

*CANADIAN CULTURE AND LITERATURE
AND A TAIWAN PERSPECTIVE*

Edited by
Steven TÖTÖSY de ZEPETNEK and Yiu-nam LEUNG

Research Institute for Comparative Literature
University of Alberta
and
Department of Foreign Languages and Literature
National Tsing Hua University

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1998

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First published 1998

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Published by the

Research Institute for Comparative Literature
University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6G 2E1
and

Department of Foreign Languages and Literature
National Tsing Hua University, Hsinchu, Taiwan

Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data

Main entry under title: Canadian Culture and Literature. Includes bibliographical references. Selected Proceedings of a conference held in Taipei and Hsinchu, Taiwan, April 1997.

ISBN 0-921490-10-0

1. Canada — Study and teaching (Higher) — Taiwan — Congresses.
2. Canada — Civilization — Congresses. 3. Canadian literature — History and criticism — Congresses. I. Tötösy de Zepetnek, Steven, 1950-. II. Leung, Yiu-nam, 1951-. III. University of Alberta, Research Institute for Comparative Literature, Volume 9.

FC10.C298 1998
F1021.C323 1998

971'.0071'151249

C98-910073-1

Distribution

Research Institute for Comparative Literature
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6G 2E6

Price

Individual: US\$ 30.00 + 2.00 handling and mailing
Institutional: US\$ 40.00 + 2.00 handling and mailing

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Acknowledgements

The articles in this volume are selected papers presented at *The 1997 Taiwan International Conference on Canadian Studies* — held in April 1997 in Taipei and Hsinchu — on the theme of "Canadian Culture and Multiculturalism: The Importance of Multicultural Social and Cultural Discourse." The Conference was organized by the University of Alberta Research Institute for Comparative Literature and the National Tsing Hua University Department of Foreign Languages and Literature.

We would like to thank for the financial support received for the organization and hosting of the Conference from the following: The Canadian Trade Office in Taipei, the Taiwan National Science Council, the Taiwan Ministry of Education, the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (Ottawa), the National Tsing Hua University Department of Foreign Languages and Literature, the University of Alberta Research Institute for Comparative Literature, as well as private sponsors Ms. Daisy Chang, Ms. Jessie Hua, Ms. Chiang-chih Yu, Mr. Peter Chang-chuan Chen, Mr. Shand-dad Liaw, and Mr. Sheng Chang, all of Canada and Taiwan.

The publication of the present volume was funded by the Canadian Trade Office in Taipei, the International Council for Canadian Studies, The Taiwan Ministry of Education, The Taiwan National Science Council, and Dr. Earle Waugh, Acting Chair of the University of Alberta Department of Comparative Literature, Religion, and Film/Media Studies. We would like to thank for the generous support that made the publication of a volume on Canadian culture and literature in three languages — in English, French, and Mandarin — possible.

Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek and Yiu-nam Leung

WRITING

朱小燕 (DAISY CHANG)

陷阱 (*Trap*)

黃昏時分,夕陽早已被灰黑濃密的雲層遮蓋了,一艘來自遠方,顯得疲憊不堪的貨輪,正穿越潮濕的空氣,駛入了溫哥華獅門大橋下暗藍色的海灣。

「希望之點」就在離橋不遠的史坦尼公園山頂上,深秋的霧氣已逐漸開始聚集,附近那家餐館裡早已亮起了燈火,白日的喧鬧聲也逐漸沉靜了下來,停車場上還只剩下最後三部車輛,遊客們都已在夜幕深垂之前紛紛離去了。

一位手提公事包,頭戴寬邊呢帽,穿深藍色風衣,蓄著稀疏鬍鬚的矮小男子自餐館裡出來,正往停車坪的方向邁去,卻一眼看到了魏宏達,就立刻止住了腳步,然後改變方向,緩慢地朝他走來,還逕自靠著他在木椅上坐下,瞄了他半晌才操著廣東國語問:「人都快走光了,不打算回家?」

魏宏達詫異地望了望他,心想,又一個老中,今天在這裡等了一天,來來往往的人群,百分之六十的人不是說國語便是廣東話,怪不得剛來加拿大時,就聽人預測,不出公元兩千年,一半以上溫哥華的人口都將是炎皇子孫哩!

他伸手至夾克口袋裡,掏出一支香煙點燃,吸了一口,眯著眼,臉上的紋路全向鼻眼集中,像捏緊了皮的肉包子似的,然後嘸起乾裂

的嘴唇，噴出一縷嫵媯的白煙來回答：「我在等人...一位好朋友。」

那人略帶揶揄地笑著問：「天快黑了，你朋友還會來嗎？」

魏宏達眼睛望著地面，雖然沒用手去觸摸，卻知道濕氣很重，那草皮和地上的小石子像上了層油似的，在微弱的路燈下發出滴溜溜的亮光來。等了整整一下午，連丁偉成的影子都沒見著，他還會來嗎？魏宏達自己也在心中敲著悶鼓，但在這陌生人面前，可不能不給自己留點面子，男人嘛，這點尊嚴是少不了的，於是就擺出一付信心十足的樣子回答：「會來的。」

那人好心地提醒他：「或許人家忘了，或許爽約了，為什麼不去打個電話？」

「他會來的，我們是最要好的朋友，我知道他。」

但他沒對陌生人說，自己知道的是以前的丁偉成，現在人家已是一家中型石油上市公司的總裁了，環境非常好，住在高級地區的華屋裡，出門有司機駕車，到遠處開會，還有自己的專用噴射機，渡起假來，天南地北，哪個好玩的地方沒去過？那樣美味沒嚐過？或許早已忘了以前兩人共吃一個便當的事也不定，但若還記得，他一定會來的。

想起分便當他吃，魏宏達就好笑，當年的丁偉成萬萬沒料到會有今天的風光吧？！連美月這麼講求名利的人都看走了眼，不然起初怎會下嫁給他？還不都為了魏家比丁家有實力？走錯了一步，弄得天下大亂，都是她不知道「小時候胖，不算胖」這句話的結果。

那個年頭，國民政府剛從大陸撤退到台灣來的情形，魏宏達可是一點一滴都沒忘懷過，或許這與他每天都在回想從前，多少有些關係。

小學五年級時，與他同坐一張桌子的丁偉成當班長，還記得級任導師為了安排坐位的事，特地對他說，你已經留了一次級，總不能再留第二次吧!?坐在班長旁邊，多多學習，有問題可以向他請教，你知道「近朱者赤，近墨者黑」這句話嗎?不知道的話，大概你也聽過孟母三遷的故事吧!?我這個安排，就是同樣的道理。

誰都知道，能當班長的，都是些品學兼優的學生，這點丁偉成也不例外。

雖然當了班長，但那時的他卻長得不怎麼，又高又瘦，活像根晾衣服的竹竿似的，加上一臉菜色，而那身制服，像是他媽用來裹腳的腳布似的，把他整個人給綁得好緊，至於那褲管，永遠都只向小腿肚看齊，下面便成了媽媽不疼，舅舅不愛，沒人憐沒人要的一截，一年四季，光溜溜的露在外面，任他日晒雨淋沒個遮攔，那付沾滿了灰泥的德性，哪有他日後的半分瀟灑?

美月從小便是個鬼靈精，當然不會將丁偉成看在眼裡啦!那時，她可是老釘著他魏宏達打轉哩!十歲生日那天，還偷偷邀他去她家吃長壽麵。她的功課跟他一樣，也不怎麼，有次數學小考，兩人的成績不分軒輊，一個十五分，一個二十分，便一同被老師叫去辦公室聽訓詞，至今想來，他還覺得怪窩囊的。

那時老師數落起他來，總是老套，為什麼不樣樣都跟丁偉成學呀?人家這好，那好，沒一樣不好，相反的，就數他魏宏達沒一樣好，千篇一律，尤其當著美月的面，叫他太不能作人了，要不他絕不會故意臭丁偉成，說他的鼻子也好，還可以當個聞香隊的隊員哩!難道我還得學他那狗鼻子不成?

老師生氣了，學生居然敢頂撞師長？真是造反啦！老師突然把桌子「啪」地一拍，嚇他一跳，問，你知不知道什麼叫尊師重道呀？什麼狗鼻子不狗鼻子？非得給我說個仔細不可，不然今天可饒不了你。

當年的老師多有尊嚴啊！被這一吆喝，他給嚇得眼睛都紅了，便雞蛋裡撿骨頭地說，丁偉成每天都眼睛睜得老大地看人吃飯，鼻翼還一扇一扇地聞人家的菜香，而且直嚥口水，好討厭！說著他還斜瞄了美月一眼，她正低下頭去，摀住嘴在偷偷的笑哩！

半年後，沒料到狗鼻子真的出事了。那天丁偉成患腮腺炎初癒，中午蒸得熱騰騰的便當才給抬回教室，魏宏達就發現自己的便當不見了，便急忙跑去報告老師。平日老師似乎不怎麼了得，但那次找便當，才顯出他的神通廣大來，真沒想到他的本領竟與福爾摩斯不相上下，只一刻功夫，居然在一棵大樹下把丁偉成給找到了，只可惜遲了一步，盒中的蛋炒飯和紅燒蹄子早已給吃了個精光。

連自己都面帶菜色的老師，雖然偏心丁偉成，還是叫他去罰站，又打他手心問，不是跟你說過，別人吃東西時連看都不要看嗎？怎麼會這麼沒志氣，去偷吃同學便當呢？

丁偉成低著頭，小聲地解釋說，我想吃蛋炒飯想了好久，他家菜裡油汪汪的，吃光了的便當，剩下的油珠還能在盒裡打滾...

美月長得相貌平平，圓圓的臉龐，白淨的皮膚，單眼皮，笑起來眼睛眯成一條細縫，不美卻十分討喜。

那天放學，美月就拖住來接她的母親，瞄著丁偉成指指點點，還摀著嘴吃吃地笑，然後又在她母親耳邊咕嚕了幾句，她母親就走過來，輕聲問魏宏達餓不餓？要不要一起去她家吃碗餛飩？

不用說，他當然去了，明知家中除了廚子和阿巴桑外，也不會有別人的，父親一定是在店裡忙著做生意，母親一定又在那家搓麻將，哥哥姐姐一定都還在外面玩著沒回家哩！他一人回去幹嘛？

後來，魏宏達認為這是他步入她撒下的天羅地網中的開始。

* * *

天色更暗了，陌生人卻似乎沒有離去的意思，他把放在腿上的公事包拿下，往地上一擱，不打自招地說自己是個職業相命師，問兩人要不要打個賭，輸了的請喝酒，依他看，魏宏達那朋友一定不會來了，還問：「你介不介意我在這裡陪著你等，看我說得對不對？」

魏宏達聳聳肩，坐直了身體，簡單地搖了搖頭算是回答。

那人高興地伸出手來，往他肩上一拍：「那好，現在麻煩你幫我看著公事包，我先去買兩杯咖啡來。」

魏宏達心想，老中到了國外，連民族性都會改變，這陌生人就是個例子，居然這麼愛管閒事，難道連老祖宗教的「休管他人瓦上霜」的古訓都忘了嗎？魏宏達還暗自冷笑，嘿，嘿，你休想打聽我老魏的隱私，有些話怎麼也不可能對你說呀！就像那天便當被人吃了，回家後我還能隻字不提哩！

這點當然也是因為丁偉成平時夠意思啦！他每天都把功課借他抄，而且從不恥笑他，更不難為他，何況放了學，兩人不是一起打球，就是一起跳到小河裡去游泳，要不就一起去公園裡盪鞦韆，這鐵一般的友誼還比不過一個便當？因此回家後他可是隻字不提，以免又為母親多添了一個在牌桌上閒談的資料。

還記得有次母親在家打牌，胡了一個清一色，開心得咯咯直笑，聲音又脆又亮，洗牌時還提著女高音的嗓門說，有個女大學生，嫌台灣窮，為了出國，經人介紹嫁了一位藍眼珠、高鼻子的老外，起先還沾沾自喜哩！去了外國後才發現人家是個擦鞋匠，這女孩就吵死吵活地哭著要上吊，嘻嘻，……活該！

魏宏達最不忍心的，就是每天看著丁偉成偷偷嚥口水的樣子。有一天中午，他故意假裝生氣，自言自語似的埋怨家中的廚子說，便當裡裝那麼多飯菜幹什麼？存心撐死我不成？菜裡還放那麼多油，膩死人啦！便轉過臉去問丁偉成，能不能幫個忙？

那以後，他倆除了每天分享一個便當外，還互相分享內心最深處、最不足為外人道的一些秘密。這鐵一般的友誼，並沒有因為兩人後來就讀不同的學校而改變。

有個夏天，知鳥在鬍鬚拖在地上的老榕樹上叫著，他們在新公園裡盪完了鞦韆，躺在草地上看天上多變的白雲浮過時，丁偉成忽然告訴了他一個秘密。

他說，昨天放學回家，家裡多了一隻大白鵝，昂著頸子，在屋裡闊步，原來是他媽上街時，看到一群鵝在眷村外的小巷裡蹣跚，便撿了一隻最肥的，趁人不備時往家趕。

這麼多年以後，魏宏達每一想起這事還覺得好笑，幸好那時街上車輛不多，要是換為現在，丁媽媽就會無計可施了，當年雞呀鵝的，滿街亂跑，當時連自行車都少，家禽與行人在街頭巷口平分秋色是常見的事。

丁偉成還說，也虧了他媽，鵝在前，她在後，走了大半條巷子，竟真給趕回家來，當然這也得感謝他家就住在進眷村的門口，要不趕這麼大隻鵝，萬一被抓到了，今後還能作人嗎？所以他老爸一下班

回家,他媽就催他快將鵝宰了,以免被鵝主人聽到叫聲趕來。那天他一家人總算打了一次鴨雞。

美月那時一點都不喜歡丁偉成,想必是因為丁家太不夠看了,有次陪他去丁家抄功課,在那眷村宿舍裡,她就一直嚷著要轉移陣地,上魏家去抄。

她喜歡去魏家是有道理的,魏家住的一棟寬敞的日式花園洋房。說那屋寬敞,可不過分,別說他們自家人了,即使是司機也都有自己的睡房,而且裡面盡是全新的榻榻米和漆得發亮的地板,隔間用的紙門,色澤花式新穎美麗,此外,後院裡除了有假山水,池子裡還養了小蝌蚪。

相形之下,丁家就差多了。在他家抄功課時,美月不斷地哇哇亂叫,一會說看到了蜈蚣,一會說看到了蝎子。他們一家七口,只配到兩間小房,屋裡堆得密密麻麻的,大的一間由祖母、偉成和他兩個姐姐及一個妹妹同住,小的一間是他父母的。

他祖母的單人床是靠著一邊牆壁擺著的,另兩面牆擺他兄弟們的上下舖,中央站著一張四方木桌,每邊各有一條長板凳,他一家人吃飯、寫信、計賬都在那裡,抄起功課來,當然也得扒在那飯桌上了。

美月吵著要轉移陣地還有個理由,那是因為她不喜歡大老遠地跑去用公廁,只得將就用丁偉成父母房裡的馬桶。正巧那天剛下過雨,連門外的蚯蚓也爬了進來,而地上的黃泥巴地還會往外冒水,變得非常潮濕,滑不溜溜的,走起路來,像踩在冰上一樣,美月從馬桶上起來,沒走兩步,一不當心就跌了個人仰馬翻,氣得哭起來,立刻發誓再不上丁家門了。

* * *

陌生人買了咖啡回來，遞了一杯給他，魏宏達心想，閑著也是閑著，既然他說自己會相命，何不趁機考他一考？若是相得靈，今後的去從，便請他指點迷津，不然只當他說著玩的，也無傷大雅，就問：「你相命是怎麼個相法？拆字？摸骨？還是純看相？」

那人不正面回答，卻仔細端詳了他一會才說：「相命一定得收錢，多寡不拘，這是行規，大家都是中國人，你想算的話，只給十塊錢就行了。」

魏宏達拿出一隻邊緣已磨得泛白的棕色皮夾，自裡面取出了兩張五元的鈔票給他。

那人將錢收下，啜了一口咖啡問：「你想先聽好的，還是壞的？」

他想了想，答：「壞的。」

那人胸有成竹地說：「你臉色晦暗，額頭泛黑，不得意還另加一肚子氣。你是剛自監獄裡出來的吧？」

魏宏達不置可否，暗下不禁嚇了一跳，這人是看相的，還是被人派來作特務的？怎麼連他刑滿出獄都知道？難道這些年來，連自己的相貌都改變了，讓人一看就知道是個有前科的人？

那人見他沒有反駁，便得意地又說：「好的方面，是你現在就快苦盡甘來啦！」

魏宏達冷笑了一聲，只差沒對那人講，這呀！你就錯了，我在監獄裡渡過了十五個寒暑，家已毀了，財產早就因生意失敗而付諸東流了，一個五十出頭的人，你想再能上那裡去找工作？還談什麼苦盡

甘來?若說這一生有過甜蜜的日子,應當是我那一去不返的青春歲月呀!

美月一開始發育,魏宏達就了解到什麼叫「女大十八變」了。她的一雙眼睛變得比溪澗還清澈,皮膚也變得光滑柔嫩,她那伸在小圓領外的頸子,就像一截雪白新鮮的嫩藕,她的唇角是往上提著的,而唇內的白牙,每一粒都像是可愛的珍珠一般。

魏宏達常懊惱自己的意志力太薄弱,要不就不會大學剛畢業,便迫不及待地將美月娶了過來,新婚夜真的是十分美好,她的身體滾燙而顫抖,她的紅唇柔潤而清甜,她狂熱地在找尋,好像嬰兒在母親的懷抱裡急待吸吮那樣。是這樣的渴望,使他們盡情歡樂。

跟著的五百多個服兵役的日子,便在思念與嚮往中渡過了,美月那時像春天的鳥兒一樣快樂,她常夢囈般地編織一些故事,並要他指著天和地起誓,說她是他的唯一,今生今世的唯一。

這才是他一生最甜蜜的時光。

服完兵役後,丁偉成為辦理去美國大學繼續深造,特地來請他幫忙。他說,那美國政府規定的兩千四百美元生活保證金,是他老爸二十年的薪支總和哩!縱使一家人光吃空氣,光喝井水,也存不了這麼多錢呀!

丁偉成出國前三週的一個黃昏,魏宏達拿了他向父母週轉來的留美保證金及機票錢,為他送去時,只見丁家的木門虛掩著,屋裡靜悄悄的,一時他還以為這家人都出去了哩!正要打道回府,卻聽到了美月自屋裡傳來的笑聲。

屋外是慵懶的夕陽,魏宏達躡手躡腳地推門進去,發現美月和丁偉成在小房間裡,她正在解開粉紅色洋裝上的一排鈕扣,又鬆去

了胸罩，一雙雪白的乳鴿便跳了出來，接著她又將裙擺掀起，坐到丁偉成的腿上來，再引導他的手，自她美麗潔白的頸項往下滑落。

魏宏達心知肚明，他生命中的甜蜜自那時便一去不返了，還以為美月是他的哩！還以為美月發過誓再也不上丁家門哩！事後，他也不知道自己是怎樣活過來的。

丁偉成在房裡看到了他，急忙推開美月，三腳兩步地衝了出來，硬拖著他往外走，並一再解釋，說他絕不會搶走美月，這種不仁不義的事，他是不可能做的，是美月找上門來，他只怪自己不是個柳下惠，若是魏宏達要揍他、罵他，他都不會反對，但千萬別教這事壞了交情，他倆是鐵哥們啊！

這次的事，他還以為自己真的原諒了丁偉成。

在獄中，他常想，「薑是老的辣」這話一點不假，怎麼見得？單看他日後自導自演的那齣戲就知道了，那可真與這次大不相同。這次他的心被搗碎了，而多少年後，當他拿著水果刀，刺入了美月的心臟時，他卻沒有絲毫悲傷的感覺。還能鎮靜地把自己扮成一個受害人的樣子，企圖將蓄意謀殺變成臨時起意的過失殺人，以求減刑。

那天回家，魏宏達才知道女人的心腸好狠。他都還來不及向美月興師問罪，美月竟毫無歉意，先發制人地開始數落起他來。

她說他沒出息，住父母的、吃父母的，連零用錢都花父母的，哪像丁偉成能憑自己的本領出國？她還用以前老師對他說話的口吻，直著嗓門問，怎麼你就不能學學丁偉成？水往低，人往高，我可是個想要力爭上游的人啊！台灣這鬼地方，住都住膩了，我想要出國，你看著辦吧！假使辦不成，還不如離婚，還我自由的好！

美月變了，變得像一座冰封了千年的女神，堅持拒絕他的愛撫，他束手無策地眼看著驕橫爬上了美月美麗的臉龐，她經常輕蔑地提醒他，說他是個沒出息的男人。

他一直還是沒有出國的念頭，直到有天美月竟挑釁到他母親頭上，魏宏達才知道不出國是不行的了。

清晨起來，美月穿著單薄的洋裝，沒戴胸罩，一對飽滿的乳房清晰地衣衫下顫動著，而她婀娜的腰肢還像陽柳般隨著她的步履在扭擺，完全沒將公婆放在眼中。

母親鐵青著臉，昂聲問兒子，你上哪裡找來的這麼個騷貨？

美月一聽，就罵了回去，妳要不騷，怎麼會生孩子？

他母親立刻將端在手中的茶杯往美月砸過去，卻被她閃過了，杯子砸到牆上，砸成了許多碎片。

當美月避過了茶杯，神色稍定，便突然衝過來，舉起拳頭，對準他這作丈夫的便沒頭沒腦地捶打下去，直打到精疲力盡，才被她婆婆拖了開來，還一邊咒罵說，這叫上樑不正下樑歪，妳打人家的女兒，我就打妳的兒子。

魏宏達覺得美月發起狠來像頭山貓似的兇惡，就是從那時開始的。

母親脾氣也大，於是，兩個女人扭成一團，又展開了一場惡狠狠的撕殺，雙方將平日壘集在心中對對方的不滿，都一骨腦地在這時傾倒了出來。

為了平息家庭戰爭，魏宏達不情不願地帶著美月移民來到了人生地不熟的加拿大。

這些年來，他日夜苦思，是不是每一個人生命中的福份，都像盛在杯中的水一樣呢？是不是年輕時把福氣用光了，到老就什麼都沒了呢？倒是一些少年時吃盡苦頭的人，老了卻還有滿杯的福氣，大概中國人講的，風水輪流轉就是這個道理吧！

魏宏達自己也承認不是塊作生意的料，要不從家裡帶來的錢不會很快給賠了個精光的，美月很久不肯與他同房了，更別提為他懷孩子，老說他的品種不佳，她要為她的孩子挑選一個有出息的父親，這話讓他非常生氣。

終於有一天，他寫信給事業正蒸蒸日上，卻還遲遲未婚的丁偉成，邀他來加拿大，說有事請他幫忙。待他來了，美月就跟在他身邊團團轉，魏宏達看在眼裡，覺得自己破碎了的心，正在一片一片地死去。

當美月的面，他對丁偉成說，她只肯和品種特佳的人作愛哩！丁偉成還得意洋洋地吹虛說，我的品種保證優良。魏宏達回答，咱們哥倆有鐵樣的交情，這樣的安排應當也是可以的。

魏宏達認為自己變得這麼詭詐，美月得負全責。那天晚上，他故意早早地響起了鼾聲，讓人以為他睡熟了，事實上，他卻是不動聲色地在悄然等待，一直等待到午夜，時機成熟了，才採取行動。

那把德國製的水果刀是朋友送給他和美月的結婚禮物，他拿了刀，躡手躡足地起身，走入丁偉成留宿的房間裡，出其不意地開了燈，只見美月全裸地自丁偉成懷裡坐起身來，他便一個箭步衝過去，趁丁偉成都還沒來得及制止時，就將刀插進了她的心窩，鮮血流滿了一床。

魏宏達還記得丁偉成驚嚇的表情，而他卻萬分冷靜，他聽到自己的聲音在說，不要教美月破壞了我哥倆的交情，然後再用手搔亂髮絲，又歇斯迪里地打電話去警局哭號著自首，說因抓到了妻子與人做愛，情緒失控，一時失手將她殺了。

後來在庭上，魏宏達簡直不敢相信丁偉成會如此恩將仇報，竟堅稱他是預謀殺人而非臨時起意，並說，他邀他來他家作客，是佈下一個供他脫罪的陷阱，由他自編自導地使妻子與人做愛，卻利用這理由將她殺了。

就是這番話，才使他依第一級謀殺被定罪，幸好加拿大沒死刑，要不大概連命都沒啦！

出獄前，捎了封信給丁偉成，約他來這「希望之點」相會，信中，他特別提到，不要教美月壞了他哥倆的情誼。

* * *

陌生人喝完了咖啡，又請魏宏達看著他的公事包，自己再回到餐館去買三明治，但直到天已全黑，他都沒再出來。

他看了看錶，快八點了，丁偉成一定不會來了，在監獄裡的這些日子，他從未來探過監，憑什麼會來赴約呢？於是魏宏達提著那人的公事包去餐館找他，卻不見他的人影，倒是一位年輕的侍應生過來，問：「你是魏先生？」

才點頭，侍應生就遞了封信過來，說是一位客人留交給他的。

那信這樣寫著：

「鐵哥：恭喜你重獲自由，很抱歉我沒能親自來見你，卻將助理派來。

在你受刑期間，我總是反省，當初我這處理情與義的態度，是對還是錯？以前的事，我雖已原諒了你，卻無法原諒我自己，我真的是羞見故人，假設有一天，當我對往事已不復記憶時，我相信我會再來見你的。

公事包中，有一份購買房屋的契約，產業已註冊在你名下，是我送給你的禮物，另有一筆銀行存款，也是開在你的名下，你好重頭來過。以後每月，我會按時匯錢去你戶頭中，使你今後不用再為生活發愁。

請千萬不要拒絕我的一番心意，想到當初與你共吃一個便當的日子，想到你資助我出國，想到你為了我的証詞而失去了一大段人生，這樣的作法，也只能算是綿盡寸心而已。

偉成」

Taipei and Edmonton

YAN LI

The Maple City Chinese Women's Club,

[Excerpt from a forthcoming novel]

...

What? The Chinese Women's Club? No, I am not going there! I have been there twice and that's enough! It's not that I am an arrogant person. I just think it's meaningless. Do you understand what I mean? I believe in God and follow God's wish only. But look at those women! They get together eating and drinking, and afterwards compare each other's husbands to see whose man has a more decent job and makes more money, whose house is larger, whose car is more expensive and so on. Aren't they silly? Think what God said....

Mrs. Wong's harsh criticism on the Women's Club came as a big surprise for Duckweed. Why? Mrs. Rice is also a Christian, but she has a totally positive opinion about the club!.... But on a second thought, Duckweed made up her mind. What's the matter whether these women are following God's wish or not? I need friends in this strange new world, don't I? And I'll go anyway.

Duckweed met Mrs. Rice through the Chinese Christian Church in Maple City, after escalating domestic conflicts forced her to leave home. Mrs. Rice was a well-to-do immigrant from Taiwan. There was an extra bedroom in her large house. After learning about Duckweed's awkward situation, Mrs. Rice patted her heavy breasts and announced with a heroic tone in her voice. Rescuing a person equals to extinguishing a fire! Move into my house right now! Don't worry! Everything is free for you there!

Duckweed felt uneasy to accept the offer of free room and board. There was no other way to show her gratitude except trying to do as much housework as possible and Mrs. Rice was all happy to cooperate with her in accomplishing her wish. Knowing that Duckweed was good in cooking, Mrs. Rice eagerly let her prepare three meals a day for the family, with day-to-day different menus to stimulate everyone's appetite. We all have got to eat nicely, Mrs. Rice warned Duckweed. You know, as a woman entering her mid years, lack of proper nutrition might accelerate her seniority in a faster pace than you can even imagine! Do you envy my skin? It's flawlessly smooth and fair, isn't it? There is no secret but to eat nicely!

Canadian Culture and Literature. And a Taiwan Perspective

Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek and Yiu-nam Leung, eds.

