-so-official contests provide less income (about 3,000 baht in prize money), they are sometimes preferred by young and poor boxers so they can avoid the 3 week restriction and participate in matches as often as their bodies and managers allow.



Figure 5: Boxer paying respect to the pillar of the ring at the beginning of the match

Figure 6: Open-air stadium in a small district of Northern Thailand

Dai is another boxers in Kru Ped's camp. He is a 21 year old boy from a small district in Phrae province in northern Thailand. He started boxing when he was in the fourth grade, roving provincial events earning 500-1,000 baht for each match. Dai entered into serious training and competition when he was in the twelfth grade. Unlike Bao, Dai had moved in and out of several training camps after he first came to Bangkok at the advice of his relatives. Dai came to Kru Ped's camp through the introduction of his manager who had 'bought' him from another camp in the suburb area of Bangkok. Now it has already been a year under the supervision of Kru Ped and he is not sure where his boxing life will lead him. "The life of boxer is similar to professional football players, it is uncertain. It depends on the money and who will be interested in buying you," Dai commented.

Training styles and rules imposed on boxers vary from camp to camp. In Kru Ped's camp, the training schedule is stricter and expectations are higher than the one Dai had previously been to. The last camp, according to him, tended to focus on tactics, but for Det Rat camp physical capacity and endurance are given priority. When there is a competition coming, Dai will be in controlled practice for ten to fifteen days. During a normal training schedule, Sunday is considered a day off, but as a fight approaches, Sunday is also a training day. This tight and restrictive training schedule within the camp leaves Dai with little free time during the week. Because of this, it is difficult for him to spend time with other friends outside the camp, and his boxing colleagues have slowly become his new close friends.

Over the past year, Dai has fought several times at Lumpini and Ratchadamnoen, the two most recognized stadiums in the country. He is now being paid around 23,000 baht per match and this prize money will be raised 3,000 baht each time he wins a match. When asked about how he perceives himself in relation to his boxing career, Dai replied that, "I have chosen to be on this path, so I have to make it through. I know there will be a certain point where I can no longer box and it has already been many years that I have walked this path. What will happen, will happen, I guess." Even though the time frame for giving up boxing is somewhat undecided, Dai has a strong interest in continuing his education, and he is determined to

apply for a university this year. The money for his tuition will come from the earnings of his labors during the past few years.

Body at Work

At Det Rat Camp, the compounds around Kru Ped's house have been turned into a space for physical training. The boxing ring is located in the area formerly used as a garage. Four sandbags are hung from the beam of the garage and all the equipment is kept behind the house. Normally Kru Ped will act as a coach supervising all the trainee boxers by himself unless he has a class to teach at the university or has to take a boxer for a competition. Kru Ped also has a few other assistant trainers who can help as practice partners for the boxers to develop skills and techniques. The daily training schedule is divided into two parts: morning, used for a warm-up, and afternoon, which is aimed at physical endurance and technical development. The training often starts with 30 minute jogging (around 5-10 kilometers), followed by rope jumping and weight lifting for another half hour. The trainee boxers then put the gloves on or use a white cloth wrap around their fists and began their session with their boxing partner, trainer, or coach. Any boxer who has an important upcoming match will be closely trained and supervised by Kru Ped. Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday there are mock fights using exactly the same rules and duration of real matches in the standard ring. One match consists of 5 rounds; each round lasts for 3 minutes with a 2 minute break between the rounds. Below is a table showing the daily schedule of trainee boxers in Det Rat Camp:

iafor

Training approaches and programs vary among different boxing camps and boxers under training. This is due to several factors such as the physical state and capacity of the boxer

Time	Activities
7.00-8.00	Jogging, Rope Jumping, Weight Lifting, Sit-up
8.00-11.00	Boxing training (shadow boxing, sandbag, moving target, counter boxing, tactic development)
11.00-15.00	Rest (mostly sleeping)
15.00-16.00	Jogging, Rope Jumping, Weight Lifting
16.00-19.00	Boxing training (practice with partners, trainers or coach)
19.00-07.00	Personal and resting times

trainees, their mental state, skills and strategies, the competition schedule, opponents, as well as the resources and the management of the boxing camps. The mental state of the boxer trainees is one of the crucial factors impacting the way in which the training progresses. Many newly arrived boxers, almost all of them from rural provinces, often feel home sick after a few weeks away from home. Some feel that they have lost their youthful freedom and are trapped by the imposed rules and strict discipline. This is not to mention the lack of private space and the adaptation to a new environment and friends. The fatigue from hard training also discourages these young ones from continuing on this physically demanding path. The level of skill each boxer has also marks the differences in training style and expectations. Some trainee boxers have never been in a boxing ring before entering the camp while some have boxed for several years without proper training. Another factor is the

duration of training time before a match. If a boxer is scheduled to be in a standard competition, then serious training, weight control, and the study of the opponent's movements, skills and advantages will be observed.



Figure 7: Kru Ped coaching his young boxers

Conclusion: Embodying Sportsmanship and the Ring of Manhood

Once a man has walked into a boxing camp and has been accepted by the camp owner or his coach, he has allowed his body to be recreated and manipulated by others around him. In other words, the trainee boxer acknowledges that his body will no longer be his own, but will be managed by the process of boxing training and wider sporting enterprises. Some say that one of the key factors for the success of a boxer is his “compliance” with his master’s instructions and how well he manages his life under discipline. Being in a boxing camp is similar to being in a military barrack where the leader commands and the followers only comply (Jiraporn 2004: 135). There is also a set of prohibitions and punishments to make sure that each boxer avoids activities that might lessen his physical capacity and create problems with others. With all these attachments the boxer has with his camp and his camp master, it is not surprising to see that in Thai boxing circles it is typical that each boxer will be provided with a boxing title referring to himself as “a son of...(camp’s name)” or “a pupil of...(master’s name)...”. This is like a genealogy of the boxing regime that represents not only the background training each boxer has but also the personal identity and the social attachment one can expect from the boxer.

The process of training the boxers, traditionally or contemporarily, also closely engages with mental adjustment and control. As we have seen from the boxing manuals and the real life practices of trainee boxers in the training camps, the mentality of being patient, disciplined, honest, loyal, and full of fighting spirit are always crucial in the success of boxer. When I talked to one of the training boxers from Kru Ped’s camp and asked about what has changed

in his life since he started to box, he said, “I have grown up and learnt not to give up easily. To be a man is to fight; fight for your survival, for your betterment and also fight for people that you love.” It is these series of “fights” that he has learnt from his physical training and embodied into his ideology of being a man.

References

- Dusit Sukprasert. 1996. *The Study of Motivation of Becoming Thai Boxers*. MA. Thesis, Graduate School, Chulalongkorn University.
- Jiraporn Kaewsringam. 2004. *Opening the World of Thai Boxing: Relations between Boxers, their Boxing Camps and Business in Boxing Circle*. MA. Thesis, Faculty of Sociology and Anthropology, Thammasat University.
- Panya Kritat and Pitisuk Karitat. 1986. *Tamra Phahu Yut: Muai Thai Yot Sinlapa Kan Tosu* [Phahu Yut Manual: Maui Thai the Greatest of all Martial Arts]. Bangkok: Kled Thai.
- Pattana Kitiarsa. 2005. “Lives of Hunting Dogs: *Muai Thai* and the Politics of Thai Masculinities” *South East Asia Research*, 13(1): 57–90.
- _____. 2007. “*Muai Thai* Cinema and the Burdens of Thai Men” *South East Asia Research*, 15(3): 407–424.
- Phosawat Saengsawang. 1997. *Sinlapa Muai Thai* [Thai Boxing Art]. Bangkok: Khuru Sapha.
- Trisdee Sitthiprasert. 1993. *Khrongsang Lae Pharuetikam Khong Talat Muai Thai* [Structure and Behavior of the Muai Thai Economy]. MA Thesis, Faculty of Economics, Thammasat University.
- Tuay (ed). 2003. *Glimpses of Muai Thai: The Siamese Art of Buddhatantric Self-Defense*. Bangkok: P Vatin Group.
- Vail, Peter. 1998. *Violence and Control: Social and Cultural Dimensions of Muai Thai Boxing*. PhD. Dissertation, Cornell University.
- _____. 1999. *The Hard Road to Bangkok: Boxing, Masculinity, and National Culture in Thailand*. Paper presented at the 7th International Conference on Thai Studies, 4-8 July 1999, University of Amsterdam, The Netherland.

Listening To The Waves Chanoyu Outside Japan

Alexandre Avdulov

0102

Saint Mary's University, Canada

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2012

Official Conference Proceedings 2012

A large, faint watermark of the iafor logo is centered on the page. It consists of two overlapping circular arcs, one in light blue and one in light red, with the lowercase text 'iafor' in a light blue serif font in the center.

iafor

iafor

The International Academic Forum

www.iafor.org

Originating in ancient China and refined in medieval Japan, Chanoyu (Japanese, literally "hot water for tea"), commonly known as the Japanese Tea ceremony, had jumped continents by the end of the twentieth century and found new homes in lands far from and near to its origins. A delicate balance between conservation and internationalization enabled this tradition to transplant to new places in its most original form and take root. It developed to accommodate local conditions while conversely influencing the original tradition in its motherland. Though the globalization of Chanoyu is just a raindrop in a hurricane of cultural globalization, it is a complex and diverse transmission across national borders on multiple levels. Tomlinson writes: "...the huge transformative processes of our time that globalization describes cannot be properly understood until they are grasped through the conceptual vocabulary of culture, likewise that these transformations change the very fabric of cultural experience and, indeed, affect our sense of what culture actually is in the modern world." (Tomlinson, 1999)

Chanoyu literally means "hot water for tea" which is not really very helpful as a definition. Chado or Sado translates as The Way of Tea and refers to the path of practice. It is a discipline, a tradition and a learning complex. Paul Varley defines Chanoyu as "a unity of ritual, methods of expression, setting and highly structured environment" (Varley, 2000). Chanoyu is a synthesis of various aspects: spiritual, philosophical, moral, aesthetic and artistic. All senses are brought into play in a complex ritual, which involves food, wine, two types of fire and two types of tea preparations. A tea gathering typically takes three to four hours with one host and up to five guests. It has been called meditation in motion.

Tea students usually visit their teacher's tearoom three times a month and study one of dozens of different forms of making two types of tea: thin whisked tea and thick kneaded tea. They learn by watching others and practicing one of the forms themselves. Variations on the basic forms of increasing complexity encourage mindfulness, awareness and memory. The student, depending on interest and ability, studies calligraphy and its reading in Japanese and Chinese, cooking, flower arranging, Japanese garden and tearoom design, the history and philosophy of tea, poetry and so on to the end of one's life or physical and mental ability which, by the way, remains remarkable in tea practitioners. Tea is the perfect paradigm for life-long learning. Chanoyu comes very close to the definition of culture itself.

The origins of Chanoyu are in 12th century Zen Buddhist monasteries in China. The monks, using tea as the rare medicine it was considered to be, offered it at the altar and then drank it communally. This communal sharing of a single bowl of tea is still at the heart of currently practiced Chanoyu. Japanese monks took back tea seeds and the tea-sharing ceremony to Japan as part of their import of the Zen (meditative) school of Buddhism. Over the next four hundred years as the drinking of tea as a beverage became popular it gradually left the temples and Chanoyu became a primarily secular pursuit. The

tea drunk in today's tea room is the same now: powdered tea leaves are whipped into a foamy infusion by mixing tea with hot water using a bamboo whisk.

By the 16th century Chanoyu had been formalized, under the patronage of the military elite, which ruled Japan. It then spread to the mercantile and artistic communities. The foremost among these formalizers was Sen Rikyu (1522-1591) whose descendants have carried on the tradition for sixteen generations. Rikyu's 20th century descendant Sen Soshitsu XV was instrumental in globalizing tea.

Globalization of Chanoyu can be considered in a number of different dimensions.

The first is that it is taught as an art form and a discipline to thousands of people in hundreds of places around the world. The huge learning curve and dependence on innumerable accouterments have prevented it from achieving the millions of adherents of its Asian cousins yoga and tai chi. Nevertheless, it has reached a critical mass of enough people to be considered part of global culture. The second dimension is apparent in the influence Chanoyu has on its connected arts, such as cuisine, architecture, design, gardens, pottery and other crafts. Few would know that Japanese cuisine actually derives from "kaiseki", the formal Chanoyu meal, which in turn had its roots in Zen Buddhism. Thought to predate the better-known French formal meal, the food of tea has influenced western cuisine through its emphasis on seasonality, beauty of presentation, small portions, staggered service and the elevation of native and natural tastes. The architecture of the tearoom, spare and empty, has influenced the work of such architects as Stanford White, Frank Lloyd Wright, Walter Gropius and others. The tea garden, "roji" literally "dewy ground", has greatly influenced western garden designers, not only as something to incorporate, but also as an inspiration for the re-consideration of the concept of space itself. Yanagi Soetsu defined Chanoyu as "a complete university of artistic taste" (Yanagi, 1972). Several philosophical and aesthetic qualities associated with Chanoyu have been influential in the West, for example, wabi (natural beauty), sabi (beauty of age and patina) and shibui (astringency). Not widely understood in their native land, they nevertheless have influenced artists, designers and writers far beyond Japanese borders.

The third dimension is the most fascinating. It is the nascent application of the forms of Chanoyu itself which could be adapted to areas from education, business, leadership, hospitality, business, art appreciation, psychological testing to memory and sensory improvement. Take for example, learning. The whole pattern for learning tea can become a model for learning of almost any other subject. Things like the "loop" review, the specific emphasis on learning rather than being taught and the panoramic style of learning opposed to a vertically structured one could be applicable to learning any subject. Study of principles and structure of curriculum can also become a valuable resource for other disciplines.

Chanoyu represents so-called "hand made" cultures, the ones that preserve and protect the old ways of doing things. Today, when most things in our lives are not made or grown by yourself, but mostly bought or ordered, Tea practice offers something like a security system for the humankind and can diffuse de-humanizing of our lives.

Paul Varley names a concept of harmony as a central to Chanoyu. He describes harmonious interaction between people, nature and objects in a very limited space for an

extended period of time and concludes that this experience could be fully applicable to the ways human society strives to function. (Varley, 2000) It can be linked to the areas of a number of environmental issues such as sustainability, slow food and many others. In a way, “tea” became an adjective, at least among practitioners to define certain style or approach.

First to encounter Chanoyu in Japan were the early Europeans, mostly Portuguese and Spaniards who arrived in Nagasaki in the mid sixteenth century. They were mainly diplomats, merchants and Jesuit missionaries. The latter group stayed and lived in Japan having to learn about the country and its culture and find ways to fit in. It was due to the non-religious but deeply spiritual quality of Chanoyu that it was chosen (by the missionaries from the multitude of cultural complexes available) as a path to the hearts and minds of their future converts and as a key to this unknown civilization. Acute observers of culture, the Jesuits have left us accurate descriptions of early Chanoyu in letters, diaries and reports. Since Chanoyu is mainly an orally transmitted tradition, equivalent texts of similar age and value don't exist in Japanese. Their accounts are invaluable since they shed light on the prototypes of the forms, which exist now. Michael Cooper in his article “The Early Europeans and Chanoyu” writes about three Portuguese Jesuits: Luis de Almeida (1525[?]-1583), Alessandro Valignano (1539-1606) and Jao Rodrigues (1561[?]-1633) and gives their perspective on the forms of Chanoyu and its role in Japanese society as well as their view of the possibility of a wider application of its characteristics and principles. Luis del Almeida described the actual teahouse the following way. “The place was a little larger than the courtyard and seemed to have been made by angels rather than by men... no words can describe the order and the cleanliness of it all.” (M. Cooper, 1995) Being a European of the 16th century he certainly saw things to learn and implement back home. M. Cooper writes, that Alessandro Valignano who was supposed to inspect the work of missionaries and implement appropriate changes in policy, not only reorganized the structure of the missions according to the order and principles of the Rinzaï school of Zen but went as far as to insist that missionaries learn to speak “correct and elegant” Japanese and ordered that all Jesuit residences should possess “their own Chanoyu”, meaning that not only the ceremony was to be conducted but also a special place had to be designated and utensils to be acquired – he provided a list of approximately 40 objects everyone had to have. “Obviously, Valignano understood that the success of the Christian mission in Japan hugely depended on how deeply the missionaries themselves learned and adapted to the customs of the new land ...hardly a startling thought for the twentieth century, but practically a revolutionary concept for a sixteenth century European” (M. Cooper, 1995) It was Chanoyu that he selected as the all-encompassing cultural repository of Japan. The descriptions of Chanoyu were not limited to its external form only. Jao Rodrigues who spent most of his life in Japan, suggests that “the qualities required to appreciate Chanoyu have a much wider application and can be extended to every branch of cultural life”

(Cooper, 1995). Therefore, Chanoyu was recognized not only as a formal introduction to the Japanese culture and society but also as a deeply spiritual, indeed unique practice with great potential for intercultural communication. Immersion in Chanoyu allowed the

Jesuits access to Japanese society. It subsequently made its way to Europe in the form of objects, descriptions and stories. The connection worked both ways and enriched both sides. At least three of the seven closest disciples of Sen Rikyu became converted Christians.

It is apparent that there was a very close connection between the early Europeans and Chanoyu. It was the first and most important cultural encounter between the two civilizations just before Japan was to tightly shut its doors to anything foreign for the following three hundred years.

At the end of the nineteenth century, deeply dissatisfied with the cultural fabric of the country, Americans begin to look to the East in search of balance, harmony and perspective seemingly lost after the Civil War. Nostalgia for the old and orderly days, a spiritual vacuum and a search for new sources of aesthetic cultivation created a wave of interest in Japan and things Japanese, which interestingly enough coincided with Japan's efforts to modernize and become a world power. New England was at the forefront of the new quest so much so that "by the end of nineteenth century a considerable part of the Boston Protestant elite preferred to consider itself Buddhist rather than Christian". (Benfey, 2003) The "opening" of Japan occurred in 1854 when Commodore Perry sailed his ships into Yokohama Bay and demanded major ports be opened for trade. It didn't really do much in terms of "opening" of Japan to the world; it still stayed a remote and unknown island for most Westerners. But another opening was even more important - the cultural opening of Japan - that happened gradually through the steady efforts of many. The Centennial Exhibition of 1876 in Philadelphia gave the first glimpse of things Japanese to an admiring public. In 1893 the first Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago offered an introduction to a number of Eastern traditions, Zen Buddhism and Yoga in particular. The Chicago World's Fair in 1892, to celebrate four hundredth anniversary of Columbus's arrival in North America, had a Phoenix Pavilion built by Japan in which a Japanese traditional teahouse was exhibited for the first time outside Japan. But the cultural opening of Japan went even farther than the political opening and prepared the ground for its globalization today. It was "the work of men and women who realized that to open Japan culturally meant to open themselves in turn, and to risk transformation in the process." (Benfey, 2003)

In 1904 Okakura Kakuzo, a Japanese scholar, the founder of Tokyo School of Fine Arts and a great connoisseur of Chanoyu, came to Boston and gave a series of lectures at Isabella Gardner's Italianate palazzo, now the Gardner Museum. He spoke about the Tea Ceremony (this was the first mention of this term in English) and captured the hearts of her guests. In 1906 his lectures became "The Book of Tea", the first, and still the most popular book in English about Chanoyu. It consists of seven chapters each focused on different aspects of the Way of Tea. Not just a description of the art and tradition of

Chanoyu, it also introduced Okakura's philosophy of pacifism and universalism: "we can only be more human by becoming more universal", which he found implicit in Chanoyu.

The following years lead to an abrupt end of the era of American fascination with Japan as the world was enveloped in the maelstrom of two World Wars.

After the Second World War it was hard to imagine the rise of interest in things Japanese. The American occupation of Japan though had one peculiar aspect – while the Americans were occupying Japan, its culture started to occupy the hearts of some. Quite a few of them fell in love with Japanese culture, mastered the language and turned from being occupiers into residents. Over the years some became experts and popularizers of Japanese culture. The breezes of a new interest in Japanese culture refreshed the post war stand off. Donald Keene opened the world of Japanese literature to English speakers, Donald Ritchie researched Japanese film, and Edward Seidensticker translated the Tale of Genji. At the same time a remarkable development was taking place through the efforts of the Urasenke Foundation, the largest Chanoyu school in Japan to open the insular domain of Chanoyu to the world. Sen Masayuki, the 15th generation direct descendant of Sen Rikyu and future Iemoto, (patriarch of the Urasenke tradition) was actually trained as a kamikaze pilot at the very end of WW II. He survived but the war was such a shock that he decided to dedicate his life to using Chanoyu as a means of rebuilding world peace. He wanted to create for all the space of peace, quietude and equality to be found in the teahouse. By opening Chanoyu to the world and introducing the world to Chanoyu he hoped to facilitate a global realization of our common humanity. Sen went to the USA in 1950 for the first time. In 1952 the Urasenke Hawaii Chapter was founded. Los Angeles and San Francisco followed. Today there are hundreds of study groups in North and South America, Europe, Asia, Australia and Africa – literally – all over the world. In 1970, exactly 40 years ago, Midorikai, a special course for foreigners was established in Kyoto at the Urasenke headquarters. These students became the first non-native tea ceremony teachers. Some stayed in Japan to act as interpreters and to teach tea to non Japanese and eventually even to Japanese. American, Canadian and European teachers began to teach Chanoyu in major cities. Though there already were Japanese tea teachers in these cities, the native teachers attracted their own students and tea became increasingly cosmopolitan as a result.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, students from the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe started to arrive to study tea in Kyoto. Studying the tea ceremony with students from all over the world required Chanoyu to act as the medium of communication between people from very different backgrounds. A stable flow of students and teachers has been established between Japan and other countries. Today, teachers and students of tea do not have to be Japanese. Chanoyu has attained a level of globalization only dimly glimpsed by Grandmaster Sen sixty years ago. He encouraged the academic study of tea through the establishment of chairs and courses on the history of tea in various universities. He published books and donated them to libraries around the world. Significant numbers of books on Chanoyu have been published by many different people in multiple languages. Grandmaster Sen has done more than any other single person to

introduce an introspective Japanese art to the world and to see it perceived as an instrument of peace. In 1993 Tea was offered again at the second Parliament of the

World's Religions in Chicago one hundred years after the first introduction, but this time it was performed by North American tea masters. No matter how successful the introduction itself might have been, it is due to the comprehensive qualities of the tradition itself and the efforts of many that Chanoyu could globalize.

Various groups and communities in North America have embraced this tradition and influenced its course in North America. Firstly, Japanese immigrant laborers who never had any connection with so called "high culture" in their homeland came to the Americas to seek better jobs and lives. In their sixties and seventies some connected with Japanese culture through Chanoyu and were able to do so through the outreach of schools from Japan, primarily the Urasenke school. For them tea not only re-established their connection with their homeland but also had the compensatory function of "upgrading" their social status vis a vis fellow immigrants and their families in their home provinces. Secondly, the next two (second and third) generations of Japanese who were born in the Americas and may have never been to Japan but desired to explore their "ancient memory" in order to seek a lost cultural identity were drawn to tea. Thirdly, some Japanese nationals working abroad for a limited period of time wanted to keep their connection with this particular tradition. Usually, these people would have started their practice back home and would continue it when they returned. Fourthly, there are communities of Japanese and non-Japanese students of tea, which formed around specific teachers, whether they happened to be in North America already or were asked to go to teach by the headquarters in Japan. These are usually mixed groups with some interesting dynamics within the group. Fifthly, groups that became part of another spiritual tradition. The Shambhala Tibetan Buddhists, a Canadian-based worldwide community incorporates Chanoyu practice to enrich their Buddhist practice. Lastly, it is the artistic community. Perhaps it is enough to say that the recreation of the forms and shapes of a teabowl is essential to master for any student of ceramics at any art school anywhere in the world.

After half a century of being taught outside Japan, has there been much of a reverse influence from Tea in the West on Chanoyu in Japan? Certainly, the sight of a non-Japanese wearing a kimono and practicing such a traditional art is a visual reminder for Japanese to pay more respect to their own culture. Over hundreds of years traditions tend to become rigid and institutionalized. Chanoyu in Japan is no exception. The rigid social hierarchy of tea in Japan might benefit from a more equitable Chanoyu of some international groups. The creation of multiple entryways for people from different social groups could be a positive development and a welcome change. Finally, an "eastern-western" approach to teaching the discipline, which is now appearing, should appeal to young people in Japan who are needed to replenish the dwindling population of tea practitioners.

Today you can learn tea in hundreds of places outside Japan. There are non-Japanese teachers educating non-Japanese students. There are inspiring local craftsmen to produce

utensils based on local traditions for use in Chanoyu. There are transformations in traditional tea cuisine. The form has traveled and has become firmly rooted far from its

source. It is evident that Chanoyu in Japan remains a closed, limited cultural complex but outside Japan it has shown that it is also able to integrate, enrich and bond with other traditions.

Though deeply rooted in Japanese culture, the very nature of Chanoyu as a practice has more to do with being a human being than being a Japanese. In fact, most Japanese neither know much about nor have much connection to Chanoyu culture. This is the base from which Chanoyu, with its intercultural nature, departed to develop outside Japan. There are several scenarios which are possible, one is a "pure" Japanese tea done in different parts of the world, often exclusively by Japanese. Another is affiliation with non- Japanese cultural entities and finally another is a practically complete separation from the original tradition. All three scenarios are playing out in different places around the globe.

I would like to mention that a major challenge to the globalization of tea is the lack of cultural and social context, which the form has nurtured over the centuries. In Japan Chanoyu is the unifying centre of a plethora of agents from tea growers to the traditional craftsmen and artists who create solely for it. Tea is part of the education system and is woven into the spiritual fabric of society. Outside Japan such context needs to be created. It is not enough to just mention a concept, one has to be ready to explain the importance and underlying principles behind specific ways of doing things. Unlike in Japan one actually has to have a very clear understanding of the rationale behind every detail and to be able to make it accessible to others. For that reason Japanese themselves are not always able to bring their own culture to those who are not part of it. Non-Japanese on the other hand, to become carriers of this culture, through great study and determination have to develop special skills for bringing it to the outer world. Today when connection and support from Japan is fading due to a number of factors, it is very important to continue this process of creation of the cultural context for Chanoyu outside Japan. I fear that despite the huge efforts of many it may still not be enough to ensure the continuity of this tradition outside Japan. A true globalization is a globalization of self, the opening up of one's inner world to the globe and this is what Japanese have to do in order to really become part of the world community.

According to Dixon Morris, Chanoyu is just as fascinating and important today as it was centuries ago both in Japan and outside. He writes: "Whether a Japanese or a non-Japanese, study of Chanoyu will greatly enrich one's life" (Varley, 2000)

Bibliography and References:

Benfey, C. (2003). *The Great Wave*, NY, Random House
Breslow, R. (1996). *Humanity in a Tea-cup: Isabella Stewart Gardner and Okakura*

Kakuzo, Chanoyu Quarterly, no. 85
Castile, R. (1971). *The Way of Tea*, NY and Tokyo, John Weatherhill, Inc.

- Cooper, M. (1995). *The Early Europeans and Chanoyu*, Chanoyu Quarterly, no.81
- Couturier, A. (2010). *A Different Kind of Luxury: Japanese lessons in Simple Living and Inner Abundance*, Stone Bridge Press
- Fisher, A. (2010). *The Way of Tea*, Tuttle Publishing
- Kumamoto, K. (1975), *Confluence of East and West: Okakura Kakuzo and Tea*, Chanoyu Quarterly, no.12
- Mori, A. (2008). *Sekai de ocha o*, Kyoto, Tankosha
- Okakura, K. (1956). *The Book of Tea*, Rutland and Tokyo, Charles E. Tuttle Co.
- Plutschow H. (2001). *The Grand Tea Master*, USA, Weatherhill, Inc.
- Sen, S. (1998). *The Japanese Way of Tea*, Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press
- Sen, S. (1988). *Chanoyu: The Urasenke Tradition of Tea*, NY, Weatherhill, Inc.
- Sen, S., Yamaguchi, M. (1979) *Chado*, New York, Weatherhill
- Tomlinson, J. (1999). *Globalization and Culture*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press
- Varley, P., Kumakura, I. (1989). *Tea in Japan*, Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press
- Yanagi, S. (1972). *The Unknown Craftsman*, Tokyo, Kodansha

The logo for the International Association for Cultural Studies (iafor) is centered on the page. It features the word "iafor" in a light blue, lowercase, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a circular graphic composed of two overlapping, thick, curved lines. The upper-left portion of the circle is a light red color, while the rest of the circle is a light blue color, matching the text.

Conceptualization Of Ueban Space in Wu Jingzi's The Scholars

Fang Xie

0108

Stanford University, United States

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2012

Official Conference Proceedings 2012

Abstract:



iafor

iafor

The International Academic Forum

www.iafor.org

In 1750 Wu Jingzi 吳敬梓 completed his satiric novel *The Unofficial History of the Scholars* (hereafter *The Scholars*). Written in a loose and realistic style, this novel tells stories of ambitious scholars trapped in the relentless machinery of the civil service examination system. *The Scholars* was a success with the reading public, especially in certain geographical areas, as it “described all aspects of scholars’ lives,”¹ and vividly reflected “the lifestyle and custom[s] of the north and south of the Yangtze River.”²

Wu Jingzi was born in Quanjiao 全椒, Anhui 安徽 Province to a patrician family whose fortunes had declined. He later moved to Nanjing after having failed the civil service examination. In Nanjing, Wu Jingzi lived in a pavilion by the Qinhuai River 秦淮河 and called himself a “Qinhuai sojourner” (*Qinhuai yuke* 秦淮寓客). He held banquets in his pavilion and invited friends to gatherings to indulge in wine and food and enjoy themselves.³ Although he also had occasional financial problems, he never failed to describe the city of Nanjing as “much more attractive than [his] hometown [Quanjiao].”⁴

Wu Jingzi’s beloved Nanjing is therefore the locus of much of *The Scholars*. In *The Scholars*, the city of Nanjing is characterized by a remarkable acceleration of commercial development and the commoditization of culture. Merchants, craftsmen, and aspiring literati flock to the city to pursue “career, fame, riches, and rank” (*gong ming fu gui* 功名富貴), and as a result, over time the gap between Confucian ideals and people’s daily performance becomes quite large. The city of Nanjing is also a place defined by its quality of life. It is different from all other towns and cities, and welcomes the emergence of a new way of living and connecting in the world, one that may defy conventional expectations. This is reflected in the novel’s structure; it does not have central protagonists, nor does it have a consistent plot line. Yet, it is through the constant shifting cast of characters that Wu Jingzi creates a patchwork vision of Nanjing.

Late Qing and May Fourth scholarship on *The Scholars* often characterized the novel as a satire of the civil service examination system, a lament of the vanity of human pursuit of “career, fame, riches, and rank,” and an attack on all manners of human pretension and hypocrisy. Indeed, the novel, as its title suggests, provides access to the unofficial side of the lives of literati in traditional Chinese society. However, *The Scholars* also tells us about perceptions of the city and its relation to countryside in the world out of which the novel emerged. In this paper, I argue that Wu Jingzi is quite aware of changes in urban life and social attitudes. Although his novel centers on the city of Nanjing, for him,

¹ Cheng Jinfang 程晉芳, “Biography of Mr. Wenmu 文木先生傳,” in *Rulin waishi yanjiu ziliao* 儒林外史研究資料, comp. Li Hanqiu (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1984), pp. 12-13.

² Huang Xiaotian 黃小田’s comment on “Preface to *Comments on Rulin waishi*, 儒林外史評序,” in *Rulin waishi huijiao huiping ben* 儒林外史會校會評本, comp. Li Hanqiu (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1984), p.15

³ Even after family fortune had declined, he continued to hold feasts to welcome friends and those who visited Nanjing from far away, and were elected as the leader of local community 是時先生家雖中落，猶尚好賓客，四方文酒之士走金陵者，胥推先生為盟主。 Jin He, “Postscript,” in *Rulin waishi yanjiu ziliao*, p. 128.

⁴ Wu Jingzi, “Rhapsody on Moving My Home (Yijia fu 移家賦),” in *Wenmu shanfang ji* (Shanghai: Yadong tushuguan, 1931)

Nanjing ceases to be merely a geographical location. It is a place where people, in the practice of everyday life, perform their collective memory, imaginations and aspirations.

City as the Locus of the Formation of Literati Communities

The historical time frame of the novel is the Ming dynasty, during which the seeds of capitalism were first sown in China. Nanjing, as the capital of the first Ming emperor, had by this time developed into a full-fledged metropolis, aided by its advantageous geographical location in the lower Yangtze River Delta (also known as *Jiangnan* 江南) and its associated political dominance of this large area.⁵ In Chapter 24 of the novel, Wu Jingzi gives the first detailed description of Nanjing, and his tone is effusive, , inviting readers to perceive and experience the city through his compression of space.⁶ According to his observations, Nanjing has come to embody an elegant and sophisticated way of life. It is filled with palaces and temples, and its entertainment district along the Qinhuai River is crammed with teahouses, taverns, and brothels. Flutists, drummers, and theater troupes play to and fro, and literati and officials mingle with elite courtesans.

