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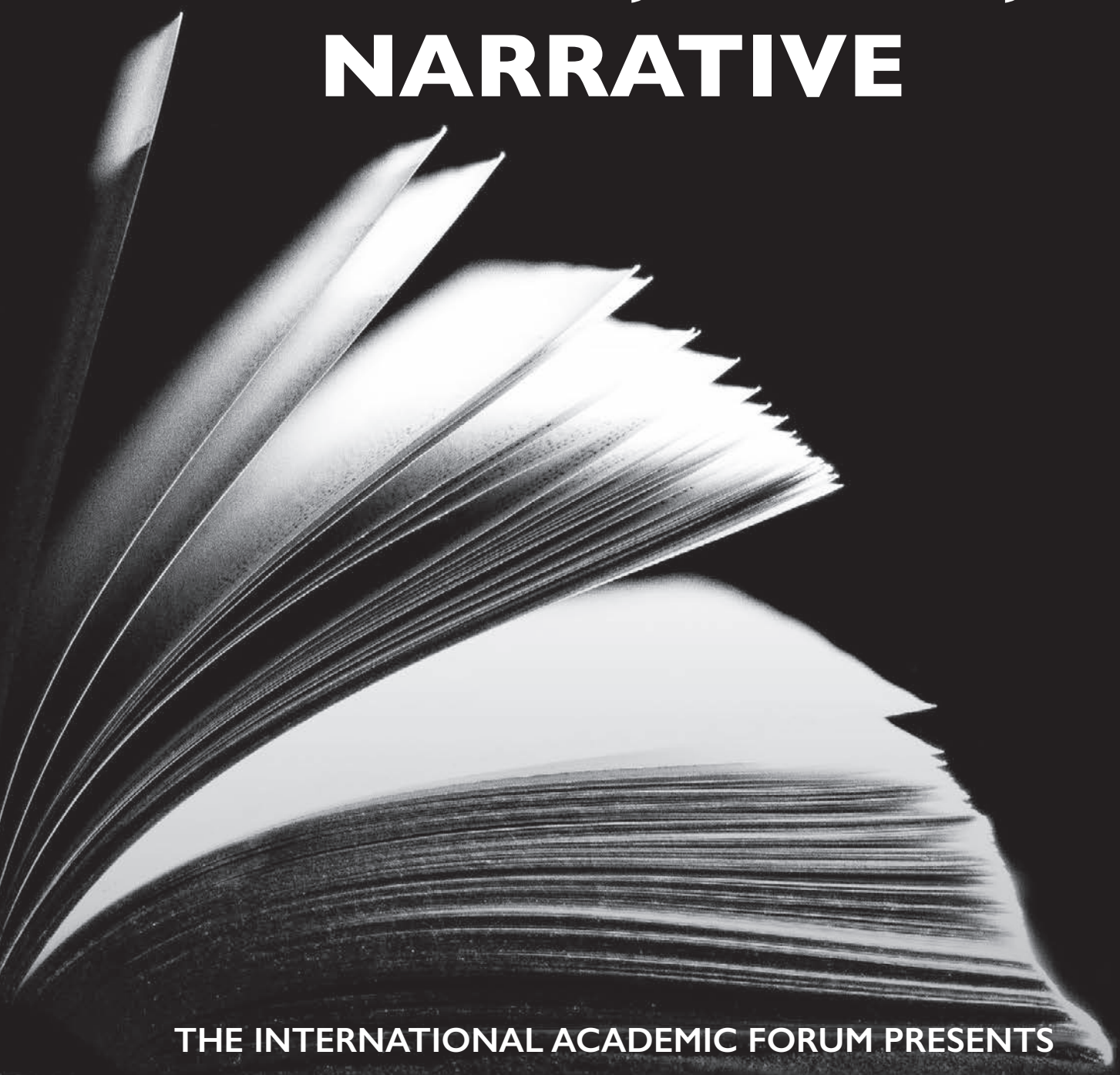

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# *Forced Departures and Fragmented Realities in Palestinian Memoirs*

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The Asian Conference on Literature 2017
Official Conference Proceedings

**Abstract**
The Arabic word *nakba* means "catastrophe". The Palestinians use this word to refer to the events that took place in Palestine before, during and after 1948. These events terminated both in the establishment of the state of Israel and the loss of Palestine. In the decades after 1948, the narratives of identity, exile and dispossession become the self-representation of survival. Palestinian memoir-writing, an amalgam of the personal and the political, well represents the ideas of self-representation, exile, displacement and collective memory which I seek to explore in a contemporary Palestinian memoir: Ghada Karmi's *In Search of Fatima: A Palestinian Story* (2002). This paper attempts to argue through a study of the memoir that there exists a shared national identity and collective memory within Palestine since *al-nakba*.
The project includes the study of the history of Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the significance of the genre of the memoir. Although a memoir is by definition a personal genre, the writer under scrutiny navigates between narrating her own story and illustrating a broader collective Palestinian history. In order to address the relationship between memory and history, as well as that between personal memory and the continuation of collective memory, the researcher considers the genre of memoir appropriate as it is suited to view it as nuanced portraits of the historical and contemporary socio-political landscape of Palestine from the perspective of victims.

Keywords: collective memory, Palestinian memoirs, displacement, exile, identity



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## Introduction

For more than 67 years, since the date of *Nakba*[1], it is estimated that more than 780,000 Palestinians were exiled. Later, more than 300,000 were evicted after Israel occupied the Gaza Strip and the West Bank in 1967. About four million Palestinians are displaced in their homeland, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and inside Israel. At present, more than ten million exiled Palestinians live in the diaspora (Saloul, 2009). The Palestinian al-nakba is hardly acknowledged outside the Middle East.

This paper is an attempt to gain a sensitive understanding of an on-going Palestinian-Israeli conflict that is recognized as a serious international conflict. However, Palestine exists most strongly in and through its narratives. Edward Said proposes that Palestinians have to struggle to maintain their identities "on at least two levels: first, as Palestinian with regard to the historical encounter with Zionism and the precipitous loss of a homeland; second as Palestinian in the existential setting of day-to-day life, responding to the pressure in the state of residence" (The Question of Palestine, 1993).

The Palestinian problem is mere complicated than the media portrayals. These memoirs could be seen as counter narratives to the creation of the state of Israel and offer resistance to the Israeli occupation of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. The writers elaborate the impact of living in exile on their relationships with their near and dear ones, and on their self-representation of Palestinian identity. Moreover, they negotiate with the restrictions that prevent many of them from returning home. Although these memoirs do not offer overt solutions to this contemporary conflict, they do gesture towards some possible directions. They offer a conspicuous historical and political context with respect to engaging with the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Consequently, the tragedy of the Palestinian nation is made accessible, acceptable and relatable to public through these meaningful memories.

## Starting from the bottom of core conflicts

In the decades after 1948, the narratives of identity, exile and dispossession become the self-representation of survival. If Edward Said's *Orientalism* argued against the denial of the humanity of Arabs through stereotypes, Zionism as a particular mutation of Orientalism negated the existence of Palestinians, insisting that Palestinian collective subjectivity does not exist. The narrative claims a Jewish historical presence in Palestine based on a timeless biblical attachment to the land while rejecting Palestinian historical counter-claims with brutal military force. The task for Palestinian writers, therefore, was to construct a counter discourse that would not only prove that they exist, but also expose the racist ideology and terrorist tactics used to cleanse Palestine ethnically in order to fulfill the fantasy of Zionist slogan of "a land without people for a people without a land" (Chomsky and Pappe, 2005).

[1] In 1948, the year known in Arabic as *Nakba* or the catastrophe. This massive humanitarian disaster marks the beginning of exile as Palestinians became stateless. However, Palestinians use the word to refer to the events that took place in Palestine before, during and after 1948.

For all Palestinians, who do not have their own state, especially for Palestinians in the diaspora who are not allowed to enter Palestine as a geographical place due to an arbitrary visa protocol created by Israeli government, Palestine exists most strongly as an imagined community. Consequently, the image of Palestine is particularly portrayed through memoirs. The memoirs explore what it means to be denied access to a particular geographical place and to have no nation. They articulate models of Palestinian nationhood which is based on an understanding of the nation as an autonomous, sovereign and delineated specific lines of race and ethnicity. By embedding the themes of self-representation, exile, displacement and return, the memoir becomes the key for the preservation of a collective memory (Varma, 2011).

As Palestinians continue to be denied the Right of Return[2] to their homeland, the relevance of al-nakba narratives has been increasing continuously and play a similar role as prison memoirs, war crime survivors, ethic cleansing and dehumanization of the Palestinians, in that they illustrate historical and political anguish by expressing the collective tragedy in individual experiences and adding the humanitarian dimension from historical and ideological positions. The writers use their memoirs as both personal and political narrative spaces. They wish not only to work through and document their own memories, but also wish to make political statements. In addition, memoirs could be considered as a political weapon also. They are the key narratives of Palestinian historical and political discourses as well. In other words, in taking direct aim at the Zionist negation of Palestinian rights, the memoirs of 1948 Palestinian exiles challenge the authority of the dominant discourse of Zionism. Memoirs of al-nakba indeed, are a powerful narrative signifier of contemporary Palestinian exilic consciousness.

Palestinian memoirs could be viewed as the colouring of the personal and the political. Through my research work, I would seek to explore the idea of self-representation, exile, displacement and return in two contemporary Palestinian memoirs: Ghada Karmi's *In Search of Fatima* (2002) and Salwa Salem's *The Wind in My Hair* (2007). It is a history of fact how Palestinians all over the world managed to maintain a shared national identity since al-nakba. The issue that would be taken up in this light would be to investigate questions which have been raised by these authors concerning the links between politics, ethics and aesthetics. For an aesthetic link, Azar Nafisi argues that the power of literature:

> link us to our past, provide us with critical insight into the present and enable us to envision our lives not just as they are but, as they should be or might become. Imaginative knowledge is not something you have today and discard tomorrow. It is a way of perceiving the world and relating to it. (3)

The research focuses on at the ways both their memories of Palestine, as well as their relationship to it in the present, as informed by their position as exiles. Finally, the research will raise awareness of unending problems, such as the denial of basic

[2] The Palestinian right of return is embodied in U.N. Resolution 194 of December 1948, and all other relevant U.N. resolutions. In fact, it is one of the most sensitive and complicated aspects of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. In Fact, this basic right is still rejected by Israeli government.

human rights in Palestine, segregation, discrimination, and racist apartheid by using Palestinian non-fiction in the light of a humanitarian perspective in order to gain in-depth understanding of the historical and contemporary socio-political landscape of Palestine and its diaspora. Horror of the Israeli military force and endless humiliation of Palestinian people will form the underpinning of such a violent history.

**Palestinian Identity and the Aftermath of Catastrophe: Ghada Karmi's *In Search of Fatima***

Karmi's *In Search of Fatima* is considered as an exploration of the impact of exile. For Palestinians, Al-Nakba represents the loss of the homeland, the disintegration of society, the frustration of national aspirations, and the beginning of destruction of Palestinian culture. According to this memoir, her childhood was obviously violently disrupted by al-nakba or the Catastrophe. Unsurprisingly, Al-Nakba is a hallmark of the destruction of her homeland. This event would define her life as one of exile. Karmi's experiences of exile and the accompanying feelings of estrangement and loss, as well as dislocation and nostalgia, cause her to feel alienated from both her identified homeland of Palestinian and her other places of residence as she states in her memoir that "In an instant, I was no longer the Ghada I had known all my life, but this alien creature, "Garda" (190). Moreover, Karmi's portrayal of her mother demonstrates a longing for Palestine as home. Her mother's recreation of the "home" has both personal and political resonances. At a personal level, she seeks to continue practicing Palestinian cultural norms to help relieve a feeling of homesickness. She states, "With our mother at home maintaining a traditional life-style, he assumed that we would naturally retain our identity as Arabs and Muslims without other help" (208). In addition, her mother's recreation of Palestine is also a political gesture, a way of recreating the lost homeland.

Moreover, Karmi's writing is also viewed as the psychological dislocation of the exile and the impact of living in exile on identity construction. She eventually mentions her exile as a permanent condition with "no return." The departure was confusing for Karmi but there was a sense that she and her family would return soon. Eventually, she has realised that she does not have "return" as a choice. Her experience of living in exile brings her to a deep feeling of homelessness, neither England nor Palestine. In other words, she personally feels more English than Arab, yet is not considered English enough by many around her. She expresses in her memoir that she feels "truly displaced, dislocated in both mind and body, straddled between two countries and unable to belong in either" (422).

Last but not least Karmi's text is a clear specimen of how to illustrate the theme of exile; how the experience of suffering in exile would be for the Palestinian diaspora. She narrates that "I realise that, I persisted. "But the fact is there are two peoples here, unequal in every respect because the one consider itself superior to the other. It's clear for anyone to see that Arabs in this country live separate, excluded lives. In the rest of the world, we call it racism" (442). I will further point out that she intentionally narrates a version of Palestine exile as a counter narrative to the Israeli nationalism. Additionally, it serves as a re-interpretation of certain dominant media representations of Palestinians.

## Living Memory of Displacement and Belonging: Salwa Salem's *The Wind in My Hair*

As mentioned earlier, al-Nakba led first to the dispersion of Palestinians and to the loss of their homeland. Almost every Palestinian has, in one way or another, been affected by the interminable catastrophe. The Catastrophe, therefore, led to the emergence of two categories of Palestinians: the Palestinians from the inside and the Refugees. This chapter will engage with Salwa Salem's *The Wind in My Hair* which exposes the difficulties most Palestinians experience under Israeli occupation. It powerfully illustrates the Palestinian problems from the 1930s to the present day. Salem started writing her memoir as she was dying from cancer. She narrates her childhood memories of fleeing from Jaffa, relating her memory of Palestine with nostalgia for her home, the big villa, the fields of oranges, grapefruits, citrus groves and the sea. She was only eight years old at that time when she (and many Palestinians) had to depart from her homeland in 1948. She further articulates, "The distance between Jaffa and Kafr Zibad is not far, because Palestine is small and it takes very little time to cross from one end to another, but the journey was atrocious. There were terrifying scenes along the way: destruction everywhere, tens of thousands of people walking without knowing where they were going" (15). She employs her personal experiences of suffering and displacement to represent the loss of Palestine and to continuously create a narrative to stand against the Israeli version. Then she explicitly states, "though we did not know it yet, my family along with thousands of other Palestinian families, had permanently lost our right to return to our city, our home and our land" (16). As a result, she and her family remain refugees across the world. However, she is displaced not only outside her country but also internally in her homeland. Memoir for her becomes a narrative of both individual and collective displacement.

Salem has encountered difficulties of displacement in her new countries. She, therefore, struggles to find answers to the question of belonging. The humiliating experiences through harsh racism, discrimination and exclusion can been seen throughout her story, as she portrays her inner tension of displacement disturbed by her experience "when we went out onto the street in Saudi Arabia the other children would shout in chorus, "Italian, Italian!" My children had had to overcome the problem of being different in Italy, and now they had to face the same thing in an Arab country." (177) Consequntly, she has realised that she is always out of place both in Arab and Western world. At this point, Salem does not feel a strong connection to the Middle East. Her experience in Saudi Arabia is a turning point in her life. She decides to remain in Italy. She goes on to say, "Our children seemed to emerge from a nightmare. They were in seventh heaven when we arrived home. They were as delighted as if they had been released from prison" (179). Both in an individual and collective level, the experiences of displacement and belonging have reflected a deep psychological mark on the survival Palestinians which is a feeling of uncertainty, vulnerability and fear that strikes them.

## Conclusion

"… to be Palestinian is, in part of upbringing, in part of sensibility, to be a wanderer, an exile, a touch moon-mad, always a little different from others. Our name, which is acquired after 1948, was not so much a national title- we had no nation- as an existential term."

- Fawaz Turki, *Exile's Return: the Making of a Palestinian American*

Diaspora, exile and immigrancy are important features in selected Palestinian memoirs. Although the Palestinian national movement predated 1948 by several decades, there is not one Palestinian family that has been unaffected by this loss. Forced movement as well as the condition of exile that scattered families and communities have produced specific lifestyles, cultural beliefs and new identifications. As the Palestinians continued to be denied the right of return, the Palestinian narrative of the nakba will continue to be written without end. Selected memoirs also suggest that the process of identity formation of Palestinians is not only determined historically by the loss of their homeland during 1948 but also crucially by the open-endedness of their ongoing catastrophe.

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# *Prisms of History: Edward Said's Humanism*

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**Abstract**
The long and winding history of the Israeli-Arab dispute along with divergent historical, geopolitical and theological interpretations should be complicated for one to make definite moral judgment. However, the cross-cultural dynamics between the Israeli Jew and the Palestinian Arab and between the West and the East in general provide a historical and political context in which the genesis and genealogy of Edward Said's entire critical practice should be understood. Said emphasizes the critical practice of secular humanism which comprehends the human world from a secular historical perspective. Said's secular humanism arises from a critical and political reaction to and resistance against the rhetorical, ideological and strategic appeal to religious authority by Israel and the USA. The Israeli Zionist movement derives from the biblical source to justify its reclamation of the "Promised Land" and its creation of the modern Jewish identity and nationality as members of the "Chosen People". Religious references and narratives appear to be indispensable in the formation of people and nation. It is partly as a reaction towards the Third World decolonization movement and domestic multiculturalist movement for the rights of cultural and social minorities. By deploying the justifications of European colonialism, Zionism effectively adopted the racial concepts of European culture. Zionism, therefore, has inevitably marked both Jews and Palestinians. For the latter, it is significant to recognize that despite a concerted effort to subsume them within the various parts of the Middle East, they have been persisted, retaining their culture, their politics and their uniqueness.

Keywords: Edward Said, humanism, postcolonialism, non-violent resistance, zionist

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"Of course. I'm the last Jewish intellectual. You don't know anyone else. All your other Jewish intellectuals are now suburban squires. From Amoz Oz to all these people here in America. So I'm the last one. The only true follower of Adorno. Let me put it this way: I'm a Jewish-Palestinian."
-Edward Said, *Power, Politics and Culture*

Edward Wadie Said, a Palestinian-American academic and writer is one of the most influential thinkers in the 21st century. He is considered as a travelling theorist, situating himself in various theories. For instance, the trajectory of his interest takes him from structuralism to deconstructive theory, after which he moved on to philology and history (Davis, 2007). Consequently, he goes beyond rigid systems.

Said was born in Jerusalem in 1935. He was brought up and educated in British colonial schools in Cairo, Egypt. His father, Wadie Said, was a successful businessman with an American citizenship. Said's mother, Hilda Said, was a Nazarene Christian. She was really fond of language, aesthetics and music. Both of his parents had been educated from either British or American missionary institutions. Obviously, Said and his family were members of Christian minority in the Arab world. When Said was a student in Cairo, he was really lonely. Therefore, literature and music were the only outlet for him to relieve his loneliness. However, Hilda, Said's mother, had been his closest companion for his first twenty-five years of his life (Ashcroft and Ahluwalia, 1999). After that, he was sent to America for his secondary and tertiary education in 1951.

Later on, he started working as an English and Comparative literature Professor at Columbia University. However, Palestine was claimed to be a motherland for Said and his family because the exile and dispossession happened in 1947-1948 when he was only a young boy. Said acknowledged himself to the Jewish minority in American cultural and historical contexts as a matter of fact that the Jews are historically people of exile and dispossession. It is the condition of exile, an existential, cultural and geographical displacement and alienation from their own cultural and national existence and consciousness. Consequently, the tension among different cultures, religions, languages and identities has been in Said's consciousness since then. It could be probably considered as the beginning of the paradox in his own identity, the US based Palestinian. For Edward Said, identity is included in his bicultural setting, bilingual name and mother tongues. This ambiguity has been at the heart of recent criticism of Said's work.

Undoubtedly, Said gained an emotional, intellectual and cultural reflection on his Palestinian American identity. Moreover, the outbreak of Israeli-Arab war in 1967 brought such turning point in Said's life and his intellectual formation. It was not only because he was an Arab but also what the Israeli-Arab war dawned on him was the ironic and tragic realization. In other words, the war underscored the combined religious, cultural, historical, national and especially political conflicts, highlighting existential, cultural, historical and political subjugation and anti-humanism on Palestine.

After the 1967 war, Edward Said dramatically started writing on the interrelating between literary criticism, politics and history. Moreover, Said was elected as a member of the Palestinian National Council (PNC) from 1977 to 1991, becoming the

most prominent advocate in the U.S. of the cause of Palestinian independence. Actually, there is a long history of the Israeli-Arab dispute, which is complicated; history, geography and theological interpretations are involved. Therefore, it is uneasy to draw a definite judgment. For the Israeli Jew, the Zionist movement derives from the bible to make a claim that this particular area is the *Promised Land*, the location for geography of Jewish national identity as members of the *Chosen People*. The Palestinian Arabs have no right in that land. According to Nicholas Bethell's article (The View from the West Bank, 1980), Arabs were driven into exile. Said met the political upheaval by constructing a secular Palestinian identity based on justice and equality. Then he began to write about Palestine after the Israeli-Arab war, his first work on Palestine was *The Question of Palestine (1980)*, portrays the Palestinian position via keeping in view an American audience. Because of his passion on the injustice that accompanied the establishment of the modern state of Israel, he put all his effort to create a counter narrative to the common western view that Arabs as terrorists and murderers of innocent victims. Correspondingly, his work gradually transformed the intellectual landscape of the humanities and the social sciences. Said wrote in "The Public Role of Writers and Intellectual" in *The Nation* (17 September 2001), "Still just as history is never over or complete, it is also the case that some dialectical oppositions are not reconcilable, not transcendable, not really capable of being folded into a source of higher, undoubtedly more noble, synthesis. I have always believed, cannot really be simple revolved by a technical and ultimate janitorial rearrangement of geography allowing dispossessed Palestinians the right (such as it is) to live in about 20 percent of their land, which could be encircled by and totally dependent on Israel…"

In terms of Palestine, the Zionist idea of a homeland, which eventually saw the establishment of Israel, was prepared for in advance by the knowledge accumulated by British scholars, administrators and experts who have been involved in exploring the area from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. It is this knowledge that permitted the Zionists to maintain arguments similar to the British imperial enterprise. By deploying the justifications of European colonialism, Zionism effectively adopted the racial concepts of European culture. While in *Orientalism* it was pointed out how anti-Semitism was transferred from a Jewish to an Arab target, said argues that Zionism itself internalized such representations and rendered the Palestinian as backward and therefore in need of being dominated. As Nicholas Bethell points out in the article "The View From the West Bank" in 1980 that "The Palestinians, he tells us, have been reviled and rejected as a people their race and religion dismissed as backward and degenerate". In the last hundred years, hence Zionism has inevitably marked both Jews and Palestinians. For the latter, it is significant to recognize that despite a concerted effort to subsume them within the various parts of the Middle East, they have been persisted, retaining their culture, their politics and their uniqueness.

That is to say that the outburst of Israeli-Arab war in 1967 is Edward Said's political emergence. Edward Said wanted to make a statement on the existence of Palestine and the reality of the Palestinian people. In other words, he raised the questions on Palestinian national existence, land and human rights. According to Said, Israel was constructed as the Occident and Palestine as the Orient. As a result, the projection of Islam that is represented in the West has been one of the major themes in Said's work. In addition, it is a well-known fact that Edward Said was an intellectual who paid

close attention to the ethical and political effects of representation. In Said's work, especially in the book named *Orientalism* (1978), he was fascinated by how people of the Western world view people and things from different cultures, particularly from the East. Orientalism is a part of a trilogy, including *The Question of Palestine* (1980) and *Covering Islam* (1981) are not only about Palestine, but also about representations of Islam in the contemporary world (Ashcroft and Ahluwalia, 1999). Furthermore, Said made it crystal clear that Islam is not a monolithic entity, yet it is more complicated and diverse around the world as stated by Césaire (cite in Ashcroft and Ahluwalia, 1999),"No race has a monopoly on beauty or intelligence, or strength, and there will be a place for all at the rendezvous of victory."

However, the most influential book, Orientalism, was heavily influenced by Michel Foucault's discourse and its power over people theories. Said employed Foucault's notion of discourse to understand and analyze Orientalism as a discursive formation. Later on, Said moved away from Foucault's work because Foucault paid too much attention to power and domination. As a consequent, Foucault did not believe in any kinds of positive truths, ideas and ideals. Said, therefore, shifted to Antonio Gramsci's hegemony. Said made the sound of hegemony more like Rousseau's social contract, which agreed by both sides rather than by a dominant force. It is obvious that Said, unlike Foucault, takes great care to make a clear distinction between humanism and humanists (who are active practitioners of humanism). Furthermore, Said thinks that the same humanists who have some mistakes can be taught to be better humanists also. The reason is that the fault is not with humanism as a theory but the problem is with the specific historical ways humanism has been used to betray its promise (Radhakrishnan, 2007). It can be concluded that Vico showed that people make history; Gramsci showed that people could unmake history through a long war of position, which could be taken place in the press or even schools. Consequently, it shows his politicizing influence on literary.

Nonetheless, Said does not have any bias towards Western or Eastern sides as observed by a number of critics and scholars. Said is not anti-Jewish or an anti-American, his criticism stems from both exile Jewish intellectual and the historically created nation of America, which he is strongly attached. His consciousness is split between two perspectives, an analysis of the Western interpretation (Occident) of the East (Orient). With his Western education, Said has an understanding of Western history and literature. However, with his Palestinian roots, his inner tension needed to be compromised. It can be stated that Said is a US- based Palestinian literary critic, cultural commentator and political activist in a Western world.

In addition, Edward Said pays much attention to culture. For him, culture is considered as the most powerful medium of imperial hegemony both systematic and hidden ways in colonization, while imperialism in Said's definition is 'the practice, theory and attitudes of a dominating metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory' (cited in Ashcroft and Ahluwalia, 1999). Therefore, he wrote *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), a collection of essays that elucidated his deep understanding of those writers, like George Eliot, Austen, and Kipling. Culture is taken into account here because it keeps imperial power flourished over the colonized world. Moreover, power is strongly maintained through culture. Consequently, Said's *Culture and Imperialism* starts with this statement that political and economic operations of power are nothing without culture. In other words, his aim in this book is to shed some lights on the

relation between culture and imperialism that could be claimed that culture as imperialism. It is obvious that imperial discourse displays native people were subjugated. Therefore, it can be implied that European superiority is over others, people and culture. One of the clear examples in imperial culture is the novel. The novel seems like a message or a reflection behind imperialism. For instance, according to the British imperial policy throughout the nineteenth century, the novel supposed to actively depict Britain as an imperial centre. Moreover, one of the crucial functions of the novel is to keep the empire in a certain place, and not to question about the idea projected in that novel. Then Said found out that the roles of society, politics and power that play a major role on literature are the key concepts. In addition, he had highlighted the links between the literary world and political world (Irrera, 2014). Subsequently, it is explained about the relationship between cultural practice and political resistance. Later on, he had pointed out that how the continue references to the late tradition of late bourgeois humanism were extremely problematic since that tradition actually implied values suggestive of European superiority over other cultures and people.

Edward Said has identified his intellectual and political works with humanism. Consequently, Said referred Giambattista Vico, a philosopher, as his constant reference in order to define his "humanism" (Davis, 2007). He believed that a deep belief in the power of the individual, men and women, to think new things and make intellectual history actively and it can also be changed by human rather than God who works in history. In other words, humanism for Said is tied up to men. Moreover, there are always men who created great works that represented the human endeavor. Hence, it revealed his secular, nonreligious way of thinking. In other words, his works are well known because of secular critical idea.

Then what is humanism in Said's view? Humanism for him is an intellectual and moral belief. It is the foundation of his critical, literary and political practice. In other words, his humanism is a historically specific and politically conscious resistance against cultural, political and intellectual oppression. Said as a critical intellectual. His literary criticism is secular and wordly because his criticism depends on the historical circumstances and political conditions under the period that the work is produced.

Said's "Humanism and Democratic Criticism" (2004) is the comprehensible example of the shifting from post-colonial criticism to humanistic interpretation. In other words, this book is about the nature of and the need for humanistic studies in the present time (Irrera, 2014). According to Said's Humanism and Democratic Criticism, "Humanism is about reading, it is about perspective, and in our works as humanists, it is about transitions from one realm, one area of human experience to another. It is also about the practice of identities other than those given by the flag or the national war of the moment… ", it shows that in Said's view, humanism is a long dialogue between a reader and an author (Radhakrishnan, 2007). In addition, he illustrates that humanist starts from a societal and political horizon marked by conflict and power relation. Finally, he concludes that through philology the humanities can find themselves again. The reason is because the ones with patience and endeavor who devote their time for close reading of great books not only can find the way to understand a humanistic text but also achieve a massive front-loading of knowledge. As he stated in *Humanism and Democratic Criticism* (2004) that, "What concerns me is humanism as a useable praxis for intellectuals and academics who want to know

what they are doing, what they are committed to as scholars, and who want also to connect these principles to the world in which they live as citizens".

To summarize, Edward W. Said appeals to show how representation is inextricably linked to power related dynamics with a strong Eurocentric connotation throughout his works. Said, unlike other scholars, held to the idea that literature had meaning and anyone could discover the meaning by the extensive knowledge of world literature and philosophy. Edward Said, therefore, is not considered as a literary scholar, post-colonial critic, but also as a humanist.

## Conclusion

For Edward Said, humanistic or historical knowledge can only come from criticism. What is humanism for Said? Why does he continuously advocate humanism as praxis for intellectuals and critics? Subsequently, how one understands humanism is consequent upon one's entire worldview. Said understands the human in terms of human existential activities: language, knowledge, criticism, theory and politics as historical. Each historical period or stage is understood as a whole in which all human activities intertwine with and interpenetrate one another. Said understands and judges a work of literature not just in terms of its cultural or national origin but in close relation to its historical knowledge of literature that Said practices his humanism. This study proposes to examine four major critical categories as classified by Said himself: literature, theory, politics, and aesthetics and attempts to show Said's humanism through his critical practice.

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# *Femininity and Masculinity in Twenty-First Century Thai Romantic Fictions*

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**Abstract**
The main purpose of this study is to examine the modes of subjectivity and discourses of femininity and masculinity found in Thai romantic novels published in the 21th Century. First, I will discuss generic conventions in Thai romance. Additionally, I will seek to locate it within the socio-cultural contexts of Thai society, which influence the constitution of Thai gender relations and the transformation of gender norms. Finally, I will compare changes within narrative discourses on ideologies concerning gender operating in Thai romantic fictions written in the last century. This study suggests that Thai romance incorporate universal aspects of romance and specifically Thai conventions of romance. Apparently, Thai gender relations are complicated because there are various culturally specific aspects that influence the construction of femininity and masculinity. Transformations of gender values and norms have been discovered when compared to romantic fictions written in the 20th Century, particularly in female sexuality. Thus, the representation of gendered subjectivity in Thai romantic fictions after 2000 indicates changes in the construction of male and female subjectivity.

Keywords: Femininity, Masculinity, Romantic Fictions

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## Introduction

In the West, he 1960s and 1970s saw insightful, extensive scholarships on the romance genre. Some critics claim that romance confines women to traditional roles of a wife and a mother and this relegates women to accept secondary, dependent roles. These critics further explain that the happy ending in fact ignores the heroine's freedom and abilities and imprisons the heroine in marriage (Regis 2003). However, some argue that romance facilitates female freedom and the reader of the genre has the power to decide, accept, and reject what they conceive. Regarding these points, it is my interest to study the portrayal of characters, especially females in Thai romantic fictions written in the Twenty-First Century. It is a textual analysis with the aim to explore how romance is related to society and the specificity of romance as a genre.

In particular, my presupposition is that to a certain extent the media might have some influence on the reader or the viewer. According to Stuart Hall's "The Work of Representation", representation is the production of meaning through language (Hall 1997, p.19) and in order to understand the meaning the reader or the viewer must interpret the message or decode it. Decoding is a process that needs consensual understanding. In other words, it needs what Hall calls 'shared conceptual meaning' which depends considerably on culture. The work of representation is not straightforward, but complex and political. Thus, the representation of men and women in a popular genre such as romance is related to culture to a certain degree. Social expectations of gender found in romance might reveal the politics of gender construction found in romance. Yet, the meanings taken into language such as romance might be accepted or rejected by its audience. However, this paper will focus on only the underlying meanings through the portrayal of characters to examine the construction of meanings in the studied texts only.

In this paper, I define romantic fiction as writing about love and relationships and will interchangeably use romantic fiction and romance novels to refer to these particular stories. Specifically, I regard romance as a cultural phenomenon. The texts that I have randomly selected for this textual analysis were written after 2000 by female authors: *New-Man-About-Town* (2008), *Cupid Awake* (2015), and *Fight with Love* (2016).


In this paper, I analyse the modes of subjectivity and femininity discourses to be found in Thai romance in the Twenty-First Century, placing those romances in relation to Thai discourses of gender. My theoretical assumptions are the following:

1. Meaning is both social and plural;
2. Meaning is produced within discourses that are material practices that are also relations of power;
3. Discourses produce and shape subjectivity within specific contexts;
4. Subjectivity is plural and changing.

In the Thai context, reading romance novels is typically a leisure activity of the middle class since middle-class women have more time and disposable income. Romance fiction is not cheap, so working-class women prefer watching TV series instead because several TV series are adapted from romance fiction, it can be assumed that ideological discourses in the novels are also transmitted in the television adaptation. These similar ideologies circulate in different types of media.

**Conventions of Thai Romance**

In the Thai language, romance novels are called *niyay-pha-fun* (novels that induce dreams); this connotes the sense of fantasy or illusion, which is linked to dreams. For this reason the meaning of romance in Thai is similar to its Western counterpart in that romance is largely fantasy and wish-fulfillment. Traditionally, Thai romance starts with the displacement of the major character(s), and love and courtship are followed by separation from the loved one, adventures, and the return to the previous realm. It

also reproduces the belief in the law of karma as in the representation of displacement of the protagonists. In Western romance, the displacement of the protagonists mostly applies to the heroine, in part, because of the influence of Greek myths like Persephone's abduction by Hades. Unlike its Western counterpart, displacement in traditional Thai romance mostly applies to the hero. It is his quest for power, love, and enlightenment. Two romantic novels in the Twenty-First Century, *New-Man-About-Town* and *Fight with Love*, present the displacement of the heroes and their quest for true love. In *Cupid Awake*, the protagonists swap bodies. In this regard, it implies the displacement of both the hero and the heroine.

Typically, the plot of *niyay-pha-fun* portrays the protagonists as faced with some difficulties in the beginning and gain happiness in the end (Theppayasuwan 1992). This reveals that one feature of Thai romance is a happy ending. According to Theppayasuwan, *niyay-pha-fun* illustrates a more beautiful life than a miserable flawed life to the reader and this is regarded as unreal or surreal. The portrayal of the protagonists is exceptionally good while the villains are portrayed negatively to the protagonists. Besides, coincidence is also essential in *niyay-pha-fun*.

Aim-on Chitasophon, a Thai scholar, defines Thai classical romance literature as unrealistic stories which are about love, adventures and loyalty to the royal family with a focus on entertainment (Chitasophon 1992). According to Chitasophon, Thai classical romance literature consistently maintains the Buddhist trilogies of impermanence, suffering, and non-identity. The principle of samsara, or the cycle of life, is also taken into account. In this regard, it can be said that to some extent Thai romance literature is similar to the Western romance in the medieval period that tells stories about chivalry and knights' adventures. Typically, traditional Thai romance usually refers to the royal tales written in poetic form with a conventional plot and the return to rule the kingdom (Kongthong 2006). Unlike Western romance, traditional Thai romance reproduces the law of karma as presented in the displacement of the protagonists, especially of the hero.

