

# “Need a Bit of Anthropology”: Aldous Huxley’s *Eyeless in Gaza* and Ada Chesterton’s *In Darkest London*

OZAWA Hisashi

## 1. Introduction

Aldous Huxley’s *Eyeless in Gaza* (1936) is a modernist experimental *Bildungsroman* that non-chronologically narrates the human and ideological development of the protagonist Anthony Beavis from an irresponsible cynic to a pacifist idealist. Apparently based on the author’s own life, the novel has been repeatedly interpreted biographically, and James Miller, the most influential figure for Anthony, has been associated with actual people around Huxley, particularly Gerald Heard (a philosopher who shared with Huxley an interest in mysticism and pacifism), Dick Sheppard (an Anglican priest who founded the Peace Pledge Union, which Huxley joined), F.M. Alexander (a therapist whose technique is cited in *Eyeless in Gaza*) and J. E. R. McDonagh (a surgeon who recommended to Huxley colonic irrigation and a vegetarian diet) (see Bedford 320; Poller 136). However, Miller is not only a doctor with a mystic and pacifist tendency but also an adventurous “anthropologist” who actively enters the world of another culture, making use of his “anthropology” for a reform movement in his country.

In this essay, I will discuss *Eyeless in Gaza* with an emphasis on the idea of “anthropology,” comparing it with the work of Ada Elizabeth Chesterton (1869–1962) — a journalist and social reformer who had “adventures into the underworld” of the homeless, reported their true state to the public by writing *In Darkest London* (1926), and established

shelters for destitute women, the Cecil Houses. Although while working on *Eyeless in Gaza* Huxley delivered a lecture to support her project of Cecil Houses,<sup>1</sup> and although Chesterton also recognised Huxley as one of the most important international writers of her time,<sup>2</sup> their relationship has received curiously little attention in criticism of this book or other facets of Huxley's career. Hopefully, my discussion of *Eyeless in Gaza* and Ada Chesterton's work will contribute to a new reading of the novel, shedding light on hidden aspects of the author's development in the mid-1930s.

## 2. Anthropology in Early Twentieth-Century Britain

In Britain, between the later nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, anthropology grew rapidly in popularity, from almost nothing to being widespread in intellectual and artist circles. Under the influence of Darwinism, Edward Tylor attributed social difference not to biological race but to culture, placing north-western Europeans at the top of the evolutionary ladder and Australian Aboriginals at the bottom. James Frazer made a greater contribution to the development and spread of anthropology by analysing a massive amount of ethnographic and folkloric data in jargon-free rhetoric in his well-known *The Golden Bough*. However, by the 1920s these armchair anthropologists were academically overshadowed by Bronisław Malinowski, who practised fieldwork of participant-observation in the society being studied. In a word, while his predecessors were conscious of their closeness to their readers, Malinowski and his colleagues preferred their closeness to the people being studied. Anthropology subscribed to some aspects of the British interwar avant-garde, including the literature of Joseph Conrad, D. H. Lawrence, T. S. Eliot, W. B. Yeats and Robert Graves.<sup>3</sup>

Although anthropology focused on colonised foreigners, some intellectuals argued that anthropological methods should be applied to the natives of the British Isles too, particularly the lower classes, in order to grasp and improve their lives and the nation itself. The idea of identifying the primitive with the poor, or at least finding an analogy between

them, is at times called “reverse anthropology” or “domestic anthropology” with quite a few precedents including Benjamin Disraeli’s novel, *Sybil, or the Two Nations* (1855). However, this kind of anthropology was carried out at a much larger scale than ever before in the interwar period, what is known as Mass-Observation. With a particular focus on the working classes, it started in 1937, led by the anthropologist Tom Harrison, the journalist Charles Madge and the filmmaker Humphrey Jennings; it was also endorsed by Aldous’s older brother, Julian Huxley, a biologist who wrote in the introduction to their 1937 pamphlet: “it is urgent to obtain detailed and unbiased information as to the mode of thinking of the larger, more powerful and economically more important groups of human beings,” such as “our own group, the English people” (5).<sup>4</sup> Anthropology in Britain has developed with these attempts at social reform, as indicated not only by Tylor’s view of it as a “reformer’s science,” but also by the fact that anthropology as such was originally associated with the anti-slavery movement.<sup>5</sup>