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1998 ISBN 0-921490-10-0

Twice or three times a week, Mrs. Rice would entertain her best friends at home. At the dinner table in front of all her guests, she would praise Duckweed's excellent cooking skills repeatedly with exaggerated facial expressions and exclamation marks. Don't you think Duckweed could have shamed the chef in Toronto's five star hotel to death? Duckweed was so encouraged by the high evaluations that she made even more effort, squeezing her brain harder, to produce more enchanting menus for the hostess' endless dinner invitations. So, Mrs. Rice laughed from ear to ear when she learnt that Duckweed could also make sweet dumplings, a traditional food made of glutinous rice flour with sweet stuffing, usually consumed in the Lantern Festival on the 15th of the first lunar month of each year. An excellent idea struck her mind and she suggested, why not make some dumplings as gifts?

Duckweed wondered if it was necessary to send sweet dumplings as gifts; it was fall now, not the right season. But she was not the type to ask why, particularly when she needed to remind herself that the room and board was all free. In the following days, hundreds of sweet dumplings rolled from her flexible fingers. The various stuffings smelt with a pleasant aroma: red bean paste, lotus seed paste, chocolate, minced dates, and fine nuts. Fifty in one pack, all neatly wrapped. Mrs. Rice counted the packs and murmured happily: This one will be sent to my elder daughter's piano teacher, this one is for my son's math tutor, that one is for my younger daughter's swim instructor, and these few will be delivered to the church minister and the Sunday school volunteers, and the rest will find their way in the houses of Mrs. Chen, Mrs. Ma, Mrs. Lee, and Mrs. Wang.... Well, what a good idea! In this way I will be able to pay less fee to the children's instructors, the debts of gratitude I owe to the ladies will thus be returned and, besides, I am contributing to God's work as well! Do you think I am smart, Duckweed?

But Duckweed eventually became dismayed after she had lived day after day like this. What's the significance of coming to Canada, if I have to be dressed up in a white apron and dance with a wok in hand around the stove from sunrise to sunset? Think about the life I used to have in Nanjing, where Jap hired a young peasant girl to handle all the housework and I was never expected to lay my fingers on any sort of chores. But look at me now! My tender fair hands have become rough and dark like barks of an old pine. All the elegant silk dresses and high-heel shoes brought for parties and balls are now ignored at the bottom of my chest and never have a chance to see the light! Ah, how stupid I am, abandoning all the joyfulness in China and crossing the ocean to travel so far, simply to become a maid in a strange land! No wonder Jap always says that I am a typical woman, with long hair but short intelligence, a creature born to be bullied upon.... Indeed, Mrs. Rice claims that she is helping me, but who knows who is helping whom?

With all those bitter thoughts brewing in her mind, Duckweed was nothing unlike a brand new immigrant from China. She had been here too short a while

to learn the frankness of the Canadians. As a Chinese, all she could do was to conceal her sorrow and disappointment, and continue to put a smile in her face and nod her head all the time.

Another subject Duckweed found hard to appreciate was Mrs. Rice's tongue, flexible but also tough, just as the soya sauce roasted ox tendon dish Mrs. Rice enjoyed eating so much. Mrs. Rice had been an honour student in a theological institute in Taiwan when young and spreading the Gospel to the heathen naturally became a part of her life. But some of her actions looked incredibly ridiculous and even stupid to Duckweed. At breakfast time, all the family members would sit straight up in their seats around the table, listening to the hostess' pray, before they picked up their chopsticks.

Duckweed understood she was in Rome, and smartly imitated the Romans, with her fingers crossed in front and chin withdrawn. But from the corner of her eyes she secretly observed her hostess. With her eyes half open, Mrs. Rice uttered her wishes: My Lord, thank you for giving us such a rich breakfast to enable us to work and study with plenty of energy! My Lord, my son is going to have a test today, please remove all the obstacles and all the difficult questions in the test for him! My Lord, my younger daughter has caught a cold this morning, with a little bit fever and not feeling very well. Please relieve her from her pain and let her to be healthy and alert as usual! My Lord, my older daughter has been impatient with her piano lessons recently and wants to quit. Please cool her mind, give her wisdom and keep her in strong interest! My Lord, Duckweed has got up early in the morning to make this delicious food for all of us. Let's be grateful for her work! My Lord, Duckweed does not know any English. Please help her! My Lord

While listening to all these detailed demands, Duckweed could not help but to wonder: if she is going to ask for favours and express thanks one by one like this, when are we going to start our meal? The soya bean milk in the bowls and the steamed buns are all becoming cold. What's wrong with Mrs. Rice, to ask favours from that lord for such trivial matters? She acts as if there were really such a lord over there in the sky, but who knows where it is? Didn't the Internationale say that "there is never any lord, nor can we depend on God or emperors. It is ourselves who should be relied upon to create happiness for mankind." Didn't she ever hear of this? Well, on the other hand, to be more open-minded and suppose there is indeed such a lord in existence, I bet he — or is it a she? — would be tangled up with all these demands if everybody else bothered him the same way she does!

Duckweed's silent speech didn't escape Mrs. Rice's sharp eyes, she was a mind reader. She immediately added up new contents into her endless prays: My Lord, Duckweed's eyes has been blinded by Satan and can not see the mighty force of the Lord. Please throw light on her and allow her to see you! My Lord, it makes my heart ache to see Duckweed and all her family members suffering

in the horrible hell! Please rescue them out and show them the way to the Heaven! Amen.

Mrs. Rice was fully confident of her eloquence with god. She had the triumphant record of converting a young couple from mainland China a few years ago. The couple was well-educated and held decent positions in China. Having both acquired their Master's degrees in journalism, they worked as news editors at Radio Beijing until they came to Canada as refugees. It was for an Easter holiday's evening that they became Mrs. Rice's guests and happened to see a movie on television about Jesus. Brought up in the doctrines of Marxism, Leninism, and Mao's Thought, soaked from head to toe with the bloody theory of class struggle, the young couple was moved to tears when, for the first time in their life, they saw this nice man by the name of Jesus dying on the cross while still forgiving his enemies! Never before had this form of unprecedented love twinkled in their world full of roaring hatred and waving fists! Mrs. Rice's sermon fell in at the right moment and the couple accepted God's kingdom without hesitation. In a short time, they chose to be baptized and became pious Christians. They decided to abandon all their secular pursuits and went instead to study theology in Vancouver in the fall, fully determined to devote the rest of their lives to their newly-discovered Ism-God for all mankind!

Mrs. Rice always boasted this as one of her numerous contributions to her god. She believed her effort would affect Duckweed, too, since she was also from mainland China, that loveless communist world. Duckweed had heard this story often. What fools, she thought and sneered secretly in her heart. I would never be that stupid as the two bookworms, so easily fooled and crazily driven by that truly worthless and vacant "ism"! Yes, I have only finished grade nine and I am not as highly educated as the two so called intellectuals. But remember! The Late Chairman Mao made the wise announcement a long time ago that schools cultivated nothing but stupid bourgeois heirs, and that workers and peasants were far smarter than those school-educated people!

Whatever was in Duckweed's mind, Mrs. Rice insisted on her own holy work in a dogged effort. Beside the routine prays before meals three times daily, she would, after her three children had gone to school, stand or sit around Duckweed while she was working and describe to her horrible scenes in hell, the disastrous moment when the end of the earth would come and thus the urgent necessity of becoming a Christian at once. "The fire, big, red burning flames, would destroy everything in the world. People, animals, trees, and all constructions, everything turns into ashes in choking black smoke. And only we Christians, under the blessing of God, will follow our Lord to rise into the sky, amidst beautiful music and live forever in paradise. Forever! Do you catch it? That means we will never die! Aren't you afraid of death?" Mrs. Rice waved her fleshy arms in the air and talked excitedly.

"When would the end of world come?" Duckweed asked suspiciously. Mrs. Rice's vivid description sounded as if she had seen it. "Oh, pretty soon! It will

arrive in notime! Some people in our church have calculated that. It will be around the year of 2014. So you see, there isn't much time left for you. Don't let yourself regret when it becomes too late!" "But, if you already know that everything is going to be destroyed in an unavoidable fire" — Duckweed turned up her pupils and hesitated, but finally decided to speak out her question — "then, why was it necessary for you to buy such a large and expensive house? Wouldn't it be a pity for this beautiful home to be burnt to ashes in a few years' time?" She asked, a slight smile appearing in the corner of her lips. What she didn't speak out was: Who are you trying to fool? Do you treat me as a three year old? What a pity that the Bible, like Buddhist and Taoist faiths, might be a good scripture as well, but is ruined by this bad monk's poor interpretation.

But nothing escaped Mrs. Rice's small but focused eyes. "Don't you believe it? Look! Without the blessing of our Lord, disasters will fall on your head sooner or later! I warn you, you'd better be careful. One day you may cut your hand off, Pah, like this, while cutting vegetables!" Mrs. Rice suddenly hit hard at Duckweed's wrist with the edge of her palm, and stared at her with protruding eyeballs like a dead fish.

Calluses grew in Duckweed's ears with Mrs. Rice's constant gospel entrances. But Duckweed was indeed annoyed today at the hostess' curses and the abrupt hit onto her wrist. She almost spilt out the rice in the pot she was washing.

That night after she had fallen asleep, Duckweed dreamt about a pool of blood on the cutting board and woke up with her heart pounding and bouncing in her chest. Her wrist watch by the pillow showed two o'clock in the morning and the night sky was dark and tranquil. What time is it in China now? Early in the afternoon. What would be Jap doing at this moment?.... Her dream now blurred away and Jap's vigorous laughter, her husband's vexed face, her son's angry screams, and the blazing laser lights in Karaoke bars all mixed up and stuffed her mind. She could no longer return to sleep but kept lying in bed with her eyes wide open until the furniture in the room became visible in the early dawn light.

Two days later, a lady guest of Mrs. Rice told Duckweed about an English language program sponsored by the Canadian government for new immigrants. It's free. You don't need to pay any tuition fees, she assured her. Duckweed's eyes widened and she already made up her mind: it's definitely more practical and worthwhile of my time to learn English than the Bible in this new land. She asked the woman to help her with registration. And so every morning after washing the breakfast dishes Duckweed walked to the downtown school to her class. But Mrs. Rice found this changed situation hard to tolerate. She needed a listener by her side all day long. Her knowledge and skill gained from the theology institute should never be left idle, God knows that too well! Besides, she had become used to talking all the time, but it would be senseless to talk to

the wall like some psycho!

One morning after breakfast when Duckweed took her schoolbag and walked towards the door, Mrs. Rice reached out her arm and stopped her. "You don't need to go to school!" She announced firmly. "Why?" Duckweed stood by the door and asked in confusion, her large black eyes clouded with questions. "All you want is learning English, isn't it?" Mrs. Rice asked but without waiting for a reply, she continued. "All right then. It's not necessary to walk so far every day. You can stay at home and learn with me. I am good in English, too!"

Duckweed wondered if Mrs. Rice's English might not be as good as that of the Canadian teachers' in the school. But she didn't want to hurt Mrs. Rice's pride by pointing out that rudely. OK! She put down her bag and decided to satisfy Mrs. Rice's self-esteem. Mrs.

Rice sat side-by-side with her at the dinning-room table and taught her how to read "How are you," "Thank you," "Good morning," and "Good night." Fifteen minutes went by and Mrs. Rice's enthusiasm waned. Isn't it boring, to repeat and repeat those simple phrases that should be taught to daycare kids only! "Well, let's take a break now! My throat is dry." Mrs. Rice put down the textbook, leaned back in her chair and yawned wide.

Duckweed quickly rose from her chair and went to make some tea for her tired teacher. "I know, you are not patient to listen to the Bible at your present stage." Mrs. Rice sipped at her jasmine tea and started talking again. "Let's change our topic today. I'll tell you about my success story now."

You are but a housewife staying at home all year round. What's to be boasted about? Duckweed asked silently. But she had to show interest in this topic, as Mrs. Rice displayed great eagerness to share her secret. She needed a rest and I'd better relax as well, to wait for her next English lesson.

Mrs. Rice was so indulged in her personal lecture, stuffed with so many details, that a few hours passed and she had only covered her success history from her birth till she was thirteen and had her first menstruation. Oh, dear! Mrs. Rice looked at the clock on the wall and cried out loud. It's already 12 o'clock! No wonder my stomach is making noises! Well, we must end our class here today to make lunch. I am hungry now! Duckweed, turn on your brain machine now and think about what we should eat for lunch! Don't let me eat the same thing as usual. Give your hard-working teacher a surprise! Come on!

The following day passed exactly in the same procedure. But since Mrs. Rice's memoirs proceeded to the sexual awakening of a teenage girl, her history of struggles became exceptionally detailed and she told her tale not by the years but day-by-day. When she had finally reached the age of twenty it was time to eat again! Mrs. Rice must have been so much excited by her own story that after lunch she dragged Duckweed back to the table to continue her account of the golden years.

On the third day, Mrs. Rice's recalling approached the glorious climate, where under the blessing of her Lord, she had defeated all her rivals and

eventually won the man who led her down the aisle of the church! Duckweed, having waited anxiously and pretending to be fully involved all the time, now saw the light of a conclusion for this boring history and promptly caught the chance to throw out her expectation. "You are really smart, Mrs. Rice. Your success story has well proved that!"

"No hurry! I am not finished yet! There are more things you need to learn about!" Mrs. Rice stated seriously. "The wedding is just the beginning. Taming your husband requires more talents! Do you know how to control your husband's heart? No? Fine! Now let me tell you how. But this is my patented experience. It's so valuable and I seldom release it to anybody unless she is my closest friend. You understand how much I love you, don't you? That explains why I am willing to do you a favour...."

Has my husband ever dared to say "No" to my face? Never! I have long ago tamed him into a faithful dog who will only look at my eyes and follow my instructions. He is well-educated and a good-looking man. He has been working for the Taiwan government for many years and he has a good income. If it was not for the better education and future of our children, I wouldn't immigrate to Canada with our three children and leave my husband alone in Taiwan! Do you think I would be so foolish as to put this big fish to feed so many greedy cats around him? Aha, I certainly have a way to remote-control him! I convinced him to purchase a new car and large properties in Taiwan and Canada and thus put heavy debts on top of him. In this way, he has to worry his head and busy his body every day and night to make money in all possible ways to pay the debts. How can he ever spare any single moment in dating other women? He would never be in that sort of mood! Do you think I am smart? I tell you, Duckweed, you are too far away from smart and there is so much you need to learn from me. You are now skilful with your hands only. You can do many things, I admit. But whatever you do is nothing but serving other people. As for me, though my hands can not compare with yours, but my brain functions much better and so I can make others working for me! Haven't you ever heard about Confucius' saying, that those who work with their brains rule and those who work with their brawn are ruled!

Duckweed was speechless. She blinked her long eyelashes and felt puzzled, about this new turn of Mrs. Rice's story. And all of a sudden, Mrs. Rice sensed that she had made an unwise comment when she was too carried away telling about her success. Her mind whirled fast and threw out a new topic which effectively led away Duckweed's thoughts in time.

Sexual life between a couple is no less important a means in taming the husband, she now continued. What I have been practicing in our sex life is never to allow him regular three meals a day. I keep him empty stomached and make his appetite strong. When he is so hungry that he can't stand it any more, I throw a piece of meat at him. In this way, he would rush over and enjoy his food,

whatever it is, so much and also feel grateful to you for letting him eat. Yes, I am a heavy-bodied woman, but because I am clever I never have to do any exercise like so many Canadian women are doing to keep themselves attractive. Now you see? ... Well, what about you? Tell me something about your sex life. How long do you make love with your husband at one time? Do you have orgasm each time? Oh yes, by the way, did you still have sex after your husband discovered your affair? No? Oh.... Then, how was your situation when you were with Jap in China? I guess he must be a lot better than your husband? Oh, come on! There is nothing to be embarrassed about! Why can not tell me? You see, I am not going to be able to help you efficiently unless you give me a clear and complete picture. Sex is important throughout one's life. My parents-in-law are in their eighty's and they still enjoy their sexual life. Guess what did I send as birthday gift to my mother-in-law last year? Vaginal lucrative oil! Haaaaaa.... She is old and too dry. It wouldn't be very comfortable any more doing it for her, you know! ...

Waterloo, Ontario

FRED WAH

POEMS

KORA'D

cement to the source
dances over the top of the forms
looking for the chemistry, clouds
covert at the spring
creek pipe a little rusty
within the back eddy all possibility
lake a Newfoundland of roots
cellar one log
cellar two rock
cellar three concrete
cellar four ties
walls get up plumb
the clear track through to the peppermint tea
this pour had the hum of a plane overhead
dreamt a good mix five or six to two
not always back to the body and its neck
la cort de zone
not just the cable of thought
would hold as one might a bird

LOKI SNIFFS THE '97 FLOODS

body waterlogged
subterranean dream
turns into a piling

all sky and osprey
mist hackles for ears
paws not on but in

24 / Fred Wah

the sand. Celebrate
each calm lake
but welcome storms

the highest line
of driftwood
in twenty-nine years

SPRING AND ALL

spring and all
before it fall
greeny dream
with lakeside scene
blackened wood
from southern sun
cabin's stood
another one

RAILING

The words geese zone in above these deck railings I've just levelled, hover
along the parallel absolute of the opposite shore.

The pilings come out of the lake bed at my blurry eyes older yet sure of the
osprey, the nest.

Goodbye water says moving, even waves.

Honks.

MUSIC AT THE HEART OF THINKING ONE TWO ONE

Looks like the Angel got through. Wrapped.
Swaddled. In between the rock and the river.

Seen speaking as having been given mere fact.
Mirroring on the wall, *not me*, begründen.

Watch who'd turned us round, turning and stopping
forever taking leaves from the bottom of the tree.

Spectacle of Mrs. Erickson's totem. Private parts.
Thread round desire like a crack through the cup.

Stare, stare nothing there. Camp. Earth. House.
Poof! said the beak. Not a ripple. By a hair.

MUSIC AT THE HEART OF THINKING ONE TWO TWO

these are the
nameless "times"
bound together
listen to them
but shut up,
say nothing
in their name(s)
such asynchrony
storm and broken
simple thinking
repeat simple
boughs to break
open to find yet
another religion
if that is what
lies ahead is this
the place what if
it does or doesn't
dying means you
are dead already
hold that

MUSIC AT THE HEART OF THINKING ONE TWO THREE

"Is the cosmic thus the temptation to melt into the fiction of the universe, and thereby become indifferent to the tormenting vicissitudes of the near at hand (the neighboring)?" (Blanchot, *Disaster*, 75)

Is a bell wood?
That is the theory!

The rip that erases the target a rose?

MUSIC AT THE HEART OF THINKING ONE TWO FOUR

With my thee I
give living (my life) marked
these lips chalk
sorry, not ivy
lapse nothing more
of myself but you
you're not the first
a little give and take
promise?

PROSE

VANCOUVER B.C. 1963¹

In the Diamond, at the end of a long green vinyl aisle between booths of chrome, Naugahyde, and Formica, are two large swinging wooden doors, each with a round hatch of face-sized window. Those kitchen doors can be kicked with such a slap they're heard all the way up to the soda fountain. On the other side of the doors, hardly audible to the customers, echoes a jargon of curses, jokes and cryptic orders. Stack a hots! Half a dozen fry! Hot beef san! Fingers and tongues all over the place jibe and swear You mucka high! Thloong you! And outside, running through and around the town, the creeks flow down to the lake with, maybe, a spring thaw. And the prairie sun over the mountains to the east, over my family's shoulders. The journal journey tilts tight-fisted through the gutter of the book, avoiding a place to start or end. Maps don't have beginnings, just edges. Some frayed and hazy margin of possibility, absence, gap. Shouts in the kitchen. Fish an! Side a fries! Over easy! On brown! I pick up an order and turn, back through the doors, whap! My foot registers more than its own imprint, starts to read the stain of memory.

Thus: a kind of heterocellular recovery reverberates through the busy body, from the foot against that kitchen door on up the leg into the torso and hands, eyes thinking straight ahead, looking through doors and languages, skin recalling its own reconnaissance, cooked into the steamy food, replayed in the folds of elsewhere, always far away, tunneling through the centre of the earth, mouth

¹ Part of this text was previously published in *Diamond Grill* (Edmonton: NeWest Press, 1996).

saying can't forget, mouth saying what I want to know can feed me, what I don't can bleed me.

* * *

Mixed Grill is an entrée at the Diamond and, as in most Chinese-Canadian restaurants in western Canada, is your typical improvised imitation of Empire cuisine. No kippers or kidney for the Chinese cafe cooks, though. They know the authentic mixed grill alright. It is part of their colonial cook's training, learning to properly serve the superior race in Hong Kong and Victoria, mostly as chefs in private, elite clubs and homes. But, as the original lamb chop, split lamb kidney, and pork sausage edges its way onto every small town cafe menu, its ruddy countenance has mutated into something quick and dirty, not grilled at all, but fried.

Shu composes his mixed grill on top of the stove. He throws on a veal chop, a rib-eye, a couple of pork sausages, bacon, and maybe a little piece of liver or a few breaded sweetbreads if he has those left over from the special. While the meat's sizzling he adds a handful of sliced mushrooms and a few slices of tomato to sauté alongside. He shovels it all, including the browned grease, onto the large oblong platters used only for this dish and steak dinners, wraps the bacon around the sausages, nudges on a scoop of mashed potatoes, a ladle of mixed steamed (actually canned and boiled) vegetables, a stick of celery, and sometimes a couple of flowered radishes. As he lifts the finished dish onto the pickup counter he wraps the corner of his apron around his thumb and wipes the edge of the platter clean, pushes a button that rings a small chime out front, and shouts loudly into the din of the kitchen, whether there's anyone there or not, *mixee grill!*

* * *

Vancouver, B.C. 1963: Hello, is this the U.S. consulate? I'm calling about getting a visa. I'm going to Albuquerque as a graduate student this fall but I understand that in order to work in the States I need a work visa, not just a student visa.

That's right. What's your name, please?

Wah. Double U, Ay, Aych. Fred Wah.

Is that a Chinese name?

Yes it is. Why?

I'm afraid you'll have to apply under the Asian quota, sir, and there's a backup of several-years' on the Asian list.

But I'm a Canadian.

I'm afraid that doesn't matter. If you're of Chinese origin, even if you're born

in Canada, you still have to go under the Asian quota.

Well that's ridiculous. Could I come down and talk to the Consul General about this?

By all means, but he's a busy....

I'll be right down.

(race along Spanish Banks, down Fourth, turn left, Burrard to Granville)

And what can I do for you, sir?

My name's Fred Wah. I talked with the receptionist on the phone this morning about getting a visa. She told me that, even though I'm Canadian, because my racial origin is Chinese, I'll have to apply under the Asian quota.

But you don't look Chinese.

That's because I'm more Swedish. I'm only quarter Chinese.

Well, that makes all the difference then. If you're less than fifty percent you can enter the U.S. as a Canadian. Just ask the girl out front for the forms, it shouldn't take more than a few days.

You had me fooled there.

* * *

Yet languageless. Mouth always a gauze, words locked behind tongue, stopped in and out, what's she saying, what's she want, why's she mad, this woman-silence stuck, struck, stopped there and back, English and Chinese churning ocean, her languages caught in that loving angry rip tide of children and coercive tradition and authority. Yet.

Grampa Wah's marriage to Florence Trimble was a surprise to most of the other Chinamen in the cafes around southern Saskatchewan, but not to his wife back in China. Kwan Chung-keong had come to Canada in 1892, returned to his small village in Hoiping County in 1900, and stayed just long enough to marry a girl from his village and father two daughters and a son. When he returned to Canada in 1904 he had to leave his family behind because the head tax had just been raised to five hundred dollars (two years' Canadian wages). He realized he'd never be able to get his family over here so, against the grain for Chinamen, he married a white woman (Scots-Irish from Trafalgar, Ontario), the cashier in his cafe. They had three boys and four girls and he never went back to China again.

I don't know how Grampa Wah talked her into it (maybe he didn't) but somehow Florence had to let two of her children be sent off to China as recompense in some patriarchal deal her husband had with his Chinese wife.

Fred, four, and his older sister Ethel, nine, were suddenly one day in July 1916 taken to the train station in Swift Current their train and boat tickets and identities pinned to their coats in an envelope. My grandfather had intended to send number one son but when departure day arrived uncle Buster went into

hiding. Grampa grabbed the next male in line, Fred, and, because he was so young, Ethel as well, to look after him. He had the word of the conductor that they would be delivered safely to the boat in Vancouver and from there the connections all the way to Canton had been arranged. Fred, Kwan Foo-lee, and Ethel, Kwan An-wa, spent the next eighteen years, before returning to Canada, being raised by their Chinese step-mother alongside two half-sisters and a half-brother.

Yet, in the face of this patrimonial horse-trading it was the women who turned it around for my father and aunty Ethel. Back in Canada my grandmother, a deeply religious lady, applied years of Salvation Army morality to her heathen husband to bring her children home. But he was a gambler and, despite his wife's sadness and Christian outrage, he kept gambling away the money that she would put aside for the kids' return passage.

Meanwhile, the remittance money being sent from Canada to the Chinese wife started to dwindle when the depression hit. She felt the pinch of supporting these two half-ghosts and, besides, she reasoned with my grandfather, young Foo lee was getting dangerously attracted to the opium crowd. As a small landholder she sold some land to help buy his way back to Canada.

Aunty Ethel's situation was different. She was forced to wait while, back in Canada, Fred arranged a marriage for her with a Chinaman in Moose Jaw. She didn't get back to Canada until a year later, 1935.

Yet the oceans of women migrant-tongued words in a double-bind of bossy love and wary double-talk forced to ride the waves of rebellion and obedience through a silence that shutters numb the traffic between eye and mouth and slaps across the face of family, yet these women forced to spit, out of bound-up feet and torsoed hips made-up yarns and foreign scripts unlucky colours zippered lips yet, to spit, when possible, in the face of the father the son the holy ticket safety-pinned to his lapel the pileup of twisted curtains intimate ink pious pages partial pronouns translated letters shore-to-shore Pacific jetsam pretending love forgotten history braided gender half-breed loneliness naive voices degraded miscourse racist myths talking gods fact and fiction remembered faces different brothers sisters misery tucked margins whisper zero crisscross noisy mothers absent fathers high muckamuck husbands competing wives bilingual I's their unheard sighs, their yet still-floating lives.

* * *

Famous Chinese Restaurant is the name of a small, strip-mall Chinese cafe a friend of mine eats at once in a while. We laugh at the innocent pretentiousness of the name, *Famous*.

But then I think of the pride with which my father names *The Diamond Grill*. For him, the name is neither innocent nor pretentious. *The Diamond*, he proudly

regales the banquet at the grand opening, is the most modern, up-to-date restaurant in the interior of B.C. The angled design of the booths matches the angles of a diamond and the diamond itself stands for good luck. We hope this new restaurant will bring good luck for all our families and for this town. Eat! Drink! Have a good time!

Almost everything in Chinese stands for good luck, it seems. You're not supposed to use words that might bring bad luck. Aunty Ethel was very upset when we chose a white casket for my father's funeral. She said, that no good! White mean death, bad luck!

So I understand something of the dynamics of naming and desire when I think of the names of some Chinese cafes in my family's history. The big one, of course, is *The Elite*, which we, with no disrespect for the Queen's English, always pronounced the eee-light. In fact, everyone in town pronounced it that way. My dad worked in an *Elite* in Swift Current and that's what he named his cafe in Trail when we moved out to B.C. *Elite* was a fairly common Chinese cafe name in the early 50's, but not any more. I see one still on Edmonton Trail in Calgary and I know of one in Revelstoke. I like the resonant undertone in the word *elite*: the privilege to choose. In the face of being denied the right to vote up until 1949, I smile a little at the recognition by the Chinese that choice is, indeed, a privilege.

Other names also play on the margins of fantasy and longing. Grampa Wah owned *The Regal* in Swift Current and just around the corner were *The Venice* and *The Paris*. Just as Chiang escaped to Taiwan my father got into *The New Star* in Nelson.

During the 50's and 60's, coincidental with the rise of Canadian nationalism, we find small-town cafes with names like *The Canadian*, *Canada Chinese Take-Out*, and, in respect of Hockey Night in Canada, *The All Star*. Along the border: *American-Canadian Cafe* and *The Ambassador*. One might read more recent trends such as *Bamboo Terrace*, *Heaven's Gate*, *Pearl Seafood Restaurant*, and *The Mandarin* as indicative of both the recognized exoticization in orientalism as well as, possibly, a slight turn, a deference, pride and longing for the homeland.