Specifically, prose has become the medium in fictional writing in the reign of Rama VI (1910-1925) (Rutnin 1988, p. 11); thus, it can be said that writing fiction in prose has been imported into the country. Previously, prose writing was found in official documents such as royal decrees, public announcements, laws, historical records, letters, and legal or business transactions (ibid). In other words, prose writing was non-fiction. Before the Twentieth Century, Thai romance was in a poetic form and those who wrote romance were poets. Rutnin, a Thai scholar in Thai literature, believes Thais are more excellent in writing poetry than prose writing. When comparing between Western prose writing and Thai prose writing, she claims that the former is far more excellent while Thai prose writing in general "lack sophistication, articulateness, and clarity of thought and expression (ibid., p. 10).

**Gender Relations in Thailand**

In the Thai context, an important period in the constitution of power/knowledge relations dates back to the Thirteenth Century. From the Thirteenth Century to the Eighteenth Century, the hegemonic constitution of gender draws heavily on Buddhism. The collective ideology of proper Thai womanhood, *Nang Kaew* or the Perfect Woman, was created by a monk who was a member of the royal family over

700 years ago. Crucially, the image of female ideology was transcribed to the Buddhist literary text and constructed by the sovereign, men at the top of the pyramid. In accordance with the Thai anthropologist Pranee Wongtes who contends that the patriarchal system in Southeast Asia works together with imported religious ideology to limit women's roles to supporters while leading roles belong to men (Wongtes 2006, p.97).

Thai society is hierarchical in its nature; thus Buddhism might not be a central site of gender discourses. For example, sexuality has been viewed as a part of the normal life cycle and virginity is not regarded as essential among Thai peasants (Tannenbaum 1999). In this regard, virginity seems to entail a modern intention of a desirable female image. According to a survey in 2005, both Thai men and women accept male sexual freedom and Thai women tend to tolerate extramarital commercial sexual relations of their partners (Tienthai 2005).

Specifically Thai men have practiced polygyny for centuries because it is a sign of power, virility, and wealth while the preferred qualities of Thai femininity are being proper (Riaproi), sweet (onwann), and not a loose woman (rak nuan sanguan tau) (Panitchpakdi, 34). From this basis, the definition of good and bad Thai women is inextricably linked to the family, the institution that constructs the female role of daughter, wife, and mother (Harrison, 1999).

An important issue of Thai gender relations is *mia noi* (a mistress or minor wife). It has always been a problematic issue and is depicted as a central conflict in *New-Man-About-Town*, one of the romantic fictions used in my paper. As mentioned earlier, research suggests that Thai women prefer their partner to engage in commercial extramarital relationships. That is because non-commercial extramarital relationship, or having *mia noi*, is a larger threat to wife-husband relationships. The practice can be dated back at least to the 18$^{th}$ Century and was normal until the first half of the 21$^{st}$ Century. The issue of *mia noi* reveals Thai cultural beliefs regarding male superiority. Traditionally, it signifies men's power and charisma as shown in the characteristics of heroes in Thai folklore. Because of the belief that men have stronger sexual needs, it is permitted for men to have a sexual outlet either by having a *mia noi* or paying a visit to prostitutes while women, especially middle-class women, are ideally expected not to have sex before marriage and are not allowed to have extramarital relationships at all.

Even though Thai law at present only allows a man to have one wife at a time, in actual practice many Thai men still maintain the practice of having mistresses. As presented in *New-Man-About-Town*, the issue of *mia noi* is a sensitive, serious issue for women and is a major conflict between the protagonists. The fact that a man can take a *mia noi* regardless of his wife's consent is a real threat for a woman. A wife has right to turn to the law for a divorce and ask for money from her husband for parental custody. In the case of the heroine in *New-Man-About-Town*, she asks for a divorce when she believes that the hero has an extramarital relationship with the female antagonist.

Another distinctive aspect of Thai male characteristic that can be found in Thai traditional folklore is being *jao chu* (a womanizer). The term can be applied to both men and women, but only men are permitted to be *jao chu*, not women. At present,

terms such as playboy and Casanova refer exclusively to a male womanizer. In *Cupid Awake*, The heroine understands that the hero is an arrogant superstar and a womanizer. Later, the hero changes his sexual behaviour after having an affair with the heroine. It can be read that the virgin heroine changes him and because her quality he stops being a philanderer since he has found "true love". Both *New-Man-About-Town* and *Cupid Awake* suggests that having extramarital relationships and being *jao chu* are undesirable male characteristics according to female protagonists' perspectives. Societal acceptance of male attributes has possibly changed. Female authors also regard these attributes as unacceptable; however, outside the world of fiction, men may still practice like their antecedents since they are not traditional consumers of romance.

**Characterisation in the Selected Romance**

According to George Paizis, who wrote *Love and the Novel: The Poetics and Politics of Romantic Fiction*, characters "are a focal point in the narrative, a device for setting it into motion and one of the signs contributing to the production of meaning" (Paizis 1998, p. 74) and suggests that the key element to look at in romance is the conflict because it moves the story forward. In romance it is the conflict between "power" and "quality". As portrayed in the three selected novels, all the protagonists, male and female, must prove their qualities. By qualities I mean cultural qualities rather than universal qualities because it needs specific socio-cultural contexts for the reader to decode.

In the case of these three romantic fictions, all the protagonists have to show that they are qualified partners, both male and female. In *New-Man-About-Town*, the hero and the heroine get married in the first quarter of the story. Although he has got a PhD and works as a business consultant, the hero has to prove his masculinity to the heroine. Since he appears as a moral, shy man, the heroine suspects that he is not heterosexual. The heroine manages to prove his sexual preference before getting married by asking him to stay overnight at the seaside together. The shy, inexperienced hero is described as traditional because he believes that sex should come after marriage and tries to suppress his desire when the heroine makes sexual advances on him. This frustrates the heroine; however, after the hero understands her plan, they have an affair and it implies to the reader that both of them never had a sexual experience. Yet, they might know something about sex and are not too naïve. It suggests that virginity is regarded as important for male and female protagonists. When the hero proves himself, the heroine misunderstands that he has an extramarital relationship with one of the models in her company who is a female rival. It is the female rival and the heroine's male relative who encourage the hero to question the heroine's quality. At the end when truth is revealed, they recognize that things are set up and they reconcile. In fact, their qualities have been proved. The hero shows the qualities of a good husband whom the heroine can rely on. The heroine shows that she is moral, reasonable, and trustworthy.

In *Cupid Awake*, the hero has to prove that he is a qualified husband and father. The story uses flashback to show that a successful novelist, the heroine, had a car crash with the hero, an arrogant superstar. The conflict starts because the hero's effort is in vain. He threw money in the heroine's face. He accuses her of earning money from a car accident. Accidentally, they have an affair because the heroine gets drunk and goes

to the hero's bedroom instead of her own when both travel to the sea. Later, because of the supernatural storm, they swap bodies. The hero is displaced to the heroine's body and the heroine is in his. They start learning about each other in their displacement from their own bodies and the hero is pregnant within the heroine's body. They return to their own bodies when the hero is giving birth. Like a conventional heroine, the heroine in *Cupid Awake* does not recognize her beauty. She is described as a tomboy because her parents get divorced and she does not want to have a feminine look, which implies weaknesses. Strikingly, when the hero resides in her body, he transforms her after his style. In her body, he has refractive surgery and changes her clothes to look more feminine and attractive. He learns to apply make-up and it is the heroine's face that he applies cosmetics to. In so doing, he creates the heroine's identity to please himself. Accordingly, he has to prove that he is not a womanizer and is really willing to have a family. He exposes the female villain's lies about sexual relationships. After he returns to his body, he makes a decision to choose the heroine and his child instead of his career. This suggests his moral quality of a husband and a father. In *Cupid Awake*, not only does the hero transform into the heroine, as taken from Janice A. Radway's analysis of the ideal romance, the heroine also transforms "the hero's emotional indifferences and sexual promiscuity into expressions of love, constant displays of affection, and the promise of marital fidelity" (Radway 1984, p. 127).

*Fight with Love* also reveals the hero's true self as a nice, warm man. He was previously hurt because the woman he loves marries a male villain, saying that he is too good. He bitterly decides to be a 'bad' man because he does not want to be a loser anymore. This book is a comedy. The hero shows an attempt to be 'bad' by adjusting his voice, his gesture, and manners. He flees from his identity by disguising himself as an employee in a Chinese bun shop and the heroine is the sister of the business rival of that shop. However, the hero cannot successfully hide his positive qualities from the smart heroine. She gradually learns that the hero is not what he appears. Besides his physical appearance, because of his morality, he is worthy of love. In this novel, a male villain is depicted sparingly as a husband of the woman the hero loves, the negation of the hero's positivity.

*New-Man-About-Town* grants power to the heroine whose family owns a factory and this guarantees her financial status. She is in her early thirties, and the hero is about 10 years older. The older age of the hero signifies the hierarchy of the characters. In *Cupid Awake*, this pattern is also employed. The hero is in his thirties while the heroine is depicted to work as a novelist for a few years after she graduated from university. The difference in age can signify greater economic security too. As a superstar, the hero can earn much more than the heroine. This reinforces his top position on the social pyramid. He is socially superior to the heroine, a real object of both social and sexual desire. *Fight with Love* also depicts the hero as powerful through his financial status and his age. From these three novels, only *New-Man-About-Town* portrays the heroine whose social status is higher than the hero. However, the hero's background from the lower-middle class reveals his positivity as an ambitious person who works hard and fights for his success. His financial stability does not come from luck, but from being hard-working and this is his real power. In short, these three romantic fictions show that men with power in age and economic status are desirable.

Significantly, these three romantic fictions portray the heroines who recognize their sexuality and desire unlike the heroines in the previous century. The heroine in *New-Man-About-Town* asks the hero to spend a night together at the beach although this is not regarded as 'proper'. However, the heroine is justified because she wants to prove the hero's sexual orientation. Thus, when the heroine flirts with the hero, it is understandable. Unlike the female villain who is seductive and snake-like, the heroine seduces only the hero, her eligible husband. In *Cupid Awake*, the heroine is described as enjoying her first affair with the hero although she regards him as her enemy. In *Fight with Love*, the hero might give a kiss, but it is the heroine who expresses her stronger desire because the hero's lips are described as swollen and chapped.

## Conclusion

Changes in characterisation have been found in Twenty-First Thai romance. In my previous study on Thai romantic fictions in the Twentieth Century, Thai romance reflects inferior and objectified female protagonists, particularly because they are objects of the male gaze (Khuankaew 2015). The ideal heroine appears sexually passive and virginity is a must. However, in the last decade of the Twentieth Century, I have found changes in Thai romance which can be regarded as progressive. For instance, more attention to the sexiness of the hero and his physical appearance is found in a book written in 1990s while this was not regarded as important in books written before the last decade of the Twentieth Century. Generally, the hero was depicted as being handsome with few descriptions of his appearance when compared to the heroine. The moral qualities of the heroes were emphasized, not his appearance. According to Ann Barr Snitow's study of Western romance in 1970s, there are two reasons why the heroine wins the hero: being old-fashioned (a code for no premarital sex), and performing well in her helping roles (Snitow 1979). It was found that Thai romance in the Twenty-First Century does not emphasize female helping roles in the private sphere like in the previous century because all the heroines in my current study are all career women. However, the conventional and hegemonic conception of femininity is still at work. They appear 'old-fashioned' in Snitow's term. They are allowed, to a certain extent, to express their sexuality, but only with the heroes so that they are not regarded as 'loose' women. Unlike the heroine in the Twentieth Century whose sexuality is an unexplored continent, unknown to them, the heroines in the Twenty-First Century recognize their sexuality and desire and they have opportunities to expresses them. These changes might reflect socio-cultural changes in Thai society as the influence of globalization affects values and norms that have been prescribed to men and women.

Regarding female sexuality, the heroines in Twenty-First Century fiction appear more active and capable of passionate sexual urges; yet, they never have any sexual contact with members of the opposite sex before their confrontation with the heroes. However, even though the heroine's sexuality is recognized, it is still limited to the heroes, the ideals guys. In the Twenty-First Thai romance the heroine is not so proper and sweet, but to have defiant heroines can engage the reader, and seems more real and creates more of a sense of identification with the characters. Accordingly, the heroine's beauty is not depicted as very stunning. Beauty is essential because it is regarded as power, especially for women from the Buddhist cannon (Esterik 2000, p. 155).For this reason the heroines are all beautiful, but not too beautiful for the reader to identify with. In conclusion, some cultural attributes can be adjusted, adapted, or

reconstructed; however, sedimented discourses that are the roots of a particular culture may still persist firmly and consistently over time, especially discourses on gender and sexuality.

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# *"Only When the Whole World Becomes One Family": The Ideal Vision of a Eurasian*

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**Abstract**
My paper benefits from Lowe's idea of heterogeneity and multiplicity and Gramsci's concept of hegemony. My ultimate aim is to challenge the binary axis of power by examining how Sui Sin Far, a pioneer of Asian American writers, enunciates to resist the mechanism of power which attempted to dominate and to exclude the Asians. In "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of a Eurasian," Sui Sin Far not only maps the difficulty of growing up as a Eurasian but also articulates her ideal vision, a racially harmonious world. What is more important is that the ideal "one family" becomes her common theme of writings both in her fiction and her journalist essays; one of these writings is "Pat and Pan." In "Pat and Pan," she attempts to imagine a more perfect social state, and illustrates how it is destroyed.

Keywords: Sui Sin Far, utopian vision, Asian American writer, Chinese American writer

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## Introduction

Lowe (1991) argues that the view that a dominant discourse produces and manages the nondominant underestimates the tensions and contradictions within any discursive terrain, the continual play of resistance, dissent, and accommodation. Most importantly, this view minimizes the significance of counterrepresentations and countercultures, and continues to subsume the resistance of a minority positions to apparently dominant formations. Gramsci's ideas help to explain this argument. According to Gramsci (1971), hegemony is the entire process of negotiation, dissent, and compromise whereby a particular group or ideological formation gains the consent of the larger body to lead. In this sense, hegemony does not refer exclusively to the process by which dominants groups exercise and maintain influence, but it denotes equally to the process through which other groups organize, contest, or accommodate any specific domination. Gramsci also suggests that popular literature attains its popularity by connecting with "the philosophy of epoch," that is, it offers collective representations of the sentiments and world-view flourishing among the "silent multitude." Drawing his examples from the work of Alexandre Dumas, Gramsci suggests that the source of the success of Dumas's work was that they permitted their readers to construct an idealized self in the character of the hero. More importantly, he suggests that Dumas tempts the petty-bourgeoisie and minor intellectuals with an "artificial paradise," which contrasts with "the narrowness and pinched circumstances of their real and immediate life." In general, then, Gramsci suggests that in societies where the subordinate people are not satisfied with their lives in the society, writing offers compensatory--images of action or society to contrast with the real one. These images can nourish wilting hopes. In this way, the experience of discontent can be shown in the form of writing.

Sui Sin Far,[1] a Eurasian writer, was born and grew up in the period of sinophobia of North America. It is no doubt that she experienced racial prejudice. As Gramsci thought, she dreamed of an ideal society which contrasted to her real life. In such a society, there were no racial boundaries. It is not surprising that she expressed her hope in her writings. This paper examines the ideal vision of Sui Sin Far, a pioneer of Asian-American writers. What led her to imagine the ideal vision? How did she create her ideal vision in her writing? What function does her imagining of ideal vision serve? Because Sui Sin Far's ideal vision related to the issue of miscegenation, to better understand, I would like to begin with the discussion of miscegenation.

## Miscegenation

Interracial union or "miscegenation" has long been a familiar phenomenon in American society. The issue of miscegenation was a debate in the nineteenth century. In fact, arguments against mixed race marriage and reproduction were reinforced by scientific discourse. Miscegenation became the threat because there was a belief that children of mixed marriages reverted to the "lower" type. Young (1995) notes that

[1] Her real name is Edith Eaton. Her pen name is used to identify her in this paper because it is the name by which she is well known. The full name "Sui Sin Far" is used throughout because its meaning (Water Lily) depends upon the sequence, and so the syllables cannot be separated.

many nineteenth-century scientists believed that miscegenated reproduction produced weaker individuals and that "the mixing of races only brought about degeneration, infertility and barbarism" (p. 130). The offspring of horses and donkeys--the sterile mule, the inspiration for the word "mulatto" was commonly cited as proof of what would occur as a result of interracial mixing between human beings. Of course, sterility was discovered to be an inaccurate concern when applied to human interracial reproduction, but the idea of the mixed-race as degenerate lasted well into the twentieth century.

In the 1850s the French diplomat Count Gobineau (1855/1915) published his influential book, in which he proposed that there were differences among races. The white races of Europe were superior to others such as "Negros" and "Mongolians." He believed "adulteration of blood is the basic cause of the fall of the nation. . ." (p. 106). Gobineau's warning points to the way in which "purity" of blood and culture were critical to the maintenance of the nation, for hybridity questions the very tenets of racial and cultural authority. In the United States, similar anxieties arose pertaining to what was seen as a dilution and corruption of the dominant white population. Concerns about miscegenation were expressed most forcefully about unions between blacks and whites and also between Native Americans and whites.

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the specter of miscegenation and the mixed-race progeny became once again a focus of racial attention and anxiety. This was due to the unresolved dilemma of the social and economic roles of the emancipated black slaves, the perceived threat from the influx of Asian immigrants, and the United States' territorial expansions into Asia and central America. In seeking "scientific" explanations for the "behavior" of those of mixed race, natural and social scientists of the day often attributed the so-called "physical, emotional, and mental deformities" of such persons to "racial disharmony," "the clash of blood," or "unstable genetic constitution" (Young, 1995, p. 29).

During the 1890s, racial atavism, or the reversion-to-type theory, became the dominant viewpoint in anthropological and popular accounts of the mulatto. A perversion of Darwin's principle of reversion, this concept suggests that the mixed-race people who have attained a veneer of civilization can, at any time, "revert" to the "savage", "primitivistic" behavior of the jungle from which their ancestors came and to which they were inextricably tied. Thus, in the Reconstruction South, the mulatto was frequently typed as the "Negro beast" who attacked white women and struck fear and terror in the hearts of white people. In the first decade of the twentieth century, the idea of Eurasian degeneracy also found its way into both academic and public discourses. Such claims were echoed by a California journalist who wrote, in response to the "Yellow Peril," that the offspring [of Japanese-white unions] are neither Japanese nor American, but half-breed weaklings, whom doctors declare, have neither the intelligence nor healthfulness of either race (Takaki, 1979, p.102).

The fear of miscegenation also appeared in legislature discourse. Laws against miscegenation had existed in the American colonies since the early seventeenth century, when Virginia lawmakers decided that sex between a black man and a white woman should be illegal. By 1664, Maryland passed a law forbidding interracial marriage--stating that if a white woman were to marry a slave, she would become a slave herself for the lifetime of her husband. In 1691, Virginia passed another law,

which essentially forbade all interracial marriages. Not surprisingly, race continued to play a role in the state legislation of marriage in this country until 1967. Initially, legislation was concerned primarily with unions between blacks and whites, who, as late as the nineteenth century, were believed to be different species; as noted above, whites were understood to be biologically superior.

With the increase of immigration as well as with population shifts, American legislators worked to prohibit the mixing of "blood" between whites and other ethnic groups as well. From the very beginning of Chinese immigration to this country, legislators were aware of a growing discomfort with intermarriage between Asians and whites, and specifically Asian men and white women. Historian Takaki (1989) notes that the Chinese, the first large group of Asian immigrants to the United States, were perceived as threats to white racial purity (p. 101). In 1880 California amended Section 69 of the Civil Code which dealt with the issuance of marriage licenses. This legislation prohibited the issuance of a license authorizing the marriage of a white person with a "negro, mulatto, or mongolian" to prevent such amagalmation.

**The Ideal Vision of a Eurasian**

Since its first appearance in *the Independent* in 1909, "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of a Eurasian," Sui Sin Far's autobiography, has been reprinted in a number of anthologies and collections. *Chinese America: History and Perspectives*, the journal of the Chinese Historical society of America, reprinted the essay in 1987. It later appeared in *The big Aiiieeeee!* (1991) and, most recently, in *Mrs. Spring Fragrance and Other Writings* (1995), edited by two of Sui Sin Far's dedicated scholars, Amy Ling and Annette White-Parks. Its most widespread exposure came from its inclusion in the *Heath Anthology of American Literature* (1990).

Although "Leaves" has been reprinted many times, the one published in *The Independent* is the most intriguing. The title identifies the author as a Eurasian, indicating that the issue of racial identity is the key to this article. The original piece is headed by a round-framed portrait of a middle-aged woman in a high-collared, respectable-looking shirtwaist, a calm and thoughtful expression on her face. Her hair is dark, and she has high cheekbones; it is worth noting that out of context her racial origins would be somewhat ambiguous. Underneath the photograph is printed her pseudonym "SUI SIN FAR." What might be the purpose of adding this photograph?

The obvious answer is simple referentiality, to put a face to the story, as it were, thus defusing the readers' natural suspicion of the autobiographical narrative: the photograph proves that the writer does exist. More importantly, it reveals the author's cognizance of the readers--and not just of their materiality, but of their condition as a social being within an established system of signification. The photograph, then, added another dimension to what Lejeune (1989) has called the "autobiographical pact"; it is a mode of reading as much as it is a type of writing (p. 30).

By itself, *The Independent*'s photograph might tell the readers nothing: neither the woman's face nor her clothing signifies beyond doubt that she is Chinese or Eurasian. But when the photo and the name combined with the title, they evoke something much more immediate. Here is what a Eurasian woman looks like; she wears a Western dress, and maybe could pass as white, but there is something different about

her. She has a strange, non-Western name which brings out the question of her identity. It's a striking layout, a curious title, and easily draws readers in.

At the same time, Sui Sin Far's text itself contains a political message; she is interested in enlightening her readers about the insensibilities and racism she has encountered. “Leaves” opens with vignettes of white people's meanness and bigotry. Two English nannies whisper about Sui Sin Far's being Chinese. A school girl cries out to a friend, “I wouldn't speak to Sui if I were you. Her mamma is Chinese.” A white-haired old man at a tea party studies her like a bug under glass: “Ah, indeed! Who would have thought it at first glance. Yet now I see the difference between her and other children. What a peculiar coloring! Her mother's eyes and hair and her father's features, I presume. Very interesting creature!” (Sui Sin Far, 1909, p. 126). This man produces the child's “difference,” by implication, from all other children at the party. In the process, he reduces her to a specimen through the mechanically enhanced vision of his eyeglasses. His scrutiny is overt, a blatant demonstration of the power of his race, age, and sex to call attention to, to differentiate, to consume, to measure, and to classify. These anecdotes show not only racial prejudice but also the author's outrage and retaliation, even as a child. A boy in a street hurls slurs at her and her brother, “Chinky, Chinky, Chinaman, yellow-face, pig-tail, rat-eater,” and on the heels of her brother's retort, “Better than you,” she records her own screaming response (Sui Sin Far, 1909, p. 126). She recalls that in her childhood, “older persons pause and gaze upon us, very much in the same way that I have seen people gaze upon strange animals in a menagerie. Now and then we are stopped and plied with questions as to what we eat and drink, how we go to sleep, if my mother understands what my father says to her, if we sit on chairs or squat on floors, etc., etc., etc.” (Sui Sin Far, 1909, p. 127).

In “Leaves,” as an adult, Sui Sin Far relates an actual confrontation with racism and tells how she responds. It happens in “a little town away off on the north shore of a big lake” in the “Middle West,” when she is lunching with her white American employer and colleagues who perceive her as being racially the same as themselves. Conversation turns to the “cars full of Chinamen that past [sic] that morning” by train, leading to her companions' observations that “I wouldn't have one in my house,” and “A Chinaman is, in my eyes, more repulsive than a nigger,” and “I cannot reconcile myself to the thought that the Chinese are human like ourselves . . . their faces seem to be so utterly devoid of expression that I cannot help but doubt” (Sui Sin Far, 1909, p. 129). Sui Sin Far recalls that “a miserable, cowardly feeling” keeps her silent, leading readers through the agony of her tension as she considers the strong prejudices against her mother's countrymen, knowing that, if she speaks, every person in the place will hear about it the next day Then she lifts her eyes and addressed her employer, “The Chinese may have no souls, no expression on their faces, be altogether beyond the pale of civilization, but whatever they are, I want you to understand that I am--I am a Chinese” (Sui Sin Far, 1909, p. 129).

It would be difficult for readers to remain unaffected by this direct and articulate description of the process of being marked as different as a child. In fact, the simple but poignant message of this passage tends to counteract the somewhat sensationalized first page layout. It compels the reader to reconsider this picture. The reader may reconsider too the directness of the title; this woman is much too measured a writer and much too serious about her subject to highlight her identity

without reason. This piece finally registers not as sensationalist fluff, but as a focused exploration of a marginalized existence in the United States. Continuing in this serious vein, "Leaves" maps the difficulty of growing up half-Chinese in Eastern Canada, evokes the anguish of other Eurasian children. She mentions meeting a Chinese man who has a white wife and several children, "I am very much interested in these children, and when I meet them, my heart throbs in sympathetic tune with the tales they relate of their experiences as Eurasians. 'Why did papa and mamma born us?'asks one. 'Why?'" (Sui Sin Far, 1909, p. 128).

Because Sui Sin Far contended with the experiences of a Eurasian, she articulated her ideal vision "Only when the whole world becomes one family will human beings be able to see and hear distinctly" (Sui Sin Far, 1909, p. 129). Like Gramsci's idea discussed in the beginning, Sui Sin Far dreams of the world which is in contrast to her real society: the racially harmonious world. In this world, because there are no boundaries among races, people will understand other people clearly. Sui Sin Far also believes that "someday a great part of the world will be Eurasian. I cheer myself with the thought that I am but a pioneer" (Sui Sin Far, 1909, p. 129). The position of the Eurasian allows Sui Sin Far to imagine herself to be "beyond" race and to invoke an individuality. Sui Sin Far idealized multiraciality which denies race by taking the form of "pretty soon, . . . race doesn't matter" (Sui Sin Far, 1909, p. 4). What is more important is that the ideal "one family" becomes her common theme of writing both in her fiction and her journalist essays; one of these writings is "Pat and Pan" discussed in the next section.

**The Loss of Eden**

"Pat and Pan" tells a story of an American boy raised in a Chinese household. A dying mother gives her baby, Pat, to a Chinese jeweler, Lum Yook, to raise. The Yooks have one daughter, Pan. Pat is inseparable from his sister, and Pan's mother loves both as her own. A white missionary, Anna Harrison, methodically works to remove Pat from his Chinese parents and later gives him to a white couple. When Pat meets Pan again, their friendship has been torn apart.

In reality, the idea that Chinese people adopted Americans is not merely a fantasy. In fact, in the late nineteenth century, while there were Chinese orphans raised by missionaries, there were also Caucasian children adopted by Chinese families. However, not all Caucasian children adopted by Chinese were so lucky as to stay on with their Chinese parents. While taking a Chinese child into an American family was considered as an act of Christian charity and no one questioned the legitimacy of the adoption, Chinese couples adopting American children often had them taken away by the authorities (McCunn, 1988, p. 34). Such is the fate of Pat in the story.

Sui Sin Far opens "Pat and Pan" with the innocence and racial harmony of Pat, a white boy, and Pan, a Chinese girl. This scene presents her ideal family: both white and Chinese live together with harmony and without racial boundaries. Nothing could be sweeter than the portrait in this scene, the White boy, Pat, and his Chinese sister, Pan, framed in the entry of a Chinatown house: "Her tiny face. . . hidden upon his bosom, and his white upturned chin rest[ing] upon her black rosetted head" (Sui Sin Far, 1995, p.160). They are asleep in each other's arm. This is a cameo of races in harmony: the children are blind to shades of "color," or racial differences; the Yooks

look at their two children the same and love them both equally. The situation is truly "one ideal family" that Sui Sin Far longs for in "Leaves."

However, this harmony does not last long. Before the first page is finished, the snake enters the garden. The third sentence of the story reads, "It was that white chin which caused the passing missionary woman to pause and look again at the little pair" (Sui Sin Far, 1995, p. 160). Shocked to see "a white boy" lying so intimately with a "little Chinese girl" in Chinatown, whose "heathen" strangeness is evoked by the joss house in front of her, Harrison questions the nearby lichi vendor: "Whose is that boy?" (Sui Sin Far, 1995, p. 160). When told that he is the son of Lum Yook and his wife, she responds, "But he is white" (Sui Sin Far, 1995, p 160). Her statement threatens to rupture the harmonious world, in which the Chinese mother and father bestow upon the White child equal love and care with their little daughter. Readers see her shocked response when the children wake and chat, and she realizes Pat speak Chinese language: "wholly unintelligible" (Sui Sin Far, 1995, p. 161). The lichi man rejects Harrison's racial fears, shrugging her off with the reply: "Yes, him white, but all same, China boy" (Sui Sin Far, 1995, p.161).

Playing the role of the Edenic serpent, Harrison purchases lichis and offers to the children as a lure. Similar to the mythical Eve, Pan does not eat directly but feeds her companion until he is full. "Whereupon," we are told in the language that imitates biblical cadences, "the little girl tasted herself of the fruit." The loss of innocence is not immediately apparent as the first scene closes. We have had our eyes guided by Harrison's eyes toward the entrance of the house, with its suspected "heathen" rituals waiting unseen inside. The story continues with Ah Ma, Lum Yook's wife, running out and calling them in. The figure of the little girl that more seriously and slowly follows Pat, who merrily runs out to see "Ah Ma" in the street, suggests the missionary woman's insidious power and foreshadows the trouble soon to come.

Then Harrison determines to "save" Pat from his Chinese environment. The story confronts the taboo society most profoundly professes: incest because the brother, Pat, and the sister, Pan, sleep together. The underlying reason of Harrison's determination is that the relationship between the two children alludes to the danger of miscegenation, a point which is undoubtedly part of its threat. The missionary woman sees the two children "asleep in each other arm's" in what, if we do not know their ages, could be the pose of adults after lovemaking. In this way, readers can recognize what Harrison thinks: the potential of sexual relations, childbearing, and marriage lies between Pat and Pan. That is the union between Chinese and white. In other words, it is the miscegenation and a threat held by many western people in the late nineteenth century as discussed earlier. Harrison holds the belief of anti-miscegenation; she fears that the pure white population will be contaminated by the mixing of different races.

This story also addresses fears in the dominant white culture of loss of their "own" people to those they term "other." Harrison's determination to "save" Pat becomes stronger when she sees him playing with some Chinese children while Pan cheers him on in vociferous, infantile Chinese. Her purpose is complicated: she wants not only to claim Pat as white but also to erase his Chineseness. Harrison fails to realize that she is judging Chinese people by her own Anglo-American standards: she assumes a patronizing air of superiority when dealing with the Chinese, and considers her own

values and customs the most desirable. Then, the ideal family, the harmony between races, gradually wavers.

First, Harrison brings Pat to her school. She opens her missionary school for white and Chinese children in Chinatown. She talks to Lum Yook, and he agrees that his adopted son should "learn the speech of his ancestors"; however, Harrison has to accept Pan to her school because Pat "could not be got without Pan" (Sui Sin Far, 1995, p 162). This means that Pat and Pan are very close and they have never been separated. Because Harrison does not intend to educate Pan, she places Pan among "a number of baby toys" and expects that she will learn nothing. However, the story reverses Harrison's expectations. Contrary to Harrison's idea, Pan acquires a larger English vocabulary than Pat, the object of her schooling. Pan, who is not supposed to learn but just to play, can sing hymns and recite verses; Pat, on the other hand, cannot memorize even a sentence. The ambiguity of the value of the lessons taught at the missionary school is clear in the image of Pan's singing. While Pan is asked to recite the verse to Pat and says, "Yesu love me," Pat mutters, "I hate you, Pan" (Sui Sin Far, 1995, p 163). The ironic juxtaposition of Pan's adopted song of love and Pat's strongly felt words of hate suggests that in the name of Christian love, Harrison's mission has introduced disharmony and racial "difference" into this harmonious family.

In the next scene, the readers witness the disruption of the harmonious world. Three years later, Harrison wants to disconnect Pat from his Chinese family completely; she gets an American couple take Pat to raise as an "American boy." When the news comes that Pat is being taken away, Ah Ma is very sad. Her heart moves from happiness to hang "heavy as the blackest of heavens." The following scene is the portrayal of the parting between Pat and the Yooks. When Pat shouts that he won't leave Pan, Lum Yook says, "But you must! . . . You are white boy and Pan is Chinese" (Sui Sin Far, 1995, p 164). Posed against the racial harmony in the first scene, Lum Yook's response suggests an introduction of racism into the children's awareness. "I am Chinese too!" insists Pat. "He Chinese! He Chinese!" the voice of Pan reinforces. However, "Pat was driven away" (Sui Sin Far, 1995, p 164). That Lum Yook has to compel Pat, whom he loves as his son, implies the power of white cultural politics and the limitations of Chinese American resistance.

The ideal vision is completely destroyed in the last scene when Pat's permanent severance from his Chinese family and culture is made evident. The results of Harrison's efforts reveal themselves when Pat and Pan meet two times, outside of Chinatown, a year after their separation. At the first meeting, Pat dresses in new clothes "Mother" has bought him; they are not Chinese clothes but American. These clothes indicate that he assumes a new identity, "white." Pat boasts, "I learn lots of things that you don't know anything about" (Sui Sin Far, 1995, p 165). Although he is glad to see Pan again, he refuses to revisit Chinatown and his Chinese parents. Furthermore, he admits that he has forgotten A-Toy, "the big gray meow." The acquisition of new knowledge in one world is set against its loss in another. In other words, the new knowledge in white society makes Pat forget his Chineseness.

Subsequently, such gains and losses move from the material world into the deepest realms of the spirit: Pat becomes completely white. The change of environment proves significantly in altering Pat; living in a white world, he soon loses his Chinese consciousness. And even feels ashamed of his Chinese connection. Pat's ultimate

renunciation of his Chinese self occurs at his final meeting with Pan. When one of his schoolmates laughs at Pan, he turns to Pan and says, “Get away from me!” (Sui Sin Far, 1995, p 166). In the past, he pushed her aside to prevent her from Harrison's slapping; at that point, Pat shouts angrily, “You hurt my Pan again!” Now, he pushes her away to distance himself from her “Chineseness.” The story ends with Pan's sorrow and saying, “Poor Pat! . . . He Chinese no more; he Chinese no more!” (Sui Sin Far, 1995, p 166). Mourning her loss of a brother, Pan's closing line resonates with the author's own lament over the impossibility of a natural, harmonious integration of races. Although Pan is the one left with sorrow, it is Pat for whom readers feel the most pity. Pan knows who her mother is and, even with a broken heart, can still think of Pat as a brother, while Pat has lost a sister, a family, a culture, and his moral base. The irony of Pan's concluding line offers the theme: it is society's intervention into this family, the separation of brother from sister and parents from child, that the author finds so “unthinkable.”

It is noteworthy that Sui Sin Far's view of the roots of racism is unique, and her analysis of the complexity of the issue is insightful in light of the social background of her time. She believed that racial prejudice was largely a product of social and environmental factors and it was education rather than genetic elements that made a person racist. If human harmony could prevail, life would be as sweet as this story's opening picture. Clearly, the author does not shy away from positing the underlying reasons why the missionary woman believes she must “save” Pat from “Chinese” culture--reasons that highlight the racism of the dominant white culture to which most of Sui Sin Far's readers belonged.

## Conclusion

Sui Sin Far's writing suggests her desire, not for exclusion and segregation, but for continued cultural contact. Yet rather than offering a solution to the problem of culture clash, she raises many issues. For instance, on what grounds does acculturation work? What are the problems that make her ideal vision impossible? Thus, Sui Sin Far's stories often mourn the tragic reality of immigrant life. All of these suggest that although the ideological power of contemporary cultural forms is enormous, indeed sometimes even frightening, that power is not yet all-pervasive, totally vigilant, or complete. Interstices still exist within the social fabric where opposition is carried on by people who are not satisfied by their place within it or by the restrictions put on them. They, therefore, attempt to imagine a more perfect social state as a way of countering despair. It is absolutely essential that we should not overlook this minimal but nonetheless legitimate form of protest.