### **3. Anthropology and Anthropologist in Aldous Huxley’s *Eyeless in Gaza***

Considering these contexts, it is no wonder that Huxley was both interested in and influenced by anthropology. In *Brave New World* (1932), he not only envisages the Savage Reservation in New Mexico by echoing, to a certain degree, contemporary anthropology of American Indians, but also describes Londoners’ life in the future as “Sexual Life of Gentlemen and Ladies,” reflecting Malinowski’s *The Sexual Life of Savages in North-Western Melanesia* (1929) and Margaret Mead’s *Growing up in New Guinea* (1930).<sup>6</sup> In nonfiction writing such as “Anthropology at Home” (1933) and “Anthropology and Social Reform” (1935), Huxley plausibly argues for the need of anthropological approaches to think of domestic problems and reforms. Having toured the industrial Midlands of England in 1928, Huxley, from 1930 to 1931, repeatedly explored “Alien Englands” — Durham colliery villages, St Katherine and Royal Albert docks in London, a Sheffield ironworks, the old and

new industrial towns in Middlesbrough and Billingham respectively, and a car factory in Birmingham. He also wrote of these visits in a series of articles — “Abroad in England,” “Sight-Seeing in Alien England,” “The Victory of Art over Humanity” and “Greater and Lesser London” (1931).<sup>7</sup> In these essays, Huxley not only objectively reports the wretched conditions of labourers but also grasps social issues behind them as his own personal ones, insisting that systematic planning is urgently required for the nation to survive the worldwide depression.

However, it is in his semi-autobiographical novel, *Eyeless in Gaza*, that Huxley most eagerly impresses on people the importance of anthropology. The story centres on Anthony Beavis, apparently modelled after the author. He is a sociologist whose sarcastic and isolated character has been formed by his outstanding intelligence as well as his childhood experiences such as the death of his mother. Anthony has led an irresponsible life and justified this by his view of identity as non-consistent or fragmentary, regarding his past self as independent of his present self. This does not change even when he unintentionally drives his school friend Brian Foxe to suicide after insincerely seducing — because of Mary Amberley’s whimsical advice — Brian’s fiancé, Joan. Although having lived in such a way until his mid-30s, his parting from his lover, Helen Amberley — following a revelatory incident of the falling of a dog from the sky — prompts him to doubt his life, searching for a new way of life. He thus joins another of his school friends, Mark Staithes, an active cynic, in participating in a coup in Mexico. On their journey Mark injures his leg in the Andes, but they fortunately encounter James Miller, an MD and anthropologist who has finished his fieldwork in Chiapas. Drawn to Miller’s ideas, Anthony, after returning to England, takes part in a pacifist movement together with his mentor and new comrades. In the end, Anthony confirms his determination to lead a responsible life, finding a “unity” of all existence in the world and history, and obtaining a new identity by positioning himself in this order. *Eyeless in Gaza* has been rightfully read as reflecting the individual and ideological development of the author, who organised anti-war activities as a leading member of the Peace Pledge Union since autumn

1935, partly sacrificing his success until then as a sarcastic intellectual writer.<sup>8</sup>

A keyword to this story is "anthropology" or "anthropologist." In terms of how to live and think, Anthony is decisively influenced by the anthropologist Miller, particularly his idea of anthropology defined in the following way:

My profession is to study men. Which means that I must always call men by their name; always think of them as men; yes, and always treat them as men. Because if you don't treat men as men, they don't behave as men. But I'm an anthropologist, I repeat. I want human material. Not insect material. (468-69)