Perhaps we might regard more concretely what resonates for us when we walk into places like *White Dove Cafe and Hotel* in Mossbank Saskatchewan or the even-now famous *Disappearing Moon Cafe*, 50 East Pender Street, Vancouver B.C.

* * *

I'm just a baby, maybe six months (.5%) old. One of my aunts is holding me on her knee. Sitting on the ground in front of us are her two daughters, 50% Scottish. Another aunt, the one who grew up in China with my father, sits on

the step with her first two children around her. They are 75% Chinese. There is another little 75% girl cousin, the daughter of another 50% aunt who married a 100% full-blooded Chinaman (full-blooded, from China even). At the back of the black-and-white photograph is my oldest boy cousin; he's 25% Chinese. His mother married a Scot from North Battleford and his sisters married Italians from Trail. So there, spread out on the stoop of a house in Swift Current, Saskatchewan, we have our own little western Canadian multicultural stock exchange.

We all grew up together, in Swift Current, Calgary, Trail, Nelson and Vancouver (27% of John A's nation) and only get together now every three years (33%) for a family reunion, to which between 70% and 80% of us show up. Out of fifteen cousins only one (6.6%) married a 100% pure Chinese. The return on these racialized investments has produced colourful dividends and yielded an annual growth rate that now parallels blue-chip stocks like Kodak and Fuji, though current global market forces indicate that such stocks, by their volatile nature, will be highly speculative and risky. Unexpected developments (like Immigration Acts) could knock estimates for a loop. Always take future projections with either a grain of salt or better still a dash of soy.

* * *

The name is all I've had to work through.

What I usually get at a counter is the anticipatory pause after I spell out H. Is that it? Double U AY AYCH? I thought it might be *Waugh*. What kind of name is that, *Wah*? Chinese I say. I'm part Chinese. And she says, boy you could sure fool me. You don't look Chinese at all.

Some of my New England friends pronounce it *Fred War*. One of my teachers in graduate school, a poet from Massachusetts, liked to play around with that phonetic pun in our mythology class. He'd say, during the Vietnam war in the sixties, *Wah*, you should go to War! We should nuke those chinks! That's when I decided I'd never be an American *We*.

I had to book a plane ticket over the phone in Montreal and when I went to pick it up I noticed they'd made it out in the name of *Fred Roy*. The flight attendant even asked if I was related to the Canadiens goal tender, Patrick Roy.

An Okanagan poet sometimes addresses envelopes to me with a comic strip cutout of some kid yelling a big cloud *WAH!*

Another Canadian poet, whose books are always alphabetized close to mine at the bottom of the bookshelf, has a line that goes So. So. So. Ah to have a name like *Wah*.

And the junk mail addressed to *Fred Wan*, *Fred Way*, *Fred Wash*, *Fred Wag*, *Fred Wan*, *Fred What* is always a semiotic treat. The one that really stopped me in my tracks, though, was the Christmas card from a tailor in Hong Kong addressed to *Fred Was*.

SOCIETY and CULTURE

DESMOND MORTON

Toward a History of Immigration in Canada: Labour Relations and Multiculturalism

Labour and Immigration Now and Yesterday

Canadians in 1997 are worried about immigration. Just under half the population believes that immigrants take jobs from established Canadians: the percentage rises among those with limited education. A series of polls show that half of all Canadians think that their country accepts too many immigrants; only ten per cent think there are too few (Kaihla 38-39). These attitudes should not be surprising at a time when one Canadian worker in ten is looking for work and half as many have abandoned the search in despair. A specific study of 110 industries found that in 52 of them immigrants had displaced established residents. Moreover, in these tougher times, immigrants claim Employment Insurance and welfare at about the same rate as Canadian-born workers (Kaihla 39).

One might expect that such profound and defensible concerns would be expressed by the organizations that, under law and industrial-relations practice, represent Canadian workers. References to "Labour" in the media almost always refer to Canada's unions and such central organizations as the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC; in the absence of better evidence in the period covered in this paper, the same — unfortunate — shorthand will apply here). Yet, in practice, the Congress and its affiliates, like other liberal and left-wing Canadians, generally treat criticism of immigration as ill-concealed racism. Unions urge locals to advance newcomers to leadership positions and face criticism if they move too slowly (see, for example, Laxer 25 and *passim*). Immigration is one of several issues which separate leaders from an increasingly conservative rank and file.

It was not always so. For the first eighty years of Confederation, Canada's labour movement was the loudest and most consistent voice of opposition to large-scale immigration and the most open national proponent of the racist features of immigration policy, the poll-tax on Chinese and the ultimate total ban on Asian immigrants. The purpose of this paper is to explore organized labour's views on immigration and why they changed.

Canadian Culture and Literature. And a Taiwan Perspective

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1998 ISBN 0-921490-10-0

Early Unions and Immigration

While Eugene A. Forsey identified the first Canadian unions on the docks of Halifax and Saint John in the first decades of the nineteenth century, organized labour emerged as a contributor to national policy debates only with the Nine Hour movement in central Ontario in the early 1870s. The first attempt to give labour a national voice, the Canadian Labour Union (CLU), met intermittently in the mid-1870s until it dissolved in the face of hard times. Like its successors, the CLU had no doubt that importation of cheap labour was a major contributor to its hard times. At its founding meeting on 23 September 1873, a committee on "Imported and Cheap Labour" denounced contractors who signed up foreign workers at less than prevailing wages. As hard times enveloped the labour market in 1875, the Toronto Trades Assembly sought to communicate the folly of emigrating to Canada to its British brothers.¹ Labour's sole elected representative in the Ontario Legislature, Daniel O'Donoghue, dutifully pledged to "do all in his power to stop unnecessary immigration" (Forsey 116). If O'Donoghue's commitment seemed guarded, remember that he and most of the unionists who had approached him were, themselves, immigrants to Canada. Proud of their status as respectable craftsmen in their new country, unionists could hardly pull up the drawbridge they or their parents had crossed. At the same time, they resented schemes, public or private, to assist immigrants, even when the avowed aim was to enlarge the farming population as a market for workers' products. From the outset, as Senator Forsey noted, immigration divided workers and their leaders: "One group thought of the immigrant, especially the assisted immigrant, as a competitor likely to underbid the Canadian workers. The other thought of him as an impoverished, unfortunate, perhaps oppressed, even persecuted, human being who deserved a chance in a new, free, rich, developing country" (Forsey qtd. in Wismer 123).

In the CLU, the former view prevailed. It was costing forty cents per Canadian "to bring labour from the old country to compete with those here." Most of the subsidies stayed in the pockets of agents. Immigration was legitimate only when immigrants paid their own way. However, the critics did not go unanswered. Thomas McDuff, from the Toronto Bricklayers and Masons, found his colleagues "most selfish" and insisted that "[T]here were many worthy people in the old country who could not afford to pay their passage out" (Wismer 123). As the depression of the 1870s deepened, there were few who echoed McDuff. By 1875, CLU delegates regretted that they had not pressed for a complete ban on any aid for immigration. In 1877, when the CLU met for the last time, Alfred

1 See the *Proceedings* of the Toronto Trades Assembly, 15 September 1875 (Forsey 111). Toronto unionists were furious at the perfunctory treatment of their concerns by the British unionists and their organ, the *Bee-Hive*.

Jury, Toronto's "radical tailor," insisted that immigration be left to "supply and demand." William Ternent, whose paper was the basis of discussion, declared that "Those immigrants unfit for the country should be encouraged to go home" (see Forsey 131).

In 1883, buoyed by economic recovery, Canadian unionists made a second attempt to form a national body, the Trades and Labour Congress (TLC). At the 1883 meeting, clearing a labour market "already more than amply provided for by the surplus of working population" formed a central theme. The arguments were familiar: Britain and other countries were dumping their paupers on Canada and "people in the old country ... made a fat living out of the immigration system" (Forsey 437). Three years later, when the surging energy of the Knights of Labour invigorated Canadian unionism, the TLC convention finally became an annual fixture, and an equally regular opportunity to denounce immigration. The 1886 resolution laid out the themes that would persist for a generation:

Resolved that the continued and systematic expenditure of large sums of public money in assisting and encouraging to this country paupers, indigents and orphans from abroad is a gross injustice to the people of Canada, and particularly to the working classes; therefore be it resolved that it is the imperative duty of the government to peremptorily abolish the existing immigration system; and that due care should be exercised in preventing the introduction of such classes into Canada, whether they be sent under the authority of the Imperial Government or through any other channel. (Logan 67)

In the 1890s depression, TLC conventions shrunk in size but grew in venom as the competition for jobs and income grew fiercer. Contracting labour was denounced as an assault on Canadian wage rates and TLC cap-in-hand sessions with the federal government almost invariably included an appeal for protection from "alien labour." The wish was finally granted in 1898, but only in retaliation for a new American Alien Labour Law banning the importation of foreign workers (Logan 67). On the other hand the Liberal government, elected in 1896, brought fresh energy to expanding Canada's population, particularly on the prairies. The policy, driven by Laurier's Minister of the Interior, Clifford Sifton, favoured farmers, not "labouring men and mechanics," but if employers had needs, they could be sure of a better hearing than labour's representatives (see Canada *House of Commons Debates*, 1897, 4071; also Avery, Chapter 1).

In 1895, Canadian unionists denounced William Booth's proposal to create a 100,000-acre settlement for English slum-dwellers under Salvation Army control. The TLC alleged that Booth's colony "of so-called reformed criminals, sinners, and others" would be established "under such conditions and regulations as would preclude any person in the so-called colony from ever becoming the owner or occupier of any part of said colony." This would establish "to a most unjustifiable extent, a tacit union of State and Church, an iniquitous condition not to be tolerated in Canada" (Forsey 437).

Labour and Race

From 1872 to 1914, Canadian labour's position was consistent and, given its view of the labour market, understandable. In 1900, the TLC repeated that it had not "the slightest objection to suitable immigrants who come of their own accord" but it was unfair to be taxed to subsidize competitors in its own market. At Victoria in 1906, the Congress insisted that Canada needed an influx of people "of the right quality" (Logan 486). That meant, of course, that unionists believed that there were immigrants of the wrong quality. Until the turn of the century, the overwhelming majority of immigrants to Canada arrived from the British Isles. The TLC had protested against English paupers and, as Sifton's policies drew more settlers from central and eastern Europe, the Congress raised the alarm. "Of late," TLC president John Flett warned in 1904, "an inferior class of immigrants are arriving from continental Europe; they do not assimilate, are very slow to adopt our methods, herding together on the communal plan" (*Proceedings of the Trades and Labour Congress* 12). Two years later, the Congress urged: "the exclusion of certain nationalities and classes of people who, whether by temperament, non-assimilative qualifications, habits, customs or want of any permanent good which their coming brings to us, are not a desirable acquisition to our citizenship" (Logan 486).

The TLC made no secret about whom it meant: the resolution named Chinese, Hindu and all other Asiatic peoples as unwelcome. Nor could there be much surprise. Since the 1880s, white workers in British Columbia had fought single-mindedly against Asian immigration. To communities that generally feared being swamped in an Asian influx, unionists insisted that high wages and a compulsory nine-hour day would remove any incentive to import competitors who worked incredible hours for tiny wages. Employers might have agreed. Chinese proved themselves building the Rocky Mountain divisions of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Instead of returning to China, as some contractors had promised, the Chinese were sought by other Pacific Coast employers as dependable, hard-working and cheap. The Dunsmuirs, partners with the Royal Navy in developing Vancouver Island's coal miners, turned to the Chinese as a substitute for high-cost and strike-prone Scottish and American miners, but white workers faced competition from Chinese, Japanese and Sikh workers in industries that ranged from cigar-making to lumbering. "Sheer prejudice undoubtedly played a part in all this," Forsey acknowledged, "but so did the unmistakable fact that the real threat to British Columbia workers' standard of living came from the Orientals, who were willing to accept meagre wages and poor working conditions at which even European pauper immigrants would have turned up their noses" (Forsey 421).

Vancouver and Victoria Trades and Labour Councils used any argument in their struggle to mobilize middle-class allies: "thousands of young men on the

coast, who are wrecks physically and mentally, can lay their ruin to the Chinese, who taught them the terrible habit of opium smoking" (Logan 68). Lengthy anti-Chinese diatribes from the Vancouver Council fill the TLC proceedings when British Columbians could not afford to attend: Chinese, they insisted in 1892, were "nothing better than filthy harbingers of disease. Morality have they none. Christianity they cannot conceive of except as a huge joke." They adulterated food with "drugs almost unknown to white men, thus placing the female members of household at their disposal and unscrupulous will..." "But enough," the letter concluded after three pages, "it is impossible to do the subject justice without wearying you" (Forsey 431). It was not so far from the views of the otherwise tolerant Rev. J.S. Woodsworth in his 1909 book, *Strangers Within Our Gates*, though his strictures were extended to Japanese and "Hindus" as well: "The Orientals cannot be assimilated. Whether it is in the best interests of Canada to allow them to enter in large number is a most important question, not only for the people of British Columbia, but for all Canadians.² The hope of allies drove unions into politics. In 1900, Ralph Smith of the Nanaimo miners, and two colleagues, held the balance of power in 1900: their reward was a set of coal mine regulations that prohibited the employment of Chinese. When that was ruled *ultra vires* by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, the province forbade a miner's certificate to anyone who could not read and explain the Coal Mines Regulation Act (see Forsey 480). As British Columbia's most frequent voice at TLC conventions in the 1890s, Smith had no difficulty raising Asian immigration as a priority for Canada's national trade union movement (Forsey 364-65). In 1898, when the TLC presented its Platform of Principles for the inspection of the American Federation of Labor, "total exclusion of the Chinese" was enshrined as Item 9 (Forsey 399). Smith was re-elected as a TLC vice-president, and won the Congress presidency in 1900, the same year that Vancouver elected him as its Liberal and Labour M.P. (Forsey 365). Efforts by the province to curtail Asian immigration failed in the courts and, by disallowance, in Ottawa because authority rested with the federal government. Pressured by British Columbia voters, Ottawa imposed a \$50 head tax on Chinese immigrants in 1885, and raised it to \$100 in 1900 on the eve of a general election.³ After a Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration in 1902,

- 2 Woodsworth's defenders, embarrassed by the piece, recall that the description of life among the Chinese was contributed by the Rev. J.C. Speer, but Woodsworth put his name on the book. His views evolved, dramatically, and the party he founded in 1932, the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, suffered at the hands of the Liberals for his insistence on extending the franchise to all Canadians of Asian origin.
- 3 The Chinese Immigration Act passed as 48-49 Vic. c.71 in 1885-86, exempting diplomats, students, "men of science" and merchants and their immediate families (but not "any huckster, pedler (*sic*) or person engaged in the taking, drying or otherwise procuring shell or other fish...." Chinese women who had married other nationalities took their husband's ethnicity.

the Laurier government raised the fee to \$500, far more than a skilled Canadian tradesman could hope to earn in a year.⁴

It took another twenty years, four of them while China was ally to the British Empire in the Great War, before Canadian labour achieved its goal of total exclusion for the Chinese.⁵ While the Japanese, through the "Gentleman's Agreement" secured by W.L. Mackenzie King as deputy-minister of labour, continued to permit 150 immigrants to enter Canada from Japan; after October 1923, only visiting merchants, diplomats, and students could enter from China (*Canadian Annual Review*, 1924-25, 195).

The Employer Side

Concerns about immigration and antagonism to Chinese workers were issues Canadian labour could never solve by itself: it needed the backing of government. Governments, in turn, needed the backing of wealthy donors, who saw themselves usually as employers, and of voters, who were at least confused on the issue. Immigration increased the labour supply for a host of farmers and small businessmen and women immigrants eased that perennial domestic concern, the "servant problems." Immigrants also promised an improved market for land, equipment, supplies and, ultimately, every consumer product and service. In a Parliament overwhelmingly formed by representatives of rural and small-town constituencies, such interests carried weight.

The representatives of a few thousand working men were lucky to receive a hearing, much less a favourable response. However, opposition to Chinese immigration reflected a broad middle-class consensus in British Columbia, with supportive echoes in the rest of early twentieth-century Canada. The Act was less a response to Ralph Smith and his union brothers than to that broader opinion. In 1896, when Ottawa responded to union indignation at contract labour, the new Laurier government was chiefly stirred by a desire to retaliate against a new American alien labour law. The Act promised fines and prison terms for those who "knowingly" contracted for work or services with aliens and foreigners prior to their immigration, but its last section added the proviso that "The Act shall apply only to such foreign countries as have executed and sustained in force ... laws or ordinances applying to Canada of a [similar]

4 See *Report of the Royal Commission on Oriental Immigration* (Ottawa, 1902). The amendment in 1903 is 3 Edw. VII c. 8, s. 6.

5 For a moment in the radical atmosphere of 1917, the TLC proposed to limit Asians to one in a thousand of the Canadian population. However, in the conservative mood that returned to the Congress in 1918, total exclusion was restored, with an end to the Japanese quota and deportation of aliens found guilty under the Narcotic Drugs act, at the time conceived of as almost wholly falling on Asian residents (see Logan 493-94).

character..." (60-61 Vic. c. 11, 29 June 1897, s. 9). Since the United States (and Canada) were each convenient sources of cross-border strike-breakers, the respective acts soothed a major grievance but did nothing to discourage large transfers of European labour.

Employers were quick to denounced "foreign domination" of Canadian unions, particularly after 1902, when delegates from internationally-based unions took over the TLC, defeated Smith and sought much closer relations with the American Federation of Labour (see Babcock 111; Morton 1990). However, they also sought their own international connections. Through its promotional journal, *Industrial Canada*, the Canadian Manufacturers Association advertised opportunities for British skilled trades where wages were high or strikes common, and maintained its own agents in London to fill more specific needs (the work of the CMA in immigration is described in Clark, Chapter 4).

Labour's specific attack on immigration promotion by employers was that it frequently misrepresented Canada. It was a fair point, though, as D.C. Corbett later noted, bound up in subjective judgements. Canada, after all, did offer freedom, beautiful scenery, and a boundless future as well as sordid slums with high infant mortality. Immigration propaganda tended to soft-pedal the desire of Winnipeg master plumbers or the local Typothetae to replace ungrateful Canadian workers with skilled British craftsmen (see Corbett 6-7). Since the government, itself, was not anxious to add to urban employees and was embarrassed by revelations about the activity of Montréal's top *padrone*, Anthony Cordasco, the TLC solicitor, J.G. O'Donoghue, actually helped push legislation on misrepresentation through the House of Commons in 1904, though it was stopped by the Senate. In 1905, he succeeded, and even won CMA support — but only when the bill was amended to punish false representations which might deter immigration (Logan 482-83; 4-5-Edw VII, c. 16, s. 1). The results were modest and, in 1906, the secretary of the TLC, Paddy Draper, persuaded the government to despatch the hard-working deputy minister of labour to England to get similar legislation there. Mackenzie King returned triumphant with an amendment to the Merchant Shipping Act.

Labour frustration grew as the flood of British and other European immigrants surged in the early 1900s. Well aware of low wages, hard conditions and prices that began to climb sharply in mid-decade, the 1905 TLC convention demanded why would not "old country" labour leaders protect British workers from "the machinations of scheming employers"? (*Proceedings of the 21st Convention of the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada*, 1905, 47). In 1907, the Congress finally found the funds to send W.R. Trotter to England to counter the CMA's agents and the work of the Salvation Army. He returned triumphant in the fall, reporting addressing mass meetings and denouncing the false claims of immigration agents. In 1908, Trotter went back, to be welcomed by both the British and the Scottish TUC. The CMA, he reported, had felt compelled to tell

its London agent to cease activities while the East End Emigration Society, which sent 6,100 to Canada in 1907, had been able to find only 859 in 1908 (Logan 483-85). Admittedly, a well publicised recession that year, followed by an even more dire economic crisis in 1912, played some discouraging role.

"Troublesome Fellows"

Employers had tended to see immigrant workers as low-paid and docile. That impression began to change as they slowly realized that all the radical and socialist ideas filtering into Canada did not come in the baggage of American miners and English mechanics. Tempestuous battles over anarchism, syndicalism, Marxism and Bernstein revisionism hardly troubled the sleep of the vast majority of Canadians, but the handful of people who served as intermediaries between the newcomers and their adopted country could not ignore the undercurrents, and some found them alarming indeed. Historians of pre-1914 radicalism provide ample evidence of the spread of revolutionary ideas to Canada, while simultaneously blaming authorities for taking them seriously (see Avery; Friesen; Leier; McCormack; Robin).

The extent of the problem — and ignorance about it — became apparent during the First World War. Thousands of miles from battle or danger, Canadian patriotism found its outlet in suspicions of espionage and sabotage, all too easily associated with "foreigners" of any description. While the federal government discouraged patriotic self-help, the public took little notice. Labour organizations were as prominent as other public-spirited organizations in demanding that all "enemy aliens" be locked up, and coal miners outside Nanaimo and along the Crowsnest Pass suited actions to their thoughts by expelling "foreign-born" workers from the pits. Ottawa felt obliged to intervene by establishing internment camps (*Nelson Daily News* [16 August 1915]; Morton 1974, 46).

A more serious phase began in the darkest year of the war, 1917, with Canada afflicted by double-digit inflation, a conscription crisis, savage divisions between French and English, and a war heading for defeat because a major ally, Tsarist Russia, had crumbled. The reasons were all too apparent, but when the short-lived rule of constitutional democrats gave way to a mysterious and brutal Bolshevik faction, conspiracy was plainly afoot. Its agents, presumably, could be found in Canada. To counter fears of subversion, Ottawa turned to its two federal police forces (see Horrall; Kealey 1992). The ranks of enemy aliens now extended beyond Germans and Austro-Hungarians (Austrians, Hungarians, Czechs, Slovaks, Slovenes, Croatians, Serbians, Romanians, Ukrainians, etc.) to the even more reluctant ex-subjects of the Romanovs.

The Armistice brought no relief. Labour militancy in 1919 cost Canada proportionately more lost working time than any subsequent year. In Winnipeg,

a General Strike was portrayed, with a little help from the more radical strikers, as a revolutionary insurrection (see Bercuson; Kealey 1984; Masters; McNaught and Bercuson). Certainly that was how a Citizens' Committee of 1000 portrayed the event to Ottawa. One dramatic result was a sweeping amendment to the Immigration Act. Section 41 declared that any immigrant, British or other, who plotted, taught, or even was suspected of associating with a group that opposed or disbelieved in organized government "be deemed to belong to the prohibited or undesirable classes" and would be deported (9-10 Geo. V c 26, s. 41). The new Act failed in its first test, when six British-born, one Austrian-born, and three Russian-born radicals were arrested in pre-dawn raids. Only the Austrian was finally deported, because he had illegally entered Canada from the United States. The thirty-one foreign-born men arrested in association with Winnipeg's "Bloody Saturday" riot on 21 June 1919, were not so lucky. They were immediately transferred to an internment camp at Kapuskasing, and expelled from Canada (Avery 85-86). They were far from the last. Indeed, as Avery establishes, F.C. Blair and other government immigration officials became obsessed with excluding immigrants, from Finland to Italy, who could potentially cause employers trouble. Under Liberal rule in the 1920s, their efforts had to be moderately discreet; with the 1930s, a Conservative government and the Great Depression, there would be almost no immigration at all (Avery 92-93; Roberts; Tulchinsky).

As the employer view of immigration changed, so did labour's, although more gradually. While few of the TLC's respectable, craft-union affiliates sympathized with Marxism, anarchism, syndicalism or any of their variants, some of their leaders, such as Toronto's Jimmy Simpson or Vancouver's James Watters, did. Others recognized that the pursuit of radicals was an ill-disguised assault on the rights of all workers. Some union leaders were indignant that Section 41 included the British-born, as well as "foreigners." Often, that included them in its menacing ambit. For once, an anti-immigrant law seemed to be anti-labour. Campaigning against Section 41 became a continuing TLC crusade until it was repealed in 1928 (Logan 319, 491).⁶

Between the Two World Wars

Like most Canadians, Canada's labour leaders hoped for a better world when the War to End War was over. Canada took its reward for victory in the form of membership in the new League of Nations and its first major agency, the International Labour Organization (ILO), a tripartite meeting place for labour,

6 The Congress also opposed another 1919 law, Section 98 of the Criminal Code amendments expanding the meaning of subversion and greatly enlarging the penalties. It was not repealed until 1936.

management and business of a type increasingly congenial to TLC leaders like Tom Moore and Paddy Draper, as it had been to the chief architect of Canada's industrial relations system, W.L. Mackenzie King. During the war years, the TLC had urged an Imperial Immigration Board to manage transfers of the Empire's population; now it switched its faith to the ILO's proposed Immigration Commission. Canada's representative, Colonel Obed Smith, its immigration agent in London, found himself the recipient of the TLC's advice on labour conditions in Canada. The Congress also sent a representative to the new Canadian Council of Immigration of Women, a body devoted to attracting European domestics, a form of labour which TLC leaders welcomed, provided it was government-regulated. However, they drew the line at a Salvation Army-sponsored scheme to send British war widows to the "white" dominions in search of mates, work and the hope of living more cheaply on their meagre pensions (Logan 489, 491).

While Canadian labour had a jaundiced view of immigration, the right to emigrate to the United States had been taken for granted. For thousands of "tramp workers," with their tools wrapped in an oily rag, the southern border was invisible and international unionism made sense for a printer, blacksmith, or cabinet-maker who might find work in Cleveland, St. Louis, Toronto, or Philadelphia in the course of a year. Emigration, Stuart Jamieson estimated, cost Canada nine or more people for every ten immigrants, making it both a safety valve in an unstable job market and a release for those whose frustrations might well have fed an earlier militancy (6-7).

Despite their own desire to be protected from foreign strikebreakers, the U.S. Alien Labour Law angered workers as well as employers. In the 1920s, nativist and isolationists pressed Washington to curb the immigrant flow to the United States by establishing national quotas. Americans were content to exempt native-born Canadians but British-born Canadians discovered to their indignation that they would be numbered with the quota from the United Kingdom. Outrage at American indifference to Canadian concerns helped break up the big Toronto local of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in the 1920s, and a thousand members were lost (Logan 91). The TLC despatched its president and secretary to Washington to lobby the AFL, the U.S. Secretary of Labour and the British ambassador. They returned empty-handed and alarmed that, if restrictions were extended to Mexicans, they might well cover all Canadians too. Moore and Draper could claim to have convinced the British ambassador that the TLC opposed measures that would force Canadians to stay home (Logan 492).

With the Great Depression, by common national consent, immigration came to an end. In 1930, the new Conservative government barred all but dependents of already established heads of family. At the nadir of the depression in 1933, one Canadian worker in four was unemployed and a tenth of the population, a million people, had endured the deliberate humiliations imposed on those who

took direct relief. In 1935, only 11,000 people entered Canada. Hundreds were deported, as troublemakers or simply for the offence of being reduced to destitution (Roberts 273). This application of Prime Minister R.B. Bennett's "iron heel of ruthlessness" against communist and other conspirators was one of many bitter memories for a labour movement that felt both victimised and helpless in the 1930s. At the same time, with immigration at a virtual standstill, newcomers could hardly be blamed for seizing Canadian jobs. However badly Canada's labour market might have been mismanaged in the past, the worst times in memory coincided with a total ban on immigration.

A Transforming Event

When war returned in 1939, about 15 per cent of Canadians were still out of work. Two years later, thanks to the drive for wartime production and the diversion of close to a million men and women into uniform, Canada had reached the statistical oddity of negative unemployment — more jobs filled than people to fill them. Seldom in modern history had the myth of a fixed quantity of work been more flagrantly exposed. Understanding takes time to catch up with reality, and wartime, for Canadians, was exceptional. In its 1942 convention, the Trades and Labour Congress urged what it called "a mutual open immigration policy" with the British Empire, the United States, and North and South America, and restricted immigration from all others. Two years later, in a more open-hearted mood, it urged Ottawa to accept Canada's "full share of refugees." Its new and growing rival, the Canadian Congress of Labour (CCL), avoided commitments on this and many other topics.