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# *Resistance in* Zitkala-Ša's American Indian Stories

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**Abstract**
Loss of identity is one of the major problems of all time. People who believe that domination destroy their true colors find resistance against the dominant as a result to maintain their identity. Literature is one of ways that best present voices and actions of people. This paper aims to analyze resistance against the domination and resistance strategies in Zitkala-Sa's *American Indian Stories*. The text is analyzed within a theoretical framework based on James C. Scott's Theory of Infrapolitics or Everyday Resistance. The study shows that Zitkala-Sa uses her pen as the weapon to resist domination by using disguised and non-disguised strategies. The study demonstrates that domination and resistance coexist together. Resistance can occur at any time and space in any form. Whenever there is an attempt to dominate, there will be resistance.

Keywords: resistance literature, Native Indian, AMERICAN INDIAN STORIES, Zitkala-Sa

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## Introduction

Each society comes with unique traditional cultures which are valuable as national or cultural heritages. Those cultural treasures are to be passed down to the later generations. However, after being invaded and colonized, societies and cultures are being transformed into different ways. Identities that co-exist with cultures are at the verge of losing the true colors. The people within the society are responsible for preserving and maintaining their originalities. The Native Americans are one of the people who have experienced colonization and loss of identity. In order to protect and regain their identity, resistance is the ultimate option. Zitkala-Sa, a Native Indian writer, is one of the resistors who present Native resistance through her writings. This study aimed to study resistance in the Zitkala-Sa's *American Indian Stories* (1921). The study is analyzed within Professor James C. Scott's Theory of Infrapolitics or Everyday Resistance.

## Theory of Everyday Resistance

According to Scott (2008), "Infrapolitics" or "Everyday Resistance" refers to two main forms of resistance: public (non-disguised) and disguised. He proposes that non-disguised and disguised resistance resist against the power of material, status, and ideology. They resist against domination of materials, profanation of quo and symbols against status domination, and counter-ideologies against the domination of ideas (as cited in Johansson and Vinthagen, 2013, p.5). Non-disguised or public resistance includes demonstration, revolts, strikes, invasions, etc. According to Scott, non-disguised resistance has to be interrelated with the society and sometimes with violence. Non-disgusied resistance needs to be directly engaged with the dominants and gain attention. Political protests, strikes, wars, and invasions are examples of non-disguised resistance.

On the other hand, disguised resistance or everyday resistance exists in the society without being disclosed. This kind of resistance does not always need to be engaged directly with the dominants (Scott, 2008). One person can be a disguised resistor. A student who breaks simple rules in school can be seen as a resistor employing disguised resistance. The act of breaking rules shows that the student does not follow the general rules of the society, or in this case, the school. Disguised resistance does not always need to be acknowledged by the dominants. There are many ways and strategies of resistance. For the Native Indians, literature is one of the tools chosen as a weapon to fight against domination. Zitkala-Sa's writing is a good example of resistance literature.

## Resistance in Zitkala-Sa's *American Indian Stories*

Zitkala-Sa or Gertrude Simmons Bonnin is a notable Native American writer. Her writing, *American Indian Stories,* was first published in 1921 in a collection with *Old Indians Legends.* The stories are partial based on Zitkala-Sa's childhood experiences and others' around her. She provides readers with hands-on experiences she has faced as a Native child in the mainstream society. By analyzing *American Indian Stories*, it

is seen that Zitkala-Sa resists against colonization and assimilation through the use of language and storytelling.

Before exposing to the outside society, the Natives Indians were educated by leaders, elders, and families of the tribes. The Natives were taught to practice from basic to survival skills such as planting, hunting, and daily routines in the reservations. A proper westernized education was first introduced to them after the western colonists arrived in the areas in the Seventeenth Century. The colonists intended to educate the Natives in order to teach them the ways of a Euro-American life. They believed that by giving education to the Natives, it would draw attention to others and appeal to classes of people from Europe to settle in the area. Marr (2008) explains that education was the way to slowly westernize and assimilate the Natives into the mainstream society, and it was the way to decrease the presence, practice, and the Natives' traditions. In a closer look, education was a tool of colonization. (p.1).

Zitkala-Sa talks about the Native children's schooling experiences in *American Indian Stories*. In the chapter "*The School Days of an Indian Girl*", she presents that education and schooling rip away Natives identity and mentally abuse children. Zitkala-Sa was sent to a Quaker Boarding School at the age of eight. It was a voluntarily wish to go to school and explore the land of the red apples. She wanted to explore the Eastern world that she has heard so much about. During her time in school, she learned that the schooling system has not only given knowledge to the Indian children but it has also taken many things from them. They were forced to give up their cultural practices, clothes, and language. They were forced to live their lives in a western way. They eventually lost their most precious thing, their identity.

The loss of Natives identity occurs from the moment children set feet in the school. Hautgren (1989) states in her work *To Lead and to Serve: American Indian Education at Hampton institute*:

> Boarding school administrations "forbade, whether in school or on reservation, tribal singing and dancing, along with the wearing of ceremonial and 'savage' clothes, the practice of native religions, the speaking of tribal languages, the acting out of traditional gender roles" (Hautgren, Molin & Green, 1989, p. 11).

Forbidding children from performing tribal rituals, speaking tribal languages, and wearing traditional clothes is part of assimilation. It is in fact an obvious way to destroy the Natives' cultures from the society. The aims were to assimilate the Natives into the mainstream society and cleanse 'the savage race' (Nelson, 1991, p. 2-3). The cultures that live and give meaning to the Natives' life were being erased from their lives. There are many sudden changes for children in *"The Land of the Red Apples"* which make them scared, uncomfortable, and out of place. When children arrive at school, they are told to take off their traditional beadwork cloth, moccasin shoes, and wear white pajamas like other children. In the next morning, Zitkala-Sa is embarrassed when she fails to follow the morning routine at breakfast

table. She cannot understand and she is unable to adjust to the routines. The biggest situation that occurs during her first days is when her braided hair is cut off.

> I remember being dragged out, though I resisted by kicking and scratching wildly. In spite of myself, I was carried downstairs and tied fast in a chair. I cried aloud, shaking my head all the while until I felt the cold blades of the scissors against my neck, and heard them gnaw off one of my thick braids. Then I lost my spirit. Since the day I was taken from my mother I had suffered extreme indignities (Zitkala-Sa, 1921, p. 22-23).

From this quote, it is clear that the school has ripped away her identity and left her with a scar in her mind. The traditional appearances represent cultures and Natives dignity. For the Natives, shingled hair represents coward people who have no will to fight or protect their cultural identity. Zitkala-Sa cherishes her braids and costume as they remind her who she is, a native daughter. They also remind her home and make her feel safe in such a strange new place. Her spirit is enacted to the last piece of traditional traits she has on her. By cutting off her braids, her soul is also ripped apart from her true self. Similarly to Zitkala-Sa, young children who went to school had to suffer the loss of their identity and to go through hard times adapting themselves into the new cultures.

Zitkala-Sa employs a non-disguised resistance when she runs, hides, and struggles against the cutting of her long hair. According to Professor James C. Scott, non-disguised or public resistance refers to use of harsh force, strikes, revolts, or resistance that can be easily recognized by naked eyes. Zitkala-Sa uses physical forces to maintain her freedom. To her, there is no other way to get away from the situation unless she runs away. Though she and her friends are unable to succeed their goals, they put the best effort to resist against the schooling system that aims to destroy who they are. They seek to protect themselves from having negative influences and becoming the ones who have to change.

Language is another tool of colonization exercised through education on the Native children. Many scholars have defined the importance of language in human life. Neito (2007) states in his article, *The Emperial's New Words: Language and Colonization,* that "Language has such a vital incidence in the human being and is so omnipresent in our lives that we are generally unaware of its influence" (p. 231). It is used consciously and unconsciously in daily life within different social contexts. Zitkala-Sa is one of the children who were oppressed and influenced by the use of English language.

In *"The Land of the Red Apples",* Zitkala-Sa is new to English because she has just arrived in school. Though she slowly learns English as time goes by, it is still insufficient. Zitkala-Sa retraces her first struggle that is related to the incapability of language and communication. When she first set feet into the school, the different atmosphere and people intimidate her. She cried "Oh! I want my mother and my brother Dawee! I want to go to my aunt!' I pleaded; but the ears of the paleface could not hear me" (Zitkala-Sa, 1921, p. 20). No one could understand and give her what she wanted at that time because she was unable to speak English. The Native

language was the only thing that made her feel comfortable but she and other children were forbid from speaking it. Another incident occurs in *"The Snow Episode"*. Zitkala and her friends are breaking rules by playing in the snow. One of the Native children, Judewin, informs her and others that the paleface woman, or teacher, is upset and they are to be punished. The only way to survive is to be quiet and reply with the word "no" because Judewin has heard the palefaces saying the word many times (Zitkala-Sa, 1921, p. 23-24). Ironically, Judewin who has better English than other children still lead others into hard situations where they are eventually punished. The inability of language causes them problems many times. Moreover, forbidding children from speaking Native language makes them voiceless. Being voiceless is like being invisible or meaningless in the society. As voices of the Natives cannot be heard, their stories are lost. More importantly, their rights and identity will no longer be existed.

However, English becomes her tool to resist against domination. Hall (2007) implicates in his article in *The Work of Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* that meaning can be negotiated, redefined, and relocated based on audience's cultural conception (p. 12-16). It also has the power to create, convey, and express different meanings to different audience. Therefore, language has the qualities to become one of the great weapons of resistance because it is the best way to express and present arguments of the authors. For many authors, English is not their mother tongue but a language of the colonists or dominants. By writing in English, the authors utilize the powerful language that oppresses them as a tool to fight back. In order to survive the changes, Zitkala took English more seriously and became a fluent English speaker. She won many oration awards and received a scholarship to pursuit a university degree. Thought she could not finish her degree, she became a teacher in a boarding school. After she returned to her home as a recruiter, she saw that education has given both advantages and disadvantages on children by using herself as an example. She has lost herself at the beginning when she went to school and struggled to find her true identity. She felt that she did not belong in the western world but she also did not totally belong in the reservation as well. She had a hard time trying to find the balance in her identity. On the other hand, she has received a standard education which elevated her soul and knowledge. She has found the way to keep and present her Native identity to the world. Therefore, she intended to express her feelings, tell stories, and let the world know the reality she has seen by writing books in English.

Writing books in English is the way that Zitkala-Sa used as resistance against the dominants or the mainstream society. Her words are the sharp blades that plunge through the hearts of readers, even among the white dominants, who share an engagement of emotions. Many of her works remain timeless as examples of the Native resistance literature. Using English as a weapon is considered as a non-violent or disguised resistance. According to Scott (2008), disguised resistance refers to the use of unarmed and non-violent force. It is to counter the domination of materials, ideology, and social status. As English is the primary language that is used to speak of the Natives from the mainstream point of view, assimilate, and discriminate the Natives, Zitkala-Sa employs it in the same way to tell stories from her side. Even

though children were forced to study English and faced with many struggles, English has become a weapon of resistance. By writing her books in English, Zitkala-Sa is able to taunt the dominants ideas, seek revenge, and regain self-dignity. She calls attention to the world through her words to let them see how the Natives are treated. Through education and the use of English, Zitkala-Sa has found the way to utilize her experiences and best resist the dominant power through her works. In order to enhance the meanings of her work to the hearts of readers, Zitkaka-Sa utilizes storytelling as another tool of resistance.

Storytelling is one of the distinctions of the Native Americans. Stories of myths, legends, tales, and fables have been playing a great part in lives of the Natives for centuries. Storytelling is first and foremost an oral tradition in tribal languages. The stories are enriched with cultures, tribal traditions, description of landscapes, and experiences of the Natives. At the end of each story, a moral lesson is given to readers. There are various definitions of storytelling. Byrd (2014) states in her work *"The Presence and Use of the Native American and African Oral Trickster Traditions"* that the form of storytelling is universally understandable and that it is used to teach, entertain, explain, and preserve valuable tradition (p. 55). For African American, DuBois (2007) states that storytelling is the way to create and maintain positive images after the main society has misconceived and misinterpreted Native people. The idea is similar to other Native tribes as the Natives have been marked as savages, inferiors, and uncivilized. Smith (2013) quotes Winona LaDuke in her article 'Native Storytellers connect the Past and the Future' that storytelling is a diverse and powerful tool to describe and create images. It also provides background knowledge and understanding Native cultures through history and ideas (as cited in Smith, 2013).

The natives tell stories of their history and traditions. They believe that everything in – lands, people, cultures, languages, and life itself-- is symbiotic. The values of land and life exist together and could never be separated. However, after the colonization, lands and possessions were taken away from the Native Indians and they suffered a great deal of pain and disgrace. Therefore, they tell the stories to the young generations in order to teach them about the ancestors, preserve history, and reflect the life after the colonization. Smith (2013) also states that storytelling is created upon cultural knowledge and references to present true emotions and sincerity of the people. Through their stories, the Native Indians are able pass down traditions and preserve their identity in the eyes of new generation.

Storytelling is considered as one of the powerful tools of resistance. Storytelling is the way to tell and retell the past in the present time for a better future. When elders tell stories to their children, they pass down traditions and valuable lessons to the young. Even storytelling has been developed and adapted into writing, painting, or performance; it still serves the same purpose. It is to preserve cultures from being erased or mistaken by the mainstream society. Storytelling also gives honors to life and reflects memories, and regains power of those who have lived through assimilation and repression. Therefore, Native people have been using oral tradition to preserve their cultures by telling their children. Later generation, such as Zitkala-

Sa, employs the stories she has learnt as a tool of resistance. In *American Indian Stories*, Zitkala-Sa employs storytelling as a tool of resistance.

In the episode "The Legends", Zitkala presents readers with myths, legends and tales which are told by the elders of the tribe. They also look up to courageous warriors and highly respect those who lived and fought bravely in the past. At young age, Zitkala-Sa found that the most exciting thing of the day was to listen to the elders.

> My uncle, whose death my mother ever lamented, was one of our nation's bravest warriors. His name was on the lips of old men when talking of the proud feats of valor; and it was mentioned by younger men, too, in connection with deeds of gallantry (Zitkala-Sa, 1921, p. 5).

From this quote, it is clear that young Zitkala-Sa is proud to be a Native. She shares the pride of her family with the readers. She learns their stories and respects her ancestors even more. Zitkala-Sa tells readers how she is delighted and entertained while listening to the elders. She also shows that people cherish the warriors which are told in the legends dearly. She interprets and applies those stories to her works and tells the world the stories about her people. Among many famous stories and mythical characters, Iktomi the Spider, a trickster is her most favorite.

In Native cultures, trickster plays a crucial part in storytelling. Radin (1988) describes general characteristics of trickster in his book, *The Trickster*, as a character who disrupts and challenges the quo. He is a complex character whose actions cannot be easily predicted. Trickster can do anything for his own survival and benefit. For the Native cultures, Radin (1988) summarizes that trickster "became and remained everything to everyman—god, animal, human being, hero, buffoon, he who was before good and evil, denier, affirmer, destroyer, and creator…what happens to him happens to us" (p. 169). Similarly, Einhorn (2000) describes in his work, *The Native American Oral Tradition: Voices of the Spirit and Soul*, that trickster can be both a deceptor and a hero. He refers to trickster's actions as "often cunning and devious... He often surprises and acts in spontaneous and unpredictable ways, warning of the folly of surrendering to limits and human vulnerabilities" (Einhorn, 2000, p. 84).

For Sioux Dakota tribe, Iktomi, though considered as a witted mischievous trickster, is sacred and valued by the people. Doloria (2006) describes Iktomi in *Dakota Text* as a poser who holds no conception of sincerity, and is traditionally thoughtless, impulsive, heartless, and selfish. He presents all possible human behaviors within him (p. 5). Iktomi is the trickster that can disgust, amuse, alternate, disrupt, humiliate or being humiliated by others, at the same time that he is also creative in many ways (Erdoes & Ortiz, 1999). In addition, Seale and Slapin (2006) state in *A Broken Flute: The Native Experience in Books for Children* that sometimes Iktomi can be seen as a character that lives to break rules and traditions (p. 239).

Zitkala-Sa also shares a similar conception of Iktomi the Spider. Even though Zitkala tells most of Iktomi's stories in *Old Indian Legends*, she also speaks of Iktomi in the episode "Impression of an Indian Childhood". From this episode, readers are able to

see that young Zitkala finds stories of Iktomi intriguing. Zitkala-Sa learns that Iktomi always follows his heart and instinct. He is not set to follow rules and unafraid to take a risk. There are times when Iktomi's curiosity leads him into troubles and embarrassment. She learns that Iktomi is led by his own appetite for forbidden things that will eventually transform his world and that he is a character that wins over difficult situations by using his wits (Rappaport, 1999, p. 14). Zitkala-Sa provides the image and character of Iktomi through her stories in *American Indian Stories*. She aims to show that there is an opportunity to challenge the presumptuous standard of the society and that the society can be changed by those who speak, think, and act differently. She intends to present that there is trickster in American Indians society.

In the episode "The Big Red Apples", Zitkala-Sa tells readers that there is a trickster in the reservation. Zitkala-Sa encounters with the missionaries sent by the government. She first hears the stories of the two missionaries who have 'large hearts' from her friend, Judewin, who is going to the East with the missionaries. Little Zitkala is eager to know more about the missionaries and even curious about the life in the East. She tries to talk to her mother but her mother warns her not to go.

> There! I knew you were wishing to go, because Judewin has filled your ears with the white man's lies. Don't believe a word they say! Their words are sweet, but, my child, their deeds are bitter. You will cry for me, but they will not even sooth you. Stay with me, my little one! Your brother Dawee says that going East, away from your mother, is too hard an experience for his baby sister (Zitkala-Sa, 1921, p. 16).

Yet, her mother's warning did not stop Zitkala-Sa from wanting to know more about the Eastern land. The next day she and her mother encounter with the missionaries (Zitkala-Sa, 1921, p. 15). Zitkala-Sa hears from Judewin that there are lots of "red apple trees" which she really loves to taste. The young girl wants to know if the children would be able to have red apples when they go to the East. The interpreter tells her that little children can pick as many red apples as they like and that they will travel on the iron horse or the train if they are to go with the missionaries (Zitkala-Sa, 1921, p. 17). As her mother suspected, young Zitkala states her intention to go right after hearing answer from the interpreter. In this sense, the missionaries are tricksters in the stories. They have come to the land and attempt to take little children away to school. They are to disrupt the order of the Native society. They represent the characteristics that Einhorn has described as they can be seen cunning and bad for the Natives. Murray (1999) states in his essay, "The Oral Trickster" that "tricksters personify a hyper consciousness. They are masters of tricky speech and verbal power" (p. 250). With their words, the missionaries are able to accomplish the mission of giving the little children education. They are able to assimilate the Natives into the mainstream western society. They are to disrupt the order of the Native society.

On the other hand, Zitkala-Sa has also become trickster when she was trying to survive the hardship in school. She assimilated herself into the new society in order to live in peace. She entered the mainstream territory and learned how to live as best

as possible. Experiences from school have caused her pain but they also made her strong. The experiences gave her consequences, negative impulses, and scars in her mind. In order to regain herself and firm her identity, Zitkala-Sa studies hard and mingles with the mainstream society as if she has given up her Native identity. However, she becomes an orator who speaks to support and represent the Natives. In the chapter "Four Strange Summers", she describes her life after she has graduated from the boarding school.

> Upon my retreating steps, I was astounded to receive from my fellow-students a large bouquet of roses tied with flowing ribbons. With the lovely flowers I fled from the stage. This friendly token was a rebuke to me for the hard feelings I had borne them (Zitkala-Sa, 1921, p. 3).

From this quote, she shows gladness and happiness after winning a university's orator competition. She has been weighing her feelings with a heavy heart as she fears that she might be in a wrong place. However, the cheer from her classmates gives her the joy that eases her mind.

> Later, the decision of the judges awarded me the first place. Then there was a mad uproar in the hall, where my classmates sang and shouted my name at the top of their lungs; and the disappointed students howled and brayed in fearfully dissonant tin trumpets. congratulations (Zitkala-Sa, 1921, p. 32).

This quote shows that even though there are some students who do not agree with her triumph, many students gladly accept her victory and together they celebrate the good occasion. With her victory, Zitkala-Sa shows that she has potential and quality of a trickster. She disrupts the mainstream society by entering a university and winning a competition. She shows the judges that, as a Native young woman, she is a distinct student with outstanding abilities in the society where she does not truly fit in or has a little space for her. Later on, writes collections of essay and books to tell the world of her experience for being a native child in the mainstream culture. Taking a closer look, Zitkala-Sa herself is a trickster. Zitkala assimilated herself into the society only to find a loop and disrupt the society. Therefore she becomes a trickster that urges to make a difference and challenge the norm of the society. She utilizes the language she was forced to study to disrupt the general or stereotypes of the Natives seen by others in the big society. Like Iktomi the trickster, she tricks people by gradually assimilating into the society, living it, and teaching young Natives in school. However, she refuses to remain a victim of the superior society and instead she dares to take her place among them. By doing what she does, Zitkala-Sa proofs that she is smarter than some other white people and she is ready to be the voice of her people.

## Conclusion

In *American Indian Stories*, readers can see that resistance has long been existed in the American Indian society. Resistance can easily be occurred in any space and time. Once the power is exercised on people, resistance will follow. Zitkala-Sa has presented the Natives' struggles through American Indian Stories. She describes how the Natives lived happily in the past and struggled to survive the changing society after colonization and relocation. She also presented that there are both advantages and disadvantages through the process of colonization and resistance. Zitkala is an example of a person who received both positive and negative effects from colonization. In *American Indian Stories*, Zitkala and other Natives applied both non-disguised and disguised resistance to fight in order to survive in the society. Even though they sometimes failed to accomplish the resistance act and received punishment, they never stopped fighting for their own rights. She implies to readers that that domination and resistance will continue to exist as people will see still see and want the world to be how they wanted. The loop of power and resistance will always go side by side with the other, for if there is power, there is resistance.

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# *Humans and Animals in the Graphic Novel The Call of the Wild from the Perspective of Ecocriticism Reading*

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**Abstract**
Nowadays, environmental crisis is one of the most important problems. Many people are affected by this crisis. Graphic novels can be used as a powerful tool to raise environmental awareness and urge people to protect the natural world. This paper aims to analyze the relationship between humans and animals in the graphic novel version of *The Call of the Wild* and examine the artistic techniques employed to show the relationship. The graphic novel is analyzed through frameworks of ecocriticism and artistic techniques. The study shows that humans' treatments have major impacts on animals' behavior. In addition, the study demonstrates that the graphic novel uses texts, illustrations, and colors as the keys to present the relationship between humans and animals. This graphic novel can encourage readers to have appreciation and concerns for animals.

Keywords: Graphic Novel, Children Literature, Humans and Animals, Ecocriticism, Artistic Techniques, the Call of the Wild

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## Introduction

Nowadays, our world is globalized by new technology that humans have created to improve their lives. These creations are created to facilitate humans' needs. Actually, humans invent new things without any consideration of future consequences. Our planet is suffering from environmental crisis, which affects people, societies, and ecosystems. Humans have to find a way to raise environmental awareness and protect nature. Environmental awareness will be more effective when it is taught to children. According to the United Nations (2015), thirty percent of the world's population is under the age of eighteen, so the key to long-term success is to educate children and young adults about environmental problems.

There are many methods that can be used to gain the children's attention about the environmental awareness. Graphic novels can be used as an effective tool for children's environmental awareness. Graphic novels are a form of storytelling by combining texts and illustrations. This kind of novels easily draws children's attention and provides a better understanding. Today, there are many graphic novels concerning environmental awareness available for readers.

Many of the classic literature are modified into graphic novels because of their popularity and classic themes. These classic graphic novels somehow gain children's attention, and motivate children to read and use their imagination in order to become aware of environmental issues. *The Call of the Wild* is one of the famous classic stories created into graphic novel versions that can raise the environmental awareness.

## Ecocriticism

Ecocriticism is a study about literature and environment. The study explores the relationship between humans and nature in literature and humans' attitudes toward environmental problems presented throughout literature (Habeeb & Habeeb, 2012). Moreover, Glotfelty (1996) stated that an ecocriticism share essential idea that humans are connected to the world because humans are affecting the world, and humans are affected by the world. Humans and nature have an important relation in our life especially with animals. Humans and animals depend on and rely on each other to live.

The connection between humans and animals is "one of the most basic human traits" (Buell, Heise, & Thornber, 2011, p. 430). The fundamental bonds create the harmonious relationships between humans and animals. According to Pythagoras, Greek philosopher, desires to create a universal law not to kill a living creatures (as cited in Spencer, 1995). Similarly, Plutarch, Greek philosopher, believes that animals have value like humans (Appleby & Hughes, 1997). Peter Singer (1974) wrote an article about the equal rights for animals and non-anthropocentric. Moreover, Tom Regan (1987) believes that humans should not experiment on animals and use animal for labor works. It can be conclude that humans and animals can live together in the society.

Most of the disharmonious relationships occur because humans apart themselves from animal. According to Plato and Aristotle, Greek philosopher, in the 'Scale of Nature,'

humans and animals have a separate status by using their reasonableness and intelligence as the basic of the scale (as cited in Serpell, 1986). This believes begin since the early Christianity On the 'Scale of Nature,' the pyramid is a hierarchical structure, which God and humans are at the top of the pyramid and animals are on the lower pyramid. Even though some of the Christians are kind to animals but some humans during that period considered animal as their subordinate (as cited in Joanne Vining, 2003). From this theory, some humans separated themselves from animals because they believed that animals were subordinate and had limited intelligence. Also, animals do not have reason comparing to humans. The hierarchical system between humans and animals portray that humans are above and higher than animals. Moreover, Descartes, Greek philosopher, emphasizes that animals are like robots and they cannot reason or feel pain (as cited in Cottingham, 1978). Some humans are willing to do anything they want to satisfy their desire to animals without any hesitation. This type of humans can also be called anthropocentric because humans consider themselves as the central and most important entity of the universe (Burchett, 2014). Therefore, human relies heavily on the exploitation of animals to serve human needs without considering the consequence that affect animals.

**Graphic Novel**

Graphic novels are combination of text and artistic image, and it come in a variety of lengths, formats, and genres (Bealer, 2014). Fletcher, Benjamin & Copeland (2005) define graphic novels as "book-length narratives told using a combination of words and sequential art, often presented in comic book style" (p. 37). Graphic novels are complete books that combine texts and illustrations together in novel length, presented in sequential art or comics-strips format. Illustrations and colors are the significant element of graphic novel.

According to Fang (1996), illustrations consist of four elements. First, illustrations can create the setting of the story including time, place, and mood. Second, illustrations can extend the meaning and develop plot of the story. Illustrations can explain meaning that the author does not mention in the text. Third, illustrations can define and develop characters, and help to present actions and reactions of each characters in the story. Fourth, illustration can support, reinforce, extend, and amplify the text and help readers fully interpret and understand the story.

Colors can present symbols, carry out moods, and foreshadow an important event in the graphic novels. According to Pilgrim and Trotti (2012), colored pictures in graphic novels often show specific mood changes in the storyline. The changes in color and facial close-ups of characters in the story are signs that important event will happen. Also, the color can shift from "light and funny to dark and sad," which depend on the mood of the story (Dallacqua, 2012, p. 375). For instance, the color will be brighter when the character arrives to a newer and safer place. Moreover, white and pink colors are used to present "dream or a flashback" (Pilgrim & Trotti, 2012, p. 38). On the other hand, the use of black and white colors can present sad and sorrow scene of the story (Schwarz, 2007). In short, graphic novel combine texts, illustrations and colors together to assist readers for a better understanding and more accessible to the story.

### *The Call of the Wild*

*The Call of the Wild* is a story about a dog named Buck living in California. In the beginning, he is living a good life until he is kidnapped and sold to a dog trader. His life completely changes when he becomes a sled dog. He must learn to survive in a cold environment. Along his journey, he is handed to a different kind of owners. Buck, the protagonist, is one of the dogs that experienced harmonious and disharmonious relationship between humans and animals.

In the graphic novel, Buck experienced several harmonious relationships with humans. First, Buck lives with the Miller's family, which is his first owner. Buck is an ordinary happy housedog and lives in a loving family as the narrator describes in the opening scene, "Buck lives in a big house in the sun-kissed Santa Clara Valley" (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 6). The writer described the surrounding and climate as "sun-kissed" valley which explains the feeling of the warm weather and Buck's warmth and comfortable feeling toward the family. According to Shipman (2010), the fundamental relationship between humans and animals is influenced by the good care of the owner. Bradshaw (2012) also emphasizes that most dogs feel the good connection with their owner through their well living. These statements match with Buck and the Miller's family because the writer portrays the strong bond between them. In the case of Buck, he feels that he is one of the family's member and they make connections between each other as he recalls the event, "He plunged into the swimming tank or went hunting with the Judge's sons" (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 6). Buck lay down on his owner feet; this scene emphasizes the closeness between them. Also, that Buck swims with the family and even involved in the family activity such as hunting. Moreover, he is mostly involved in the family's activity where the narrator described, "He even escorted the Judge's daughters on long twilight rambles" (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 6). From this statement, Buck receives trust from the family and is considered as one of the family members because the family treats him well and values his goodness. Therefore, the good treatment Buck gains from this family makes him feel secure and trust humans.

Buck experiences another pleasant relationship with Francois and Perrault, his third owner, through the working relationship. Buck has to learn to adapt to the new environment and cold climate. Buck quickly learns that they are fair owners because they use dogs to work, but they are not cruel to dogs. They treat their dogs with respect and bring out the best part of the dog's ability to work. They teach and train their dogs to become a sled dog. According to Darwinism's theory of survival of the fittest, human beings as well as animals have natural instincts, which passed down through the genetic code (Okasha 2013). This theory also emphasizes that "social conditions, heredity, and environment" have an important impact on shaping one's character (Zhang, 2010, p. 279). This can apply to Buck's situation, where he learns to fight and start using his animal instinct for survival. In order to survive, Buck has to learn how to fight and adapt to the cold environment. He also learns that only the smartest and the strongest can survive in this world. Francois and Perrault are not a gentle type of owner, but they never mistreat Buck and other sled dogs. Whenever Buck learns something new, Francois compliments him, "That Buck, he pulled like hell. He is a quick learner" (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 17), and he added, "What did I tell you, Perrault? That Buck is a quick learner" (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 19). The

last day that Buck sees them, he feels sad: "And that was the last of Francois and Perrault. Like other men, they too passed out of Buck's life for good" (38). Although the relationship between Buck, Francois and Perrault is a working relationship, but Francois and Perrault treat Buck with good care and they create a companionship together.

Buck and John Thornton, his fifth owner, have a royal and truthful relationship. Thornton saves Buck's life without hesitation and they rapidly create an intimate human-animal bond. Thornton became his new master and "he [Buck] experienced love from the first time−genuine passionate love" (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 51), and "This man had saved his life. He was also the ideal master because Thornton took good care of him. He looked after his dogs as if they were his children" (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 52). Thornton sincerely cares and loves him. "Buck knew no greater joy than his rough embrace. Buck expressed his love by lightly biting Thornton's arm" (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 52). From this statement, it shows that the relationship between Buck and Thornton is harmonious. According to Walsh (2009), dogs are considered as loyal companions to the owner (463). Buck becomes faithful and devoted to Thornton as recalls "For a long time after his rescue, Buck did not let Thornton out of his sight. He was afraid he would pass out of his life as his earlier masters had" (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 52). After all, Buck feels deeply connected to Thornton and creates a strong companionship with him.

However, Buck also experienced several disharmonious relationships with humans in this graphic novel. First of all, Buck experiences harsh relationship with Manuel, the gardener's helpers in the Miller's family, and a group of dognappers. Manuel and a group of dognappers are Buck's second owners. Manuel steals Buck from the Miller's family, and he sells Buck in order to pay off his gambling debts. Manuel kidnapped Buck and sold Buck to a group of dognapper. Manuel ties Buck with a tight rope around his neck, so Buck cannot run away. According to Francione (2010), some people believe that animals are things that have no moral value and exist completely outside the moral and legal community. Manuel is an example of this type of people. He only sees Buck as an object and is careless about Buck's feeling. Manuel and the dognappers maltreat Buck as describes, "Any trouble for him, just twist this rope for complete obedience" (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 7). The word "complete obedience" shows that Manuel has absolute control over Buck by abusing him. This previous statement also portrays the cruelness and selfishness of Manuel and the dognappers. Buck allows Manuel to put a rope around his neck at first because he trusts Manuel as he describes, "Buck accepted the rope with quiet dignity" (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 7). Buck did not realizes that he has been betrayed by Manuel because he had learned to "trust the men he knew." (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 8). Miller's family teaches him to trust everyone in the family, and he believes that Manuel is one of the family members. But when the ends of the rope were placed in the stranger's hands, Buck feels betray by Manuel as the narrator explains, "Never in all his life had Buck been so wickedly treated, and never had been so angry" (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 8). From the maltreatment that Buck receives, he starts not to trust humans.

Buck experienced heartless and savage relationship with Hal, Charles, and Mercedes, the fourth owner, in the story. They brought Buck to join the other sled dogs and they

have a mission to go to Canada for a gold rush. They did not prepare for the long and difficult journey ahead. They are cruel and force dogs carry overload sled as recall, "The dogs strained against the breast bands, unable to move the sled" (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 44). According to Bujok (2013), some humans use violence against animals and attempt to oppress, mistreat, and threaten animals to pursue their domination. This statement can be applied to Buck situation because Buck and other dogs cannot move the heavy sled, the three unkind masters force the dogs by whipping them as the narrator describes, "You've got to whip them to get anything out of them" (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 44) and "Hal's whip fell upon the dogs again" (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 45). The three owners use violence to make them do as they desire. Moreover, Buck and other dogs suffer the coldness, hunger, and starvation. Buck has limited food as the narrator explains, "But one sled could not carry food for fourteen dogs. It was inevitable that they would fall short of dog food" (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 46). Even though the dogs did not have enough food to eat, the most thing that they want more at the moment is to rest as recall, "However, it was not food that Buck and the huskies needed, but rest" (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 46). From this condition, the sled dogs are weak and exhausted. Hal did not care and shot the six dogs with heartless feeling as the narrator describes, "It was impossible to make the dogs travel faster. The first to go was Dub. Hal shot him with a big Colt revolver. In the end, the six new dogs also died" (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 47). After six dogs died, Buck must use his animal instinct in order to survive in this harsh environment. Hal, Charles, and Mercedes maltreat every dog in the team. The three owners are inconsiderate about the dogs and they use power over the dogs to achieve what they want. The ill treatments that occur to Buck causes him not to trust human. The relationship between Buck and Hal, Charles, and Mercedes represent a clear illustration of the disharmonious relationship between humans and dogs in the graphic novel.

In the end, Buck chooses to return to nature. After Thornton's death, Buck feels lost and hopeless. He does not want to live with humans anymore as state, "Buck's last tie of bond with human was broken. Man and the calling of the man no longer bound him" (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 65). Buck is no longer attached to humans. Buck does not want companionship with humans anymore. Every year, Buck returns to the place where Thornton died to mourn for his dead master. Even though in the past his life experiences harmonious relationship with humans, he still chooses to live in the wild with a pack of the wolf. In the past, he used to trust humans because humans take good care of him and he builds a strong connection with humans. Humans' good treatment affect the good behavior that Buck show. On the other hand, he also experiences the maltreatment. From all of the bad experience Buck have been through, he becomes eager to have freedom by himself. He feels that nature is where he belongs and nature does not destroy or betray him. His final decision to live in nature reflects that he do not want to associate with humans because of the bad experience he has with humans. He does not trust humans anymore because humans abuse and mistreat him. Therefore, humans' bad treatments had effects on his decision to separate himself from humans and live in the wild.