Miller's idea of anthropology as such is drawn from his own life with peoples under his research (see 471). In his words, if you go among "a suspicious, badly treated, savage people" when you are "unarmed, with your hands open" and with the "intension of doing them some good — curing their sick, for example," in most cases "they'll accept you as a friend, they'll be human beings treating you as a human being." Of course, in some cases, "[a]nthropologists may get killed; but anthropology goes on; and in the long run it can't fail to succeed" (469). After all, anthropology is "applied scientific religion," based on "love": "If you don't care for them, you can't possibly understand them" (470-71). Interestingly, Miller applies his anthropology to British and international contexts of "politics," insisting that Europeans "need a bit of anthropology" (471-72). In his view, which soon becomes Anthony's too, the means determine the ends: for example, domestically, if a government treats the people with coercion, it will bring about violent resistance; internationally, if a country treats another with a threat, the result will be war (see 261-63, 335). In *Ends and Means* (1937), Huxley expounded this idea at length, arguing that the good ends cannot be achieved unless the means are good, even though it is currently believed that evil means can be justified as long as the ends are good (see *AHCEIV*, 334). Here the usage of anthropology and anthropologist is apparently not

common. They are different from the general definition of these words (see e.g., his favourite *Encyclopædia Britannica*),<sup>9</sup> and seem to even deviate from the aforementioned contexts of anthropology. Certainly, Miller is an anthropologist who conducts fieldwork and advocates a sort of domestic anthropology, but that is not all. For one thing, the words anthropology and anthropologist in the text are metaphorically used for Miller and his work in contrast to the sociologist Anthony, who tends to see people as “a collective noun, an abstraction, not [...] a set of individuals” and his sociology, “the science of human senselessness” (135–36), and more conspicuously in contrast to Mark, a quasi-“entomologist” who gets “a wonderful feeling” in Chiapas by thinking of the inhabitants “as some kind of rather squalid insects. Cockroaches, dung beetles. Just a hundred big, staring bugs” (467–69). Most important, anthropology refers to a way of life, that is, a life based on love, believing human nature as fundamentally good (see 185, 493). An anthropologist is a person who practices these beliefs, potentially contributing to social reform and even world peace. Where does this view of anthropology or anthropologist come from?

In fact, this is not the first time that Huxley presented the core of this idea. Although the word anthropology itself was not used, the same sort of vision had already appeared in a speech entitled “The Worth of a Gift,” which he made in support of the Cecil Houses Women’s Public Lodging House Fund at Daly’s Theatre, London, 16 November 1934. This is printed in the *Seventh Report* (1934–1935) of the Fund (1935).<sup>10</sup> In the speech, Huxley points out three acquired characteristics of the psychology of the poor that are often lacking in the rich. First, history attests to the “patience” of the poor: “For the most part, the poor have simply accepted the social conditions of their age — accepted them as inevitable” like “acts of God or the King’s enemies,” although in fact these are “under human control” (18). Second, their predicament leads to “a general apathy and indifference, and in particular to a blunting of all interest in anything but the immediate present” (18). Lastly, the poor tend to be “kind” or “benevolent,” which is closely related to the notion that human nature is fundamentally good: “Most

people are potentially a good deal more criminal and a good deal more altruistic than they themselves suppose. Opportunity makes the thief; but it also makes the good Samaritan" (19). What shall we then do to help the poor? Huxley actually emphasises how rather than what: "The worth of a gift lies as much in the way it is offered as in its intrinsic value" (16). We should treat them as human beings, although not so long ago it was — and unfortunately it is still in quite a few situations — taken for granted that the poor are "not quite human survivors" but "mere cases or things," or "a different and inferior species" (16, 20). Huxley sees that the organisers of Cecil Houses not only understand precisely the guests' characteristics but also support them in an appropriate way: "Humanity and decency are impossible without understanding; and understanding is impossible without knowledge and a working hypothesis to act upon" (17). In the end, Huxley asks the audience to "help the committee extend its admirable work" after stressing again the significance of Chesterton's project:

We do evil when we treat others as though they were not persons, like ourselves, but as though they were things. [...] Judge them by this standard, and you must conclude that there is an element of evil even in certain charitable organisations. [...] But the evil is there and should be eliminated. And it can be eliminated. Cecil Houses are there as a proof that it can. No person in a Cecil House is ever treated as a thing. (20)

Even as he delivered the lecture, Huxley was undergoing great difficulties in writing *Eyeless in Gaza*, having already spent much more time than his original plan (see Dunaway 7, 23–24). It is thus possible that for this novel, as well as for his vision of anthropology, Huxley drew some kind of inspiration from Ada Chesterton's work.