However, Nanjing's growth had a dark side. The development of commercialization and rise of printing industry caused the official career of literati gentry to become less promising. The number of literati gentry expanded, but not enough new positions in the bureaucracy were created, causing a surplus of qualified candidates for each opening. As a result, those who had passed the lower civil service examinations were often forced into a host of new occupations, such as secretaries to officials, tutors in wealthy families, academic teachers, and so forth, in order to make a living. They were also strictly forbidden to comment on the ills of the society,⁷ and could no longer participate in political activities in public space.

The enforced detachment from state politics thus led those lower-ranked scholars to either turn toward a philosophical pursuit of the Confucian ideal or to linger in private literary society for pecuniary profit and – apparently – public esteem. They could, and did, form unofficial literati communities, either with a shared set of values and discourses or with the same aspirations for earning a reputation as a man of letters, which could in turn endow them with power in their own local public space. Urban space is always a geographical locus for the formation of such communities, and Nanjing, known for its storied past, its cultural achievements, and its natural beauty, thus became a popular venue for these unofficial literati to fulfill their dreams.

⁵ F. W. Mote, "The Transformation of Nanking," in *The City in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), pp. 147-148

⁶ Wu Jingzi. *The Scholars* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1973), p.270

⁷ For example, in 1382, the fifteenth year of Hongwu 洪武 emperor of Ming dynasty, an explicit regulations for licentiates (*shengyuan* 生員)' behaviors was implemented: "Anyone but licentiates is allowed to comment on both positive and negative sides of the society. Licentiates who gather together and form partisan group of 10 people and above, scolding officials and behaving in not respectful ways, will be punished according to laws." See *Code of Great Ming Dynasty* (*Daming huidian* 大明會典), vol. 78.

The Scholars vividly depicts the attempts of lower ranking scholars to establish communities and gain power in urban spaces – more specifically, in Nanjing. In chapters 32 and 33, Du Shaoqing 杜少卿, moves to Nanjing after an acquaintance advises him that, “Nanjing is a great metropolis, and there you may find friends to appreciate your talent and be able to achieve something.”⁸ Shortly after his arrival, Du Shaoqing prepares a feast and invites four tables of guests to the house he has rented for himself and his family along the Qinhuai River. In attendance are a successful licentiate who turns out to be a libertine, only seeking as much pleasure as possible from moment to moment, a pedantic Confucian who is determined to advocate *bagu* 八股 composition, a real Confucian who shows a deep interest in classical learning (with attainments to match), an owner of a turban shop with the desire to become famous as one of his talented patrons, a Taoist monk, and so forth. Most of the guests come from nearby towns and counties, and the novel tells us that they “sat where they pleased or leaned over the balcony to watch the water, sipping tea as they chatted, leafing through the books on the tables, or sitting at ease enjoying themselves.”⁹ After the casual gathering, Du Shaoqing visits some of the scenic sites in Nanjing.

Chapters 17 through 18 mention a loosely structured poetry club in the city of Hangzhou. The five main members of the poetry club are Zhao Xuezhai 趙雪齋, Jing Lanjiang 景蘭江, Pu Moqing 浦墨卿, Zhi Jianfeng 支劍峰, and Mr. Hu 胡三公子, the third son of the former minister of the Board of Civil Office. They have migrated to the city from different areas of Zhejiang province, and have different occupations, among them merchants and full-time poets. They gather together and compose poems with a certain style and rhyme scheme. Sometimes visitors to the city join them for poetic meetings, and other times they are invited by higher-ranking officials to write poems and odes for some specific purpose or occasion. In addition to the social and intellectual camaraderie, there is at least one very pragmatic reason for writing poems and holding such poetry club meetings, as revealed through their comments on one poetry club member who does not become an official but has a houseful of children and grandchildren: to gain fame and reputation.

“Gentlemen,” said Jing, “when you choose officialdom, is it for the sake of fame? Or for the sake of profit?” “For fame,” they answered. “Then you must realize that although Dr. Zhao has not become an official his poems are printed in dozens of anthologies and read all over the empire. Who hasn’t heard the name of Zhao Xuezhai? In fact, he is probably much more famous than most scholars who have passed the metropolitan examination.” Having said this, he roared with laughter.¹⁰

What this little episode demonstrates is that, evidently, literati can raise their reputation by writing poems, and, further, that forming poetry clubs and publishing anthologies of members’ work can serve not just as entertainment and social networking, but also career development leading to the creation of literary and artistic works. Although poetry clubs and other kinds of literati networks and associations have existed since the time of

⁸ *The Scholars*, p. 359

⁹ *The Scholars*, p. 364

¹⁰ *The Scholars*, p. 198

Jian'an 建安, they truly proliferated in the Ming and Qing periods under the influence of the burgeoning printing industry. It has been noted that, in late Ming and early Qing dynasties, many people did in fact gather together for the civil service examinations. They formed covenants and societies, and published anthologies of essays by their literati members. Their efforts would be rewarded with an increase in fame and reputation if any of those essays became recognized among a wide audience.¹¹ In the novel, poems written after the meeting are published and distributed, and as anticipated, it brings fame and reputation to those participants. Many years later, the collection of poetry can still be purchased in the market and people will occasionally mention those names of participants treating them as historic celebrities.

Wu Jingzi sets forth various scenes of literati travelling and gathering in urban spaces, and thus reveals some characteristics of literary communities and the role cities played in the formation of such communities and networks during the Ming and Qing dynasties. First, those travels and gatherings would be filled with music and dance, and usually accompanied by drinking, theatrical performance, and other artistic and literary activities. Second, for those not at the center of society who rarely enjoy high status, cities could serve as places to seek solace and contentment in their unwilling estrangement from officialdom and politics. Cities like Nanjing and Hangzhou have been closely intertwined with historic images and cultural ideas. The activity of landscape appreciation in those cities is thus thought to be granted not only through education, but also through social background and occupation. As such, the landscape does not “appear” until it has been first presented through historical or poetic writings, which obviously require people to have certain prior knowledge before participating in landscape appreciation and related activities. Third, according to traditional views, officials are trapped in the pursuit of success and have lost interest in nature, but those who fail to attain official titles could indulge in literary pursuits and become known for pursuing the lofty matter of landscape appreciation. In other words, landscape appreciation and its associated social gatherings carries a sense of group identity based on acceptance of a common fate. However, it also provides an alternative path to fame, especially when the flourishing publishing industry in the Jiangnan area could actually facilitate the development of those loosely structured literary communities and networks.¹²

City as a Heterogeneous Space

In *The Scholars*, Wu Jingzi narrates travel experiences of many characters as well as varied social gatherings. The novel, as scholars have pointed out, can be read as an autobiography in which the author attempts “to define or give meaning to his own past and present selves.”¹³ Indeed, the real-life Wu Jingzi was enthusiastic about tourism,

¹¹ Xie Guozhen. *Mingqing zhi ji dangshe yundong kao* 明清之際黨社運動考 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1982), p. 7

¹² There was a close cooperation between literati and book merchants, for example, Ma Chunshang was an expert in *bagu* essays and earned a living by editing collections of *bagu* essays.

¹³ Zbigniew Slupski, “Three Levels of Composition of the *Rulin waishi*,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, vol. 49, no. 1 (Jun., 1989), pp. 5-53; Martin W. Huang. *Literati and Self-Re/Presentation: Autobiographical Sensibility in the Eighteenth-century Chinese Novel* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 53.

although he was not much of a traveler himself. After his move to Nanjing, as Jin He reports in the postscript to *The Scholars*, Wu Jingzi enjoyed entertaining “men of wine and literature from everywhere who ventured into Nanjing,” whatever his finances.¹⁴ However, Wu Jingzi also saw the possible dangers of travelling and gatherings in urban spaces, and thus derided rather than complimented most of his fictional characters. For example, during Ma Chunshang’s famous tour of West Lake, Wu Jingzi opposes a lyrical description of West Lake to Ma Chunshang’s limited field of vision. Ma Chunshang merely lingers over food but avoids the sight of other temptations, such as women. By the view from the top of Mount Wu, he can only quote two lines from one of the Four Books. Similarly, the poetic meeting over West Lake brings fame to its participants, but after a few decades, it is inevitably confused with a different meeting over Yingdou Lake 鶯脰湖.

Wu Jingzi’s ridicule of many of the travels and gatherings of literati shows his acute understanding of the ephemerality and unreliability of fame on the one hand, and on the other hand the fear of the looseness of the urban space, which is defined by all kinds of cultural activities but in turn leads to the abuse of conventional literati taste. In the novel, Wu Jingzi repeatedly depicts scenes of banquets and feasts, which show the characteristic heterogeneity and promiscuity of the urban space.

In the Ming and Qing dynasties, heterogeneity and promiscuity existed in the contexts of both social and geographical mobility. Together with civil service examination system and the flourishing of trade and commerce, the upper stratum of wealthy gentry grew in numbers, families of lesser status could more easily gain access to gentry status, and more and more people migrated to cities. These trends expanded the urban sector, but in turn led to the intensification of the sojourner and settler relation and the relationship between the new plebeian parvenus and Confucian literati.

Wu Jingzi was obviously worried about the deleterious impact of the influx of outsiders and the new plebeian parvenus over the formation of social custom in major metropolises such as Nanjing, Hangzhou, and Yangzhou 揚州. In *The Scholars*, he portrays several nouveau-riche salt merchants from Huizhou 徽州 who are in the process of colonizing the city of Yangzhou. Among these characters, Wan Xuezhai 萬雪齋 is the most vividly drawn. He first appears in Chapters 22 and 23, and is introduced by Niu Yupu 牛玉圃 as a quack pretending to be well connected in the literary circles of the Jiangnan region, a characterization that is achieved through a detailed description of the elegant setting of the residence.

“Passing through an arch with tigers carved on its base and a courtyard paved with polished bricks, they reached a hall in the middle of which hung a great placard with the inscription “Hall of Contemplation” written in gilt characters by the salt commissioner, Xun Mei. This was flanked by a couplet in gilt calligraphy: “Study is good, farming is good: to want to make good is excellent. To build up an estate is hard, to maintain it is also hard; but if you know this they cease to be difficult.” In the center hung a painting by Ni Yunling, and on the desk stood a great block of unpolished jade. There were twelve rosewood chairs in the hall and on the left a huge mirror six

¹⁴ Jin He, “Postscript,” in *Rulin waishi yanjiu ziliao*, p. 128.

feet high. They passed behind this mirror through a double door to a courtyard inlaid with pebbles, and walked along a corridor with vermilion railings skirting the lake to a hall with three rooms divided by bamboo curtains where there were two young servants on duty. When these boys saw the visitors, they lifted the curtain and invited them in. The furniture here was all of highly polished *nanmu* wood, and on the white scroll in the middle of the hall was written in black characters: "Cultivate Flowers and Compose Poetry."¹⁵

The landscape and the spatial arrangement of one's residence served as a status symbol for most wealthy sojourning merchants in major cities of the Jiangnan region in late imperial China. The merchant class usually lived a luxurious life and aspired to engage in refined activities, such as book collecting, patronage of the arts, and the creation of elaborate gardens and mansions, so as to assert their social importance. They invited famous scholars, officials, poets and artists to elegant gatherings, tasting good tea or wine, composing poems and enjoying works of art or refined environment.¹⁶ They imitated literati life and taste in order to hide the fact that they were of humble origins. Wan Xuezhai is a studio servant in the family of a salt merchant when he is a boy. After achieving economic success, he marries his son to the daughter of a Hanlin scholar, which gives him a certain elevated social status. He then identifies himself as an educated person, or literally "book reader". By a schematic representation of a space filled with elegant furniture, paintings and calligraphies, he tries to convey the message that he has a refined sense of art and probably the talent of poetry. Such upward social mobility is not often welcomed. Wu Jingzi comments, via the words of a Taoist monk uttered with a defiant and sardonic tone of voice, "even if official caps were flying all over the sky and one fell on his head, he wouldn't be allowed to keep it."¹⁷

The Confucian doctrine ranks farming as the most essential livelihood and commerce as the least. Although in reality during the Ming and Qing eras, successive generations of merchant families become more successful in pursuing careers as government officials, suspicions and doubts about the corrupted and vicious nature of merchants remained strong among intellectuals and commoners alike. It was thought that merchants might take advantage of their urban residence to build close ties with higher officials in the cities, while they could also take advantage of their mobility to escape the local government's fiscal and tax system. People feared the combined power of local government officials with sojourning merchants, and were worried about the blurring distinction between literati and merchant, and thus the boundaries of social hierarchies. They blamed the transgression of hierarchical boundaries for the deterioration of social customs in urban space.

In the novel, there are several episodes showing the hostility directed toward such transgressions. For example, two scholars tear off Wang Yi'an's 王義安 scholar's cap and slap on his face when they notice that he, in actuality a pimp for a brothel, has dared to don them undeservedly. In Chapter 24, Bao Wenqing 鮑文卿, a theatrical manager yet a man of exceptional integrity, critiques the phenomenon of transgression. He sees a man

¹⁵ *The Scholars*, pp. 249-250

¹⁶ Evelyn Rawski, "Economic and Social Foundation of Late Imperial China," in *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), pp. 3-33

¹⁷ *The Scholars*, p. 253

who used to play old men's parts in his company wearing a tall hat, sapphire-blue gown and black shoes with white soles, all while drinking tea alone in a teahouse. He then deprecates him, stating that, "it is not right in our profession to wear those clothes."¹⁸

The unease the two scholars and Bao Wenqing voice toward the transgression of social boundaries echoes Yan Yuan 顏元 and Li Gong 李塉's stance against Wang Yangming's emphasis on the individual cultivation of sagehood and the de-elitization and decentralization of culture. Yan Yuan and Li Gong believed that the accessibility of sagehood would likely raise the problem of moral degradation in a disordered and chaotic world. They conceived of an ideal feudal society as being based upon the *Rites of Zhou* (*Zhou Li* 周禮), which placed emphasis on categories, or, in other words, rituals, that defined the boundaries of proper behavior and regulated those behaviors.

For Wu Jingzi, the great influx of merchants, wealthy magnates and other immigrants into the cities not only causes the confusion of social identity but also raises problems relating to the literati's own self-conception and their adjustment to a new environment. The dilemma of positioning oneself as a member of the literati in an increasingly commercialized but depoliticized city is that, on the one hand, literati must rely on merchants for practical and financial support and in reciprocity provide entertainment and thereby boost their patrons' reputations, while on the other hand, the Confucian doctrines require literati to stick to philosophical virtues rather than material comfort, and the Mencian notion of attending to one's own virtue in solitude when frustrated (*qiong ze du shan qi shen* 窮則獨善其身) is considered a fundamental aspect of shaping the self. In Wu Jingzi's observation, in the Jiangnan region the literati's engagement in politics has been discouraged to a certain degree, and the machinery of the civil service examination system has created a chasm between rigid Confucian scholars, who are engaged in an effort to climb higher rung in the social ladder via the regular route of the civil service examination system, and literati, who seek alternative self-fulfillment. For those literati who claim that they are not interested in official careers, the openness of cities could provide opportunities for leading a secular life with its concomitant insouciant attitude.

Urban Space in Nostalgia

Wu Jingzi's attitude toward urban space is ambiguous. The discourse of decline dominates his treatment of the city in the novel, and cities are most of the time rendered as a social wilderness. However, for Wu Jingzi cities, particularly Nanjing, can also serve as placeholders for nostalgia. Wu Jingzi dubs himself a "Qinhuai sojourner," and to a great extent he identifies himself as a permanent sojourner, who has a vague and general intent to return to his homeland, but never forms concrete plans to return.¹⁹ Or, to put it another way, he regards the city of Nanjing as his spiritual hometown, taking him back to the golden past.

¹⁸ *The Scholars*, p. 272

¹⁹ Wu Jingzi didn't get well with his relatives back in his hometown.

Nanjing was the capital of the six southern dynasties²⁰, and rapidly developed into a major cultural and religious center during those periods. Wu Jingzi was particularly interested in the literati culture of the Six Dynasties, as the Six Dynasties witnessed a profound transformation of the intelligentsia from politically engaged elite intellectuals to detached artists, connoisseurs, and philosophical thinkers. The Ming and Qing dynasties shared the same atmosphere, but what differentiates the two periods is the fact that people in the Six Dynasties, like Ji Kang 嵇康 and Ruan Ji 阮籍 were thought to have had a genuine and wholesome state of mind. That is to say, literati at that time dared to confront a corrupt institutional ideology and thus were more likely to provide moral leadership for society – a stark contrast with the perceived decadence of the disenfranchised literati of the Ming and Qing dynasties. Wu Jingzi deeply admired Ji Kang, Ruan Ji and the whole literati culture of the Six Dynasties. Cheng Jinfang, in “Dedicated to the Memory of Yan Dongyou” (*Ji huai Yan dongyou* 寄懷嚴東有) noted that:

Minxuan is our contemporary, but he was more like someone living in the time of Six Dynasties. He admired the elegance of the Jian'an period and respected Prince Zhaoming for his filial piety.²¹

There are reasons for Wu Jingzi to feel a great affinity with Six Dynasties figures. One obvious reason is that radical literati in that period were thought to have adopted a lifestyle of personal freedom and spiritual cultivation, which, according to Wu Jingzi, is an ideal state. Another reason is the rise of Confucian ritualism, the major intellectual trend in China from the seventeenth through the early nineteenth centuries, as expressed in all kinds of discourses. On the surface, radical literati, such as the seven worthies of the bamboo grove during the Wei-Jin period, are known for their anti-ritualism and were characterized as iconoclastic or anarchistic. However, they never deny the importance of the genuine rituals in everyday life. For example, Ruan Ji writes in his *Discourse on Music* (*Yue lun* 樂論) that:

Regulations and cultivation can't be separated from each other. Rituals and music are outer and inner sides of one thing. Without regulations, cultivation won't exist; without cultivation, regulations lose their basis.²²

Ruan Ji's essays on music passionately advocate a return to traditional notions of propriety. He is known to have had a penchant for poking fun at the more ritual-minded men of the day, but what he especially mocks in this instance are pretense and formality. He is repulsed by corrupt practices of ritual, but is always an advocate for a ritualistic life with genuine sincerity. Lu Xun has described the inner voice of those radical literati in the time of Wei-Jin period in “The Literati Mannerism of the Wei and Jin, and its Relation to Poetry, Drugs, and Wine” (*Weijin fengdu ji wenzhang yu yao ji jiu de guanxi* 魏晉風度及文章與藥及酒的關係)

²⁰ The six southern dynasties are the Wu 吳, the Eastern Jin 東晉, the Song 宋, the Qi 齊, the Liang 梁, and the Chen 陳.

²¹ Cheng Jinfang, “Ji huai Yan dongyou,” in *Rulin waishi yanjiu ziliao*.

²² Ruan Ji, “Yue lun,” in *Ruan Yuan Ji* 阮籍集(Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), p. 89

During the time of Wei-Jin, those who claimed to be ritualists were actually destroying rituals; while those who ridiculed Confucian morals and rituals were *de facto* ritualists. They had already internalized rituals into their lives.²³

Wu Jingzi is more like Ruan Ji. He knows the problem of ritualism of the day and is thus very critical of it. Ritualism has developed into two categories. One is dualistic ritual serving as the source of ethical values as well as a utilitarian vehicle for achieving sociopolitical objectives; the other one is ascetic ritual, insisting on the separation of ritual from the mundane world and involving the replacement of discourse with practice.²⁴ Wu Jingzi realizes that in his time people who claim to be ritualists of some kind or other are no more than formal and hypocritical. He chooses to satirize and interrogate in his novel the variety of hypocritical behaviors and political maneuvers, but on the other hand, he claims in the *Comments on Book of Songs* (*Shi shuo* 詩說) that without following of the rites of Zhou, a country would fall apart.²⁵ He also has hope that people could revive somewhere the genuinely meaningful rituals to cure social ills of the times.

Nanjing is a place where “even cooks and porters are cultured [in an atmosphere like that of the Six Dynasties].”²⁶ For Wu Jingzi, Nanjing is a city that in fact recognizes the language of his soul. He then conceives the city of Nanjing as a locus for rebuilding the lost homeland and patching up the gaps in his memory. He believes that his project is about genuineness. In chapter 37 of his novel, he depicts at length a Confucian ceremony. A group of Jiangnan literati assemble in Nanjing, planning to build a temple and perform a ceremony dedicated to Wu Taibo 吳泰伯, a Confucian sage of antiquity. Those literati are aware of social problems in their time. They lament their contemporaries’ pursuit of fame and social status, and then decide to implement social reform to promote proper and correct behaviors and to recreate the harmony of the ancient age. The ceremony is a large-scale event in both time and space. Due to its size, and the scale of the required preparations and activities, it involves such a large group of literati and town villagers for such an extended period of time as to make it a veritable reenactment of the past. The immediate response to the ceremony is encouraging. As participants depart from the temple, the local people line the road, crying for joy:

We have never seen a ceremony like this, or heard music like this before! The old folk told us the gentleman who was the master of sacrifice is a sage who has come back to the earth, so we all wanted to see him.²⁷

It seems that the ceremony has brought both the literati and the commoners into a renewed relationship with the sages of antiquity. However, in the end it is judged as a failure. After participants disperse, the initial effect of the ritual ceremony fades into a purely symbolic gesture. Many local people in Nanjing express their desire to make

²³ Lu Xun, “*Weijin fengdu ji wenzhang yu yao ji jiu de guanxi*,” in *Er yi ji* 而已集.

²⁴ Shang Wei. *Rulin waishi and Cultural Transformation in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), p.14

²⁵ Zhou Yanliang. *Wenmu shanfang shi shuo jianzheng* 文木山房詩說箋證 (Jinan: Qilu shushe, 2002)

²⁶ *The Scholars*, p. 323

²⁷ *The Scholars*, p. 473

personal contact with those who organized such a grand event. The city of Nanjing remains its characteristically lavish lifestyle, with conspicuous consumption and the inevitable decline of moral ethos.

During his stay in Nanjing, Wu Jingzi also discussed issues of Confucian ritual with friends in the Nanjing literati circle and participated in restoring the dilapidated shrine to the Confucian sage on Rain Flower Terrace (*Yuhua tai* 雨花台). However, this real-life ambitious agenda ended in failure, too. In essence, the literati's restorative nostalgia, which proposed to rebuild the past, proved futile; it wrought instead only a reflective nostalgia dwelling in longing and loss, thus rendering the city of Nanjing a locus for the imperfect process of remembrance.

Dwelling in the city while dreaming of the countryside was a prevalent idea amongst literati in imperial China. Faced with changes in the structure of city life, which had been impacted by economic malaise and political corruption, people were more likely to celebrate the return to a self-contained agricultural community in which they could abandon any concern for the urban money economy and its corruptive impact. However, it seems that Wu Jingzi did not exactly share this idea, at least not in all its details. In the novel, he creates the plot of Xiao Yunxian 蕭雲仙 rebuilding the city of Qingfeng. The historical city of Qingfeng was located far away from the Jiangnan region, but this appears to be of little import to Wu Jingzi, who focuses his description instead on how it was supposedly built according to Yan Yuan's idea of solid learning (*shixue* 實學), more specifically, ritual, music, military training, and farming (*li yue bing nong* 禮樂兵農). Wu Jingzi was under the influence of Yan-Li school and regarded the idea of solid learning as an alternative route to return to the golden past. Xiao Yunxian leads the people to cut water channels and build an irrigation system. After all is completed, he summons all the people to a ceremonial sacrifice. All these scenes are reminiscent of Yan Yuan's doctrines, while at the same time the city of Qingfeng is also made to look like cities of the Jiangnan region. Also, in the last chapter, Wu Jingzi tells stories of four plebeian talents living in the city of Nanjing. They enjoy the pleasures of literature and art for their own sake, rather than as means to an end. As for Wu Jingzi, the ending of the novel indicates a new mode of life in urban space. It also suggests a different way to conceive of the city in late imperial China.

Selected Bibliography

- Benjamin Elman. *From Philosophy to Philology: Intellectual and Social Aspect of Change in Late Imperial China*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984.
- David L. Rolston. *Traditional Chinese Fiction and Fiction Commentary: Reading and Writing Between the Lines*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997.
- Evelyn Rawski. *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985.
- F. W. Mote. *The City in Late Imperial China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997
- Matin W. Huang. *Literati and Self-Re/Presentation: Autobiographical Sensibility in the Eighteenth-Century Chinese Novel*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995.
- Rulin waishi yanjiu lunwen ji* 儒林外史研究論文集, comp. Li Hanqiu, Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987.
- Shang Wei. *Rulin waishi and Cultural Transformation in Late Imperial China*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003.
- Si-yen Fei. *Negotiating Urban Space: Urbanization and Late Ming Nanjing*. Cambridge (Massachusetts) and London: Harvard University Press, 2009.
- Stephen J. Roddy. *Literati Identity and Its Fictional Representations in Late Imperial China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998.
- Timothy C. Wang. *Wu Ching-Tzu*. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1978.
- Wing-tsit Chan. tr., *Reflections on Things at Hand*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1967.
- Wu Jingzi. *The Scholars*. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1973.
- Wu Jingzi. *Wenmu Shanfang Ji* 文木山房集. Shanghai: Yadong tushuguan, 1931.
- Zhou Yanliang. *Wenmu shanfang shi shuo jianzheng* 文木山房詩說箋證, Jinan: Qilu shushe, 2002.
- Zhou Yuwen. *Zhongguo jiaoyu shigang* 中國教育史綱, Taipei: Zhengzhong shuju, 2001.

*The 'Gambatte' Project; An Action Research Application: The 2010 South Africa World Cup
Media Publicity and Cultural Exchange Initiative Project Conducted in Japan between 2007-
2010*

Bheki Hlabane

0116

Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, Japan

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2012

Official Conference Proceedings 2012

Abstract:

This paper applies conflict theory to examine how the media and host nation, in the case of a developing country, approach sports mega-events to promote their own interests, even where, in certain cases, the interests of the media may result in a loss for the host nation. To highlight this conflict, a case study approach is used to investigate the link regarding the media issues related to the 2010 South Africa World Cup and the host nation's efforts to use the event to project a positive image to the Japanese audience. To achieve these goals, the discussion will use a participatory or insider perspective in the form of an action research project known as the Gambatte Project. The goal is to show three critical issues: Firstly, to highlight that in the case where a host nation of sport mega-event is from a developing country, its relationship with the international media is often paradoxical in nature and based on conflict. Secondly, to show that the success of staging an event like the FIFA World Cup also depends on the ability of the host nation to establish a collaborative framework based on consensus and mutual interests with other stakeholders. Lastly, in the case of the Gambatte Project, the discussion will show that the primary incentives behind stakeholder's participation in the project were largely intangible in nature and based on short-term relationship. Therefore approached in this fashion, this paper attempts to offer a model for studying how organizations and the media related to sports mega-events make use of small projects at the micro-level to reach new markets.

Key Words: Sports mega-events, Tourism, media hegemony, collaboration and network

iafor

The International Academic Forum

www.iafor.org

Introduction

This paper asserts that in terms of sports mega-events, the media, multinational corporations and international sports organizations have formed a mutually beneficial relationship based on economic principles driven by profit motives. In this context, the media system is the driving force behind that relationship. It is responsible for selling and distributing the commercial products of stakeholders to the global market. In turn, the medium of sports and particularly sports mega-events, serves as the single most lucrative area for the global media industry (Laker, 2002). In the case of broadcast, print and web media, hosting sports mega-events assist with issues relating to programming, content, packaging and product differentiation (Stead, 2003). In this respect, media organizations purchase exclusive rights for live broadcasting or publishing purposes. The implications are that the media rights holders will offer the advertisers a chance to market their brands to a global audience for a certain fixed price.

Viewed within a tourism perspective, this paper suggest that through advertising and other marketing channels, the media assist host nations to communicate and ultimately convince the international sports fans that the chosen host city or country is the best place to host the sport mega-event and is also a great place to visit. In other words, the media are a vehicle for selling the tourism product of the host nation to an audience who in turn, constitute the buyers of the media product. However, in the case where a host nation of a sports mega-event is a developing country, the nature of the relationship between that host nation and the media appear to be paradoxical in nature. On the one hand, the host nation (or its tourism sector) does not have the power to control what the media covers. Equally, the media do not have the power to control how host nations express themselves through images and other forms of narratives, although the media may shape or actually create these narratives themselves. Therefore, depending on circumstances, the media may have a positive or negative impact on the image of the host nation. On the positive side, the media may portray the host nation as a democratic country with a stable political climate and boasting a cultural dynamism. On the negative side, the media may expose the host nation's social problems, economic and political instability.

Cottle (1998): asserts that a high profile event or a situation of dramatic or catastrophic proportion like act of terrorism or natural disaster serves as an occasion for heightened media publicity. In the case of South Africa within the context of the 2010 South Africa World Cup, the conditions in the country in terms of social inequalities, economic disparities, high crime rates, high level of poverty, the large unemployed population, political infighting within the ruling party (the African National Congress), and the growing public discontent against the state since the fall of the apartheid system in 1994, provided the impetus for conflict and therefore heightened the media coverage of the country leading up to the 2010 World Cup event. It is equally significant to consider that in terms of location, the FIFA World Cup is spread across different host cities and therefore activities are decentralized to local governments and other stakeholders. However, for the media, any critical breakdown in the systems of one host city has a negative effect in the way the whole event is perceived. Clearly given the range and

number of stories being broadcast and the number of people they are being broadcast to, the effect on the host nation's branding and tourism marketing can be significant indeed.

For the 2010 South Africa World Cup, the host nation approached the event as a mechanism to strengthen and assert its political power, boost its economy and showcase its culture to a global audience. The media plays a key role in transmitting those messages both on the national and international level. However, when the media emphasizes the fear factor or issues related to crime and poverty in its editorial content, and ignore the positive attributes of a particular host nation, the results might have a negative impact on inbound tourism in the short and the long term. The driving factor behind this media behavior is the profit motive, where conflict sells the news.

In the context of the 2010 South Africa World Cup landscape and the media publicity it generated in Japan, this paper hopes to answer three basic research questions; (1) What was the nature of the conflict between the international media and South Africa in respect of coverage of the 2010 South Africa World Cup? (2) What mechanisms or strategies were adopted by the South African authorities in their desire to market the country as a 2010 FIFA World Cup host to a Japanese audience? (3) Can the application of action research in sports serve as a useful tool for making a positive contribution towards bringing about social consensus and thus social change?

Theoretical framework: *Conflict Theory and the Media*

The concept of hegemony is commonly used in critical social research on the media. Lears (1985:568) defines cultural hegemony as "the 'spontaneous' consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group; this consent is 'historically' caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production." The media is regarded as a cultural product or "mental production" (Curran et al, 1982: 22) in the capitalist system, and thus conforms to this definition. The significance of hegemony as defined by Lears reveals some interesting factors: first it shows hegemony is a process, secondly it implies that social life is directed and imposed on others by the dominant groups, and lastly it views the subordinate groups as having been manipulated to accept the social reality as dictated to them by the dominant groups.

However, the notion of hegemony does not necessarily suggest that the subordinate groups are passive recipients of domination by the dominant group, but rather they exist in a constant state of opposition against the status quo. However, despite their efforts, the dominant group will continue to protect its advantages and maintain a disproportionate share of society's resources. Therefore, this paper views society as bound not by shared values, but rather by shared coercion at the hands of the dominant group. The coercion is both tacit and explicit, supported by political and economic institutions in terms of the police, military, judiciary and the financial systems. In other words, consent is key for the acceptance of components of the dominant culture in terms of values, beliefs, norms and social institutions. The media plays a critical role in spreading those attributes in society. As Anastasio et al (1999:152) assert, the media "is part entertainer, part educator, part

purveyor of social norms.” Therefore, the media are the most important instruments of twentieth century capitalism for maintaining ideological hegemony in that they provide the framework for perceiving reality (Hall, 1977). In other words, the media are responsible for helping perpetuate existing norms, conventions, and sociopolitical relationships.

Looking at the question of media hegemony in the context of sports mega-events, this paper applies the media theory of agenda setting. The motive for choosing this approach is to highlight the close connection between the media, public opinion and perception. Wanta, Golan and Lee (2004:367) consider agenda setting as “the choice of (agenda) attributes” that the media chooses to portray to the public. In other words, the agenda the media sets has a direct impact and consequential effect on the larger public agenda by deciding which news makes headlines and which does not, which in turn influences public discourse and perceptions. This issue is particularly relevant in tourism for sports mega-events in relation to destination marketing and nation branding strategies. The media serve as an important source of information about potential tourist destinations to the public. The communication system may be in the form of still images, video, live broadcasts, print and the web.