In order to raise the relationship between humans and animals effectively, artistic techniques are used. First, illustration can establish the setting of the story. The opening scene introduces the house of the Miller's family which is surrounded by

trees and natural environment (Figure 1). The trees and natural surrounding represents the fertility of the family. The house portrays a place of family to live together and a safe environment, which give the readers a better understanding of Buck's pleasant life with the family. In addition, colors help create symbols and a deeper meaning to the words, which make the content more powerful for readers to understand. In Figure 1, the Miller's family house enclosed by green trees and natural environment symbolizes the happiness and peacefulness. This picture gives a relaxing and refreshing feeling to the readers. The illustrator tries to highlight the natural atmosphere by using light green and blue to create the image of the sky (Phunkitchar, 2014). Combining the blue and green color in this illustration portrays the harmonious relationship between Buck and the Miller's family. The connection between Buck and the Miller's family encourage readers to have a positive feeling. In short, the setting and colors assist readers to understand the peaceful relationship between humans and animals and interpret the story better.


Figure 1: Buck and the Miller's Family (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 6)

Second, illustrations can expand the story's meaning. Illustrations can explain meaning that the author does not mention in the text. The author never mention that Buck and Francois have a good relationship but the author uses picture to portray the deep bond between them. The illustrator portrays the companionship through the image that Francois touches and hugs Buck (Figure 2). This is an emotional scene between Francois and Buck. The gentle gesture between Francois and Buck give readers a better understanding of their relationship. Readers can feel the love and care that Francois gives to Buck through the illustration. Also, words help to emphasize the relationship: "And that was the last of Francois and Perrault. Like other men, they too passed out of Buck's life for good" (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 38). This statement can describe that Buck feels strongly connected to Francois and does not want him to leave. Moreover, colors can transform the written content and illustrations into a more powerful instrument. According to Ferber (1999), winter or snow in literature can refer to losing someone you love, pain, loneliness, or an end. In Figure 2, the surrounding of white snow that covers on the ground symbolizes an ending relationship between Francois and Buck. Also, the white snow foreshadow that Buck will feel loneliness after Francois leave. Therefore, the illustration and color in this picture can support readers in understanding the deep human-animal bonding between Francois and Buck.


Figure 2: Buck and Francois (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 38)

The illustration in Figure 3 is another clear example of extending the meaning of the story. The facial expression of Thornton along with the smile on his face while holding Buck's head shows the deep connection between Buck and Thornton. The illustrations and words highlight the marvelous relationship between Thornton and Buck through the description, "This man had saved his life. He was also the ideal master" (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 52). The description explains the important event that Thornton saves Buck's life from drowning and torturing from Buck's previous owner. The author also uses the word 'ideal master' to imply the great treatment that Buck experience while living with Thornton. Buck appreciates the excellent care and the tenderness that Thornton gives to him as he describes, "He looked after his dogs as if they were his children" (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 52). Thornton truly loves Buck and treats him well. Thornton never separate Buck as an animal but he treats Buck as one of his kid. In Figure 3, the white sunbeam shines between Buck and Thornton's face represents the pureness, freshness, and goodness. According to Chijiiwa (1987), brown color stands for a strong need for safety, belonging to a family, loyal and faithful, sincere and reliable. In this scene, the brown color in Buck's face helps to underline that he is faithful and honest to Thornton. In sum, words, illustrations, and colors join together to create the meaning: the deep companionship between Buck and Thornton.

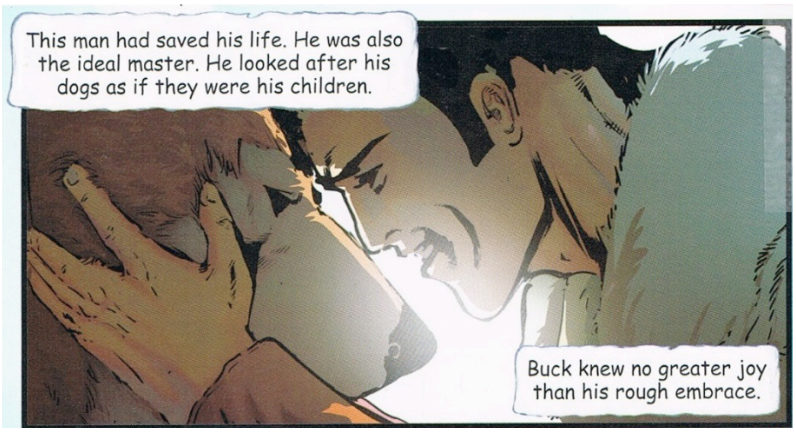


Figure 3: Buck and Thornton (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 52)

Third, illustrations can present strong actions and reactions of each characters in the story. According to Fang (1996), illustrations can help characterization within the texts by showing characters' actions and reactions to one another or make character more flesh out. This can be seen in Figure 4. Buck's facial expression and action emphasize that he is angry. The illustrations in this scene underline the cruelty Buck has to face in the story. Buck's fang in the illustration shows the reaction and madness that Buck is having because someone whom he trust has betrayed him. In addition, the illustrator painted the picture with dark blue sky. According to Pilinis (2002), colors can create the feeling of happiness and joyfulness, on the other hand it can form anger. The illustrators express their ideas through their use of colors. The dark blue can form strong faithful relationships, on the other hand it respresent being betrayed (Chijiiwa, 1987). Similarly, in Figure 4, dark blue color in the sky shows the readers about Buck's feeling of betrayal.

Figure 4: Buck and Manuel (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 8)

In figure 5, the illustration is another obvious sample showing the characters' action and reactions. The scene shows that Buck is extremely angry with the Yeehats for killing his beloved master Thornton. The illustrator draws Buck's face showing his fang to express the rage that he has over the Yeehats. Readers can see fear on the Yeehats' faces. Buck did not hesitate to fight the Yeehats and Buck did not afraid of them at all. Buck is willing to do anything for his beloved master. Additionally, the illustrator uses different shades of red evoke the readers' emotion (Figure 5). According to Chijiiwa (1987), red is an extremely leading color, which can have an exciting and stimulating effect on the readers. Red color can express both positive and negative emotions. Also, red is a strong color and often use as signs for warning or caution. Moreover, red color can also trigger the readers' attention. In this scene, red color is used as a powerful tool to highlight negative emotion. It not only highlights the anger but also highlights fire, blood, danger and aggression. The text also underlines the anger as describe, "He plunged about, tearing, slashing, and destroying in such quick motion that none of their arrows hit him" (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 64). This fighting scene, violent action and red color, can arouses readers' emotion and make readers understand Buck's anger.


Figure 5: Buck fight with the Yeehats (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 64)

Fourth, illustration can support, reinforce, and amplify the text and help readers fully understand the story. This can be shown clearly in Figure 6. After Buck lost his beloved master, Buck becomes sad and lonely. The narrator describe "All day Buck brooded by the pool or roamed restlessly above the camp" (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 65). From this statement, it highlight that Buck thinks about Thornton all the time even though Thornton is dead. Also, the moon in the background of the picture help to reinforce Buck's sad feeling. According to Ferber (1999) the full moon symbolizes deep feelings and soul. The illustrator uses full moon to describe the strong love Buck has for Thornton. Moreover, the illustrator painted different shades of blue and black color of the sky and trees. The different shades of dark blue and black are employed in order to create the sorrowful mood of the situation. Buck is deeply attached to Thornton because he was Buck's closest master. Thornton takes good care of Buck and they live together as a family. After Thornton's death, Buck feel extremely sad and hopeless. Buck's facial expression and text as the author describe, "He followed Thornton's scent down to the edge of a deep pool. All day Buck brooded by the pool or roamed restlessly above the camp. He knew John Thornton was dead" (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 65). To represent Buck's feeling, colors in this scene grow darker to underpin Buck's emotional feeling.


Figure 6: Buck feels sad and lonely (Wagner & Nagar, 2010, p. 65)

## Conclusion

The graphic novel version of *The Call of the Wild* raises the environmental awareness especially associated with animals. This graphic novel inspires readers to consider about the moral responsibilities towards animals. In this graphic novel, Buck lives harmoniously with humans that surrounded by good environment. Buck receives love and care from the good owners, which easily creates intimate animals-humans bond. On the other hand, Buck faces disharmonious relationship with cruel owners. Some of the owners mistreat Buck and other dogs, and see the animal as an object. The bad relationships occur because humans believe that they can use power over animals and do not appreciate their value. More importantly, words, illustrations, and colors join together to raise the awareness. All of the techniques are employed to enhance deeper meaning in the story. Therefore, the study shows that humans' treatments have major impacts on animals' behavior and also motivates them to care for animals.

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# *Annette von Droste-Hülshoff and the Biedermeier Narrative*

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**Abstract**
"Annette von Droste-Hülshoff and the Biedermeier Narrative" relates the aesthetic of the German Biedermeier period (1815-1848) to the life story of writer Annette von Droste-Hülshoff (1797-1848) and to her texts "Ledwina" (fragment/1820), "The Marl-pit" (poem/1841), "The Jew's Beech" (novella/1842), and "The Spiritual Year" (poetry/1851). Before all else, the Biedermeier cultivated the inner self through domesticity and its associated spaces and enclosures; for Droste, they were her ancestral home Hülshoff Castle, with its memories of generations past, and her mother's widow-seat Rüschhaus, with its collections of stones and fossils, in themselves compressed memory. Moreover, the Biedermeier also valued letter writing as part of its emphasis on closeness, and Droste told stories of her daily life (which included reading, writing, walking, collecting, knitting) in the correspondence with her mother Therese von Haxthausen, her sister Jenny von Laßberg, her uncle Carl von Haxthausen, and her friends Elise Rüdiger and Levin Schücking. Some of Droste's letters may well lay claim to being literary accomplishments themselves, but especially in her poetry Droste masterfully manages a jerky syntax and a dense barrage of words in a rigid grid of rhyme and meter. Regardless of the narrative, however, be it that of the Biedermeier period itself, Droste's life story as conveyed in her letters, or her literary works, stones appear throughout: in the shape of tomb stones in "Ledwina," as minerals in "The Marl-pit," as a quarry in "The Jew's Beech," and as boulders in "The Spiritual Year." They bind the narrative strands.

Keywords: Biedermeier, aesthetics, memory, enclosure, domesticity

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## Introduction

Few of Annette von Droste-Hülshoff's fragile scissor cuttings survive, but one such could well depict a scene from that fateful country wedding in the novella "The Jew's Beech" (1842), the reveling not yet intersected by the humiliation of Friedrich Mergel and the subsequent brutal murder of butcher Aaron, a ghastly business involving a blow on the head with a cudgel. Nothing so quaint as a scissor cutting, this quintessentially Biedermeier accessory, a meek yet unforgiving craft, its formation entirely dependent on the tracing of demarcations into a web of cuts whose density prohibits repair; one stroke gone astray, the entire work destroyed. Annette von Droste-Hülshoff (1797-1848) knew all about cutting, not only in paper- and needle work. She herself proclaimed to have "a gift for the most ruthless crossing-out" (*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, vol. IX,I, p. 257), aiming, with a dismissive gesture, at her editors, whose directives she rejected with imperturbable assurance, knowing full well that it "may occasionally harm me that I follow my path so rigidly…still, I wish this were at least acknowledged" (*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, vol. X,I, p. 136). Meanwhile, in the privacy of her home, she treated her manuscripts unsanctimoniously: sections cut and restitched together, passages thrown off the page, words swept into piles that turned into veering, dense towers of text.

## Body

What followed in her poetry is the "packing of meaning" into a "rugged," "jerky" syntax, where "[w]ords…are wrenched apart," their "ungainly" angularity or "lapidary starkness" (Atkinson, p. 32, pp. 35-36) only compounding the overall effect of dislocation. Outright displacement is avoidable only by retracing one's steps and uncovering obscured rules of construction. Add to that the constraints of meter and rhyme, which must be respected at all cost, to fathom what it takes to manage so rigid a grid and dense a barrage of words. From this she broke the pieces for her poetry. If Droste had a reservoir for words not yet accommodated, surely it must have been her letters, the surviving ten to twenty percent of which make up over one-thousand pages in the minutest handwriting (Blasberg, p. 129). Possessed with filling the page to a point beyond repletion, until there seemed no blank morsel left, she knuckled down. Famous is her February 1843 letter to her sister Jenny. Droste wrote, like a garland around the margins of the paper, "You must turn my letter at all corners, otherwise you'll miss something, because I blotted everything from top to bottom" (*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, vol. X,I, p. 32). Letters, so integral a part of the Biedermeier aesthetic of closeness, what are they but little parcels of memory tied up with ribbon?

In June of the same year, she wrote to Elise Rüdiger: "I am alone today…dearest, have looked through and burnt papers and, with it left behind me a piece of the past, which, of course, had grown over with the years…but now it seems like half a murder. One reads old letters so rarely…there is nothing more painful. The dead…have to be buried a second time and the living…touch on…long since forgotten moments, which once made our heart beat faster, so that we want to cry over them and us" (*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, vol. X,I, p. 94). More than that, the power of recollection lies in invoking recognition, if only by suggestion. Upon her return to Rüschhaus in September 1842, Droste wrote to her love Levin Schücking: "I went away so soon after you that it felt as though you had left only yesterday and …books and papers had just been placed there by your hand" (*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, vol. IX,I, p. 361).

Indeed, "[t]he Biedermeier [was] infused with [a] culture of memory" (Ottomeyer, p. 76), spatially expressed in an aesthetic of interiority: domesticity and proximity combined, as if memory could be reached for like an embroidered bell rope. Droste was at home in it as she was in moated Hülshoff Castle, the house that bound all her memories, including that of her first poem about a chicken. Later in life, she tested it by listing and cataloging not only her various collections but also occasional items of the everyday, such as her stockings or the nicknames of people in her acquaintance (Beuys, p. 428). In March of 1835, she wrote to Carl von Haxthausen "Listen, Uncle, I will make a list of…some…coins that are more interesting to you than me…under condition that you respond…as I obediently write this despite a serious headache" (*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, vol. VIII,I, p. 163).

Collecting and storing away one's gems, be they coins, which have always belonged to the canon of reminiscence, fossils, minerals, pebbles, or shells—Droste collected them all—is Biedermeier under the magnifying glass, devoted to the cleaning and sorting of its world. From the many walks she took for steadfastness, often through the bogs around Hülshoff where first "the thought of sinking in began to form" (Ledwina, p. 12), joined by the image of "a human…craw[ling] out of its four-thousand year old crust" (*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, vol. IX,I, p.66), Droste brought home her exploits, then spent much time dusting and neatly arranging her collection, so long as it securely fit into drawers you could keep shut. Always on its guard, the Biedermeier favored to enclose for safekeeping the potentially dubious or precarious. Thus, Droste "redoubled [the] belonging" (Sallis, p. 8) of her stones and in the process reassured herself of a comforting order in which every detail was understood. Though the collection is "a spatial and material phenomenon…seek[ing] a form of self-enclosure…[and] maintain[ing] its integrity [through] boundary, the past is at [its] service…lends it authenticity" (Stewart, p. 151-153). Forever peering, either with a telescope into the landscape to draw its elements near or, attentive to the small and inconspicuous, bent deeply over single stones: isolation grants intensity and alters our perception of surface, roughens it.

This focus allowed Droste to view rubble, catapulted along its journey by immediacy, a "prod [o]f toe-tip" ("The Marl-pit," p. 181), with the same reverence as she did erratic blocks, "foundlings" (*Gedichte*, p. 51) of the earth and its compressed memory, and she "harkened as if intoxicated" (*Gedichte*, p. 52) to boulders that "could split all lightning" (*Gedichte*, p. 300). More than their eminent presence and stark impermeability, such stones speak with certainty of arid hardness, taciturn obstinacy, and an enviable indifference born of their remoteness from human concerns. Still, their permanence has made them ideal markers of human life; you decide whether to step over or stretch out on them. Ledwina (heroine of the 1820 story by the same name) though forewarned by her guide during their nocturnal walk through the cemetery declares "that she would always remain here [lying on this gravestone] until she [too] were dead" (Ledwina, p. 12) wasn't "what was dearest in the world to her…buried here? She knew no names and had no more exact shape for it…but it was certainly her dearest and she tore herself away with a dreadfully confused whimpering…and began…digging up the earth here and there with a little spade" (Ledwina, p. 11). "Ledwina" remained unfinished, but had its heroine lived, she would have been doomed to "drag behind her the gravestone fastened to her ankle" (*Gedichte*, p. 485). The megalithic tombs and rune stones of her native northern Germany, bearing witness to an earlier people, regularly appear in Droste's poetry as

do fossils, the impressions of small dead bodies that are more than a residue of the past but a lock-up, a compression, an actual "binding of time" (Goldsworthy, p. 6) that provides cohesion in dispersion. This, Droste addressed in "The Marl-pit" (1841/1842): "the schist-plate…amidst that rushing, [was]/Flung from the bosom of the sea, just yielding,/While mountains sank, to the oppressive crushing" (The Marl-pit, p.183), and to Christoph Bernhard Schlüter she explained, "I…admire crustaceans…whose fragile existence has been preserved through thousands of years, and I feel quite odd at times when some stalk or shell reemerges in the form into which death [once] bent them" (*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, vol. IX,I, p. 66). Thus, Droste declared fossils the objects of her passion.

On a fair day, her destination was a local quarry, her tool a small hammer, her work "knocking stones" (*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, vol. IX,I, p. 61), as she called it, while "forgetting food and drink" (*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, vol. IX,I, p.61) in order to seek what she most deeply longed for. Where else could you find it but at a precipice or in a pit, where the earth is wounded and may give way without warning. Out here, there is nothing to overcome. You "disappear into the deepest cleft" (*Gedichte*, p. 368), into a subterranean surge of dust and rubble. The narrator of "The Marl-pit" relates how "onto [his] hair/And clothes grit trickled, till [he] grayed like some/Corpse in the catacombs" and that he "had been transmuted into a mummy, dust now constituted/[His] linens, gray [was his] countenance and pale" (The Marl-pit, p. 183). More than a refuge from the wind, the quarry offers up a cave to lean yourself into…let come what may after. Still, the terse break and second half of the poem prove that Droste, a little tongue in cheek, was dallying, still. In the "Jew's Beech," however, the weather has decidedly changed for the worse. At the country wedding, both Friedrich Mergel (the surname means "limestone/marl") and his double Johannes Niemand (the surname means "nobody") have both been exposed: Friedrich as being unable to pay off the watch with which he boasts in front of his rival, Johannes as having stolen half a pound of butter that melted in his pocket when he stood by a kitchen fire. That very night, both disappear, and twenty-eight years pass before the now crippled fugitive Friedrich Mergel returns in the guise of Johannes Niemand (who remains unaccounted for) and relates their escape to the squire. "And so we fled as far as Heerse; it was still dark and we hid behind the great cross in the churchyard to wait until it grew a bit lighter, because we were worried about the quarries at Zeller Meadow…we suddenly heard a sound of stamping and snorting above us….We leapt up and ran in God's name as far as our legs could carry us" (The Jew's Beech, p. 122). Indeed, they had been chased, but not by Kapp, clerk of court, who then knew nothing of the affair but still remembered the night: "At last the rain stopped and we drove again, trusting to God, pressing on in the direction of Zeller Meadow; you could not see your hand in front of your face. Then the coachman said: 'We'd better not get too close to the quarries!'….All at once we heard the bell ringing….I leapt from the carriage….And so I stood there in the mud and rain without moving….And where had we halted? Close to Heerse Cliff….If we had driven another twenty paces, we should have been killed.'-'That was no joke, indeed,' replied the Squire" (The Jew's Beech, p.116-117). "'A strange thing…you were so near each other!'" (The Jew's Beech, p. 122). The edge of life caves in the space between what once were unyielding irreconcilabilities into a forbidding and tightening ledge that stifles much too close at hand. No longer does proximity here suggest the cozy comfort we call "Biedermeier." When the edge breaks away, rumbles down, and washes out, none of us clambering nobodies will ever return.

Droste knew that the last means of self-preservation compels us to ossify, to forge ahead the rigor our body will one day assume. In a cycle of poems called "The Spiritual Year" (1851), petrification permeates everything, from the "stony ether" (*Gedichte*, p. 405) we breathe to the "sparks…[of]…stone" (*Gedichte*, p. 392) we bleed. The landscapes of desperation invoked in these religious poems, where boulders ever hang ready for the crash, do not let you breathe, lest you exhale and they plummet. All you can be sure of is what securely fits into the palm of your hand, be it a "languished heart" (*Gedichte*, p. 487), this "little lump of earth" (*Gedichte*, p. 597), or the blunt menace of a rock, the densest form of rage you can close your fist around. Droste did not throw it but withheld in an act of volition, a perfect suspension of compressed emotion equal only to "the pent-up energy" (Goldsworthy, p. 95) of the stone itself. In the October 1820 letter to her mother that prefaces the first edition of "The Spiritual Year," Droste wrote: "Now this book is in your hands….though downcast my work is complete, only veering in itself….it shows the traces of a depressed and divided spirit….as I did not spare…even the most private thought" (*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, vol. VIII,I, p. 47-48). Droste's entreaties to her God remained unanswered, just "as though [she] had been calling out to rocks" (*Gedichte*, p. 366). When stones came to her as a gift, however, they were accepted as tokens of a shared delicacy of feeling. With like-minded collector friend Scheppe she exchanged, as she put it, "precious presents of fossils and shells because, like me, he is creeping about…[in search of them] has, in fact, been creeping long before me" (*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, vol. IX,I, p. 282). In November of 1843 she wrote of one such excursion: "a storm broke lose…each gust took hold of my thick, padded dress…I crawled more than I walked…most of the time I sat huddled up like a little lump…in only a few minutes I was soaked…my skirt turned into a sponge and pulled me down like lead" (*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, vol. X,I, p. 106-107). Earth calls when setting out for stones, but it takes the hems of layers of clothing, your stockings and boots in squelching clods of mud and your frozen body lowering into it to truly recognize that, indeed, the matter "[s]tone is of the earth" (Sallis, p.5).

## Conclusion

On the exotic backdrop of lava and melting rock, that is to say, in front of the hand-painted wallpaper called "Vue d'Italie," manufactured by Dufour of Paris and depicting a Naples harbor scene with a smoking Vesuvius in the background, the one small but true Biedermeier luxury Droste afforded when settling into her mother's widow-seat Rüschhaus in 1826 (Springer, p. 95), she arranged herself, without disdain, in the corner of a life that no longer held much promise after tradition and duty had worked themselves off and whose reach she estimated at "1000 steps around my settee" (*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, vol. X,I, p. 389). Still, the enclave that is domesticity cultivates the inner self, as her daily routine attested: "I read, write, care for my collections, go for walks, and knit" (*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, vol. VIII,I, p. 267). In her private entresol rooms, the entrance to which you may well pass without being the wiser, Droste withdrew for repose and contemplation onto her ugly black sofa, "on which [she] s[a]t or l[ay] (you may call it what you will)" (*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, vol. IX,I, p. 56). This habit, in fact, caused some stir in Münster society, as the Fräulein was rumored to "sit like a Turk" (Films Media Group). Today, both Rüschhaus and Hülshoff Castle are museum spaces with lovely Biedermeier rooms dedicated to the poet's memory. Charming Rüschhaus, especially, appears to

belie Droste's own assessment that "[she] did much violence to [her]self when [she] wrote" (*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, vol. VII,I, p. 153). The merciless cuttings to which she subjected her texts shared their edge with the stones she knocked from the quarry rubble. Her writing happened in the cut, with an elemental matter-of-fact exactitude that looked words straight in the eye—before they fell to the ground. At the end of her life, she remembered her first poem, written at age seven: "I stole away to where they said I should not go…unhesitating…I climbed up to the tower and in the rafters, sly, I hid for a distant hour, when all should fall to dust, my secret to be found" (Films Media Group). As though it were an act of immurement, she offered her first poem to her ancestral home Hülshoff Castle, the house that not only grounded her memories but that of all Drostes since 1417 (Bieker, p. 21).

(All translations are the author's.)

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# *History in Fiction or Fiction in History: Enchi Fumiko's Namamiko Monogatari as Historical Novel*

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**Abstract**
While Hayden White asserts that historical discourses mirror literary writing, he also recognizes the value of narrativity in historical representations of reality. Many authors of historical discourses interpret and report their materials in narrative form, in the process of which the representation is governed by certain criteria of truth but also some degree of imagination. White's theorizations relevantly underlie the reason why Enchi Fumiko's novel *Namamiko Monogatari* (*A Tale of False Fortunes*) has been regarded by some critics as historical novel. Since the novel concerns the conflation of historically authentic elements and fictitiously created texts, the difficulty in distinguishing fictitious accounts from existing historical documents reveals that narrative history and fiction are rhetorically intertwined. Different from existing literary criticisms, I contend that the novel metanarratively exposes the convention of historical novel and discloses the fictionality of the literary work. By means of incorporating people and events of historical existence, intertextual references to historical narratives, and emplotting the events in typical plot structures, Enchi has created a new form of historical fiction.

Keywords: Enchi Fumiko, *Namamiko Monogatari*, historical novel

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## Introduction

By definition, historical novel presents a story based on the events, people, and places in the past. Whereas this literary genre has had a long standing in world literature since the tenth century, it was not until Georg Lukacs (1962) that the development of historical novel was critically studied. His book, *The Historical Novel*, has often been regarded as one of the founding texts of criticism on historical fiction. Arguing for the revolutionary nature of the novels of Sir Walter Scott, Lukacs maintains that what makes a novel "specifically historical" is the "deviation of the individuality of characters from the historical peculiarity of their age" (p.19). In other words, it is not purely the choice of a historical theme, but, as John Bowen (2002) paraphrases, historical novel reveals "the essential and casual links between the historical setting of the novel and the events and characters depicted in it" (p.247). *Rekishi shōsetsu*, or historical novel in Japanese literature, shares the same definition that the novel is constituted of historical events and people, but the Japanese genre puts more emphasis on the author's responsibility in composing the story based on researched historical facts and in demonstrating the essence of history faithfully (Zhao, 2015, pp.10-11).
This understanding has been strongly advocated by Mori Ogai, who made pioneering contributions to the literary genres of modern fiction and historical fiction. As discussed in his famous essay "Rekishi sonomama to rekishi banare" (Faithful to history and departure from history), *shizen* or the naturalness in historical facts is what he feels unwilling to alter but to be maintained in a faithful manner even though the author's subjective interpretation is inevitable (Mori, 1915, p.106). Among Mori's thirteen historical novels, half of them tend to follow history, but those after *Sanshō Dayū* (1915) become more detached from history since Mori has sensed the limitations imposed by the "rekishi sonomama" approach (faithful to history). The difficulty in preserving the faithfulness in his historical novels rests on the indelible presence of fictionality, hence driving him towards adopting the alternative of "rekishi banare" (departure from history) (Mori, 1915, p.107). Mori's struggle with the two ways of presentation of history genuinely informs the ambiguous nature of historical novel, and the boundary between fictional narrative and historical discourse is crossed. However, the genre is more than merely mingling fiction and history. Instead historical novel concerns the preoccupation with the past and how it is situated within the present. As Diana Wallace (2005) aptly summarizes in *The Woman's Historical Novel: British Women Writers, 1900-2000*:

> Any historical novel is 'historical' in at least four senses: in its use of a particular period for its fictional setting; in its engagement with the historical moment (social, cultural, political and national) of its writing; in its relation to the personal life history of the writer herself; and in its relation to literary history, most obvious in the intertextual use of earlier texts. (p.4)

As we can see, the nature of historicity extends beyond the fictional setting, and it is exactly the obscure border between historiography and literature that gives rise to the prevalence of historical novel.

Considering these parameters and the sense of historicity, this essay examines the nature of historical fiction in Enchi Fumiko's award-winning novel *Namamiko Monogartari* (A Tale of False Fortunes, 1965*)*. Enchi Fumiko (1905-1986), one of the

most acclaimed female prose writer in post-WWII Japan, produced over a hundred plays, short stories, novels, and essays, and received six major awards in literature (Mikals-Adachi, 2001, p.197). Her unrivalled knowledge in classical Japanese literature developed since her childhood. Under the influence of her father, Ueda Kazutoshi, a renowned professor in Japanese linguistics, her literary works were fraught with motifs of the classical elements which are reconfigured by re-situating the characters of the past in her modern socio-cultural and psychological setting. Although intertextual references to classical texts and historical discourses are indispensable in her short stories such as "Himojii Tsukihi" (Days of Hunger, 1954) and "Yō" (Enchantress, 1956), and in major novels including *Onnazaka* (The Waiting Years, 1957) and *Onnamen* (Masks, 1958), *Namamiko Monogatari* is most replete with historical fictional elements. Thus the objective of my essay is to highlight the characteristics of historical novel in *Namamiko Monogatari* while arguing that by means of specific narrative ruses Enchi exposes the problematic approach of the traditional historical novel. Alternatively, using the historical fiction genre Enchi has created her own form of historical novel to articulate feminist concerns over the suppressed women in the Heian era, rendering her masterpiece a feminist historiographic metafiction.

## Incorporating historical and fictional discourses

*Namamiko Monogatari* is a fictional story that mocks the panegyrical account of the eleventh-century regent Fujiwara no Michinaga (966-1028) in the historical chronicle *Eiga Monogatari* (A Tale of Flowering Fortunes, 1028-1107*)* written by Akazome Emon, who served the Fujiwara family as a lady-in-waiting. The novel unfolds with a prologue-narrator who recounts how she came to read the manuscript of an ancient love story titled *Namamiko Monogatari – Shui* (hereafter shortened as *Namamiko-Shui*) forty years ago. After some years when she reads *Eiga Monogatari*, the discrepancies she has observed in *Namamiko-Shui* motivates her to recall her memories of the latter story in which Michinaga is portrayed as a calculating and power-obsessed person. Thereafter in the chapters that follow, the narrator recounts the tale, *Namamiko-Shui*, but the narration is interspersed with the narrator's metafictional intrusion. *Namamiko-Shui* is an embedded tale based on the historical people and events taken place in the Heian court under the reign of emperor Ichijō (980-1011). Different from the historical chronicle, *Namamiko-Shui* gives a fuller account of the empress consort Teishi and is infused with the stories of other fictional characters, including the shaman sisters Ayame and Kureha. The story also depicts the machinations of the regent who comes to his power and status by retaining ramifications of his people among the court and instigating plots to denigrate the household of Teishi. Amid the downfall of Teishi's family and a series of fabricated spirit possessions, the possessed mediums accuse the empress consort of plaguing other royal family members by her living spirit. Nevertheless, the genuine love between emperor Ichijō and Teishi stands undefeated. Ultimately, Michinaga's conspiracy is doomed to fail. In a nutshell, this version portrays Michinaga negatively and creates a more vivid image of Teishi. Whereas *Namamiko Monogatari* is qualified as historical novel by its nature that the story is set in a real historical period with people and events of historical existence, they are interweaved with certain fictional elements, resulting in the ambiguity between history and fiction. This ambiguity is essential in historical novel in the sense that the novel alternatively exposes

fictionality and enhances the plausibility of the narration, making it increasingly difficult to draw the distinction. In the followings, I will examine the narratological ruses that contribute to this ambiguity.

First and foremost, the incorporation of historical people, events and places as well as historical narratives is imperative in historical fiction. At the beginning of the prologue, the narrator mentions her family's acquaintance with Dr. Basil Hall Chamberlain during her childhood, an active Japanologist at Tokyo Imperial University in the late nineteenth century, marking the first narratorial intention of establishing the authority of her accounts. This approach of incorporating people and events of actual historical existence has been pervasively adopted throughout the novel. For instance, when the prologue-narrator is speculating on the period in which *Namamiko-Shui* should be composed, she concludes that it might be a second-rate work by Takebe Ayatari in the Tokugawa period:

> 私は読んだその物語は、鎌倉か室町期の古書を更に写しかえたものか、或いは徳川時代の余り有名でない国文学者の戯作の一つで、建部綾足の亜流の筆ずさみかも知れないのである。(Enchi, 2004, p.12)
>
> Judging from that, the story must have been a transcription of an older book from the Kamakura or Muromachi period, or possibly a fictional work by a not-so-famous literary scholar of the Tokugawa period – perhaps a second-rate work by Takebe Ayatari. (Enchi, 2000, p.11)

Here the mention of Takebe Ayatari seems not a random act if we are informed that Takebe was one of the founders of the *yomihon*, the earlier form of historical novel that pervaded in Kyoto and Osaka between mid-eighteenth and early nineteenth century (Zolbrod, 1966, p.486). Takebe made an invaluable contribution in the early period between 1750 and 1800 to the *Kamigata yomihon*, with *Nishiyama Monogatari* (Tale of Nishiyama) (1768) being his representative work. *Kamigata yomihon* consists of "adaptations of Chinese vernacular fiction, collections of tales with a historical setting, Buddhist narratives, or anthologies of supernatural stories" (Zolbrod, 1966, p.487). The indication of historical periods and actual figures has implanted into the fictional narrative a sense of historicity.

Apart from proper names of historical existence, historical narratives are intertextually referenced as part of the reconstructed story of *Namamiko-Shui*. Developed on the historical facts depicted in the chronicle *Eiga Monogatari*, the embedded tale is re-created in a cut-and-paste manner, meaning that excerpts allegedly taken from the historical document are interpolated among the narrator's recounts, the narratorial commentary and quotations taken from other historical narratives such as *Makura no Soshi* (The Pillow Book), *Genji Monogatari* (The Tale of Genji) and Chinese poetry. For instance, while justifying for the higher credibility of the depiction of Teishi in *Namamiko-Shui* than that in *Eiga Monogatari*, the narrator makes reference to a passage purportedly quoted from *Makura no Soshi*, a collection of tales and anecdotes written by Teishi's another lady-in-waiting named Sei Shōnagon (966-1025). The adulation of Teishi is supportive of the narrator's complimentary recount of the appearance and the talent of the empress consort. Embedded within this quoted passage is an allusion to the Chinese poet Po Chu-i's "Song of the Lute". It is apparent that the intertextual references serve to enhance the

authority of the fictional narrative.

Using the framework of chronicle in *Namamiko-Shui* is pivotal since chronicles are important sources of court history. Unlike national histories, chronicles tend to record the "realities of aristocratic existence" and ordinary daily subject matters, which are believed to be reflecting the actual history (McCullough and McCullough, 1980, p.8). The way Enchi mimics the discursive style of the chronicle form in the composition of *Namamiko-Shui* evidently indicates her intention to take advantage of the authoritativeness of historical chronicle. For example, the linearity of the narrative is maintained and temporality is frequently stressed by giving the exact time, date, and month in the calendar (e.g. 正暦五年二月二十一日, 巳の時) (Enchi, 2004, p.47; p.98), the season (e.g. 夏の盛り) (Enchi, 2004, p.115), or festive and ceremonial events (e.g. 元服) (Enchi, 2004, p.19). The theme of *Eiga Monogatari* centers on the splendor of aristocratic life but the events are often organized in a disjointed, episodic manner. Since the Heian language style has been adopted in the passages allegedly quoted intact from the historical documents, the contrast in style is particularly marked in its comparison with the narration of the tale retold by the narrator. S. Yumiko Hulvey (1995) describes the imitation as "pseudo-classical" style by which the embedded quotations are interspersed with classical Japanese suffixes, honorific prefixes attached to nouns, and certain special vocabulary, adding an authentic and archaic flavor to the narratives (p.180). Further, adopting the chronicle plot structure significantly contributes to the credibility of the fictional representations of events in historical novel (White, 1996, p.67). By depicting events resembling the style used in *Eiga Monogatari*, its plausibility can extend to the recounted tale. Since the retold story conforms to the general outline of the historical events and the people lived in history, the illusion of literal truthfulness is naturally maintained (White, 1996, p.67).