#### 4. Ada Chesterton's Work of Journalism and Charity

Ada Elizabeth Chesterton (1869–1962) is not a major figure in

Huxley studies and has been rarely mentioned in other aspects of literary research. Following her father's work for the press, Ada Jones started her career as a Fleet Street reporter when she was sixteen years old. By 1900, she was such an established freelance journalist that her future husband's older brother, G. K. Chesterton, recollected her as perhaps "the most brilliant" of the independent journalists working in Fleet Street during the early twentieth century (188). In 1917 she married the journalist Cecil Chesterton (1879-1918), who was enlisted as a private during the Great War and died of nephritis shortly after the armistice. As a foreign correspondent, Ada travelled in Poland, Russia and other countries, publishing *My Russian Venture* (1931), *Young Chinese and New Japan* (1933) and *Salute the Soviet* (1942). Ada was consistently interested in literature, working as the drama critic for *G. K.'s Weekly* and writing novels, plays and biographies including *The Chestertons* (1941).<sup>11</sup>

However, Ada Chesterton made a better-known contribution to the public as the author of *In Darkest London* and as the founder of the Cecil Houses. In February 1925, she spent two weeks on the streets of London to investigate the realities of destitute and homeless women. After reporting her experiences in the *Sunday Express*, she brought them together as a book, *In Darkest London*, causing a sensation, and published two more books on the same line, *Women of the Underground* (1928) and *I Lived in a Slum* (1936). Despite many troubles including prejudice against women, because of her passion, belief and funding that she raised through many events, Chesterton opened in London the first Cecil House, which she named after her late husband. Four more facilities were established by 1934, and when Huxley was invited as a supporter of her project, the committee was planning to rebuild the first house (see Chesterton's talk, "They Come with Their Joys and Their Sorrows" [1935], 24).<sup>12</sup>

Although in preparation for his speech Huxley might have visited the Cecil Houses, it is more probable that he read her famous work, *In Darkest London*. This is an account of the author's "adventures in the underground" (66). Ada Chesterton, using the alias Annie Turner



during her investigation, came to London without money, pretending to look for a job. On the first night, advised by the police, she visited the Salvation Army Shelter, where she slept with destitute women, feeling as if she "had come to a new and undiscovered country" (25). The next day she went to a Labour Exchange to support herself and worked as a charwoman, earning her "first fourpence" by manual labour (49). A similar hand-to-mouth life followed: Chesterton ground out an existence as a day labourer (cleaning steps, washing up in a restaurant, selling matches on the streets, etc.) and mostly managed to sleep in shelters (the LCC-inspected lodging house in Kennedy Court, the Refuge in Union Street, Southwark, the Providence Night Refuge in Crispin Street, etc.) although she also had to spend a night in the streets.<sup>13</sup> In the course of her work, she mixed with many kinds of destitute women — pregnant women, women with children, thieves, prostitutes, etc. Her experience had a tremendous effect on her psychology (see 157, 161). The merits of this account are: Chesterton not only observed but also experienced for herself the way outcasts lived, narrated this vividly and dramatically by exploiting her literary talents, and presented her views on the cause of and measures against difficulties of destitute women.<sup>14</sup>

Through her journey Chesterton learned many realities around homeless women mostly different from disseminated prejudices (see 66). For example, the actual poor are not immoral but rather are "very decent," "fresh, amusing and very friendly," even offering "kindliness" to Chesterton (vii, 33, 76; see 78). They are also patient: "all these poor women seem to accept their lot as though it was the will of God, rather than the inhumanity of man" (200). They even have the virtues that are lacked in "women of ordered and leisured lives" (see 84). Certainly most of them have "[s]mall interest in politics" (67), knowing "nothing of the affairs of the political or the literary world," but this is natural since they cannot afford to see beyond the immediate present: "The avenues of interest open to the well-fed are closed to them, they are haunted always by the spectres, hunger and sleeplessness" (106-07).