This paper asserts that in relation to sports mega-events, media agenda setting can have devastating consequences for the tourism objectives of the host nation when it is exposed to extensive negative media coverage. Furusawa (2008) confirms this notion by noting that the media coverage of international events such the Asian financial Crisis of 1998; the 9/11 attacks in America in 2001 and the invasion of Iraq in 2003 all had a negative impact on outbound travel patterns for Japanese heading to the affected areas. The portrayal of a given global event by the media to a mass audience that causes panic or at least uncertainty amongst potential tourists regarding safety and security in the affected destination affects tourism negatively. Hall and O’Sullivan (1996) maintain that macro-events like these are critical factors that influence the tourist decision-making process. Therefore, when reporting on a potential destination, the media content may focus or comment on the level of infrastructure development (or underdevelopment); safety and security issues; the state of transportation; the political climate; or any number of different issues relating to a destination.

Given the number of potential stories that could be covered by the media, it is clear that the issue of news selection in the editing rooms of media outlets is the core of the agenda setting process. As a result, this paper consider the media’s editorial rooms to be the first line of gatekeepers which sort which news stories are deemed worthy of coverage and public consumption (usually few), and which stories are left out of the media domain. This line of reasoning puts the question of the culture and social background of the media practitioner in the spotlight. Benson (1999) proposes media field theory as a theoretical framework with which to examine the influence of the socio-cultural background of the journalist in the news process. Anastasio et al (1999) and Tajfel (1978) have applied social identity theory while Bandura (2001) used social cognitive theory in an attempt to address the same question. The two theoretical approaches are similar in that they highlight the close connection between the media, public opinion and perception. The

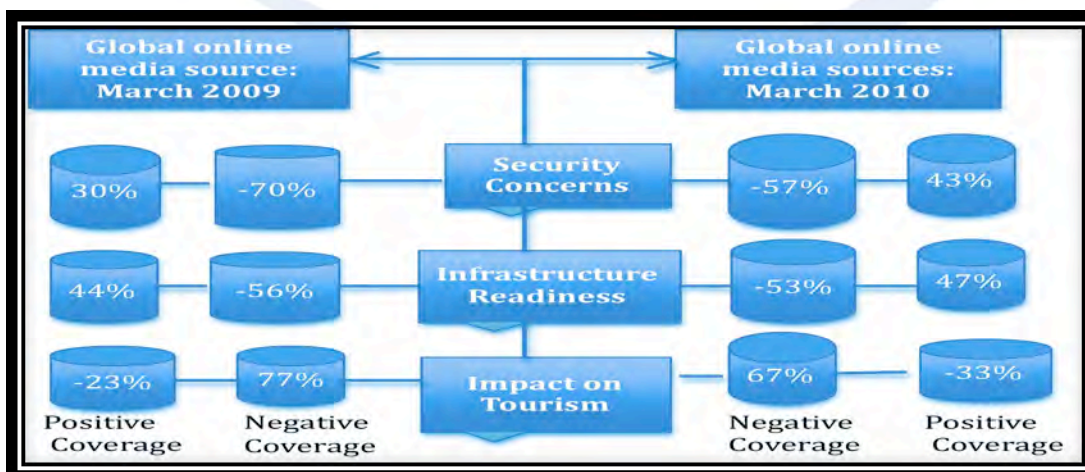
implication is that the media reflects the views or prejudices of both journalists and their audience.

Dimeo and Kay (2004:1268) examined the international media coverage of the 1996 India Cricket World Cup and concluded that “Western cultures continue to construct “others” in oppositional, dichotomous terms, often as inferior.” Boyd-Barrett and Rantanen (1998) confirm that the social context in developing nations is often represented negatively by the international media compared to that of the developed nations. That kind of representation or misrepresentation has a profound influence on the opinions of the media audience about the social context in developing nations. Therefore, the question of media hegemony poses serious challenges regarding the role of the media in global capitalist society. Furthermore, debates surrounding media hegemony highlight the complex nature of news production and the struggle between different social groups for cultural influence and power.

The conflict between the international media’s coverage and the host nation’s self-image campaign; the case of the 2010 South Africa World Cup

The development of the mass media and the concept of global marketing are significant drivers of economic investment in sports mega-events. Host nations often spend significant amounts of resources in advertising with global media networks in an effort to reach an international audience. In the case of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, two examples are noted, firstly: the South Africa Tourism entered into a three-year partnership deal with CNN International in 2008. Under the agreement, CNN produced the “first ever user generated content driven advertising solution, geared towards raising the profile of South Africa to CNN’s elite audience of business and leisure travellers” (Singh, 2008:22). Secondly, the host nation organized media tours for “10 key foreign journalists from the world’s major media agencies” in an attempt to familiarize them with conditions in South Africa (Singh, 2008:22). The overarching goal of the two strategies was to use the global media to increase the host nation’s international appeal. Therefore, positive media coverage about the 2010 South Africa World Cup was crucial for nation branding and tourism purposes. However, as Figure 1 below illustrate, despite these global marketing efforts, South Africa continued to receive negative media publicity ahead of the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

Figure 1: Online media coverage and global perceptions about the 2010 South Africa



Source: Own diagram and figures derived from Grail Research (2010/May). 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa: *Changes in Public Perception –Mar'09 to Mar'10*. pp1-21

The figure 1 above shows that media research conducted before South Africa hosted the 2010 South Africa World Cup indicates that the majority of articles that were published between March 2009 and March 2010 were mainly focused on issues surrounding safety and security, and infrastructure development. This had serious implications for South Africa's tourism strategy and also its international image. The link between the amplified media coverage of the theme of safety and security in the host nation and the tendency of sport mega-event tourists to use the media as a primary source, restricted South Africa's ability to communicate its 2010 World Cup tourism message to the Japanese audience. As a result, media communication from the host nation focused on assuring the international media and potential visitors that the 2010 South Africa World Cup would be a safe affair. Moreover, the message often emphasized assurances that the state had taken critical steps to deal with the problem of crime. As a result the organizers of the 2010 South African World Cup had to employ a combination of public relations, crisis and risk management techniques in an effort to salvage the reputation of the host nation.

Introducing the Gambatte Project; Combining theory and practice

The word *Gambatte* is a Japanese phrase that is used to encourage another person or group to do their best or to try harder in what they are doing. Therefore the overarching goals of the project were (a) to keep the public informed and educated about the development of the 2010 South Africa World Cup, (b) to provide exposure and marketing opportunities for the stakeholders of the project, and most importantly, (c) to provide the media with alternative narratives of the preparations of the 2010 South Africa World Cup. Therefore, connecting with the Japanese media throughout the 2010 South Africa World Cup process formed the core of the Gambatte Project.

In terms of the methodology, the Gambatte Project was approached as a qualitative method, based on principles found in "participant observer" and "action research" strategies. The decision to choose these two methods was informed by the idea that sports mega-events are complex in nature and therefore require a complex research methodology. Action research is defined as "a form of collective self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices, as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practices are carried out" (Kemmis and McTaggart, 1990:5). Moreover, action research aims to "contribute both to the practical concerns of people in an immediate problematic situation and to the goals of social science by joint collaboration within a mutually acceptable ethical framework" Rapoport (1970:499).

As Gaventa, Bell and Peters (1990:98) conclude, "without practice there's no knowledge." Therefore, it was critical to apply theoretical concepts and practical

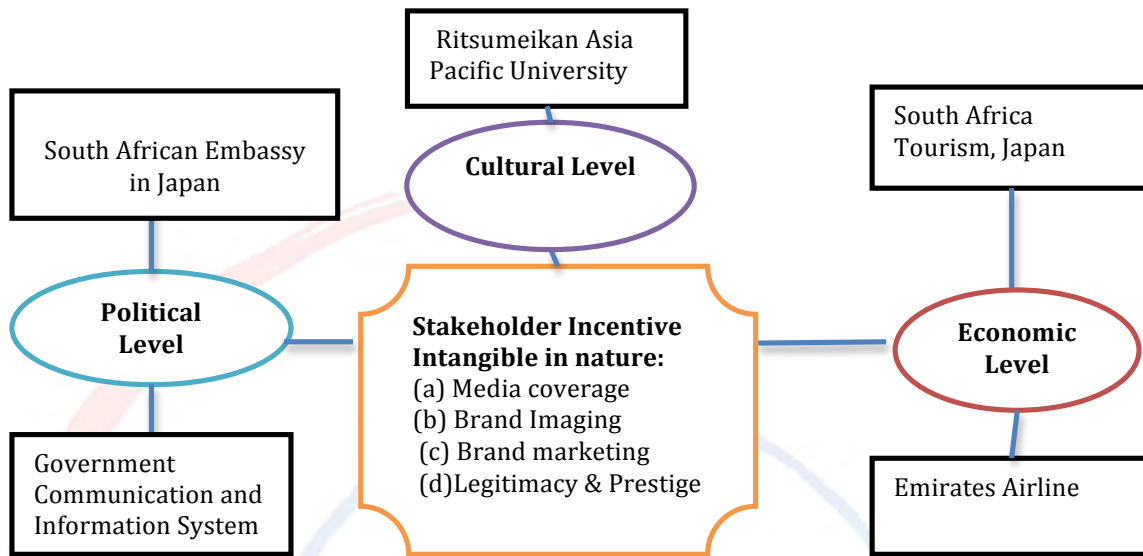
experiences within a social framework for the purpose of developing knowledge. Action research can assist researchers to get closer to their sources, and at the same time become part of the environment under study. In that respect, the role of the project facilitator is important in the research process. Central to the function of the facilitator is the notion of building relations with the media and establishing collaborative networks with stakeholders of the 2010 South Africa World Cup. Gummesson (1998) asserts that building relationships based on consensus leads to a win-win situation for the actors involved in a project. On the other hand, Benson (1975) makes a distinction between domain and ideological consensus. He states that domain consensus refers to an “agreement among participants regarding the appropriate role and scope of an agency” and ideological consensus covers “the agreement among participants regarding the nature of the tasks confronted and the appropriate approaches to those tasks”(Benson 1975;235). With regards to the Gambatte Project, both types of consensus were established.

Based on this understanding, it is clear that, as an action research method, the Gambatte Project focused on inter-organizational relationships in the organization of sports mega-events. Under such an arrangement, my goal as the Gambatte Project's facilitator was to reconcile the conflicts of interest between the various actors involved in the project and broker negotiations and trade-offs that would allow for greater participation in the research process. This approach allowed me to become involved as an active participant in the research process by striving to create synergy between the other actors. By acting as a bridge between the actors, it was possible to co-coordinate activities between them for the benefit of all stakeholders. This included ensuring that all the actors were familiar with the strategies and activities of other actors in the network and how they could benefit from the activities of others.

Establishing the collaborative network of the Gambatte Project

The figure 2 below indicates which stakeholders were interested in participating in this project activity.

Figure 2: Stakeholder Participation Matrix



As figure 2 illustrates, the stakeholders were divided into three categories, which are labeled as political (South African Embassy in Japan and South African Government Communication and Information System), economic (South Africa Tourism, Japan) and cultural (Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University). Below is figure 3 that indicates stakeholder's incentives or motive for participating in the Gambatte Project. Their benefits in that regard is identified as intangible in nature and pertains to their individual desire to attract considerable media attention for brand marketing and public relations purposes.

Figure 3: Stakeholder incentives or motive for participation in the Gambatte Project

Stakeholder	Incentive/Motive	Project's strategy
South Africa Tourism (Japan)	Imaging and brand marketing opportunities. Chance to maintain sustainable and visibility on the ground.	Establishing legitimacy and authority to operate on behalf of the host nation. Gaining strategic access to marketing and advertising operations established as a result of hosting the 2010 South Africa World Cup.
Embassy of South Africa in Japan	Inexpensive and useful opportunity to expand foreign policy activities to a wider social audience	To secure political support for the project. To ensure greater interest from the Japanese counterparts.
Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University	Gaining favorable media coverage from the local and international media. Hosting visits from high-ranking government officials from Japan and South Africa. Visits from multinationals affiliated with the FIFA World Cup. Gaining international appeal.	Legitimacy
Emirates	Emirates Airline signed a sponsorship deal worth \$ 195 million with FIFA in 2007 for the 2010 South Africa World Cup and the 2014 Brazil World Cup (www.fifa.com). Marketing and public relations opportunities. The presence of the tourism industry represented by Japan Association of Travel Agents (JATA) and South Africa Tourism provided Emirates with a good opportunity to gain the attention of the trade. Connect with the Japanese media	To establish direct association with the official partner of the 2010 South Africa World Cup
South African Government Communication and Information System(GCIS)	Foreign Policy dimension: Desire to advance the interest of the South African state in Japan. Communicating more directly with Japanese society through the local media.	The GCIS facilitated government communication efforts in relation to the 2010 South Africa World Cup event. To use the GCIS as a reference point in terms of understanding the national and regional objectives set out for the 2010 South Africa World Cup
Oita City Local Government: Mr Hiramatsu Morihiko	Connect the South African embassy in Japan, APU, the Japanese local government in Oita City, and the organization of the Japan Korea games personified by Mr Hiramatsu.	Mr Hiramatsu Morihiko is the former governor of Oita Prefecture, he was also the vice president of the 2002 Korea Japan World Cup Local Organizing Committee and he currently held the title of 'Honorary President' of the Japan Football Association.

It is clear from the diagram in figure 3 that the common factor between all the stakeholders with regards to their willingness to participate in the Gambatte Project was their desire to achieve shorts term goals in terms of gaining access to the media and thus marketing their respective brands. Therefore, the incentive for stakeholder participation in the Gambatte Project was in the form of intangible benefits. More specifically, brand imaging and brand marketing were two main factors behind stakeholder participation. Meanwhile for the Japanese media, the Gambatte Project was an attractive endeavor due to its association with the 2010 South Africa World Cup, and also because it was based in Japan.

Initiating the projects and attracting the media

The Gambatte Project initiated several projects based on the research goals outlined above. However, the most successful project in terms of the impact factor was the international symposium about the 2010 South African World Cup hosted at APU in 2008 October 22nd and 23rd. The title of the symposium was “Fulfilling the 2010 South African World Cup Promise: Learning from the Experiences of the Korea Japan World Cup 2002.” The event was organized as a joint venture between the Ritsumeikan Center for Asia Pacific Studies and South African Tourism (Japan). The idea was to examine the extent to which the experiences of Japan and Korea in hosting the Soccer World Cup in 2002 could help in the planning of the event in South Africa in 2010. In addition, the symposium aimed at promoting dialogue, cooperation, cultural exchange and partnership between Japan and South Africa.

More significantly, the goal of this project was to attract the Japanese media’s attention and to offer them alternative themes other than safety and security issues in terms of news coverage surrounding the 2010 South Africa World Cup. As a result, the symposium applied a media strategy based on collaboration and networking. The goal was to encourage interaction between the media, government officials, the tourism sector, academia, 2010 FIFA World Cup organizers and FIFA commercial partners. The strategy had the potential to draw media attention from both Japan and South Africa. For that purpose, the Gambatte Project collaborated with the Network Office and the admissions office of APU, and also Planet Marketing Communications Inc, a public relations company responsible for handling media issues for the South Africa Tourism branch office in Tokyo. Below is figure 4 and figure 5 showing the media coverage about the symposium and the post-symposium media coverage respectively.

Figure 4: *The Media Outcomes of the Gambatte Project (2008)*

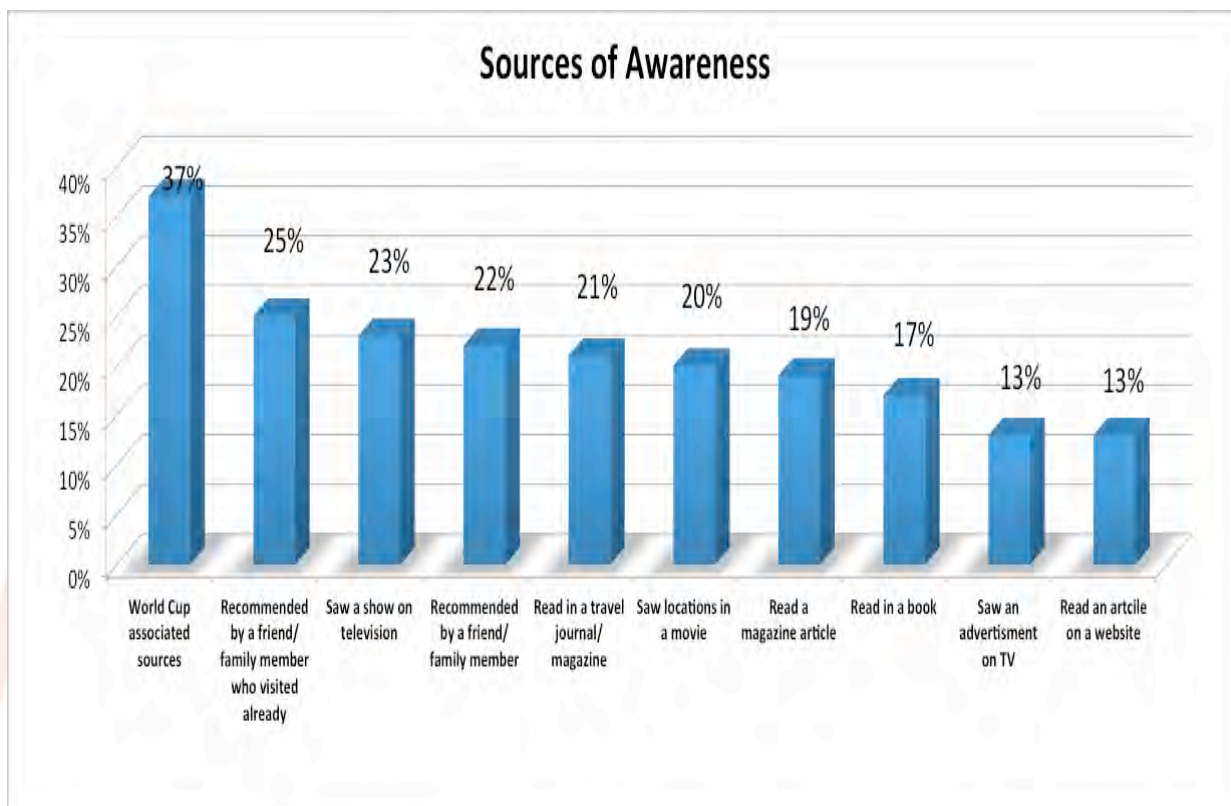
Type	Name and date	Description	Mileage /Reach
TV	NHK	Interview featuring myself and their journalist; topic: motive of hosting the symposium. Coverage: The story made primetime evening news and the coverage was extensive.	National broadcaster, Japan
Radio	Oita Broadcasting Station (OBS) (12/10/2008)	Appeared as a guest on a talk radio show entitled 'fun!fan!time'	Regional, Oita Prefecture
Newspapers	1. Mainichi Shinbun (27/10/2008) 2. The Star (30/10/2008) 3. Nishi Nihon Shimbun (24/10/2008)	1. featured an article focusing on my profile and ideas about the legacy of the 2010 South Africa World Cup 2. carried a story about the symposium highlighting the Japanese concerns about safety and security issues in South Africa. In addition, the article had a brief description of APU in the introductory section and mentioned that the university had hosted the symposium 3. Published an article about passing on Oita's experience of the 2002 FIFA World Cup to South Africa for the 2010 event.	1. National, Japan 2. National, South Africa 3. Regional, Oita prefecture ; circulation, 120.000
Online	1. Travel Vision (30/10/2008) 2. Travel Vision Weekly 3. Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University's website (www.apu.ac.jp) 4. Government Communication and Information Services (http://www.sa2010.gov.za)	1. Specialized Tourism website with 27.000 registered users. 2. Specialized Tourism website with 10.000 registered users.	

Figure 5: Post- Symposium Media Outcomes (2009-2010)

Type	Name and date	Description
TV Documentary	HNK (Tokyo), 16/6/2009	Assisted on the production of a documentary that was broadcasted during the 2009 FIFA Confederations Cup hosted in South Africa. The documentary was fashioned as a human-interest story and it was about the social impact of the 2010 South Africa World Cup.
Newspapers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nishi Nihon Shinbun, 10 June 2010 2. Nishi Nihon Shinbun, 14 July 2010 	<p>The first interview covered issues related to crime incidents that took place a few days before the start of the 2010 South Africa World Cup. Again questions of safety and security in South Africa were central for the Japanese media and the audience alike before, during and after the World Cup.</p> <p>The second interview came at the end of the World Cup and it was about my assessment and overall impressions of the event, including my thoughts on the legacy that the 2010 South Africa was most likely to leave behind.</p>

It is critical to consider the media as the primary source of information about the host nation. According to a report by the South Africa Tourism, more than one third of tourists that came to the 2010 South Africa World Cup said they relied on the media as their first source of information about the event (South Africa Tourism, 2010 South Africa World Cup impact study, December 2010). Furthermore, as figure 6 below indicate, the majority of tourists that attended the games stated that the media were crucial as a source of information about the host nation prior to their departure to the 2010 South Africa World Cup.

Figure 6: Source of Awareness about the 2010 South Africa World Cup



Source: South Africa Tourism, 2010 South Africa World Cup impact study, December 2010, pp 30

In addition, the figures also shows that one third of tourists said that the world Cup associated media or channels were their first source of awareness about the host nation. Interestingly, the report does not mention the percentage of the tourists that relied on newspapers articles as a source of awareness. As the Gamabatte Project has demonstrated, host nations can use newspapers to distribute information and highlight their destinations to a wide audience. The report is also silent about the impact of radio shows in creating awareness. As highlighted in the discussion, the Gambatte Project media strategy included a combination of print, online and broadcasting media to spread the 2010 South Africa World Cup message in Japan. Although, the Gambatte Project was a small project, it managed to keep the media and the audience informed about the host nation and further contributed towards building a South Africa brand.

Conclusion

This paper applied media hegemony and agenda setting theories to show how the media are responsible for the reproduction of social inequalities in the realms of culture, politics and economy, and are also keen on news content that emphasizes conflict. In an effort to examine this issue more closely, the discussion used a case study approached looking at the international media coverage surrounding the 2010 South Africa World Cup. As a result, this paper asserts that in the case of a developing country as the host nation, the

interests of the media and the host nation interest will often clash. Several factors are responsible for the inevitable conflict between the two groups. Firstly, developing nations are often faced with serious economic and social problems, and naturally the media are attracted to such issues. Secondly, developing nations are viewed as peripheral in the modern world system. This means that their status of being dependent will tend to remain unchanged, despite hosting sports mega-events.

In this context, the media and the host nation are often deadlocked. On the one hand, the host nation will continue to invest money in the media in the hope of receiving more positive coverage, while the media will continue to publish stories of conflict that sell on the market, but which might end up harming the interests of the host nation. In the case of the 2010 South Africa World Cup, there is a clear indication that safety and security as a news theme dominated global media coverage before and after the 2010 World Cup event. In that respect, factors such as high crime rates, labor unrests and political instability of the host nation, were critical for heightening the media spotlight on the 2010 South Africa World Cup. Meanwhile, despite the many challenges, hosting the 2010 South Africa World Cup was equally significant for branding the host nation, and the media played a crucial role in that regard.

Therefore, as this paper suggests, an action research approach as exemplified by the Gambatte Project may be used both to ensure that the media and the host nation benefit from the relationship emanating as a result of sports mega-events. Although the issue of incentive is generally measured in terms of real or tangible benefits, the global appeal of sports mega-events allow organizations to invest in intangible benefits such as enhancing their brand image and marketing opportunities. However, evidence from the Gambatte Project indicate that stakeholders are most likely to favor a relationship based on short – term goals and would resist the temptation of diverting substantial resources in support of a micro-level project from which continued returns are uncertain. Despite these limitations, the Gambatte Project managed to achieve some of its objectives. Firstly, the project assisted in creating a platform for dialogue between South African and Japanese organizations and interests. Secondly, the project played a small role in ensuring that the Japanese media spotlight on the 2010 South Africa World Cup continued. Furthermore, the project served to generate an alternative, less conflict-driven narrative of the issues affecting South Africa ahead of hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup, providing the media with an opportunity for diversifying their content. Therefore, the Gambatte Project did manage to create some ripple effects that contributed to positive information on the South African brand and the 2010 South Africa World Cup.

Suggestions for future research

Looking ahead at the next FIFA World Cup to be held in Brazil in 2014, it would be interesting to see if Brazil adopts some aspects of the 2010 South Africa World Cup model in terms of public relations strategies and media marketing techniques design to counter or resist hegemonic tendencies of the media from developed nations. Brazil and South Africa share some common social challenges in terms of the inadequate public transportation system, extreme poverty, high crime rates and high unemployment figures.

Therefore, how Brazil deals with some of these issues in preparation for the 2014 World Cup will have serious implications how it is presented by the global media leading up to the event in 2014. Nonetheless, the reputation of Brazil as the home of football, combined with its scenic beauty, may be crucial factors in attracting fans and thereby optimizing the potential for success of the FIFA World Cup in 2014 and the Olympics in 2016.

References

Anastasio, P.A., C.R Karen and J. Chapman (1999) "Can the Media Create Public Opinion? A Social-Identity Approach." *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 8 (5): 152-155.

Bandura, A (2001). "Social Cognitive Theory of Mass Communication." *Media Psychology*, 3, 265-299

Benson, R. (1999) "Field theory in comparative context: A new paradigm for media studies." *Theory and Society*, 28, 463-498.

Benson, J.K. (1975) "The interorganizational network as a political economy." *Administrative Science Quarterly* (20), 229-249.

Boyd-Barrett, O. and T. Rantanen (1998). *The Globalization of News*. London: Sage.

Curran, J., M. Gurevitch and J.Woolcott (1982) *Mass Communication and Society*. London, Edward Arnold.

Cottle, S. (1998): "Ulrich Beck, 'Risk Society' and the Media A Catastrophic View?" *European Journal of Communication*, 13(1): 5-32.

Dimeo, P. and J. Kay (2004) "Major sports events, image projection and the problems of 'semi-periphery': a case study of the 1996 South Asia Cricket World Cup." *Third World Quarterly*, 25(7): 1263-1276.

Furusawa T. (2008) President of JTB Corporation and JATA. Paper presented at RCAPS Symposium: "Fulfilling the 2010 South African World Cup Promise." Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, Beppu, Japan.

Gaventa, J., Bell, B., & Peters, J. (eds.). (1990). *We make the road by walking: Conversations on education and social change*. Paulo Freire and Myles Horton. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Grail Research (2010/May). 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa: *Changes in Public Perception –Mar'09 to Mar'10*. pp1-21.
http://grailresearch.com/about_us/Reports_and_Pubs.aspx

Gummesson, E. (1998) "Productivity, quality and relationship marketing in service operations", *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 10 (1): 4-15.

Hall, S. (1977) "Culture, the Media and the Ideological Effect," In Curran, Gurevitch & Woolcott (eds), *Mass Communication and Society*, London, Edward Arnold: pp315-348.

Hall, C.M. and V. O'Sullivan (1996) "Tourism, political instability and social unrest." In A. Pizam and Y. Mansfield (Eds.) *Tourism, Crime and International Security Issues*. Chichester: John Wiley:pp159-174.

Kemmis, S., and McTaggart, R. (Eds.). (1990b). *The action research reader*. Victoria: Deakin University.

Laker, A (2002). *The Sociology of Sport and Physical Education*. London: Routledge

Lears T. J. J. (1985) "The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and Possibilities." *The American Historical Review*, 90(3): 567-593.

Rapoport R.N. (1970) "Three dilemmas of Action Research." *Human Relations*. 23(6): 1-499.

Singh R. (2008) "2010 FIFA World Cup, Progress report." South Africa Tourism (pp1-29). Presented at RCAPS Symposium: Fulfilling the 2010 South African World Cup Promise. Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, Beppu, Japan.

South Africa Tourism (2010) "2010 South Africa World Cup impact study." Pretoria, December: pp 1-36.

Tajfel H (1978)(Ed.), *Differentiation between social groups: Studies in the social psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 77-98). London: Academic Press.

Wanta,W., G. Golan, and C. Lee (2004) "Agenda Setting And International News: Media Influence On Public Perceptions Of Foreign Nations." *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 1(2):64-377.

*The Gay Artists Journey between France and Thailand through Diverse Art Forms in
Contemporary Dance Theatre Performance*

Sun Tawalwongsri^{1,2}

0119

*¹University of London, United Kingdom, *²Suan Sunandha University, Thailand

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2012

Official Conference Proceedings 2012



iafor

iafor

The International Academic Forum

www.iafor.org

Introduction

In July 2011, Jitti Chompee, the director and choreographer of 18 Monkeys Dance Theatre Company¹ searched for male dancers to perform in his new production. It was a dance theatre performance entitled *A Love Song*, cross-culturally inspired by Jean Genet's film and poetry. At first, I merely purposed to myself to be a research observer in this company, one of the case studies in my doctoral thesis, emphasising the embodiment of contemporary dance theatre performance in Thailand. The choreographer, however, suggested and persuaded me to perform in his production. He pointed out that there were many advantages and approaches to discover research information by way of participating as a performer in the production more than in only observing at certain rehearsals. In his opinion, moreover, I was suitable to perform in this piece because of his inspiration and because the characteristics of the production involved issues of the notion of homosexual images and being an artist. In Thailand, there are limited dance companies that have continuously created contemporary performance, especially in terms of dance theatre; following passion for my dance passion, therefore, I devoted myself to dancing in and researching his project. I was selected as one of five performers for the project to collaborate on and create the dance piece. The performers had diverse theatrical backgrounds and dance styles, composed of *Khon*² dance, Latin dance³, classical ballet and contemporary dance, and B-boying⁴, including acting⁵ training and magic performing⁶. From mid-July of 2011, the performers immersed themselves in workshops and rehearsals every weekday for approximately four months until *A Love Song* premiered in November 2011 at P. Tendercool Warehouse⁷, Thailand. *A Love Song* dance theatre performance was separated into two main parts. The first part as inspired by Genet's film in 1950, *Un Chant d'Amour (A Song of Love)*, while the second half was influenced by Genet's essay on arts in 1958, *Le Funambule (The Tightrope Walker)*.

As an active scholar-practitioner, I applied an ethnographic approach⁸ as a research tool to investigate and understand the creative process of the performance, immersing

¹ For further company information see in <http://www.18monkeysdancetheatre.com>.

² Khon is a Thai classical masked dance-drama.

³ Latin dance refers to various kinds of ballroom dance originating from Latin America such as samba, paso doble, and tango including Argentine tango.

⁴ B-boying (breakdance) is a style of street dance that stemmed from hip-hop culture in New York City, USA. Howard Gardner identified the four 'corners' of hip-hop culture, consisting of rapping/MCing, DJing, b-boying and b-girling/break-dancing, and the art of graffiti (cited in Abe 265). This dance style has also become popular worldwide for youths through the media, and was introduced in Thailand during the past 30 years.

⁵ Acting is the individual performance ability to portray a character on stage. In this project refers to I and James Laver who has a theatrical background relating to drama skills and acting training as a professional actor.

⁶ Magic performing refers to James Laver, an actor who was fascinated in magic tricks for entertainment and started performing at the age of 8.

⁷ P. Tendercool Warehouse was a site-specific space for this performance. For more of its history and information see in <http://ptendercool.com/pt-warehouse.html>

⁸ Ethnography as a method of research is used to understand a particular group of people in a real-life setting. The core methods to document and discover a particular

myself in the company dance community and being one of the performers. This approach allowed me to understand and profoundly analyse the current phenomenon of contemporary dance theatre performance in Thailand. This paper discusses and examines the representations and expressions of homosexuality through art forms, drawing from Genet's film and poetry, to originate homosexual images in the contemporary dance theatre performance, *A Love Song*. At first, I describe the film and poetry of Jean Genet, representing his homosexual images and imagination through his art forms. These masterpieces of Genet play an important role as gay rebellion in his time and beyond his time. Secondly, I discuss Genet's homosexual images, which were adapted and visualised as inspirations and materials in the creative process of dance creating dance theatre performance. Further, other representations of homosexuality created by the choreographer and performers are provided. However, it is noticeable that homosexual issues in diverse art forms have consistently emerged and have been created particularly with the individual passion of gay artists. This constantly arouses the curiosity of theatregoers in terms of the representation and appropriation of certain gender minorities and sexuality in contemporary society, not only with the Thai audience but also transnational audiences.