Although the narrator has been constantly emphasized the veracity of the tale, her unreliable accounts and narratorial interventions simultaneously expose the fictitiousness. Right from the beginning of the prologue, the narrator frequently stresses the truthfulness of her narration. For instance, based on her fairly accurate memory, she remembers the tale she has read forty years ago. After a couple of lines she reminds the reader that her deteriorating memory might cause errors in her recount. In another occasion, claiming that the manuscript is the sole copy and she is the only person who has read it, she also regrets that nobody has heard of it and its whereabouts has been unknown. While metanarratively admitting the possibility of conflating her childhood memories and personal emotions with the historical accounts, she earnestly indicates the infallibility of her memory and hints at some imperfections in her narration. Most importantly, all verisimilitude has been virtually destroyed by the metafictional closing when the narrator intervenes immediately after quoting the final sentences taken intact from *Namamiko-Shui*:

> 「生神子物語」の本文はこの文章で終わっている。年譜を調べると道長の薨じた万寿四年はまだ後一条帝の後世であるから年代の記述に誤りがあるが、これは物語のことで作者の語りたい諷喩をのべる手段に歴史を前後させたものであろうか。(Enchi, 2004, p.196)

> A Tale of False Fortunes ends with these lines. An investigation of thechronologies reveals that when Michinaga died in the fourth year of Manju (1027), it was still the reign of Emperor Go-Ichijō, so there is some error in dates. But then it is a work of fiction, and perhaps the order of historical events was inverted as a means for its author to suggest something. (Enchi, 2000, p.150)

The inconsistency in the date of death and the reign of the emperor irrevocably refutes all kinds of authority and credibility established throughout the narrative. Here the implication of the closure is not about the overriding of fictionality over factuality, but instead what historical novel concerns most is the inseparability and interdependent relationship between fiction and history.

**Emplotting history with narrativity**

The intimate relationship between fictional and historical representations in historical novel can be achieved by another narrative ruse - emplotting the events in typical plot structures. By means of emplotment, history is added with narrativity. According to Hayden White (1996), emplotment here means to "endow historical events with a figurative meaning by endowing them with the structure of a generic plot type, such as farce, romance, tragedy", etc. (p.74). These generic plot types possess narrative coherence found in real events which are endowed with "structures, tonalities, auras, and meanings" (p.65). In other words, when historical events are represented in generic plot types, the fictional narratives will become credible. In Enchi's novel, the events in the recounted tale are endowed with the form and the style that imitate the chronicle of *Eiga Monogatari*. Other than the chronicle plot, history is also represented in the typical romance plot of emperor Ichijō and Teishi. These typical plot structures have greatly enhanced the plausibility of the fictional narratives.

Representing history with narrativity exerts an effect of immediacy or an illusion of the reader's experiencing the events "realistically". This is made possible by the fact that history borrows from fiction the figurative imaginations. Paul Ricoeur (1984) enunciates in *Time and Narrative* that in composing historical discourses historians could only imagine what had happened without witnessing the events themselves. They intentionally write as if the past had taken place in a fashion that imitates the "metaphorical reference" adopted in poetic writing. Thus the reconstruction of the past is achieved metaphorically by the historian's re-imagination of history. The "historical intentionality" is borrowed very much alike by historical novelists who told their narrative as though it had occurred, as evident from the use of "verbal past tenses" in narrating the unreal. This "reciprocal borrowing" reveals that fiction borrows "as much from history as history borrows from fiction" (p.82). The "interweaving reference" between history and fiction what Enchi's historical novel is all about. The narrative ruse of fusing fictional narratives with historical discourses significantly reinforces the tensions, hence enhancing the plausibility between the two types of accounts. The novel should be read by considering both worlds and their relationship because history and fiction are intimately connected and virtually inseparable. While *Namamiko-Shui* is claimed as the true version of the history about Michinaga and Teishi, the tale is compared against Akazome's historical representation in *Eiga Monogatari*. The presence of the two versions suggests that the author, whether of the fictional narrative or the historical discourse, could give

different interpretations of the same history. Hence the activity of emplotment might "generate alternative and even mutually exclusive interpretations of the same set of phenomenon" (White, 1996, p.68), indicating that history is not about "one authentic representation of the past but a plurality of competing versions" (Nünning, 1997, p.227). Further, the contrast in the characterization of the main characters diegetically encourages the formation of a different image of Michinaga and Teishi. Takenishi Hiroko (1967) supports this view in her contention that the incorporation of the fabricated ancient tale functions to create a more vivid image of Teishi (p.168). After all, the historical novel poses the question of truthfulness and falsehood of the historical and fictional accounts. The fact is that there is no pure history or pure fiction, and history is simply the presentation of the image of the past.

**The new form of historical novel**

Against the traditional approach of historical fiction that stresses faithfulness to real histories, Enchi's *Namamiko Monogatari* represents an unconventional form of historical novel that challenges the positivist nature of historiography. By parodying the historical chronicle *Eiga Monogatari*, Enchi problematizes the traditional mode of representing reality. As the prologue-narrator perpetually declares the accuracy of her recount and her certainty of the manuscript being the only and more comprehensive source of history, she is exploiting the self-reflexive truthfulness inherent in the name of "history". However, her inconsistent reliability and self-contradictory narration expose the limitations of historical narratives. The self-established authority of history is actually an illusion made possible by its own nature of incommensurability. When a discourse is labelled as "historical", it immediately stands as if it represented the truths. Yet the fact is that even historiographic representations could provide "a mediated form of access to the past" but never "a transparent reflection or a reliable account of any historical event" (Nünning, 1997, p.235). The truthfulness of the real events of the past could never be verified by the historians whose unavoidable subjectivity "lies behind the process of selecting, integrating, and interpreting the 'facts'". Thus the claim of faithfulness to history is nothing but a pretension to historical truth and objectivity (Nünning, 1997, pp.227-228). Masuda Yūki (2013) demonstrates a shared perception that what history shows cannot fully reveal all histories. Such history is a kind of "surface history" (表の歴史) which to a certain extent must have missed out something that was not recorded in historical discourses or had been forgotten. This kind of history, the "inside history" (裏の歴史), is traced and recuperated in the way *Namamiko Monogatari* has been narrated. Thus the conscientious manner of the narrator, who recounts the tale and speculates on its details such as the author, the period of composition, and the unknown whereabouts of the manuscript, represents the way of interpretation of history that aims at transforming the "inside history" into the "real history" (真の歴史). And by rendering the "inside history" as "true history", it not merely challenges the traditional approach of historical writers who conduct research on the historical facts before composing their novels but it has also genuinely produced a new and unconventional framework of historical novel (pp.43-44).

As aforementioned, whether the historical tale is faithful to history should not be assessed on the extent to which it is attached to historical facts but on the plausibility of the plot type chosen. Other than giving the historical discourse literal and figurative

dimensions, transforming history into romance "allows reinsertion of women's concerns" (Wallace, 2005, p.20). By emplotting the historical events in a romance plot structure, it makes the characterization of the image of Teishi more natural. If we regard the laudatory depiction of Michinaga in *Eiga Monogatari* as a representation of proper histories, it metaphorically reflects the masculine nature of canonical histories that often exclude women. Conversely, *Namamiko-Shui* foregrounds the status of the women characters and exemplifies "an imaginary recovery or recreation of women's lost and unrecorded history", resulting in a disruption of the exclusive view of history itself as "unitary and closed" (Wallace, 2005, pp.16-18). The feminist concerns in the novel involve more than the appealing account of Teishi but more broadly the roles of the women in the Heian court. The women suffered from the system of patriarchy and polygyny and were frequently manipulated by men for obtaining political powers. Heian women were oftentimes associated with the vengeful spirits that haunt the royal members and acted as possessed mediums who were depicted as horrid beings. Further, these women were assigned the roles of child-bearing and motherhood whose sufferings were often granted a subjective and feminist perspective in traditional historical records. However, by means of historical novel, women readers are presented with "the imaginative space to create different, more inclusive versions of 'history'" (Wallace, 2005, p.3). Historical novelists "supplement those incomplete and partial accounts of the past which systematically ignore the viewpoints and roles of women" (Nünning, 1997, p.223).

## Conclusion

Re-considering Diana Wallace's definition of historical novel, although the embedded story in *Namamiko Monogatari* is a fictional narrative, it is set in the historical Heian period and engages with the historical moment in its present narration. To understand the narrative ruses of the novel, the erudition of Enchi and her personal life have to be taken into account in the sense that the identity of the prologue-narrator is put in question when the names of her father and Dr. Chamberlain are mentioned. The overall effect of historical novel can take shape when the literary history of Japanese literature is addressed. It means that the intertextual references to classical texts and literary genres have been a convention in Japanese literature. Considering *Namamiko-Shui* as a reconstruction of "history" and the metafictional role of the narrator who metanarratively discusses the composition of her recounted tale and makes authorial comments on the plot, characters, and the credibility of her accounts, *Namamiko Monogatari*, can be concluded as a feminist historiographic metafiction.

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# *The Presentation of Rape in Laurie Halse Anderson's Speak*

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**Abstract**
With the raising number of reported rape cases, rape becomes one of the crucial social problems in worldwide. Mostly, women and girls are the main target of this violent crime. The violation on women's body is an issue which has been discussed in many ways. Children's literature is one of the powerful tools used for raising awareness of sexual assault in readers. This paper focuses on the presentation of rape in Laurie Halse Anderson's *Speak*. It also discusses the effects of rape culture on a rape victim. The study shows that rape myth acceptance considerably impacts victim, people surrounding a victim and rapist's attitudes toward rape, rape victim, and rapist

Keywords: Children's literature, patriarchy, rape, sexual assault, rape myths, SPEAK

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## Introduction

Rape becomes one of the crucial social problems worldwide. Because of the surging number of rape cases reported each year**,** it is a crisis that many counties try to solve thoroughly. Women and girls can be sexually harmed by all surrounding men. Not just strangers can sexually harm them; however, all male siblings and kinship could even be women and girls' surrounding dangers. Few of rape victims are brave to report about rape because of many reasons. Therefore, learning about the danger of sexual violence and its prevention has been focused nowadays.

Literature is a powerful tool to change people and societies. Literature is creatively written by an author for entertainment and appreciation; however, sometimes it directly and indirectly informs readers with profundity of thought in order to effectively change societies. According to Fox (1993), "Texts are important influences that shape us by reflecting politics and values of our society." They are not just passive texts which we actively interpret meaning from it, but they are created to mold us through letters (p. 656). Therefore, literary works have had a great impact on readers and the development of society. Children's literature is a powerful tool to raise awareness among young people. Rovenger (1988) stated that children's literature is like a moral compass; it is not only "the stuff of memories, but it also can be vital compass point along the byways of life" (p. 45-46). There are many children books related to sexual assault theme in the market. Many of them got awards because of their popularity and profundity of thought. Among them, *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson is chosen to study.

*Speak* is a story about Melinda Sordino, a high school girl, who is raped by an upper-class boy at an end-of-summer party. She is friendless and outcast as a result of breaking up the summer party by calling the police as a will to report her rape incident. However, she flees before reporting the crime and keeps it secretly. Consequently, she starts her life in a high school with trauma. She feels safe by living alone. *Speak* by Anderson is a children's literature that can distinctly expose false beliefs held in our societies. Because of the influences of rape myth acceptance, Melinda, the protagonist, people surrounding her and Evans, the rapist, have distorted beliefs about rape, rape victim and rapist

## Rape Myths

Rape myths are false beliefs about rape, rape victims, and rapists that perpetuate an accepted rape culture. Many people have inaccurate ideas about rape. Unfortunately, some men use these myths to justify their sexually violent actions. Crosby (2011) suggested that rape myth can be divided into three groups: myths of victim blaming, myths of the rapist's exoneration, and myths of the rape's surrounding environment.

Myths of blaming the victims include many prejudicial beliefs about women. These myths subscribe to the misconception that it is the woman's fault for being raped. Blame is placed on the female survivors of rape, rather than on the perpetrators of the crime. For example, there is a belief that if there is no physical injury as a result of the victim's resistance, she should not be treated as a rape victim because women cannot be assaulted against their will. They can supposedly prevent rape if they want

to by fighting hard. False reporting is another rape myth that makes it easy to blame the victims. Some think that women lie about being raped because they feel guilty after having sex, or they want to seek revenge against their partners. There is also the idea that women "ask for it." The belief is that because of their provocative dress and actions, women deserve to be raped (Sherwood, 2011; Mulliken, 2006; Curran & Renzetti, 1993). Women's beauty and charm are often blamed for arousing men's sexual desire. Sometimes a woman's friendliness may be misinterpreted as an invitation to have sex with a man. According to Shotland and Goodstein (1983), they found that rape by an acquaintance is questioned as being a genuine rape. They stated:

> Several authors suggest that it is commonly accepted for a woman to conceal her genuine interest in sexual contact and merely suggest her intentions in subtle or symbolic ways....Conversely, cultural beliefs about the dating situation hold that a woman is expected to resist a man's advances at least in the beginning stages of a sexual encounter, even though she may be responsive and ultimately consent to having sexual relations....It appears that some men may underrate a woman's verbal protests and overrate her expressions of friendliness in their attempts to facilitate a sexual encounter (p. 5-6).

This shows that gender patterns constructed by society can affect the attitudes of men on how to interpret women's signals or words. Women's rejection signals and words may be ignored because some men think that women pretend to be "hard to get." Men misinterpret this as flirting. The word *no* from a woman may mean nothing to a man, and he may ignore her protests in favor of his own desires.

There are many notions that support the myths that exonerate rapists. These beliefs benefit rapists by negating accusations against them. An illustration of this type of myth is that if an incident does not involve a weapon or a violent physical attack, some people, even some victims, do not consider the event a rape (Mulliken, 2006). Without sufficient, accurate knowledge about rape, many people do not know what is considered rape. Some victims do not think that they have been raped; therefore, they do not report the incident as a crime. Moreover, there is the belief that a wife cannot be raped by her husband because the husband has a right to do whatever he wants to his spouse. Another commonly held rape myth is that women are usually raped by strangers. However, some researchers' data show evidence contrary to this belief. Bureau of Justice Statistics Selected Findings (2009) reveals that fifty seven percent of rape crime are committed by people known to the victims. According to Curran and Renzetti (1993), it is also believed that only men with mental illness commit this violent crime. Media sometimes publicize the idea that rapists are psychotic. The thinking is that normal men cannot commit this crime. Consequently, a rapist may be treated as a sick person rather than as a criminal. Moreover, they emphasize that there is a belief that rapists are not Caucasians, but people of color. Most rapes are interracial crimes, and men of certain races are more likely be accused of rape than others. As a result, white people are generally not accused of rape. Mulliken (2006) describes the finding of Williams and Holmes's study as an irrefutable evidence that men from minority groups, African Americans and Mexicans in particular, often see themselves as scapegoats in rape accusations. It produces stereotypes in people's mind that a rapist cannot be a white man.

There are myths about the site of the rape and its surrounding environment. Some believe that being in certain places increases a woman's chance of being raped. In reality, rape can occur anywhere: at home, at school, on public transport, in temples, etc. But a myth exists that rape only occurs in dark and isolated places outside of the home, and it usually happens in lower-class neighborhoods (Crosby, 2011; Curran & Renzetti, 1993). Therefore, it is a woman's responsibility to avoid such places to lessen her chance of being raped. Staying at home, women will be safe. So, when they go to risky places, such as a bar or an isolated area, they are responsible if they are raped.

Through these three false myths, rape culture is perpetuated by misconceptions regarding rape, rapists, and rape victims. Moreover, society discourages rape victims from reporting the crime. Rape experiences are minimized by rape myths as unimportant experiences. Although police officers are trained to deal with rape cases effectively, victim-blaming attitudes have not totally disappeared from every police department. Victims will not get the proper help they need if they keep the rape secret, nor will the perpetrators be punished. In addition, victims can become embarrassed and blame themselves for what happened. Consequently, male sexual aggression against women is accepted and justified in some societies while it is also being constantly perpetuated in those societies.

**The Role of Rape Myth Acceptance in *Speak***

Rape myths do not only encourage men to commit sex crimes by giving them accusations, but it also discourages rape victims to report the crime. Because of a consequence of social learning, the way people think about rape, rape victims, and rapists are shaped. The acceptance of rape myths considerably influences people, societies and authorities to have distorted attitude toward rape, rape victim and rapist.

Melinda who also holds rape myths knows how the societies will judge her after revealing about the rape. For this reason, she is the first one who blames herself of being raped. Because of the influence of rape myths acceptance, Melinda kept her rape experience in secret. There are many reasons that make Melinda feel that she should take the responsibility of being raped.

First, bringing herself into the risky places is one reason that stops Melinda to report the crime. One rape myth that some people believe is that in some certain places, especially in dark and isolated places, women have high risk of being raped (Crosby, 2011; Curran & Renzetti, 1993). They should avoid being in these places. If they decide to go to the risky places, they have to be responsible for the outcome. Women who voluntarily bring themselves to risky places will increase the degree of suspicion and doubt in people as rape victims in people because women's self-protection is one element that people use for judging them. In Melinda's case, she realized that she was the one who walked into a risk situation herself, being out late at night and going to the party with her friends without parents' permission. A party where people can assume that it relates to alcohol, sometimes drugs and drunkards is one of the risk areas that a good girl or a good woman should not go. Moreover, Melinda made herself getting in a higher risk by going to the woods with a man while she was drunk. She went into the woods where she described, "somebody giggled, hidden beyond the dark, quite boygirl whispers" (Anderson, 2008, p. 156). She knew it is a place that

couples whisper sweet nothings and exchange kisses to each other. In that isolated area, she did not detect any danger. She could not say to anybody that she was forced to go to the party and to the woods. She made her own decision to walk into troubles. Therefore, by her decisions to put herself into the unsafe places, she was reluctant to report the crime. Because of the rape myth acceptance, she thought that it was her responsibility for being assaulted.

Drinking alcohol is another reason that prevents Melinda to report the sexual assault. Some people believe that women who drink are not good women (Sherwood, 2011; Mulliken, 2006; Curran & Renzetti, 1993). Besides, women who go to a bar with provocative dresses are sometimes seen as gullible women who have less value, and they deserve to be raped. With slightest respectability toward females in patriarchal societies, drinking is enough to discredit rape victims in the eyes of authorities. Women and alcohol are not a good combination of good women. Many people think that women who are willingness to drink a lot of alcohol should not complain of being raped. As a fourteen-years-old girl, Melinda could not legally drink, but she did drink. Because she drank, she jeopardized herself. With half-conscious state, she could not make a good decision to prevent herself from an unsafe position as she recalls the event, "I tested a beer. Another beer and one more, then I worried I would throw up" (Anderson, 2008, p.156). Because she was incapacitated by alcohol, she was unable to give consent or prevent to have a sex. Therefore, by deciding to go to a party and drinking alcohol, it is difficult to make other people believe that she does not "ask for it" as one of the rape myths always blame on rape victims. Some men seize an opportunity to have sex with drunken women by implying their unconsciousness means consent, while women who willingly drank lots of alcohol should not complain about being raped. In Melinda's case, it cannot be denied that if she tells the truth, some people might think that she deserves to be raped. As a result, because she held this rape myth, she believed that no one would believe her rape experience.

Another myth that affected Melinda's willingness to report the crime is that the rapist is not a stranger. It is always complicated in a case that a rape victim knows the offenders. Shotland and Goodstein (1983) also suggest that rapes that were committed by someone whom rape victims knew were often questioned. Previous relationships between women and offenders were always used as one of the evidences for judging the crime. It often has affected judgments of people, society and authorities. In Melinda's case, the truth is that she flirted with the rapist at first. The meeting between Melinda and the rapist started with the flirting of a boy and a girl. Therefore, he was not a complete stranger. This becomes to be troublesomeness for Melinda, who holds a false belief that the rapist must be a stranger, to explain to other people about her unfortunate situation. While being flirted by a "gorgeous cover-model guy" whom she thought her friend would be jealous of her, she was happy. She let him flirted, touched and kissed at first (Anderson, 2008, p.156). Montgomery suggested that flirting often has different meaning between men and women. Sometimes men and women flirt to build friendly relationship, but mostly men flirt women because of sexual intention (as cited in Grauerholz, 1994). Montgomery's idea seems to fit well with Melinda's case. Melinda's intention was just to have a handsome boyfriend in order to start a bright high school life like other teenage girls. On the other hand, Evans, the rapist, interpreted Melinda's previous actions as consensual signs to have sex with him. Consequently, because of the different

interpretation of flirting between Evans and Melinda, she ended up with being raped by a senior boy from her school. Therefore, with all of her actions, it is hard for her to persuade people to believe that she does not consent or "ask for it." Moreover, other people who hold rape myths may think that she deserves to be raped because her flirting provokes the man to have sex with her. Rape is a crime that victims must prove themselves as victims, and they have to prove that they do not consent (Curran & Renzetti, 1993; Sheffield, 1984). Similarly, Melinda questioned whether her flirting mean consent. Therefore, it is troublous for her to prove herself that she is the victim of this sexual crime because people usually blame date rape victims. It is illogical because people overlook the right to say no of the victim at any time. Legally, previous relationship between victims and offenders cannot use to judge this sexual crime. Willingness to be flirt, to kiss, and to embrace is not always mean consent to have sexual relation (Kring, Davison, Neale & Johnson, 2013).

Not fighting hard enough to protect herself from being raped is another reason that stop Melinda to report her rape experience. Some people hold an idea that women cannot be raped against their will. They can protect themselves from being assaulted by fighting hard (Sherwood, 2011; Mulliken, 2006; Curran & Renzetti, 1993). According to Sheffield (1984), rape is considered as a sexual act that need evidence to prove that there have forcible actions or resistances. To convict rapists, victims are demanded to have evidence of forcibility and resistance to prove. Victim's words are not sufficient to convict a crime. In Melinda's case, when she realized that the situation was too much to handle, she could not resist and take control anything. Because of the drunkenness and differentiation of physical strength, she could not strongly refuse and prevent herself from the unconsent sexual activity. She could only mumble about leaving her alone that she knew it sounds like "a deranged drunk" (Anderson, 2008, p.158). When she wanted to scream, her mouth was shut by his hand, and her rejection was intentionally ignored. After being rape, although she decided to call the police, she fled before reporting the crime because of doubt in the event. "Was I raped?" is a question popped up in some victims who held some rape myths, and Melinda is also one of them (Anderson, 2008, p. 190).

Malinda's rape case is not the only unreported rape case, but many victims decided to unreport their crimes. Crowell and Burgess (1996) inform that thirteen to twenty-five percent of American women will be sexual assaulted during their life (p. 1). However, rape is one of the least reported crimes according to information published by police. Twenty-five percent of victims consider rape an intimate problem that they want to deal and conceal with themselves (Glynn et al., 1996). When women are raped on a date, which the rapist is someone known to the victims, they seem to less likely report the incidents. On the other hand, random rapes by a stranger are ten times more likely to be reported by the victims (Curran & Renzetti, 1993). Moreover, according to Koss and Harvey, sixty percent of rape victims are worried of being blamed for being raped (as cited in Kornblum, Julian, & Smith, 1995). Therefore, the number of reported rape cases is not correct with circumstances nowadays.

The acts of people surrounding Melinda essentially affect her willingness to report the crime. Firstly, to be accepted into a group of friend and community is one reason for keeping Melinda from telling someone about rape. Social rejection was one of the results she encountered from trying to speak. For example, when she was crying with tears on her face and bruise on her lips, however she was slapped by a person who

heard when she called to the cops at the party and became mad by her friend, Rachel (Anderson, 2008). Without asking for a reason, she was banned by other students. To be a teenager is about to be a part of a clan. However, Melinda started her high school life with clanless and became to be a pariah in the school. She did not want to be friendless as she thinks "I need a new friend. I need a friend…Not a true friend…Just a pseudo-friend, disposable friend. Friend as accessory. Just so don't feel and look so stupid" (Anderson, 2008, p. 25). She still cared about what people think and judge about her. She only wanted to be a normal teenager who has a friend to "confess everything, hand over the guilt and mistake and anger to" (Anderson, 2008, p.59). An addition of being banned in the school, bullying is another effect she gets from trying to tell the truth. Although she did it to protect her right on her body and her right to be safe, she was physically and verbally bullied by other students as she thought, "Rachel and every other person I've known for nine years continue to ignore me. I'm getting bumped a lot in the halls. A few times my books were accidentally ripped from my arms and pitched to the floor" (Anderson, 2008, p.16). She also hurt by mean children who got the effect of Melinda's call as she said, "When the pep rally ends, I am accidentally knocked down three rows of bleachers" (Anderson, 2008, p.35). Truly, these are not accidents, but they intentionally assault her. She realized that social judgment and word of mouth are powerful since she called the police in the night of the party. She was not sure that everyone will believe her if she tells them what happened to her in that night. Therefore, before telling the truth that can harshly affect her social life, she has to think twice. Finally, concealing her rape event as a mystery is what she chose for her safety.

The acceptance of rape myths of Rachel significantly has impact on Malinda's courage to report the sexual crime. After telling the truth about rape, sometimes rape victims are looked down as a liar for some reasons. Some people think that women lie about being rape because they feel guilty after having sex, or they want to seek revenge (Sherwood, 2011; Mulliken, 2006; Curran & Renzetti, 1993). This idea shows clearly in Melinda's case. Because of the concernedness about safety, Melinda decided to tell Rachel, her ex-best friend, who now dates with Andy Evans, the rapist, about her rape incident at the party in order to warn her not to step on Melinda's footprint. She hoped that Rachel would believe in her and get away from him. Rachel unfortunately thought that Melinda made up a story because of jealousy and anger. Melinda's goodwill was viewed as a plan for revenge of a jealous girl. Rachel intensely believed that her boyfriend, Andy Evans, could not be a rapist. Evans, a good looking, rich and white man, is a man with some characteristics that are always looked over of rape accusation by people. Curran and Renzetti (1993) state that people often believe that rapists are not Caucasians, and according to Mulliken (2006), African Americans and Mexicans who hold bad images in Societies are always accused of being rapists. With this kind of belief, Evans was hardly seen as a rapist. Therefore, Rachel was really mad at Melinda and said, "Lair! I can't believe you. You are jealous that I'm popular and I'm going to prom and so you lie to me like this. And you sent me a note, didn't you? You are so sick" (Anderson, 2008, p. 213). It shows that Melinda's goodwill is worthless because Rachel sees it as a revenge of her jealous ex-friend. Besides, Rachel's words destroy her courage to speak the truth. Her rape case is seen as a lie of a jealous and vindictive girl who only does it for her own benefit. Her experience is minimized as unimportant, and it reaffirms her that people may not believe her as she thought "I got my hopes up halfway through the conversation with Rachel – that was my mistake. It was like

smelling the perfect Christmas feast and having the door slammed in your face, leaving you alone in the cold" (Anderson, 2008, p.214).

The acceptance of rape myths has a great impact on Andy Evans' attitudes, the rapist, about rape. According to Sheffield (1984), victim blaming is pervasive in male dominated societies. Rape myths are established to justify the sexual violence of men against women, and to ensure that men will not be punished by their sexual violent actions. Some rapists justify their sexual violent activities toward victims with rape myths. As being widely accepted in societies, sometimes rape myths are used for breaking loose from accusations by rapists. In Evans' perspective, he also thought he did not do anything wrong. Evans believed that Melinda's sexual assault experience was not rape, but it was just misunderstanding and disagreement between Melinda and him. Evans, the rapist, also justified his sexual violence actions and placed blame on Melinda. He stated:

> You have a big mouth, you know it? Rachel blew me out the prom, giving me some bullshit story about how I raped you. You know that's a lie. I never raped anybody. I don't have to. You wanted it just as bad as I did. But your feelings got hurt, so you started spreading lies, and now every girl in school is talking about me like I'm some kind of pervert. You've been spreading that bullshit story for weeks. What's wrong, ugly, you jealous? Can't you get a date? (Anderson, 2008, p.24).

He clearly has held false beliefs of rape, rape victim and rapist in his mind. His logic was distorted by his beliefs and high self-esteem. He negated the accusation of being a rapist by telling Melinda that he was a boy that everyone wanted to know and date with him. There was no need for him to rape anyone. Therefore, Melinda was blamed as a liar who wanted to seek revenge. Evans' distorted thought was similar to an idea of rape in *Playboy*, published in October 1990, which stated, "the new definition of rape gives women a simple way of thinking about sex that externalizes guilt, remorse, or conflict. Bad feelings after sex become someone else's fault (Dworkin, 1999). Evans accused that Melinda was mad and spread a rumor about being raped because she was not the chosen one. Moreover, for Evans, it was not considered raped by Evans because he thought she enjoyed it as he stated, "You didn't scream before. You like it. You're jealous that I took out your friend and not you" (Anderson, 208, p. 25). He overlooked the truth that she said "No" even though it sounds like a mumble because of being drunk. Moreover, he covered his hand on her mouth in order to prevent her from screaming. Shotland and Goodstein's study (1983) obviously reveals that women's verbal rejection may be underrated by men. Her weary resistances were ignored and somehow interpreted as she wanted it as he asked her, "Do you want to?" (Anderson, 2008, p. 157). Evans' question showed his distorted belief about women that women secretly want to be raped, and they enjoy it. Therefore, he did not feel guilty about all of his actions toward Melinda because he thought he did nothing wrong.

Because of insufficient knowledge about rape, Melinda, a thirteen-year-old girl, felt ashamed, and thought it was her fault of being raped. She truly believed that she had to take responsibility for being raped. Her embarrassment and ashamedness were shown through her thought about herself. She thought that she was similar to Hester, the protagonist, in *The Scarlet Letter* taught in English class. Hester Prynne has been

found of guilty of adultery. To expose this humiliation publicly, she must wear a scarlet A on her dress to mark her shame as a punishment and stand on a scaffold for hours. However, her secret lover remains unidentified. He tortures with anguish as a result of the unconfessed sin. With embarrassment and guilt in Melinda's mind, she thought she had a similarity to Hester in *The Scarlet Letter* as she thought, "I can see us, living in the wood, her wearing that A, me with an S maybe, S for silent, for stupid, for scared. S for silly. For shame" (Anderson, 2008, p. 118). Instead of branding herself with a letter A like Hester, Melinda disgracefully branded herself with a letter S to stand for her silly, stupid and scared. It suggests that she blames herself for going to that party, and she should be silenced. Consequently, her heart was slowly dying as she described her feeling, "they [feelings] are chewing me alive like an infestation of thought, shame, mistake (Anderson, 2008, p. 146)."

## Conclusion

Melinda is a good example of a person who does not understand the realities of sexual violence. According to Kring et al. (2013), a person who is below the age required cannot legally have any sexual activities, even with consent–Statutory rape. Because of the consequence of social learning and insufficient guidance, Melinda has inaccurate ideas about rape. She does not know that she is protected by the law in all coercive sexual circumstances. She is too young to know that it is not her fault of being raped, and the use of force is enough to sue him. Sex is always a controversial topic to accurately and truthfully teach to young people, however Bott (2003) argued that "trying to pretend rape does not exist is dangerously ignorant" (p. 26). Consequently, to protect children from distorted beliefs and potential bad circumstances as Melinda, school, parents and authorities should help preparing children to become to be socially responsible people who can live in realities. The study clearly shows that the acceptance of rape myths affect people's attitudes toward rape, rape victim and rapist. The influence of rape myth acceptance considerably is a consequence of social learning. Because the violated female body is a vital issue, people should aware of the impact of rape myth acceptance.

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# *Ned Kelly: The Multiple Truths of Australia's Most Famous Bushranger*

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**Abstract**
In a line-up of all the Australian criminals, who sparked fear in the community and generated business for the law and justice systems in the colonial era, no individual stands taller than Edward 'Ned' Kelly of Victoria. Of all the bushrangers, it is Kelly who maintains a prominent place within Australian history as a cultural and popular icon. This situates Kelly, and his Gang, alongside many other bushrangers – men who robbed, raped and murdered their way across the Australian outback in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries – men who are now often seen as heroes of folklore. Men who have been celebrated in a wide variety of histories: in illustrations and paintings, in articles and books, in newspaper reportage as well as in traditional songs. The practice of celebrating Kelly across a range of creative outputs including art, crime fiction, true crime, film and song is not, however, undertaken without some criticism. There are certainly some who consider Kelly to be a hero, a young man rebelling against unwarranted police persecution and profiling. Yet many others, position Kelly as a villain, one who did not hesitate to engage in, and to lead others in, a diverse range of criminal activities from the stealing of livestock to the murdering of policemen. This research looks briefly at Edward Kelly's story, not as a neat narrative but as a colloquium of voices, a suite of multiple truths that now surround Australia's most famous bushranger.

Keywords: Edward 'Ned' Kelly, Australia, bushrangers, colonial, history, punishment, true crime

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## Introduction

Australia has a long history of criminal activity. Established as a penal settlement and as a military outpost, by the British, in 1788 the colony of New South Wales – the first of several British colonies to be established in *Terra Australis* (Latin for South Land) – was dominated by law breakers and law enforcers. The First Fleet provided a population for the new settlement that, by today's standards of significant towns and cities, was particularly small. The man appointed as custodian of this community, Governor Arthur Phillip, documented 1,030 people across the eleven ships (Macquarie, 1988, p. 31) that sailed from Portsmouth to Port Jackson with the convicts numbering 548 males and 188 females (Goff, 1998, p. 103).[1] Today the greater Sydney area is home to almost five million people (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016, n.p.).

The colonial era – from 1788 until Federation in 1901 – stood witness to an astonishing array of crimes committed; from petty thefts to brutal murders. Yet, in a line-up of all the Australian criminals, who sparked fear across the colonies and generated business for the law and justice systems in the colonial era, no individual stands taller than Edward 'Ned' Kelly of Victoria (a colony south of New South Wales). Of all the bushrangers, it is Kelly who maintains a prominent place within Australian history as a cultural and popular icon. This situates Kelly, and his Gang, alongside many other bushrangers. Men who robbed, raped and murdered their way across the Australian outback in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; criminals (sometimes referred to as banditti) who sought refuge in the bush. Men who now, in several cases, are heroes of folklore.

Image 1: Ned Kelly, 15-years-old, in Kyneton, Victoria (1871).
Photographer: Unknown. National Museum of Australia.

[1] It is important to note that Indigenous peoples were not counted in official census efforts, in Australia, until a Referendum was carried in 1967 (Thompson, 1997, p. 95).

Contributing to this construction of the heroic criminal are the twin Australian legends of:

> [T]he 'noble bushranger' and the 'noble convict': victims of a palpably unjust penal code, these figures could be grafted – with the help of a little historical sleight of hand – onto a long line of morally ambivalent 'good badmen' whose romanticised outlawry embodied libertarian ideals within an oppressive colonial system. (Ryan in Huggan, 2002, p. 142)

The broader political and social debates of colonialism and penological practices, superimposed upon an individual, serve to cast shadows and, in some instances, fundamentally distort readings of biography and of history.

**Edward 'Ned' Kelly**

Born in Beveridge, rural Victoria, in December 1855 (Cave, [1968]1980, p. 2]); Edward Kelly was the oldest son and one of eight children born to an Irish convict, John Kelly, and his wife Ellen (Barry, 1974, pp. 6-8). Kelly's criminal career began as a child, resorting, out of poverty, to "various kinds of petty theft and law-breaking" (Cave, [1968]1980, p. 2). This soon escalated to robbery with violence, robbery under arms (alongside notorious bushranger Harry Power), assault and indecent behaviour, theft of stock, drunkenness and resisting arrest. For some of these crimes Kelly would avoid punishment, for others he would be subjected to prison (Cave, [1968]1980, p. 2-3). Kelly would eventually form the Kelly Gang and lead three others. Kelly's companions in crime were Dan Kelly, his younger brother, and two young men the Kelly brothers "had met earlier in Beechworth Gaol": Joe Byrne and Steve Hart (Macfarlane, 2012, p. 2).

Image 2: Ned Kelly's Armour, for the Siege of Glenrowan, in Glenrowan, Victoria (1880).
Photographer: Unknown. State Library of Victoria.