So, what is it that drives women to shelters? Whereas "a fixed

idea” blames their personal faults such as “venture, drink, depravity” (147; see 66, 203), Chesterton on the contrary realises that these women are “victims of circumstance,” including economic injustice and gender inequality (76; see 74, 167–68, 178–79). Chesterton goes on to identify the problems of the existing condition. Materially, the number of beds or shelters is conspicuously insufficient, and current facilities have shortcomings, e.g., in terms of sanitation (see especially Chapters 9 and 13). A more serious problem is the mental one: the inhuman attitudes pervading the country towards the poor. In the Church Army, Chesterton was refused entry to the kitchen by the sister in charge because of her “bedraggled clothes,” by which Chesterton realises that destitution “destroys the sense of human dignity” (161–62; see 133). This also reminds her of a “prosperous” man saying one day: “after all they [people in the slums] are dogs — let them live in their kennels!” (162). When asking a question to a policeman, she finds this “superior” person treating her “as if I were a sort of loathsome microbe” (188). On the whole, “the majority of those who hold official positions on public bodies are convinced that the casual is an economic, rather than a human problem,” only regarding the outcast “as a source of national trouble and expense” (155).

In her opinion, what is urgently necessary is to increase the places that provide the homeless with “human treatment” (127). Instead of subjecting them to an “inquisition,” the organisers of shelters should treat them with “good manners and humanity,” trusting in them and imagining their feelings (see 18, 80, 133, 214, 223). This is exactly what the homeless are seeking (see 244). In conclusion, Chesterton decides to “rouse public opinion to the shameful inadequacy of public lodging houses for women” and “enlist sufficient support to start a number of small houses or homes,” namely “human places for destitute and homeless women” (246–47). Indeed, her report prompted some facilities to improve (see 42, 143), and she herself established the Cecil Houses with her faith that human beings are essentially good<sup>15</sup> and where the only one rule is that “no question shall be asked of any girl of woman applying for a bed; it is sufficient that she is homeless and in need of a

shelter" (248–49; see 223–24).<sup>16</sup>

All of these came from what Chesterton learned from her "adventures into the underground." Her life with the destitute in the streets and shelters gave her "a wider and deeper comprehension of the infinite loving-kindness of the human heart" (243) and "a practical recognition of that sisterhood," "a bond of fellowship" (223, 82; see 26). And these senses of humanity and solidarity were also strengthened up to a conviction within her by the kindness and goodwill of strangers who extended a caring hand to her when she was in need of help.

In "The Worth of a Gift" Huxley probably owes much to Chesterton's *In Darkest London* — his description of the characteristics of the poor, his emphasis on the need of treating them as human beings and his idealist vision of human nature. What is more, I would suggest that Huxley received some ideas from Chesterton's writing and charity in developing the images of anthropology and anthropologist in *Eyeless in Gaza*. She was indeed not only a practitioner of domestic anthropology in the sense of her time (albeit in her own way) but also that of what Huxley calls anthropology in *Eyeless in Gaza* — an anthropology based on love for humanity and a belief in the goodness of human nature. It would not be an exaggeration to say that Ada Chesterton herself was one of the models of Huxley's charismatic anthropologist, James Miller.

## 5. Conclusion

In *Eyeless in Gaza*, Huxley assigns key roles to anthropology and the anthropologist. His deep interest in anthropology is not so strange in view of the contemporary contexts of British society and culture, but his idealist image of anthropology cannot be fully reduced to them. As one possible source for this, Ada Chesterton is worthy of consideration. In the sense that Miller practises and Anthony follows in the novel, she was an "anthropologist" who in her journalism and charity never hesitated to do a good deed, trusting in the innate goodness of human nature and treating the socially disadvantaged as being just like herself.

Of course, Chesterton's work of "anthropology" cannot be fully identified with Huxley's idea of "anthropology." There are certainly inconsistencies and differences between them. For instance, Chesterton led a life of the homeless, disguising herself as one of them and making friends with some of them. She was not just an observer and analyst but also an experienter and empathiser, which gave her work actuality, persuasion and public appeal. In contrast, even when considering his tours "Abroad in England," it is still probable that Huxley had a limited knowledge of the destitute and the homeless, remaining in the position of observer and analyst. When he gave an overview of the characteristics of the very poor in "The Worth of a Gift," Huxley was to a certain degree cautious of over-generalisation (see 17-18), but his mention of the poor as "hav[ing] no future" was severely opposed by Mary Borden, a feminist writer who stood on the platform next to him (see 20-22).<sup>17</sup> In terms of unity and solidarity of human beings, Chesterton attaches importance to sisterhood (see 84, 223, 225) in accordance with her consistent concern for gender equality<sup>18</sup> whereas Huxley, particularly in *Eyeless in Gaza*, accentuates the aspect of male bonding inasmuch as he describes the pacifist movement, based on love for humanity, as mainly led by male characters. On the other hand, it may be that by employing the keyword "anthropology" Huxley could systematise, expand and perhaps deepen the thoughts provided fragmentarily by Chesterton.<sup>19</sup>