The sensual universe of Jean Genet through his masterpieces as inspiration of the performance-making process

Jean Genet (1910–1986) was a celebrated and controversial French novelist, poet, and playwright, including being an ex-criminal. His illegal childhood background and memory concerned being a thief, a male prostitute, a con artist and a prisoner for instance. Consequently he always reflected on his life and experience through his masterpieces by considering these illegal and immoral remembrances and his homosexuality. James Creech notes that Genet as “the most out-queer writer in the French canon, the one great figure who, more than anyone, made literature explicitly from his own queer sexuality” (cited in Stephens 29). Meanwhile Jean-Paul Sartre acclaimed Genet as a Saint’ who illuminated and originated his masterworks by using impressive moments from his immoral childhood memories. In Sartre’s view these became ‘sacred, ‘fatal instants’ and ‘a liturgical drama’ embedded in Genet’s heart as life choices reflecting his arts were permeated with the notions of death and metamorphosis (Sartre 19). Sartre agrees that:

The erotic humiliations of a homosexual and the occupational risks of a thief are tinged with an aura of the sacred. Confronted with a trivial, everyday event, Genet is “turned inside out,” “like a glove”; the whole world is involved, one touches the ineluctable. These erotic and occupational accidents have a meaning which transcends them, and, as has been said of love, “they are much more than what they are,” because they manifest the “immortal enchantment” that begot a monster and killed a child..... It would be wrong to paint Genet's childhood in too-dark colors since he has been careful to inform us himself that it was the most beautiful period of his life (Sartre 22-25).

culture consist of participant observation and informal interviewing, which are suitable and applicable for researching the performing arts community.

In 1950, *Un Chant d'Amour (A Song of Love)* was the single film written and directed by Jean Genet. It was a 25-minute, black and white silent short film, and became visual material and inspiration for the generation and creation of the image of the homosexual and dance movement in *A Love Song* performance. The film was defined as a classic of gay and LGBT⁹ cinema. It was not just a masterpiece of the gay revolution in its own time, but also provided an extremely sensational expression as the pure aesthetic of the queer film. This provocative film exhibited Genet's homosexual images in expressing human desires and existence, and in it he expressed man's loneliness, immoral love, and passion and spirituality. From his poetry, spiritual imagination, inner fantasies, and homosexual images were transformed and visualised into his cinematic work. His universe of mystical love and homoerotic scenes were displayed explicitly and passionately. Through the experience of viewing his only powerfully romantic film, there were radical close-ups focused on the male body and masculinity, for instance shots of hairy sensual and sexual organs, chest and abdomen, sweaty feet, and armpits and thighs. Furthermore there are shots of masturbatory acts and frontal erection in the film, which are ambiguous and risky to interpret in term of art and obscenity. This is because viewing some shot of the film look like a pornographic. These provocative and distinctive queer images in the film were derived from his novel, *The Thief's Journal*, in 1949 (published in English in 1964), which narrated a series of homosexual love affairs and male prostitution as a dialogue between Genet and his diverse criminal background.

The film is set in a prison cell, where the characters are portrayed as solitary male inmates, who motivate themselves to express their obsessive erotic desires through different kinds of masturbatory sexual acts. The main characters are gay lovers, who are in two adjacent cells, trying to have intercourse with each other. One is an older Algerian prisoner and the other is a younger handsome French prisoner. They blow and share a puff of a cigarette through a straw, inserted into a tiny glory hole in the thick stone prison wall. Meanwhile a warden takes his voyeuristic longing in observing the isolated inmates in their prison cells through the windows or peepholes. As a voyeur, this warden is aroused by viewing each prisoner, one by one, and occasionally some prisoners are aware of him and present sexual acts for him. This goes on until he cannot tolerate it; then he enters menacingly into the prison cell of the Algerian man, whips him with his belt and later gets him to fellate his pistol. These imageries connote oral sexual behaviour, phallic symbols, and sadomasochism, including referring to homosexual prejudice or oppression at the same time. The metaphors of being gay as an outcast from society are consistently visualised through Genet's literature and film. The crude and savage scenes, however, are intervened by romantic interludes, resembling dreamlike sequences in a lush forest, exhibiting gay prison lovers—playing, romping and then making love. Rothman argues that it can be a prejudice if the viewers interpret homosexuality by merely focusing on the sadistic and homoerotic scenes in the film. He points out that indeed Genet used many reverse shots, and repetition and alternation in the film, to express the opposition between “inner” and “outer,” and between “fantasy” and “reality” (59). If the viewers keep these senses of separation in their mind, they will watch the film more freely without biased attitudes concerning same-sex relationships. For example, he (Genet) cuts back and forth between shots of the guard's whipping, the prisoner's facial expression, and the romantic interlude scenes, which never display actual images of the whip beating the victim. It seems like an inner fantasy of one

⁹ LGBT is an abbreviation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender.

character, making the film more artistic than realistic. Although the contents and connotations of the film can touch and connect human existence, the extreme homoerotic shots in the film caused provocative fighting against censorship problems. Unfortunately, the film was banned in his period by the censors in France, the United States, and Great Britain, and in addition Genet disowned this film himself¹⁰. Nonetheless, the direct narrating of Genet, especially regarding the homosexuality and immoral enchantment in his art, was unconventional and controversial in the history of gay film.

During 1957, Genet journeyed around Northern Europe with Abdallah Bentaga, who was an Algerian tightrope walker, and his lover. This young acrobat boyfriend and the art of tightrope walking motivated him to write the essay, entitled *Le Funambule (The Tightrope Walker)* in 1958. It was an inspiration of the second half part of the dance performance, which portrayed the concept of being a dancer or an artist. Related to other Genet essays on art in the same period, *L'Atelier d'Alberto Giacometti* and *Le Secret de Rembrandt* were inspired by the portraits and drawing of Giacometti and Rembrandt, respectively, through his journey. With these three essays as an artistic triptych, Genet disproved of Sartre's argument in his book *Saint Genet* that life choices were reflected in art by arguing that "it was the 'metier,' art itself, he argued, which drew life along with its own demands"(cited in Wilson 6). In *Le Funambule*, Genet reflected not only the figures of his life, his experience even with his lover, but it communicated the meaning of the solitary and self-being artist in the text. The dancer actually must dance and perform in front of a public; however, he indeed must dance for his own self-image rather than for the other, as Genet wrote:

The Angel, for us, is the night coming down on the glaring floor. May your solitude, paradoxically stand in the limelight, and darkness made of a thousand eyes judging you, fearing and wishing for your fall, who cares: you shall dance on and in a desert-like solitude, blindfolded with your eyelids stapled if they could be. But nothing - not indeed the applause nor the laughter - shall bar you from dancing for your own image. You are an artist - alas - you can no longer escape the awful abyss of your own eyes. But it is not about coquetry, selfishness nor self-love. What if it was about Death itself? Therefore dance alone. Pale, livid, anxious to please or displease your image: well it is your image that shall dance for you (Genet 110, Sanya's translation¹¹).

This is a part of the *Le Funambule* essay, in which the choreographer used the concept of dancing in the second half part of the performance. Some parts of this essay were recorded as a voiceover instead of the dance music.

Jitti Chompee, the choreographer visited France and Europe before creating this dance performance. At that time he was fascinated by this Genet's book, which his artist friend gave to him. After his friend translated it, he was touched with the beautiful words and its story. The main idea of being an artist in solitude, and with the loneliness and occupational risk of the tightrope walker in the text, remained in his mind. This was

¹⁰ For further information about the censor problems of Genet's film see the second chapter of *The Cinema of Jean Genet: Un Chant D'amour*. Giles, Jane 1991.

¹¹ Sanya Souvanna Phouma translated *Le funambule* from French original version to English for creative performance making process and publishing in *A Love Song's* programme.

because he always in fact encountered this situation being an artist himself; moreover, he found after studying and discovering some anecdotes and myths of Genet's life that they were similar to his life and his journey as well. He deployed and centred on especially the thematic phrase of "Dance for your own self-image" to challenge the performers capability and their perception of being an artist. The core concept of Genet's homosexual love, the visualisation in his film and the poetry of *Un Chant d'Amour*, the rhythmic element in his essay, and the words and thematic phrases in *Le Funambule* were harmonised and mingled in the body of the dancers, who were the heart of the dance theatre work. Encountering the diversities of body, text, character, and art forms of Genet allowed the participants to join not only Genet's homosexual universe but also to relate to heterosexuality as a part of human life and existence.

The representation and expression of homosexual images in contemporary dance theatre performance of *A Love Song*

In the first part of *A Love Song*, the choreographer did not exploit the whole storyline of Genet's film as a plot of the dance performance. He selected eclectic sensual movements and dance styles from the film to represent human sexual desire and to express homosexual images in Genet's sense. Some fragments of Genet's film and poetry, therefore, became the inspiration and material for the process of the creation of the performance. Regarding the performance space, the P. Tendercool furniture warehouse was turned into a theatre stage as a site-specific theatre/performance¹² concept linking the prison atmosphere in the film. Naturally in the warehouse, the viewers were fascinated with the heavy wooden tables placed vertically along the wall as a backdrop and some were stacked up tidily in front along the floor. This unconventional theatre setting and atmosphere in the warehouse allured and entrapped them with a sense of incarceration. The empty space in between was adapted to be a performance space, providing a new perspective of the theatre space for the audience, especially for Thais.

The performance began with a trio dance piece, exhibiting the characters of male prisoners, focused on a sense of solitude and masturbatory acts. The stylised movements and dances in the film were selected and impersonated as a point of departure in the creative process. The choreographer deployed and blended some movements, for instance lustful caressing, kissing the shoulder or tattoo, watching with a suspecting gaze, grazing the sensual parts of the body against the wall, softly walking in place in double time, and slightly turning around. Accompanied with a soft sound and slow, prolonged, rhythmic music through the silence, it was like falling in one's subconscious. This allowed the audience to absorb the breathing sound, the rubbing of the feet on the floor, and the puffing voice of the dancers. During half of this dance, I separated myself to express the painful sentiment and suffering of character of the male prisoner, even of human existence, through facial expression, frustrated gestures, crashing movements, and body into the wooden tables dynamically. This scene was added after we had the first rehearsal in the warehouse. It was built up and more dramatic elements intervened in order to adjust the performance in terms of dance theatre. Along with the dance performance, some shots of the *Un Chant d'Amour* were edited and screened on the

¹² Site-specific theatre/performance is the particular performance in particular location in which allow the performer's bodies and feeling to enact and interact with the place.

wall. The various arts forms on stage directly and explicitly expressed the homoerotic images of Genet's film in comparison with the interpretation of the dance performance.



Figure 1. A trio dance piece in the characters of male prisoners.
I watched the other dancers with a suspecting and voyeuristic gaze.

(Photo: Courtesy of Basil Childers)

In the following scene, the French prisoner (as narrator)¹³ and the demon character¹⁴ (as a prison warden in the film) enter onto the stage. In this part of the performance, the poetry of *Un Chant d'Amour* was inserted, written by Genet and translated into English by Mark Spitzer as follows:

Caressing the shoulder of the sea
my eye distracted (my sandal wet with the wing unstitched)
I feel my swollen hand
on your mossy heat
fill with white flocks
invisible in the air.
From your hip to your neck, my lambs go to graze
to browse through fine grass burnt from the sun
flowering acacias roll in your voice
the bee will steal the honey
of their echoes (Spitzer 52-53)

¹³ The character of a French prisoner in the film was performed by James Laver, who was well trained in acting and magic techniques; furthermore he performed other characters, such as a narrator, a magician, a gorilla, and a master of ceremonies.

¹⁴ The demon character represented the prison warden character in the film, performed by Anucha Sumaman, a *Khon* dancer at the National Theatre and an expert in the demon character.



Figure 2. The imagery of male-to-male sexual activities
(Photo: Courtesy of Basil Childers)

In this scene, the narrator (French prisoner) articulated this poetry as a monologue, while the rest of the performers expressed homosexual acts. I hid my head inside my dance partner's T-shirt, stroking my head up and down and making lamb sounds when the narrator uttered the phrase "my lambs go to graze to browse through fine grass burnt from the sun." This imagery suggests the oral sex of homosexual behaviour. Afterwards the performers used white chalk to draw artistically phallic and sperm symbols in various styles, like graffiti art on the floor, inspired by chalk lettering on prison walls in the film. Afterwards the scene was changed to the theatre part with a humorous dialogue between the drag queen (myself) and magician (James Laver) by talking about sexual choices with the crazy laughing (see in figure 4). This scene represented the parodied craziness of the drag queen¹⁵ or *kathoey*¹⁶ character, which became a fixed character in general. Finally to end this part, the duo male dance piece articulated the lovers in the film.

¹⁵ A drag queen refers to a man who dresses and acts in a female gender role for performing and entertaining purpose. In general, a drag queen is always exaggerated certain characteristics, such as dramatic, comical, satirical make-up and costumes. This performance, I wore only the long dress without any make-up or wig that the audiences can focus on gesture expression and character.

¹⁶ Kathoey is a traditional Thai term describing the indeterminacy of sex/gender in humans, animals, and plant...in contemporary popular discourses, *kathoey* has exclusively become a blanket term for male to female transvestites, transgenders, transsexuals, and sometimes effeminate gay men (Singhakowinta 86).



Figure 3. A chalk drawing of phallic and sperm symbols on the floor
(Photo: Courtesy of Anooch Petcharat)

The second half part of the show, *Le Funambule*, introduced the mood and tone of a circus by using animal characters. It began with the motion of mask screened on wall, transforming a demon mask to an angel (male) mask. In the meantime the performers slightly metamorphosed themselves backward from human characters to diverse kinds of animal-like gesturing and animal characters. For instance, an ape, gorilla and (Donald) a duck character were displayed through the actors bodies and animal sounds and alien language—creating a dialogue on stage. This transformation implied a reverse of human evolution. This scene, I wore a long black dress by standing my back towards to the audience. I moved some selected parts of my body: shoulders, waist, and hips. I employed isolated movements, rolling the shoulders, side-bending at the waist, and lifting and swinging my hips at different levels to express the image of woman's torso and its curve and to represent the femininity of the male body. Later I transformed myself into a female ape and carefully walked across the wooden tables placed along the wall with other animal characters instead of a wire or rope connected with the tightrope walker in *Le Funambule*. After this scene, I changed my costume and came on stage with a short trunks and a see-through black dress that looked nude to perform the dance competition between me as a female role and a male Latin dancer. In this short piece, the choreographer integrated African movements and basic samba steps, inspired by the dance movements of the black prisoner in *Genets* film to show femininity through the male body. The later and final piece was a Tango dance scene, in which I represented the emotions of femininity and maternity throughout. The choreographer portrayed his inspirations and fantasies by emphasising the dance bodies and performance-making process to communicate a homosexual image and the ways of being an artist with diverse characteristics of genders. He utilised various elements of the performance to expose a sense of the absurd and the abstract.

I was the only performer that enacted femininity on stage. I played around with diverse characters: a solitary gay prisoner with homoerotic scenes, a monkey-like animal in the circus scene, a drag queen or *kathoe* character in humorous part, switching to the feeling of motherhood and being a mother character to dance with the human puppet. Expressing the emotion of femininity and motherhood through my body and feeling, being and switching characters between masculine and feminine, human and animal, individual and partnering/grouping, challenged my performance capability beyond my

gender boundaries. From my viewpoint, this performance introduced new homosexual aspects and images to the Thai dance performance scene. I was able to explore myself in diversely impersonating and metamorphosing in several characters and emotions; meanwhile the audience could interpret this through its own experience. The performance exhibited a broader way of understanding the meaning of gender diversity, which nowadays may not need to be identified. When I (a male body) wore a female dress, it was inescapable that the audience would interpret my character with the label of drag queen or with *kathoey* characteristics, exaggerating the humorous acting style and with loud laughter. However, it is undeniable that all of these kinds of fixed characteristics homosexual images existing in society, not only the appropriation of some improper gestures and characteristics of gay man to create an exotic or odd performance. In contrast, these representations can be considered as a resistant voice and reaction to the restriction and fixed understanding of gender boundaries as well. This is because I was transformed in many dissimilar characters so I could be more realistic and enact a sense of “femininity” through the male body.

The logo for 'iafor' is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, sans-serif font. The text is surrounded by two large, overlapping, semi-transparent circular arcs. One arc is light blue and the other is light red, creating a circular frame around the text.



Figure 4. I dressed as a woman to portray the drag queen or *kathoey* characters (left) and a female or mother character (right). (Photo: Courtesy of Anooch Petcharat)

To conclude this article, I have revealed that the dance theatre performance, one of the art forms, can extend the space for the representation of some gender minorities in Thailand. The homosexual images of Genets journey pass down as the choreographer's inspiration and interpretation to expressed through the performers especially focusing on my body, my characters and experience exhibited the way of gay artists express their universes throughout the art forms around the world. Although the reproduction of some stereotype of homosexual images and characters, which is improper for some individual attitudes, have been continued through the arts and media. This essay has also exhibited the creative performance process portraying the characters and identities of homosexuality from Genets film and poetry to stage performance can be a way to articulate and negotiate the perception of gender diversity to the audiences. At least,

participating and supporting gay artists and performance will be the way to share the perception of gender diversity, to understand homosexuality in various dimensions and to expand the boundaries of gender minorities in the public space in Thailand.

References

- Abe, Daudi. "Hip-hop and the Academic Canon". *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice* November 2009 4: 263-272. London: SAGE Publications. Web. 24 Jun. 2012
- Genet, Jean. *Le funambule in Le condamne à mort*. Paris: Gallimard, 1999, Print.
- Giles, Jane. *The Cinema of Jean Genet: Un Chant D'amour*. London: BFI, 1991. Print.
- Rothman, William. "Romance, Eroticism and the Camera's Gaze in Jean Genet's Un Chant D'amour". *Film international issue* 42: 56-63. Intellect. Web. 15 May. 2012
- Spitzer, Mark. *The Genet Translations: Poetry and Posthumous Plays*. Polemic Press, 2010. Print.
- Stephens, Elizabeth. "The Bad Homosexual: Genet's Perverse Homo-politics". *Sexualities* January 2012 15: 28-41, London: SAGE Publications. Web. 15 May. 2012
- Sartre Jean-Paul. Trans. Frechtman, Bernard. "Saint Genet: Actor and Martyr". *The Tulane Drama Review*, 7.3 (1963): 18-36. The MIT Press. Web. 15 May. 2012
- Singhakowinta Jaray. "Politics of Negotiation: Thai Gay Men's Appropriation of Public Space". *The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies Conference proceedings 2011*, N.d.: 84-96. Web. 15 May. 2012
- Wilson, Sarah. "Rembrandt, Genet, Derrida". *Portraiture. A collection of papers on the visual construction of identity*, Ed. Woodall Joanna. N.d.: 1-19. Manchester University Press. Web. 15 May. 2012

Sun Tawalwongsri is a dance and theatre lecturer in the Department of Performing Arts at Suan Sunandha University, Thailand. He completed his B.F.A. (Drama) and M.A. (Cultural Management) at Thammasat University, Thailand. He has internationally diverse performance experiences as a choreographer, dancer, and performer both in Thai and on the world stage. Currently, he has received a scholarship from the university for further Ph.D. study in Drama and Theatre at Royal Holloway, University of London. His areas of research interest include dance theatre, ethnochoreology, the intercultural body, and hybridity of performance in addition to creating new traditions or reinvention of traditions through contemporary performance.

Chinatown as a Mnemonic Site: Restaurant and Chinese Canadian Special Stories in Fred Wah's Diamond Grill

Fang Jeng Liu

0121

National Sun Yat-sen University, Kaohsiung, Taiwan

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2012

Official Conference Proceedings 2012

A large, faint watermark of the iafor logo is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue font, surrounded by two concentric, hand-drawn style arcs. The outer arc is light blue and the inner arc is light red. The watermark is semi-transparent and serves as a background for the central text.

iafor

iafor

The International Academic Forum

www.iafor.org

Combining “forms and elements of history, autobiography, poetry, prose and self-critique,” Fred Wah’s *Diamond Grill*, delineates the author’s early working experience in his father’s restaurant, Diamond Grill, in the milieu of the 1950s Nelson’s Chinatown, British Columbia (Saul 4). The narrative viewpoint is primarily conducted by an I-narrator, the mouthpiece of the author. While recalling his daily life before the adulthood, the narrator introduces the history of his immigrant family primarily of the paternal side. In addition, voices from the family members, from the employees and the customers of the restaurant and from the inhabitants of the Chinatown are involved in the text. A convergence of different articulations therefore turns the restaurant into a meeting place of the individual and the collective memory.

Taking Diamond Grill as a mnemonic site, this paper explores how the restaurant becomes a practiced place, an in-between space where the memories of the individual and of the Chinese Canadian community accumulate and perform to demonstrate an in-between Chinese Canadian identity in Wah’s *Diamond Grill*. Based on Doreen Massey’s and Michel de Certeau’s theoretical thinking, this paper sets out to discuss the Chinese restaurant in *Diamond Grill* as a place performed by the collective and personal memory of the Chinese Canadian. In the first part, I will discuss how the restaurant is constructed by the Chinese immigrant family when Wah’s Chinese grandfather, Jim Wah, started his first restaurant business in a small town in Canada during the 1920s.

Later, Jim’s son, Wah Sr., inherited and opened a new restaurant, Diamond Grill, in Nelson’s Chinatown. The family business not only chronicles the history of the Chinese immigrant family but shapes the collective memory of the Chinese Canadian community. After analyzing how the restaurant is practiced by the collective memory, I will proceed to discuss how the individual memory may confront and negotiate with the collective. The negotiation will turn the monumental place into a space of mobility. Taking the restaurant as a point of departure, Fred Wah reifies a transnational and transcultural Chinese Canadian identity.

From the Place to the Space: Massey’s and de Certeau’s Theories

The sense of place refers to one’s experience and his relationship with the place, which “can provide [. . .] stability and a source of unproblematical identity” according to Doreen Massey in “A Global Sense of Place” (Massey 172). Yet since the sense has already been enriched by our “[physical] movement and communication across space” as a result of globalization and capitalism, we can no longer think places as “areas with boundaries around” (Massey 168, 175). Rather, the critic claims that we should “imagine [places] as articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings” (Massey 175). The “meeting place” where

people encounter, interact and soon depart is able to accumulate different senses. Owing to the confluence of senses, the place attaches to more than one single locality. It is therefore characterized as progressive and limitless according to Massey. Considering the mobility and changeability of the place, the critic then argues that it is full of internal conflicts. A debate on “what the place has been” in the past, “what the place should be” in the present and “what it could be” in the future is going on and which continuously structures the place (Massey 176). Without fixed spatial and temporal orders, as the critic concludes, the place can extend from the local to the global world (Massey 177).

The concept of the place, relating to the local and the global, is elaborated in Michel de Certeau’s “Spatial Stories.” Besides, the critic distinguishes the place from the space by analyzing how the place is practiced in the narrative. Whereas the place “is the order in accord with which elements are distributed in relationships of coexistence,” the space “is composed of intersections of mobile elements” (de Certeau 117). In contrast to the “static” place, the description of which usually appears on “maps,” the dynamic space where are full of actions or operations is often delineated by “tours” (de Certeau 120). Despite their differences, the narrative of map and tour accentuate the importance of marking out boundaries. The delimitation then leads de Certeau to explore the function of “frontiers” and “bridges” in the narrative. While frontiers are the borderland, the space between differences, bridges connecting differences represent the relationships with the frontiers (de Certeau 127-28).

From a critical reading of Massey’s and de Certeau’s definitions of the place, the space and the boundaries, I want to examine Diamond Grill, laden with the collective memory of the Chinese Canadian community on the one hand, is intersected and manipulated by the individual memory on the other hand. Thus, the restaurant becomes a dynamic space functioning both as “a frontier” and “a bridge” in-between ethnic and cultural differences. In the text, the diasporic experience in China makes the father, Wah Sr., to deploy the tactics of “faking” in order to affiliate with the Canadian mainstream. His restaurant, Diamond Grill is therefore operated under the “faking” politics. The food, the employees and the customers of different ethnic and cultural background are gathered in the restaurant. As a meeting place, an in-between space, the restaurant illuminates “the intersectionality of diaspora, border and dis/location” (Brah 181).

Diamond Grill and the Collective Memory of the Chinese Canadian

According to Joanne Saul, *Diamond Grill* as a “biotext” is designed to illuminate “the tension [. . .] between the ‘bio’ (with an emphasis on the ‘life’: including the family, relationships,

and genealogy) and the ‘text’ (the site where these fragments are articulated in writing)” (Saul 4). With Chinese restaurants in the background, the text, composed of 146 sections in prose, introduces the family history, the settlement of the early Chinese immigrants and personal recollections or commentaries on the Chinese Canadian identity. The fourth section, “Yet Languageless. Mouth always a Gauze, Words Locked” and the section entitled, “He Wouldn’t Go back Again with no Chance,” delineate the settlement of the Wahs in the milieu of the late nineteenth century Canada. The author’s Chinese grandfather, Jim Wah (Kwan Chung-Keong) who came from Canton worked as a dishwasher in the Vancouver’s Chinatown to support his family in China (5-7; 55-56). After laboring in different cafes, Jim Wah eventually saved enough money to run his own restaurant, Cafe Elite, in Cabri, a small town in Swift Current, Saskatchewan.

Jim Wah’s working experience in the restaurant not only records the pioneering history of the immigrant family but reflects the history of the Chinese settlement in Canada. In *Chinese in Canada*, Peter S. Li refers the Chinese restaurant business, exclusively before the 1950s Canada, to an “ethnic business” which usually associates with ethnic or immigrant communities (Li 56). “The operations of ethnic businesses are usually small and labour-intensive. [. . .]. Often entrepreneurs rely on family members and kin for a continuous supply of unpaid or under paid labour” (Li 56). Li explains that most of the restaurant business in Chinatown was formed to provide an economic shelter for the marginalized immigrant Chinese in the white society as well as to enforce the solidarity of the family and of the community (Li 57-58). From a portrait of the family business, the text illuminates the restaurant a place laden with Chinese immigrant history as well as ethnic activities.

The restaurant represents the monumental history of the Chinese Canadian community. In addition to providing the family history of the paternal side, the author further cites historical facts to authenticate the history. The section, “Cabri Quote,” introduces six successful Chinese immigrants and their restaurant business from the history book, *Through the Years: History of Cabri and District*. An emphasis of the common business activities of the early immigrants further lead the I-narrator to explore the politics that lies behind. In “Famous Chinese Restaurant is the Name of a,” the I-narrator, after observing the names of the restaurants in the town, points out that the naming denotes the immigrants’ desire either to preserve the traditions or to assimilate into the white society. For instance, the grandfather’s Elite Cafe, not only denotes that the restaurant is the best in town. When the owner adopts the pronunciation better commanded by the Chinese native speakers by replacing “elite” for “eee-light,” the westernized name is carried with the characteristics of the East (25).

In addition, some Chinese restaurants are named for good luck such as the “Famous” (25). There are some named to reflect the rise of Canadian nationalism, such as “Canadian Chinese Take-Out,” “American-Canadian Cafe” or “the Ambassador” (26). As the narrator reflects, while some Chinese Canadians choose to identify with their Canadian nationality, there are others naming their restaurants as “Bamboo Terrace,” “Pearl Seafood Restaurant” or “the Mandarin” to show “a deference, pride and longing for the homeland” (26). As more Chinese Canadians become more aware of their hybrid identity, several newly-opened restaurants adapt the titles of the literary books for their names. According to the narrator, a Chinese restaurant in Vancouver’s Chinatown is even named after the novel, *Disappearing Moon Café* (1990), written by the Canadian novelist, Sky Lee (26). To name either for blessing, for selling the Chineseness or for demonstrating the bond to China, the Chinese restaurant in Canada symbolizes a mnemonic site where the collective memory of the Chinese Canadian is performed.

When the grandfather determined to settle in Canada, he left his family in China behind by marrying a Scotch Irish woman, Florence Trimble, and bred four children in this transracial marriage. However, to affiliate with his Canadian family with the Chinese, he decided to send off his children, Fred (also Wah Sr., the author’s father) and Ethel (the author’s aunt) to his first wife in China. The decision was made to compensate for his first wife’s loss of the husband. Besides, as Jim Wah reasoned to his white wife, his children born in Canada symbolize the leaves of the growing Chinese family tree that should return to the ground of China (5). Jim believed that the children’s “homecoming” should expose them to the Chinese language and culture from which his half-bred children could learn and be able to inherit the traditions. However, to the children born in Canada, the journey to China is not a returning but a traumatic diasporic experience.

Forced to stay with his father’s first wife in China until adulthood, Wah Sr., came home as an outsider. In the section “These Straits and Islands of the Blood Can,” the I-narrator describes how the Canadian-born father when eventually coming back from China was considered an illegal immigrant by the Canadian government because his parents couldn’t provide any official document to verify his nationality (22). Moreover, growing up in China for nearly twenty years, the Chinese native speaker confronted with the language and cultural barriers. Failing to assimilate fully into the Canadian way of life, for a year long, he lived a restricted life working in his father’s restaurant and learning English from his siblings at home. Wah Sr.’s diaspora in China, instead of strengthening the link between the home in China and the one in Canada, results in a gap in the family history.

Lily Cho suggests to “think of diaspora community as constituted not in history but in

memory” (Cho 82). Taking up “racial anger” in Wah’s *Diamond Grill*, she examines how the text represents the melancholy and nostalgia as a result of Chinese diasporic experience and how the sentiments are conjured up by the body. (Cho 96). In her essay, “How Taste Remembers Life: Diasporic Memory and Community in Fred Wah’s Poetry,” she argues that the taste of “real Chinese food” evoking the subjects’ memory of an imaginary homeland constitutes a collective diasporic identity (Cho 101). According to Cho, the diasporic subjects do not yearn for “an impossible authenticity in fictive narratives of homeland” (Cho 102). Rather, through the gestures and longings of the racialized body, the subjects construct an imaginary homeland with which they could identify (Cho 102). The critic proceeds to explain that the palatable desire connecting the diasporic individuals to the imaginary homeland should eventually be incorporated in a collective desire.

Based on Cho’s statement, I want to consider that the restaurant, Diamond Grill, established and operated by Wah Sr., instead of structuring a centralized, collective imagination of the homeland, becomes a battlefield where the individual diasporic memory contests against the authority of the collective. The power struggle occurs not only inside of the Chinese Canadian community but extends outside of the ethnic enclave. The restaurant turns into a contested space functioning both as a “frontier,” a space in-between the differences and as a “bridge” where the differences converge and negotiate.

How Diamond Grill Fakes its In-betweenness

Growing up in China until the adulthood, Wah Sr. used to be considered as neither a Chinese nor a Canadian. However, with the tactics of “faking,” he learned to move in-between the two tongues and culture. “In Nelson My Father Joins the Loins Club,” describes how Wah Sr., when giving an official speech in front of the commerce club members, misspelled the word “soup” for “sloup” and how he joked around by faking the misspelling as a Chinese idiom (65-66). By faking everything, the father not only adapts himself to the white mainstream. As an inside outsider, he constructs a contact zone where oppositional differences confront and interact.

Unlike most Chinese Canadian restaurants with only “typical improvised imitation of Empire cuisine,” Diamond Grill serves “faked” dishes, a mix of the Chinese and the Canadian ingredients. For instance, one of the popular orders, the “mixed grill,” different from authentic American grill with only roast meat, is made of beef, livers and sweetbreads, the Chinese (2). Or the “Salisbury steak” also called “a poor man’s steak” is not a real steak but a large-sized hamburger particularly favored by the working class (82). With the combination of the Western and the Eastern dishes, the restaurant attracts customers of different ethnicities.

The Chinese restaurant where the food is made and consumed becomes a stage on which signs of hybridity are performed.

Running the restaurant with the tactics of faking, the father demonstrates the confrontation of oppositional differences and indicates the need of negotiation. In addition to the mixed food, the employees and the customers of different ethnic or cultural backgrounds get together in Diamond Grill. Most employees of the restaurant are Chinese. There are Shu the cook and Wah Sr.'s partner, who invents the mixed grill; the other cook, Pong, who wishes to bring his family from China but always gambles away all his money; Wing Bo the dishwasher who came to Canada as a paper son; an anonymous old dishwasher who always remains silent about his past. Besides the Chinese male employees, some female are non-Chinese. For instance, the white old lady Marry Morrison is a waitress in Diamond Grill and Wah Sr.'s Swedish wife, used to be the accountant. In addition, two young Japanese Canadian waitresses, Miko and Dona Mori, also worked in the restaurant.

In the section, "After the War, Japanese-Canadians Continue to Live," the narrator delineates how his father visited the Japanese Canadian community in the neighboring Slocan City to find waitresses for the restaurant. Regardless of the antagonism the Chinese Canadian community held toward the Japanese, Wah Sr. appreciated the Japanese workers for "their tenacity and diligence [which make them] more reliable than [those] white girls who whine a lot and never show up for work" (77). The young Japanese Canadian sisters were therefore hired to attend the tables. Working as industriously as the other Chinese employees, the sisters received equal treatment in the restaurant.