However, when the war ended, the newer Congress would be anything but silent. Its president, veteran railway unionist A.R. Mosher, appeared before a new Senate Standing Committee on Immigration and Labour in July, 1946 with a lengthy, thoughtful and rather unexpected statement on behalf of his predominantly industrial union members. The immigration question, he insisted, was purely economic: "maintaining the highest level of employment and income with the facilities and resources at our disposal and the nation's capacity to absorb." The notion that there was only a fixed amount of work to distribute was as false as the belief that "the more people you bring in, the richer everyone will be" (Logan 562). Veteran labour expert Harold Logan, astonished by Mosher's thoughtful language as much as the tone, shrewdly suspected the handiwork of the former McGill academic and CCL research director, Eugene Forsey. "It raises the question," he wrote, "of how far the enlightened research employee of the union may lead the thought of the masses in whose service he works" (Logan 561).

Yet Mosher (or Forsey) hardly differed from the TLC's president, Percy Bengough, when the older Congress met with the Senate committee in July, 1946. Canada, Bengough insisted, needed a larger population to develop a

market for manufacturers and merchants and to hold so vast a land. Canadians should be concerned with the draining away of thousands of university graduates and skilled workers. "On the face of it, our first job is to repair the container, then pour in the new immigrants" (Logan 493).

While the senators were not as concerned as unionists about the quality of the container, nothing Canadian labour had said discouraged them from urging a vigorous immigration policy, though a prudent wing of the committee added: "Admissions should not exceed the number which can be absorbed from time to time without creating conditions of unemployment, reducing the standard of living or otherwise endangering the Canadian economy" (Hawkins 82). On race, the labour representatives might have been wiser to say nothing, but that was not Forsey's style nor Mosher's: "racial discrimination should have no place in our immigration policy," the CCL brief bravely asserted, but added that some people fitted more easily into Canadian life than others. His Congress, Forsey made it plain, had never advocated "an open door for Asiatic immigration" (Hawkins 85). The CCL, commented the *Vancouver Sun*, "is trying to say softly what the TLC is saying forthrightly" (qtd. in Abella and Troper 233). The senators agreed: "Any suggestion of discrimination based upon either race or religion should be scrupulously avoided both in the Act and in its administration," though the final report discreetly explained: "the limitation of Asiatic immigration being based, of course, on problems of absorption" (qtd. in Abella and Troper 84).

In 1948, when the senators received a deputation from the Committee for the Repeal of the Chinese Immigration Act, Mosher was a member. "We are not asking you to open wide the gate for Chinese immigration," the deputation insisted, only to allow the wives and children of men of Chinese descent to join them in Canada (Abella and Troper 84-85). The government soon obliged, but "opening wide the gates" would have to wait for a later generation.

Another old issue, the fear of immigrant-borne subversion, continued with the added suspicions of the Cold War. Among the hundreds of thousands of "Displaced Persons," waiting in dreary camps for a chance to start a new life in Canada, how many were dedicated to overthrowing the Canadian way of life? Anxious to help, the Deputy Minister of Labour, Arthur MacNamara, sought to appoint Canadian unionists to help with screening refugees both for their skills and their political allegiances. After a succession of nominees from the International Fur and Leather Workers Union were rejected, the RCMP had to tell MacNamara what everyone in the labour world knew: Robert Haddow of the ILFWU was himself a loyal Communist (Whitaker 368-69).

Profound or Superficial

In postwar Canada, the leaders of Canada's labour movement for the most part abandoned their traditional anti-immigration stance.⁷ The reasons must have seemed obvious. After 1945, Canada entered a period of seemingly endless affluence, beyond anything the country had ever experienced. The Holocaust was an almost indelible warning of the consequence of the substantial racism which had enveloped Canadian society and which had found an outlet in racially-biased immigration policies. Wartime reforms, notable the National War Labour Order and its reflection in federal and most provincial industrial relations law, made it possible to organize unskilled, low-paid workers and to eliminate many of the job ghettos that had threatened labour standards for the unionised minority. If British-born immigrants had always played a disproportionate role in Canadian labour leadership, they were increasingly joined and even supplanted by men and women whose roots were in other parts of Europe. Racial assumptions common in past labour meetings became unacceptable after 1945. The language of non-discrimination might immediately affect Jews, Blacks, Ukrainians, and Italians, but it could not then exclude Chinese, Japanese, and East Indians.

Did this change of attitude extend to rank-and-file unionists? In 1946, the Canadian Institute for Public Opinion found that 60 per cent of Canadians thought Japanese were undesirable immigrants, 34 per cent did not want Germans and 49 per cent would not welcome Jews. Writing in 1957, David Corbett doubted it. Labour's official political positions — including the post-1956 tendency of the new, united Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) to support the CCF and form a new left-wing political party, clearly did not carry most of its million members; neither did its more liberal view of immigration.

Members, claimed Corbett in 1957, "fear flooding of the labour market, lowering of wages, and deterioration of conditions of work and living standards" (4). As Paul Kaihla found before, the same can be said in 1997, though the rank and file are unlikely to hear their leaders saying so. Nor, as he reported, does the attitude to immigration coincide with increasing tolerance for people of different cultures, values and appearance (37-38). Canada has learned to tolerate differences, perhaps because Canada's allegedly frail and ill-defined culture has more absorptive capacity than its elite normally believes. A majority which found that the price of their own country, *a mari usque ad mare* was the

7 A notable exception was due to the return of regional and seasonal unemployment during the 1950s. In 1951, Bengough of the TLC demanded an end to immigration in the winter. Carl Berg, a vice-president of the TLC and a former immigrant, claimed in 1953 that old practices of pre-immigration contracting, and charging by immigration agents, had returned (see Corbett 17).

accommodation of *le fait français*, was more apt to accommodate other cultures. Some might call it an illustration of the Canadian pursuit of the constitutional goal of "peace, order and good government."

Nationalism and Multiculturalism

In the 1960s, it became briefly fashionable in intellectual circles across Canada to refer to Canada's two founding nations. It had happened before and, indeed, was the essence of Québec's Compact Theory, but now it was part of a "bonne ententism" appropriate when Québec had emerged from the *grand noirceur* of the Duplessis years, and seemed ready to join the rest of Canada in the second half of the century. Kindness and understanding about "two nations," bilingualism" and biculturalism might assuage old divisions and produce a new sense of community. Yet, almost simultaneously, the concept of multiculturalism slipped into usage and, a decade later, into official policy. What did it mean? Did it rank the cultures of "other" Canadians with those of "founding" peoples? Did it permanently group Canadians with ethnic hyphens — and perhaps ethnic stigmata? The issues would affect relations between Québec and the rest of Canada; it affected the identity of Canada as a whole.

The cultural homogeneity, dynamism, affluence, and exclusiveness of the huge English-speaking community in North America provide a huge ocean in which a tiny French-speaking minority swims. A Québec grievance has been the failure of federal immigration policy to reinforce the French-speaking minority. The French refuse to leave *la douce France*. After 1950, Ottawa sought Italians, Greeks, and other Mediterranean people who would surely find French an easier language to adopt than English. Such newcomers were sophisticated enough to understand the state of affairs in the continent and to profit from them. Nothing produced more outrage in Québec than a 1967 research report that Québec's newcomers earned more than the average native French-speaker (Trofimenkoff 310, 318). Learning English made them part of the province's dominant economic group, the Anglophones. Hence, Bill 22, Bill 101, and key clauses in both the Meech Lake and Charlottetown Accords. What the law can enforce in language, Québec will enforce.

A great many non-French or English-speaking immigrants have, of course, settled in Québec and Jewish and Greek communities have deep roots in Trois Rivières and Montréal, to name only two examples. However, few immigrants were attracted to the poverty or riel or hinterland Québec before this century when that poverty faded. Québec and Montréal until 1914 were cities with strong if not dominant Anglophone communities. Although immigration was a conjoint power with Ottawa, unlike Ontario, Québec took no interest in it. Were Québécois unenthusiastic about an immigration that could dilute their own *pure laine* roots?

The first important non-English and non-French group to settle in the West were the Icelanders. Pushed out of their native island in the 1870s by its desperate poverty, over-population and seismic disturbances, the Icelanders arrived in Manitoba soon after it became a province and settled in its far northwest corner at Gimli. They faced terrible experiences from hunger, cold, and a devastating smallpox epidemic which also decimated nearby Indian populations. When they emerged from the suffering, Icelanders embraced two distinct policies in their new country. Politically and linguistically they would assimilate with the English-speaking majority; culturally they would remain proudly distinct. Icelanders gave meaning to the melting pot but they remained a people with their own books, with an intense commitment to schools, libraries, theatre and their own folklore. Once early prejudices had melted, the Icelanders struck the increasingly British Manitobans as the model of what any ethnic group in Canada could and should be. In the increasingly bitter schools controversy of the 1890s the Icelanders were staunch. If they had sacrificed their language to the higher good of public education, why could not all others. In their schools Manitobans would teach homogeneous virtues of thrift, cleanliness, industry, and loyalty to the Crown and devotion to Parliamentary institutions as well as the 3 Rs. The Icelanders never used the word but their shiny piece of mosaic would have crucial significance for Canada.

Canada's immigration policy after 1896 was clear: populate the prairies with immigrant stock suited to the conditions of western agriculture. That gave a new importance to people from the East and East Central Europe, whether from Imperial Habsburg or Romanov control. Immigrants from Germany gave Canada a first experience of cultural diversity — the German-speaking settlements in the black walnut country of Ontario and in Lunenburg had roots as deep as any other Loyalist refugees from the American revolution. So did descendants of the German mercenaries settled along the north shore of the St. Lawrence. Mennonites, a German pacifist sect with remarkable success as farmers in Ontario's Waterloo County encouraged Ottawa to believe that other sects could bring agricultural prosperity without grossly offending their neighbours. Hence Canada welcomed Hutterites and Doukhobors in the years before 1914 and promised them, like the Mennonites and Tunkers, perennial exemption from military service. It was a promise, of course, that a peaceful Canada never intended to have much significance. Also, when the intensely communal Doukhobor and Hutterite settlements had taken shape, did they turn out to be major contributors to local commerce or CPR profits. People who lived of their own had little to buy or sell.

To the dominant group in English-speaking Canada this was a British country. That did not mean, of courses, that Canada was a version of England nor that the English were admired. On the contrary, in the pre-1914 recession, British immigrants encountered, at least fabled signs saying "No English need apply." They were found to be demanding, lazy, and too well versed in their

own inalienable rights to be dutiful workers. When he later recalled welcoming "peasants in sheepskin coats," Sir Clifford Sifton had an accompanying warning: Canada did not need English "rads" or "remittance men" to tell us how to run our affairs. Of course Canadians believed in the British throne and the Mother of Parliaments. Our judges might be politically-appointed hacks but they wore the scarlet and ermine of British judges, refusing only to wear the British wigs. Unlike Americans, we never elected judges. Our parliamentary system was the best in the world because it was on the Westminster model, whether in the House of Commons or the tiny territorial assemblies.

An aspect of the immigrant experience sometimes forgotten by the host country is that many newcomers see themselves as temporary guests. The temporariness varied from indentured labourers, who came to earn enough for a better life at home and who made little commitment to assimilation, and others who were refugees, perhaps Ukrainian, Zionist, or Croatian nationalists, living in indeterminate exile on the assurance that the day of revolution, liberation, or cataclysmic eruption would produce the long-sought homeland and end the time abroad. For those who counted on immigrants to become good Canadians (or Americans), external loyalties were a much greater problem than the apathy of casual labourers who, after all, would depart when old age or injury made them less useful to their masters. Whether they were Russian Jews escaping the pogroms and oppression of the Pale or Ruthenians and Galicians from the eastern regions of the Austrian empire, waiting for an independent Ukraine, nationalist exiles were an important and influential part of the mosaic. Although their loyalties to Canada might be fragile and opportunistic, they were the most likely to become interlocutors with the majority. They urged the emigrant groups to respect their own culture and institutions; they recruited cultural and religious guides and they carried on the bitter emigre quarrels. In the relative freedom and indifference of the host country, they were free to publish their vernacular newspapers and pamphlets and, for all their practical powerlessness, to belabour each other over old controversies and new. And, of course, there was the struggle to survive in communities that were always poor and sometimes on the verge of hunger. Canada, newcomers always complained, was a far colder and harsher place than they had been told or could imagine.

Immigrants were expected to carry Canada through the brutal hardships of settlement. If the process moved faster on the prairies than in Upper or Lower Canada 200 years before, it was not easy. Homesteading was brutal, lonely work, with a constant requirement of capital in a monocultural economy. Frankly, where immigrants succeeded best was in tight, ethnically homogeneous communities, transplants of homeland villages. After a brutal beginnings, conditions might be better than in the old country but not much.

Immigrants usually reward the politicians who admit them. After 1896, that was the Liberals. Laurier's Minister of the Interior, Clifford Sifton, got rich selling settlement lands, but he left behind a political machine closely tied to the

immigrant groups, funding their newspapers, grooming their more acceptable spokesmen and helping them with their problems. The Liberals learned to be sensitive to national, ethnic and cultural differences while the Conservatives in the West tended to find their loyalists among those who resented the influx or who wished to assimilate so completely they would not be noticed. Canadian Liberals became the primary party of the Canadian immigrant, from the time of the Irish to the present-day Sikh and Tamil communities. The Conservatives could only claim part of a divided British community. The Left told ethnic groups that they were poor and oppressed because they were workers — a status newcomers wanted to leave — and that they must make common cause with other workers whose ethnicity they despised. The Liberals had a simpler, if more divisive message: hold on to your ethnicity and rise with us. It would become, in due course, the policy of multiculturalism. In the meantime, it gave status and importance to ethnic group leaders.

In the 1914-18 War, with the Conservatives in power, anti-alien feeling reached a crescendo in the British-Canadian community. The Borden government, obviously against its will, was compelled to divert resources to restrict, register and ultimately to intern several thousand so-called "enemy aliens." By the end of the war, foreign-based organizations were banned or controlled, newspaper in enemy languages were compelled to print translations of every word they printed. The Liberals behaved judiciously, kept silent and sometimes howled with the patriots. They were not blamed. When the Liberals returned to power at the end of 1921, prosperity coincided with a substantial resumption of immigration, from central Europe as well as the British Isles. Part of the pressure to emigrate to Canada was the aftermath of the national revolutions of 1919. Some had not gone according to plan. There was now a Ukraine but it was part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. There was now a Poland but it was ruled not by socialists but by reactionary army officers. So were the new Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria. Whatever the Balfour Declaration seemed to promise, there was no Israel at all. The national minorities had to continue their exile and to translate any surviving dreams into the reality of a cold Dominion. They were to be the basis of that "mosaic" of cultures which an American author, Victoria Hayward, described in a 1921 book on Canada (cited in Colombo 237). In the Depression, immigration virtually ended. Even desperate Jews, fleeing Hitler, found that Canada was closed to them. Even impoverished Latin-American countries were more welcoming (see Abella and Troper).

In the Second World War, twenty thousand Japanese Canadians, most of them born here, were evacuated to internment camps for reasons that had less to do with war than with a century of anti-Oriental prejudice. Norman Hillmer, Bohdan Kordan and Lubomyr Luciuk point out in *On Guard for Thee* that Ukrainians and others excluded and coerced in the earlier war, now filled the

rank of an infinitely more Canadian-born Canadian Army, RCAF and RCN. At the end of the 1939-1945 war, Paul Martin, as M.P. for Windsor and Minister of Health and Welfare, had visited the graveyards of soldiers from his small industrial city and been struck by the variety of ethnicities represented on the gravestones for Canadian victims of the unsuccessful landing at Dieppe (66). Martin coerced cabinet colleagues and most of Parliament to acknowledge for the first time the existence of a "Canadian" citizenship. For the time being, of course, a Canadian also remained a "British subject."

The 1945 aftermath was even more frustrating for national dreams in East and East Central Europe than 1919. The independent states of the previous war vanished behind a new Iron Curtain as satrapies of the USSR. There was another reason of greater significance: postwar Canada was affluent as Canada never had been before. Something else changed too. Perhaps it was victory, perhaps it was the opening the extermination camps, but suddenly everyday anti-Semitism and public, sanctioned racism became intolerable to most Canadians. Casual prejudice, long taken for granted survived only underground, on latrine walls and playground slurs. One can hardly exaggerate the transition in sensitivity in the few postwar years although it is customary now to insist that nothing changed.

In 1947, our infinitely cautious prime minister, William Lyon Mackenzie King, reminded Canadians that his government had agreed to allow Chinese and East Indian families to be reunited after the war, forty years after the Asian Exclusion Act. However, to reassure his listeners, he promised us that Canada retained the right to choose "desirable future citizens" and that no "fundamental change in the character of our population" would be allowed (Pickersgill 35). As a result, only some 6,000 Chinese gained admission (Pickersgill 35). Yet that could not be all. In the post-war, Canada was a leader in a multi-ethnic United Nations and under prime minister Louis St-Laurent the government helped forge a new Commonwealth from the Old Empire, largely by bridging between the old white Dominions and the new republics of India, Pakistan, Ceylon (Shri Lanka), and ultimately, in the 1960, in Africa. How could Canada maintain racist immigration and citizenship policies? The prosperity demanded new people. By 1955, 1.5 million immigrants had arrived in a decade, only a third from Britain. In 1962, the last vestige of explicit racism was purged from the Immigration Act.

John George Diefenbaker could take the credit. The Saskatchewan lawyer had carried his name to the leadership of his province's conservative party frankly because the prize was not worth having. Diefenbaker had lost every election until 1940 when accident and his populist style finally persuaded the rural riding of Lake Centre to choose him. When he ran for his party's leadership in 1948, party brass insisted on pronouncing his name in its German version, no kindly gesture in 1948. In 1949, the Liberals gerrymandered his riding out of existence and thought him finished, Prince Albert gave him a

chance. By 1956, he was Tory leader.

Diefenbaker and smarter Tories recognized that the Cold War gave them a hook on Canadians from East and East Central Europe, with their bitter anti-Communism. For the them, at least, the Tories were more attractive than their traditional Liberal allies, with their reluctance to outlaw the Communist Party and their caution about arms and war. Moreover, as a party that attracted and cultivated small business and farmers, the Tories were closer to immigrant entrepreneurs than the Liberals with their links to the biggest of big business. In 1956, Diefenbaker won his party's nomination as leader and new faces began to appear. When he won in 1957, one of the features of his success was the large number of non-WASPs in his caucus. Believe it or not, this was a first for M.P.s of Chinese-Canadian and Italo-Canadian origin and the number of members of Ukrainian and Polish origin was unprecedented. Diefenbaker was the first prime minister to include a woman NAME, RIDING? and a Ukrainian-Canadian, Mike Starr, in his cabinet. Remember that the Liberals had done neither. Indeed, they had thought long and hard about including the brilliant David Croll and had concluded that a Jew in the government was too dangerous.

When they returned to power in 1963, the Liberals had to catch up. They had permanently lost the West, and Canada had changed. When Laurier was prime minister, 95.4 per cent of Canadians had French or British roots; by the 1961 census, the share was barely 73 per cent (it is now under 67 per cent.) The key step to multiculturalism came from a Liberal pledge to create a Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism to explore the vexed issue of Québec-Canada linguistic and cultural relations. The promise, crafted by Maurice Lamontagne, may have drawn few votes but Mike Pearson had made it early and often. Among the ten members of the Commission, under André Laurendeau and Davidson Dunton, were a French-speaking Polish scholar from Montréal, Professor Paul Wyczynski (U d'Ottawa), and Professor J.N. Rudnycki, a Ukrainian-Canadian academic from Winnipeg. Seldom has the influence of representation in a consensual group been made more evident. By the time the Royal Commission was prodded into its interim report in 1965, it had discovered that Canada might and should be bilingual, but it was certainly also multicultural. The ethnic groups, gathering at each hearing, had made such a finding literally unavoidable. In the final report, the Commission concluded that ethnic leaders without in any way undermining national unity, wished to maintain their own linguistic and cultural heritage (summarized in *Royal Commission*, Vol. 5, 1-14). In its response in 1967, Ottawa declared that Canada would have two official languages but no official culture.

As a political phrase, "multiculturalism" has always been easier to say than define. It describes a society marked by ethnic or cultural heterogeneity, it is a concept of equality and respect for a population's ethnic or cultural groups and, of course, it referred to a set of defined Canadian government policies first

proclaimed in 1971, followed by appointment of a minor minister of state, Dr. Stanley Haidasz, on the eve of the 1972 election. In 1973, a Multiculturalism Directorate was formed and a Canadian Multiculturalism Council. In December, 1987, the Mulroney government attempted to give more shape to the concept with the Canadian Multiculturalism Act. Bilingualism was complex enough but with cost, argument, and patience, the concept of two working languages where needs warrant was definable. Multiculturalism was less so. Cynics argued, and some cultural leaders insisted, that multiculturalism was another excuse for governments to buy support from benefited groups, and many of Ottawa's political initiatives had an electoral edge. Here was a way of mobilizing cash to conciliate groups and their leaders. Critics complained that this set so-called "ethnics" outside an otherwise invisible mainstream instead of giving them status. It was never clear that either of the two "founding nations," British and French, were included in any definition of multiculturalism and, if they were, they were not made beneficiaries of the policies or the appointments. And for obvious reasons, the Québécois and French-speaking Canadians elsewhere furiously resented any measure that put them on an even plane with those who had come later, even when, in the West, they were very small minorities.

Critics of multiculturalism have abounded from the first, many of them expressing arguments found in a 1994 book, *Selling Illusions*, by writer and novelist Neil Bissoondath, whose South Asian and West Indian roots have been entwined with a French-Canadian wife and a range of topics. Others complain that language, a central part of any culture, is set aside by official multiculturalism. Can you be Chinese or Russian without a language? French-Canadians make no such concession. Québec's version of multiculturalism, *interculturalisme*, is founded on an uncompromising insistence on French as the province's official language, and only English as a tolerated minority language. Yet to acknowledge all the languages in Canada as official guaranteed a Tower of Babel.

Does the recognition of multiculturalism face a necessary fact of Canadian life and therefore strengthens our sense of collective identity? Or does it preserve old identities that might have been shed at the port of entry? If each new arrivals can insist on their version of Canadian history and their contribution to Canada's national symbols and institutions, what loyalty can anyone display for them? Imagine the difficulty of composing national history when enemies in past wars are now prominent and influential citizens. A massive agreement to differ on national questions does not really look like a consensus, but it can be a way of living in forgetful peace. Multiculturalism is another of those ways Canadians have learned in order to live together in relative peace.

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STEVEN TÖTÖSY de ZEPETNEK

Social Discourse and Cultural Participation in a Multicultural Society: The Canadian Model

Introduction

One of the current "master narratives," including the humanities and social sciences, when it comes to the academe, is globalization and its contingent problematics (see, for example, Chen). This is a welcome event as well as necessary discourse. At the same time, it appears to me that in the humanities the issue is more often than not sidetracked and remains on the level of rhetoric only. Globalization — in its meaning of cosmopolitanism — is accepted as an ideological position and working method only if it does not conflict with the national, regional, and local. The permanence and insistence on national or regional values, traditions, and interests — whether in the context of American cultural, political, and economic imperialism or in the context of peripheral and marginal insistence of uniqueness — pervades, at large, our social discourse. That particular universalism that emerged in the West with the period of Enlightenment is now in disrepute (at times rightly so, at times not at all). Interestingly, what we do not appear to realize is that it is the Romantic idea and ideology that entrenched nationalism, racism, and exclusion. In this situation and in face of the overwhelming social, political, economic, and cultural continuum of "localization" there is little left for an alternative but proselytizing and fighting a losing battle in support of inclusion and mediation, between the national versus the multicultural and global. That an inclusionary approach versus the homogenizing — whether in culture or business practices — is preferable can be seen in the most odd places and from the most unexpected corners. George Soros, the Jewish-Hungarian-American business tycoon who supported with millions of dollars the transformation of East Central Europe before and after the changes of 1989, argues in his recent article, "The Capitalist Threat," in *The Atlantic Monthly*, that the free market approach without the mitigation of inclusion and attention toward the peripheral and marginal will — without the inclusionary approach — in fact, result in adverse business results, is just one such example.

Canadian Culture and Literature. And a Taiwan Perspective

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1998 ISBN 0-921490-10-0

Soros argues eloquently, for instance, that "to derive a political and social agenda from a philosophical, epistemological argument seems like a hopeless undertaking. Yet it can be done" (58). In this article, I take my point of departure from Soros and postulate that the Canadian model of multiculturalism — whatever its handicaps — may be a model we ought to pay attention to and so in a global and cosmopolitan perspective. In the following, I will discuss and argue for a social discourse of inclusion and mediation based on the Canadian model of multiculturalism, but with reference to the problematics of diversity in Europe and East Central Europe.

The Canadian Model: Cultural Diversity versus Cultural Homogeneity

The notion of multiculturalism and cultural diversity is a specifically Canadian construct. Historically a country of immigration (i.e., a conquest and colonization of Indian nations and territories), Canadians — more so English-Canadians than French- or Québécois-Canadians (see Lamey) — institutionalized the concept of the recognition and inclusion of the other. Charles Taylor, in his well-known *The Politics of Recognition* states that democracy "has now returned in the form of demands for the equal status of cultures" (27) and this recognition has been a Canadian criterion of cultural identity politics since the 1970s. However, I hasten to add that the intellectual notions of multiculturalism but more so its political and social implementation is not without problems. Importantly, the notion and administrative implementation of multiculturalism as official (federal) governmental policy has been tied to the parallel notion of the "founding nations," that is, English Canadians and French Canadians.¹ Although originally there was a certain amount of consensus that special attention to ethnic minorities in the context of multiculturalism is a positive approach, especially in the last few years there has been increasing opposition to the notion of a government sanctioned policy of multiculturalism (see, for example, the much debated book of Bissoondath; and for counter-arguments see, for example, Li; Lamey). More recent objections to and arguments against all notions of "ethnic" or "ethnicity," thus implicitly opposing the notion of a policy of multiculturalism, appear on all levels of society. An example is the public objection in parliament to the "label" of "ethnic Canadian" in favour of "Canadian" only by the Liberal member of parliament Janko Peric (Gessell). But overall, in the general discourse of society and politics, as well as in that of scholarly research, the notion of the two founding nations (English and French) and multiculturalism (immigrants other

1 The six volumes of the *Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism* (1963-71), which include a volume on *The Cultural Contribution of the Other Ethnic Groups* (1969) are the original representations of this curious dichotomy. See also, for example, Burnett; Isajiw; Kalin.

than English and French and the various Indian First Nations and Inuit)² co-exist and receive intellectual, institutional, and financial support from the federal government and from most who proclaim to be federalists in Canada.

The model of recognition and inclusion — while objected to by some as I briefly indicated — suggests an approach that in my opinion contains both in theoretical and in pragmatic terms conditions which would be applicable to the situation of Western European countries. The specific case of Germany may be a paradigmatic example both nation-internally and in that country's relationship with its historical and contemporary sphere of influence in East Central Europe. Although in Germany "about 8 percent of the population are foreigners ... compared to other European countries, e.g. Switzerland, the proportion of foreign residents in Germany is not extraordinarily high" (Chic 38), Germany manifests great difficulties in dealing with its immigrant population on all levels, cultural, political, educational, economic, social, etc. The crucial and basic point of departure, however, for the situation of ethnic groups in Canada and Germany is not the fact — from a European point of view — that Canada is a new country with as of yet unentrenched historical and identity consciousness and its population variance which would "allow" for the freedom to recognize ethnic diversity. The point of departure is the fact that the Canadian intellectual, political, academic, and business community recognizes — to various degrees — the importance of population variance and acts accordingly. And this "recognition" (Taylor) results in the government policy of multiculturalism and the inclusion of cultural diversity. Of course, all is not wonderful with either the government policy of multiculturalism or the general perception of ethnicity in Canada. Racism is rampant, particularly towards visible minorities. And historically, Canada is not different from other Western countries in its rejection of "otherness": for instance, Canada granted citizenship to its Chinese population, often third generation Chinese Canadians only in 1947 and the treatment of Jews fleeing Nazi Germany is a well-known black mark in Canadian history (see Abella and Troper). Today, right-wing ideas for a selective immigration policy abound in both English-speaking and French-speaking Canada. But the years of multiculturalism, with all the now negatively perceived "song and dance" support, are a crucial and important background for a Canadian identity.