But why did Huxley use no other word but "anthropology"? Even though his usage was different from the general definition of this word, there must have been something in the anthropology of his time that prompted him to think of it. For example, Ruth Benedict, in *Patterns of Culture* (1934), which Huxley positively reviewed in "Anthropology and Social Reform," refuses evolutionist and West-centrist anthropology, adopting instead a cultural relativist stance following her mentor, Franz Boas: "Anthropology was by definition impossible as long as these distinctions between ourselves and the primitive, ourselves and the barbarian, ourselves and the pagan, held sway over people's mind" (3). Huxley amplified these liberal facets of anthropology to the spheres of personal life and politics while also organising them in philosophical

terms. The author's expectation for anthropology in the future<sup>21</sup> can be seen in Miller's and Anthony's anthropology in which they earnestly work towards world peace in conformity with the idea of unity, seriously telling people that we are "all capable of love for other human beings" beyond "families and clans," "classes and nations" — "*if we choose to*" (185, 493).<sup>22</sup> This may be called critical anthropology or meta-anthropology in that it, using the word anthropology, proposes how anthropology should be as a study and a practice.

The analysis of anthropology and the anthropologist in *Eyeless in Gaza* leads to a reconsideration of Huxley's ideological development in the 1930s, hinting at what he was thinking he should do and should be like in the future. Miller has aspects not only of a mystic, therapist and pacifist like Heard, Alexander and Sheppard but also of a social reformer like Chesterton. There one can see the author's course of action and an ideal image of himself. In hindsight, Huxley could not become a Miller, or to be precise, he did not continue to be a Miller. After committing to the PPU campaign in the mid-1930s which left him unsatisfied, Huxley did not return to the popular movement or other domains of direct action for a political change. Yet that is not to say that Huxley withdrew to an ivory tower for the intelligentsia where Mark is and where Anthony was before his awakening. In fact, throughout his later career Huxley never abandoned idealism or hope for human beings as embodied by Miller's and Chesterton's "anthropology," but rather strove to achieve them by his most potent weapon, the pen. This is eloquently attested to by the large amount of his subsequent work, particularly the pieces in which he encourages people to realise what he brilliantly calls "human potentialities."<sup>23</sup>

#### Notes

- 1 In January 1932, Chesterton asked Huxley to join the council of the Community Theatre, and Huxley replied that he would do so with pleasure (see his letter to Chesterton, 31 January 1932 [Smith 262]).
- 2 In August 1939, Chesterton reported from Moscow for *The Spectator*: "The Soviet has a keen appreciation of foreign writers of all schools and creeds.

The most popular at the moment is Aldous Huxley, not only among authors. He is also appreciated by students and the intelligentsia" ("The Author and the Soviet" [1939], 175).