Situated between Vancouver's Chinatown and the Kootenays where the former Japanese interment camps were distributed, Diamond Grill in Nelson could be regarded as either a frontier or a bridge allowing the opposing sides, the Chinese and the Japanese, to meet and to interact. Although the interaction provides no guarantee to dispel hostility or antagonism between the two ethnic groups, it deconstructs the boundary that used to delimit the enclave. The restaurant, with a confluence of various ethnicities and culture, is therefore tagged with multiple identities. Further, from the mixed food to the physical movement of the workers and the customers, the restaurant becomes a space of mobility moving in-between diasporic individuals, Chinese Canadian community and other ethnic groups with the aim of creating new connections.

The Hyphen as the Door

The term, "hyphen," is adopted to accentuate the connection among the opposing

differences. In an interview with Ashok Mathur, Wah discusses his concept of the hyphen and how he thematizes “the hyphen [as] the door” (16) in *Diamond Grill*:

For me, the hyphen is a recent discovery. [. . .]. [The hyphen’s] marginalize position (and I don’t mean only racially), its noisy—sometimes transparent, sometimes opaque—space feels nurturing. Its coalitional and mediating potentiality offers real engagement, not as a centre but as a provocateur of flux, floating, fleeting. [. . .]. The idea of an exterior/interior being connected or separated privileges the extremities; I want that “noisy hyphen” of a door clanging and rattling the measure of such movement (*Faking It*, 103-04).

The door as a metaphor articulates Wah’s theoretical thinking of his hyphenated Chinese Canadian identity. Noticing the significance of the slapping sound of the swinging wooden kitchen doors in *Diamond Grill*, Saul comments that “[a]lthough the hyphen divides Occident from Orient, Fred Wah and his father are forced to move from one side to the other. And yet the differences between the two sides are never totally elided” (Saul 116). The critic points out how the hyphen both separates and unites the Chinese and the Canadian. Likewise, the door not only separates the insider from the outsider, the self from the other. By adjoining the difference, it structures a transracial and transcultural discourse.

The hyphenated identity made out of adjoining the difference forms a heterogeneous unity. The unity is represented by his Chinese Canadian identity. With a father of Chinese Scots-Irish descent and a Swedish mother, via the I-narrator, the author evaluates his “living in the hyphen” as well as defines his “not pure” identity (53). In the text, the narrator considers that his hyphenated ethnic identity reflects the common social phenomenon in Canada by declaring that “[i]f you’re pure anything you can’t be Canadian” (53). Moreover, in order to illuminate what it is like to be a Canadian, in the section, “I’m just a Baby, Maybe Six Months (.5%),” the narrator uses percentages to express the quantity of other ethnicities relative to the quantity of Chinese in his mixed-blood family (83). The percent sign allows the narrator to mark how the transracial marriages in his family have already changed the Chinese genealogy. Furthermore, to represent the diverse ratios of his family members’ Chinese Canadian identity, the narrator explicates the differences carried within the sameness. Living in the hyphen enables him to criticize the essentialized identity politics that used to bind the individual to one single nation, race or ethnicity.

The decentralized Chinese Canadian identity allows the individual to move between two countries, to negotiate his position in order to relocate himself in his hyphenated identity. In “The New Star is Actually Our First Cafe,” the narrator recollects a journey around Alberta to

Vancouver city with his family. The travelling experience makes him to contemplate his father's connection with the local: "For me the trip is a major embellishment of geography. For [the father], place never seems to be important. He looks out at it but he never seems to care if he's there or not" (171). To the narrator, "[p]lace is a pause in movement. [. . .]. The pause makes it possible for a locality to become a center of felt value" (Tuan 138). Moreover, from an image of the father sunbathing by a lake, the narrator describes the father's body as a door-like space. The father, though lying on the Albertan grass, "seems to sink out of this world into [the landscape of the mud of a paddy field], exclusively his" (171-72). When "the [land of China and of Canada] becomes an island [floating] in the [father's] blood," the subject, instead of being trapped by his hyphenated identity, enjoys a complete freedom in his in-betweenness (23).

Conclusion

The mobility of the father's body reflects Fred Wah's notion of his Chinese Canadian identity. He comments:

My hybridity obliges me to locate by difference, not sameness. My sense of place has become informed by distinctive features, particulars, sometimes minute particulars. In fact, the landscape of this large and hypothetical country seems to me best known and valorized by the singular [. . .]. Place therefore seems specific and particular. Where one is, here, is who one is [. . .]. (*Faking It*, 47)

With a reference to the restaurants run by the paternal side of his family and by the Chinese Canadian community, the author illuminates the restaurant a place practiced by diasporic memories. As a mnemonic site, the restaurant becomes "a place/ mass of Pleistocene" piling up monumental history of the immigrant Chinese (*Waiting for Saskatchewan*, 3). Moreover, the performance of the collective and the personal memory makes the place a space of mobility in which a transnational and transcultural identity is constructed.

The text ends with Wah Sr. coming to the restaurant as usual doing his chores early before the business hours. As the father unlocking the restaurant door, "the door clangs and rattles a noisy hyphen between the muffled winter outside and the silence of the warm and waiting kitchen inside" (176). The sound of the opening door echoes the sound made by the swinging wooden doors in the first section. Owing to the movement of the subject's body, the door as the boundary used to separate the interiority from the exteriority is dismantled. Moreover, from an illustration of a painted sign "*Fred Wah/ Diamond Grill/ Private*" that marks the father's parking space nearby the restaurant, the author aligns the identity of the subject and

the restaurant (*italics original 176*). The alignment reinforces the interrelation of the subject and the place both of which are progressive yet filled with internal conflicts. Instead of recognizing the Chinese Canadian identity from the map of the history and the collective memory, Fred Wah shows a confluence of transnational and transcultural identifications within Diamond Grill, a hyphenated space in which the identity is taken on tour and always remains in-between.



Works Cited

- Brah, Avtar. "Diaspora, Border and Transnational Identities." *Cartographies of Diaspora*. New York: Routledge, 1996. 178-210.
- Cho, Lily. "How Taste Remembers Life: Diasporic Memory and Community in Fred Wah's Poetry." *Culture, Identity Community: Diasporic Chinese Literatures in English*. Eds. Tseen Khoo and Kam Louie. Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 2005. 81-106.
- de Certeau, Michel. "Spatial Stories." *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Trans. Steven Rendall. Berkeley: California UP, 1984. 115-30.
- Li, Peter. *Chinese in Canada*. 2nd ed. Toronto: Oxford UP, 1998.
- Massey, Doreen. "A Global Sense of Place." *Defining Travel: Diverse Visions*. Ed. Susan L. Roberson. Jackson: Mississippi UP, 2001. 167-77.
- Saul, Joanne. "The Politics and Poetics of Identity: 'Faking it' in *Diamond Grill*." Saul: 103-27.
- . "Introduction: Writing the Roaming Subject." Saul: 3-12.
- . *Writing the Roaming Subject: The Biotext in Canadian Literature*. Toronto: Toronto UP, 2006.
- Tuan, Yi-Fu. *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*. Minneapolis: Minnesota UP, 1977.
- Wah, Fred. *Diamond Grill*. 10th Ed. Alberta: NewWest, 2006.
- . *Faking It: Poetics and Hybridity, Critical Writing, 1984-1999*. Edmonton: NeWest, 2000.
- . *Waiting for Saskatchewan*. Manitoba: Turnstone, 1985.

An Encounter with Difference: Images of Macao and China in the Works of two Portuguese Writers (Ferreira de Castro and Miguel Torga)

Dora Gago

0123

University of Macau, China

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2012

Official Conference Proceedings 2012



iafor

iafor

The International Academic Forum

www.iafor.org

Ferreira de Castro visited Macao and China in 1940, during the war, and recorded his impressions in a book with his travel chronicles titled *A Volta ao Mundo*. Forty seven years later, Miguel Torga also visited this city and country, more specifically in June of 1987, conveying his eyewitness accounts in several passages of the fifteenth volume of his *Diário*. Our aim is, therefore, to follow these travelling narrators and, in the process, analyse the images of Macao and China as seen by them at a chronological distance of almost five decades.

Ferreira de Castro mentions his intention of going to Macao while he is at the port of Hong Kong and stresses the need for vaccination against cholera (1998: 22-23). Such a fact explains the current sanitary conditions in Macao in 1940 while the Second World War was taking place and the so-called “City of the Holy Name of God” was regarded as an oasis of peace in the midst of a world torn by warfare.

After the detailed description of the voyage, the historical facts surrounding the story of China’s gift to the Portuguese, Macao, are recalled. Finally, the very first impression of the territory is conveyed, one that is replete with a profusion of Portuguese traces that impart to it a romantic and *sui generis* appeal:

“We sailed wide of the mouth of Pearl River. A little after, to our right, there rose two hills, the first topped by a white lighthouse and a chapel, and the second by a church. Between these two guardians of navigators a beautiful inlet stretched before our eyes. The hillsides were overrun by verdant groves encrusted with flirting snow-white dwellings. Before anyone had informed us, we knew we had arrived in Macao. [...]” (Castro, 1998: 26).

Hence, a certain feeling of awe is conveyed through a few metaphorical images and personifications (“guardians of navigators” “beautiful inlet stretches before our eyes...”), which manifest a sense of fondness awakened by the vision. This fondness can be sensed through such diminutives as “casitas” (little houses or dwellings) which denote smallness, in other words a “Lilliputian” vision, accentuated by the passage of the steamboat in front of the dazzling, small city (“small city growing ever prettier”; 1998: 26). The analogy evoked by the first impression of the city reminds us of the pleasant, verdant city of Lilliput as described by the narrator of *Gulliver’s Travels*.

Suddenly, the exoticism emerges as well as the cultural distancing; this familiar landscape, however, is gradually replaced by another one – entirely Chinese – which somehow clashes with the cultural values of the narrator: at the dock he witnesses the half-naked Chinese crews, cooking, eating, and washing while arousing feelings of promiscuity (1998:27). In this context, and bearing in mind Jean-Marc Moura’s typology, which neither implies a relation of superiority nor inferiority, the relation with the “other” can best be defined by the Latin pronoun *alius* (the indefinite, utopian “other” considered from a distance, arousing feelings of cultural repulsion, motivated by his inclusion in the group; 1992: 281-83).

Next, the narrator expresses his satisfaction concerning the overall ambiance of freedom in the territory, since he is not asked to exhibit a passport.

Although both languages, Portuguese and Chinese, co-exist peacefully, the truth is that many Chinese people didn’t speak Portuguese at the time, preferring, instead, to learn English.

Despite highlighting its smallness, the peninsula of Macao is formed by “two cities” which are completely different: the Portuguese and the “native” one. The former is singled out quite easily and is characterised by a certain opulence, where the weight of tradition is a reminder to visitors of the old Portuguese towns.

Once again, the natural beauty of Macao is foregrounded, exceeding the expectations of the narrator. In addition, its urban development is also emphasized and it is undoubtedly greater than that of some cities in the metropolis.

Through the detailed description of the main Avenue (Almeida Ribeiro) we clearly notice the coexistence of two different cultures and civilizations. Despite their peaceful and fraternal coexistence, however, they do not blend together, with the Leal Senado square serving as a frontier between them.

The “Chinese city” is depicted as exotic and picturesque, with a profusion of advertisements of many colours and strange forms (cf. 1998: 32).

The Chinese section of Macao is thus considered by the author as being more characteristic and multiform than certain big Chinese cities, given that the Portuguese were respectful of aesthetics and habits.

Afterwards, the traveller goes on to describe in much detail some traditions and customs pertaining to the Chinese inhabitants, coming across as open-minded not only towards the other but also towards anything that does not resemble his home country.

The narrator notes the importance of the currency exchange houses, the way commerce is conducted and how money circulates and, in the process, does not overlook the peculiar custom of some businesses that sell tickets resembling paper bills, which they often call money for the afterlife (“dinheiro para o outro mundo”), in that it was to be “used” by the souls of the deceased. Furthermore, the narrator reveals his interest and wonder for the Chinese funerals, which are completely different from those in the Portuguese culture (for example, mourners dress in white). Once again, the territory’s minuteness is emphasized so as to stress the notion of this city as “Lilliput,” and, in particular, its lack of space to bury the dead. In opposition to these phantasmagorical ceremonies stands the colourful, exuberant dance of the dragon.

Afterwards, the piece of news regarding a robbery and murder committed by the pirates serves as a pretext for the narrator to undo certain stereotypes which distant readers may associate with the Chinese people, possibly thinking that they vegetate in a state of cruelty and savagery (1998: 35).

In this sequence, an extremely positive image of these people surfaces, revealing an attitude of “filia” since their superiority is acknowledged (cf. 1998:35). In this context, the qualities of this foreign and “exotic” people are recognized: their calmness, tolerance and resignation, but also their major negative trait – their being easily influenced by others.

Next, it is the image of Macao-Lilliput that emerges in order to reveal its superiority in comparison to others: “Even though very tiny, Macao of the green hills is rich in vistas as few cities of its size. The white Portuguese neighborhoods yield to rustling and polychromatic Chinese neighborhoods, which in turn yield to other, extremely recent neighborhoods [...]” (1998: 37).

However, even if unconsciously and in much the same way as Torga, Ferreira de Castro constantly looks for traces of Portugal in the foreign territory, for signs of his own culture, identity and History.

There is a reference to a trip to the Guia Hill (“Colina da Guia”); on its surrounding walls there is a door with a stone plaque above exhibiting the crown of Portugal. The inscription on it alludes to the origin of the fortress (1638), the visit to the Camões hill, the necropolis, and the burial ground where the first Europeans who had died in the Far East, were laid to rest. In this scenario, the element that clashes with such beauty is precisely the «Grotto of Camões», where, according to legend, the Portuguese poet wrote part of *The Lusiads*. At this point, a contrast between the golden past and the current decadence of this location is established, which, in the time of Camões, presumably had been “suggestive”. When it is visited, however, this locale evinces its state of decadence, the destruction of the natural purity for the sake of civilization and History: “But today, with a modest bust of Camoens and between rocks and a few Portuguese and Chinese memorial stones scattered about, what once must have been a crude, savage beauty, morphed into a kind of frustrated necropolis” (1998: 37).

The narrator goes on to reflect on the religious life of that place, pointing out that the “City of Lilliput” possesses at least forty pagodas (1998:37). Moreover, he focuses quite objectively on

the diversity of religions (Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism). This reflection reveals a solid knowledge concerning the different religions, their origins and principles.

To the already mentioned religious diversity, one should also add the Christian sanctuaries constructed by the Portuguese.

The author appreciates such variety and considers it quite enriching since, as he notes by way of quoting from sinologists, that the Chinese find in this diversity a certain realistic meaning in life (“it’s to that amalgam of religions that the people of China owe, in part, their realistic sense of life”) (1998:39).

These comments bearing a religious, historical and cultural nature – quite descriptive of the *modus vivendi* of those inhabitants – are made as the traveller strolls through the several streets of the city, while narrating details of his walk, the passage of time, as if going around in circles, and rendered through such phrases as “strolled through the streets,” “at nightfall, entered again the Chinese neighbourhood” (1998: 41-42).

Afterwards, the author shows the negative and stereotypical images that several foreigners create about Macao and China, especially those stemming from this nocturnal environment, marked by the coexistence of houses of commerce, venal love and gambling. In contrast to the image of the Chinese as indolent and addicted to gambling, Ferreira de Castro stresses the hard-working character of these people who, fighting against calamities, “created the largest and most human civilization existing in the East” (1998: 46).

After having crossed the “Doors of the Siege” (“Portas do Cerco”), the traveller conveys a fraternal view of China, thus undoing the negative and stereotypical image broadcast by his native culture. In this case, he comes across as imbued with a universalist spirit which conceives the “other” as an equal, since misery is similar all over Europe: “Everything we saw in these poor villages is not worse than what we’ve seen in the majority of Latin countries, including our own [...]” (1998: 48).

This meeting with the “exotic other,” which is quite distinct, reveals the author’s universalism. This is further evinced during the process of change since the awareness of the other leads to a feeling of equality. Moreover, despite their differences, regardless of how great or rooted they may be, one can distinguish the similarity of essence and humanity in each one, unmindful of geographical frontiers. In addition, his attitude of “filia” and awe for the other is rooted in a “human foundation of fraternal and understanding tolerance” (Cidade, 1974:20).

On the other hand, in Torga’s *Diary*, the day before the departure (the 3rd of June, 1987), the narrator reflects on the distance between literature and reality. This trip stems, therefore, from an old craving felt by his body and spirit to be in contact with places he had written about – which, in this particular case, preceded the actual occurrence. The writer, however, is afraid of being disappointed because, to his mind, reality may not be as pleasant as what he has imagined.

Indeed, in *O Senhor Ventura* (Mr. Good Fortune), by Miguel Torga, the protagonist is a simple man, who leaves his native Alentejo and arrives in Lisbon, at the barracks. Afterwards, due to some conflict, which led to the death of an individual, Ventura joins a group of soldiers leaving for Macao. A parallel occurrence can be seen in *Peregrinação* (*Peregrination*), by Fernão Mendes Pinto, the foremost Portuguese traveller of the sixteenth century, where the hero, due to some event that took place in Lisbon, initially seeks refuge in Setúbal, but is later forced to leave.

In this sequence, in the poem “Errância” (Errancy), written by Torga while he flies over Samarkand, historical memories erupt through the recollection of his “peddler grandparents.” Departing from the past, nonetheless, we witness a projection of the present, where the aim of the journey is announced – to “talk about Camões” (1999: 1577). Later, it is the future that is outlined, since the traveller takes on the role of a discoverer, in charge of keeping alive the flame from the past.

The narrator's arrival in Macao is signalled by just two lines impregnated with pride and patriotism: "Here I am. A Portuguese to the very last parcel of Portugal" (1999:1578). This is followed up by a reference of his visit to a temple (the very first place he always visits when arriving at a foreign land), which provides us with a glimpse of the author's ambiguous and complex relationship with religion, emphasizing, in the process, its universalism: "The gods change in space and time. The faith that venerates them is always the same. And always absurd" (1999: 1578).

The following quote substantiates the narrator's fascination and perplexity in addition to his desire to get to know more, discover and apprehend such a different reality from his own. He notes that:

"I cross the city in every direction, I visit forts, churches, casinos, I get into a launch and inspect the inner harbor, disembark on the islands, look them over and return, stunned to the hotel. I had never had the experience of walking this many hours in levitation. Everything in this land is at once natural and magical, concrete and abstract, immobile and fleeting." (1999: 1578)

The traveller seems, therefore, to have been assailed by a certain restlessness to know and discover that new world, which, from the outset, seems quite unreal and, to a certain extent, dream-like, just as if he had encountered a fantastic universe. The realization that it is different, exotic, considered almost unreal and magical also applies to nature itself and can be seen through the description of a garden with gnome-like plants: "Dwarfish plants in vases, next to giant ones, seemed enchanted by the gardener and arrested in time. Transformed into sorts of vegetable gnomes, instead of pleasing the eyes they produce unease, like all aberrations" (1999:1578). While these elements of nature are personified and valorised, they are also subjected to a certain rejection due to their strangeness. In spite of this, the narrator acknowledges a cultural conciliation, a miscegenation which reflects familiar cultural traces.

Furthermore, the harmonious coexistence of the two cultures that had already been witnessed by Ferreira de Castro is alluded to once again through the hybrid dance: "the dragon dance and the *vira* of Minho joining hands on the same stage, the strange alliance of mythic depth and choreographic superficiality" (1999:1578).

Another issue that perplexes this traveller is the importance given to the gambling addiction and the abundance of fortune-tellers. Such a scenario perturbs him deeply since his cultural paradigms are affected. Because of this, he says:

"Even the air we breathe has something perturbing about it, due to the opium. It does not stimulate, it makes you languid. Tangible mirage, challenge to our reason, our sensibility and our common sense, Macao is not a reality one apprehends with clarity. It's like a muddled dream of Portugal". (1999: 1588).

In our view, Torga glances at this foreign locale from a relatively ethnocentric perspective, since he cannot discard his "cultural baggage." There is, however, a conflict between his strong attachment to this land and his need to flee, to challenge the other's prejudices and stigmas. It is, therefore, only through the knowledge of the "Other" that it is possible to assess and know better one's country of origin, that is, to define one's identity. This national identity is highlighted precisely during the speech given at Macao's Leal Senado, on the 9th of June, 1987, which is quite an imposing text. The latter, entitled "Camões", thus contains a thoughtful and interesting reflection on the notion of "Portuguese-ness," Portuguese identity, and the characteristics that define the Portuguese as a people. In his view, the unique genius of Camões projects all the wisdom and ambitions of the Portuguese people. In this context, he also foregrounds the humanist and universal dimensions as well as the contemporary appeal of Camões's epic.

The visitor goes on to stress the reduction of the homeland to its smallness: "Geographically, it is not more than a strip of land hemmed in by the sea [...]" (1999: 1588). The narrator, however, recognizes the right of the colonized peoples to their independence, which constitutes the collective face of freedom.

Such is, hence, the search for the real traces of this homeland which prevent the traveller from deciphering the city, from "reading" this much visited locale, not as an echo of the colonizing country, but as a singular, multicultural place.

That is why in the last quote focusing on Macao the traveller confesses his inability to understand that land; he does so by stressing the exoticism and a certain feeling of strangeness, and of disintegration:

"I do what I can to understand this land, but unsuccessfully. Everything is so enigmatic, fleeting, so ambiguous, so labyrinthine that one's faculties vanish every so often. One tortures oneself in a search for Portugal, but one does not find it, despite the fact that the streets bear names of national figures and the fact that a statue of Vasco da Gama rises a couple of steps from the hotel. No one speaks Portuguese, the population is Chinese... A spirit that is alien to us commands all gestures and motivates all smiles. We are the exotic ones, amidst a yellow uniformity". (1999: 1588)

Hence, we witness that the individual self is incapable of distancing himself from his points of reference; instead, he looks for ways to project the homeland in that foreign land, a place where its colonial traces – ranging from the language to religion – have gradually disappeared. That is why in this exotic setting, the visitor feels as if out of place, different. Completely disillusioned, he concludes that we roam through the entire world like phantoms, leaving behind "sleepy footprints" ("We strolled the world like phantasms, leaving sleepy footprints on our wake" (1999: 1588).

From the representations filtered by his "gaze," the notion of exoticism surfaces, ingrained in the representation of the uniqueness of the "Other". While the observed foreign reality is marked by difference, we can also attest to it as a place where "distinct civilizational worlds" converge, where the issue of identity and a socio-cultural belonging also emerge through the confrontation between two cultures, two civilizations. These exotic representations are, therefore, intimately related to the historical and social contexts, the dominant perceptions, and the stereotypes. As Yu-Fu Tuan declares: "Ethnocentrism is a common human trait. [...] The illusion of superiority and centrality is probably necessary to the sustenance of culture. When rude encounters with reality shatter that illusion the culture itself is liable to decline." (1991: 31).

In China, Ferreira de Castro visits Canton and Shanghai. The description of the trip taken on board of a small ship "Shing-chung," is interspersed with the evocation of aspects of the history of Canton, then under Japanese rule. Among the important historical figures, he highlights that of Dr. Sun Yat Sen, medical doctor, Republican, "the last great voice that galvanized Canton and, after Canton, all of China. " (1998: 68).

Beyond describing the monuments visited, the narrator also portrays a Chinese wedding ceremony he attends and that he considers a "fairytale wedding" contrasting with the blackened ruins of the city (1998: 71).

In Shanghai, the narrator emphasizes the fact that the real image of the city does not match his created expectations.

First, he is given an overview of the city, which later will be deepened by means of the various tours taken by the narrator. But the perception of its particularities and the so-called 'spirit of the place' is evident upon his departure: "Shanghai is divided into three sections: the International Concession, the largest of all; the French Concession and the Chinese City, the smallest of the three. Each of these sections of the city exhibits its unique character." (1998: 86)

The chapter ends with the departure from Shanghai and the prediction that China will undergo deep transmutations en route to progress.

It is precisely this “positive metamorphosis” which Torga will encounter more than forty years later. In despite of the disappointment that he reveals when he leaves Macau, due to the absence of the marks of Portuguese identity, it is in China, particularly in Canton, where the narrator shows the largest discrepancy (although in this case positive) between the horizon of expectation and the reality that before his eyes – the same thing that happened with Ferreira de Castro, who observes a new, different view of this country.

Therefore, Torga shows his admiration and emotion:

“The half-digested view derived from the books, the eloquence of the simples facts [...] The twisted and skeptical China I brought in my head, and the ready and confident China I came face to face with! One, intemporal, dreaming the dream of History; the other, temporal, awake, its eyes fixed on life.” (1999: 1588-1589).

Thus, the image of a stagnant country, asleep in the past, aged, is replaced by a reality full of vitality. The responsibility for this metamorphosis belongs to the power of the revolution that has transformed attitudes, and opened prospects for future social changes whose consequences are unpredictable.

It is, therefore, the human dimension that draws the image of this country where, once again, anxiety is associated with vitality, synonymous with life, with change.

In conclusion, Ferreira de Castro and Miguel Torga are like “brothers” in the sense that they share the same universalism and fraternal humanism, despite several nuances. While Torga has defined himself as an “insatiable earth-eater” (“geófago insaciável” (1999:890), Ferreira de Castro has always evinced a temperamental nomadic nature, always craving the poetry of the wide, wide world (“nomadismo temperamental, sempre faminto da Poesia do Mundo inteiro” (s/d: 52). Quite suggestive of such a universalism are, without a doubt, the definitions they have provided us with: for Torga universalism has no walls (“o universal é o local sem paredes” (1969: 57), whereas for Ferreira de Castro it must entail a blending, a fraternal understanding among all the places in the world (“fusão e a compreensão solidária de todas as aldeias, vilas, cidades, planícies e montanhas do Mundo”; s/d: 54). Furthermore, since both belong to the same epoch, both had to endure the vicissitudes of Salazar’s dictatorship, often revealing their discontent with the current situation of their country, as well as their concern for the huge problems affecting humanity. In this particular case, we note, especially in Ferreira de Castro, his preoccupation with the poor conditions of the Chinese.

In short, this writer adopts a less ethnocentric attitude, one that is clearly more optimistic, deeply rooted in a never-ending fascination, and which leads to a sort of “personal mythologizing” of the city. We cannot forget, however, the forty seven years that set apart both representations and the historical factors that influenced them. While the first author found, in Macao, an oasis of peace and freedom in a world torn apart by war and misery, the second one contemplated the “end of the Empire,” the gradual erasure of its Portuguese imprints, completely disillusioned with his initial expectations.

Finally, from the moment when it is rewritten, transformed into literature, the city, in this particular case, Macao, becomes a place where several paths of otherness unfold, all converging towards identity, the bridge between two dissimilar worlds (Portugal and China, east and west) converging towards harmony. It is, in essence, a space which should be read about and understood in the light of its own multiplicity.

Works cited:

- Castro, José Maria Ferreira de. *Os Fragmentos*, 2ª ed, Lisboa, Guimarães&Cª Editores, S/d.
-----1998. *Macau e a China*, Ed. Câmara Municipal das Ilhas, 1998.
- Cidade, Hernâni. «Uma lição de fraternidade» in *Revista Colóquio/Letras*, nº 21, Set. 1974, p. 19-20.
- Moura, Jean – Marc. «L’imagologie littéraire: essai de mise au point historique et critique», in *Revue de Littérature Comparée*, 3/ 1992, pp. 281-283.
-----*La littérature des lointains: histoire de l’exotisme européen au XX e siècle*. Paris, Honoré Champion, 1998.
- Swift, Jonathan. *Gulliver’s Travels*. 1997.
- Torga, Miguel. *Traço de União*, 2ª edição revista, Coimbra, Edição do Autor, 1969.
----- *Diário* vols. IX a XVI, 2ª edição integral, Lisboa, Publicações Dom Quixote, 1999.
----- *O Senhor Ventura*, 4ª edição, Lisboa, Publicações Dom Quixote, 2000.
- Torres, Alexandre Pinheiro. «Uma compreensão do povo português», in *Revista Colóquio/Letras*, nº 21, Set. 1974, p. 17-18.
- Tuan, Yu-Fu. *Topophilia, A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes and Values*. Prentice-Hall, INC, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1991.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT : I would like to thank to Professor Francisco Cota Fagundes (University of Massachussets, Amherst, USA) who translated all the quotations. Thank you very much!

*Corporeal Politics of Shadow Globalization: The Invisible Other and Dark London in
Monica Ali's "In the Kitchen"*

Pei-Chen Liao

0130

National Cheng Kung University, Taiwan

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2012

Official Conference Proceedings 2012



iafor

iafor

The International Academic Forum

www.iafor.org

In contemporary British minority literature, South Asian immigrant novels play an influential role. From a historical perspective, South Asia has been tied closely with Britain since the arrival of the English East India Company in the early seventeenth century, the colonial rule of the British Raj, and the collapse of the British Empire after WWII. In particular, with the independence of India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh, the number of people migrating to Britain has increased due not only to ethnic, religious, and political conflicts as well as economic decline in the Indian subcontinent but to the need of human resources in post-war Britain. Generation after generation, South Asian immigrants have come to have the largest population among the ethnic minority groups, and, with a number of 4 percent of the total population, South Asian immigrants have challenged the concept of Britishness or Englishness while reshaping the configuration of the nation. Especially in the 1980s when the growing trend of multiculturalism drew attention to ethnic minority groups, several writers of South Asian origin rose to stardom and received critical acclaim for their works, such as Salman Rushdie, the worldly renowned author of *The Satanic Verses* (1988), V. S. Naipaul, the 2001 winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature, and the second-generation novelist and playwright Hanif Kureishi.

Among the South Asian British women writers, Monica Ali, born in Dhaka of a Bangladeshi father and an English mother, is a rising star emerging in the past decade. Prior to the publication of her debut novel *Brick Lane* (2003), Ali was already named by Granta as one of the twenty “Best young British writers” based on the draft of her manuscript. Upon completion, the novel has been published in more than twenty countries and entered the short list of the Man Booker Prize. Considered by Michael Perfect and many others as a “multicultural bildungsroman,” the novel depicts the evolution of a Bangladeshi immigrant woman and portrays the area of Brick Lane, conceived as a segregated space for the underprivileged, among which the Bangladeshi community is by far the largest group.¹ Although it has won itself several literary awards, including White Smith People’s Choice Award and British Book Awards Newcomer of the Year, and enjoyed worldwide popularity among readers, the novel encountered immediate criticism and protest from the Bangladeshi and Muslim communities residing in Brick Lane and elsewhere. As Yu-cheng Lee points out in “Brick Lane Controversy,” Ali was reproached and accused for “creating backward and ignorant Bangladeshi characters” and for “distorting or even insulting Bangladeshi life and culture” (55), due partially to the fact that the female protagonist in the novel commits adultery, which is surely against the orthodoxy of Islam, and to the fact that the mixed-race author, who can barely speak Bangladeshi, is not authentic.² Here, like many minority writers such as women, immigrant, gay, and indigenous writers, Ali is faced with the old problem of what Kobena Mercer and others have called “the burden of representation.”³ That is, viewed by the reader as a Bangladeshi and Muslim migrant woman writer, Ali is “burdened with the impossible role of speaking as ‘representative’” in the sense that she is expected to “speak for” the community from which she comes (Mercer 62), and yet, the community she is believed to have come from does not even accept her as one of them. Seeing the problem as more than the burden but the “tyranny” of representation, Ali in

¹ In *Black British Literature*, Mark Stein examines the novels of transformation created by British-based writers with African, South Asian, or Caribbean cultural background and links their works to the bildungsroman genre. For more specific discussions on *Brick Lane* as a bildungsroman, see Perfect; Valman; Feng; and Bentley 22, 83-95.

² The translation is mine.

³ For more details on the burden of representation, see, Alam; and Procter.

“Where I’m Coming from” refuses to be labeled and argues that any literary work “stands or falls on its own merits regardless of the colour, gender and so on of the author.” Unlike V. S. Naipaul, for whom “‘finding the centre’ has been an important part of his journey as a writer,” Ali has engaged herself with “the inverse process,” that is, “seeking out the periphery” (“Where I’m Coming from”). If the center is where fixed identity or the self is located, by seeking out the periphery, Ali is embracing fluid, heterogeneous, and hybrid Otherness as a mix-raced person and as a writer who willingly ventures to write about communities that she does not belong to.