Canadian (cultural) identity, I postulate, is a construct based on the following general parameters of positive diversity. I should like to stress, however, that the general parameters of positive diversity are to be understood in relative terms. Jacques Chirac's vulgar complaint about the immigrants' smell of cooking or the

2 Personally, I oppose the designation of Canadian First Nations as an Ethnic group. Canadian Indians, Inuit, and First Nations ought to comprise a distinct third group of Canadian society, parallel to the Ethnic Canadian groups and the English- and French-Canadian groups and I support self-government for the First Nations.

French ban of the shador of Muslim-French women in schools, the German murders of German Turks, the Hungarian treatment of Hungarian Gypsies, the Canadian systemic discrimination of First Nations, or the Toronto subway beatings of Canadian-Pakistani youths do not differ in their negative impact on society or on the individuals suffering from it and they all are both singular and endemic expressions of negative discrimination and racism. Rather, the difference is in the approach to cultural identity from the point of positive diversity versus cultural homogeneity, most importantly — following an intellectual argument — as a governmental (political) administrative policy and educational position. And herein lies the importance of Canadian multiculturalism: it is not without problems and much could be improved; but *in comparison* with the situation of minorities — immigrants or other — in other countries, the Canadian model excels.

In Canada, while Québécois-Canadian linguistic and cultural nationalism — argued as a matter of cultural survival — poses very real problems which became evident by the results of the October 1995 referendum,³ the problematics and the existence of the specific Canadian polyphony of cultural identities are obvious even in the perception of Québécois-Canadian nationalists like Québec Premier Jacques Parizeau and other separatists, who suggested that the loss of vote for the Québécois-Canadian separatists was owing to "money" (i.e., the Anglophone population of Québec, specifically Montréal) and the Ethnic Minorities (*Globe and Mail* [1 November 1995]: A7). Similar to most countries in the Western hemisphere, it is a physical reality that Canada is increasingly populated by and is going to receive further immigrants whose languages and cultures are neither mainstream English nor French. As mentioned above, apart from the institutional and legal difficulties that the two-pronged approach, founding nations and multiculturalism, has created in Canada, the reality is that Canada's polyphony of cultural identities consists of the English-, French-, Ethnic- (immigrant), and Aboriginal socio-cultural groups.

The epistemological and intellectual following of these administrative and institutional recognition of the said polyphony and construction of government policies are possible in Canada because of the "newness" of the country, its relative abundance of space and opportunities, and, mostly, because of the lack of overwhelmingly entrenched cultural and historical paradigms usual with

3 A referendum in Québec was held on October 30, 1995 — the second such in the last two decades — concerning the provincial government's proposition to create a sovereign and separate state of Québec, a secession from Canada. Residents of the province of Québec voted on the following question: "Do you agree that Québec should become sovereign, after having made a formal offer to Canada for a new Economic and Political Partnership, within the scope of the Bill respecting the future of Quebec and of the agreement signed on June 12, 1995?" The result of the referendum was No (no to secede) 49.5 % and Yes (sovereignty for Québec) 48.7% (see, e.g., *Globe and Mail* October 31, 1995, A1).

homogeneous societies in Europe or elsewhere. While this situation allowed and continues to allow the construct of a Canadian model of polyphonous cultural identity building, *previously* "homogeneous" societies such as Germany or Hungary would profit, in my opinion, from some of the aspects of identity construction in the Canadian model. My examples, obviously, while drawn from a varied geographical and political perspective, are to be understood in my insistence on the value of globalization and cosmopolitanism. As well, my examples illustrate the endemic situation of exclusion in the full range of the Western hemisphere and I submit that this is no different in Asia or Africa and we have ample evidence to support my assumption.

The Canadian model differs from American⁴ or various European models of cultural identity on this elementary level: it allows, more, it strives to create positive diversity at the cost of cultural homogeneity. At the same time, the allowance of positive diversity in turn creates a specific, Canadian "post-modern" cultural identity (see Gwyn) based on the following basic paradigms:

1) A freedom to choose: to accept and to exercise or to "neglect" specific expressions of cultural identity markers. For instance, a Hungarian immigrant may or may not choose to identify with and/or to maintain certain markers of "Hungarianness" or a Canadian-born individual of Scottish ancestry may or may not identify with certain markers of Scottish culture and expression. The individual's desire for or rejection of mainstream English-Canadian or Québécois-Canadian acculturation is independent — at large — from political, cultural, economic, social, etc. pressures. While the marginalization of ethnic minority individuals and groups (visible or Caucasian) is strong in Canada depending on specific real or imaginary situations, this marginalization amounts to significantly lesser extent than in, for example, Germany or Hungary.

2) From the above relative freedom to identify with and/or to exercise or not to exercise specific cultural identity markers comes the specifically Canadian environment of "space allowance." Under "space allowance" I understand that Canadian characteristic of allowing those who chose to exhibit or to express a specific identity marker — may that be a Sikh turban, Scottish Highland dancing, or other similar cultural identity markers, albeit on the surface superficial, in reality based on deeply rooted identity constructs — to live with it as the individual's or group's *choice* of identity expression in a relatively and comparatively free approximation. This environment of approximation counteracts notions of traditional cultural homogeneity.

It should be pointed out here that the specifically Canadian model of the said environment of cultural identity approximation is only comparatively an advan-

4 Although the "melting pot" paradigm is still an overriding and powerful aspect and perspective in American politics and culture, the paradigm of multiculturalism is gaining ground. For an informative survey of new developments in the last decade, see Yamada.

cement of social construction. In comparison with the American model of the "melting pot,"⁵ where to become an American implies the shedding of the immigrant's past or original cultural identity in favour of an American social and cultural identity or the commonly held European insistence on the immigrant's assimilation and acculturation to the "homogeneous" culture of the receiving society, the Canadian model is clearly preferable. The reasons are obvious. We live in an age of mass migrations of diverse populations, affecting the technologically advanced parts of the world, i.e., the Western hemisphere. One cannot either physically shut down all borders nor is it possible to wish away the impact of (im)migration and the mass movement of populations. Hence my argument that apart from a "universal" ethics of Humanism or liberalism, it makes no sense to insist on the maintenance of cultural homogeneity and its hegemony in any society. Positive cultural diversity means recognition and consequently inclusion; cultural homogeneity and hegemony means marginalization and consequently exclusion. Importantly, it makes no sense to do such in terms of the basic force of existence of the Western hemisphere, that of business capitalism and market orientation: the (im)migrant populations constitute a *presence*, they are a significant *market*. Therefore, it is preferable and a demonstration of business acumen to create an environment where positive cultural diversity is officially sanctioned and promoted by the various levels of government, the business community, the educational system, etc., in other words, in the whole of social discourse. The German voice, for instance, where the presence of ethnicity and (im)migration is perceived as "a ethnification of the country and its political structure paves the road to a constant lack piece" (Schmid; my translation) is misdirected. A similar argument — although more differentiated in a curious lapsus of logic — is proposed by Johannes Heinrichs: "the stronger our national identity proves to be, the more people we will be able to integrate, at the least" (118; my translation). In the case of Germany, for instance, it is a call for the maintenance of cultural homogeneity essentially by force, the continuation of such as the resistance to grant German citizenship to German-born "ethnics"/"foreigners," and thus disclaiming the *presence* and the recognition of the real situation of a culturally diverse society. It is exactly to the contrary to what the authors of the above excerpts assert: the non-recognition and approximation of (im)migrants will lead to hostility and a counter-productive social discourse resulting in unnecessary social, political, economic, *and* cultural tension and destabilization.

While it is true that the call for cultural homogeneity is a natural human act, it is the responsibility of any society's intellectual, political, economic, and

5 For an essentially similar argument for recognition and inclusion rather than cultural homogeneity and the concept of the "melting pot" in the context of the United States see Moynihan.

cultural leadership to educate and to legislate in counteracting the said "natural" desire to maintain cultural homogeneity and hegemony.

In closing my introductory theoretical arguments, I would like to draw attention to Richard Falk's postulate of "humane governance" and to his last of ten dimensions of his normative project:

Cosmopolitan Democracy: This is the binding idea of democracy encompassing all relationships, providing the grounds of institutional legitimacy, and establishing the basis for procedures and practices linking individuals and groups with institutions. It is becoming the pervasive underpinning that has been evolving along several tracks for several centuries, and now, in tandem with technology and high finance, is necessarily operative across statist boundaries as well as within them. Of course, leadership styles based on hierarchy and soft authoritarianism remain potent realities, especially in the Asian/Pacific region and in Islamic countries; elsewhere, a democratic facade is fashioned to hide the persistence of authoritarian institutional controls. But what gives promise to the vision of cosmopolitan democracy is the legitimation of democratic ideas of governance on a universal basis, the embodiment of these ideas in human rights as specified global instruments, the democratic implications of nonviolent approaches to resistance and reform, and most of all, the deeply democratic convictions of transnational initiatives that have begun to construct the alternative paradigm of a global civil society. (254)

East Central Europe and Germany

In my extended and global perspective, I will now focus on the conceptually parallel situation of European integration. It appears to me that the current situation of Europe will give some insights with regard to the multicultural approach as based on the Canadian model. By drawing on an extended example, we should be able to recognize the applicability as well as attractive and pragmatic reasoning embedded in the Canadian model. Most importantly, the applicability of the Canadian model to the European situation underlines my argument that the global perspective is clearly preferable to the national, regional, or local.

That countries of Central or East Central Europe constitute — to various degrees and to various levels — a specific cultural *noyau* has long been argued and there is a sizable amount of secondary literature in various disciplines about it (see, for example, Ash; Bojtár; Nemoianu; Tötösy 1995, 1996a). It is also a matter of considerable importance that Germany exerts and exercises cultural and economic influence in Central and East Central Europe. Cultural, political, economic, etc. arguments for closer ties among countries such as Austria, Hungary, the Czech and Slovak Republics, Romania, Slovenia, and Poland, especially after the demise of Soviet domination, abound. Austria recently joined the European Community and the countries of the former Soviet hemisphere in Europe would like to follow suit as soon as possible. It is well known that the

"centre-power" countries of the EU (Britain, France, and Germany) pay close attention to the drain of their own economic strength owing to transfer payments and aid packages to countries of the "periphery." In my opinion, the main problem of entry of East Central European countries in the EU is based on economic considerations while political consideration serve only as a secondary and rhetorical purpose. However, while I postulate that the entry of East Central European countries in the EU depends on economic parameters, in turn, the base of economic performance is to be found in cultural parameters and in cultural identity (see, for example, Braveboy-Wagner). Here, I will propose a theoretical framework which can serve as a tool to further elucidate and to serve for the understanding the problematics of social discourse I described above.

The situation of Germany in its internal aspects of cultural homogeneity and the real presence of (im)migrant groups versus positive cultural diversity as well as the same in Hungary or in other East Central European countries may be transferred to the larger context of the problematics of European integration (see, for example, Bojtár; Bos; Ester; Glatz; Hassner; Lützel; Nagy; Niedermüller; Tschernokoshewa).⁶ My theoretical postulate is based on an adaptation of the notions of post-colonialism and the question of the centre / periphery configuration. The theoretical framework I propose is the Polysystem Theory.⁷ With reference to literature — which, I postulate, is applicable here to the problematics of cultural identity — Itamar Even-Zohar, in his *Polysystem Studies*, argues that a dominant literature, otherwise also viewed as "source" literature, in the case of colonial literatures "imposes its language and texts on a subjugated community" (68). For the purposes of my discussion here, I understand language not only in its primary linguistic function and as one of its further functions as literature, but also within the context of cultural identity building. In most cases, this influence is not immediately obvious or clear but the influence on identity building and culture of a centre power exerts nevertheless an impact that can be observed and analyzed.

The notion of "centre and margin" has been also elucidated by Trinh T. Minh-Ha, in her well-known article, "No Master Territories": "To use margina-

6 For relevant discussions of East Central European immigrants and the question of national identity in Austria — a country that, in turn, lies equally in the sphere of influence of Germany — see Wodak (1996, 1997) and Cillia et al.

7 For a detailed introduction of systemic approaches as a subsystem of social-communicative action and social discourse, applicable to culture and literature, including the theoretical frameworks of the Polysystem Theory, the Systemic and Empirical Approach to Literature, and the *l'institution littéraire* approach see Tötösy (1992), for the application of the systemic and empirical approach to literature to ethnicity and ethnic minority writing in the context of mainstream versus minority culture and cultural identity see Tötösy 1996b, and for a recent anthology containing theoretical articles and applications, and with a selected bibliography, see Tötösy and Sywenky.

lity as a starting point rather than an ending point is also to cross beyond it towards other affirmations and negations" (216). In both Even-Zohar and Trinh's frameworks the main argument is that the centre, while obviously exerting power and influence, nevertheless must be mediated if we are to understand the margin, or, in terms of my proposal, the periphery. My differentiation between the notions of "margin" and "periphery" stems from the point of view that the notion of margin is too radical and only applicable to a limited set of situations, e.g., the British marginalization of its colonies which was followed by the post-colonial situation, while periphery allows for a view where mediation between centre and periphery is accounted for.

It is no secret that Hungary — along with its neighbours, the Czech and Slovak republics, Romania, Poland, Slovenia, etc. — is on the European periphery politically, culturally, and economically. Here is an example of the German perception of Hungary's position, one which I personally also accept: "Hungary must open itself culturally to the outside if it truly aspires to join that European community and tradition they feel they belong to" (Scherrer 113; see also Tötösy 1995, 1996a). This perception of the peripheral situation clearly connects to the problematics of cultural identity. While there is no doubt in my mind that Hungary, for instance, must both open itself towards Europe by counteracting its nationalism, regionalism, and parochialism — in essence a significant modification of the notion of a Hungarian cultural homogeneity and consequently its narrow definition of cultural identity — Germany, as a centre power, must adopt an approach towards positive cultural diversity not only internally but also in the master narrative of social discourse in the context of a European community. Theoretically speaking, this peripheral *locus* can be applied to various — and a large number of — situations: in the case of Hungary and its East Central European neighbours it means a "postcolonial" situation (see my discussion on this in detail in 1999) while in the case of Ethnic Minorities and their cultures and literatures it means a similar situation and *locus* of peripherality.

The centre/periphery situation of Hungary with regards specifically to Germany may be briefly illustrated with an example I have from a conference on "European Cultural Identity" at University of Halle-Wittenberg (November 1995). The example is outstanding because of its location, a scholarly conference on *European Cultural Identity*: because of the prescribed parameters of funding by the German federal and state governments, the conference organizers were obliged to concentrate on inviting, in the majority, German scholars. In addition, as the conference was a "closed" conference, that is, scholars who presented papers attended by invitation only thus *a priori* the possibility of participants from a higher variety of European regions was prevented by the organizers' focus on Germany proper, in turn responding to requirements by the funding agencies. Hence, there was virtually no represen-

tation of the "Other" Europe, such as East Central Europe or Southern Europe. Obviously, this administrative restriction results in intellectual as well as political impoverishment. Of course, what is important here is the paradigmatic effect of the situation with reference to the "Other" Europe and this did not go unnoticed by the audience. For instance, the reporter of Mitteldeutscher Radio approached me after the session for a brief interview and asked my opinion about the lack of representation of peripheral countries at a conference on "European Cultural Identity." Interestingly, the media — local and national — focussed on the notion of *European* cultural identity (see, for example, Grunwald). And here it becomes obvious what some of the participants as well as the media misunderstand: the importance of a *European* cultural identity is not to replace national identities and cultural homogeneities with another, albeit large and totalizing European cultural identity as one observer argues: "A larger and expanded dimension — the unification of Europe — can also result in the loss of identities. Europe is an imagined invention. In contrast, the existing regions [read, nation states *and* regions within] would appeal to the heart" (Grunewald 10). I agree with the author of the newspaper report and with the scholar who organized the conference in the above immediate context: a new and again homogenizing identity building will achieve little. It is the *recognition* of the other, *space allowance*, and an *environment of approximation* of the (im)migrant population — in the context of multiculturalism and positive cultural diversity as I postulate here — which will create a meaningful social discourse and free society from the ties and outgrowths of cultural homogeneity.

Conclusion

I argue that various modifications and the mediation of cultural homogeneity and hegemony is preferable to the insistence on their maintenance. My argument for this preference I base on, in the first instance, the unavoidable and real *presence* of (im)migrant groups in countries of the Western hemisphere, including such countries as Canada, Germany, or Hungary. Neither are educational, administrative, political, or cultural objectives of acculturation or the "melting pot" paradigm acceptable because such deny the basic possibilities of identity maintenance of the (im)migrant population. Instead, *recognition*, *space allowance*, and an *environment of approximation* for a polyphony of cultural identities offer a meaningful social discourse, from both the (im)migrants' point of view and *locus* and the given mainstream society. This freedom of possibilities will achieve a higher level of cultural identity approximation to the mainstream than otherwise, which, in turn, allows for a more profitable social discourse situation, including social, economic, and cultural stability at the same time resulting in effective and affective economic performance. Positive cultural diversity in the above configuration enriches any given society while the denial

of or resistance to the notion of multiculturalism and the polyphony of cultural identities invites social, political, economic, and cultural tension and limitations.

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EARLE H. WAUGH

The Structure of Religio-Cultural Adaptation: MacKay and Vandersteene, Missionaries Extraordinaires

Introduction

A thousand years hence, our progeny will certainly look back on the years 1250-2000 for the role that religion played in moving people and ideas around the globe; while the period may not have the succinctness of Karl Jasper's "Axial Age," it certainly sparked integrationist trends of sizeable proportions. In that span of time, literally thousands of individuals gave themselves over to the radical notion of reorienting millions to a particular vision of life and its meaning. Moreover, these people believed that such a universalist model of cultural construction could be accomplished for every living individual. We are only beginning to understand the resulting dynamics of such an impulse in human history.

The subjects of my analysis here are two individuals of quite different religious *ethoi*: George Leslie MacKay and Rogier Vandersteene. MacKay was Canadian-born, Vandersteene was a Flemish-speaking Belgian; both laboured among Aboriginal people with considerable acclaim. Their work bears close scrutiny as we examine some of the deeper reasons for their mission activity and its impact, not just for what they did, but for what it tells us about the motivations of the period of history that is about to come to an end. Obviously, this is to take a radically different perspective than the study of them within their own particular historical time-frames.

George Leslie MacKay

George Leslie MacKay was born to a Scottish Highlander, George MacKay and his wife Helen Sutherland, who had immigrated to Canada from the grim "Sutherlandshire Clearances," when tenant-farmers were driven from the land to make room for sheep (see MacKay; Austin). The MacKays went to Canada, where they cut and cleared a portion of land in Upper Canada in Zorra township

Canadian Culture and Literature. And a Taiwan Perspective

Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek and Yiu-nam Leung, eds.

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1998 ISBN 0-921490-10-0

near the present city of London, Ontario, built themselves a crofter's home, and began farming. George Leslie was born 21 March 1844. Raised in the strict Presbyterian environment of Ontario, young MacKay responded to the amazing hothouse that Zorra township became: he was one of thirty-three ministers, 24 medical doctors, three millionaires, and two college presidents that came out of the Sutherland emigrés:

Born in humble though Christian homes, reared amid hardships and sometimes want, they were unconsciously trained by a stern but kind Providence in those habits of temperance, economy and hard work which have brought them to the front in almost every department of life.... So far as known to the writer, no Zorra boy to-day is ashamed of either the porridge or the Catechism on which he was reared. (Austin 30)

Years later MacKay would write, "The paraphrase beginning with the words 'While humble shepherds watched their flocks in Bethlehem's plains by night,' repeated at my mother's knee in the quiet of the Sabbath evening, early made a deep impression on my soul. It was then that the thought of being a missionary first came" (16). It did not immediately germinate into a missionary training. Rather, he went to school and became a teacher. After regular school training, he took a job as a teacher at local school boards in Maplewood and Maitlandville, Ontario, then moved to Woodstock where he studied in grammar schools until he was accepted into the Arts programme at the University of Toronto. During summers he became part of the Presbyterian Church's outreach programme to rural Ontario and served in seven different posts. He came under the influence of the Reverend Robert P. MacKay, a relative who was to become secretary of the Presbyterian Foreign Missionary Committee, and John Henry Cody, another Zorra boy and the leading Anglican of Ontario and the founder of that Church's foreign missions society. Early in September, 1867 he went to Princeton Theological Seminary, where he revelled in the teaching of Dr. Charles Hodge, a theologian whose lectures were so powerful that he enthused: "How awed we sometimes were when that trembling hand came down on the desk and those lips quivered with a strange and holy speech!" (18-19). When he graduated in 1870, these connections led him to apply to the Western Division of the Free Church of Scotland, a church that had had a foreign missions organization for sixteen years but had failed to send one missionary. True to form, they were reluctant to sponsor him; MacKay sailed off to Scotland without knowing whether they would support him or not. Regardless, he wanted to take some training in Hinduism and Buddhism and to learn Hindustani, since he eventually hoped to go to India. At the University of Edinburgh he met his missionary idol, the noted "Apostle to India," Dr. Alexander Duff. MacKay had applied to go "to the heathen" (*sic*) abroad (MacKay 23).

He was finally appointed to go to China by the Presbyterian Church of Canada. However, making the rounds of the congregations, he found little

enthusiasm for his missionary zeal. The local ministers thought him an excitable young man while he thought the churches in "the ice age" (MacKay 24). His contacts in the British Isles, and particularly to the English Presbyterian Church, were the basis for his first approach to Taiwan, for when he arrived in southern part of the island, it was to see Rev. Hugh Ritchie who had himself nine mission stations. "I made good use of his Chinese teacher," MacKay tells us, "and mastered the eight 'tones' of the Formosa dialect" (32). Shortly thereafter he decided to proceed to the northern part of the island, where no mission station yet existed. Settling in Tamsui, he rented a house that had been used as a stable, and from this began a remarkable missionary career.

Successfully converting a Chinese student, Giam Cheng Hoa or A. Hoa, as he became known, he gathered about him a peripatetic group of students who followed him faithfully throughout the island. Wherever he went, he stopped to carry on the most dramatic of missionary enterprises: he would begin immediately to minister to the ill, pulling teeth, and diagnosing problems. Then he commenced what was to become a trademark of MacKay ritual, a strange mix of academic lecture, sermon, song, and tooth extraction: "Under a tree or by the sea-shore, or in the chapels, they received instruction in geography, astronomy, church history, anatomy, physiology, etc., but chiefly in Bible truth" (MacKay 316). Accordingly, MacKay began a career that he says resulted in him extracting 40,000 teeth and establishing sixty mission stations or chapels. It also allowed him to construct a boys' school in Tamsui called Oxford College, so named in recognition of the generous gift of \$6,000 from Oxford County in Ontario. It housed not only teaching facilities but, "There are idols enough to stock a temple, ancestral tablets and religious curios, musical instruments, priests' garments, and all the stock in trade of Chinese idolatry" (MacKay 289). MacKay took full advantage of an honorary doctorate and some medical training to use his influence to establish an influential hospital. Likewise, ahead of his time, he founded a girl's school. In all of these activities he was greatly assisted by a fortuitous marriage with a Chinese convert, Tui Chang Mia, who was called, in understated Canadian fashion, Minnie MacKay. Minnie's success made life virtually impossible for the wives of missionaries who wished to labour in the Formosan mission fields. MacKay took a very dim view of "foreign" woman for the Formosa missions, referring to them as those "charming ladies," and in his book spent one whole chapter outlining his philosophy, which he summarized as "native workers for native women" (297-307; see also Papageorge, 100-11).

Indeed, MacKay also found it difficult to work with some other male missionaries sent to aid him. On one occasion he railed to the committee about the complaints of John and Annie Jamieson that they had not been able to perform any missionary activity since being sent out, haranguing about base ingratitude and injustice, only to wire the committee later that they and he were working together quite acceptably. Confused and angry, the committee who had

recalled the Jamiesons on receipt of his first letter, agreed to their remaining, at half pay. As Austin notes, "The qualities that made him a 'missionary entrepreneur' also touched him with madness, a fact tacitly recognized at home" (Austin 32). The Taiwanese had called him *He Hu Tzu Man-je*, meaning "The Black-Bearded Barbarian," an appellation with several apparently contradictory meanings.

Given a furlough in 1894, he completed his magna opus about his mission life, *From Far Formosa*. MacKay credited the antagonism of the Japanese to Christianity with some of his success; he noted that "now hatred for the Japanese induced friendliness to the religion of the foreigner" (Austin 34). He died from cancer of the throat on 2 June 1901, certainly one of the most successful missionaries Canada ever produced.

Rogier Vandersteene

Rogier Vandersteene O.M.I. served with the Oblates in several Cree settlements in Northern Alberta from 1947-1976 (Waugh 1996). Baptised as Roger, he was later called Rogier by his mainly French-speaking colleagues in northern Alberta, and was widely known by that designation in Canada. He was born in Marke, the Flemish-speaking section of Belgium on 15 July 1918, eldest of the thirteen children of Adolf George Vandersteene and Julia Kerkhove. His father argued vehemently against him entering the priesthood, wishing him to remain at home and work in the family's horticultural business. Rogier was a strong defendant of Flemish nationalism, especially of Flemish linguistic claims, and was accused of supporting collaborators with the Germans because they had promised independence for the Flemish-speaking population. His role in this earned him the nickname "the priest with the black heart" because he actively pursued benefits for fellow-Flemish speakers against the French-speaking majority in Belgium. He trained locally for the priesthood and took his vows on 11 July 1943, and immediately applied for the toughest and poorest of the Oblate missions, notably those among the Inuit in Canada's Arctic. However, he was sent to Alberta where he served in Wabasca 1946-49 and in Little Red River and Fort Vermilion from 1949 to 1953. In 1955 he published *Wabasca*, a book based on his early experience among the Cree; the book was popular in Belgium and was translated into French. In the book, Vandersteene described *wikkokkewin*, the ceremony for inducting the spirit of the recently deceased to the other world and welcoming the spirit ancestors of the tribe to a winter celebration in their honour. This ceremony became the basis for a revised Catholic mass, incorporating many Cree emblems. He then returned to Wabasca until 1956, when he was assigned to Trout Lake in 1957 where he remained until 1968. So thoroughly did he involve himself in the Cree community, and so confident were the Cree medicine men of his intentions that, when he had a medicine pipe

transferred to him, they began passing on secret medical lore. At the same time, the Bishop urged him to go to Grouard to act as overseer of the missions and develop a Cree missions policy. After five years, he asked to be returned to mission work and he was sent to the remote Jean D'Or Prairie, Fox Lake, and Garden River (at the south westerly edge of Wood Buffalo National Park). In 1975, he learned that he had pulmonary cancer from the Cross Cancer Clinic in Edmonton. Following the preliminary treatments, he returned to his duties. He sought out and was doctored by two medicine men, but he died during an asthmatic attack in Slave Lake on the 7 August 1976. He was interred in the Oblate section of the Girouville cemetery, after both Native and Church burial ceremonies.

The Cultural Matrix and the Mission Enterprise

Of all the cultural components utilized by these two individuals in their work, language was basic. In this emphasis they reflect the conclusion of research that has only just now been investigated: Pool, Milroy, and Chambers, for example, have conclusively established in their studies in linguistics that language use is a key ingredient in and of social identity (see Pool 5-21; Milroy and Milroy; Chambers). Both MacKay and Vandersteene seem to have realized this early in their careers and, in addition, they each learned the Aboriginal language they understood as a necessary ingredient in their work in quite unorthodox ways.