- 3 For this paragraph, see MacClancy, "Anthropology: 'The Latest Form of Evening Entertainment'" (2003), especially 75–81.
- 4 The necessity of applying anthropology to understand the natives of the British Isles was also mentioned in some volumes of the *To-day and To-morrow* series, which was somewhat familiar to Aldous Huxley. For example, in *It Isn't Done or the Future of Taboo among the British Islanders* (1930), Archibald Lyall envisages British customs in the future, arguing: "Anthropology, like charity, should begin at home a great deal more often than it does" (5).
- 5 See MacClancy 76.
- 6 See Aldous Huxley's letters to Julian, 13 July 1929 and 12 October 1929 (Smith 314, 318); to Norman Douglas, 7 January 1930 (Smith 326); to Kethevan Roberts, 28 November 1930 (Smith 343). For analyses of *Brave New World* from the viewpoint of anthropology, see Meckier, "Brave New World and the Anthropologists: Primitivism in A.F. 632" (1978); Firchow, *The End of Utopia: A Study of Aldous Huxley's Brave New World* (1984), Chapter 3; Higdon, *Wandering into Brave New World* (2013), Chapter 5; Ozawa, "John and Ishi, 'Savage' Visitors to 'Civilization': A Reconsideration of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, Imperialism and Anthropology" (2014).
- 7 In the late 1930s, Huxley visited drug and bicycle factories in Nottingham (see "How to Improve the World" [1936]), as well as a camp for unemployed people in the New Forest (see "The Man without a Job" and "Pioneers of Britain's 'New Deal'" [1936]). His articles on "Alien Englands" may remind one of George Orwell, who also revealed the living and working conditions of labourers in *Down and Out in Paris and London* (1933) and *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937). Even though their writings have several points of similarity, a vital difference would be that unlike Huxley, Orwell based his nonfiction on his experiences of being a vagrant in slums and staying under the same roof with families of the lower classes.
- 8 See e.g., Bedford, Part 6, Chapter 6; Dunaway, Chapter 1; Bradshaw, "The Flight from Gaza: Aldous Huxley's Involvement with the Peace Pledge Union in the Context of His Overall Intellectual Development" (1995); Murray, Chapters 23–24.

- 9 The fourteenth edition of *Britannica* (1929) defines the word academically: "that branch of natural history which deals with human species (from Gr. *anthropos*, man; *logos*, theory). It is thus part of biology, the science of living things in general." In "Anthropology at Home," Huxley himself mentions the conventional image of anthropology: "For the ordinary educated European or American, 'anthropology' is something which superior people practice on inferior ones. A kind of spiritual vivisection of lower animals" (*AHCEIII*, 368). Meanwhile, in *Patterns of Culture*, Ruth Benedict begins her book by remarking: "Anthropology is the study of human beings as creatures of society. It fastens its attention upon those physical characteristics and industrial techniques, those conventions and values, which distinguish one community from all others that belong to a different tradition" (1).
- 10 I examined a copy of the report at Kensington Central Library in July 2015. Huxley's speech is also reprinted in *The Hidden Huxley* (edited by David Bradshaw, 1995 [org. 1994]), 159–65, and *Aldous Huxley Complete Essays, Volume III: 1930–1935* (2000), 414–18.
- 11 For this paragraph, see Knight 346.
- 12 The Cecil Houses still exist and with respect for the founder's will have been organised "to offer inspirational, person-centered care and support to older people, including: frail older people who require personal care or care with nursing / people living with dementia / active older people living in sheltered and extra care housing / people with mental health support needs" (see the website of Central & Cecil Housing Trust, "About Us"). At the end of the Second World War, Chesterton founded the Cecil Residential Club for Working Girls on Small Wages, and in 1953 opened the Cecil Residential Club in Kensington for female pensioners (see Knight 346).
- 13 For a review of Chesterton's comments on each facility she visited, see Jarrett, "In Darkest London: Ada Chesterton on Charitable Provision for Homelessness in 1920s London" (2012).
- 14 Chesterton is sometimes compared with Mary Higgs (1854–1937), a Christian missionary who had a series of several-day wanderings on the streets in different parts of England, and published several books and pamphlets on them. She led a campaign for a new type of working women's lodging houses and turned her house into a lodging house for women to improve the housing condition by herself (see e.g., Rose, Chapter 15).
- 15 On the other hand, Chesterton suggests that the majority of people appear to see human character as bad or at least in principle unreliable: "It may be,