As if to rebel against the tyranny of representation and to challenge the reader’s expectations of ethnic minority and migrant writers, Ali’s 2006 novel, *Alentejo Blue*, has departed from what her first novel has centered on -- Muslim cultural background and migrant experience. Since seeking out the periphery also involves traveling, it is not hard to imagine Ali’s novels crossing borders to countries and cities other than Britain and London, where her current home is. Set in a small village in Portugal, *Alentejo Blue* depicts simple yet lonely and frustrating life through a polyphony of voices and the interactions of the village inhabitants. With this obvious shift in topic and setting, the novel has received mixed reviews. On the one hand, in some favoring reviews, Ali is acknowledged for “her versatility and hints at the breadth and variety of her interests” (Schillinger, “Simple Life”) and accredited to have “produced one of the best books of 1926” with her “spare, unrelentingly depressing story about several lost generations” (Charles, “Marking Time”). On the other hand, as a “escape from Brick Lane,” the novel is said to be “the least expected thing,” the result of which is yet “less satisfying than Ali’s fans might have hoped for” (Clark, “Escape from Brick Lane”), leading Natasha Walter of the *Guardian* to claim that “Ali is much better when she gets closer to home.” Despite her second novel’s lack of commercial success, Ali continues to experiment and explore how far she can seek out the periphery, as demonstrated in her most recent novel, *Untold Story* (2011) -- an imaginative tale of what might have happened to Princess Diana had she lived -- and opened in a small town in the U.S.⁴

Unlike her second and her most recent novels, which are set on foreign lands, Ali’s third novel, *In the Kitchen* (2009), at first glance seems to be “the follow-up to *Brick Lane*,” as described in the press release, for it returns to the setting and the themes that the author has often been identified with. Like *Brick Lane*, which concerns itself with the life of ethnic minority groups and women workers in East London, *In the Kitchen* is set at the heart of London and opens with the accidental death of a Ukrainian porter named Yuri, who works for the Imperial Hotel and whose corpse reappears in almost endless nightmares that haunt the executive chef Gabriel Lightfoot, one of the only two white Englishmen in the kitchen. Disturbed by Yuri’s mysterious death, Gabriel undertakes some investigations and uncovers the restaurant manager and other kitchen staff’s secret and illegal acts of driving migrant workers into prostitution and slavery. Although both *Brick Lane* and *In the Kitchen* address the problems of immigrants, the latter, however, is distinguished from the former in the sense that, in the latter novel, Ali moves away from her Bangladeshi diasporic community and focuses attention on the predicaments of the migrant workers and sex slaves mainly from Eastern European countries joining the European Union in 2004, thus reflecting the most

⁴ As Marie Arana has pointed out in “The Cuisine of Death,” compared with *Brick Lane*, *Alentejo Blue* is certainly less successful in terms of the copies sold. She cites clear statistic numbers from Nielsen Bookscan to prove her point that “whereas ‘Brick Lane’ had climbed U.S. bestseller lists and sold more than 200,000 copies, ‘Alentejo Blue’ squeezed out a mere 6,000 in sales.”

recent flow of immigrants into Britain. Although Eastern European migrants have figured in contemporary British fictions such as Rosemary Tremain's award-winning novel *The Road Home* (2007) and Marina Lewycka's *Two Caravans* (2007), Ali's *In the Kitchen* can be said to be one of the first narratives by South Asian British writers to characterize Eastern European migrant workers and particularly prostitutes in literature. With significant distinction from "Black British writing," Ali's novel in a way responds to the literary endeavors of what John McLeod in "Extra Dimensions, New Routines" calls "contemporary black writing of Britain," which, as McLeod argues, "ultimately supersedes, exclusively Black British concerns" and involves "various 'other things' which suggest something new and specific . . . in the twenty-first century" (46). If *In the Kitchen* is Ali's another attempt to seek out the periphery and to resist labeling, it shows that what has been at issue is not whether or not Ali should write about migrant experience or set her works in her familiar city and country. Rather, the questions are how to observe different trajectories and circumstances of immigrants, to write without centralizing them as if they possess a homogeneous identity or subjecting them to the gaze of the reader, and to understand the immigrants' position at the margin of the national center of Britain and the heart of London.

According to Ali, never being an insider to both the white British and Bangladeshi diasporic communities from which she comes is a good training for her as a writer. As she poetically puts it, "Standing neither behind a closed door, nor in the thick of things, but rather in the shadow of the doorway, is a good place from which to observe" ("Where I'm Coming from). The shadow as a poetic trope not only captures the fact that Ali is never being an insider, it is also an important motif that runs through *In the Kitchen* when the author tackles the problems of economic migrants, as opposed to the postcolonial and permanent immigrants in *Brick Lane*, who, in the age of globalization, have crossed borders from the poor countries in Eastern Europe and the Third World to the capital of Britain to make a living.⁵ For example, only a few pages after the beginning of the novel with Yuri's death, Lena, the Belarusian escaped sex slave and illegal hotel worker through the agency, is introduced to the reader through Gabriel's eyes. Her first appearance in the novel is shown "standing in the doorway in the jumble of shadow and light" (20), revealing how she is seen and not seen by the British society. Actually the image of the shadows is evoked early in *Brick Lane*, too, when the narrator introduces Tower Hamlet, the area where the Bangladeshi immigrant characters live: "Most of the flats that closed three sides of a square had net curtains and the life behind was all shapes and shadows" (17). As Jane Hiddleston has persuasively argued in "Shapes and Shadows: (Un)veiling the Immigrants in Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*," the early evocation of "shapes and shadows" in *Brick Lane* "announces Ali's daring attempt to give form to the hazy figures that flicker behind the surface of persistent stereotypes and misconceptions" (58). In *In the Kitchen*, however, the shadow is a multi-layered image, through which, as I will discuss in the following sections, Ali represents not only the invisibility of the immigrants but the secrecy of the global network of sex slavery and forced labor in the age of globalization. My focus will be placed on how Ali deals with the undercurrents of globalization, "the underground economy, and a shadowy world of illegal immigration schemes" (Grimes, "Londonstan") through her representation of London as the contemporary "heart of darkness," to quote Conrad, and her parody of the Imperial Hotel, especially its kitchen staff, as somehow "less like a United Nations assembly" but "more like a pirate crew" (Ali, *In the Kitchen* 205).

⁵ Actually the trope of the shadow is not Ali's exclusive use. As McLeod points out, recent writers such as Zadie Smith and Andrea Levy "seem preoccupied by a politics and poetics of resemblance and sameness, often built through tropes of twinning or shadowing and so-called racial mixture" (51).

Mobility and Location in an Era of Globalization

“Hotels,” as Christopher Tayler points out in “If You Can’t Stand the Heat,” “are fruitful settings for fiction,” as, for example, in J. G. Farrell’s *Troubles* (1970) -- the first of his Empire Trilogy, Naipaul’s postcolonial *Mimic Man* (1976), and Ali Smith’s postmodern novel *Hotel World* (2001). Stephen Frears also makes use of the hotel as the setting for his 2002 film *Dirty Pretty Things*, which “depicted the world of illegal workers as a perfect breeding ground for crime” (Merritt, “Check into the Imperial Hotel at Your Peril”). Indeed, because of “a build-in set of contrasts” coming with the hotel: “front-of-house grandeur versus backstage seediness, institutional permanence versus transient personnel” (Tayler), the hotel as a popular setting in literature and cinema, as the cited examples have shown, allows artists to explore issues relevant to the postmodern, postcolonial, and globalized world, such as the intersected lives of different people, the decline of the British Empire, the transient and rootless identity of the postcolonial immigrant, and the precarious lives of more recent migrant workers in an era of globalization. In general, the hotel is a good starting point for contemporary cultural studies, for, as James Clifford argues in “Traveling Cultures,” “the hotel epitomizes a specific *way into* complex histories of traveling cultures (and cultures of travel) in the late twentieth century” and no doubt in the twenty-first century, too (105; italics original). For Clifford, as “a supplement to the field (the tent and the village),” the ambivalent setting of the hotel as “dwelling-in-traveling” and “traveling-in-dwelling” has “framed, at least, encounters between people to some degree away from home” (108, 103, 105). People however travel in different ways, under different circumstances, and for different reasons. As Caren Kaplan points out in “Transporting the Subject,” although, in Western modernity, mobility, especially leisure travel, is valued, it is essential to bear in mind that “the movements can be viewed also as discrete, always uneven, and infused with power relations of tremendous complexity” (35). After all, as suggested etymologically, “*travel* is linked to *travail*, or ‘labor, toil, suffering, trouble’” (Kaplan 33; italics original). The hotel may be a paradise for some and yet a hell for others, considering its different functions to people who travel. Rethinking culture as travel through the hotel image thus entails a reconsideration of gender, class, and race when we ask who is to be counted as a traveler in the contemporary society. As Clifford asks, “Does the labor of these people [servants, helpers, companions, guides, bears, etc.] count as ‘travel’?” (107).

In the context of the hotel as the location of traveling culture, it is significantly symbolic for Ali in *In the Kitchen* to have the practices of migrant exploitation enacted at the kitchen of the Imperial Hotel in central London. Through the center-periphery dichotomy and the spatial hierarchy of London-hotel-kitchen, Ali provides both horizontal and vertical views of traveling in the age of globalization. In terms of the center-periphery dichotomy, London, the City, is assumed to be the center of Britain, modern Western civilization, and globalization. As the capital of Britain, London is the great metropolis, which, as shown in Ali’s novel, has attracted many Britons from the suburbs and the countryside, including, for example, Gabriel from a mill town in northern England and the restaurant manager Gleeson from a Norfolk farm. In history, especially at the height of the imperial power in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the City was also where the ruling power of the British Empire resided. As John Ball comments in *Imagining London*, London “projected itself to the inhabitants of its pink-stained territories as the centre of the world, the fountainhead of culture, the zero-point

of global time and space” (4). And yet, whereas London was the imagined center of the world in the colonial periods, it “came to include and represent ‘the world’ in another way during the postwar decades of formal decolonization” when waves of New Commonwealth immigrants arrived in the city (Ball 4). With the arrival of Commonwealth immigrants, the space of London, as depicted in *Brick Lane*, has become multicultural and transnational and, in Ali’s most recent twenty-first-century city novel, with the global flow of people from countries other than the former colonies, such as Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova in Eastern Europe, London maintains its status as a global city, whose economy relies largely on transnational corporations and major immigrant flows. Although, in an era of globalization, transnational mobility may seem to create a borderless utopia in the urban space of London as a cosmopolitan metropolis, the dichotomy between the center and the periphery is yet not necessarily broken down with the flow or traveling of people if the division of labor is taken into account. As Saskia Sassen manifests in *The Global City*, immigrants are “disproportionately concentrated in large, central cities and in low-wage jobs and casual labor markets” (306). With particular respect to the more recent flow of Eastern European migrant workers to Britain, Will Somerville and others point out that the low-paid jobs have been found mainly in sectors such as hospitality and catering. The hotel and the restaurant that are particularly located in the global city of London thus become almost indispensable settings for Ali to explore the problem of migrant exploitation implicated in the global division of labor. On the one hand, built in the Victorian age, the Imperial hotel in the novel, as its name implies, evokes the past glory of the British Empire. The hotel itself had its glorious history, too. It was the dwelling in traveling for people like the English singer and composer Noël Coward, who “composed songs here,” the Imam of the Ismailis the Aga Khan, who “had a permanent suite,” and the American former President Theodore Roosevelt, who “‘gave his name’ to the drawing room” (Ali, *In the Kitchen* 21). On the other hand, currently owned by the PanContinental Hotel Co., the hotel itself serves as an emblem of the imperialism of global economy, for one thing certain in hotel life, according to the general manager, is that “[t]o make your margins, you screw every last drop of blood from your workers,” who, as Gabriel has observed in his kitchen, have come from “[e]very corner of the earth . . . Hispanic, Asian, African, Baltic, and most places in between” (93, 97). Horizontally speaking, the space of the city hotel as the location of traveling is as divided as the division of labor in an era of globalization: whereas the hotel suite and drawing room belong to local and global celebrities on the move, the kitchen is the place where transnational migrant workers stay.

Vertically speaking, moving from the larger conceptual frame of London as a political and economic center to the specific locations of the hotel and the kitchen, Ali shows her ambition to locate globalization in everyday lives. According to Elina Penttinen in *Globalization, Prostitution and Sex-Trafficking*, current IR (International Relations) literature, whose “focus is most often on macrolevel agents and events,” tends to discuss globalization “in the context of the global economy from a critical theory perspective or as competition economics, relations of state or in terms of politico-ideological developments” (2-3). Like Penttinen, who endeavors “to find the corporeal politics of globalization that is enacted in the private, in the mundane space of bedrooms, kitchens, backyards and the shadow neighborhoods,” Ali, with her focus on the kitchen, draws the reader’s attention “toward the powerless, toward the dailiness of IR in forgotten or silenced places” (Penttinen 38). In fact, the kitchen at the Imperial Hotel is not private, as Gabriel has often been offended by the “domesticity” of Oona, the executive sous chef from Jamaica, who seems unaware of the distinction between “the professional kitchen” and “the domestic kitchen,” although, for Gabriel, “[t]he two were worlds apart” (Ali, *In the Kitchen* 9). Yet, even if it is a professional one, the kitchen in Ali’s

novel shares some common characteristics with the kitchen in a house. First of all, like the domestic kitchen, which is usually less decorated than the other rooms in the house such as the living room, the kitchen of the Imperial Hotel “—despite numerous refurbishments and refittings—retained its workhouse demeanor, the indelible stamp of generations of toil,” whereas “the lobby and function rooms, the bedrooms and bathrooms, the stairways and corridors and vestibules had been transmuted into twenty-first-century spaces within a nineteenth-century shell” (13). If, as discussed previously, the hotel kitchen is the working house for transnational migrant workers, the “indelible stamp of generations of toil” highlights the migrant workers’ labor, trouble, and suffering, as Kaplan draws our attention to the etymological linkage of *travel* with *travail*.

Secondly, in terms of its role to the family, the domestic kitchen provides ingredients of a comfortable, nurturing home, and yet, in relation to the visitors, as Patricia Bastida-Rodriguez observes in “The Hidden Face of the New Millennium,” “the kitchen is that part of a house which is not usually shown on a first visit” (56). Similarly, located “at the edge of the dining room,” the kitchen of the Imperial hotel is not open to the restaurant customers, although, according to the narrator, it is “the belly of the hotel” (Ali, *In the Kitchen* 65). Later in the novel, the narrator uses a similar metaphor of the belly to describe the role that London plays in Britain:

London wasn’t the brains of the country, as people said; it certainly wasn’t the heart. London was all belly, its looping, intestinal streets constantly at work, digesting, absorbing, excreting, fueling and refueling, shaping the contours of the land. (242)

Given that London is the national capital as well as a global city, the narrator’s linking the hotel kitchen metaphorically to London through the image of the belly reveals how migrants play an essential role in sustaining not only the health and growth of the British domestic economy but those of global economy. Yet, like the kitchen, which is at the margin of the dining room, the migrant workers are marginal and often invisible to the society and the people they are nurturing. Even to the executive chef, Gabriel, who has himself worked in the kitchen, the migrant workers are merely the forgotten, unknown, or mysterious shadows. Not until Yuri’s death, for example, does Gabriel take interest in the Ukrainian porter’s life. As Gabriel speculates, “It was loneliness, certainly, that killed Yuri” (19). After Yuri’s death, Gabriel starts to inquire into his kitchen staff’s lives. When, invited to a night bar, Benny, the Liberian, tells Gabriel his background, Gabriel on the one hand is “grateful” to hear Benny’s story, and yet, on the other hand, “he did not wish to be burdened with it” (117). Thus, at the end of the conversation, Benny remains nothing but a shadow to Gabriel:

They left the bar, and Benny walked toward Oxford Street to wait for the night bus. Gabriel watched him for a few moments, *the tiger dancing on his back, stepping in and out of the shadows*, his stories packed and stowed; a small black man on his way to or from a shift, hurrying, looking down and walking away, until the city claimed him and Gabriel turned and hailed a cab. (120; italics added)

This passage bears a reminder of Gabriel’s first encounter with Lena, who, as I quoted earlier, “*standing in the doorway in the jumble of shadow and light*, let him look at her and she looked back at him” (20; italics added). For Gabriel, who is “astonished” that “he has never looked at her before,” Lena’s “face was thin and rigid, and her hands, which she held twisted together at her chest, were fleshless claws” (20). Thus, through the trope of the shadow, Ali subtly shows the invisibility of both Lena and Benny as the migrant workers in the hotel kitchen, who are somehow inhumanized, as manifested in the images of “fleshless claws” and “tiger,” when they -- the gendered (“that girl”) and ethnicized Other (“a small black man”) -- are subject to the white male gaze of the executive chef. The fact that they are “claimed” by

the city hints at a parody of London as “the belly,” “whose voraciousness disintegrates everything it takes in” (Bastida-Rodriguez 57), including the transnational migrant workers, whose bodies are metaphorically as well as literally consumed and absorbed by the host society they are working and dwelling in.

Actually, in the novel, the migrants who work in the hotel kitchen are mostly in the shadows not only “in terms of otherness of the domain of subjectivity of global world economy” (Penttinen 7) but in terms of their involvement in the shadow economy. The shadow economy, as Matthey Fleming et al have discussed in “The Shadow Economy,” refers to “[e]conomic activity that falls outside the purview of government accounting,” which is also known by other names, such as “informal, hidden, black, underground, gray, clandestine, illegal and parallel” (387). These activities are usually illegal, illicit, informal, unregulated, or unrecorded (Fleming et al 387-88; Saskia 290). Since many of these activities take advantage of global flows of people, capital, information, and technology, Penntinen has coined the term “shadow globalization” to address various other aspects in addition to the economy and to highlight the dimension of the global. In *Brick Lane*, homes are the sites of shadow globalization, as exemplified by the council flat of the protagonist Nazneen, who, like many other Bangladeshi migrant women in Tower Hamlets, has joined the garment-manufacturing industry and has taken in sewing at home.⁶ In *In the Kitchen*, shadow globalization is located in the Imperial Hotel and particularly in the kitchen. According to the studies cited by Saskia, “20% of workers in the hotel and catering sectors are on temporary contracts” (300). Since the 1980s onwards, London has seen an increase in such part-time, casual, and sweated labor “not simply as a response to seasonal demand in hotel and catering, but largely as a way to cut costs and avoid addressing poor working conditions and low pay” (Saskia 300). Since migrant workers are often offered jobs in hotel and catering sectors and are sometimes undocumented or illegal, they are the invisible shadows involved in the activities of shadow globalization. Their unaccountability or invisibility, like that of the Bangladeshi migrant women working at home, means that they are not regulated and yet not protected either by the government. On that condition, they are rendered particularly vulnerable to violence and abuse. In *In the Kitchen*, it is thus not surprising that Fairweather, Gabriel’s business partner and a British MP, has asked if Yuri is “one of those bonded labor situations, living in the cellars, desperate to pay off his debts” (254). In an era of globalization, as the novel reveals, bounded labor becomes the twenty-first-century slavery which operates by “[t]aking away passports, debt bondage, threats of violence, that sort of thing” (255). It is not made clear in the novel whether Yuri is a victim of bounded labor, but it has been hinted at several places that not only Yuri but several other porters come through the agency, and most of them, after being smuggled illegally, are sold out for cheap labor. As if to make a parody of underground economy and shadow globalization in general, the hotel underground is shown to be the “crime scene” in the novel where Yuri’s corpse is discovered (10). Most importantly, the basement is also where Yuri has lived secretly and illegally for some time, as Oona describes, “like a little old rat” (10). Having been referred to frequently in the novel as the “catacombs” (3, 17), the hotel underground rooms to some extent bear ironic resemblance to the subterranean cemetery – an analogue that vividly captures the living death of the migrant workers under the force of shadow globalization.

⁶ For more information on women and ethnic minorities working as homeworkers in London, see Kabeer, *The Power to Choose*; Saskia 301, and Sandhu.

In Ali's novel, the kitchen has however hidden something even darker than illegal immigration or migrant exploitation. The hotel kitchen is not only the location but the breeding ground for sex-trafficking that has similarly taken advantage of globalization. As the Moldavian worker Victor reveals to Gabriel, the restaurant manager, cooperating with other kitchen staff and especially with the housekeeping supervisor, "gets girls from the hotel," such as cleaners and maids, and "sells them on" (368). These girls are lured with photos and stories of singers, dancers, and waitresses and then sold "to the club, the bar, the whatever, that's the line" (369). Thus, the hotel, a common location of traveling in an era of globalization, provides a perfect base for sex-trafficking because of its "beautiful system":

You've got a ready-made supply of girls. None of that business about getting them away from home, smuggling them, all that shit. Less hassle, less expense, feed them through, get paid. Who's gonna care? (370)

Sex-trafficking usually leads to forced prostitution, as Lena has painfully experienced. Lena has been lured to come to London illegally to work as a nurse and yet, upon arriving, as an illegal immigrant, she is coerced to become a sex slave. In order to hide from the pimp, she lives in the hotel basement with Yuri, even if she needs to bear "a rat curled on the pillow" (154). As represented in the novel, the Imperial hotel -- the kitchen and the basement in particular -- reveals the other, dark faces of London as a global city, which are embodied by the suffering bodies of the immigrants living and working underground.

Conclusion

In *In the Kitchen*, the predominant motif of the shadow and the setting of the hotel and the kitchen manifest Ali's literary endeavor to seek out the periphery at the center and to create contemporary black writing of Britain in the context of globalization. By looking into how migrants work and live in the shadows, how they are viewed as shadows, and how shadow globalization affects them, Ali not only locates globalization in the everyday lives of immigrants but, through the interplay between bodily exploitation and invisible subjectivity, foregrounds the power of corporeal politics in the context of globalization. Globalization and shadow globalization as well are enacted through the immigrants' moving, working, and commodified bodies. To quote Victor in the novel, the migrant workers are "flesh for sale" (133). Most importantly, their constrained bodies, as exemplified by bounded labor and forced prostitution, are implicated in the biopolitics of globalization, which paradoxically results in and results from the incorporation of "gendered, economic, cultural and social as well as ethnicized relations that are shaped by globalizing processes" (Penttinen 7).

Works Cited

- 李有成。〈磚巷風波〉。《在甘地銅像前：我的倫敦札記》。臺北：允晨文化，民國九十七年。頁四七～六六。
- Alam, Fareena. "The Burden of Representation." *The Guardian* 13 July 2003. 24 Jan. 2008
<<http://observer.guardian.co.uk/bookgroup/story/0,13699,996999,00.html>>.
- Ali, Monica. *Brick Lane*. London: Black Swan, 2004.
- . *In the Kitchen*. New York: Scribner, 2009.
- . "Where I Am Coming from." *The Guardian* 17 June 2003. 22 Dec. 2010
<<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2003/jun/17/artsfeatures.fiction>>.
- Arana, Marie. "The Cuisine of Death." Rev. of *In the Kitchen*, by Monica Ali. *The Washington Post*, 14 June 2009. 21 Oct. 2009.
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/11/AR2009061104520.html>
- Ball, John. *Imagining London: Postcolonial Fiction and the Transnational Metropolis*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2004.
- Bastida-Rodriguez, Patricia. "The Hidden Face of the New Millennium: Migrant Exploitation and Reader Expectations in Monica Ali's *In the Kitchen*." *SKASE Journal of Literary Studies* 3.2 (2011): 49-65.
- Bentley, Nick. *Contemporary British Fiction*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2008.
- Charles, Ron. "Marking Time." Rev. of *Alentejo Blue*, by Monica Ali. *The Washington Post* 18 June 2006. 5 Dec. 2010
<<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/06/15/AR2006061501122.html>>.
- Clifford, James. "Travelling Cultures." *Cultural Studies*. Ed. Lawrence Grossberg et al. New York: Routledge, 1992. 96-116.
- Clark, Alex. "Escape from Brick Lane." *The Observer* 21 May 2006. 13 May 2012
<<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2006/may/21/fiction.features1>>.
- Feng, Pin-chia. "Out of Brick Lane: The Novel of Awakening and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*." *Tamkang Review* 40.1 (2009): 15-28.
- Fleming, Matthew H., Graham Farrell, and John Roman. "The Shadow Economy." *Journal of International Affairs* 53.2 (2000): 387-412.
- Grimes, William. "Londonstan." Rev. of *In the Kitchen*, by Monica Ali. *The New York Times* 6 Aug. 2009. 10 Aug. 2011.
<<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/09/books/review/Grimes-t.html?scp=1&sq=book%20Oreview%20in%20the%20kitchen&st=cse>>.
- Hiddleston, Jane. "Shapes and Shadows: (Un)veiling the Immigrant in Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*." *Journal of Commonwealth Literature* 40.1 (2005): 57-72.
- Kabeer, Naila. *The Power to Choose: Bangladeshi Women and Labour Market Decisions in London and Dhaka*. London: Verso, 2000.

- Kapan, Caren. "Transporting the Subject: Technologies of Mobility and Location in an Era of Globalization." *PMLA* 117.1 (2002): 32-42.
- McLeod, John. "Extra Dimensions, New Routines: Contemporary Black Writing of Britain." *Wasafiri* 25.4 (2010): 45-52.
- Mercer, Kobena. "Black Art and the Burden of Representation." *Third Text* 4.10 (1990): 61-78.
- Merritt, Stephanie. "Check into the Imperial Hotel at Your Peril." Rev. of *In the Kitchen*, by Monica Ali. *The Guardian* 3 May 2009. 10 Aug. 2011.
<<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2009/may/02/monica-ali-in-the-kitchen>>.
- Penttinen, Elina. *Globalization, Prostitution and Sex-Trafficking: Corporeal Politics*. London: Routledge, 2008.
- Perfect, Michael. "The Multicultural Bildungsroman: Stereotypes in Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*." *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature* 40.3 (2008): 109-20.
- Procter, James. "New Ethnicities, the Novel, and the Burden of Representation." *A Concise Companion to Contemporary British Fiction*. Ed. James F. English. Oxford: Blackwell, 2006. 101-120.
- Sandhu, Sukhdev. "Come Hungry, Leave Edgy." *London Review of Books* 9 Oct. 2003: 10-13. 24 Jan. 2008 <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v25/n19/sand01_.html>.
- Sassen, Saskia. *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2001.
- Schillinger, Liesl. "The Simple Life." Rev. of *Alentejo Blue*, by Monica Ali. *The New York Times* 25 June 2006. 8 Dec. 2010
<<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/06/25/books/review/25schillinger.html>>.
- Stein, Mark. *Black British Literature: Novels of Transformation*. Ohio: Ohio State UP, 2004.
- Taylor, Christopher. "If You Can't Stand the Heat..." Rev. of *In the Kitchen*, by Monica Ali. *The Guardian* 18 Apr. 2009. 10 Aug. 2011.
<<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2009/apr/18/in-the-kitchen-monica-ali>>.
- Valman, Nadia. "The East End *Bildungsroman* from Israel Zangwill to Monica Ali." *Wasafiri* 24.1 (2009): 3-8.
- Walter, Natasha. "Continental Drift." *The Guardian* 20 May 2006. 13 May 2012
<<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2006/may/20/featuresreviews.guardianreview14>>.

*From Official Nationalism to Popular Nationalism: Eating Culture in Contemporary Taiwanese
Hsiang Tu Dramas*

Linden Yu-sheng Chen

0131

National Taiwan University, Taiwan

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2012

Official Conference Proceedings 2012

A large, faint watermark of the iafor logo is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue font, surrounded by two concentric, hand-drawn style arcs. The outer arc is light red and the inner arc is light blue.

iafor

iafor

The International Academic Forum

www.iafor.org

Introduction

From 2006 to 2007, Taiwanese Hsiang Tu¹ Drama *Unique Flavor* (*Tian Sia Di Yi Wei*, SET TV, 2006-2007) earned not only success in the ratings² but popularity among fans that heatedly discuss food in *Unique Flavor*. Since then, both of the two leading TV networks that produce Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas started injecting elements into their works³. The paper aims to how and why eating can be a recurring motif in Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas from 2006 to 2011. The main questions it attempts to look at are: What kinds of food are employed in the eating culture of contemporary Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas? Why can these kinds of food be employed? What does this kind of eating culture signify? In this paper, I adopt a combination of interpretation and in-depth interview. The texts to be analyzed in the paper are Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas from 2006 to 2011 of which the background of the plots is related to food. Furthermore, I have interviewed two 20 year-experienced local Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Drama screenplay writers, Lin Jiou-Yu and Lin Ling-Ling, and FTV (Formosa TV) Program Manager, James Jhao. In what follows, I shall retrospect the emergence and the history of Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas.

The History of Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas

Since Communist forces took control of mainland China in 1949, the KMT government retreated to Taiwan and regarded itself the only official government for Chinese people. To continue the feeble regime, the KMT government declared Martial Law and adopted totalitarian measures so that no dissidents were allowed under the regime. Culturally, despite the fact that large percentage of people in Taiwan could not speak Mandarin, the KMT government declared Mandarin was the only official language and prohibited people from speaking other vernaculars. The

¹ “Hsiang” means rural or country-side, and “Tu” means earth or location. It is thus inadequate to translate “Hsiang Tu Dramas” as “local drama,” for which neglects the intrinsic grass root culture of Hsiang Tu Dramas. See: Ko, Yu-Fen. (1999). *Nation, History, and Culture: A case study on Taiwanese primetime television*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA. pp. 1-3.

² From Sep. 25, 2006 to Sep. 29, 2006, the average rating of *Unique Flavor* on SET TV was 6.19, whereas the average rating of *Eternal Love* (*Zai Sheng Yuan*, FTV, 2006) was only 3.52. Due to the defeat in the ratings, FTV even decided to cease broadcasting *Eternal Love* after it was broadcast for merely two months. (Nian Chang Yu, 2006)

³ From 2006 to 2011, seven out of eight Hsiang Tu Dramas are about eating. Except for *I Should Succeed* (*Wo Yi Ding Yao Cheng Gong*, SET TV, 2007-2008) that adopted the plot background of make-up artists, all of the Hsiang Tu Dramas aired on the two leading TV networks, FTV and SET TV, have been comprehensively using the element of food in Hsiang Tu Dramas.

KMT military totalitarianism and cultural elitism did not dissolve until Lee Teng-Hui, a vernacular-speaking Taiwan-born local, assumed the presidency in 1987 and gave impetus to democratization in Taiwan. Simultaneously, the KMT government held a series of elections that brought about the cultural climate change from cultural elitism to localization.

Under the trend of localization, the state-owned television networks⁴ seized the opportunity to produce programs that could go with cultural concerns while, to some extent, making their cultural products meet their political ends⁵. Most of the Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas were about anti-government uprisings, such as the 228 Incident and White Horrors. While the first ever Taiwan presidential direct election took place in 1996, Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas helped Lee Teng-Hui and KMT articulate with a grass-root image, get detached from mainland complex, and thus win more support from the anti KMT hostility⁶. However, after Lee won the election, Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas declined and incurred criticism about the low tastes of Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas.

Not until *Our Beloved Mother*⁷ (*Chun Tian Hou Mu Sin*, FTV⁸, 1998) was broadcast on FTV in 1998 did Hsiang Tu Dramas revive and top the ratings. Describing how a stepmother takes care of her family members in the face of numerous hardships, *Our Beloved Mother* featured how it was produced. While it was broadcast on TV, screenplay writers might adjust its plot based on the audience's reaction on the ratings. Since *Our Beloved Mother*'s success that turned FTV's deficit to success, FTV has adopted this mode of production up for more than a decade.

⁴ The national television networks refer to TTV (Taiwan Television), CTV (China Television), and CTS (Chinese Television System). They were once dedicated to producing Hsiang Tu Dramas from the 1990s.

⁵ Ko, Yu-Fen. (1999). *Nation, History, and Culture: A case study on Taiwanese primetime television. Unpublished doctoral dissertation.* University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA. pp. 40-41.

⁶ Ko, Yu-Fen. (1999). *Nation, History, and Culture: A case study on Taiwanese primetime television. Unpublished doctoral dissertation.* University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA. pp. 47-48.

⁷ *Our Beloved Mother* (*Chun Tian Hou Mu Sin*, FTV, 1998) describes how a stepmother takes care of her children and family members in the face of numerous hardships. It is noteworthy that *Our Beloved Mother* starring the actress Bai Bing Bing, whose daughter was abducted and murdered by several gangsters in 1997, to some degree attached much attention from the media and audience. See: Lin, Chi-Bo. (2001). What's in Style on Primetime Television: Hsiang Tu Dramas. *Taiwan Panorama Magazine*. June 2001

⁸ FTV and SET TV are both television networks that rose in the beginning of the 20th century when the three conventional national television networks slumped. Both of FTV and SET TV are well-known for their production on Hsiang Tu Dramas.