One of the most important episodes in Kelly's life was an incident in April 1878 in which Constable Fitzpatrick was injured. While "no one knows the truth of the story" (Cave, [1968]1980, p. 3), and the how and why of Fitzpatrick's injury, what is certain is that this incident set off a chain of events that concluded in the Siege of Glenrowan in June 1880. Between the altercation with Fitzpatrick and the Siege, the Kelly Gang murdered three policemen – Constables Thomas Lonigan and Michael Scanlan,[2] alongside Sergeant Michael Kennedy – at Stringybark Creek in October 1878, they committed an armed holdup and robbery of the Euroa National Bank in December 1878 as well as another armed holdup and robbery of the Jerilderie Bank in February 1879. The men also murdered their friend, suspected police informant Aaron Sherritt, in June 1880 (Holden, [1968]1980, p. 191). In taking the life of Sherritt the Gang could not have known that three of their number only had days to live. The fourth, and most famous, member of the Gang would also be dead before the end of the year. It was at Glenrowan, after an exhaustive hunt of the Gang by police, that three members of the Kelly Gang were killed. Kelly – still wearing one of the four sets of the now iconic armour made from plough mouldboards, for the Siege, weighing over ninety pounds (or forty-one kilograms), – was wounded and taken into custody (Nash, 2004, p. 1362).

What would mark the beginning of the end of the Kelly story would also be a starting point for the consolidation of the Kelly legend. The combination of an outlaw's antics with the defining outline generated by a makeshift steel helmet and apron would prove astonishingly robust and resistant to criticism. Kelly was and continues to be, regardless of what detractors and sympathisers say, a chapter in the Australian story.

Crucial to the Kelly legend is how much was made – and in many instances, continues to be made – of the matter of Kelly's physicality. *The Australasian Sketcher with Pen and Pencil* remarked that "Ned is a good-looking man, with reddish whiskers" (Anon., 1878, p. 155). This description is important because it highlights how personal the writing of Kelly's story was in some publications. Very few criminals are routinely referred to by their first name, let alone a shortening of that name that offers informality, familiarity. This early-adopted habit of being on a first-name basis with Kelly, one so easily converted to a hypocorism, provided a platform for early readers of Kelly's exploits to engage with Ned as one of them, rather than as the criminal Other. Returning to physical overviews of Kelly, one newspaper described Kelly, at the time of his 1880 trial – in an item that presents an odd mix of phrenology report and romantic novel – as:

> [A] man above the ordinary stature, being about 6 feet 2 inches in height. He is robust and strongly built. His head is not by any means of the criminal type, nor are his features unprepossessing. His forehead, though low, is broad and indicates intelligence. His eyes are dark, but furtive and restless. His cheekbones are prominent and give a triangularity to his face, the lower portion of which is covered with a straggling beard. The general expression of his face betrays a Celtic origin. (Anon., 1880a, p. 1)

[2] Some sources spell Michael Scanlan's surname as "Scanlon".

Image 3: Ned Kelly, 25-years-old, Melbourne Gaol, Victoria (1880).
Photographer: Charles Nettleton. National Archives of Australia.

The day before his execution, a photograph was taken of Kelly (at his request), the image interpreted as the face of a "young statesmen" (Gammage, 1998, p. 362).

The application of leadership potential tapped into the theory that Kelly intended to build a republic in north-eastern Victoria. This theory, first introduced by Max Brown in *Ned Kelly: Australian Son* (1948), has been debated by scholars for many years with some being keen supporters of the idea that Kelly had visualised a republic, with others cautiously questioning the reliability of this argument. This romantic idea has been systematically dismantled by Ian Macfarlane in *The Kelly Gang: Unmasked* (2012) with a methodical analysis of archival and published materials which reveals "no documentary evidence" for any such plan and that there is no record to be located "that suggests a republic was being contemplated" (p. 12). Some aspects of the Kelly story can be restored through this type of archive-focused research. Yet, there is much that remains "concealed and confused" (Cave, [1968]1980, p. 4) with even eye-witness accounts of important events being "confused and contradictory" (Jones, [1968]1980, p. 173). Accepting the notion of Kelly's ambitions of, and plans for, a republic can be seen in arguments that present Kelly as a hero; while those that dismiss this theory are more easily able to discard Kelly as a villain.

Image 4: Ned Kelly, 19-years-old, in Beechworth, Victoria (1874).
Photographer: John Chidley. Private Collection.

In a twentieth-century collection of essays, bringing together the thoughts of eminent historians and enthusiasts for the Kelly story, Ian Jones highlighted, again, the idea of Kelly the man, writing that: "Physically, Ned Kelly was almost superhuman" ([1968]1980, p. 155), going on to detail how:

> He was an outstanding boxer […]. Ned Kelly's boxing prowess was symptomatic of strength and endurance which he displayed to a spectacular degree in his Last Stand. Ned Kelly was a crack horseman […]. He was also a crack shot. […] He possessed a degree of vanity, but not without some reason. He was justly proud of his boxing ability. He dressed well – he was proud of his personal appearance. ([1968]1980, pp. 155-156)

The man from poverty-stricken, rural Victoria had grown up to be a great all-rounder. A man who was good looking and talented. A man to be admired.

## Colonial Reporting

True crime has been an enormously popular genre since the birth of publishing; alongside classic works of philosophy and poetry, Latin grammars, political treatises and religious instructions were reports of crimes "of a cruel and unusual nature" (Biressi, 2001, p. 60). The modern true crime market, described as a "juggernaut in publishing" (Murley, 2008, p. 44), confirms our ongoing fascination with the macabre. Such success is a recognition of how true crime entertains, informs and serves as a "scale model of modern society" (Seltzer, 2008, p. 11). Yet, unlike crime fiction, true crime has not been the subject of systematic critique and ongoing

investigations. Even Australia, with a modern history enmeshed with narratives of crime, justice and punishment, has not yet produced a comprehensive set of accounts of the true crime genre. As Rosalind Smith expounds:

> Contemporary Australian true crime texts typically concentrate upon particular events and figures – Ned Kelly, the disappearance of the Beaumont children, Azaria Chamberlain, the Peter Falconio murder – as cultural flashpoints, returned to, repeatedly, across a range of media and narrative forms. However, the genre also includes a longer history: from colonial true crime narratives to mid twentieth-century pulp fiction. (2008, pp. 17-18)

Colonial popular reporting of true crime events was widespread. Crime was, and continues to be, newsworthy: driving circulation. Yet, despite such rich reservoirs of material for analysis, there continues to be an under-exploration of the true crime genre, and sub-genres, which requires addressing. If we claim an interest in any aspect of the cycle of crime – from cause through to aftermath – if we voice any opinion on policies of justice and punishment, then how can we ignore the genre of true crime? In particular, how can we not seek to understand more about how and why so many of us consume this most morbid of commodities?

In Australia, one of the more popular topics for true crime texts is the bushranger: those who abandoned the emerging metropolises and became figures of small towns and of the bush. Bushrangers have become celebrated men (and women); their tales told in print, in hotels and in traditional songs, such as 'The Wild Colonial Boy' and 'Bold Jack Donahoe' (Macinnis, 2015, pp. 194-196). The first bushranger was 'Black' Caesar who took to the bush in 1789. The last major bushranger – and the most celebrated – was Ned Kelly, whose criminal career lasted from 1869 to 1880" (Cawthorne, 2010, p. 6). Although it is important to note that even these stories have not been systematically revealed.

Colonial newspapers were selective in the offering of their attentions to bushrangers; "the papers printed the stories that sold papers best, so we are more aware of the actions and statements of the vicious killers and boasters who courted publicity" (Macinnis, 2015, p. 2). The term bushranger first appeared, in print in Australia, in a Standing Order of 1801, before appearing in the consolidated *New South Wales General Standing Orders and General Orders* of 1802 (ii, 67-68). The term then appeared in *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* on 17 February 1805 (Wilson, 2015, n.p.). The short piece describing, in amidst notices of a range of crimes committed, how: "On Tuesday last a cart was stopped be-tween this settlement and Hawkesbury, by three men whose appearance sanctioned the suspicion of their being bush-rangers" (Anon., 1805, p. 2). When printed in a newspaper, as well as in Government instructions, the term became popularised and part of the Australian lexicon.

A review of the contemporaneous press coverage of Kelly reveals a story of escalation. A systematic slide from pettiness to murder. The public could not read enough. Newspaper reportage of the bushrangers created much excitement: "There are 840,000 people in Victoria. Of these 839,996 – barring children in arms and ministers of religion – are deeply interested in the doings of the remaining four" (Anon., 1879, p. 8). The Kelly Gang was big news with numerous articles "written on

the four members of the gang, often daily, not only in Australia, but all over the world. At the time, it was the biggest news story in the country" (Toohill, 2015, p. xi). It would also prove to be a story that would maintain its power into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Kelly would also produce short memoirs. A twenty-two-page letter written in Euroa, which, addressed to Donald Cameron, Member of the Legislative Assembly would be known as "The Cameron Letter" (Jones & Bassett, 1980, p. 65). Another, longer letter, this one fifty-six pages in length, would become known by the place in which it was written: "The Jerilderie Letter" (Jones & Bassett, 1980, p. 73). These, and other letters, were dictated to Gang member Joe Byrne who was "more intellectually minded and better educated than his partners in crime" (Macfarlane, 2012, p. 2) for, as E.S. Fosbery informed Henry Parkes in correspondence dated 1896, "neither Ned or Dan Kelly could write more than their names" (1879, p. 235).

In an enthralling twist to the traditional newspaper reportage of Kelly and the Gang these letters, by Kelly, were written as interjections into the published commentaries on his life and his crimes. Many of these newspaper reports were objected to, by Kelly, as false and misleading. Sparking potent ire were any comments directed at his family:

> [T]his sort of cruelty and disgraceful and cowardly conduct to my brothers and sisters who had no protection coupled with the conviction of my mother and those men certainly made my blood boil as I don't think there is a man born could have the patience to suffer it as long as I did or ever allow his blood to get cold while such insults as these were unavenged and yet in every paper that is printed I am called the blackest and coldest blooded murderer ever on record. (Kelly, [1879]2012, pp. 42-43)

So, it was with Kelly's own works, and with "The Jerilderie Letter" in particular, that he inserted "himself into history, on his own terms, with his own voice" (McDermott, 2012, p. xxx). Attempts to manipulate the press would be taken up by one of Kelly's lawyers. When Kelly was charged with murder several legal practitioners – of varying experience and skill – would become involved in the case though, ultimately, Kelly was forced to resort to seeking financial assistance with: "The Crown [agreeing] to pay for Kelly's defence, since apparently he had no funds. The fruits of Euroa and Jerilderie were no more" (Waller, [1968]1980, p. 113). One of these lawyers was David Gaunson, a fierce opponent of capital punishment (Macfarlane, 2012, p. 109); a philosophical rejection of the death penalty instigating some risk taking on Gaunson's part.

Despite stringent restrictions around accessing the prisoner it was claimed that a reporter had been allowed to interview Kelly. "In the circumstances, it is impossible not to conclude that Gaunson had a hand" in what was, "by far the strongest, most resonant and articulate of all Ned's public statements" (Macfarlane, 2012, p. 109).

Reporters at *The Argus* were unimpressed, indignantly writing that:

> It is notorious that the habitual criminal has a dogged hatred of the police and a morbid vanity as regards himself, and, above all, that he is incapable of telling a true story, and must romance. Mr RAMSAY [who ordered that the

> prisoner was not to be indiscriminately visited] was therefore justified in saving the community from the pollution of the Kelly lies, and we can only express our surprise that Mr DAVID GAUNSON has not seen his way to promptly contradict the assertion that he has [breached instructions]. […] Yet it is alleged – and no contradiction has appeared – that he has allowed Kelly to use him as a means of placing before the public a series of statements which on the face of them are false and injurious. We can only hope that Mr Gaunson will yet see his way to assure the public that he has in no way abused his position. (Anon., 1880b, p. 5)

The storytelling around Kelly, from the early days of the legend, was a highly contested and highly charged space.[3]

## Contemporary Reflections

The mass of material, written on Kelly and his crimes, is sufficient to suggest that the Kelly Gang could be classified as a distinct sub-genre of true crime. This can, in part, be explained by the fact that Kelly is often described as the last of the bushrangers: his life and crimes the final scene in a story that had played out on the great colonial stage of the bush since early settlement. For the first colonists, bushrangers were those men who: simply 'ranged the bush' "finding their way through the scrub and home again, a matter that wasn't too hard in a country that was populated by and occupied by people whose feet had left easy tracks to follow" (Macinnis, 2015, p. 9). Initially, convicts abandoned the hurriedly formed roads and streets established by colonial administrators to follow the paths made by Indigenous peoples.

These rangers of the bush increased as "convicts ran from road gangs or from their masters in the wake of the harsher and more bureaucratic convict system of the 1820s [… and while bushranging] "continued throughout the nineteenth century […] by sheer rate of conviction per head of population, the period of most intense activity was in the late 1820s and early 1830s" (Karskens, [2009]2010, p. 300). "Until about the 1860s, bushrangers were usually convicts or ex-convicts" (Macinnis, 2015, p. 7). Some of these convicts had merely continued with their criminal ways; some joined up with other criminals.

Absconding was often in fear of secondary crimes being discovered and the associated dispatch to a site of second punishment. So, "ironically it seems the threat of banishment to distant parts itself was enough to make some take to the bush" (Karskens, [2009]2010, p. 300). Bushrangers would help build up a canon of folk tales until their ranging days came to an end. As Peter Macinnis writes, Kelly, "a far more vicious man [than many other bushrangers], was also a bushranger in the wrong time, [for] he failed to allow for the new technologies, the telegraph and the railway, that ended the bushranging era" (2015, p. 53).

Stories of these men (and the occasional woman), from the moderately genteel to the utterly villainess, have retained a place in the history of Australian crime. The most well-known bushranger tale is the one of Kelly. As observed by Willa McDonald and

[3] For a discussion on the sketches that accompanied colonial reporting, see: Gaunson, S. (2009). The mere fancy sketches of Ned Kelly. *Latrobe Journal*, *84*, 23-33.

Kerrie Davies:

> Through the attention of historians, journalists, writers, filmmakers and artists, the bushranger has become a powerful symbol for a range of ideas, from a masculinist ideal of freedom in a lawless frontier to an heroic champion of the underdog, a brave rebel against Protestant and British authority, and a political agitator. (2015, p. 33)

In a setting in which symbolism was such an important tool for a story's longevity, Kelly was greatly aided by his makeshift armour which gave a physical, iconic, shape to the ideas he has been associated with. The silhouette of the armoured Kelly, standing his ground against the police has been etched into the Australian story. "In a nation built not only by free settlers but also by English convicts and Irish rebels, Australia continues to celebrate aspects of its colonial and penal history, and Kelly as a romantic symbol of resistance to authority" (Tranter & Donoghue, 2010, p. 202).

There are striking images, both traditional and updated, of Kelly generated by artists as diverse as Norman Lindsay, Sidney Nolan and Reg Mombassa as well as Australian criminal-turned-artist Chopper Read. There are volumes of literature, poetry, plays and songs based on, or dedicated to, Ned Kelly. Such is the broad appeal of Kelly, and bushrangers across Australia, there are more entries in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* "for writers, journalists, poets and authors who have written about bushrangers, than there are for bushrangers themselves" (Wilson, 2015, n.p.). These are stories people want to read. This can be seen in fictionalised versions of the tale such as Robert Drew's *Our Sunshine* (1991) and Peter Carey's *True History of the Kelly Gang* (2000). Indeed, as popular culture icon the Kelly legend has, as Graham Huggan argues, formed an industry with the "ability to mobilise popular sentiment for ostensibly high-brow representations" including visual art and literature (2002, p. 143).

The Gang would also be the focus of the world's first feature film *The Story of the Kelly Gang* (1906) and several films since including a controversial effort in 1970, *Ned Kelly*, starring rock star Mick Jagger. Television, music and video games have also taken inspiration from Ned Kelly, the Gang and their exploits. With more books, songs and websites "written about Ned Kelly and the Kelly Gang than any other group of Australian historical figures" (Australian Government, 2016, n.p.). Keith Dunstan, in his work *Saint Ned: The Story of the Near Sanctification of an Australian Outlaw* (1980), dedicates an entire chapter, "Mr Kelly and the Cash Register", to the souvenir industry that emerged around the cult of Kelly (pp. 96-121). A sympathetic account, Dunstan asserts that Kelly is continuing to "work hard for his country" through boosting local and national economies (1980, p. 96) and suggests that the awarding of a posthumous knighthood (1980, p. 121) for such a great Australian is not unreasonable.

This industry, of memorabilia and tourism, has been referred to by Ian Jones in his work on an exhibition on Ned Kelly (at the Old Melbourne Gaol, 2001-2002), as "Kellyana" (2002, p. 122) and is an industry that continues to be supported by those interested in Ned Kelly, and the Kelly Gang, today. Many of these commercially-based activities present a sanitised account of events in Victoria and New South Wales in the late 1800s. As Peter Macinnis has noted in relation to bushranger stories

told in print and on screen: "You can make money by telling tales of brutal murderers, but you can make more by writing about brave and handsome heroes dashing through the bush" (2015, p. 3).

The practice of celebrating Kelly across a range of creative outputs including art, crime fiction, true crime, film and song, is not, however, undertaken without some criticism. There are certainly some who consider Kelly a hero, a young man rebelling against unwarranted police persecution and profiling. Yet many others, position Kelly as a villain, one who did not hesitate to engage in, and to lead others in, a diverse range of criminal activities from the stealing of livestock to the murdering of policemen.

The genre's "characteristic hybridity – there is often another generic frame through which a text may be critically examined, such as history, memoir or biography" (Smith, 2008, pp. 20-21) – engages readers beyond a central group that would identify themselves as consumers of true crime. This hybridity, a single text with multiple points of interest for readers is, it is suggested here, one of the features that provides true crime with the foundation of its popularity. This can be seen in the numerous texts on Kelly, such as Paul Terry's *The True Story of Ned Kelly's Last Stand* (2012) which is true crime, biography and history while Craig Cormick's *Ned Kelly Under the Microscope* (2014) is true crime, history and science. In this way, Kelly confirms his adaptability; his appeal to a broad cross-section of audiences and, by extension, potential critics and sympathisers.

**A Narrative of Punishment**

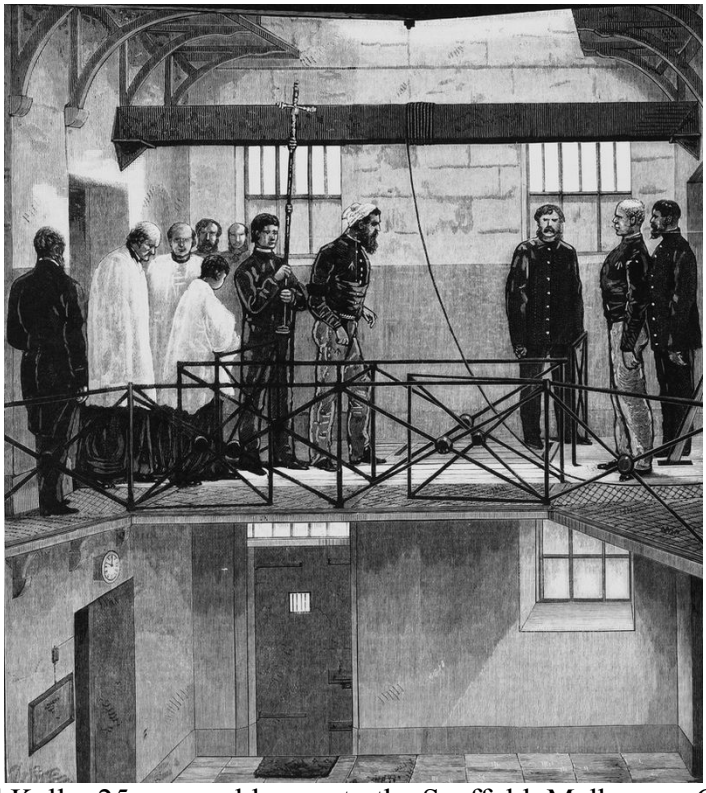

Image 5: Ned Kelly, 25-years-old, goes to the Scaffold, Melbourne Gaol, Victoria (1880).
Artists: Alfred May and Alfred Martin Ebsworth. State Library of Victoria.

On 11 November 1880 Kelly was hanged, found guilty of murdering Constable Thomas Lonigan. "However, Ned Kelly was never trialled for the murder of Sergeant Michael Kennedy or Constable Michael Scanlan. This must have been incredibly difficult for Sergeant Kennedy's wife and children and Constable Scanlan's family" (Toohill, 2015, pp. ix-x). Poignantly, Kennedy's pocket watch was handed down to his great-grandson: Senior Constable Michael Kennedy of the Victorian Police (Dunstan, 1980, p. 107).

The physical and mortal impact of the Kelly Gang, over two short years of outlawry, produced a startling list of victims. Nine people died (including three police officers and a child) and seven people (including two police officers, a police volunteer and a child) were wounded between April 1878 and June 1880 (Anon., 1880c, p. 10). The victims are largely forgotten – especially the victims of Stringybark Creek: "If you ask members of the public who [Kennedy, Lonigan and Scanlan] are, most would not have heard of them. But ask anyone who Ned Kelly is and they instantly recognise his name" (Toohill, 2015, p. viii). Kelly is the ultimate Australian criminal celebrity. If we choose to remember Kelly's name, it is important, too, to remember the names of his victims, for:

> While we must sympathize with the individual whose domestic environment and circumstances were such that poverty and hardship were their everyday problems, we cannot condone behaviour which is against the accepted standards of the community, nor can we make a hero of one who would kill and rob to achieve his ends. (Holden, [1968]1980, p. 190)

Ned Kelly was hanged but he lives on. Manning Clark has explained this as being the result of what Kelly might teach us, and how that:

> Despite all the sermons and homilies and leading articles, and all the attempts of the explainers, and the hounders of the weak, Ned became a folk hero. […] Perhaps there is something of Australia in his story – something of that nostalgia for the life of the free, the fearless and the bold, uncorrupted by industrial civilization, with its railways, its petrol engines, and all its conformism. ([1968]1980, p. 22)

Or, perhaps it is how the "Eureka Stockade, Ned Kelly and Gallipoli celebrate defeats – a quirk in our national character" (Macfarlane, 2012, p. 204). There is, it is argued here (in this necessarily brief article), no better example of how, within the Australian record, one story can support so many different truths; contributing to the construction of two diametrically opposed histories. Two factions: one that shows sympathy for an outlaw and understanding for his personal situation; another that demands decisive punishment as retribution for crimes committed. It was a need to ensure a society that was safe for all, which was regularly cited as the primary need for the punishment of Kelly.

As G.W. Hall wrote, the year before the Siege of Glenrowan:

> To all right-minded and law-abiding men it must seem in the highest degree desirable, both from a moral and social point of view – in accordance with justice and policy – that evil-doers should meet their deserts in proportion to the enormity of their several offences, not only with a view to punishing the culprits, but also with the object of discouraging others from inflicting injuries upon society. ([1879]2015, p. 133)

As Huggan asked: "Who is it, exactly, that Kelly represents? And who is it that his memory has been made to serve?" (2002, p. 153). Tensions around these questions can be seen today, as evidenced by the ongoing debate that surrounds Ned Kelly and the Kelly Gang.

## Conclusion

Ned Kelly's story has been told and retold: the result is, not a neat narrative, but a colloquium of voices, a suite of contested, fabricated and forgotten truths. As noted by Dorothy Simmons:

> Through word of mouth or click of mouse, stories are how we make sense of our world, or worlds. Not all stories, of course, are memorable enough to be mythologized; that is, stored in our collective consciousness for generations. (2014, p. 416)

The practice of mythologising Kelly, celebrating the man and his deeds across a range of creative outputs including art, crime fiction, true crime, film and song, is not, however, undertaken without some criticism. There are certainly some who consider Kelly to be a hero, a young man rebelling against unwarranted police persecution and profiling. A man with dreams of a republic and a better life. Yet many others, position Kelly as a villain, one who did not hesitate to engage in, and to lead others in, a diverse range of criminal activities from the stealing of livestock to the murdering of policemen. These multiple truths see Kelly simultaneously situated as one of the good "badmen" and one of the bad "badmen". Perhaps the only certainty is that Edward Kelly will always be on trial; evidence continually assessed, displayed and reimagined in various attempts to tell his story and argue for his position as a hero or as a villain.


Image 6: Ned Kelly, 25-years-old, Melbourne Gaol, Victoria (1880). Photographer: Charles Nettleton. University of Melbourne Archives.

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# *Folktales, Myths and Legends on Sculptors of South India*

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**Abstract**
History speaks on sculptures and silent on sculptors; whereas folktales take contradictory position towards this phenomenon. The folktales, Myths and legends on sculptors of south India narrate the dark shades of the life of sculptors. The present paper is intended to explore the tales from south India and hypothetically propose the four processes occurring in the narration of these stories: 1. Demonisation 2.Suppression 3.Marginalisation 4.Devaluation. So far, intensive studies have been carried out on the South Indian sculptures in scholarly texts. The major works have concentrated on the aesthetic elements of the sculptures rather than sculptors. So, finding the colossal void, present paper would discuss the narration. The paper is confined to the mythology of Thvastr-Vishwaroopa in Sanskrit and legends of Jakkana - Dankana in Kannada, Shambhu Kalkuda - Beera Kalkuda in Tulu, Raman Perunthacchan-Kannan Perunthacchan in Malayalam. These are the major mythological and legendary characters. The paper would use folktales, Myths and legends as primary sources and history works as secondary sources and it also would examine the adaptations of the folktales into theatrical, performing art form and cinematic works. A fraction between the history and the legend is observed: historians have started questioning the very existence of these legendary sculptors and at the same time, folklorists are placing the counter points. Reading the reflections over each other would provide the multiple layers of meanings.

Keywords: Folktales on sculptors of south India, cultural study

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## Introduction

The irony of the history is in its selective narratives and total denial of the oral history on the grounds of evidences and plenty of questions are being raised against the historiography itself. The present paper is focusing on various processes occurring in the marginalized oral history of south India, particularly of sculptors. History speaks on sculptures and unspoken on sculptors; whereas folktales take incongruous position towards this trend. The folktales, Myths and legends on sculptors of south India narrate the dark shades of the life of sculptors. The four processes occurring in these tales are:

1. Demonization
2. Suppression
3. Marginalization
4. Devaluation

So far, intensive studies have been carried out on South Indian sculptures in scholarly texts, which have concentrated on the aesthetic elements of the art rather than sculptors. So, observing the colossal void, present paper would discuss the oral narratives and is confined to the mythology of Thvastr-Vishwaroopa in Sanskrit and legends of Jakkana - Dankana in Kannada, Shambhu Kalkuda - Beera Kalkuda in Tulu, Perunthacchan and his son in Malayalam. The paper would use folktales, Myths and legends as primary sources and history texts as secondary and it also would examine the adaptations of the folktales into theatrical, performing art form and cinematic works.

The relation of history and oral history is much more problematic as historians have already started questioning the very existence of these legendary sculptors and at the same time, folklorists have been placing the counter points. Reading the reflections of historians and folklorists over each other would provide the multiple layers of meanings.

Details of life and achievements of the sculptors are the issues undiscovered by the history. Art-architectures and sculptures are the pageantry of the emperors of the land. Inscriptions, pillars, forts, temples, lakes tell the opulence of their regime. Sometimes the sculptor gets the patronage, at the same time the hegemony has demonized, suppressed, marginalized, and devaluated them.

As narrated in *The Orientalism* (Edward Said, 2000, p5)[1], The Idea, Culture and History cannot be studied without their original force. In concise, the original forces are the designs of the hegemony. The idea of demonization, suppression, marginalization and devaluation of sculptors are the ideas of the hegemony and these can be seen in Sanskrit and South Indian languages.

History is a design of the hegemony and it recommends the proofs generated by the kings and rulers, in other words, it rejects the multi-faceted narratives. The Myths and legends burst the bubble of the single faceted narrative. It is a kind of conflict between history and Mythology. History narrates the story of the haves and folk tales tell the

[1] Said Edward.(2000). *The Orientalism*. New Delhi: Penguin books

story of the have not's. If we have not read both facets of history and Legends, surely we will lose the great traditions of meanings. The sculptors, once the worshippers of Brahma, become the worshippers of Kaali can be read in lights hegemony.

**Sanskrit: Demonization**

**Thvastr-Vishwaroopa**

Demonization of sculptors began in the Puranic period, social structure started shifting and disfiguring happened in the same period and it seems to be Jnaana or Knowledge and Karma or Action took diverse way.

In Veda Mantras, particularly in Rig-Veda and Atharva-vedas, sculptor had occupied predominant role as Vishwashilpi or World-sculptor and in Puranic period he had been demonized and otherized. The longing for the highest power by the ruler was the reason behind it. As depicted in *A history of India*, The central force of the ancient Indian system was an emperor (Kulke and Rothermund, 2002, p6). [2] The Indra of the Vedas or the Emperor of the land, who was willing to expand his empire, had to eliminate his enemy and thus the horse sacrifice of Ashwamedha came to existence and either the enemy had to bow before the emperor or to fight and defeat him, at the same time internal enemies were demonized.

**Asura: God or the enemy of God?**

Wilkins W. J.(2012, p438-40)[3], who studied the Hindu mythology in depth, throws light on the word Asura, its etymology and the transformation of meanings. In Earlier times the word Asura was used to mention the gods, and then turned to notify the enemies of gods, there after it was narrowed into the meaning of Demons. It seems to be, the word Asura had been used as both in positive and negative meanings.

**Towards the Goddess worshipping**

In Vedas, sculptors were worshippers of Brahma, later they began to Worship Kaali; reason for this can be defined as countering hegemony. Interesting thing is that, so called hegemonic culture was also having the vestiges of violence in various forms like Bali-Ahuthi-Tharpana. Vedic texts, particularly, Rgveda Suktas consider Thvastr as the generator of the world. `Ya Ima vishwa bhuvanani..' are very popular (Griffith, 1896, Mandal 10, Sukta 81-82)[4]. Thvastr is being hailed in Rgveda Suktas as equal as Indra, Varuna, Mitra, Agni, Soma are being hailed.

`Thvastr is the Vaastuthajna or Architect of gods. He is the constructor of many places of heaven. War mongering gods are indebted to him. Brahmanaspathi or God of fire's axe is sharpened by him; he created Vajrayudha or weapon for indhra. He is very closer to human beings- these are descriptions seen about Thvastr.' (Wilkins, 2012, p75) [5]

[2] Kulke, Hermann. & Rothermund, Dietmar. (2002). A History of India. London: Routledge Publication.
[3] Wilkins W. J.(2012). *Hindu Mythology*, NewDelhi: Rupa Publication.
[4] Griffit, Rolf Thomas Hatchkin. (1896). *The Rgveda.* sacredtext.com
[5] Wilkins W. J. ( 2012). *Hindu Mythology*. NewDelhi: Rupa Publication.

## Creating the intimate enemy

In the Puranic age, the sculptor narratives took the way of demonization. The skills of the sculptors become the curse to them. The Puranas narrate how they have been demonized by the hegemonic power.

`In VishnuPurana, Thvastr is the master of many arts, Machine maker to gods, designer of jewels, the head of the artists, Sculptor of the self starting chariots of gods. According to the fifth cantos of vishnuPurana, Vishnu managed the duty of Brahma. That means Vishnu Purana gives the right evidence of marginalization of Brahma. The Sixth Canto reveals the Chaturvarnya or the four castes (Dutt Manmathnatha,1896, p174)[6]. `In some parts he(VishwaShilpi) is called Brahma. In pictures, he is portrayed as Brahma…Vedic hymns recognized him as a creater and protector. But later texts have given him a lower status. Brahma becomes creator, Vishnu becomes protector. And Thvastr become servant of the both.( Wilkins, 2002, p406-8)[7] Wilkins recognized how the Thvastr's position was downscaled and how he become the servant, but did not consider the process in a serious manner.

Competition, jealousy, killing, revenge-are narrated here. Equal share to Gods and demons and Asuras was the viewpoint of Vishwaoopa and therefore he becomes an intimate enemy to Indra. This is the reason for the death of Vishwaoopa and Such an anxiety is also the reason and inspiration for demonizing the sculptors.

## Sethubandha of Ramayana and Mayasabha of Mahabharatha

Valmiki Ramayana has depicted Monkey king Nala as the son of Vishwakarma. Nalas episode comes in the Sethubandha context in Ramayana (Griffith, 1895, p444-45)[8]. `Ramayana depicted Neela as one who came out of the fire. He has the special aura. He is more powerful and skillful than his own father(Wilkins, (2012, p 408 )'[9].

In the Sabhakriya parva or canto of the Vyasa Mahabharatha, Krishna says to Maya that `Construct an auditorium as you like it… O Dithiputrhra, if you want to give justice to Yudistira, just build a palace for him. Construct the unimitable palace. May it be having the designs of Deva/Devine-Asura/Demon-Manava/Human says Krishna. Thus Maya builds palace at Khandavaprastha( Ganguly, 2003, Sabhakriya Parva, Chapter 1.)[10].

The sculptors belonged to Harappan culture and were also localities. Aryans, who came later, might have dominated them. Aryans applied the `Apavithra Siddhaantha ' or `theory of Impurity' to the skills of sculptors.

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[6] Dutt Manmathnatha.(1896*) Vishnupuranm (Tr)*, Kolkatta, : Manmathnath Dutt.
[7] Wilkins W. J.. (2012). *Hindu Mythology*, NewDelhi: Rupa Publication.
[8] Griffith Rolf Thomas Hotchkin. (1895). *Ramayan of Valmiki*. London: E.J. Lazures and Company
[9] Wilkins W. J.. (2012). Hindu Mythology, NewDelhi: Rupa Publication.

[10] Ganguly, Kisori Mohan (tr). ( 2003), *The Mahabharatha Of Krishna Dvaipayana vyasa*. Sacred texts.com, ,

## Anti-Sanctimonisation

In Vedic texts sculptors were called Rathakars. They were familiar to Vedic texts. In the Aryan culture chariots were took important role and there are very few mentions of other jobs. After the migration stopped and the habitats began, carpenters, potters and smiths appeared. These details can be seen in the Vedic texts. Metal, Bronze, Silver, Gold are some metals mentioned in the Vedic texts.

At the beginning of the Rig-veda period the black shadow of the Jaathi or caste was seen, later it was expanded. The sculptors were included into the Sudra system. The sculptors had regular contact with the fire and water and there was fear and anxiety about smiths and a fear of the ritualistic impurity also. Therefore the soil pot used in the Agnihotra or fire-ceremony was made by Aryans themselves. They thought, if it had been made by the potters it would be impure or Asurya.

These anecdotes appeared in later Vedic texts, which tell many things. The localities were highly skilled persons. They were brown in color and faced the color discrimination, later which turned into their jobs also. The main reason behind the classification of the society was the lack of the skill in Aryans which were in sculptors. The categorization had the intention of establishing the social and political dominance of the Aryans(Kulke & Rothermund, 2002, p41)' [11] `In the name of purity in rituals Aryans demonized the sculptors and smiths were appeared to them as terrorizing persons'- says historian Burton Stein (2010, p46-67)[12]

The hegemonic culture had the antagonism with the sculptors, in every step of the knowledge construction the demonization, Anti-sancitmonisation and de-culturalisation were taking place. The hegemonic culture internalized Buddha, but those sculptors who went beyond the lines of hegemony, have been externalized. The skills, the notion of equality, eagerness for the freedom have forced them towards demonization. Hegemonic culture considered them as `intimate enemy'.

[11] Kulke, Hermann., & Rothermund, Dietmar. (2002). *A History of India*. London: Routledge Publication.
[12] Stein, Burton.( 2010). *A History of India.* West Sussex: John Ville and sons publication

**Kannada : MarginalisationJakkana-Dankana**

In the recent channel discussion in Karnataka panelists were fully engaged in the arguments and counter arguments of the existence of the Jakkana-Dankana, the two medieval sculptors. Historians, most of them belonged to the socially creamy layer communities, have suspected the very existence of the Jakkana-Dankana. They reiterated their stance that these are two imagined characters, nowhere have the historical background. Contradiction of these self acclaimed historians are they agree the myths and legends of the rulers and they disagree the myths and legends of the sculptors. They agree the diary of the foreign visitor and they disagree with the folk narrations.