MacKay gave up on trying to use teachers. Rather, he wandered out in the countryside, befriended the boys who were tending the water-buffaloes, and spent four or five hours a day listening to them talk and slowly conversing with them. Each word or phrase was carefully written down, memorized, and utilized when he went back home to talk to his servant. Wearied by the barrage of queries, the old man left and never returned. But MacKay persevered. The pattern became routine: during the evening, he worked through the English-Chinese dictionary, while during the day, he doggedly carried on conversations with the buffalo herd-boys. So successful was he that, he tells us, within five months he could preach his first sermon in Chinese. By contrast, Vandersteene began by working with old father Floc'h, who had laboured for years among the Cree and was an excellent Cree speaker. Words were written on small pieces of paper and tied to his gun site, and he forced himself to learn a word before shooting a rabbit for dinner. So thoroughly did he learn the language that he became known by the Cree epithet of *Ka nihta Nehiyawet*, "He Who Speaks Cree." His command of Cree mixed well with his Flemish character and language abilities; as he contended, "A Fleming understands better than anybody that the language of a people is its main artery" (Tanghe 56). His experience of the Flemish language and its cultural significance and context of subjugation gave him an insight into Cree. For instance, he was entranced by

the way Cree could give an instant photograph of a situation and he liked the ease with which new words could be formed, just by connecting elements of meanings together. In his meetings with colleagues, he could speak eloquently about the treasures of the Cree language and he pressed academics to study Cree for its possible relationship to German and Dutch. In 1971 he attended a conference on Cree Syllabics in Winnipeg. His comments, set in the controversies of bilingualism in Canada, nevertheless sum up the attitude he formed toward Cree:

Cree is a beautiful language that should not be allowed to die. It is spoken, in several dialect, nearly clear across Canada and in parts of the United States. It belongs to the Algonquin family of languages.... Missionaries and traders who learned it themselves and taught it to the people were doing a very wise thing. English or French taught in schools were often forgotten quickly by the native children when they returned to their communities, and those who did not forget completely did not further develop. Their reading consisted mostly in comic strips.... Many books and articles were printed and still are reprinted in syllabics in Cree, Montagnais and Eskimo, mostly of a religious nature. Lately, however, the state took over all education in all its ramifications and native languages started to suffer. No more Cree in schools. It has been banished locally, even from recess periods and recreational halls, and propaganda is being made to have the children speak more English at home, even when parents do not understand it. A painful spiritual poverty of the children is the result of such actions. The authority of the parents is broken, respect for their own history and culture is replaced by a false sense of superiority. Mature people and children are alienated, to the detriment of both. Undigested ideas make an unreal and unrealistic atmosphere in which dissatisfaction and frustration abound. (qtd. in Waugh 91)

His dedication to the Cree language ultimately brought him into conflict with the residential school policy and the provincial government. The policy was that children were not allowed to speak Cree on school grounds, and if caught doing so, they were to be punished. Vandersteene fought this policy with all his might, even against fellow missionaries. For both these missionaries, then, the matrix out of which mission activity must evolve is language in its full cultural and ideological context: it is the distinctive language that must be the vehicle for mission accomplishment, affirming that religion is conveyed through the meaning of local discourse. Religion can be translated from one cultural context to another because it operates in a living oral tradition. It is that medium that carries the existential power of personal experience, an essential element in the conversion process. The assumption behind this is that religio-cultural adaptation must begin with a discourse that enshrines a personal involvement with spiritual forces. Once this "spiritual discourse" has been accepted into the host language a new religious reality can come into being. This religious reality will have its own style and meaning, in short its own cultural compartment.

Both MacKay and Vandersteene came into social environments that were highly complex. The intermix of aboriginal, Chinese, Japanese, and Western inhabitants, as well as the constant movement between mainland China and the island has woven a complicated cultural matrix in Taiwan (see Hsieh 125-39; Goddard; Davidson; MacKay 41-47). Despite the extravagant claims of gods surrendered and destroyed, MacKay was much more subtle than appears on the surface. His most clear policy is stated in his book: "It is my custom never to denounce or revile what is so sacredly cherished, but rather to recognize whatever of truth or beauty there is in it, and to utilize it as an "open sesame" to the heart" (133). Such a utilitarian attitude allowed him to tolerate the slow surrender of the "idols" and the tablet with ancestral names inscribed thereon. Indeed, MacKay was quite honest in his respect for Confucian filial piety:

There are some things that appeal to human nature in this ancestral idolatry. Its motive may be fear, but its basis is filial piety. And there is something very solemn about their annual family gatherings before the spirit-tablets of their dead. The most sacred time in all the Chinese calendar is the last night of the old year, when the chief family feast is held and sacrifices are offered to the ancestral guests. To be present on such an occasion, the son returns home, it may be, from beyond the Pacific. The household assemble in their family oratory. No stranger is there. Before them are the sacred tablets, their household gods, and with reverence they present their offerings, burn their sacrifices, and bow themselves to worship.... This ancestral feast on the last night of the year is to the Chinese what Passover night is to the pious Jew. (MacKay 133)

In other places, MacKay acknowledges the benefits of mission work in a Chinese locale already "civilized" — this is apparently a continual theme among Christian pastors (see, for example, Yu, especially his comments on the life of the "savage" woman. He sees her life one of constant drudgery and hardship, leaving her aged far before her time) — as he notes "when her civilized sister is in her prime she is worn, haggard, and utterly repulsive in her decrepit ugliness" (265). His answer to this degrading situation is "centuries of civilization and the influence of Christianity [which] would equalize the burden of men and women, and teach those idle braves that the weaker sex is not the beast of burdens for the lords of the tribe" (MacKay 265). The picture he paints of the Aborigine is laced with conceptions that we would today perceive as having obvious racial overtones, for example: "The blankness of their moral life, the blindness of their spiritual vision, the darkness — not absence — of their receptive faculties make the effort to move them with the dynamic of truth a seemingly hopeless task" (MacKay 266). Clearly there is a profound difference in the way he looks at the Chinese population and the so-called "savages."

Vandersteene's sympathy for Cree culture led him early to explore traditional Cree ceremonial. During one of these explorations, he was invited to the *wikkokkewin*. The experience was such an eye-opener for him that its description

was the centre-piece of his book *Wabasca* and it had, consequently, a dramatic impact on his understanding of the Cree. But the *wikkokkewin* was not the only sensitivity he had to Cree tradition: when a fellow priest broke an old man's peace pipe as a sign of disgust, Vandersteene fixed the pipe and returned it to the old man. He studied Cree ritual to the extent that he began arguing for a genuine Cree-Christian liturgy. In all matters of Cree liturgy, Vandersteene emphasized the essential *kaseyitam* or the "singularity" of the Cree, a characteristic that has dimensions of the "lone wolf" in it; because of that cultural characteristic, he rejected the use of popular Christian phrases, like "Amen," "So be it," or even of the notation in the mass of "Be seated," a phrase, when translated into Cree, bordered on the obscene. They are corporate expressions that imply group submission to certain rules. Vandersteene believed that such protocols went against Cree culture, resulting in the people pulling back into passive resistance. On the same grounds he warned against the use of standard occasions of greeting, hello and goodbye, hand-shaking, or even the "kiss of peace" that often were utilized in White services as a way to establishing rapport and elevate the sense of congregational cohesion. None of these activities have any following in Cree culture and are rejected by them. Mindful that the *Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy* (see Jungmann) set up the goal of "full active participation" by all members of the congregation, even to radical alteration if necessary to make the liturgy more acceptable, he argued for the use of Cree instruments, drums, and the adoption of Cree tunes and phrasings throughout. Further, Vandersteene suggested raising silence to a central position in the liturgy, because he insisted that silence was a medium through which Crees communed more effectively with their spiritual selves. In the same vein, he insisted that the "Our Father" be acculturated, being replaced by a liturgical chant of *Kisemanitou* with sheep beside still waters replaced by phrases more related to Cree lifestyle, such as a warm fire in a cabin during a snowstorm (see Waugh 136-37). In short, it was a theory to rely on Cree conceptions for both the preservation of the Cree people and the development of a new sense of being Christian.

In their attitudes to culture we can see evident differences in treatment between these two missionaries, some of which has to do with changed conceptions of culture and progressive work on intercultural understanding, but much of it having to do with the quite distinctive cultural differences of the missionaries themselves: after all, Vandersteene was European, living in a Canada with strong European roots; MacKay was a Canadian of strong European flavour, working in an environment totally foreign to his conceptual system. Still, it is striking how pragmatic they both were concerning the cultural foundation of the people and the role it could play in aiding in conversion to Christianity. For example, in both, the stress on teaching from an establishment

literate tradition drew heavily from European and Confucian models.¹ In both, the immediacy of personal experience was essential to give religion its meaning; in both, cultural protocols were largely accepted; in both, liturgy could not be imported, it had to be locally fashioned; in both, local religio-cultural expressions were not to be denigrated. In sum, MacKay and Vandersteene recognized the structural priority of the host culture in the conversion enterprise. At the same time, they both felt that their vision of religious meaning could be built upon this culture and their assumption was that there was sufficient traits within the culture towards which to orient their message, and these traits could then be utilized for the construction of the Christian community. Their confidence in the integrative possibilities of their vision is an important feature of the global mission enterprise (for a negative assessment of such a possibility see Gernet).

Healing as an Instrument in Cultural Modification

It is perhaps understandable that health would play a role in mission life, since Jesus himself provides the model for the healing preacher (for a general examination of Protestant medical missionaries in China, see Choa). The role of health in religion is a complicated one, of which we are only now beginning to comprehend the ramifications (see Sodhi; Shapiro; Lee; *Alternative Medicine*). Even at the practical level in MacKay's day, a medical missionary required several years of advanced medical work. Once again both missionaries were unorthodox on the issue. They practiced as if health was a key ingredient to the gospel's expression although, unfortunately, both had taken minimal training in medical procedures, MacKay in medical procedures and oral health, Vandersteene in midwifery.

MacKay was much more traditional in his vision of health. He made his reputation with his forceps in one hand and his Bible in the other: "Our usual custom in touring through the country is to take our stand in an open space, often on the stone steps of a temple, and after singing a hymn or two, proceed to extract teeth, and then preach the message of the gospel" (315-16). In the long term, he built a hospital and clinic where Western medicine could be practiced among the people. The relationship of medicine to mission would be of concern to the readers of MacKay's book, but still, he was quite honest about its role. It was a social service, available for believer and unbeliever alike. His attitude is summed up by "large numbers were cured during these twenty years, many more were relieved, and the services rendered made them much more kindly disposed towards the mission" (MacKay 317).

Vandersteene, on the other hand, had a ritual medicine pipe transferred to

1 There is a considerable debate among scholars and others about the role of Confucianism in the modernization process in Asia (see, for example, Hendrischke; Brodsgaard).

him by a dying shaman, and that pipe gave him access to healing traditions among the Cree. He became known as a Medicine Man. He collected and grew plants from all over Alberta in his Trout Lake garden in his attempt to draw upon the healing traditions of the Cree. Yet, as is traditional among healers, he seldom talked of his healing powers. Under the impetus of invitations and opportunities, Vandersteene widened his scope of people to whom he shared his ideas and his spiritual insights. One area that I was able to explore was his use of dreams. He built upon the widespread belief among Cree people in the validity of the dream. Visiting one Emilia in hospital in Edmonton, he listened as she related to him how, for two years she had suffered from pains in her head, so much so that her eyes seemed slowly to be losing sight. Before going, he rose, and gently placed his hand on her head, said a small prayer and left. Emilia settled down for the night. She continued: "I began to dream. As I dreamed, I saw Fr. Vandersteene enter the hospital room. He was dressed entirely in white. He spoke to me, as he came right up to my bed. Then he was gone. When I awoke the pain was gone and my eyesight was normal" (qtd. in Waugh 139). When she saw him the next time, she related the dream and the relief she now enjoyed. He laughed and allowed how it could not be he since he only wore baggy old green pants. But it is evident that Vandersteene was not laughing at the dream *per se*. And evidence such as his mother had been a firm believer in the power of dreams and Flemish folk belief accepts the importance of them are of some import here. In *Wabasca*, he sketched the Cree justification for dream power:

On His own part, God takes the initiative of entering into relationship with his people. He does this especially by means of dreams (*pawatamyuwin*) which He sent to the wise men and which, very probably, He still send at the present time. From these dreams come the first sacred songs — detailed narratives of the mystical experience of the visionary — which unfortunately have become partially unintelligible because of lack of precision due to too long an oral tradition. Thanks to these dreams, the knowledge of the medicinal properties of many tree roots, barks, leaves, and all sort of plants was revealed to them. Certain dreams have instigated prophesies and councils which were the origin of profound and radical conversions. The Cree is deeply convinced that God will nurture and protect His people, cure them and guide them, and fight on their side; for without God, His people would be unable to survive unharmed the incessant dangers with which the evil spirits worry them. The occult powers are so numerous that it is impossible for men to discover them all. (61)

For Vandersteene, the healing traditions of the Cree were efficacious, and he utilized them for his own illnesses; MacKay, on the other hand, was adamant: "I have no more faith in the prescriptions of the native doctors than I have in those of the priests or sorcerers" (MacKay 313; for discussion of medicine in China see Jewell; Hillier and Jewell 3-27). Because of this, he trained all the native preachers in rudimentary medicine. Yet if both saw health and healing to be part

of the gospel message, they integrated it into their work in different ways. Most informants knew little of Vandersteene's healing abilities while MacKay was quite bold to utilize it in his work. Even so, they both recognized that the religious discourse could not be separated from the wider ramifications of health and welfare; both developed a health ideology that included the interconnection of religion and culture in a more fundamental way than just as a tool for conversion. Their views imply a relationship between religion and culture such that the language of the former may dominate, but which requires the context of the later to give it specificity and concreteness.

Religion as Interstitial

Despite their many differences, both missionaries ended with a conception of religio-cultural adaptation rather than religious displacement. Indeed, we see here another example of how varied the motivations for mission can be. This conception is a decidedly recent and tolerant one, more reflective of a liberal than a vigorous evangelical consciousness. While we may read all those celebratory stories in MacKay's book about massive idol-burnings, a more accurate picture can be gleaned from between the lines. For example, in his tour through the Aboriginal Pepohuan territory in Taiwan, he describes an occasion when the whole village is purged of idols after the headmen indicate acceptance of Christianity. Even the chief mocked the pile of burning effigies. One would have thought that Christianity had truly triumphed. Yet he adds:

If I know anything about it, if twenty-three years of experience be of value, then I should say the work was only begun. I do not believe in perfection this side of the "river," but such converts as we have in Formosa, like some we have in America, are a long way from what is attainable here. Many things are needed in leading them on. One thing before all things else is needful, viz., patience. (MacKay 236)

He may say this because the military mandarin had told the village they had to retain their idols as tokens of their subjugation to China, thus certainly shifting "conversion" into a statement of independence from Chinese authority (MacKay 231). For MacKay, then, while ideologically Christianity was seen to be displacement, in reality it was a slow shift of allegiances and uneven modification of attitudes and cultural markers. For Vandersteene, the cultural structures of Cree existence are foundational and one must draw upon the sacred elements present there to formulate a new Cree Christianity. To use New Testament imagery, what is essential is the wine, not the wineskin. Discard the European wineskin that hampers access to the wine and so he found the most apt structure to be the Cree ceremonial of the *wikkokkewin*. His vision is based upon the refined model of what he called the "Tent of the Ancestors." In *Pole et Tropiques*, Vandersteene wrote:

Yonder, in the great tent of the Ancestors, I have made a marvellous discovery. I have assisted at a strange ceremony that fell into three parts. The first part was a sort of meditation: old legends of the Cree Indians were narrated. The story of Creation was told, more or less like the Bible, re-lived by the Cree Indians in song and dance. This happens in the presence of "past and future." In the presence of the past, because all the deceased are invited and are present in the form of dolls. Indeed, whenever anybody dies, a lock of hair of the dead person is put inside a doll. Some of the dolls have become quite bulky. They are sure to contain the hair of ancestors that died a very long time ago. As the "skin" of these dolls can easily be replaced when they are threadbare, the tribe can preserve them without much trouble for many centuries. Hence, through these dolls, the ancestors are symbolically present. In the presence of the future, too. The future is there in the person of the women who are carrying babies. In the second part of the ceremony an offering takes place. While the past is present in the form of dolls and the future in the presence of pregnant women, and whereas one has been meditating on Manitou's goodness, it is fit to offer Him a worthy sacrifice: meat that is consumed by fire. A third part introduces the rite of communion. Everyone present sits down in a circle and eats from that meat, after the "peace pipe" has gone round. Isn't that fantastic? Not one single Indian has heard the word of Christ: "When you bring your offering to the altar and you remember that somebody has something against you ... go first and be reconciled with him." They have never heard this and yet they experience that need far more strongly than we do. Being reconciled, they can now share the meat. When the love-feast is over, all remain seated, because the conversation, the dancing and the singing continues in earnest. And so this being together goes on until sunrise. The nocturnal ceremony ends with the dismissal, reminiscent in a way of our "Ite Missa Est." Suddenly the drums roll so vehemently that one's eardrums are in danger of breaking; shouts and howling are all around you and never seem to stop. In this way they send their dead away, back to their darkness. This moment is so lugubrious that children begin to cry. (26)

His vision of its possibilities did not immediately strike him; he remarked that fifteen years had gone by before he understood how this could be adapted to the Eucharist. When he finally did, this is how he indicates that he will combine the two rituals when they consecrate the new church/ancestral structure during the consecration night:

Procession: 1. Elders (having at least one grandchild) with drums; 2. Bishop; 3. Vandersteene and Sisters. Consecration Ceremony: 1. Invocation of the Spirits; 2. Elders, carrying bear fat, circle church; 3. Bishop, carrying holy oil, circles church; 4. Elders, makes ribbon offering to manitokkan at altar (three different colours); 5. Bishop consecrates manitokkan; 6. Elders consecrate altar (bear fat); 7. Bishop consecrates altar (holy oil). Offering: Presentation of offering to ministers. Invocation: 1. Elders stand and name all tribal members of honest memory; 2. Entrance of the dancing dolls; 3. Vandersteene invokes sainted Christians, St. Therese of Lisieux, the Virgin Mary, St. Catherine, martyrs of Uganda; 4. Elders invoke Christian saints; 5. Bishop invokes French-Canadian Saints; 6. Vandersteene invokes Charles the Good and St. Lutgard. Dance Ceremonial: 1. Elders; 2. Bishop, with crosier; 3. Fr. Provincial, carrying statue

of Mary; 4. Proceeds nine times around fires at altar. Texts/Scripture: 1. Elders, creation story; 2. Vandersteene, Genesis, creation story; 3. Epistle, with Our Lady brought to front; 4. "Doll" of Jesus tied to Virgin Mary. Sacrifices: 1. Elders to altar with meat and water; 2. Vandersteene to altar with real bread (not wafer). Eucharist: 1. Traditional offertory, with explanations in Cree. Mass Prayers: 1. To unborn babies; 2. To the dead, in form of dolls; 3. For Pope, Bishop; 4. Celebration of presence of Christ. Smoking of pipe: Pass to all (sign of peace). Feast: All eat and drink to capacity. Dismissal: 1. Strong address to ancestors: Return!; 2. Recession. (Qtd. in Waugh 148-49)

This program of worship was to be followed twice a year, reminiscent of the tea dances spring and fall, although it would not contain the consecration elements of the altar and the building. Thus a new religious reality comes into existence when the old form, that is, European Christianity, is unable to provide the cultural base for the message. What was envisioned was an institutional "Cree Christianity." Until this is in place, there will be an environment of transition, where the envisaged religion operates as a conceptual frame, developing out of the religion and culture in place.

For both MacKay and Vandersteene, then, the religious reality is one of transitional process, when the transformation of the environment is underway, but the foundational views have not yet shifted significantly. Moreover, the religious situation can be said to be interstitial, that is, alternative models of religion are operational but not institutionally and culturally sustained.

Religio-Cultural Adaptation and the Mission Enterprise

Both MacKay and Vandersteene relied upon a resilient cultural base for their missionary activities and both affirmed that religion could only have permanence if it was expressed in the idiom and carried on its discourse within the cultural boundaries of the people. It is relevant here to point out that both missionaries came from essentially developing agrarian, small farming communities and background: Vandersteene from a horticultural region of a small nation, MacKay from a rural homesteading area in developing Ontario. Both had marginalization as an important component: Vandersteene from the Flemish-speaking minority in Belgium, MacKay from the clearances of Scotland. These ingredients gave them an affinity for the people they served. Both held that there was something absolutely unique about the Christian tradition and obviously both believed that tradition to be superior to all others, yet neither accepted that conversion meant cultural displacement. Rather, both held that religion could alter attitudes within the existing cultural base. MacKay may have had significant success among the Chinese in Taiwan, but he was under no illusion of his impact on the mountain Aboriginal peoples: "Our work among the savages is little more than skirmishing ... their receptive faculties make the effort to move them with the dynamic of truth a seemingly hopeless task" (MacKay 265-66). Still, he credited

them with a sense of moral rectitude that was not translatable into the civilizational model of either Confucianism nor of Christianity. He seems to have thought that it reflected another type of religious terrain:

These savages are singularly free from many moral and social vices common alike among civilized and uncivilized peoples. Gambling and opium-smoking are very rare; murder, theft, incendiarism, polygamy, and social impurity are almost unknown, except where the baneful influence of Chinese traders and border-men has corrupted the simplicity of the savage ... among themselves crime is rare. (MacKay 258)

He seems to have been aware that he and the Aboriginal peoples had a common tie: they were not Chinese. On one occasion, upon entering an Aboriginal village, one villager told him "You have no cue; you must be our kinsman" (MacKay 260) and, as noted above, he thought his work was made easier when the Japanese invaded. There was, then, a political dimension to his achievements that was outside and in addition to his objectives. Moreover, MacKay seemed to sense the divide between the Chinese and Aboriginal people and determined that he would occupy a place of neutrality between them. Yet, on the efficacy of bringing the gospel to the Aborigines, MacKay was pointed: the only people who could convert the Aboriginal people would be Aboriginals themselves. He held that it required the cultural base of a local person to adapt the Christian message to the people. Those among whom some success was achieved were those who had adopted Chinese civilization, and in these partially "civilized" areas he was able to found churches (MacKay 238-40; for a study of Canadian missionaries in China and the rural environment, see Mitchell). However, it is remarkable that the Aboriginals seemed to be less antagonistic to him than to the Chinese, and perhaps thus more welcoming to his religion. One wonders whether it had something to do with his less forceful attitude, because he seemed to hold that they would have to be civilized before they could truly become Christians, a factor that probably slowed his evangelistic enthusiasm: "You black-bearded barbarian, with your Chinese disciples, must either leave in the morning or stay in the house for three days" (238) was the letter that greeted him upon entering Sekhouan. He recounts one case where a letter had clandestinely warned him away from the aboriginal peoples on pain of death, but he determined many years later it was a Chinese person who wrote it; the Aboriginals were entirely welcoming of his party (240).

Vandersteene, on the other hand, affirmed one fundamental principle necessary in the Canadian Cree-Christian environment: to act in such a way as to maintain the moral vision of God's creativity in religions. He was governed by the conception that destroying another religion was destroying the work of God: "Every nation is an idea of God, every culture is an answer to that idea. Once it is supernaturally lifted-up by liturgy, Indian culture becomes eternal in God, even though it eventually disappears as any other human culture." It

follows, then, that every religion is the creative expression of God through distinctive cultures, which, through its own liturgy, finds a place of worship in God. Interestingly, Vandersteene's conflicts with his own principles arise most notably with Protestants. The reason for this lies, I think, in the uprooting of the Trout Lake church by the Alliance and Pentecostals. His notion of the Cree character would not predispose the Crees to his Church, even to a Cree-ritualized Church. Vandersteene must have realized that the Cree "essence" was even more complicated than he had assumed: his notion of a single Cree ritual arising out of a Cree cultural core was contradicted by the readiness of his parishioners to abandon his "interstitial" religion for what he thought was much to much a simplistic Christianity. What must be done, he thought, is preserving the essential character of that religion by merging with it the critical distinctive of the Christian tradition. Out of this he believed would come a genuine kind of local Christianity. His view has certain elements in common with MacKay, that is, the basic moral perspective toward the Aboriginal culture. However, unlike Vandersteene, who held Cree culture to be quite acceptable for the Aboriginal peoples, MacKay held little hope for their survival as Aboriginals: "The aborigines cannot survive the coming and presence of the dominant race ... the first touch of the civilized man is the touch of death" (MacKay 248; for a study of some of the adaptation problems of Aboriginals in Taiwan, see Li; Hsu).

As I mentioned above, a common feature of both missionaries was that both came to espouse a type of interstitial religion. Perhaps it is this characteristic that we can suggest to be critical for the missionary period under scrutiny. Interstitiality suggests that encountering the "Other" is a religious task that primarily functions in process. At the same time, the religious reality gives the conviction that it actually and truly is, even if it is not embodied in institutional or cultural forms. It exists as a visualized as well as conceptualized presence in missionary behaviour. It is also important to note that this interstitial religion assumes an integrative feature with the local culture and that this characteristic transforms it from being entirely "outside" to being a potentiality within the local tradition. Yet, the fact that the new form of religion can be envisioned, can be described as the goal, and can thus be operated in a new kind of ritual form, indicates that it exists in a powerful dimension, even if that dimension cannot be described in either the terms of the missionary's culture or of the host culture. Similarly to Heidegger's encounter with Being it is present but not able to be articulated in terms that quite make it fit the structures that are available. The consciousness that there is a collectively experienceable reality of this sort is perhaps a hallmark of the age we are now completing, and will no doubt be one of those ingredients scholars of the future will examine.

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THEATRE, DRAMA, and FILM

KAI-CHONG CHEUNG

The Brighter Side of Acculturation: Hollingsworth's *Ever Loving* and *Mother Country*

In nearly all discussion of multiculturalism in Canada it is assumed that Anglo-Canadians represent the mainstream and little or no attention is given to modern English immigrants who have as much difficulty in adjusting to life in Canada as do immigrants from the other countries of Europe or Asia. English immigrants, particularly women, although coming from the so-called "mother country" with the advantages of speaking the same language and sharing similar habits, could not help but feeling "foreign" in Canada.

Margaret Hollingsworth, who was herself born in England and has become a Canadian playwright, realizes the pain and difficulties of changing one's identity in a new country and treats the problem in her plays. Her protagonists are mainly women who fall in love with Canadian soldiers during the World War II and, therefore, have to move to Canada right after the war to join their husbands. With a great deal of courage, confidence, persistence, and endurance of facing all obstacles, they overcome all sorts of problems which every foreigner will encounter in a new country. They finally find their identities and are happy as Canadians. Margaret Hollingsworth has travelled widely and lived in Italy and Japan before becoming a Canadian citizen. Her plays have received stage productions in England and Canada and several have been aired on radio in Canada, England, West Germany, Australia, and New Zealand. Both her plays, *Mother Country* (Toronto: Theatre Ontario Printing Centre) and *Ever Loving* (Toronto: Theatre Ontario Printing Centre), appeared in 1980 and 1981, respectively. The former was staged by Toronto's Tarragon Theatre while the latter was premiered at the Belfry Theatre in Victoria and was scheduled to open at Montréal's Centaur Theatre in the Spring of 1981. Apart from being produced in the same year, the plays share various similarities: they have small casts (six characters in *Ever Loving* and seven in *Mother Country*); they have about the same length; their plots concern the same issue: exposing the hardships of adjusting oneself to become Canadian; and both plays have happy endings.

Ever Loving takes place between 1938 and 1970, the locations are varied,

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1998 ISBN 0-921490-10-0

including a bar, a cafe, three railway stations, a train, a farm, and contrasting domestic interiors. The play begins in the 1970s when two couples get together in a restaurant after a good twenty-five years of not seeing each other. The two wives, Ruth and Diana, are overjoyed to see each other again and naturally the reunion reminds them of the hard times in the 1940s when they were taking the boat from England to Canada in order to join their husbands. On the one hand, it was what they were waiting for, but on the other hand, they hesitated to face the reality that they were now on their own in a brand new place. Nightmares and struggles began when the captain announced "Canada welcomes you as citizens" (4). Like all immigrants from the old world, the first impression of Canada is that it feels "different" (5) and "foreign" (5). Everything is different from home; the landscape is "big" (5) and "untouched" (9), maple trees abound instead of walnut trees, and people speak with different intonation from the British accent they are used to. Apart from the strange surroundings, the most important change is that they are here to start their new lives as wives, mothers, and Canadians.