- and has been, argued that to take a strange woman into your house is to court disaster, it being the explicit belief of ninety people out of every hundred that unrecommended humanity is inevitably dishonest" (215).
- 16 In the 1935 edition, Chesterton adds a chapter on her Cecil Houses that appends the aims and objects of the shelters: "(1) To provide suitable premises for Women's Public Lodging Houses. (2) To meet at cost price the acute need of clean beds, bathing and washing accommodation for homeless or vagrant women. (3) To secure, by public appeals, the capital funds necessary for this purpose. [...] (4) To appeal for donations and annual subscriptions for replenishments and extension of activities [...]. (5) The Society has been established solely for the purpose of social service, and in no circumstances will any profit be made. (6) Cecil Houses are entirely non-Sectarian. Women applying for beds will not be called upon to answer any questions whatever" (253).
- 17 Borden comments: "I do not agree that they have no future and that they do not look to the future. I think the very poor are much like ourselves in their hopes and fears." Although destitute women may appear to be "resigned or hopeless," they are in fact just "frightened" and "afraid of starving." Rather, "Mr. Huxley ought to add to the characteristics of the very poor, the quality of great pride and self-respect" (Borden 20-22). On the other hand, Chesterton backs up Huxley's analysis: "It is there [the first Cecil House] that we first started to discover all the things Mr. Huxley has told you about the very poor, and saw for ourselves the amazing generosity and the tact with which that generosity is offered" (Chesterton "They Come," 24).
- 18 Making effective use of a female perspective, Chesterton probes into the causes of the housing shortage and other unfair conditions for women. One of them is discriminatory prejudices prevailing in society such as "the rooted belief that they [homeless women] must be bad lots or they would have a home; if they are not thieves they are prostitutes" (167-68, see also 42-43, 113-22, 178-79, 217). Another problem is misunderstandings held by public officials, which she points out by citing an example: "the London County Council refuses to assume the responsibility of running municipal lodging houses for the female sex on the plea that we [women] are difficult to manage" (224-25). She goes on to criticise female activists for indifference to these "real disabilities which press on woman" (168, see 224-25). According to Jarrett, "[w]hat stands out in her work is an acknowledge-



ment of the possibility to be both a single-mother — or a prostitute, vagrant, or in any number of states that were seen as 'deviant' at the time (and often are today) — and be 'otherwise' of 'good character,' exhibiting positive attributes such as 'honesty,' 'kindness,' and (despite having next to nothing in possessions) 'generosity'" ("Ada Chesterton: 'Slumming It' in 1920s London" [2012]).

- 19 For another point shared by both authors, their use of the words "human" and "humanity" is worth carefully considering because they may sound typical of the words offered by intellectuals of the middle classes. In other words, the (seemingly) egalitarian and emancipatory idea of treating the poor as human beings *like* themselves could be critically reviewed as an evidence of their self-centred or class-centred attitude.
- 20 Huxley was also somewhat familiar with Boas's work. See "Casino and Bourse" (1935), *AHCEIII*, 419.
- 21 Huxley mentions the anthropology of his time, including Benedict's: "Anthropology is a new science, and the knowledge of human behaviour accumulated by it up to the present is only sufficient to deprive us of the certainty of ignorance. It will be a long time before it gives us the certainty of complex knowledge" (123).
- 22 Meanwhile, Miller's teaching people in Chiapas to play football as an alternative to the convention of killing each other — a similar argument can be seen in "Anthropology at Home" — may appear to be an example of moral imperialism made by Western civilisation (especially the Western idea of human rights) and thus to be problematic in the light of cultural relativism. His choice of football may not be just incidental; as is often pointed out, football was connected with British imperialism inasmuch as this was widely used to enlighten or Westernise the colonised overseas by teaching them respect for the rules or other sorts of morals. However, Miller's practice of anthropology is not so much Eurocentrism as elitism in general in that he tries to impose his ideals such as nonviolence upon all human beings equally rather than forcing European values upon non-Europeans.
- 23 In "Human Potentialities" (1961) Huxley writes: "Ancient and modern, the two babies are indistinguishable. Each of them contains all the potentialities of the particular breed of human being to which he or she happens to belong. But the adults into whom the babies will grow are profoundly dissimilar; and they are dissimilar because in one of them very few, and in the other a good many, of the baby's inborn potentialities have been

actualized" (417). Huxley then discusses the ways of actualising these potentialities. For an analysis of his vision of "human potentialities," see e.g., Nugel, "Aldous Huxley's Plea for Desirable Human Potentialities: Some Unknown Late Comments (1961-63)" (2012).

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(おざわ・ひさし 商学部専任講師)