While the Priest at Chennakeshava temple at Kaidala of Tumakuru in Karnataka was explaining about the sculptor Jakkana, The so called historians participating in the panel discussion in the channel were negating the very existence of Jakkana. They argued that there is no Jakkana; the character is itself an imaginary, cooked up story. There were more than historians, they are agenda setters. It seemed to be the conflict between the legend verses history. But the truth is looming somewhere else.

There are several legends regarding the existence of Jakkana. The legend of Kaidala, The legend of Jakkanapura, legend of Melukote is the few legends being told by the common people. Folklorists argue that the descendants of Jakkana are still living in Shivarapattana of Kolara district in Karnataka and are engaged in sculpting. They ask the question that without Jakkana how the legacy has been created. They draw the quotes from the Abhanga, a kind of song, in Marathi language.

But the position of the historians was total denial. Their argument is that, there is no information about Jakkana in inscriptions, or coins, or sculptures or temples which have been said to be chiseled by Jakkana himself. No information is available about Jakkana in any excavation. There are saying that the sculptures carved during 11 and 15 century were attributed to Jakkana, but how can Jakkana alone chisel the huge number of temples and sculptures in this period is the basic question of the historians.

How the legend of Jakkana can be removed and how the Jakkana, who is not in history, to be proved- is a complicated question. Folklore is the born oral history and the history is the constructed past. In folklore the pro people personality become the hero, but in history king and ministers become heroes. This is the point where written history and Oral history comes to face to face. The meanings implied by the oral history are many. Eulogy of kings become classical history and eulogy of common man become folk oral history.

**Grand tradition and Small tradition**

Probably it shows how scholars like Maxmuller and A.K. Ramanujan, whose view on India are entirely different. Maxmuller excavated classicl, Vedic, Aryan and Grand tradtion india, while A.K. Ramanujan explored Folk, Alternative, Small tradition india. To get the comprehencsive outlook about india we have to combine the Vedic and Non-vedic india together.

In his book `Speaking of Shiva', A.K. Ramanujan (1993, p16) [13] gives an account of the Great tradition and Small tradition.

| Hindu Religion | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Structure | | | Anti structure |
| institution<br>Public religion | | | Protest<br>Individual religion |
| | Great tradition | Small Tradition | Bhakthi |
| Texts | Vedas | Local Myths | |
| Performance | Vedic rituvals | Local sacrifice | |
| Public association | Caste | cult | |
| Mythology | Pan Indian gods | Local gods | |

The close observation of the Small traditions which have been having discourse with Great tradition is necessary of the hour. In connection with the narrations of sculptors Great traditions and Small traditions make layers of overlapping each other. The narration of sculptors is being seen both in Vedic texts-Local myths, Vedic rituals-local sacrifices, caste hierarchy-cults, pan Indian and local gods and goddesses. Therefore pure Vedic based or non Vedic based studies will be handicapped and incomprehensive.

**The legend of Jakkana and its denial**

In the book ``The Keshava temple at Belur'(Narasimhachar, 1982, p14-15) [14], first appeared in 1911, has recorded some important informations:

``Kappe Chennigaraya god was thus called has its own tradition. The naval part of Chennigaraya idol was cavity where a frog seen was the traditional statement. Chennakeshava or beautiful keshava is the famous name for the idol. The background of the name is derieved thus-

Kaidala is a village in Tumakuru taluk in Karnataka. The former name of the village was Kridapura. That was the capital of the kingdom. This village is the birth place of Jakkana. Nriparaya was the king when Jakkana started his career. Then Jakkana left his village to work various palaces of various kings. He carved and chiseled great idols and sculptures. His son Dankana grown and he left his village in search of his father Jakkana. Thus Dankana comes to Belur where the installation ceremony of Chenna Keshava idol was going on. Dankana publically pointed out that there is a fault in the idol and such sculpture must not be worshipped. If the fault is proved I will chop off my right hand was the challenge by the sculptor Jakkana. To test the

[13] Ramanujan A.K. (1993). *Speaking of Shiva*, New delhi: Penguin Books .
[14] Narasimhachar R.. (1982) p 14-15. *The Keshava Temple at Belur*, New Delhi: Cosmo Publications.

fault the idol was smeared with the sandal paste, when it was dried only the naval portion was left wet. When tested the cavity in naval portion and frog and sand was found. Insulted by this incident Jakkana chops off his right hand. Co-incidentally , it is found that their relation is father and son relation. Jakkana got intuition to build Keshava temple in Kridapura, where he gets the lost hand while constructing the temple. Thus the village was named after Kaidala meaning getting back the hands.

In front of the Keshava temple of Kaidala there is statue, of one and half feet height, said to be the statue of Jakkana: Having a towel on his shoulder and khadga or dagger in his hand. But this tradition is not reliable. The architectures built in various periods in Mysore and other places are attributed to Jakkana. The existence of Jakkana is suspicious. No evidence is found so far regarding such a sculptor. But the names and details of other sculptors are available''

Even though he denied whole incident, R. Narasimhachar documented the tradition or legend in his book. But the``Hoysala Shilpa kale' (Vasanthalaxmi, 2008, p 53-54 & 74-75)[15], a book published by the Shilpakala academy of Karnataka government dropped the tradition or legend. It gives the accounts of Kaidala and Chenna keshava statue, but the missing point is Jakkana. R. Narasimhachar's account reads, `There is a statue on the entrance pillar of the Keshava temple at Kaidala is said to be the statue of Jakkanachari, who made the temple.' But the author of the book `Hoysala Shilpa Kale' excluded and marginalized the legends of Jakkana and included the legends in connection with the sculptures(Vasanthalaxmi, 2008, 53-54 & 74-75)[16] Thus the tradition of the marginalization continues as well.

**Film, Novella and a Play**

In 1964, the first color cinema in Kannada `Amarashilpi Jakkanachari'[17](Ranga, 1964) appeared on silver screen and it had the intention of revivalist nationalism. The whole background set was as in Hoysala period of eleventh century, it was the regime of Vishnuvardhana. An Ideal king and an ideal sculptor. B.S. Ranga created a new character called Manjari, a courtesan. Love with Manjari, changes in the life by the blessings of saint Ramanujan, the building of the chenna keshava temple, reunion with his family- are highlights of the cinema.

One of the English novellas in `Rayanna: the patriont and other novellas'(Naikar Basavaraj, 2011)[18] is on Jakkana. It describes the achievements of the sculptor. In this novella, Jakkana reads the horoscope of the newborn child of his own and suspects the illicit relationship of his own wife and also misapprehended that the child is not belong to him. He leaves is home and later he becomes a great sculptor. Basavaraj Naykar gives the touch of the previous life of Jakkana.
Chandrashekhar Kambara's `Jakkana',[19]a kannada play, begins with old woman screaming and begging in front of The Chenna keshava temple. On the other side the

[15] Vasanthalaxmi K.Dr.. ( 2008). *Hoysala Shilpakale*. Bangalore: Karnataka Shilpa Kala Akademy.
[16] Vasanthalaxmi K.Dr.. ( 2008). *Hoysala Shilpakale*. Bangalore: Karnataka Shilpa Kala Akademy.
[17] Ranga B.S.(Dir.). (1964). *Amarashilpi Jakkanachari*. Chennai: Vikram productions.
[18] Naikar Basavaraj. (2011). *Rayanna: The Portrait and other novellas*. New Delhi: Gnosis publishers.
[19] Kambara Chandrashekhara(2011). *Jakkana Mattu Ithara Ekanka Natakagalu*. Bangalore: Ankitha Pusthaka.

chorus is talking about a boy. The second scene shows the Dankana touching the feet of Jakkana as a symbol of respect. Dankana introduces himself as he came from Kalinga country. Both Jakkana and Dankana want to be anonymous. `Jakkana says `Everyone has his own story of sorrow. My story is also like that. I have not told about me or king has not asked my whereabouts. Under the supervision of the queen the work is going on. She is also not interested in the personal information. Once she asked about my whereabouts, but I did not tell, she kept quiet.

In this play the highlight is about the anonymity of the sculptors. Anonymity – migration-and the hegemonic matters here are most complex. In Naikars novella, Vishnuvardhana sends a spy to watch the arrival of Jakkana. But Kambara's king shows no interest to know the sculptor. `If the defected idol was installed, the king will be in the centre stage for the tales generating hereafter' says a character in the plat, thus the designs of hegemony has been implied.

The important thing in this play is, how the politics grabs the personal life. In the novel Shanthala, K.V. Ayyar, and Pattamahishi Shanthala by C.K\.Nagarajarao give the details of Jakkana. Though it seems to be the quarrel between father and Son, ultimately it leads nearer to power. The values, purity, honors of the art is decided by power. The Melukote legend says that, Jakkana took the challenge to complete the work of the entrance gate within a night. But his enemies blow the counch in the midnight and created the belief that it is already a day break. Jakkana stops at the sound and leaves the work unfinished. It seems to be the part of marginalization.

**Tulu: Suppression**

**Shambhu Kalkuda and Beera Kalkuda**

Folk ritual of Kalkuad and Kallurti

58 feet tall monolithic statue of Gommateshwara at Shravana Belagola

The story of Beera Kalkuda of Dakshina Kannada(Formerly known as Tulunadu) in Karnataka state, represents the process of the suppression. The story of Beera Kalkuda appears in a folk ballad or Paddana in Tulu language. Though there are many versions to this folk ballad, the primary motif is suppression and the agitation is secondary here.

There are three ballads called Kallurti, Posabhootha and Kalkude in A. Manors book `PaDdanalu'. `PaDdanagalu', a book by Kanaradi Vadiraja Bhatta gives some information about some texts. `Beera Kalkuda' , a PaDdana compiled in `Tulu PaDdana Samputa' , edited by Amrutha Someshwara has been selected here for in depth study.

There are three main parts in this story: in the first part Beera Kalkuda is travelling in search of his father Shambhu Kalkuda and he finds defects in the Gommata Statue of Shravana Belagola chiseled by his own father. Saddened by the defame Shambhu Kalkuda commits suicide. In the second part, Beera Kalkuda sculpts Gommata idol at Karkala in Dakshina Kannada. King, thinking such idol must not be chiseled elsewhere, orders to chop off his hand and leg. In the third part, Beera Kalkuda migrates to Venur and carves a Gommata using his single hand. Searching her brother Beera Kalkuda, Kaalamma reaches Venur and she is worried by the scene. Both of them vanish into air and began to haunt the king of Karkala.

In the stories of Kalkuda, the works of Gommata statues in Shravana Belagola, Karkala and Venur are mentioned. Scholars come to the conclusion that, the stories might have been taken place through generations. There are huge time gap between the installation of these Gommata statues. The anonymous poet of the Paddana shows much interest in how the Beera Kalkuda turned into the Daiva or Spirit.

``Karkala Gommateshwara charite ' by poet Chandrama (A.D. 1646) narrates how the king Bhairavarasa honored the sculptors. But there is no mention of the chief sculptor' points out Dr. Amritha Someshwara(1997, p64)[20]. But the legend oriented `Karkala Arasara Kaifiyattu' mentions the installation of the Gommata idol in Karkala. There is mention of the chopping off of right hand of the sculptor Chikkanna. The same matter is repeated in the Kaifiyattu by Ajila. (Gowda Kushalappa, 1983, p 111-117)[21]

[20] Amritha, Someshwara. (1997). *Tulu Paddana Smputa*. Hampi: Kannada University.
[21] Gowda , Kushalappa, K. Dr. & Gowda, Chinnappa, K.,(Ed) (1983). *Dakshina Kannadada Kaifiyathugalu.* Ujire: SDM Pustaka Prakashanamale.

## The story narrated in the ballad

The ballad[22] (Someshwara,1997)., at the beginning, says `Acchavara Puttina Naadu Kellatta Marnadu' in Tulu, meaing Kellatta Marnadu is the land of sculptors. Iravadi and Shambhu Kalkuda are having five children including Beera Kalkuda and his sister Kalamma. Each one has his own profession.

While Iravadi had been pregnant her husband Shambhu was invited to Shravana Belagola. Making all arrangements for the pregnant wife, Shambhu leaves for Belagola very next day with all his instruments. King says ` there is no temple for god, no Basadi, have to work out Gommata statue, Seven Gods have to be installed in seven small temples. Elephant stone is needed. Shambhu gives his consent and goes to his assigned room. Waking up in the morning Shambhu evokes his god Guru Kaalamma or Kaali, and thus he finishes his work. `I came a long ago and I am returning to my hometown' says Shabhu to king. Shambhu was honored by giving endowments, cows for milk, shawls, beetle leaf, golden bangle and golden chain.

According to the Tulu folk ballad Gommata Statue at Shravana Belgola is by Shambhu Kalkuda. But according to the classical works it is by Aristanemi. Folk poet has not mentioned the names of king and minister of the Shravana belgola. Shambu Kalkuda has not been given any historical prominence. Whether he is actual or imagined character is not known. But the important thing here is the poets of kingly courts seen the Gommata through the eyes of kings and ministers but the folk poet observed it through the eyes of sculptor. This the dichotomy of the story.

In the second part of the story, at Kellatta Marnad the children of Iravadi were grown up. Beera and Kaalamma were twins. They were teased by friends as they don't have father. When Beera asked his mother, she says `your father went to Belagola for work '. Beera decides to meet his father and to see his work. Very next day he leaves to Belagola. The father was leaving from Belagola as vice versa is the son.

Son insisted the father to see the work and found defect in the Gommata Statue. `You born just yesterday and you point out the defect in my work? If the king came to know this, he will throw me to the foot of elephant and would beat me using horse stick' uttering these words, Shambhu took out the knife and stabbed himself.

The words of shambhu is important here: `If the king came to know this, he will throw me to the foot of elephant and would beat me using horse stick'. The Ruler who gives donations, can also chops off the hands of the sculptort. Sculptor decides that, it is better to commit suicide than the suppression of the Ruler. The King could grace and disgrace his subject.

Son Beera Kalkuda comes to Tulunaadu. The king of Karkala, Bhairavarasa sends him invitation to build temples and Gommata Statue. After having finished the work, Beera asks wages for his work. King asks him to come next morning. The next day the king orders the servants to put golden bangle to his right hand and chop off the left. And put the golden ornament to his left leg and chop off the right. Thus the king

[22] Someshwara, Amritha, (1997). *Tulu Paddana Smputa*. Hampi: Kannada University.

of Karkala respected the great sculptor called Beera! Beera vows not to drink a single drop of water in such a kingdom and returns to his native place.

Thimmanaajila, the king of Venur invites Beera to build a Jain temple and Gommata Statue. Using single hand and single leg, Beera did the assignment of the king. On the other hand Kalamma tells her mother to see her brother Beera. Making delicious foods for brother, she leaves, wanders and arrives at Venur. On the way she got the tragic news about her brother. She comes to her brother and asks `what happened to your hands and legs? ' . Beera replies `It is not for theft, not for lying, but for my hard work'.

Till this point, the story is about the land or Jogo, here after the story is about the sky or Maayo. One is about this world and another one is the other. Kaalamma vows that, `We are suppressed in this world and will take revenge from the next world'. Thus they disappear and arrives at Karkala in the illusionary form and lit the torch and set the fire to castle of the karkala, fire captures the town. The black magician Balyaya seizes the spirits promising all kind of rituals or Nema.

The present Paddana gives many accounts on this: the competitions between the father and son, Affection of brother and sister, the husband leaving wife, Father and son challenge,King and sculptor relation. Suppression and revenge, Jogo and Mayo - are binary opposition appearing in the Paddana.

They are suppressed, victimized: The reason behind the suicide of Shambhu Kalkuda is fear of the ruler, Beera lost his leg and hand due to the hegemony. Even though the level of the suppression is high, the sculptor did not lose his temper. Sculptor did not have the voice against it until and unless the arrival of sister Kaalamma. Both, brother and sister, vanished into Mayo and took revenge against the ruler. Suppressed here is man and the rebellion is woman. She inspires her brother to take revenge.

`When they turn into Mayo, sister become dominating character to order her brother to engage in unlimited activities of revenge has been clear in the parts of Paddana. When they turn from Jogo into Mayo, the transition of the exchange of the power is an important matter' (Navada, 1987, p 170)[23]

The word Acchava and Acchavadi is appeared in the Paddana . Acchava is the Tulu form of the word Acharya in Sanskrit. The other form appearing in Malayalam is Thacchan means sculptor. (The Beeru or Beera Kalkuda Paddana was collected by Amritha someshwara from Late kutty Nalike, Polya, Puttur, Dakshina Kannada, 68 years, Nalike Community, Education Nil. The date of the Paddana collection is 30/10/1975. Joga = appearing form, Mayo= Non appearing form.)

Folk scholar Dr. Amritha someshwara wrote a Kannada Yakshagana plot based on the Tulu Paddana which he had collected. In the introduction Someshwara wrote, `Most of the People who appreciate the gala of the sculptures forgot the sculptor. People of the Tulunaadu respect the Gommata sculptor, though not as the sculptor, but as the Daiva or Spirit; they worship. The Yakshagana plot of the *Tulunaadu Kalkuda* has

[23] Navada A.V. & Subhaschandra (Tr). (1987). *Tuluva Darshana* by Peter J. Claus. Kundapura: Prakashana.

been added with some historical events and also added the mythical story of Vishwaoopa. Historical gap between the makings of the three Gommata Statue is so wide. The present plot is an evidence of the unity of time as it has synchronized the three different periods. It is possible that the different sculptors of Kellatta Marnadu sculpted in different periods of time. The plot should not be seen in pure historical perspective, it must be observed in the dramatic aesthetic sense. Moreover it is not the job of the Yakshagana art form to report the pure realistic narrations' (Someshwara, 1979)[24]. as he agreed, Amritha Someshwara's Yakshagana plot is the blend of the myth and folk tales facing the historical facts.

The myth presented in the Yakshagana Prasanga or plot by Amritha Someshwara reads like this: when Guru Brihaspathi came to court of Indra and Indra did not paid respect to him. Thus angry Guru left the heaven. Indra, without giving any hints to demons, brings Vishwaroopa and makes him a Guru. Vishwaroopa had three faces: One for vedic chanting, another for Surapaana or drinking and third for other things. Vishwaroopa is a Guru on agreement, so he expected full freedom and won't tolerate the pompous. Indra agrees to these conditions. According to this myth Vishwaroopa is a demon. The other demons came to him and requested to share the wealth of gods. Indra questions, Guru says to him all are equal. Vishwaroopa taking drinks, tries to pursue Indra's court dancer Rambhe, She denies. Indra kills Vishwaroopa. According to the Yakshagana plot the same Vishwaroopa born as sculptors on the earth.

The minister and military head in the Ganga dynasty was Chavundaraya. His mother had a dream to have a giant Gommata, to fulfill the dream of his mother he gives consent to Shambhu. Remaining plot runs as usual in the Paddana. But some changes appeared here are: Padmaji, Daughter of Bhairavarasa, a newly added character, fell love in with Beera. But he denies. She went to Bhairavaras and tells that Beera tried molestation and escaped from. Thus Bhairvarasa orders to chop off his leg and hand. Amritha someshwara also transformed the same plot into a Tulu play (Someshwara, 1989).[25]

According to another legend recorded by Milli Batra, `Ganga king Rachamallas minister Chamundaraya installed the Gommata Statue. His Mother's dream was to have the darshan of Gommata at Podanpura. They began journey. On the way Chamundaraya had a dream at Shravana Belagola, he calls sculptor Aristanemi to install Gommata shilpa. Involving local sculptors he works for twelve years and complete the task'(Batra, 2014)[26]. Upon this theme a novel called `Mahashilpi' was written by H.B. Jvalanayya. Leading this novel a black and white cinema `Mahashilpi'(Doreswami, 1966) [27] was appeared and the story includes the adventurous work of the sculptor.

Southern story of the Shravana Belagola emphasizes on sculptor, whereas northern legend of the same stresses on the minister. Here the history and narration comes to face to face, kicks off for the new discourse.

[24] Someshwara, Amritha . (1979). *Amara Shilpi Beera Kalkuda* . Kotekar : Prakriti Prakashana.
[25] Someshwara, Amritha. (1989). *Tulunada Kalkude*. Kotekar: Prakriti Prakashana
[26] Batra, Milli. (2014*). Shravana Belagola : An abode of peace*. New Delhi: Ahimasa Foundation www.jainsamaj.org,
[27] Doreswami, H.G.,(Dir). (1966*). Mahashilpi.* Bangalore: Padma productions

**Malayalam: Devaluation**

**Raman-Kannan Perunthacchan**


The stone chiseled by Perunthachhan and The Cinema

Perunthacchan was a great sculptor. Carpenters were called as Thacchan in ancient Kerala state. Aithihyamaala[28] is a collection of legends published in Malayalam language by Kottarattil Shangunni. According to this legend, great sculptor Raman Perunthacchan is born to Vararuchi, a Brahmin and basket weaver belong to lower community. She hails from a village called Thrithala. After having marriage , both of them set out for a long journey, on the way she become pregnant for many times, give birth to children. Each and everytime Vararuchi asks whether the child has the mouth, she says `yes'. Then he tells to leave the child there itself. If the child given mouth, god will also give food is the belief of Vararuchi.

Thus they left twelve children on the way and various community people took them to nurture. They all called like `Parayi petta Pandrandu makkal' means the twelve children born to parayi or low caste women. Elder son is Agnihotri or fireworshipper, Pakkanar or basket weaver, Peruntacchan or great sculptor, Naranattu Branthan or great thinker people consider him a mad, Vayilla kunnilappan or a duff – so on.

Peruntacchan was adopted by the carpenters and become expert in wood art and architecture. He reads the books on sculpture. Builds temples, palaces. People believe that he is the incarnation of the god sculptor. He had a highly talented child. He become much more famous than his father. Father was so jealous about his son. According to Aithihyamaala, Father Peruntacchan kills his own son by dropping chisel while working the temple roof as if it is seems to be the chisel fell down accidentally. It sees a tragic end. It narrates the jealousy of the father and son. Peruntacchan complex is father's control over a son. (Kottarattil, 2004, . Chapter 6)[29]

According to another version, there was no jealousy or fury about his son. There is another reason. Raman Perunthacchan engaged in carving the goddess sculpture in a palace. The part of the face was yet to be completed. The queen was peeping, the work of Perunthacchan, through the doors. At last he took the model of queen for goddess and completed the work. When king went outside, queen and peruntacchan had the love. After the returing of the king the installation work of the goddess was

[28] Kottarattil, Shankunni. (2004). A*ithihyamaala Volume 1.* Kottayam
[29] Kottarattil, Shankunni. (2004). A*ithihyamaala Volume 1.* Kottayam : Current books

done. Queen gave birth to girl child. Many years later, Perunthachhan's own son Kannan loves that girl. Perunthacchan was in dilemma. `Could my own daughter be loved by my own son?'- So Raman Peruntacchan decides to kill his own genius son Kannan, says the legend. The first legend tells the professional jealousy and the second one about the opposition to the marriage of a brother and sister.

Legend tells about various achievements of Perunthacchan. He was well established in sculpture and architecture. He studied the old scriptures and acquired the knowledge, was Chief sculptor of various temples and palaces. People believed him as the incarnation of Vishwakarma. He builds a lake which has the multi dimensional form. The temples attributed to him are Shiva temple of Uliyannoor and The temple at Valluvanadu. Koothambalam in Chenannur Mahadevar temple in Alappuzha is special to be mentioned. The art performance or Koothambalam has a special feature that if the all the lamps were lit there will no shadow of the performer be seen.
Perunthacchan is the source of inspiration to many poets and story writers in Malayalam. Poet G Shankara kurup (Kurup, 2012, p91-96) [30] wrote a dramatic monologue poem on Peruntachhan.

The poem reveals the interior of a sin consciousness filled protagonist called Perunthacchan. The jealousy caused the tragic end of his son. Both the father and son are equal in architectural and sculptural sublime. Raman invented a wooden doll and installed on a bridge. While a commuter walks towards the middle of the bridge, the wooden doll moves upwards and spit water upon the commuter's face. People of the village enjoyed this. Kannan invented another doll and fixed beside water spitting doll. Both dolls move upwards while the commuter walks towards the middle of the bridge. While the former doll yet to spit, the latter doll thrash at its face and makes the water fall again into the river. This made Perunthacchan feel total upset. Jealousy increased. Though the responsibility of the temple work came to him, people tell him to have a consultation with his son. Perunthacchan drops the chisel at his son- the all incidents were narrated in monologue with a flash back method.

Based on the second version the Peruntachhan[31]( Ajayan, 1991) legend, M.T. Vasudevan Nair wrote a Cinema script, which become a popular film in Kerala.

As in cinema, Raman Perunthacchan was born to the Upper caste male and lower caste female. Neither upper caste nor the lower embraced him. Though he learned the Veda, he does not belong to the Upper caste. He agreed to build a temple and statue to his friend Namboodiri. Raman was attracted by the girl in that family. But hesitates to progress.He used the face as model for his Goddess statue. Perunthacchan uplift the moral values. But his son Kannan differs from him. He is so modern and self centered. Perunthacchan consider him as a threat. Years later, Son comes to the same house and fell in love with a girl in the house. Kannan did not have any class consciousness. It makes Namboodiri sleepless. Perunthacchan comes to oversee the temple works. When he concludes that son cannot be controlled he drops the chisel and kills him. Vasudevan Nair narrated Perunthacchan as a great person with high values and traditional person, but the son is rebellious and questioning the social hierarchy, he loves the daughter of Namboodiri and lost his life.

[30] Kurup, G., Shankar. (2012) *Master Carpenter* . In George KM and AKR (Tr). The Oxford Anthology of Modern Indian Poetry. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
[31] Ajayan. (1991). *Peruntachhan*. Thiruvananthapuram: Bhaavachithra Productions.

Here Raman Perunthacchan is not only the sculptor but also a great scholar, he follows Brahmakarma. But son mocks at him. To claim the achievements of Peruntachhan, It is possible to cook up a story of `Brahmin father and Carpenter Guardian', says Kannan. He points out at the devaluation of the character and it is the agenda of the upper claste to claim the others achievement.

M.T. Vasudevan Nair depicts the clash of two generation. Perunthacchan was working on Swayamvara Durga statue. He sees Bhargavi, the queen. Whenever he chisels her face appears before him. When she nears to him, he controls himself. But his boyhood days friend Namboodiri suspects him. Perunthacchan leaves the house.

Years later, Son of Perunthacchan, Kannan, comes to the same house to build the Saraswathi Mantapam or divine porch. The incidents were repeated. Queen's daughter comes nearer and Kannan loves her. It becomes a controversy. Kannan rejects the words of his own father. To save his values Raman kills his son Kannan. The legend, the poem, the cinema- all are revolving round the single theme -that is **devaluation**. It is possible to cook up a story of `Brahmin father and Carpenter Guardian' says Kannan. It is the way of devaluation. Talent is claimed by the hegemony. All these process happens with the consent of the person. Manufacturing the consent is an important thing in this process. It compels to adopt the narrations, and hegemony manufactures the knowledge according to them. Knowledge and consent were simultaneously produced.

In Indian history, knowledge was produced to defend the shameful practices of un-touchability. Theories were woven to deny the freedom to women. We and other were created; Otherisation was justified in several texts.

## Conclusion

Narratives relating to the sculptors in Vedic texts and Puranic texts are entirely different. Major changes in the social strata take place when transcending to the Puranic age from Vedic age. Theory and practice or knowledge and work might had been deviated.

Vedic Mantra or hymns, particularly in Rig-Veda and AtharVeda, hail and invoke the Chief sculptor a major god, but in Puranas he becomes a demon. The process of demonization occurred due to the power ambition and hegemony. This ambition caused Otherisation and Demonization. To retain the power one has to exclude from the power sharing. Through the demonization these sculptors were turned into intimate enemies, they have been othered, have been excluded.

Earlier sculptors worshipped Brahma and later they turned into worshipper of Kaali. It might be the befitting reply to the hegemonic designs of demonization.. So, the word culture in India is mostly hegemonic in nature and it is used to discriminate and exclude the other equal cultures terming lower cultures. The vested culture in India is also having the vestiges of Bali-Ahuthi-Thrpana as representing the cruelty and the violence.

In the puranic age, the sculptor narratives took the way of demonization. The skills of the sculptors become the curse to them. The Puranas narrate how they have been demonized by the hegemonic power.

Historical Narrations have blossomed under the hegemonic designs and it has its own agenda. The gods in Vedic texts become demons in Puranic texts show the shift in the social order and hierarchy system based upon the accumulation of the power and manufacturing of the knowledge. Demonization is the part of otherisation. Creator of the world becomes the destroyer of the world, means Brahma becomes Shiva due to the pressure of the cultural hegemony. In this process, Softness to hardness, Creator to Destroyer and Men to Women binary can be observed. Vishwaroopa's motto was that everything must be shared: Gods and Demons are eligible for the Havis. it is the cry of the right to food to all in ancient times, social and cultural equality.

Harppan Culture is basically the culture of the sculptors and later the invasion of the Aryans everything was applied with the `theory of impurity' or `Apavithra Siddantha'. In this way sculptors were victims of ethnical discrimination. Demonization, Otherisation, Anti Sanctimonisation, De-culturisation were package of the hegemony to control the sculptors in ancient times. Case study of Jakkana proves the continuation of the marginalization of oral history and the question is being raised as is the falsification is ultimate?

Hegemony decides the value of art, sacredness, prize and honour, according to which the rules change, according to which grace and disgrace would be decided. In oral history common people are heroes and written history the kings. The Tulu oral tradition considers Shambhu Kalkuda as the hero and the rulers as villain. Jogo and Mayo are the two important concepts. Jogo or the worldly is for kings and Mayo or the other worldly is for common people; they can be suppressed in Jogo but cannot be resisted in Mayo. `Best belongs to us', is seem to be the agenda of the hegemony, can be seen in the legend of Perunthacchan. So Kings rule the history and the Sculptor live the legend.

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# *'It Was as Silly as All Women's Stories': Women's Marginalisation and the Duality of Gender in the 20th C West African Novel*

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**Abstract**

Twentieth century African literature, mainly the novel, is criticised for marginalising the African female character. In addition to being influenced by the colonial discourse, living in pre-colonial and colonial African patriarchal societies stressed further the portrayal of the African woman as an 'inaudible' character by African male writers. Thus, her participation became limited to the space that male characters/ writers allow her to inhabit and function within. Through this paper, I use psychoanalysis, Carl Jung notion of 'femininity', and the West African mythology of the Dogon -a tribe in West Africa- to discuss the female role in West African novels. Even though he is criticised for ignoring females in his works, when it comes to the unconscious, Carl Jung argues that every human being has an 'inner opposite gender', *anima*/ *animus*, which creates a kind of balance between the two genders. The same goes for the Dogon's creation mythology, in which it is believed that the world is based on the male/female dualism.

Through using the notion of 'gender duality', I reflect on the role of female characters in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958), Gabriel Okara's *The Voice* (1964), and Obeng's *Eighteenpence* (1943). In doing so, I try to investigate how these marginalised females, and through their inclusion/ exclusion in these literary works, are able to influence, in one way or the other, the fate of male protagonists. Furthermore, I investigate the different speech acts that African female characters use in these novels as a method to *Signify* their teachings, desires, and challenges. In doing so, I try to study how despite being marginalised and voiceless, African female characters can make a difference in the development of the novels' events.

Keywords: Twentieth century, West African novel, Duality of gender, Women's marginalisation, African mythology.

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## Introduction

Things come in doubles
Male and female
Heaven and Earth
Day and night
Morning and evening
Right and left
Life and death
Good and evil.[1]

African female characters are often marginalised in African literature, more particularly if we speak about twentieth-century African novel. In a kind of a repeated mode, African female characters during this period are presented in three main images, the virgin, the prostitute, and the mother. In so doing, African male writers, mainly those who wrote under the Négritude Movement,[2] have used the female character as a trope, as Stratton refers to, and a symbol of the African continent (Stratton, 1994: 39).

The use of the African female character for these writers[3] in such a manner is to deliver the idea of how colonialism and imperialism have influenced Africans. The virgin representation in these literary works is a way to indicate the pureness of the African continent before the colonial period. While the first trope inhabits the African 'village'; the second, however, is usually presented in the picture of an African female abandoning the village and inhabiting the city -which in itself is used as a symbol of colonialism. The prostitute, who fancies the city lifestyle with its expensive cars, clothes, and high life music, is a reflection of the decimation that colonial regimes caused to the African continent. The last trope of the African female character that is used in 20th century African literature is the mother. The African mother, she can be portrayed as the city prostitute who returns to her village, is a woman who holds tight to her people's traditions, and the bearer of the next generation of African nationalists (Nfah-Abbenyi, 1997: 05). It should be noted here, however, that the modern generation of African writers[4] has been dominated by males. It is only until 1966 when Flora Nwapa (1931-1993), a Nigerian female writer, published her first novel *Efuru* that this domination came to an end. This indicates that before the publication of *Efuru*, African females' ideas and points of view were only voiced by male writers and from a male perspective.[5] Bearing in mind that the picture that African male authors have given to women is a result of a Western influence, in what way the

[1] Originally written in the Igbo language, the poem is an indication of the importance of complementarities in the African mythology. See Salami-Boukari's *African Literature: Gender Discourse, Religious Values, and The African Worldview* (2012: 16)

[2] Négritude: The term first was used in 1940 as a way to unite Black people, Africans and those of the African Diaspora, on the base of identity and Black cultural values against Euro-American white ones.

[3] Writers such as Léopold Senghor, Kofi Awoonor, and Okot p'Bitek are commonly known for 'feminising' the African continent in their works.

[4] The first (modern) generation of African writers are those who received a Western education, especially in missionary schools, and published their works during colonial and neo-colonial periods. See Simon Gikandi's *Encyclopedia of African Literature* (2003).

[5] See Sougou's 'Rethinking Androcentric Representations of Women in African Literature' (2010).

African female used to be portrayed in more traditional works? Did the West African social structures and beliefs define a particular role for women, either to be subordinate or dominant in comparison to men? In order to answer these questions, I analyse three West African novels from different periods and different cultural backgrounds. These novels; Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958), Gabriel Okara's *The Voice* (1964), and R. E. Obeng's *Eighteenpence* (1943), offer varied levels of African female characters' exclusion/ inclusion in the stories' events, which reflects the importance of their roles.

**Content**

Using African female characters as a representation of the continent is not an African invention, for critics state that African writers inherited this method from the colonial discourse (Nnaemeka, 2005: 149). Works such as Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1611), and Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899) represent the African female character in an inferior position, as she is left, mostly, 'inaudible'. The African male, on the other hand, is given a voice to deliver his ideas, even if it is in a 'broken' pidgin. In 'Silencing Sycorax: On African Colonial Discourse and the Unvoiced Female' (1991), Busia criticises this method of leaving the African female characters in literary works written by Euro-American males marginalised and unvoiced. Being an African herself (Ghanaian), the author concludes her article with an interesting remark, as she states that 'for women, "narrative" is not always and only, or even necessarily, a speech act. We women *signify*: we have many modes of (re)dress' (Busia, 1990: 104, *my emphasis*). In this quote, the word 'signify' itself is loaded with meaning, which I would like to explain before going any further. Signifying is a speech act used mostly by Africans and people of the African descent. The American writer and critic Henry Louis Gates (b. 1950), in his book *The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of African-American Literary Criticism* (1988), presents an overview of this type of speech, in which he goes back to the African myth of the Signifying Monkey[6] and its move to the New World with the African slaves. Going through the linguistic background of such use, Gates quotes the definition given to this aspect from the African-American scholar Mitchell-Kernan, who states that;

> The Black concept of *signifying* incorporates essentially a folk notion that dictionary entries for words are not always sufficient for interpreting meanings or messages, or that meaning goes beyond such interpretations. (quoted in Gates, 1988: 81).