The scenes shift back to England in the early 1940s when Ruth and Diana were still in their girlhood and enjoying the courtship of their future husbands. They finally accepted their marriage proposals along with the commitment that brought them to Canada. On the journey they both fantasize about their future life in comfort and luxury, yet the actual situation turns out to be far from their expectations. With the combination of disappointment and anger, they became strong in mind and body to fight for their future. In Diana's case, she expects to see a thriving farm with houses such as Paul had described in his letters, but on arrival, what she sees is a piece of wilderness. Her ideal collapses when her husband tells her that "we start off with nothing" (55). She feels cheated, confused, and helpless and she tells her husband "I don't know what I'm going to do ... please ... I can't go back Paul. I'd never be able to hold my head up" (56). But her desperation creates her power and a completely changed Diana appears. No longer confused and helpless, she is determined and hard working and her ideal of having her own farm is on the way to come true. Owing to hard work, they accomplish their dream and they have their farm. But the efforts to mix with local people fail because she is still an alien among them. They laugh behind her back and tease her for lacking the style which they expected from an English "lady." Here she is torn by an identity crisis. When she originally set foot on the land, she accepted her new identity as Canadian; yet the Canadians considered her as a foreigner. The only solution was to have a second generation who would become "genuine Canadian." Yet when her son is born, there were more conflicts concerning his education. Diana wished to give him general concepts about English history and tradition, but Paul wanted him to be a typical Canadian. At last she yielded and agreed to let her son grow up as a "pure" Canadian who had no influence from any other country. She even confessed to her old friend Ruth at the end of the play that "Well, this is our home now isn't

it. It's certainly mine. It's not that I've given up — that is — I'll always be English, but I'm Canadian as well. This is where I belong. Isn't that right?" (95).

Ruth went through almost the same experiences in the last twenty-five years in Canada. Trying to become a genuine Canadian she still could not forget her native country, England. She longed to go back but she was also afraid to face the truth that if she went back she probably would not have the courage to return to Canada. In fact she had two chances to go back but she lacked the courage to seize them. She did not get anything from Canada except six children and a hot-tempered yet loving husband. As the title of the play, *Ever Loving*, suggests, it is the love of her husband that made her sacrifice herself and remain with him all these years. She agreed in silence at the end of the play that Canada "is the greatest goddamned country in the world" (97) since her loving husband and all her children are there. In later years, she would never again think of going back to her homeland any more. The two other characters of the play had their own ways to success. They were already married at the beginning of the play but later separated. The wife was an Italian from a wealthy family who missed her home country so much that she at first spoke nothing but Italian. Later on she resigned herself to learn English and finally became a successful singer in Toronto. In essence, the play shows that chances for happiness exist all over Canada and whoever wants to grasp the opportunity will succeed. It does not matter whether one is English, Italian, or other, Canada is equipped to accept all: "You know something? You can drive 'round the world in Canada — no need to go outside of Ontario — we got a Paris and a Melbourne and a Delhi ... and a Hamilton" (29) and the symbolic nature of geographical locations represents the immigrant realities of the country.

Hollingsworth tries to convince her audience that Canada is the best place to raise one's children. In fact this is the main reason for her protagonist Janet in her other play, *Mother Country*, to stay for her mature life in Canada. The play starts with a party to celebrate Janet's 65th birthday and consequent retirement from teaching. By means of conversations among her three daughters, the son-in-law, and an elderly neighbour we find out that the wife of the neighbour had gone back to her home country quite a long time ago and that Janet's own husband had left Janet. She, therefore, taught school as the sole support of the family. Because of her high standards she was misunderstood by her daughters, who thought that she was too demanding of them. To the contrary, what she actually wanted was their happiness as well as her own freedom, and, at the age of 65, she made up her mind to go back to school and study for a university degree. This fresh start could be regarded as Janet's "rebirth" from her past. In the middle of the play, she and her associates were playing a game in which she was fated to die as a device to symbolize the spiritual "rebirth" of Janet.

Mother Country is a mild satire on English Canadians who continually and

consistently make a display of English culture. But the play is by no means anti-English. Rather, it takes advantage of stock characterizations to develop a plot and portray a psychological condition. The satire of the hundred percent British type consists primarily of congenial jesting in the vein of P.G. Wodehouse. The protagonist of the play, Janet, is the mother of three daughters, who has been abandoned by a womanizing husband. She supports her family by teaching, and in the process creates a home exemplifying the values and material aspects of British culture. The first act is primarily a comedy of manners in which Janet, her three daughters, and three other English Canadians portray Janet as the ruling spirit of a tight little British enclave. The second act, however, turns into a domestic melodrama. A party to commemorate Janet's 65th birthday and retirement from teaching takes place in her home attended by her three daughters and the three other Anglo-Canadians. After conventional tea-drinking, they play the parlour game of murder. In the midst of the game, an American woman, Sharon, arrives, identifies herself as the present fiancée of Janet's ex-husband. Janet receives her coolly and leaves the party en route to the beach just as a fierce storm with heavy rain and wind breaks out. Circumstances indicate that Janet may have put to sea in a boat, and the conversation turns to the possibility that she may be in danger of drowning. There is considerable talk but no action except from Sharon, the only one who offers to go in search of Janet. After she puts on a life-jacket and leaves for the beach, the others call the police and are told that a helicopter will be sent to investigate. Their initial reaction is to affirm that it must not be allowed to land on the lawn since Janet would not have wanted it to be chopped up. Mentally, the others begin to reorganize their own lives, trying to decide what they should do if it turns out that Janet has drowned. They fill "Waterford brandy glasses" and gaily toast that everything may continue for them just as it is at the moment. At this juncture, Janet reappears under the assumption that they are still playing the game of murder. When she realizes that her daughters and friends had actually thought that she had drowned she carries on the pretext that it was only a game. Sharon who has also returned and perceives the truth of the situation expresses admiration for Janet and withering contempt for the others.

The play concludes on a strong pro-Janet, pro-British note. She has managed to live a perfectly adequate life without mixing with any Canadians. Her love for her daughters has enabled her to keep the family together up to that moment. Now, instead of reacting against their selfishness and callousness, she decides to do something for herself, to study for a graduate degree at a Canadian university. In a sense her attitude symbolizes a reconciliation between Canadians and English Canadians. She has remained true to British values while caring for herself and her children in a Canadian environment.

Seeing Is (Dis)Believing: *trompe l'oeil* in Atom Egoyan's Films

Never at Home / Always beyond "Frames": The Spirit of Independence

Egyptian-born Armenian-Canadian film director Atom Egoyan is one of the most important film makers in Canada. Especially meaningful for the director and for us is the fact that since the 1960s, Canada has been trying to "define" itself as a culturally and economically independent country.¹

Success means much to Egoyan himself as well as his success to Canada. Ironically, although Egoyan's work has won many awards and prizes both in Canada and abroad, audiences outside of Canada know him and have seen his works more than at home in Canada. When Geoff Pevere says someone like Egoyan "never really feels at home" (41), the observation is that in addition to Egoyan's ethnic background there is a sense of doubleness. In other words, Pevere criticizes the Canadian environment that ignores or will not subsidize such talent whose work goes against a commerce-oriented and bureaucracy. But paradoxically, his situation has, on the one hand, highlighted the fact that when the film production or film distribution has been monopolized by a commerce-oriented government film policy, it is very difficult for film makers to articulate something different from that fostered by the entertainment enterprise. On the other hand, the situation has become the very screen through which the director views a world beyond. Egoyan has artistically and successfully re-appropriated the filmic language which is so culturally and commercially coded and has made himself thus visible in this world full of sound and fury. By constantly challenging the accepted form of entertainment, his work not only criticizes the

- 1 In the development of Canadian film industry, especially that of English-language feature films in Canada, the government has directly or indirectly played a key role in the production and distribution of motion pictures. This has to do with the ambivalent relationship between Canada and her neighbour, the United States, in the areas of economic, political, and cultural interaction. To have a general view of how the United States, especially Hollywood, "takes over" the Canadian film market and how the Canadian government interferes with the process of production and distribution of feature films, see, for example, Bor; Whynot; Vanderburgh.

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entertaining industry of Hollywood and the audience's indulgence in that illusion but also implies that from that voyeuristic position one can still achieve true creativity and claim it as one's own. Although Egoyan's violent method of taking images away from their context and transforming them through reconfigurations is precarious — and its result can be alienating — this is exactly how we can construct our own identity. No matter how feeble it is, the act of re-appropriating images seems to be the only way out for Egoyan's characters. Identity, family, home, memory, etc., can be re-invented, re-created, and negotiated. We can safely say that Egoyan's success lies in his extreme self-awareness as an image maker in a culture that thrives on images and thus his work self-reflexively analyzes the potential power and limitation of different processes and mechanisms of media and public surveillance. For instance, a different lens of a camera may indicate different referential framework which in turn frames sets of ideology that regulate our perception of self and other. Furthermore, his critique of our wholesale reliance on the electronic technologies as means of communication provides us alternative perspectives to define our positionality in the socio-political sphere. He puts on display for us a predicament that we all have to deal with in our postmodern era. While Egoyan is not criticizing the technology itself, what concerns him is the enshrinement of sentiment through technology: During an interview Egoyan mentions that no matter how advanced technology has become, to him telephone is still a very alluring medium for communication. And he adds that "what the telephone does in terms of real-time communication — the seductiveness of intimacy through the filter of distance — that, as a primal gesture, is still having a residual effect on me" (Cooper). And we can see his deliberate use of telephone as the main channel of communication between the lawyer father and the drug-addicted daughter in his latest movie, *The Sweet Hereafter* (1997). When the father gets the news, on the cellular phone, that his daughter has been infected by the HIV virus, a clear breathing sound together with the extreme close-ups of camera movement showing father and daughter's mouths and eyes, intersected with a shot showing the baby daughter's face with a knife ready to cut up her throat offers the audience catharsis. Volunteering to offer his service for the parents whose sons and daughters died in a school-bus car accident, the lawyer actually is also dealing with his own personal loss, the loss of his only child. This time, Egoyan focuses more on the loss of families and the sudden rupture that tears open the bond between and among people. Egoyan seems to say that although almost everything can become virtual and malleable because of the impact of electronic images, human relationships should nevertheless never be perceived or assumed to be nihilistic. To him, understanding, negotiation, and communication — between different ideologies, no matter how unsuccessful this may be — are still a positive channel through which one reaches out, attempts to love, and tries to find some form of connectedness (Wall 141).

Most of all, Egoyan is trying to forge a more visible space for further alliances. "Space" means more than geographical space and it can be extended to include social space with dynamic power relations and different forms of combinations. When Egoyan tries to formulate new kinds of connectedness, this means first of all to subvert the fixed hierarchical structure that regulates our imagination when we are sketching a possible self-portrait which, in turn, trespasses the configuration of a realistic representation and a network of new coalitions with different groups of people.

In this article, I will explore the latent but powerful relationship between Egoyan's work and his appropriation of *trompe l'oeil* as a central means to enfranchisement and disenfranchisement. By highlighting this effect of *trompe l'oeil*, I hope to make clear what it means when we say Egoyan challenges Hollywood and requires a more self-conscious spectator to actively join the making of any possible meaning out of each person's gender, ethnicity, class, age, sexual preference, and lived experience. As Baudrillard perceptively points out, *trompe l'oeil* transcends painting and can parody everything (59). By applying Baudrillard's reading of the power of *trompe l'oeil*, I want to emphasize the fact that Egoyan's work parodies the hegemony of vision as the framework of our knowledge of self and other. Thus, we can see how Egoyan as a self-conscious image-maker participates in the discourse of Canadian multiculturalism and eventually brings out a possible blind spot in the "mosaic" concept, that political rhetoric that prescribes the notion of Canadian multiculturalism. Egoyan's parody is not without sympathy; he sympathetically reveals how people know themselves and others through mediated images. We see so we think we know; we think we know because we see what we want to see. This conception of self and other is culturally biased and hierarchically structured according to our vision of the world. In Egoyan's work, because identities can be constructed through visually mediated images, this also implies that they are erasable and ephemeral. However, it is because of the very erasability of identities that we can gain our power as image consumers. That is why, although Egoyan criticizes people for losing themselves in the world of illusions, he actually sympathizes with them and gratifies their effort to change their situation. We are like beholders of *trompe l'oeil* whose weakness and empowerment are all conflated into the images that take us in.²

2 In other words, "take us in" means both to "deceive" the eye and to "include" into the same space of the image; to "take in" also means to take us under its wings: we are sheltered by its protecting presence. "Screen" can mean screen in the movie theatre or screen of a TV set. However, the difference between these two media and how it influences spectator's reception are not the main points I want to deal with in this paper.

***trompe l'oeil* as a Vehicle for Boundary Crossing**

To further accentuate the relationship of using *trompe l'oeil* in my explanation of Egoyan's films, I will start by taking a look at the relationship between cinema and painting. In the field of interart study, the linkage between cinema and painting has been a heated topic in discussing formations of visual culture. Their relationship has been described as ambivalent — intimate but contesting. When compared, their relationship may be examined from different perspectives; they could include discussions of a famous painting within a film's diegetic space, or the analysis of film that has a painterly style. Furthermore, at an allegorical or metacinematic level, the intertextual study — painting as more than allusion or citation — can help to probe the encounter between painting and cinema, art and technology, tradition and modernity (see Vacche 3-11). That is to say, by borrowing or rejecting images of painting, cinema is engaged in a dialogue with other arts so as to give comments and to participate in cultural discourse.

While I do not aim to discuss the similarities and differences between cinema and painting, by appropriating the term *trompe l'oeil* that embodies the extremities of illusion I want to further highlight the discussions of framing, the construction of space, and spectatorship in Egoyan's work. I hope that my reading of the *trompe l'oeil* in his films will contribute to the analysis of the special techniques and the themes that he has begun to explore since his early shorts like *Peep Show* (1981) and *Open House* (1982). Egoyan seems to be saying that if it is our destiny in this age to be filled with layers of images, perhaps we can find a way to re-empower ourselves by self-criticizing and self-examining this compulsive behaviour (Virilio 107). Critics of Egoyan's work such as Paul Virilio, Carole Desbarats, and Geoff Pevere use painterly metaphors to describe his special use of camera (both video and film camera), the theme of his characters' desires, and the psychosexual impact of technological representations. In praising Egoyan's use of refilmed footage of video tapes on screen and the juxtaposition of different media like TV and video camera, Virilio applies the concept of anamorphosis to emphasize the effect of disintegration of the (film) screen, and its challenge to the spectator's perception and reception of it (113). For example, we see how TV and monitor screens work in *Family Viewing*, *Speaking Parts*, and *Calendar*. Desbarats uses *trompe l'oeil* to describe *The Adjuster*; he states that *The Adjuster* is like "a world of *trompe l'oeil*" (25). Pevere also uses *trompe l'oeil* to highlight how characters are fooled by the illusion of their own wishful thinking, and the after effect of its disillusionment. He analyzes Egoyan's early short film, *Peep Show*, and points out the scene where the young man in the photograph booth sees a woman, his object of desire, appearing and taking off her blouse behind him is a "beguiling *trompe l'oeil* about desire, power, and the psychosexual impact of technological

representation" (22). These critics are trying to align terms in painting with Egoyan's films to bring out Egoyan's artistic contribution to the critique of our "ocularcentric" culture.

It is no mere coincidence that these terms come to be applied on cinema. This is because anamorphosis and *trompe l'oeil* are ways or even games of perceptive destruction, a kind of diverting, and even subverting of the one-point perspective that is dominant in Renaissance painting. Renaissance one-point perspective painting is a way of seeing the world that has provided an imaginary depth of field at the price of a fixed (singular) viewing position. Anamorphosis and *trompe l'oeil* are, according to Bonitzer, *decradage* (de-framing) of Renaissance one-point perspective painting (96-98). It disorients the linear line of the programmed way of looking, that is, the one-point perspective. To disorient, subvert, and set adrift, critical tools provided by the above terms have close connection with Egoyan's main story-telling techniques, for Egoyan has focused on questioning the illusion-building roles played by point of view and language in the narrative of conventional films (Pevere 39-40). Point of view in the narrative of conventional film usually is designed to develop a story line so that the viewer is guided into the story, into the atmosphere that is being built up for the benefit of realism. In Egoyan's films, point of view is not to be anchored down with one major character. Instead, point of view is slippery and meant to disorient and to disengage the viewer, so that the viewing position can shift from one place to another. A further significant point for my use of painterly terms is their usefulness in the discussion of the relationship between power and image, especially with regard to beholder/spectator's role in the exchange of, the flow of, power and desire. W.J.T. Mitchell, for instance, has provided a careful analysis of the issue of illusion. In his conclusion, Mitchell points out that the problem of illusion is deeply interwoven with structures of power and social otherness, and illusion should be distinguished from illusionism. He states,

illusion is something built into the very conditions of sentience and extends from areas of animal behaviour such as camouflage and mimicry right to *trompe l'oeil* and ultimately, I want to argue, into the universal structure of ideology or false consciousness. This is illusion as *error*, delusion, or false belief. Illusionism, by contrast, is playing with illusions. (343)

Here, Mitchell has pointed to the crucial point, namely that illusion is a trick and illusionism is playing a trick on the trick so as to foreground itself. This process of first playing and then undermining the power relationship between master and slave has to do with the invisible but not invincible power structure in society. Though Mitchell does not mention Baudrillard directly, we can still see his concern for the use of *trompe l'oeil* as a powerful means of cultural critique as did Baudrillard, who also points out the space of politics falls under the influence of *trompe l'oeil*, and the application of it is the "production of a

simulacrum in full consciousness of the game ... throwing doubt on the principal of reality" (58). If the painterly experience of *trompe l'oeil* goes from a submerging into the illusion of reality up to a point where a sense of wanting to touch will take the place of that illusion, this sense of wanting to touch or embrace is what Baudrillard calls "tactile hyperpresence of things" (59). We can say that this power in the image that incites its beholder to touch and hold at the same time implies the end or destruction of the illusion; the excess of reality leads to death of it. For "every composition in *trompe l'oeil* contributes to the effect of loss, a sense of losing hold on to the real through the very excess of its appearance" (Baudrillard 56). Without the usual reference of reality, taken away from its daily functionality, objects in *trompe l'oeil* no longer represent but parodies. So, this is the time when we as image consumers could empower ourselves by removing from the fixed position and criticizing the given order in the illusion of "reality."

Baudrillard goes on to explain what is at stake in tactile hyperpresence:

tactile hyperpresence is a metaphor of that sense of being "gripped" that results from the abolition of the representational scene and of representational space. What is more, this shock that is the miracle of *trompe l'oeil* is reflected in the so-called world round about, by revealing to us that "reality" is never more than a world hierarchically staged (*mise en scène*), an objectivity achieved according to the rules of depth; that reality is a principle of the observance of which regulates all the painting, sculpture, and architecture of the time. But it is a principle and a simulacrum and nothing more, put to end by the experimental hypersimulation of *trompe l'oeil*. (59)

From Baudrillard's explanation we can see why *trompe l'oeil* "transcends" painting: it is not painting any more. It can parody anything in its hyper-simulation. And most important of all, it reverses and subverts the rules of representation. The "blank sign" that ceases to represent but directs its vanishing point that guides our line of sight originated in Renaissance painting and pointed outward to the space of the beholder. The so-called one-point perspective that builds the sense of depth is only one way of observing the world. This particular way of seeing sets up relationship between things and the beholder, which by means of the sense of depth structures represents near/far, foreground / background, higher/lower relationship, etc. "Reality" is like a well-planned setting on stage. We are taught how to look, and most of all how to behave according to hierarchical power relations. For Baudrillard *trompe l'oeil* is like an opaque mirror that does not reflect "reality"; instead, it challenges and counteracts the privileged position of gaze. The literal translation of the term says a lot: it fools the eye.

In this connection, when Gombrich says *trompe l'oeil* is the illusion of the shared space between beholder and painting, we can not ignore the problem of power relation in this shared space (205). A further step is needed to liberate the

viewer from a fixed space (of the one-point perspective) and the shared space of the "innocent" *trompe l'oeil*, through a "critical" *trompe l'oeil* as what Mitchell and Baudrillard specify: a *trompe l'oeil* which pays equal attention to sharing and power struggle. This power struggle or the flow of desire manifests itself in Egoyan's effort to subvert the one-point perspective (referring to both perception and conception) that sets up — to borrow Foucault's book title — "the order of things."

Egoyan's characters are compulsive spectators of their own (family's) images. And they can also choose to play a role as actors in order to act out their own fantasies. From the repeated act of viewing and role-playing, the images that they are watching, the scenario(setting) according to which they act out and the roles assumed by the characters become "real" to them. A critique that doubles back on itself can be found in the character's manipulation of mediated images, and role-playing in order to invent, change, and exchange identities. To further involve a critical spectator of the film, this effect of *trompe l'oeil* is also applied in a use of different media, especially the foregrounding of different lens (of video and film camera). These two different types of lenses sometimes become conflated and thus fuse with each other; sometimes they are contesting with each other so as to displace the film spectators and re-move them from the seemingly "true" identification or point of view. We can see this constant "Egoyanian" concern in his early shorts and his feature films.

A further constant theme in Egoyan's film is that identities, memories, family, home, and even experience in general are malleable and can be exchanged through the manipulation of modern technologies like video tapes or photographs. Technologies designed to eliminate distance between people may in fact enlarge and deepen that gap. The beguiling part is that we think we are getting closer through electronic technologies, and we think there is this real-time communication like talking on telephone or on the Web through BBS or e-mail. But in fact this illusion of intimacy is what deepens our sense of alienation. Maybe we can say modern technology provides us in every part of our lives with the illusion of intimacy, the sense of reachability, and thus it is important to pay attention to the seductiveness and the subversiveness of *trompe l'oeil*, the effect of hyperpresence.

Travelling through Multiple "Realities"

Let us first look at some of Egoyan's shorts as a means to a better understanding of his feature films. Egoyan's *Peep Show* is his early experimental short film. He superimposes two different forms of expressions, animation and film, together with different colours to build up a world of fantasy aroused by the pornography industry. Colours reflect his emotions and illusions, while film is what we accept as reality, the part of animation implies artificiality. But as the

film unfolds itself, we see one becomes the double to the other. Instead of being conflated the two are really dialectically interlocked. In this short, a young man walks into a place called "Stardom" designed for only visual pleasure. The rule is "You are not allowed to touch." In this combination of sex and money, the young man's sexual fantasy about a woman disrobing herself seems so real to him that when the machine stops producing the fantasized image of the woman, he feels fooled and starts kicking the booth. Eventually, he is taken away by a guard. This is Egoyan's first short to convey the seductive treachery of the screen. Here, the screen is his own photos taken in an automatic photo booth. What he thinks he sees by his own eyes is something made up for his suspended disbelief, for his entertainment. When he first comes up to the second floor where the photo booth is, he is given a notice by a woman at the stairway. The handout gives some personal information about a woman who is looking for a mate. Thus, the text and the invented woman set up the atmosphere for the young man to get ready to be taken in. That is to say, he actually anticipates some form of sexual entertainment from this machine. Because of the anticipation, he "sees" a woman disrobing herself behind him and he turns around to find her. Because of this seductiveness of "hyperpresence," the sense of "wanting to touch" is aroused and the booth becomes a *trompe l'oeil* machine.

When we as spectators of this young man follow the camera into the booth, and see his own desire superimposed on the "screen," the photos, we are oscillating between illusion and "reality." These two layers of images are revealed and exposed to us. Thus we are forced into an in-between hyper-simulation that neither of them (or both of them) can make truth claims. This kind of doubleness or in-betweenness can also be related to character's identities. Egoyan's characters often find the past is a better place to be. Thus, the memory of home, the good old times of a family, and even family members can be "found" again through characters' role-playing. Role-playing means more than to be someone else. By assuming other roles, characters seem to switch bodies and thus they change identities. And most important of all, they can talk about "themselves" or their problems with other people like they are talking about someone else they know. It is only by willy-nilly entering a *trompe l'oeil* relationship will they be able to open themselves up, both in the sense of opening up the latent desire and opening up to alternative identities. In this sense *trompe l'oeil* is important because it cuts open the suture between reality and fantasy, without really severing it. Thus, illusion facilitates understanding of reality and vice versa.

This is a theme that Egoyan develops in his another short, *Open House*. A real-estate agent, Frank, shows a young couple to see an old house on sale. The agent and the lady of the house turn out to be acting out invented roles and it turns out that they are actually mother and son. They are what Pevere calls the "desperate pretenders" (22). They have to be somebody else, to act, to pretend

so that the unhappy present can be bearable, and so that they can see "themselves" and talk about themselves or their own problems. The main setting is located in the house and its backyard. Interior and exterior are connected to and contrasted with each other. Inside everything is painted white and is covered with white cloth. On the white wall, the shape of a fireplace popped out of the wall gives us a hint that this could be a living room. On top of the fireplace stands a rose which is the only colour beside white and maybe the only thing that shows life in this room. The empty space and the whole arrangement of "furniture" make this place look more like an empty stage, a place for a made-believe home. Outside, the yard looks wasted and abandoned with big trees whose solitary branches reaching out to the sky seem to grasp the last hope that is lingering in the air. From the dialogue between the house owner and his wife we know the house lady's husband has put a lot of effort into this house until a car accident crippled him. By then, we can guess that the old man sitting numbly, staring at the slides on the wall is in fact the lady's husband.

A very impressive camera movement (by Peter Mettler) occurs when the mother is remembering how the yard usually looked before the buildings surrounding their houses were erected. The camera, together with the background music work together to build up this atmosphere of loss, the loss of some good times in the past, a never retrieved once happy family. The camera lifts itself up toward the sky and circles around the now withered branches, and with the mother proudly stating the past, it pans around the yard, revealing not the green grass with bushes of tiny flowers but a broken chair and empty jars covered with dirt. Thus we see the great contrast between past and present. Only by this kind of role playing, by manipulating machine-created facsimiles of the past through tape-recorder and slides projector, are we able to articulate our loss and temporarily re-create the more desirable past. *Peep Show* and *Open House* are Egoyan's early works but they have shown his insight about identities and the theme of the quest for home which is retained in his later feature films.

Here, for the purpose of further explaining how Egoyan appropriates *trompe l'oeil* to create a "tactile hyperpresence" on the effect of the spectators' viewing process, and thus transporting spectators into the realm of oscillation between illusion and reality, a place of the constant suspended belief/disbelief, I will give some examples from *Speaking Parts* (1989) and *The Adjuster* (1991). In my analysis, I will concentrate on the experience of watching Egoyan's films perceived as a destruction of the voyeuristic pleasure of conventional entertainment films. Following Baudrillard that "from an intense sensation of déjà-vu ... it gratifies the eye and at the same time deceives it: it is in the deception (non-capture) that, paradoxically, the pleasure of this deception is to be found ... *trompe l'oeil* indiscriminately mixes the disciplines and then plays false with them all" (58-59), Egoyan problematizes the fixed, single viewing position.

Timothy Shary says it well when he points out the fact that Egoyan's use of

video camera image is a means to express "character psychologies, to develop a new method of constructing narrative strategies in cinema and to call attention to the perverse presence of visual technology in contemporary North American society" (2). Indeed, the video image shown on TV or monitor can be selectively cut to frame the focused part of what the character is really watching, and the space/time relationship between the video image and the film itself can be changed according to character's psychological state of mind. However, the dialectical relationship between the frame of the film image and the frame of TV/monitor image, I think, reveals more than "a new method of constructing narrative strategy" (Shary 2). I want to further point out that this is a building up of the hypereffect of *trompe l'oeil* in Egoyan's films in order to force the spectators of the film to actively and critically get involved in the "sharing space" between themselves and the screen. This is crucial to Egoyan, I think, as Mitchell specifies, "the self-conscious exploitation of illusion as cultural practice for social change" (343). Confronting the problem of space, Egoyan could bring up the problem of power structure in society and by further disturbing the fixed viewing position, spectators could be self-aware of their own positionality in this seemingly ordered hierarchical world outside of film. The order of high/low and front/back in a one-point perspective, the so-called reality with depth is nothing but one way of many other ways of seeing the world.

Speaking Parts shares the theme with *Peep Show* about the relationship between desire and visual images. The hypereffect of *trompe l'oeil* and thus the oscillation between illusion and reality, is designed or structured by the employment and deployment of different media. In the case of *Speaking Parts*, it is done through conflating or juxtaposition of different frames of screens, the screen of TV for tele-visual communication (at the conference room, and in the scene of a talk show), the screen monitor in a hotel room, the screen that shows the footage of Clara's brother, David, and the screen of the film itself. Based on the "playing" or manipulating of the frames of screens, Egoyan ironically subverts the authenticity/simultaneity that a TV talk show seems to imply.