In 2004, the popularity of *Taiwan Thunderbolt Fire* (*Taiwan Pi Li Huo*, SET TV, 2004) was another twist for Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas. Unlike past Hsiang Tu Dramas for which the audience felt sympathetic the protagonists, *Taiwan Thunderbolt Fire* caught the audience's attention with its characterization on the villains. Virtuous and loyal to their friends, those villains always revenged when life was unfair to them. As the political situation was in chaos, *Taiwan Thunderbolt Fire* not only attracted more audience but also provided the audience a way to vent disappointment.

Two years later, *Unique Flavor* (*Tian Sia Di Yi Wei*, SET TV, 2006-2007) embodies another twist for Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas. Characterizing a Taiwanese chef, *Unique Flavor* dazzles the audience with variety sublimes presented on TV. From the retrospect above, it is clear that, before the first ever presidential election, the development of Taiwan Hsiang Tu Dramas is closely connected to anti-government uprising and dissidents. Since 1996, Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas have been a space where heterogeneous elements could be added. It is obvious that food and eating culture can be one of these elements that prolong the popularity of Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas. But what kind of food can be employed in Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas? How are these elements employed and significant in relation to early Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas and nationalism?

Food Presented in Contemporary Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas (2006-2011)

The plot of *Unique Flavor* is a famous Taiwanese chef who fights vicious forces and develops many creative sublimes. The chef provides roadside banquet services, and therefore, most of the cuisines presented in *Unique Flavor* are banquet cuisines, including *Braised Pork Foot with Bamboo Shoots*, *Buddha Jumps over the Wall* (*Fotiaoqiang*), *Drunken Chicken with Tea Scent*, and *Fried Fish Slices with Sweet and Sour Sauce*. Also, the chef in *Unique Flavor* also makes some home-style dishes for his family members. Home-style dishes presented in *Unique Flavor* include *Three-cup Neritic Squids*, *Fried Tofu*, *Hakka Stir-fried* (*Ke Jia Siao Chao*), *Fried Rice Noodles with Pumpkins*, and so on.

In addition to Taiwanese banquet cuisines and home-style dishes, Japanese food is also presented in *Unique Flavor*. In the plot background, the Taiwanese chef is set to befriend with a Japanese food chef who runs a Japanese restaurant. It is intriguing

that several other characters in *Unique Flavor* are set to befriend with the Japanese food chef above and also skilled in making Japanese food. Japanese food presented in *Unique Flavor* comprises *Teriyaki Rice Ball*, *Sashimi*, *Sushi*, *Japanese Beef (Wagyu)*, and *Japanese Seafood*.

As Lin Jiou-Yu, the screenplay writer of *Unique Flavor* reminisces why she put these elements into *Unique Flavor*, she says, “The idea of *Unique Flavor* originates from the popularity of Korean Drama *Dae Jang Geum*. It was popular in 2005, a year earlier than *Unique Flavor* was broadcast. I think it is interesting to see chef cooking on TV, and eating is an essential part in our daily lives. That was the beginning of how I wrote *Unique Flavor*.” (Lin, Jiou-Yu, 2011) As for the Japanese cuisines presented in *Unique Flavor*, Lin Jiou-Yu says, “Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas usually last for more than 200 or 300 episodes. After *Unique Flavor* is broadcast for several months, I find I can’t find any new element of Taiwanese food culture. But Western-style food is not familiar to Taiwanese audience. (I further inquired: Since *Unique Flavor* is somehow inspired by the Korean Drama *Dae Jang Geum*, have you ever considered using any element of Korean food?) I still think Korean food is not familiar to Taiwanese audience even though Korean Drama and pop culture win overwhelming popularity in Taiwan these years. Because of the Japanese colonial history of Taiwan, Japanese food culture is much more acceptable for Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Drama audience⁹. What’s more, the vice general manager of SET TV is familiar with a Japanese restaurant in Taipei, so he often asks for some secret recipes from the chefs.” (Lin, Jiou-Yu, 2011) Obviously, the decisive factors about how Taiwanese food and Japanese food are employed in *Unique Flavor* can be summarized as catering to audience’s familiarity with food and the convenience of production.

Following *Unique Flavor*, five other Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas continue the trend of food culture. However, Japanese food is no more comprehensively employed in these Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas. Only Taiwanese home-style food is used in Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas, including *Fish Ball Soup*, *Fried Rice Noodles*, *Braised Pork Knuckles*, *Chicken Rice*, *Medicinal Ribs*, and so forth. The screenplay writer of

⁹ It is noticeable that people with Taiwanese identity are discovered to be Japanophile, who hold friendlier attitude towards Japan than China. See: Chuang, Jing-Yi. & Li, Mei-Chih. (2003). Ethnic Identification and Attitudes towards the Japanese in Taiwan. *Indigenous Psychological Research in Chinese Societies*. (2003, Dec.) pp. 105-135.

Parents' Love, Lin Ling-Ling, says, "For me, the most important of all is to characterize a character. If I portray a protagonist as a waste collector or a hospital volunteer, the scene will not be appealing. If the protagonist is a noodle stand owner, the scene will be more appealing. And food that I used in my screenplay should be familiar to the audience." (Lin, Ling-Ling, 2011)

Likewise, the FTV Program Manager, James Jhao, holds the same opinion as above when supervising *A Place Called Home* (*Niang Jia*, FTV, 2008-2009) and *The Life in the Night Market* (*Ye Shih Ren Sheng*, FTV, 2009-2011). He says, "Taiwanese eating culture is not the principle we cling to, but when people with different backgrounds meet, such as a principal and a braised pork knuckles restaurant owner in *A Place Called Home*, there will be many interesting conflicts. Of course, food that we select in these Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas should be close to the audience." (James Jhao, 2011) In a nutshell, in contemporary Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas, the decisive factor of how Taiwanese home-style food can be used is how it is familiar to the audience. But how does the familiarity signify in relation to nationalism?

Benedict Anderson's Three Models of Nationalism

In Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*, he brings up three models of nationalism, Creole nationalism of the Americas, the popular nationalism of the Europe, and the official nationalism of Russia.

Creole nationalism, the earliest form of nationalism, was based on common economic interests of the creole communities in Spanish Americas in the eighteen century. The tightening of Madrid's control and the spread of liberalizing ideas of the Enlightenment in the latter half of the eighteen century¹⁰ also help these creole communities form a colonial society opposite to Spanish Empire. Notably, improving trans-Atlantic communications, and the fact that the various Americas shared languages and cultures with their respective metropolises, meant a relatively rapid and easy transmission of the new economic and political doctrines being produced in Western Europe¹¹. However, due to provinciality¹² and 'local'

¹⁰ Anderson, Benedict. (2006). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin And Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso. p. 50.

¹¹ *ibid*, p. 51.

backwardness of Spanish capitalism and technology in relation to administrative stretch of the empire¹³ a permanent Spanish-America-wide nationalism failed to constitute.

The popular nationalism is based on 'national print-languages' of central and ideological and political importance¹⁴. The general growth in literacy, commerce, industry, and state machineries that marked the nineteenth century¹⁵ all made 'national print-languages' possible. Through the process of 'pirating,' the concept of the French Revolution entered the accumulating memory of print¹⁶ and thus later became a 'model.' Print capitalism caused vernacular languages-of-state to assume ever greater power and status¹⁷ as well as made the Latin decline.

The official nationalism is a means of a means for combining naturalization with retention of dynastic power, or, to put in another way, for stretching the short, tight, skin of the nation over the gigantic body of the empire¹⁸. As an anticipatory strategy adopted by dominant groups which are threatened with marginalization or exclusion from an emerging nationally-imagined community¹⁹, it developed after and in reaction to the popular nationalism proliferating in Europe since the 1820s²⁰ and thus concealed the discrepancy between nation and dynastic realm²¹.

Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas in the 1990s and Official Nationalism

In Taiwan, after the first television network formally broadcast in 1962, the party-state conceived the television as a governmental tool²² under the authoritarian rule. It was not until this decade were the three state-owned television networks privatized or publicized. Therefore, the upsurge of Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas in the 1990s can be regarded as a cultural trend with a political view.

¹² *ibid*, p. 62.

¹³ *ibid*, p. 63.

¹⁴ *ibid*, p. 67.

¹⁵ *ibid*, p. 77.

¹⁶ *ibid*, p. 83.

¹⁷ *ibid*, p. 78.

¹⁸ *ibid*, p. 86.

¹⁹ *ibid*, p. 101.

²⁰ *ibid*, p. 86-87.

²¹ *ibid*, p. 110-111.

²² Lin, Lih-yun. (2006). Capital Formation in Taiwan's Television under the Authoritarian Rule. *Chinese Journal of Communication Research*, No. 9, June 2006. pp. 99-100.

The first ever Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Drama is *Love (Ai)*, CTS TV, 1991) that won unprecedented success in the ratings. Its plot is about how mainlanders (those who emigrated from China in 1949) and native Taiwanese (those who had lived in Taiwan before 1949) improve their mutual understanding in many everyday conflicts. It was the first time for actors and actresses to speak Taiwanese Hokkien in primetime television²³. Three years later, because of Qiandao Lake Incident²⁴ and a series of elections²⁵, Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Drama turned 'political' with the theme of tabooed 228 Incident and White Horrors. Facing the upsurge of localization, the three state-owned television networks, as ideological state apparatus, evoked social meanings of localization that met the political ends: Lee Teng-Hui's victory in the first ever presidential election in 1996.

As a historical response to Taiwanese localized popular nationalism formed by anti-KMT hostility, KMT naturalized local Taiwanese and propagated Taiwanese Hokkien to stabilize itself when it was threatened with the marginalization of the emerging trend of localization. This helped KMT conceal the discrepancy between KMT's mainland complex and Taiwanese localization. Also, under the trend of Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas, the official nationalism became a double-edged knife that sided with Taiwanese Hokkien-speaking subjects but aroused the antipathy among the rest.

However, This model of official nationalism differs from Anderson's. First, the premise of Anderson's model of official nationalism lies in the challenge to the legitimacy of the ruling class. In the case of Taiwan, KMT's legitimacy of ruling over the Taiwanese territory after 1949 is still somehow a controversy in Taiwan. It can be sure that it is not the divine rights of kingship. On the other hand, with no

²³ Before *Love (Ai)*, it was impossible to hear any vernacular spoken in primetime television programs because it was not politically correct and lucrative. See: Lin, Chi-Bo. (2001). What's in Style on Primetime Television: Hsiang Tu Dramas. *Taiwan Panorama Magazine*. June 2001.

²⁴ Qiandao Lake Incident refers to the kidnap and murder of 24 Taiwanese tourists and 8 local tour guides in Qiandao Lake, China in 1994, which had great impact on cross-strait relationship then.

²⁵ From 1992-1994, DPP, the opposition party in Taiwan at that time, won several important seats in elections and posed a threat to KMT in the forthcoming 1996 presidential election. See: Cheng, Shao-Chun. (2010). The Displaced Cultural Consumption and the Displaced Cultural Production?: Exploring the Mainland Chinese Audience's Reception of Taiwanese FTV Hsiang-Tu-Ju "Unforgettable" and the Operating Strategy of FTV in the Greater China Regional Media Market. 2010 Annual Conference of Chinese Communication Society. National Chung Cheng University, Taiwan. p.6.

need to assimilate Taiwanese Hokkien-speaking subjects, the leader of KMT was Taiwanese Hokkien-speaking Lee Teng-Hui. The official nationalism not only made Lee Teng-Hui and KMT side with Taiwanese Hokkien-speaking subjects but helped him oppress his opponents in other fractions of KMT. Moreover, Anderson's focus is the state's technology of power to draw an invisible line about an imaginary landscape on a piece of paper which symbolizes the nation²⁶. But in Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Drama texts, the nation is the symbolic power that the state strives to claim²⁷.

Food, Contemporary Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas, and Popular Nationalism

Since the late 1990s, three state-owned television in Taiwan started to decline. In contrast, two other television networks, FTV and SET TV, became the main producers of Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas. It should be noted that FTV and SET TV are both localized in their political orientations. The two major characteristics of FTV are "Taiwanese nationalism" and "commercialism."²⁸ The strategy of SET TV is somehow similar to FTV's, but SET TV puts more emphasis on the latter. Food has been an important part of the plot backgrounds in Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas since *Unique Flavor* was broadcast on SET TV in 2006. How does the food signify in relation to the early official nationalism as stated above?

Arjun Appadurai elucidates the functions of regional cuisines in his work *National Cuisine: Cookbooks in India*, "Like tourist art, they begin to provide people from one region or place a systematic glimpse of the culinary traditions of another; and they also represent a growing body of food-based characterization of the ethnic Other²⁹." Food is thus can be viewed as a base on which imagined communities with shared collective memory and identity are established. But how do Taiwanese food and Japanese food signify respectively in Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas?

²⁶ Ko, Yu-Fen. (1999). *Nation, History, and Culture: A case study on Taiwanese primetime television*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA. p. 139.

²⁷ *ibid*, pp. 139-140.

²⁸ Rawnsley, Ming-Yeh T. (2003). Communication of Identities in Taiwan: From the 2-28 Incident to FTV. *Political Communications in Greater China*. Rawnsley, Gary D. & Rawnsley, Ming-Yeh T. (Eds.). London: Routledge. p.159

²⁹ Appadurai, Arjun. (1988). National Cuisine: Cookbooks in India. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 30, No. 1. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 15.

Having developed since the Japanese colonial era, the meaning of Taiwanese cuisine differs in the past century. In Japanese colonial era, it was enjoyed exclusively by the upper class in the society, embedded with an exquisite image, and thus distinct from Chinese cuisine and Japanese cuisine. For the middle and lower class, they live on simple diet, of which the cooking methods and condiments also convey unique Taiwan-ness³⁰. With new regulations imposed by KMT since 1945, Taiwanese cuisine declined and became a marginalized Chinese local cuisine. Nevertheless, the convention of Taiwanese cuisine has been passed down in wine restaurants (*jiou jia*)³¹ and thus influenced on contemporary Taiwanese banquet cuisines. Taiwanese food cultures practiced in daily life could be considered subtle forms of resistance to the long predominance of Chinese culture since 1945³².

The formation of the term “Japanese cuisine” is closely related to Japanese militarism beginning from Meiji Restoration. Since the late 19th century, features of Japanese cuisines have disseminated around the world. After Japan won victory in a series of expansions of wars, attributes of Korean cuisines and Chinese cuisines became an important part of Japanese cuisines. On account of KMT cultural elitism that depreciated localized Taiwanese culture from 1949 to 1980s, people who have the self-identity as Taiwanese (instead of Chinese) are more likely to yearn for Japanese colonial history of Taiwan. Having a better impression on Japan than China, people with the self-identity as Taiwanese are apt to rationalize Japan’s invasion in World War II. There can be inferred an affiliation between Japanophile and Taiwanese identity.

As John Fiske elucidates, “Yet realism is an artificial construct. Its ‘naturalness’ arises not from nature itself but from the fact that realism is the mode in which our particular culture prefers its ritual condensations to be cast,” through FTV and SET TV, two advocates of Taiwanese nationalism, the artificial naturalness of Taiwanese food culture and Japanese food culture was represented on TV and linked to Taiwanese nationalism. But how is this kind of Taiwanese nationalism related to

³⁰ Chen, Yu-Jen. (2008). Nation, Class and Cultural Presentation: “Taiwanese Cuisine” During Japanese Colonial Era and Early Post-war Taiwan. *Taiwan Historical Research*, Vol. 15, No. 3. Taipei: Institute of Taiwan History, Academia Sinica. pp. 154-173.

³¹ *ibid*, p. 177.

³² Chuang, Huei-Tun. (2009). The Rise of Culinary Tourism and Its Transformation of Food Cultures: The National Cuisine of Taiwan. *The Copenhagen Journal of Asian Studies*. Vol. 27, No. 2. Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School. p. 86.

early Taiwanese official nationalism above?

I call this kind of nationalism “popular nationalism” because Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas cater to the audience by arousing their collective memory of eating. The employment of Japanese food and Taiwanese food are merely tactics to get high ratings. Lin Jiou-Yu, the screenplay writer of *Unique Flavor*, said “I often have to adjust my screenplay based on the ratings after it is broadcast on TV. If the rating is low, I need to make a twist...because we don’t hope this drama is produced under deficit.” (Lin, Jiou-Yu, 2011). Compared with early official nationalism in Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas, capitalism is the crucial factor that influences how nationalism in contemporary Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas is formed.

Though the popular nationalism in Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities* and in contemporary Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas both acceptable to the mass with the purpose of evoking consensus, the two models of popular nationalism differs in many aspects. First, Anderson thinks the experience of the French Revolution was shaped by millions of printed words into a ‘concept’ and, in due course, into a model³³, which left no doubt about its it-ness. Food, as a concept of “popular nationalism” that I stated above, had been shaped in history before it was represented in Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas, which merely appropriate relations Taiwanese cuisines and Japanese cuisines as symbols of Taiwanese nationalism. Moreover, In Anderson’s theory, it was print capitalism that caused vernacular languages-of-state to assume greater power and status. But through the promotion of the KMT government, Taiwanese Hokkien was widely used in Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas since 1991. However, since Lee Teng Hui won the first ever presidential election in Taiwan in 1996, the significance of Taiwanese Hokkien as a vernacular languages-of-state gradually faded away. The employment of Taiwanese food as well as Japanese food can thus only be considered a way that reminds the audience of their collective memory of Taiwanese nationalism. This way, Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas often succeed in the ratings. Third, it is also notable that people might shed blood in pursuit of popular nationalism, as Sun Yet-Sen making absurd claims to territories in various parts of Southeast Asia and Central Asia³⁴. But in contemporary Taiwanese

³³ Anderson, Benedict. (2006). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin And Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso. p. 80.

³⁴ Anderson, Benedict. (2001). Western Nationalism and Eastern Nationalism. *New Left Review*. (May

Hsiang Tu Dramas, the audience do not have strong feelings or emotions on the cuisines that present nationalism.

The Transformation from Official Nationalism to Popular Nationalism

In Anderson's theory, official nationalism is the historical response to popular nationalism. However, as I mentioned above, the mode of nationalism in Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas developed reversely. The first reason of the transformation lies in the political situation and its consequence after 2000. On 9th December 2003, Taiwan's Legislative Yuan completed the amendment of both 'The Radio and Television Law' and 'The Cable Radio and Television Law'. The amended laws prohibit that the people (or legal people) related to government or political party directly or indirectly invest in or act as founders, directors, supervisors, or managers of private radio or television businesses. Until then the state-controlled broadcasters were finally extinct in Taiwan³⁵. Without the patronage from the government, the three old national television networks, TTV, CTV, and CTS, began to decline, and official nationalism perished in these three television networks. Although FTV's and SET TV's popularity surged, both of them needed to be financially austere when producing programs. It is obvious that Taiwanese cuisines and Japanese cuisines serve as nationalism under this background.

But why do FTV and SET TV no longer produce Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas related to anti-government uprisings or other tabooed stories in history? Financial austerity is of course one of the reasons that lead to the absence of history in contemporary Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas. Due to the limitation on production budget, it is impossible to represent historical events in Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas. In addition, the political consequence after 2000 made some audience lack interests in politics. As Lin Ling-Ling stated, "I was touched when I read Shih Ming-Teh and Annette Lu's biographies before. I thought it would be a success to adapt their stories for Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas. However, after I thought what DPP had done over the eight years, I would feel dispirited..."³⁶ (Lin, Ling-Ling, 2011) DPP is

June 2001). London: New Left Review Ltd. p. 37.

³⁵ Chu, Cho-wen (2008). *A Comparative Review of Media Globalization in China and Taiwan*. In IAMCR (International Association for Media and Communication Research) 2008 Annual Conference.

³⁶ Shih Ming-Teh and Annette Lu were both political dissidents and prisoners in the era of White Horror. The latter used to be the vice president of Taiwan under Chen Shui-bien. After Chen

often associated with many anti-government uprisings and historical trauma. To attract audience and express nationalism in a subtle way, “food” hence became the strategy for Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas.

The other reason that makes Taiwanese cuisines and Japanese cuisines recur in Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas is the “placement marketing strategy.” When Lin Ling-Ling was working on *Love (Ai)*, (FTV, 2006-2008), she was asked to adopt placement marketing strategies in her screenplays. “While I was working on the screenplay of *Love*, I was asked to embed chicken essence in my screenplay. The chicken essence company hopes me to arrange the leading actor to hold the chicken essence and let him say some advantages of chicken essence. Though I didn’t accept the idea, the supervisor of FTV still does it on the sly. I was very furious when I saw it on TV.” (Lin, Ling Ling, 2011). However, James Jhao holds completely different opinion about placement marketing strategies. “Placement marketing strategies should be touching and spontaneous. I must admit that placement marketing strategies in *A Place Called Home (Niang Jia)*, (FTV, 2008-2009) is rough. Its roughness even astonishes myself. But when you watch *Sex and City*, have you ever wondered if the luxurious bag that Carrie buys is a placement marketing strategy?” (James Jhao, 2011) The two different opinions above reflect the dichotomized attitude towards placement marketing strategies. Whether it should be legalized is still under debate in Taiwan, but, in the face of financial austerity, it can be sure that television networks will keep making cuisines appear in Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas to create more profits.

Conclusion

Since *Unique Flavor* won triumph in the ratings with the theme of Taiwanese cuisines and Japanese cuisines, Taiwanese food has been a recurring theme in Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas. In the 1990s, the television networks that produce Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas were under the KMT government’s control. Therefore, Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas were often associated official nationalism. From then on, the government’s influence on Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas faded away. In order to cater to the audience to win success in the ratings, the employment of food

Shui-bien, who was president of Taiwan from 2000 to 2008, was convicted of bribery, the popularity of his party, DPP, plummeted.

has been served as a method to evoke the audience's collective memory of nationalism. However, this kind of "popular nationalism" is different from Benedict Anderson's theory of popular nationalism in at least three ways. First, instead of using printed words to embody nationalism as a concept, Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas only appropriate Taiwanese cuisines and Japanese cuisines as symbols of the root of Taiwanese nationalism and further to arouse the audience's collective memory of nationalism. Second, not perishing to pursue for nationalism, the audience usually don't have strong feelings on nationalism represented in contemporary Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas. In conclusion, the transformation from "official nationalism" to "popular nationalism" results from the political situation after 2000 and placement marketing strategies. Due to the two reasons above, the mode of nationalism in Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Dramas has been shifted from "official nationalism" to "popular nationalism."

Title	Broadcast period	Broadcast network	Plot Background
<i>Unique Flavor</i> (<i>Tien Hsia Di Yi Wei</i>)	Aug. 16, 2006 to Sep. 19, 2007	SET TV	A famous chef and his family
<i>Love (Ai)</i> ³⁷	Nov. 28, 2006 to May 21, 2008	FTV	A fish ball soup vendor
<i>Love Above All</i> (<i>Jhen Cing Man Tien Hsia</i>)	Jun. 26, 2008 to Sep. 2, 2009	SET TV	Several farmers who grow grapes
<i>A Place Called Home</i> (<i>Niang Jia</i>)	May 21, 2008 to Dec. 22, 2009	FTV	A family who sells braised pork knuckles
<i>Parents' Love</i> (<i>Tien Hsia Fu Mu Sin</i>)	Sep. 2, 2009 to Nov. 10, 2010	SET TV	A single mother who sells chicken rice
<i>The Life in the Night Market</i> (<i>Ye</i>)	Dec. 22, 2009 to Jul. 19, 2011	FTV	A single mother who sells

³⁷ The name is the same as the first ever Taiwanese Hsiang Tu Drama *Love (Ai)* broadcast on CTS in 1991, whereas the contents of the both are completely different.

<i>Shih Ren Sheng</i>)			medicinal ribs in the night market
-------------------------	--	--	---------------------------------------

Table 1. Hsiang Tu Dramas produced by two leading TV networks in Taiwan with the theme of eating from 2006 to 2011

References

- Anderson, Benedict. (2001). Western Nationalism and Eastern Nationalism. *New Left Review*. (May June 2001). London: New Left Review Ltd. pp. 31-42.
- Anderson, Benedict. (2006). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin And Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso.
- Appadurai, Arjun. (1988). National Cuisine: Cookbooks in India. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 30, No. 1. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 3-24.
- Chen, Yu-Jen. (2008). Nation, Class and Cultural Presentation: “Taiwanese Cuisine” During Japanese Colonial Era and Early Post-war Taiwan. *Taiwan Historical Research*, Vol. 15, No. 3. Taipei: Institute of Taiwan History, Academia Sinica. pp. 139-186.
- Cheng, Shao-Chun. (2010). *The Displaced Cultural Consumption and the Displaced Cultural Production?: Exploring the Mainland Chinese Audience’s Reception of Taiwanese FTV Hsiang-Tu-Ju “Unforgettable” and the Operating Strategy of FTV in the Greater China Regional Media Market*. 2010 Annual Conference of Chinese Communication Society. National Chung Cheng University, Taiwan.
- Chuang, Huei-Tun. (2009). The Rise of Culinary Tourism and Its Transformation of Food Cultures: The National Cuisine of Taiwan. *The Copenhagen Journal of Asian Studies*. Vol. 27, No. 2. Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School. pp. 84-108.
- Chuang, Jing-Yi. & Li, Mei-Chih. (2003). Ethnic Identification and Attitudes towards the Japanese in Taiwan. *Indigenous Psychological Research in Chinese Societies*. (Dec 2003). Department of Psychology, National Taiwan University. pp. 105-135.
- Chu, Cho-wen (2008). *A Comparative Review of Media Globalization in China and Taiwan*. In IAMCR (International Association for Media and Communication Research) 2008 Annual Conference.
- Fiske, John. (2003). Television Realism. *Reading Television* (Fiske, John & Hartley, John Eds.) London: Routledge. pp. 159-171.

- Ko, Yu-Fen. (1999). *Nation, History, and Culture: A case study on Taiwanese primetime television*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA.
- Ko, Yu-Fen. (2003). The Insight to Taiwanese Television Culture from *Taiwan Thunderbolt Fire*. In Ko Y. F. (Eds.). *The Connections of Critiques*. Taipei: Tonsan. pp. 135-175.
- Ko, Yu-Fen. (2009). Television and Modern Life: “Nation” and “Family” in the Installation Process of Television Sets, 1962-1964. *Taiwan: A Radical Quarterly in Social Studies*, No. 73, March 2009. Taipei: Taiwan Social Research Council. pp. 1-38.
- Lin, Chi-Bo. (2001). What’s in Style on Primetime Television: Hsiang Tu Dramas. *Taiwan Panorama Magazine*. June 2001. Taipei: Government Information Office of Taiwan. pp. 86-93.
- Lin, Lih-yun. (2006). Capital Formation in Taiwan’s Television under the Authoritarian Rule. *Chinese Journal of Communication Research*, No. 9, June 2006. Taipei: Chinese Communication Society. pp. 71-112.
- Lin, Ming-Teh. (2002). Besides Sourness and Saltiness: A Panorama of Taiwanese Eating Culture. *Beautiful Formosa*. No. 16. Retrieved May 24, 2012, from: <http://www2.thu.edu.tw/~trc/1-epts/1-class/1.4.2.5.pdf>.
- Mintz, Sidney Wilfred. (1985). *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History*. New York: Viking.
- Murcott, Anne (1996). Food as an Expression of Identity. In Gustavsson, Sverker and Lewin, Leif (Eds.), *The Future of the Nation-State*. London: Routledge. pp. 49-77.
- Nian, Chang-Yu. (2006). Eternal Love Will Adjust Its Plot in the Face of Failure in the Ratings. (2006, Oct. 3.). *United Daily News*, D3.
- Rawnsley, Ming-Yeh T. (2003). Communication of Identities in Taiwan: From the 2-28 Incident to FTV. In Gary D. & Rawnsley, Ming-Yeh T. (Eds.), *Political Communications in Greater China*. Rawnsley, London: Routledge. pp. 147-166.
- Tsai, Yean. (2002). A Historical Review of the TV Drama Programs in Taiwan’s Three Wireless TV Companies, 1962-2002. *Chinese Journal of Communication Research*, No. 6, Dec 2004. Taipei: Chinese Communication Society. pp. 157-193.

Crossing the Boundary: Towards Harmonisation in East Asia

Seiko Yasumoto

0145

The University of Sydney, Australia

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2012

Official Conference Proceedings 2012

Abstract:

The Japanese media content industry within the popular culture domain has been comprehensively developed as a vehicle for the promotion and improvement of the mutuality of cultural understanding in neighbouring Asian countries, through its Pan-Asian dissemination and consumption. The indigenous functions of many original texts have been transformed and extended by the cultural specificity of the adaptations and by the expanding multimedia technologies. The regionally consumed entertainment has made a contribution to Japanese 'soft power' enunciated by Nye and is valued by the Japanese government. This political interest in media exports illustrates a trend towards a Pan-Asian regional trading zone countering the paradigm of Western cultural imperialism. The paper investigates the extent to which media exports from Japan contribute to regional cultural integration. It draws on audience research to illustrate the loss or reinforcement of national identity as a consequence of cross-cultural trade. The principal argument is that this trade, both authorised and non-authorised, brings forward benefits in promoting the resolution of historical regional conflicts in East Asia. The significant cultural influences on the adapted texts, which may be regarded as contributing to a better understanding of East Asian society, is in line with the idea of regional 'harmony'. The paper further argues that the cultural and commercial successes of Japanese products beyond Japan, is governed by perceptions of the quality of the story and by the cultural frames of the target audience. The paper concludes with recommendations for the sustainability of the Japanese media industry and in turn its contribution to regional harmony.

iafor

The International Academic Forum

www.iafor.org

Introduction

The Japanese media content industry¹ within the popular culture domain has been comprehensively developed and is a vehicle for the promotion and improvement of the mutuality of cultural understanding in neighbouring Asian countries through dissemination and consumption. The indigenous functions of many original Japanese texts have been transformed and extended by the cultural specificity of the adaptations and by the expanding multimedia technologies. Contemporary political interest in Japan in respect to media exports illustrates a trend from a wholly internal focus towards a Pan-Asian regional trading zone countering the paradigm of Western cultural imperialism. The paper investigates how media exports from Japan contribute to Japanese soft power and regional cultural integration. It draws on audience research to illustrate the loss or reinforcement of national identity as a consequence of cross-cultural trade. The principal argument is that this trade, both authorised and non-authorised, brings forward benefits in improving the image of Japan in East Asia and in turn serving to mitigate historical regional conflicts in the region. The significant cultural influences of cross border traded and nationally remade texts, which may be regarded as contributing to a better understanding of Japan within East Asian society, is in line with the idea of regional 'harmony'. The paper further argues that the commercial successes of Japanese products beyond Japan, is governed by perceptions of the quality of the story and the receptivity of the cultural frames of the target audience. As a consequence of media trade the retention of the implicit monetary value of the Japanese content industry is receiving attention from the Japanese government, particularly in the domain of popular culture, and associated copyright protection is important for the sustainability of the industry. Japan has also shown initiative in drawing forward the importance to the region of the need to review legal systems to better protect intellectual property with respect to licensing and merchandising of media content. The paper concludes with recommendations for the sustainability of the Japanese media industry and in turn its contribution to regional harmony

Japanese Soft Power

What is Japanese soft power? Sugiyama notes that Japan conveys super power influence through popular culture, not only from a commercial viewpoint but also through the impact of the culture itself (Sugiyama, 2006). Soft power is a term first proposed by Nye. Nye also describes soft power as "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion. It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies" (Nye, 2004, p. x). The widespread appeal and sales of *manga*, *anime*, television drama and other Japanese cultural media and allied products is consistent with this analysis. The concept of Japanese soft power may be viewed from an external vantage point, but it also has a meaning within Japan. Soft power is multi-faceted, Yamazaki points out how soft power connects the urban culture and cities and creates power; iconic places attract citizens and these citizens create soft power through fashion, shops, restaurant, coffee shops, amusement park, cinema complexes, leisure land and convention centres. The drawing together of these facilities and services creates a power that results in economic prosperity (Yamazaki & Tachioka, 2006). This aggregation of media into the hub is significant and creates a focused and interactive media community.

¹ Content, from a Japanese legal perspective, is described in the 'Act on Promotion of Creation, Protection and Exploitation of Content (*Content Promotion Act* promulgated in June 2004)'.

Jenkins notes that ‘some Japanese policy makers view overseas interest in *anime* and *manga* as a vehicle for soft power’ (Jenkins, 2007). The transfer, localisation and ensuing regional popularity of Japanese media and cultural products has had an impact on regional audiences, and this is considered to have contributed to Japanese soft power. Economic power and military power were grouped by Nye and housed under the umbrella of national power. In the 1990s the falling Japanese economy reduced these powers. However, in the late 1980s and 1990s, Japanese media products became increasingly successful overseas markets. Many Japanese popular culture products have been produced and successfully transferred to many countries with good audience acceptance. These products have been traded to markets in Korea, Taiwan and others leading to localisation through the vehicles of adaptation.