Going through the two previous quotes (Busia's and Mitchell-Kernan's), it is given that Africans, in general, may/ can use other 'indirect' methods to disclose their ideas and to deliver their voices. Thus, in this paper, and in order to answer the previously asked questions, I try to investigate how the marginalised African women use the limited space given to them by the male writer/ protagonist to deliver their thoughts. Also, I reflect on the importance of their exclusion/ inclusion in the chosen literary works, and how that influences the development of the novels' events. Accordingly,

[6] See Henry Louis Gates's *The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of African-American Literary Criticism* (1988).

this leads me to discuss the importance of their existence throughout the narrated stories in relation to the notion of balance and duality of gender and its use in the African cultural tradition. In so doing, I relate the degree of the female's marginalisation with the fate of the male protagonists and argue that in spite of their marginalisation, African females in *Things Fall Apart*, *The Voice*, and *Eighteenpence* play a significant role in bringing balance to the stories.

In patriarchal societies, like the ones used in Achebe's and Okara's works, and in the colonial discourse, females are not supposed to participate in public events (Wehr, 1989: 16).[7] One of the main approaches dealing with this idea is the theories of the Swiss psychiatrist Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961), in which he believes that females are 'receptive' rather than being active in the society and that their identity is 'found in the service of a man' (ibid: 105). Jung in this point is criticised, especially by feminists, as being influenced by the patriarchal system. This perspective towards women is brought to the African continent by colonialism, in which it has introduced the 'Victorian notion of domesticity' (Allman et al., 2002: 03). Females, it was believed, are to be left home to serve men rather than having better education and work opportunities like their peer males, and with the colonial understanding, their marginalisation was stressed further (Ce and Smith, 2014: 96). The lack of education, thus, can be considered to be one of the major reasons that delayed the emergence of African female writers during the colonial period.

Nevertheless, when it comes to dealing with the unconscious part of the human mind, Jung states that every human being has an inner opposite gender. This opposition is presented by the *Animus* and the *Anima* (Johnson, 1988: 48). On the one hand, the female, according to Jung, has an inner masculine self, *animus*, and for the male, he has an inner feminine self, *anima* (Jung, 2004: 31). From this perspective, Jung sees this as a process towards individuation, in which through encountering the opposite gender, the person comes to identify his/her own self. Despite it being a Western approach, the method of individuation already exists and is rooted deep in the African mythology (Salami-Boukari, 2012: 15). The Dogon's[8] myth of creation resembles Jung's belief of balancing both opposite genders. The people of the Dogon, who currently inhabit West Africa, more specifically Mali, have travelled from the Niger River until Egypt. Those travels enabled the tribe to exchange different beliefs from other cultures and traditions. In their myth of the world's creation, the people of the Dogon believe that the world is based on the balance between the two genders, male and female. Amma, the creation god (a goddess in some references)[9] for the Dogon, has created the Nummos -or the Nommos- twins, a male and a female, who started the life of everything on the planet Earth. From such a belief came the idea that all human beings have a male and a female soul at birth. Such balance, for the Dogons, is a means towards 'wholeness' (Johnson, 1988: 54). Thus, whether according to Jung's

[7] In the Igbo-land (South-Eastern Nigeria), women used to obtain a title, *Ekwe*, which signals their power in relation to *Idemili* (the water goddess). This title allows them to achieve equal powers to men, thus the same level of authority. Such recognitions slowly dissolved with the coming of Christianity (colonialism).

[8] The Dogon: A tribe in West Africa (Mali and Burkina Faso) which is believed that it did not get affected by Westernisation (colonialism) until the beginnings of 1930's.

[9] See 'Dogon Creation Account' (page 37) in *African Mythology, A to Z* (2010) by Lynch, P. A., & Roberts, J.

belief or the Dogon's myth, the continuity of the world depends on the interrelationship and *complementarities* between male and female. Some theorists,[10] however, have a 'doubt about the authenticity' of the myths and symbolic interpretations of the Dogon's beliefs, and even about the reality of how French anthropologists[11] have managed to register the Dogon's myths and religious rituals at the beginnings of the twentieth century (Mosima, 2016: 48). Nonetheless, and only through relying on the carvings and drawings that the Dogon's tribe used to portray their gods, this duality or 'twiness' of the male and the female can be detected easily.[12]

The Dogon's belief that the absence of one of the two genders creates chaos in the world is used in Achebe's novel *Things Fall Apart* (1958). Throughout the novel, Okonkwo, the male protagonist, considers the females around him as inferior. Weakness and emotions, according to Okonkwo, are 'womanly' characteristics that a *real man* should not get acquainted with. This can be related to his hate towards his father, Unoka, who is described as being a coward and an *agbala* (woman) (Achebe, 1958: 11). The word 'agbala' in itself holds another meaning in relation to the position of woman in Umuofia society, for, besides meaning a woman, agbala is used to refer to a man who has no title, thus giving him an inferior position beside the female. Female characters in this novel -which gets the lion's share of criticism as it is considered to be one of the masterpieces of Anglophone African literature- are presented mostly unnamed, or referred to in relation to their eldest child, as 'mother of Nwoye' for instance (ibid: 12). One of the major aspects that these female characters, Okonkwo's wives and daughters, relate to is narrating folktales to their children and younger siblings. Okonkwo, from inside his 'manly' shell, considers these stories to be weak and only for women, for he obliges his eldest son, Nwoye, to listen to his masculine, violent stories instead. The disrespect that Okonkwo has for the females around him has no limits, for upon remembering a story he has heard from his mother, he reacts by stating that 'it was as silly as other women's stories' (ibid: 55). Such reaction is a key stand for Okonkwo that leads to his destruction at the end of the novel.

In her book *The Politics of (M)othering: Womanhood, Identity, and Resistance in African Literature* (2005), Nnaemeka goes through the folktales used in Achebe's work and gives a lengthy explanation of their backgrounds and meanings. Most of these folk stories that Okonkwo's wives narrate are based on a male and a female character, which are often in a kind of quarrel. These traditional stories can be seen as a sort of warning to Okonkwo, who ignores them due to his belief that such stories are 'womanly stories'. As an example of this warning, Nnaemeka uses the story of *The Snake Lizard* and his mother to reflect upon the fate that awaits Okonkwo (Nnaemeka, 2005: 62). This folktale tells the story of a snake lizard that kills his mother out of distrust and ends up killing himself, as to show that by eliminating the female part, the male one cannot survive. The same thing happens with Okonkwo, for his disrespect was not limited to 'human' females only, he even commits sins against *Ani*, the goddess of Earth. First by beating his second wife on the week of Peace and then by,

[10] See Pius M. Mosima's *Philosophic Sagacity and Inter-Culture Philosophy* (2016).

[11] Marcel Griaul (1898-1965): a French anthropologist who studied the people of the Dogon, and met one of its priests which resulted in his publication *Conversation with Ogotemmêli* (1948).

[12] See Johnson's article 'Image and Archetype: Male and Female as metaphor in the thought of Carl G. Jung and Ogtemmêli of the Dogon' (1988).

mistakenly, murdering a man from his village, Okonkwo is warned by his friend, Obierika, that if he is not punished for his crimes, Ani's wrath is 'loosed on all the land and not just on the offender' (Achebe, 1958: 91). The first punishment that Okonkwo receives is his exile from his fatherland to his *motherland*. However, upon reaching there, he is faced with his uncle's continuous questions and teachings about the importance of the 'mother' by reminding him that;

> … a man belongs to his fatherland when things are good and life is sweet. But when there is sorrow and bitterness he finds refuge in his *motherland*. *Your mother is there to protect you*. (ibid: 98-99, *my emphasis*).

By using such a comparison at this level of the novel, it sounds like the position of 'masculine' males, like Okonkwo, is questioned in relation to females'. However, it looks like Okonkwo is trapped inside his masculinity and 'manhood', for ignoring all that his mother clan did for him, as he describes it as a 'womanly clan' (ibid: 117) when they did not fight the coming of the white men (missionaries). To his surprise, and upon returning to his fatherland after seven years of exile, Okonkwo is faced with how his village, Umuofia, for the same reason as his motherland, has 'become soft like women' (ibid: 133).

Nonetheless, there are two female characters in the novel whom Achebe gave importance to beside Okonkwo. Ezinma and Chielo are able throughout the novel to voice their ideas with a kind of authority and power even in the presence of males. The first, Ezinma, is Okonkwo's daughter which he praises for being 'tougher' than her half-brother, Nwoye. Due to this, Okonkwo cannot hide his regret and disappointment of her being born a girl, for he expresses that he would be happier if she were a boy (ibid: 48). However, the presence of Ezinma and her relation with Okonkwo can be considered as a means to show the positive side of Okonkwo's character, for when she fell sick, her father spends a whole night preparing medications for her (ibid: 72). From this perspective, Ezinma's character is *used* to show the emotional side of Okonkwo and his 'manhood'. Chielo, on the other hand, is portrayed as both a normal woman and a priestess of the Oracle. In her normal life, Chielo is a *widow*, which, according to Stratton, gives her a sense of freedom from any kind of 'male hierarchy' over her (Stratton, 1994: 25). Beside this, Chielo is a representation of the duality in the spiritual world, as mentioned earlier in the Dogon's mythology. The gods and goddess presented in *Things Fall Apart* are based on the notion of the duality of gender. For instance, Chielo is a priestess for the male God, the Oracle. Also, such indication can be found in the narrated folktale stories by Okonkwo's wives about the Earth goddess, *Ani*, and the god of the Sky, *Chukwu*. The balance of genders that the spiritual world of Umuofia society in Achebe's novels reflects upon indicates at the same time the chaos that Okonkwo's world develops to. By ignoring females and their importance in his life, Okonkwo fulfils Obierika's warning when he commits suicide, thus giving in under Ani's wrath. [13]

[13] Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958) contains a number of cases that present the balance and complementarities between the two genders, however, due to the article's limited space I cannot refer to them in details here. See Nwando Achebe's article; 'Balancing Male and Female Principles : Teaching about Gender in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*' (2002).

The chaos that Okonkwo goes through due to his ignorance, and his disrespect of the other gender, is dealt with differently in Okara's *The Voice* (1964). The novel opens with Okolo, the male protagonist, running away from the villagers, who they believe that 'his head was not correct' (Okara, 1964: 23). This accusation is due to the fact that Okolo is looking for *it*, 'the right thing in life', which the elders of his village, Amatu, believe that he should not do. Throughout all this commotion, Okolo is continually saved, supported, and protected by Tuere, the only female character in the novel. Tuere is often located in the darkness of her hut at the edges of the evil forest, for she had been cast outside the village as it is believed that she is an evil witch (ibid: 31). In a flashback to the days she lived in the village, Okolo goes back to the death of everyone who approaches her, starting with her parents to anyone who proposes to her, and how she faced the accusation of being a witch with *silence*. This silence broke with the coming of Okolo, for in the first scene after hiding Okolo in her dark hut, she is the one who goes out and faces the elders and the villagers who were looking for Okolo (ibid: 29). From Tuere's point of view, her silence was due to the fact that she is a woman, and even though she and Okolo hold the same dangers towards the village's elders, they were able to put her out 'of the way… like a tree that has fallen across the path' (ibid: 54). However, according to her, this cannot be done to Okolo, for he is an *educated man*, thus he is someone like a 'big tree fallen across their [the elders] path. They could not move it or cut it' (ibid: 55). One of the interesting scenes in the novel, however, is Okolo's decision to face the elders and to question them about the whereabouts of *it.* Even though Tuere warns him about the elders' plan to kill him, Okolo sticks to his decision. Still, when he stands in front of the whole village, Okolo loses his ability to voice his challenge; instead, it is Tuere who comes and challenges the elders;

> "Listen! Listen!" Tuere said as she walked fast to Okolo who had decided he had accomplished something by his mere reappearance and stood calm with the face of a god (ibid: 120).

The silent presence of Okolo and the stormy presence of Tuere reflect the balance that the two characters play in the novel. As, before Okolo's return from exile, Tuere confesses to a friend her desire to be a man as it is the only way for her to stand in the face of the village elders; 'If in this world we can recreate ourselves I would become a man. When I die I will return as a man.' (ibid: 115). Accordingly, the coming of Okolo is enough for her to be able to deliver her message. Okolo's 'mere' presence in front of the elders has given Tuere what she needs to break her silence; it has given her the needed half, the masculine part. Even though this brought the end of these two characters as the elders drown them, their messages did not (ibid: 127). Okara gives us a short conversation between two unnamed messengers who discuss how Okolo's and Tuere's words started to grow in their 'insides' (ibid: 96-97). It looks from this account that it needs the cooperation of the two genders, male and female, in order to get the message delivered. Another aspect that the novel presents in relation to the balance between a male and female is the use of the pronoun *It* (Fashina, 2009: 72). Used in the novel to refer to 'the right thing in life', the neutral pronoun can be used to refer to independence, nationality, or freedom, if we take into consideration the historical context of the novel, or 'a meaning of life' as indicated in the introduction of the work (Ravenscroft, 1969: 08). Moreover, the use of such a pronoun shows how

doing the 'right thing' for the society is neither the male's nor female's burden only, rather it needs the cooperation of the two.

If the previous two discussed novel represent a patriarchal society, the third novel used in this paper introduces the matriarchal system of the Ghanaian society.[14] E. R. Obeng's novel *Eighteenpence* (1943) is the writer's only novel, where its events take place in the Obeng's hometown of Abetifi. In the Ghanaian system, or Akan to be more specific, the female is given a distinguished position. Even though she is still expected to serve the men around her, the Ghanaian female is meant to be financially independent from her husband (Dako, 1999: 64). However, with the coming of colonialism, Ghanaian women lost their position in this kind of society due to the patriarchal system that was brought along with the Western regimes (Amadiume, 1987: 07).

Such change in the women's position in this society can be seen throughout Obeng's novel, which is considered to be the first English Ghanaian novel, and its narration is taken to be based on Ghanaian folktales. Despite this, however, the novel is overlooked by critics and little study is done on it (Dako, 1994: 364). The novel is supposed, according to Dako, to tell the story of Akrofi, the male protagonist, and his rise from poverty to wealth. However, after introducing Obeng Akrofi in the first two chapters, he is left aside, and Konaduwa, a female character, takes over. This makes the novel read into two parts, the first narrates the story of Konaduwa and the second of Akrofi. Konaduwa is presented as a smart woman with harsh words which leads her from one trial to the other. These characteristics enable Konaduwa to challenge the people around her and to get what she desires, especially those who apply any level of authority over her, such us her husband -Owusu, the village's elders, and even the District Commissioner. Throughout her trials, Konaduwa outwits and ridicules the males judging her by labelling them as cowards. This can be seen especially in her trial in front of the British Magistrate, in which she starts to question his ability to judge her case, and after questioning her husband and giving her a chance to ask him any question, she exclaims; 'Ask him why he fears the white man. Is it because of his pale face or because of his eyes which are like those of a cat?' (Obeng, 1943: 35). Reducing the British Magistrate to his 'appearance' and voicing challenges against him in a colony where women are supposed to be obediently silent, Konaduwa is used as a means to 'insult the colonial administration' (ibid: 35).[15] In an encounter during a trial, Konaduwa accuses the people around her for dragging her from one trial to the other because she is a woman who they believe she would not speak for herself, but she is, as she describes herself, a '*masculine* woman' (ibid: 49). The ability to challenge the males around her and her reference to herself as a 'masculine' woman sets Konaduwa in direct opposition with Akrofi's wife who is presented in the second part of the novel. Unlike Konaduwa, Akrofi's wife is left *unnamed* and her voice is rarely heard. Moreover, unlike Konaduwa who is able to defend herself and to challenge people around her to get what she wants, neither Akrofi nor his unnamed wife is able to defend themselves from the continuous cruelty of Akrofi's uncle and his desire to control their wealth. Despite the fact that the writer concludes both parts of the novel by stating that the two characters, Konaduwa and Akrofi, led a 'happily

[14] For the Ghanaian society, the children belong to their mother and the inheritance is given to the female members of the family, usually the sister.

[15] See footnotes in page 35 in Obeng's *Eighteepence* (1943).

ever after' life (ibid: 75 and 163), Konaduwa's character has been transformed radically. Obeng writes that; 'Owing to her experience, Konaduwa became the best wife and a very good mother and house-keeper' (ibid: 75), which reflects the negative influence that the colonial and Victorian ideologies had created on the system of a Ghanaian society in dealing with women.[16]

Before concluding I would like to note the social 'norms' that the societies narrated in the three novels follow when it comes to gender identity. If Okara's *The Voice* narrates the balance between a male and a female, Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and Obeng's *Eighteenpence* bring to the surface another form of gender representation that the villagers see as different, which is the 'feminine' male and the 'masculine' female. Unoka, Okonkwo's father, in Achebe's work, is considered to be a coward, that even his son is not proud of him, especially after labelling him an *agbala*. Unoka, that man who is fascinated by music is unable to do what other Umoufia's men usually do, as going to the fields and farming or being able to enter the evil forest. However, Unoka sticks to the area around the household, which in itself is a symbol of his femininity, as that area is supposed to be where women have their small farms (Achebe, 1958: 22). The other picture is presented in Obeng's work, Konaduwa as the 'masculine' woman. The Adontenhene,[17] while going through another woman's trial, and affected by her 'soft-manners' and apologetic tears, remarks that 'how true is that women are of different kinds. What a vast difference there is between Konaduwa and this women' (Obeng, 1943: 80) as an indication of how her 'masculine' self distinguishes her from how the Akan women should be.

## Conclusion

From this analysis and despite the marginalisation of the African female character, her role is as important as that of the male protagonist. Perhaps we can argue the universality of Jung's theories and beliefs when it comes to the subordination of females in a patriarchal society, but his notion of duality of gender is feasible. Even though what is called in Jung's theory an 'internal oppression' where women learn how to oppress their own ideas and feelings mainly in a patriarchal society (Wehr, 1989: 11), African women, as seen in the analysed novels, are able to *signify* their voice through different methods. Such methods vary from teaching stories, spiritual protection to constant challenges of their social hierarchy. Their importance also is reflected upon through the old African cultural tradition and mythologies, as she, the African female, is seen as a needed half to finish the whole existence of the world, whether in their cosmology or literature. Even from the females' perspective, mainly those who see themselves as 'womanists',[18] African females believe that their recognition cannot be achieved without referring to their cultural background.[19]

[16] The novel also reflects Obeng's belief that a woman should fulfil the 'Victorian notions of domesticity' to resemble Akrofi's wife in the novel. See Dako's Gender Roles as Indicators of Social Change in a Colonial Novel (1999).

[17] A traditional military rank at the Akan society.

[18] Womanism : First used by the African-American writer Alice Walker, as to show the importance of African women's cultural background in relation to her femininity. See Willmann's 'Is Feminism Un-African? Do We Need to Talk about African Feminism in Plural' (2015).

[19] Black women, and women of the Third-World in general, believe that Western feminism sets them in crossroads between their gender identity and cultural heritage. See chapter three; 'Difference: A Special Third World Women Issue' in Trinh T. Minh-ha's *Woman, Native, Other* (1989).

Moreover, '… womanism argues for *a union of males and females* in joint endeavours to promote the advancement of the human race' (Mogu, 1999: 69, *my emphasis*). Thus the balance between the two genders is not a mere quest to fulfill women's rights; rather it is a quest for the progress of the human beings.

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# *Ambiguous Japan: A Study on Four Lectures of Nobel Prize Winner Kenzaburō Ōe*

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**Abstract**
In 1994, Kenzaburō Ōe, second Japanese writer to receive the Nobel Prize in Literature, entitled his Nobel Lecture "Japan, the ambiguous, and myself", dialoguing with his predecessor, Yasunari Kawabata, whose Nobel Lecture was entitled "Japan, the beautiful, and myself". Confessing his quest for "ways to be of some use in the cure and reconciliation of mankind", Ōe proposes a reflection about Japan's role in the world by that time, having ascended by its technology, but not by its literature or philosophy. His Nobel Lecture aligns with other three lectures in different places and contexts: "Speaking on Japanese culture before a Scandinavian audience" (1992), "On modern and contemporary Japanese Literature" (San Francisco, 1990) and "Japan's dual identity: a writer's dilemma" (1986). This paper attempts to reflect on the writer's perspectives expressed in his lectures, focusing in the following subjects: Japanese culture and identity, Japan between past and future and the contributions of literature in the achievement of peace.

Keywords: Ambiguity. Japanese literature. Kenzaburō Ōe.

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## Introduction

When I first had the chance to read one of Kenzaburō Ōe's stories, I was still an undergraduate student of Japanese Language and Literature. The first one I read, *Tori* ("The birds"), from the book *Miru mae ni tobe* ("Leap before you look"), let me so uncomfortable, so uneasy, and fascinated me in a very particular way. Those haunting birds really left an impression on me. The second time I had the chance to read one of Ōe's literary works was when I had in hands the novel *Kojinteki na taiken* ("A personal matter"), whose protagonist was nicknamed "Bird" – a very appropriate term for a young man struggling with a difficult marriage, wanting to fly to Africa with an ex-girlfriend, wishing for freedom, but feeling the responsibility of raising a mentally disabled son. The "personal matter" is indeed personal, also for the autobiographical strokes in the novel, but it reaches everyone in the sense that it deals with freedom and decisions.

A few years later, randomly checking books on Japanese Literature at my University's library, I found "Japan, the Ambiguous, and Myself: The Nobel Prize Speech and Other Lectures", with four speeches/lectures by Kenzaburō Ōe. The four speeches it brings are not chronologically organized, but placed in a crescendo that culminates with the Nobel Prize Speech "Japan, the ambiguous, and myself", the broadest known of the four, in which Ōe builds his reflections by referring to Yasunari Kawabata's speech "Japan, the beautiful, and myself". The word he uses in Japanese is *aimai-na*, formed by two ideograms whose meaning is "dark", "obscure". One could say that "ambiguous" does not express exactly this idea, being based in Greek suffix *ambi-*, that means "two", and not exactly "dark", "unclear". This is a point of view, but in fact Ōe shows a Japan whose obscurity lies on doubles: traditional *versus* modern, spiritualistic *versus* materialistic, a country ascending in the international community *versus* a country having problems in relating to its Asian neighbors etc.

Ōe has given many different speeches, in other occasions and places. These four are somehow aligned, mainly presenting confessions about Ōe's authentic worries as a writer: "Speaking on Japanese culture before a Scandinavian audience" (1992), "On modern and contemporary Japanese Literature" (San Francisco, 1990), "Japan's dual identity: a writer's dilemma" (1986) and "Japan, the ambiguous, and myself" (1994). Here we will refer to these speeches by the order they appear in the book (first to third and the Nobel Prize speech), reflecting on some of Ōe's perspectives as shown in these lectures, focusing in three main lines: Japanese culture and identity, Japan between past and future and the contributions of literature in the achievement of peace, as follows.

## Japanese culture and identity

Every time one is to study the topics related to Japanese culture and identity there is an expression that inevitably comes to mind: the term *nihonjinron* (or "theory of being Japanese"). It is an emblematic expression that refers to the works of a wide range of writers and scholars, either from Japan or not. Some questions, then, have to be raised: what are the opinions of a Japanese writer, for example, from the beginning of the 19th century? How do they compare to those of a foreign writer from the post-

war period? It is a very complex theme, not only because of variations of space, time and perspective, but also because it deals with society, religion, history, philosophy, politics, economy, international relations and much more.

Ōe mentions *nihonjinron* in his second speech, "On modern and contemporary Japanese Literature", when he brings to the audience the character Daisuke, the intellectual hero of the novel *Sorekara* ("And then"), written by Natsume Sōseki, "the national writer of Japan", in 1909. Through the voice of this main character, Sōseki criticized Japan of that time, but his criticism "was not just leveled at Japan's economic pursuit of the West; he criticized the basic conditions of life as well (like the shabbiness of human dwellings), which had actually deteriorated in the process of modernization" (Ōe, 1995, p. 45). Like a man in search of himself, gazing at others and comparing himself to them, Japan from the Meiji period stares at the outside and tries to learn not only what the foreign world is and how it works but also what it means to be Japan in such a big world. In the first speech, "Speaking on Japanese culture before a Scandinavian audience", Ōe also mentions Sōseki and his "prophetic voice" in Daisuke, yet affirming that, even though Japan has reached the same level of other economic potencies of the West, the "balance between appetites and morality" was not achieved, and has become even worse (p. 25). Pessimistic? Realistic? How far can pessimism go from realism when things turn bad indeed?

Even though *nihonjinron* has become a popular subject after the end of World War II, it started earlier, for the contact with the foreign is obviously older. Takeo Funabiki (2014), a specialist in *nihonjinron*, says that "reflecting about Japan is to reflect about the differences between Japan and other countries" (p. 92). First, Japan (or Yamato, that is to say the name of Japan in its very beginning) was in contact with Korea and China; in the 16th century, with the arrival of Portuguese merchants (and a little after with Spanish, Ducth, English and others), the contact with the foreigners was intensified. The *sakoku jidai*, or the "era of the closed country", from 1633 to 1858, was a period of endogenous development of arts and literature in Japan. After this period, Japan was initially compelled to establish relations with other countries, but this compelling seems to have soon turned into fascination, especially regarding Europe and the United States.[1] As Ōe writes, "Japan's modernization reveals the history of an Asian country that sought to extricate itself from Asia and become a European-style nation" (p. 55). This fascination survived the enmities of the great world wars as, for instance, Japan even imported the "American way of life" during the 50's/60's.

The beginning of Japan is usually traced back to the formation of Yamato, as in the expression *Yamato damashii*. *Yamato damashii* is a very well-known expression whose meaning, according to Ōe, depends on the era: in his first speech he reminds of Genji supporting his son Yugiri in going to the university: "Only after we have had enough of book learning (...) can we bring our Yamato spirit into full play" (p. 17). Ōe understands the Yamato spirit in the Heian period was a "shared sensibility". Throughout Meiji period, however, the expression has changed its meaning, or at least its use: it started to turn into a slogan for imperialist Japan, "to unify the people's

[1] Some authors, like Takeo Funabiki, question the widely accepted interpretation according to which Japan was forced to reopen the seaports to foreign ships (2014, p. 103).

consciousness in the interests of creating a modern state" (Ōe, 1995, p. 19). Then, in a fanatic wave, Japan might have lost the tracks of the shared sensibility that could really bind the whole country together.

It was also in the Meiji period that the idea of *wakonkansai* was substituted by the one of *wakon'yōsai* (p. 20). Both expressions are made of *wakon* (the ideograms of *Yamato* and *tamashii*); the difference between them is just what is to be accompanied to the Japanese Spirit: Chinese studies (*kansai*) or studies of the West (*yōsai*). Either way this spirit is not alone: it refers to something else to be taken as a parallel. Once again citing Funabiki's work, it is necessary to stress that, in the exercise of a reflection about Japan there is necessarily a comparison between Japan and other countries. The Meiji period just witnessed the change of the object in the comparison.

But how is it after the war and after Japan's recovery? Ōe is not conveying an ultranationalist defense of traditional Yamato culture: he is obviously aware of Japan's role in a globalized world, ready to cooperate and share, as he says:

"What Europeans and Americans should clearly see is a Japan possessing a view of the world richly shaped by both traditional and foreign cultural elements; and a will to work as a cooperative member of the world community, to make an independent and distinctive contribution to the environment of our shared planet" (p. 54)

The importance given to the group relations, as testified in notions like *uchi* (the inside; my group) and *soto* (the outside; the others), is clear in Japanese culture. For foreigners who study the Japanese language, it can be very hard to learn how to master the honorific language, for example, and other marks of this feature in language as a cultural material. Notwithstanding, it is not a matter of us (from Japanese perspective) *against* them (other countries). And it is not a naïve conception of world harmony either: it sounds like an enlarged conception of *uchi* – we are all members of the big group of international community, after all. We are part of the same world and definitely somehow linked. Of course it brings new insights to the development of *nihonjinron* in the present. Ōe also believes that this Japanese group psychology is in crisis, since Japanese homogeneity is being questioned, for reasons like the fact that the number of foreigners living in Japan has significantly increased (Bradbury, Pease, Wilson & Kenzaburō, 1993, p. 9).

**Japan between past and future**

As prof. Shuichi Katō (2012, p. 18) says in his work, Japan lives for the present. Japanese language does not even have a future tense – it does not mean, however, that the sense of future, or *mirai*, is weaker than in other cultures. It is just a matter of focusing on now rather than in yesterday or tomorrow. This feeling pervades all Japanese culture. In the present, past and future are incorporated/anticipated. In the third speech, Ōe (1995) defends that the role of literature "is to create a model of a contemporary age which encompasses past and future, a model of the people living in that age as well" (p. 66).

In the first line of the same speech, he writes: "I come to you today as one Japanese writer who feels that Japanese literature may be decaying" (p. 59). In his second

speech, he advocates that there is a decline in "serious literature" and "literary readership", because, as a matter of market, to meet the needs of contemporary readers – or, should we say, consumers – there has been more offer of what Ōe calls sheer entertainment, *manga* included in this category (p. 49). He addresses severe critics to some of the most popular Japanese novelists, like Haruki Murakami and Banana Yoshimoto. In his words,

"Murakami and Yoshimoto convey the experience of a youth politically uninvolved or disaffected, content to exist within a late adolescent or post-adolescent subculture. And their work evokes a response bordering on adulation in their young readers. But it is too early to predict where this trend will lead as they grow older." (p. 50)

The word "adulation" might sound heavy, but it reflects exactly Ōe's idea that recently famous writers are prioritizing what their readers like or want to read, and not what they need to. Ōe acknowledges that Murakami is an intellectual writer of the same range of Sōseki e Ooka, "yet Murakami, in capturing an extremely wide and avid readership, has accepted what had hitherto been beyond the reach of other genuinely intellectual writers (…)" (p. 51). For Ōe, postwar Japanese literature, unique in its mission, was the very best representation of *junbungaku*, or "pure literature", since the writers of the time were strongly committed to "enlighten Japanese people".[2]

Here it is necessary to pose some questions: from 1994, the year when Ōe won the Nobel Prize, until today, what has changed? Can we agree with his words, or may we reassess them? For example, in 2002 Haruki Murakami published his novel *Umibe no Kafuka* ("Kafka on the shore"); even though there are elements of pop culture in this book (Johnny Walker, Colonel Saunders, a lot of musical references and so on), it might not be considered a light work for sheer entertainment, to use Ōe's own words. It is a very intriguing story that dialogues not only with other literatures, Franz Kafka's works being the most evident ones along with Sophocles' Ōedipus myth, but also with Japanese literature, bringing back Sōseki's *Koufu* ("The Miner") and Murasaki Shikibu's *Genji Monogatari* ("The Tale of Genji"). Besides, Haruki Murakami – and maybe we can extend this impression to other contemporary writers – seems to contemn any label, *junbungaku* included (Stretcher, 1998, p. 354).

Beyond Japanese literature and the discussion on what can be considered *junbungaku* or not, continues the debate on what art – and, more precisely, literature – is, and what it is for. In spite of the fact that Ōe is being coherent to his own understanding of what the role of literature is, it is necessary to ponder the presence and use of mass media in the postwar period, in the early 90's (when Ōe writes the speeches), and furthermore, bring this analysis to the present moment. Besides, the idea that popular/best-selling is opposed to intellectual/sophisticated urges to be relativized. Thinking of an example in Japanese culture, maybe the Kabuki theatre can help us visualize what is there for relativization. Kabuki, from the word *kabuku* ("to be strange, extravagant"), started with public performances for commoners, mostly in leisure quarters; as time went by, the genre became more and more sophisticated, but it did not lose its popular appeal.

[2] The term *junbungaku*, "pure" or "sincere literature", was first used by Tokoku Kitamura. Presently, it is understood as literature that does not accept dictated influences from mass media. As Oe (1995) defines it, it is "literature that is not 'popular' or 'mundane'" (p. 66).

Even though some say that Kabuki has lost its strength and does not attract young people anymore, it is possible to see recent performances that, mostly using mass media, not only enrich the genre but also help disseminate it.[3] Lastly, the whole debate can be put down if we get "lost in translation": the opposition of *jun* ("pure") and *taishū* ("mass") does not exactly correspond to the opposition of "serious" and "popular" as already carved in Western tradition (Stretcher, 1998, p. 355).

**Contributions of literature in the achievement of peace**

Ōe grieves for Japanese literature. His worries are patent in many of his works, interviews and lectures. Just as the examples of writers he cites in his speeches (especially in the third one), Ōe's writing militancy is embedded in the conscience of the effects of literature in society:

"I suppose my only regret is that my writing, in the sense that it is an act of resistance against reactionary tendencies in postwar Japan, has not had sufficient power to push back a rising tide of conformity." (p. 38)

Even though he acknowledges his resistance is not enough, he stands for a task that could not be performed by any other: a philosopher, a historian, an anthropologist, a social scientist, a psychologist, they would all work with their own tools, their own expertise. Only a writer can do what a writer does, and it is to cause people to become better through literature. In fact, literature does not depend on economy or politics to do what it does. Referring to the years 1945-1960, right after the war, Ōe says: "... while people had the greatest difficulty satisfying their material needs, the moral issues they found addressed in the literature of the time were at their highest tide" (p. 47)

Even though his view of literature is conceived under the labels of "pure" and "mass", in a somewhat conservative way, his political view is liberal and he has done much more than just showing his ideas in his writings. Ōe believes strongly that the writer has to accomplish a social responsibility (Stretcher, 1998, p. 372) and has used his influence, for example, participating in anti-nuclear protests in 2011 and 2012. Two works of his, *Hiroshima nōto* ("Hiroshima notes") and *Okinawa nōto* ("Okinawa notes"), published in 1965 and 1970 respectively, address two delicate situations, in both political and moral terms: the condition of the nuclear bomb victims after 1945 and the oppressive treatment towards Okinawa and its people. Even though his activity is linked to problems that are peculiar to Japan, he closes his Nobel Prize speech with a message that could fit any engaged writer of any place or time:

"As one with a peripheral, marginal, off-center existence in the world, I would like to continue to seek – with what I hope is a modest, decent, humanistic contribution of my own – ways to be of some use in the cure and reconciliation of mankind" (p. 128). A noble desire of a Nobel Prize winner – I wonder if we, writers and literature lovers, can relate to it, not in a naïve sprout of self-confidence, but, taking a grasp on Japanese *junbungaku*, with a pure, sincere desire of engaging in the task. Ōe's

[3] Some examples are Kirk Nishikawa Dixon's performance in the film "The lion", 2014 Grand Prize Winner in the Mill Valley Film Festival, and Nico-nico's Chō-Kabuki, where the vocaloid Hatsune Miku performed with Kabuki actor Shidō Nakamura (2016 and 2017).

resistance is for values that "will remain unexpressed if not given a voice by the writer" (Katō, 1997, p. 351). Whatever literature he writes, may it be fiction or non-fiction, he states the commitment, implicitly or not, to what he understands the role of literature really is.

## Conclusion

Even though ambiguity itself must not be considered strictly a good or bad quality, Japanese ambiguity as suggested by Ōe can show a path to conflict: traditional and modern are often in frank opposition, and so are spiritual and material prosperity. In the international community, Japan has already reached a comfortable status, but still has some particular problems, mostly from historical roots, towards the Asian neighbors.

When referring to Kawabata's speech, Ōe comments on two possible translations to the Japanese particle *no* in his title: "Japan, the beautiful, and myself" (revealing the idea of Japan and the writer juxtaposed) and "myself as a part of beautiful Japan" (p. 111). He does not indicate which one is more appropriate, simply pointing out that the title has two different ways of reading. Similarly, if we keep the same understanding for Ōe's own speech's title, we can read it as either "Japan, the ambiguous, and myself" or "myself as a part of ambiguous Japan". In his third speech, entitled "Japan's dual identity: a writer's dilemma", he had already testified that he hoped "to be able to overcome the ambiguities" (p. 63). As a matter of fact, the ambiguities he shares in his speeches are associated to Japan but also affect the writer (not only Ōe, but every Japanese writer, broadly speaking), in the sense that he is inside the context, being a part of Japan. These ambiguities are stressed in the studies of Japanese culture and identity, in the study of contemporary Japan and also in the quest for what contributions literature can give in the achievement of peace, in a local or global aspect. Ōe, as a "part of ambiguous Japan", responded – and stills responds – to what he understands his mission is.

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