The export of these types of product contributing to soft power illustrates the influences which lead to the transfer of media in a plethora of formats which in turn create a measurable cultural force known as ‘Gross National Cool’ (GNC), a term coined by Douglas McGray (McGray, 2003). While in economics, national power as quantified through national income and output is expressed in terms of gross domestic product (GDP) and gross national product (GNP), GNC is a measure of the influence of a nation’s products in the domain of popular culture. GNC has demonstrably had significant influence, particularly in East Asia. GNC exerts significant influence, particularly in East Asia. It can be argued that the evolution of Japanese soft power has been driven by regional desire for things Japanese rather because of any particular Japanese Government policy. In fact it can be argued that policy in Japan has trailed the regionalisation of Japanese media outputs and associated value chains. The importance of media content in the development of national strategies has been recognised since 2004 (DCAJ, 2004).

Regional Media Trade

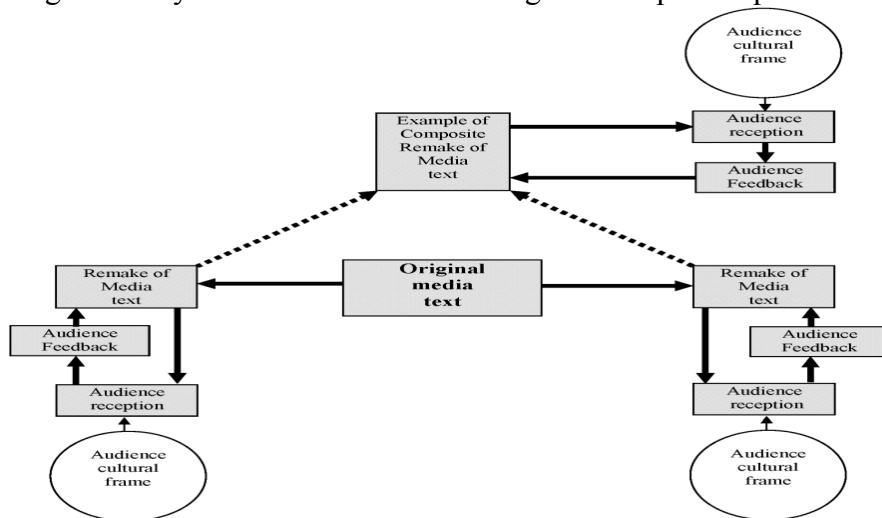
Lee draws attention to regional connectivity and cultural trade in East Asia: ‘The popularity of Japanese media products in Asia in the 1990s has challenged the hegemony of US/Western media culture. During this period, Japanese popular culture served as a leading resource for the trans-cultural phenomenon among Asian countries’ (Lee, 2004). Lee acknowledges that the US retains its importance as a global player but also recognises the changes in regional media trade. The US remains the most important global player directing media products into Asia; however, the growing interpenetration of local media markets and products in proximate Asian countries is changing the balance in the region (Lee, 2004). In countries like Korea prior to 2000, fears of Japanese culture were stronger than fears of Westernisation. The question therefore is: Can Japanese popular culture shift perceptions in the region about Japan as a good neighbour?

The adaptation of the Japanese *manga* *Hana yori Dango*² into television formats within and beyond Japan is an example of regional media trade. Its content was attractive to audiences beyond Japan confirming the ‘quality’ of the story. When media products are traded from one culture to another they need to negotiate cultural differences. This concept can also be extended to a media product being created not only from an originating text but also drawing on content from other interpretations of the originating text. Diagram 1 illustrates a cycle of

² *Hana yori Dango* (Boys over Flowers), *manga* was originally written by Kamio Yoko 1992-2004. The *manga* was remade in a number of countries including Taiwan in 2001, Tokyo in 2005, Korea in 2009 and China in 2010.

adaptation. It shows the concept of composite adaptation, where the end product is created from an originating text and moves through a complex of adaption and cultures.

Diagram 1: Cycle of media content through the adaptation process

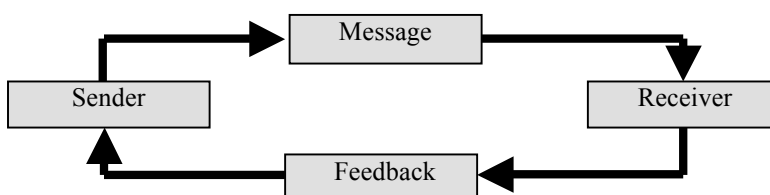


Cultural Frames: Towards a Hybrid Culture?

The television dramas *Hana yori Dango* emanating from Japanese content and *Winter Sonata* from Korea have shown how mediation can occur across independent high context cultures in East Asia. There is a regional enthusiasm for Japanese stories, humour, actors and characters and this was generally associated with shared values. Similarly, in the case of *Winter Sonata* there was an enthusiasm in Japan, by a female segment of the population, for things Korean. Shared values have the capacity to expand the proximity of the viewer of television dramas and provide a space beyond the immediate audience space and move the viewer from a formal to an informal level of culture. This informality, which arguably overrides national conservatism or prejudices, enables a greater empathy for external inputs and, in turn, may contribute to regional cultural harmony.

Communication and reception of media trade is more difficult than may be assumed. Hall proposed that the most basic goal of communication was ‘transmitting meaning as closely as possible to the way it was conceived’ (Walker, Walker & Schmitz, 2003, p. 204). He proposed an ideal communication process where messages travel without distortion between a sender and a receiver. Referring to the cultural communication model of Walker et.al, the ideal communication process can be said to be simple, as Diagram 2 shows.

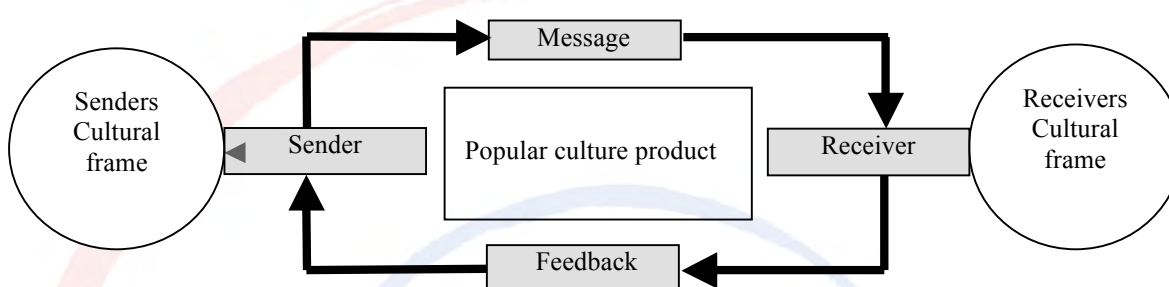
Diagram 2: The ideal communication process



Source: adapted from Walker et.al. 2003, p 205

Communication in real life situations is very complex. One often has to consider the impact of the cultural frames of both the sender and the receiver, especially if these are different. Diagram 3 illustrates a simplification of the real communication and interaction process.

Diagram 3: Typical communication and interaction process



Source: adapted from Walker et al., 2003, p. 207

Walker et al (2003) argue that our cultural frames act as the perceptual window or filter through which an individual defines one's own self, others and the world. An individual's cultural frame is informed by such variables as ethnocentrism, false attributions, stereotypes, etiquette and non-verbal behaviour, to name but a few, and these influence audience reception of television dramas across, and even within, cultural boundaries, as illustrated by audience numbers and demographics. When senders and receivers have mismatched cultural frames, this results in messages contaminated by mismatched expectations, misinterpreted messages, feedback, etc. and 'noise' — meaningless or distorted signals which place a burden on communication. (Walker et al., 2003, p. 206).

Arguably viewers view television programs actively and subliminally using the same process. If the viewer perceives that the program's cultural frame is incongruent with their personal frame, they will be aware of the 'noise' and find the program less satisfactory and it will be more difficult for them to appreciate and empathise with the characters. In a different vein, Keane et al point out: 'Foreign forms, ideas and styles are not so much absorbed as window-shopped like new commodities'. (Keane, Fung & Moran, 2007, p. 48). By inference, the consumer sees and may be influenced by their perception of what they see. The window-shopping may well lead in time to a degree of absorption or cultural hybridism. In times of unprecedented change, processes of translation are applied to commercial culture with, sometimes, unusual results.

The Cultural Impact of Regional Media Trade

The cultural impact of media trade in East Asia has been described in the past using the terms cultural imperialism. Cultural imperialism is generally associated with cultural homogenisation and globalisation. Media trade is important for cultural diplomacy, not only for Japan but also in East Asia. Japan is often categorised as a monoculture and a homogenous society, which suggests that it is impervious to cultural trade and incapable of change. This view is not universally shared (Denoon, Hudson, McCormack & Morris-Suzuki, 2001). Rather than being a loss, or dilution, of identity my audience research presents it as a

culturally enriching process, evidenced through the matrix of media trade in East Asia. This trade is creating islands of commonality across cultures..

The transfer of media content has the propensity to contribute to hybridisation. Straubhaar defines hybridisation as ‘new elements from outside a culture, whether from slow gradual contact or major threshold change, tend to be adapted to local culture over time’ (Straubhaar, 2007, p. 12). However, hybridisation is rarely used to describe cultural products. Cultural hybridity (Burke, 2009) or ‘hybrid culture’ are more useful concepts to describe the outcome of cultural mixing. Alongside hybridity we need to account for indigenisation. Appadurai recognises the process of indigenisation ‘at least as rapidly as forces from the metropolises are brought into new societies they tend to become indigenized in one way or another’ (Appadurai, 2003, p. 30). Both Straubhaar and Appadurai refer to ‘hybridity’ more as a tendency that entails a degree of acceptance in the new culture. The process creates a hybrid culture, possibly diluting to a greater or lesser extent the original culture. Appadurai draws attention to cultural homogenisation linking this to Americanisation. He notes that Americanisation might be of less concern than ‘Japanization may be for Koreans’ (Appadurai, 2003, p. 30). He also refers to the tensions between cultural homogenisation and cultural heterogenisation. I argue that these concepts are primarily viewed from a Western perspective. An illustration of the difficulty in applying terminology to events is illustrated by Ratanen’s observation regarding similar events viewed from the perception of two researchers. He points out the conundrum arising from research observations when Hamelink and Lull drew opposing findings when observing similar events. Hamelink defined the event as representative of homogenisation, whereas Lull noted it as heterogenisation. (Rantanen, 2005, p. 93). My audience findings tend towards Lull’s opinion on cultural transfers in the context of East Asia. ‘We have not, and will not, become one people’ (Lull, 2000, p. 233). This does not detract in any way from the prospects of mutual enjoyment of each other’s media. Hybridity, if it occurs, does not detract from what is quintessentially Japanese culture, nor does it detract from its identity.

Bhabha states that ‘all forms of culture are in the process of hybridity’ (Rutherford, 1990, p. 208). This raises the question of what is hybridity and how is it adequately defined? Burke notes of books: ‘Translations are the most obvious case of hybrid texts’ (Burke, 2009, p. 17). Further, in respect to the ‘equivalent effect’, he states, ‘the introduction of words and ideas that are familiar to the new readers but might not be intelligible in the culture in which the book was written’ (Burke, 2009, p. 17).

What is the boundary between the commonality of enjoyment of a television drama in original or remade format across cultures, and what is its propensity for variation? In his seminal study of popular media, Kraidy introduces many examples of hybridity, ‘Hybridity is almost a good idea, but not quite’ (Kraidy, 2005, p. vi). He presents his view in respect to the juxtaposition of globalisation and hybridity. The sheer repetition of the word ‘hybridity’ in hundreds of media outlets and dozens of academic disciplines gives hybridity an aura of legitimacy and hides its inherent contradictions as it mystifies globalizations material effects (Kraidy, 2005, p. 148). While not entering into a discourse on ‘the complex and active links between hybridity and power’ (Kraidy, 2005, p. 149), I argue that it is not an exact term to classify the acceptance of Japanese popular culture in East Asia. When Japanese popular culture is translated or remade the form and context of the text remains important and relevant throughout the process of adaptation. It is necessary to be very cognisant, therefore, of the ‘give and take’ effect. Appropriate changes to content overcome prospective rejection of the text in whatever form it may be presented. For instance when a television drama is

remade from an original *manga* or in any form of translation, it is important to align the text to the cultural frame of the intended audience.

Audience research

To search for the cultural impact of media trade I have utilised audience research. I selected six sub groups. Three of the sub groups were in Australia in late 2009 comprising Sydney University students of Korean, Taiwanese and Japanese ethnicity. The other three sub-groups surveyed 2010-2011 were respectively students from Chang University in Korea, Tamkang University in Taiwan and Shinwa Women's University in Japan. The research input was derived from completed survey questionnaires and focus group interviews. The content, for the purpose of this paper, was to gauge their opinions on issues arising from Japanese popular culture relating to cultural proximity. The structure of each focus sub-group was guided by Morgan, Krueger and Vaughn et al who suggest that the ideal number of participants in focus groups should be no fewer than six and no more than ten (Morgan & Krueger, 1998; Vaughn, Schumm & Sinagub, 1996). My findings in Japan confirmed some residual entrenched notions of superiority in Japan compared with Asia. As Chua has noted from the perspective of Japan: 'It has a tendency to place the rest of Asia at a culturally-historically "backward" position' (Chua & Iwabuchi, 2008, p. 80). This view is reflective of a historical reality fuelled by the benefits derived from the Meiji Restoration 'being in Asia but not part of Asia' (Chua, 2008, p. 80). Looking to the future, from my contemporary findings, the majority view of the Japanese research participants was more pragmatic and regionally embracing, discounting to some extent the notion of superiority. Chua's observation is that 'a cultural-historical temporality defined by the level of development in capitalist modernity' (Chua, 2008, p. 80) is becoming evident in Japan. Japanese female university students within my research parameters confirm that the temporality is now finite and Japan is re-engaging with Asia, and this is being recognised and supported by a significant segment of Japanese youth. The spectacular modernisation of Korea and Taiwan, and more importantly from an Asian perspective, China, has contributed to respectful perceptions of each other and the development of capital into a regional commonality.

My audience research found, in respect to both Korea and Taiwan, minimal adverse views about the effect of Japanisation on the respective countries. This concern, where expressed, was predominantly a male one. While popular culture has prevailed and positively reinforcing a good image of Japan, 'the legacy of Japanese imperialism in Asia' remains (Iwabuchi, 2002, p. 27). In considering residual 'ideoscapes' of Japan from a mainland Asia perspective 'concatenations of images-directly political' (Appadurai, 2003, p. 34) derived from the twentieth century military excesses by Japan were confirmed to still exist. The research gave some insights into that which is purported to be hybridism in East Asia. Shim notes that the intrinsic attribute of cultural flow is hybridity (Dooboo, 2005). The term cultural flow suggests a one-way movement of culture; however there is a more complex counter flow of popular culture. In respect to the inherent complexity of the audience for cultural flows or trade, Hills says, 'neither constructivist or cognitive theories can account for the formation of fan cultures through the expression of "personal significance"' (Hills, 2002, p. 93), this draws the discussion about hybridity back to the personal or the fan group. The transfer of texts in original and remade forms from my findings is closer to the position expressed by King and Craig, who argue that local cultures are resilient (King & Craig, 2002). They say 'popular culture is constantly being rediscovered and reconfigured by its audiences and performers' (King & Craig, 2002, pp. 5-7).

Hybridity or Harmonisation?

Another way of examining the impact of pan-regional media trade comes with the introduction of the concept of harmony. Themes reflecting cultural harmony and conflict resolution result in audience acceptance of television dramas and further reinforce the idea of social harmony. Japan, as witnessed by its direct and indirect media outpouring, now has a sustained connectivity in the Asian region. Iwabuchi refers to a 'recent shift in Japan's hitherto introverted cultural orientation towards an exaltation of its transnational influence, particularly in Asia' (Iwabuchi, 1999, p. 44). This view is supported by the spread of Japanese popular culture products in the region. This is an important point and worthy of continuing research, since historically this was not the case. Iwabuchi further notes that Japanese intellectuals often refer to the spread of Japanese popular culture as being evidence of the cultural commonality between Japan and other parts of Asia, while simultaneously articulating Japanese superiority. Iwabuchi refers to the external influences on a Japan 'that absorbs foreign cultures without changing its national /cultural core' (Iwabuchi, 1999, p. 51). My findings confirm Iwabuchi's opinion that Japan retains its national and cultural core and furthermore Korea and Taiwan retain their respective 'Korean-ness' and 'Taiwanese-ness'. The sharing of values through popular culture, rather than focussing on cultural differences, can bring people closer together. Popular culture content in the format of television drama analysed by me was acceptable to audience segments across cultural and geographical divides. The aspect of localisation was a very important component in popularity of the content but not at the expense of the original story.

Kato notes that Japanese culture is known for its unique hybridity, a mix of Western and Japanese culture, described as *Wa Yo Secchu* (Kato, 1974). *Wakon Yosai*, Japanese spirit and Western knowledge were fully integrated during the Meiji restoration. It can be concluded from the historical evolution of Japanese culture that Japanese traditions continue to comfortably coexist with Western culture rather than be subjected to cultural globalisation. Examples are: Japanese medicines modelled on Dutch medicines; the Japanese Constitution modelled on the German Constitution; Japanese NHK broadcasting modelled on the BBC; the Tokyo Tower modelled on the Eiffel Tower; modernised Japanese lifestyle and youth culture, post-World War II, modelled on the US lifestyle and culture, with popular culture icons juxtaposed with shrines and temples. Japan, unlike the US, is not a cultural melting pot, it still retains its essential monoculture and adapts to Western culture. Japan assimilated foreign cultural elements and created a unique hybrid culture (Tadokoro, 2003).

East Asian Cultural Trade: Political Influences

East Asian cultural flows have been dramatically affected by political changes in East Asia. As an example Japan and Korea are neighbours in the region and share some cultural aspects because of a shared historical contact with China but there are a number of barriers that divide the two countries. During the early part of the second half of the twentieth century Korea actively discouraged friendly relations between itself and Japan. At the end of Japanese imperial policies in 1945 and since the partitioning of Korea into two countries in 1948, residual ill feeling between Japan and Korea has kept relations at a distance for four decades. As a result, there was little interaction during this time between Japanese and Korean media. Prior to the 1990s, Korean government legislation restricted the import of television, music and film productions. However, from the 1990s, government legislation has

responded pragmatically to unauthorised media trade, principally from Japanese sources, overlaid with technological changes.

Kim Dae-Jung when President of Korea instigated four steps to open up the Korean door to Japan, leading to the authorised entry of Japanese popular culture into Korea for the first time in 1998 and then in 1999, 2000, and 2003/4 (Ishii, 2001a; Maeda, 2007). This initiative was revolutionary in changing the relationship between Japan and Korea, progressively allowing the legal importation of Japanese media and cultural products for the first time. The first step resulted in an adverse reaction from Korea's mass media, intellectuals and academia, thus highlighting, with the benefit of hindsight, their short-sightedness. Notwithstanding resistance to change and hesitation in accepting this new open door policy Kim's actions progressively enabled cultural flows between Japan and Korea. He saw this as the way to improve the understanding of Koreans for things Japanese and, conversely, Japanese for things Korean. It was a far sighted policy as, by 1995, 80 per cent of Japanese television *anime* had already unofficially penetrated into Korean society. Despite this the initiative was an important one towards mutuality of media transfers in the region. The four steps of Kim's vision were progressively implemented by the Korean government (Ishii, 2001b; Maeda, 2007). These were implemented by the Korean Cultural Tourist Bureau and Chosen Nippo (2003) and the ban on Japanese media products was lifted progressively.

Protecting Japanese Media Content Value

Japanese popular culture in all of its forms is arguably attractive not only to Japan but also to its geographic region, and in certain segments like *anime* and video games, globally. With the expanding world population, increasing wealth, particularly in Asia, and the apparent insatiable appetite for media content globally, market potential is very clear. An important issue for Japan apart from the regional cultural influences, be they hybridisation or harmonisation, is how it can maximise and obtain full value from, and also protect, its media cultural products. Japan is using the content business as a mechanism to link culture and economics. However, the global distribution of media content introduces problems, resulting in large leakages of monetary value not unique to East Asia. Piracy, unauthorised copying, and downloading of media content has significantly devalued licensees, ownership, adaptation, and formatting (METI, 2003a). Notwithstanding the importance of monetary value arguably the proliferation of Japanese popular culture, authorised or not, does have a positive cultural impact when it is enthusiastically received by its audience.

The Japanese government's response to loss of monetary value from piracy was to implement, in 2003, an intellectual property strategy group 'Chiteki Zaisan Senryaku Honbu' (METI, 2003b). Through this, the government acknowledged that by creating high quality music, film and *manga*, Japan was promoting high quality culture, and this needed to be protected. Content business international strategists report that Japanese *anime* occupies 65 per cent of the international market (METI, 2003b). JTB reports profits in excess of \$US 4 billion in 2002 (JETRO, 2009). This is 3.5 per cent of the Japanese exports to the US, and draws attention to the need to protect and increase media business, a great stimulus for not only developing new texts and formats but also for the business of adaptation (METI, 2003c, pp. 8-11). On 4 April 2009, a key strategy was announced by the group to strengthen and consolidate soft power industries called 'brand industries', which include media content, music, food, and fashion (METI, 2009b). The strategy aims to promote the industry to Japanese fans, media creators and Asian audiences, as well as to European and American

audiences. As a result, soft power brand industries have been promoted through various events; for example, the Japan Media Arts Festival, Japan International Contents Festival, the Japan Expo in Paris and the Asia Content Business Summit were all held in 2009 (METI, 2009b). Together with these promotions and government attention, *anime* and *manga* increasingly feature as themes at academic conferences, attracting more scholarly attention. The value of Japanese content business, including films, *anime*, game, *manga*, television and music, was estimated at 14 trillion yen in 2006. The Japanese government expects the growth of the content business as a national process, aiming for 19 trillion yen by 2015 (METI, 2008). Matsubara Sho of METI, by telephone interview on 18 May 2011, observed 'It is quite difficult to ascertain absolute figures of import and export rates as we have to get information from overseas. Japanese media products such as video games, *anime*, television drama, film and music exports were seven billion yen'(Matsubara, 2011).

Japanese Regional Engagement

The Japanese Government hosted an Asia Content Business Summit in Tokyo on 15-16 October 2009. As noted in the report key, public and private sector representatives in content industries from China, Hong Kong S.R.R, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand attended, with the intent of strengthening cooperation in the Asian content industry (METI, 2009a). Key points were the need to review legal systems to better protect intellectual property with respect to licensing and merchandising, and also to promote international co-production (METI, 2009a). The Japanese government continues to be proactive, and sustains its emphasis on growing the content business. As recently as 8 June 2010, METI established a Creative Industries Promotions Office under the Manufacturing Industries Bureau to plan and implement inter-ministerial measures to promote cultural industries, or creative industries such as design, animation, fashion and movies, as a strategic sector for Japan. The office is charged with implementing measures that facilitate overseas expansion to disseminate relevant information in Japan and abroad, and to develop human resources.

Concluding remarks

The Japanese government in recognising the importance of media trade is showing a willingness to participate in regional and international groupings to evolve a means of protecting and growing its popular culture by promoting media content, protecting copyright and encouraging joint production. In doing so, it is arguably expressing soft power in a manner that will be beneficial to the groupings as a whole. The progressive regional relaxation of media control has resulted in an emerging regional cooperation, with some joint productions offering a substantial indication of the benefits of moving to a more open market model, particularly in Japan, Korea and Taiwan. With these changes, the value of regulating intellectual property ensures that the financial benefits of users paying for media content provides the revenue for new and adapted media products. As production and the creation of new content become more global, the importance of valuing and legally distributing media content will become an imperative. Stepping back from a purely media perspective, the benefits of regional harmony becomes more evident and it is hoped that the vision of Kim Dae-Jung will be sustained, and changes in the East Asian market will become all embracing. Japan still need to make progress in coming to terms with the residual antipathy towards Japan from its military excesses in the past and how it may acknowledge these in enhancing regional harmony. My findings from audience analysis have confirmed that harmony between Korea, Taiwan and Japan at the student level as an outcome of media trade is occurring. This

is not necessarily representative of the respective societies but encouraging for the prospects of harmony in East Asia.

I also argue that the financial returns, from a Japanese perspective, even with an international transfer success, have been paltry compared to prospective revenues from a better orchestrated production and marketing approach within Japan and in the spread of its media outpourings. The Japanese government and the industry are showing initiatives in enhancing and protecting value. Maximising revenue, minimising value leakage, and marketing are the essence of a viable regional and international future for Japanese popular culture. Cross border joint production can be a powerful initiative towards these goals.

The logo for 'iafor' is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, sans-serif font. The text is surrounded by two large, overlapping, brush-stroke-like arcs. The upper arc is light blue and the lower arc is light red, both curving around the central text.

Bibliography

- Appadurai, A. (2003). Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy. In J. E. Braziel & A. Mannur (Eds.), *Theorizing Diaspora* (pp. 25-48). Oxford: Blackwell
- Burke, P. (2009). *Cultural Hybridity*. Cambridge Polity Press.
- Chua, B. H. (2008). Structure of Identification and Distancing in Watching East Asian Television Drama. In B. H. Chua & K. Iwabuchi (Eds.), *East Asian Pop Culture: Analysing the Korean Wave* (pp. 73-90). Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- Chua, B. H., & Iwabuchi, K. (2008). East Asian TV Dramas: Identification, Sentiments and Effects. In B. H. Chua & K. Iwabuchi (Eds.), *East Asian Pop Culture: Analysing the Korean Wave* (pp. 1-12). Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- DCAJ (2004). *Dejitaru Kontentsu Hakusho 2004*. Tokyo: Digital Content Association of Japan.
- Denoon, D., Hudson, M., McCormack, G., & Morris-Suzuki, T. (2001). *Multicultural Japan*: Cambridge University Press.
- Dooboo, S. (2005). Globalisation and Cinema Regionalisation in East Asia *Korea Journal* 45(4), 233-260.
- Hills, M. (2002). *Fan Cultures*. New York: Routledge.
- Ishii, K. (2001a). *Higashi Ajia no Taishuu Bunka*. Tokyo: Sososha.
- Ishii, K. (2001b). *Higashi Ajia no Taishuu Bunka (Popular Culture in East Asia)*. Tokyo: Sososha.
- Iwabuchi, K. (1999). *Returning to Asia: Japan in the Cultural Dynamics of Globalisation, Localisation and Asianisation*. Unpublished PhD, University of Western Sydney, Nepean.
- Iwabuchi, K. (2002). *Recentering Globalization: Popular Culture and Japanese Transnationalism*. London: Duke University Press.
- Jenkins, H. (2007). *What Makes Japan So Cool?: An Interview with Ian Condry*. Retrieved August 14, 2009, from http://www.henryjenkins.org/2007/06/what_makes_japan_so_cool_an_in.html
- JETRO (2009). *Japanese Trade and Investment Statistics*. Retrieved January 10, 2010, from <http://www.jetro.go.jp/en/reports/statistics/>
- Kato, S. (1974). *Zasshu Bunka (Hybridisation)*. Tokyo: Kodansha.
- Keane, M., Fung, A. Y. H., & Moran, A. (2007). *New Television Globalization and the East Asian Cultural Imagination*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

- King, R., & Craig, T. J. (2002). *Global Goes Local: Popular Culture in Asia*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Kraidy, M. M. (2005). *Hybridity, or the Cultural Logic of Globalization*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Lee, D. H. (2004). *Cultural Strategies of Remakes: The Case of Yojolady*. Retrieved January 23, 2009, from http://www.jamco.or.jp/2004_symposium/en/lee/index.html
- Lull, J. (2000). *Media, Communication, Culture: A Global Approach* (2 ed.). New York: Columbia University Press.
- Maeda, Y. (2007). Kindaichu Daitoryo no Tainichi Taishu Bunka Kaiho Seisaku no Rekishiteki Imi. *Otsuma Joshi University Higher Education*, 37, 45-57.
- Matsubara, S. (2011). Interview with Matsubara Sho, May 18, 2011.
- McGray, D. (2003). Sekai wo Kappo suru Nihon no Kakkoyosa (Japan's Gross National Cool), *Chuokoron* (Vol. 118-5, pp. 130-131). Tokyo: Chuokoron.
- METI (2003a). Chiteki Zaisan no Sozo, Hogo Oyabi Katsuyo ni Kansuru Sushin Keikaku In METI (Ed.). Tokyo: METI.
- METI (2003b). *Kontentsu Bijinesu no Kaigai Tenkai ni Tsuite*. Retrieved January 11, 2009, from <http://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/singi/titeki2/tyousakai/contents/dai3/3siryou2.pdf>
- METI (2003c). Kontentsu Sangyo Kokusai Senryaku Kenkyuukai: Chukan Torimatome. In Commerce and Information Policy Bureau Ministry of Economy Trade and Industry (Ed.) (pp. 9). Tokyo: Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry
- METI (2008). *Gijyutsu Senryaku Mappu*. Retrieved January 19, 2008, from http://www.meti.go.jp/policy/mono_info_service/contents/downloadfiles/gizyutumap.pdf
- METI (2009a). *Asia Content Business Summit 2009 Joint Declaration* Retrieved May 17, 2011, from http://www.meti.go.jp/policy/mono_info_service/contents/downloadfiles/JointDeclaration.pdf
- METI (2009b). *Brando Senryaku Akushon Pran (Brand Strategy Action Plan)*. Retrieved May 16, 2011, from <http://www.cas.go.jp/jp/seisaku/brand/dai02/nbap.pdf>
- Morgan, D., & Krueger, R. (1998). *The Focus Group Kit* (Vol. 1-6). California: SAGE Publications.
- Nye, J. (2004). *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. New York: Public Affairs.

- Rantanen, T. (2005). *The Media and Globalization*. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: SAGE Publications.
- Rutherford, J. (1990). Interview with Homi Bhabha. In J. Rutherford (Ed.), *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference* (pp. 207-221). London: Lawrence & Wishart.
- Straubhaar, J. (2007). *World Television: From Global to Local*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Sugiyama, T. (2006). *Kuuru Japan: Sekai ga Kaitagaru Nihon (Cool Japan: Japan Being Wanted by the World)*. Tokyo: Shodensha.
- Tadokoro, M. (2003). Sofuto Pawaa toiu Gaikou Shigen o Minaose (Reconsider Diplomacy Resources as Soft Power). *Chuokoron*, 118-5, 121-140.
- Vaughn, S., Schumm, J. S., & Sinagub, J. (1996). *Focus Group Interviews in Education and Psychology*. California USA: Sage.
- Walker, D., Walker, T., & Schmitz, J. (2003). *Doing Business Internationally: The Guide to Cross-Cultural Success*. New York: McGraw-Hill
- Yamazaki, S., & Tachioka, H. (2006). *Eizo Kontentsu Sangyo no Seisaku to Keiei (Audio Visual and Media Content Industry: Policy and Management)*. Tokyo: Chuokeizaisha.

2012 Upcoming Events

October 24-28 2012

ACE2012 - The Fourth Asian Conference on Education

November 2-4 2012

MediAsia2012 - The Third Asian Conference on Media & Mass Communication [Click Here](#)

FilmAsia2012 - The First Asian Conference on Film and Documentary

November 16-18 2012

ABMC2012 - The Third Asian Business & Management Conference [Click Here](#)

2013 Upcoming Events

Thursday March 28 - Sunday March 31, 2013

ACP2013 - The Third Asian Conference on Psychology and the Behavioral Sciences

ACERP2013 - The Third Asian Conference on Ethics, Religion and Philosophy

Thursday April 4 - Sunday, April 7, 2013

ACAH2013 - The Fourth Asian Conference on Arts and Humanities

LibrAsia2012 - The Third Asian Conference on Literature and Librarianship

Thursday April 25 - Sunday April 28, 2013

ACLL2013 - The Third Asian Conference on Language Learning

ACTC2013 - The Third Asian Conference on Technology in the Classroom

Friday May 24 - Sunday May 26, 2013

ACAS2013 - The Third Asian Conference on Asian Studies

ACCS2013 - The Third Asian Conference on Cultural Studies

Thursday June 6 - Sunday June 9, 2013

ACSS2013 - The Fourth Asian Conference on the Social Sciences

ACCS2013 - The Third Asian Conference on Sustainability, Energy and the Environment

Wednesday October 23 - Sunday October 27, 2013

ACE2013 - The Fifth Asian Conference on Education

ACETS2012 - The First Asian Conference on Education, Technology & Society

Friday November 8 - Sunday November 10, 2013

MediAsia2013 - The Fourth Asian Conference on Media & Mass Communication

FilmAsia2013 - The Second Asian Conference on Film and Documentary

Friday November 22 - Sunday November 24 2012

ABMC2013 - The Fourth Asian Business & Management Conference

For more information please visit [The International Academic Forum at www.iafor.org](http://www.iafor.org)