Lance, a hotel worker in charge of house keeping with a part-time job as an extra, gets an opportunity of audition for a part in Clara's film, based on her true story between herself and her brother. Lisa is Lance's co-worker and now his abandoned lover. She rents videotapes with Lance as an extra in it and watches these after work at night. These three characters in *Speaking Parts* are somehow all engaged in video watching, and thus video is used to portray objects of desire, lost or unattainable. The scene where Lance sees Clara for the second time through the tele-visual phone at the conference room demonstrates how Egoyan, by panning the camera and manipulating the voice of the two talking together, both hides and reveals the distance between characters and thus builds up the effect of *trompe l'oeil*. This scene also prepares us, the spectators, for a more complicated, interwoven, and contesting framings/oscillations of viewing positions in the scene of the talk show. In the scene of Lance's dialogue with Clara, we see the camera moving slowly to reveal the seemingly intimate

conversations between them taking place. This communication has to be paid for economically and emotionally. Their dialogue is stopped abruptly because time is up. Their relationship is like communication through technology: it seems close yet far, real (because of presence of facial impressions and voice) but ephemeral. The Baudrillardian pleasure in deception and the duplicity of visual *trompe l'oeil* is best shown in Lance and Clara's conversation and tele-sex. And we are made acutely aware of these "facts" by the camera; we get additional kicks out of it as if we were watching a peep show. On the other hand, the conversation or tele-sex, although for a while real, has to be cut short because of time, because of the nature of technology: it is real because it is ephemeral?

Characters are spectators of each other's images. We, spectators of the film, also look at the image on different screens in/outside of the film. A more intriguing interlocking of different images of different media are to be found in the scene of the talk show. There are four kinds of screens/frames fusing, juxtaposing, or contesting together. They are the screen of the film being filmed (the whole setting of the talk show); the TV screen within the talk show, showing another scene at the hospital; the screen of a monitor at the hotel room, camera placed from a low-angle shot; and Clara's footage of her dead brother David. Here, characters become both "actors" and spectators. Because the inter-embedding of these screens, we the spectators also become "actors" participating in the scene of the talk show. However, at the same time, with Clara's footage and the image that shows Lance himself lying on the hospital with long hair again and with Lisa, now a nurse, gently kissing him on the forehead, we also enter into character's state of mind (i.e., Clara's and Lance's). As we see from the low angle of the camera position, that of the monitor at the hotel room, we are in the position of a public surveillance, watching Lisa confronting her own "vision" that she sees happening in this room. When Lisa finds the monitor and reaches out to turn it off, our authoritative, voyeuristic viewing position is also being confronted and challenged.

Characters become actors and spectators, while spectators (we) by switching viewing positions become actors/characters or even machines. Thus, the story about organ transplant can be metaphorically read as physical substitution, the switching of positions, travelling between spaces, and thus dis-anchoring meaning, and no more fixed identities. When Baudrillard says there is "no nature in *trompe l'oeil*, no countryside or sky, no vanishing point or natural light.... Here all is artifact; vertical field constitutes objects isolated from their referential context as pure signs" (55), I believe the concept of the artificiality of *trompe l'oeil* can also be applied here in the commerce-oriented, superficial authenticity of the talk show on TV. I want to point out another well-designed setting in *The Adjuster* that is pregnant with the critical qualities of the effect of *trompe l'oeil*. In *The Adjuster*, the two couples would not have had the chance to meet each other, if it were not for this half-developed, empty lot. Noah, the insurance adjuster, lives together at a model house with one of his clients, Hera. Hera's job is also about evaluating things. She classifies pornographic films into

several classes. And there are also Bubha and Mimi, a wealthy couple willing to experiment with any kind of sexual adventure. It is the deserted, empty lot that attracts these people and makes them come together. Bubha, like most other characters in Egoyan's films who tries to direct (usually unsuccessfully) his life by actively assuming a role to play, plays the role of a movie director. He wants to rent Noah's "house" as the shooting site. The aesthetic/political contemplation about creating images is actually embodied in this character's role-playing. It is also closely connected to the censoring centre where Hera works. The supervisor of that centre and the kind of work they are doing can be contrasted with the fantasy acted out by Bubha and Mimi. What they do is arbitrary and can be destructive.

When Bubha finds the deserted place for first time, he is captivated by the house standing there all alone. Travelling through the field that once belonged to a real-estate company and now abandoned because of bankruptcy, he passes by several billboards with paintings of dream houses. These billboards at first looked artificial compared with the "real" house standing on the other side of the field. However, as the film unfolds itself, we see the house, that Noah and Hera live in and Bubha admires is no less false/fake than these billboards. Here, in an empty space we see before our eyes the intricate interaction between framed paintings of ideal houses and the picturesque or made-believe family of Biblical Noah and mythical Hera. In reverse, in the scene where Noah is shooting arrows at the billboard, we experience the genuine and vertiginous effect of *trompe l'oeil*. Noah is standing in front of a billboard looking to the right side of the frame together with the family members (father, mother, and a daughter: a typical image of a white middle-class family). To us, Noah looks like "in" the picture, but at the same time so out of place in that picture (how can he fit himself into that family?). Furthermore, when we look to the right with the camera cutting to that direction, together with Noah we see another billboard with a beautiful house, but a (single) man in it. For a few seconds, the camera stays with that billboard and the man. This single person does not fit the image of a supposedly happy family. Sudden doubts grip the spectator, Noah, and he begins to approach the man. Feeling threatened, the man moves and starts to run away. This also echoes another scene where a billboard is juxtaposed with Noah's house at this moment rented to Bubha for filming. By now, the billboard looks almost fused with the landscape of that deserted place. The effects of *trompe l'oeil* are further shown within the same film space, in the deserted area where Noah and Hera's model house is located. We can say that the model house and the different billboards of dream houses in the abandoned development site together form a specular, dialectical relationship, in which Egoyan both visually mocks and ideologically satirizes the illusion/dream of the dominant white middle-class patriarchal family that this capitalist society promotes.

As Egoyan himself states, when talking about independent cinema, "the whole thing with independent cinema is that what you want to see up there on

the screen is a certain spirit, and the whole process of their type of production ... is that you *camouflage* that whole process of *seeing a spirit* by seeing a lot of other things which are very seductive in a very superficial sort of way" (Burnett 42; my italics). In other words, I want to over-interpret Egoyan's words by pointing out that it is this "disguise," the illusion of a dream house, a family based on the white middle-class patriarchal ideology that Egoyan wants to mock. And the effect of *trompe l'oeil* displays the spirit of Egoyan's independent cinema.

Being Oblique: Opening Up (an) Alternative Perspective(s)

In the early 1980s during the tax shelter period, Canadian feature film production increased. However, this occurred under the monopoly of American film distributors. Thus the commerce-oriented films are almost a copy of Hollywood films. This is also the time when Egoyan brings out his first foray into film-making. This outburst of creativity going against the mainstream shows tremendous courage that is vital to the making of his own visibility. Egoyan is always intensively concerned with his role as an image-maker. At the same time, this kind of acute self-consciousness also affects the process in which he involves and /or alienates his spectators. To dissolve the dominant power of conventional one-point perspective that develops a story-line, the effect of hyperpresence, the critical *trompe l'oeil*, all help us to re-open the suture between illusion and reality. Thus, during the viewing process, the realm of oscillation between illusion and reality, a place of instability, is foregrounded. By exploiting illusion, Egoyan participates in cultural discourse and articulates his vision for social, cultural, and political reformation.

Robin Wood suggests that the kind of democracy we need may be

a democracy built upon progressive decentralization, popular participation, genuine and not specious equality, and the development of autonomous communities, in which the media were no longer dominated by capital — would actually enable the emergence of cultural particularities, developing all that is valuable in a given cultural tradition without developing overtones of competitive nationalism. (60)

I think, for Egoyan, speaking from a position of ethnic minority, this means to re-appropriate the "language" so as to articulate both personal and collective experience. This requires efforts to first to deconstruct the given, fixed values and then to form new alliances to construct new "identities." Thus, if a vision or metaphor of its likes decides how we form self/other relationships, we have to be careful about how arbitrary and precarious it is. Therefore, it is this spirit extended from independent cinema that Egoyan, in his early shorts such as *Peep Show*, *Open House* and later feature films such as *Speaking Parts* and *The Adjuster*, uses techniques like camera movement, fusion of TV and film cameras and the juxtapositions of frames of billboard and frame of the film to create the effect of *trompe l'oeil*. He wishes to first build up a "true" illusion and then

criticizes it: it plays against itself. Thus by shifting the spectators' viewing positions, we are empowered to be self-conscious of the positionality involved in the game of visual discourse. Egoyan seems to say, by subverting the mosaic — the metaphor of Canadian multiculturalism — with *trompe l'oeil*, we are able to access and reveal other possible pictures and images. If one is willing to displace oneself, step aside from the so-called perspective, one may see certain colours emerging in the foreground and others retreating to the background and thus forming a network-like structure. Or, perhaps if we take the sight obliquely we will find colours fusing into a spectrum and start to form an arch of a rainbow, the symbol of stateless and nationless coalitions.

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La Scène au féminin dans *Les Belles-soeurs* de Tremblay

Michel Tremblay s'est imposé comme le plus original des dramaturges québécois après sa comédie, *Les Belles-soeurs*, qui fut représentée en 1968. Les aspirations à l'indépendance, qui avaient commencé à fermenter, inondent cette comédie par le biais de l'étalage sans complaisance de l'asservissement de tout un peuple. La trouvaille géniale de Michel Tremblay aura été de comprendre que le joul, redouté et ridiculisé par les esthètes canadiens, renvoie l'image caricaturale de la sujétion économique et culturelle des Canadiens français. L'univers des *Belles-soeurs* est considéré comme un "enfer des femmes," elles sont vulgaires, misérables, pauvres et médiocres. Au fond, quelles sont les implications de la situation québécoise? Existe-t-il une issue pour cet inconsolable "sexe faible"? Dans les *Belles-soeurs*, on a atteint le parfait équilibre entre le grotesque et le tragique. La réponse n'a plus tant d'importance, c'est plutôt la revendication et les échos qui comptent le plus.

La pièce des *Belles-soeurs* a été créée le 28 août 1968 au Théâtre du Rideau-Vert à Montréal. Cette pièce fait s'entrechoquer, à l'époque, jurons et expressions vulgaires, dans le milieu bourgeois montréalais. En dépit de certaines critiques impitoyables et d'accusations de vulgarité, les *Belles-soeurs*, dans une veine tragicomique poussée jusqu'à l'absurde, lève le voile sur l'aliénation d'une quinzaine de femmes de la classe populaire, et impose aussitôt Michel Tremblay comme auteur dramatique important. Celui-ci agit comme un catalyseur de la société montréalaise et québécoise des années soixante-dix.¹

Germaine Lauson, ménagère dans un quartier ouvrier de Montréal, vient de gagner un million de timbres-primés qu'elle doit coller dans les livrets avant de pouvoir s'en servir pour obtenir les meubles et les accessoires de pacotille qu'elle a toujours rêvé de posséder. Elle invite alors dans sa cuisine une quinzaine de femmes, parents, amies et voisines, pour l'aider à accomplir cette tâche. Mais par

1 Il n'est pas dans notre propos d'étudier la fonction symbolique des *Belles-soeurs* dans la société québécoise, c'est-à-dire de nous demander pourquoi une partie de la société, engagée dans la Révolution tranquille, s'est projetée dans ces femmes et identifiée à la représentation de la partie la plus figée d'elle-même.

envie, on finit par lui voler ses timbres. Avec la chute des timbres-primés et la tombée du rideau quand retentit l'hymne national canadien, la pièce atteint pour le public son apothéose. Le fond et la forme de la pièce se répondent adéquatement et s'enrichissent d'une fécondation mutuelle: l'attente, l'arrivée des invitées, la dispute, le récit des vicissitudes de la vie de chacune, accompagné de monologues, les discussions sur le passé, sur les enfants, même sur le goûter ou les rafraîchissements, enfin le chœur final, *Ó Canada* et la chute des timbres. Tremblay brosse une fresque puissante de ces types de femmes du milieu populaire, en faisant devant nous défiler sur scène toutes les misères des stéréotypes féminins: la grand-mère gâteuse, la mère possessive, l'épouse abrutie, la vieille fille scrupuleuse, la bigote, la prostituée, etc. Dans les monologues, chacune expose son cas, repris par des chœurs qui enchaînent avec un commentaire médiocre sur les événements courants.

Le huis clos féminin et un avenir borné étouffent les personnages des *Belles-soeurs*. Leur univers est comme un "enfer des femmes." Ces femmes travaillent à la maison comme ménagères, et elles ne sont pas si pauvres puisqu'elles peuvent encore dégager un surplus pour organiser la "party de collage de timbres" avec "chips et coke" ou s'offrir, comme Angéline le fait, un pot dans un bar. Mais elles n'ont pour s'évader, et c'est leur activité principale, que le jeu des concours. Elles veulent gagner des prix. Leur sort est ainsi et aux mains des hommes et aux mains du hasard. Elles n'ont aucune prise sur l'Histoire, ni sur la vie publique. Leur monde reste fermé, fondé sur la chance. Les jeunes qui essaient de s'en échapper, ne trouvent que deux issues: la première, c'est le mariage, dans la mesure où on espère y trouver une promotion sociale, promotion qui, toutefois, demeure illusoire. Car le mariage est comme une loterie: les gagnants sont plutôt rares, les gagnantes encore plus rares.² La seconde issue est le travail: les jeunes filles travaillent en usine, au resto ou au *club* ... et elles finissent par découvrir que les hommes leur réservent la profession des catégories inférieures, sans parler du harcèlement sexuel, du salaire mince, des conditions instables et des exploitations de toutes sortes (voir Piccione).

L'action qui structure la pièce est menée par un sujet collectif. Les femmes, entre elles, ont des relations plus ou moins intimes; et poussées par l'avidité et par la jalousie, elles détruisent le rêve de l'hôtesse. En outre, le million de timbres volés et les disputes sans fin font perdre à chacune ses illusions. En fait, la thèse de Tremblay consiste avant tout dans une revendication pour le pouvoir et une critique du pouvoir patriarcal. Et elle s'appuie sur une analyse de la

2 Prenons l'exemple de Pierrette. Gabrielle Jodoin se rappelle: "Quand a l'a fini ses études primaires, on y'a demandé (à Pierrette) c'qu'a voulait faire une maîtresse d'école. Est-tait pour commencer ses études.... Mais y fallait qu'a rencontre son Johnny!" (69). On apprend vite que Pierrette était, à l'époque, une excellente élève, et pour les belles-soeurs, il est évident que l'obstacle au succès professionnel de Pierrette fut Johnny, "un vrai démon, sorti de l'enfer."

condition féminine. Dans la pièce, il n'y a que des femmes sur la scène. La situation problématique est transférée dramaturgiquement sur le terrain de la parole; et les femmes "papote," "jasent," "se chicanent," "prient" en un vocabulaire limité mais répétitif pour désigner leur vie. Elles maugréent abondamment, mais personne ne les écoute.

Pour mieux saisir leur position, on peut répartir les personnages en deux groupes. D'abord les femmes mariées et intégrées: Rose Ouimet, Gabrielle Jodoin, Marie-Ange Brouillette, Thérèse et Olivine Dubuc, puis Yvette Longpré. Puis, en simplifiant, les femmes non mariées, non voleuses et non intégrées: Pierrette Guérin, Angéline Sauvé et Lise Paquette. Elles sont les déviantes. Reste à classer Des-Neiges Verrette, Rhéauna Bibeau, Lisette de Courval et Germaine Lauson, auxquelles manque un des traits de l'une ou l'autre catégorie.³ Des-Neiges Verrette, non mariée mais voleuse, est attirée par la déviance à travers sa relation avec Monsieur Simard. Elle n'a pourtant pas encore cédé et affirme son appartenance au groupe; on peut donc la considérer comme appartenant au premier groupe. Quant à Rhéauna Bibeau, voleuse et intégrée, elle n'est pas mariée, mais forme avec Angéline un couple qui l'assimile aux femmes mariées. Pour Lisette de Courval, mariée et voleuse, le statut est plus ambigu: elle ne reconnaît pas son appartenance au groupe; cette déviance culturelle n'a pas vraiment de place dans le système de la vie. Elle prétend "perler bien" et ne fait que tenter de se justifier par rapport à un milieu aliénant, attitude qui la conduit au mépris et au refus d'elle-même. Enfin Germaine, qui, mariée et intégrée, s'oppose au plan de l'action. Le million de timbres-primés qu'elle vient de gagner la singularise: le fait d'être différente de ses "soeurs" médiocres la rend triomphante; voilà donc pour elle une occasion de se valoriser. Mais le "triomphe" de Germaine est insupportable aux autres femmes. Envieuses, elles deviennent des agents de frustration. La pièce va plus loin, pour ne pas trop montrer leur complexe, elles se comparent entre elles, puis se dénoncent l'une à l'autre, cherchant à rabaisser qui serait mieux qu'elles.

Tout fonctionne comme si le signe principal de l'appartenance au groupe était le pôle négatif. Seules les déviantes se situent dans le pôle positif, et elles sont exclues. L'action du premier groupe a donc pour but de ramener Germaine dans leur clan, opération réussie, puisque la victime interrompt finalement l'expression de son désespoir pour entonner, avec les autres, l'hymne national du Canada. Pierrette, qui vient chez sa soeur dans l'espoir d'être réintégrée dans la famille, n'échappera pas à son exclusion. Angéline, découverte, devra renoncer à la satisfaction secrète de fréquenter *le club* une fois par semaine pour y trouver "chaleur humaine" et plaisir de rire. Lise, entravée dans son désir de "s'en sortir" par l'abandon de son *chum* au moment où elle est enceinte, verra cet obstacle

3 Linda et Ginette, non mariées et non voleuses, ne participent pas vraiment à l'action, mais elles relèvent, elles aussi, des femmes frustrées.

levé grâce à Pierrette. Ainsi, il existe deux voix principales qui tissent la trame textuelle des *Belles-soeurs*: celle des intégrées et celle des déviantes, chacune prenant une forme précise dans le texte. Les premières parlent à travers la conversation et les chœurs; les dernières par des monologues qui remettent en question des valeurs collectives et individuelles.

La voix collective se fait entendre dans deux chœurs, celui des soeurs fait Guérin, qui pleurent sur le destin de Pierrette, incarné par le "maudit Johnny," et le chœur de toutes les femmes (sauf les jeunes et Pierrette) contre Angéline, dont on vient d'apprendre qu'elle fréquente *le club*. Cette voix est celle des préjugés moraux et religieux. Elle prononce l'exclusion des membres qui ont transgressé: c'est la voix officielle. Opposée aux chœurs, la conversation est plutôt la voix quotidienne du groupe. Son but est d'influencer l'interlocuteur. L'action principale des *Belles-soeurs*, le vol des timbres, s'accomplit sans recourir à la parole, mais la conversation est porteuse d'enjeux dramatiques. Un examen sur trois passages nous permettra de les dégager et de voir les moyens de persuasion des protagonistes. La scène entre Germaine et Linda ouvre la pièce: Germaine veut amener sa fille à renoncer au plaisir d'une soirée avec son *chum* pour partager la corvée du collage des timbres. Aux hésitations de Linda, Germaine répond toujours d'un ton sec: "Parle-moé pus...," suivi de l'étalage de ses propres frustrations. Elle revient ensuite à la charge en dénigrant le *chum* de sa fille, puis culpabilise Linda.

La deuxième conversation intervient au deuxième acte. Le protagoniste principal, Angéline, celle-ci dénoncée accidentellement par Pierrette, est immédiatement condamnée par le chœur. Elle essaie alors de s'expliquer, de négocier un espace où elle puisse vivre abandonner le plaisir de rire, de connaître les gens. C'est le prix à payer pour demeurer dans le clan, dont Rhéauna, son amie, ne se dissocie pas. La troisième conversation dramatique, amorcée entre Lise et Linda, s'achève avec Pierrette. Lise avoue sa détresse à Linda: son *chum* l'a abandonnée et elle se trouve enceinte. Au nom des principes moraux, Linda, qui a un *chum* aussi, reprend pourtant l'attitude de sa mère, refuse d'entendre le désarroi de son amie et, surtout, d'envisager des solutions. Mais Pierrette fait un geste; elle donne à Lise l'adresse d'un médecin par qui elle pourra se faire avorter. C'est le seul moment où quelqu'un est entendu et se voit aidé. Cependant Lise veut avoir la possibilité de repartir à la conquête de l'homme riche, médiateur des autres satisfactions matérielles que sont "un char, un beau logement, du beau linge."

A travers la conversation, il apparaît que le signe d'appartenance au clan est la frustration dont les membres sont agents et victimes. Avec la frustration, ce qui est offert en partage à ses membres, c'est la dévalorisation de soi et des autres. La voix dominante des Belle-soeurs se fait entendre sans répit dans la conversation et se condense dans les chœurs; elle tend à occuper tout l'espace. Néanmoins, une autre voix se fait aussi entendre dans une série de monologues.

Quelqu'un parle à haute voix alors qu'il est seul et heurte de front l'objectif qui vise à confondre réalité scénique et réalité quotidienne. En fait, c'est un dialogue avec soi-même, une communication interne et dynamique. Le monologue intervient comme une échappée du personnage, impromptue, insolite, non justifiée, inattendue; il opère une coupure brusque dans la trame principale et s'interrompt aussi brutalement. Cette voix, refoulée de l'espace social où elle n'a pas de place, est isolée dans l'individu, au sens de l'isolation névrotique.

On trouve à peu près une douzaine de monologues. Ils peuvent être groupés en deux catégories: ceux qui parlent à l'évidence de la frustration ou du plaisir; ils s'apparentent à des monologues lyriques. Les autres, par leur sujet apparemment insolite ou banal, semblent se situer en marge de ce regroupement, mais ils méritent d'être étudiés, car ils expriment tous le rapport entre l'individu et le groupe, ou celui de l'individu avec son monde pulsionnel (voir Juéry).

Tremblay a pu aller plus loin sur le thème de la méconnaissance de soi, de l'aliénation collective et de l'incommunicabilité accablante. Néanmoins, c'est le monologisme qui structure fondamentalement son écriture: narrateur ou personnage soliloquant, chacun s'investit de son idée fixe; le dynamisme émotif de la situation se développe par les monologues successifs, qui s'interpénètrent et engendrent un dialogue de sourds, essentiellement polémique, en assurant le locuteur d'une position défensive à l'égard des autres. Dans son théâtre, la lutte est à qui fera taire l'autre. La "ruminantion" du personnage est souvent hargneuse; cependant, le personnage n'est jamais aussi lucide et aussi franc que lorsqu'il est le seul à parler.

Le seul espace libre est fait de cette intériorité blessée qui agit comme un rempart et sert d'ultime refuge contre la médiocrité et la mesquinerie du monde. Quant au monde de Michel Trmeblay, il relève d'une blessure inconsolable, d'un vide sans fond que rien ne saurait combler.

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SHARON POLLOCK

The Evolution of an Authentic Voice in Canadian Theatre

I work in the theatre. I work in the theatre as an actor, as a director, and as a playwright. I have earned my living making theatre for over thirty years. I am driven to do so for reasons beyond my comprehension; however since the mark of the rational mind is its ability, when pressed, to invent a reason for anything, I suppose I could come up with one or two if necessary. I suppose I would have to, or label myself irrational.

The truth is, a tendency to irrationality can be an invaluable asset if one is committed to the making of theatre in Canada, the kind of theatre that Colin Taylor, a Jamaican-born Canadian theatre artist speaks of when he says that theatre

can be — but rarely is, because it's mostly just bad — can be healing. It can actually constitute an authentic gift to another human being. It can, in fact, on those rare occasions reveal possibilities, open the gates — the prisons that we lock ourselves in — demolish the categories and the categorical thinking with which we make our way through life. (9-10)

I suggest that irrationality can be an asset for the dramatist committed to Taylor's kind of theatre simply because the path of its creation from compulsive urge to public production and dissemination is so often fraught with pitfalls and abyss that a rational mind would soon turn to other endeavours.

In Canada we experience — in combination with the usual challenges theatre artists encounter in creating work and finding an audience everywhere — a particular set of circumstances grounded first in our origin as a colony of the British Empire; second, in our expropriation of a land the physical attributes of which were perceived as alien and threatening; and third, in our oppression of the people who inhabited that land, a people whose presence we essentially denied and attempted to wipe from the landscape as literally as we wiped them from our minds. Here, I speak as a white descendant of immigrants from the British Isles who came to Eastern Canada in the mid-1700s.

Nowhere is the impact of our colonial heritage more evident than in the

Canadian Culture and Literature. And a Taiwan Perspective

Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek and Yiu-nam Leung, eds.

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Department of Foreign Languages and Literature, National Tsing Hua University

1998 ISBN 0-921490-10-0

evolution of an authentic voice in Canadian drama. Of course the "authentic voice" I speak of refers to a larger concept than the literal and individual voice which is the material means by which the dialogue manifests itself in the communication of a drama in performance. But I would like to use my own experience with the expression of that material voice as an example and starting point. My voice has a particular rhythm, a cadence, tonality, and tenor. My vowels sound this way; my consonants that way. This is my natural voice. My true voice. My own voice.

In the mid-1960's, when I began work in the theatre as an actor, this voice was silent. If I wanted to work in Canadian theatre it was always necessary for me to assume another voice. A command of accent is invaluable for an actor, any actor anywhere. One used a range of appropriate British accents for plays set in Great Britain, similarly so for plays set in the United States, and what was referred to within the profession as a "mid-Atlantic" (translation: upper-class educated English) accent for all other plays although they clearly were not set in the mid-Atlantic but in places like Russia, France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Scandinavia, or in some imaginary location. The only voice and accent one never used was the Canadian voice and accent, the Canadian voice as it was heard when it fell from the lips of white Canadians, with such transformations in it as history, distance, geography, and climate had wrought upon the Mother Tongue of English. People found nothing odd about its absence in our theatres for virtually no plays were set in Canada. If some highly inventive, for the times, director or playwright did so, one would ape the voice of our supposed betters, the Colonizer, in performing it, for only that voice carried legitimacy and significance. It was thought to be the voice of art and culture and theatre. It had status. It was the voice to which we should aspire as an expression of ourselves. No matter that it was not our own, no matter that it would forever constitute a falsehood, no matter that we would "pretend to being" as opposed to "being." I see it all as based on an assumption held by many that every slave aspires to be master.

Merril Denison, a Canadian writing plays for the stage and radio in the 1920s and 1930s who eventually turned to the writing of commercial and industrial histories, informed readers of the *Yearbook of the Arts in Canada, 1928-29* that writing about theatre or drama in Canada was depressingly like discussing the art of sailing by desert dwellers: "There is little to be said on the subject [of Canadian drama and desert sailing] because there is none" (51). He does admit that, just as some small body of water may exist upon which a desert dweller has launched a raft and hoisted a sail, there may be some Canadian plays. But Denison confesses that such exceptions are noted merely "to protect oneself from pointless future arguments" (51). Denison continues by stating that

the fact that there is none [referring to Canadian plays] will come as distressing and discouraging news to but a few people. ... Until the national intentions of Canada are

greatly clarified, the theatre would at best be an artificial graft supported with as great travail of the spirit and the purse as a Canadian industry in oranges. But there is this to say about a Canadian theatre: in a discussion of none of the arts are the realities of our cultural pretences brought so sharply into focus. (55)

Fortunately, few read the *Yearbook of the Arts in Canada* in 1928-29 so I would like to think that budding dramatists were not and are not unduly discouraged. As for me, I firmly believe that one can sail on sand, that somewhere someone has sailed on sand, and if they have not, someday they will. All that is required is the creation of a craft expressive of its time, its place, and of the means and ends of its creators, for the wind blows round the world. And even wind can be created if need and desire are great. I recognize however that the kind of craft that sails the Thames cannot nor should not be expected to sail a sea of sand. Those cultural pretences to which Denison refers constitute the shoals which have so impeded the creation and clear sailing of our Canadian ship of theatre. Denison is wrong, or perhaps merely being dramatic, when he speaks of the absence of Canadian plays in his time. They existed, those of the nineteenth century modeled on English literary drama (itself an imitation of Shakespearean drama) and faithfully reproducing all of its worst features. In 1908 Canadian dramatist Wilfred Campbell in a preface to a collection of his plays states "the author makes no apologies for the form of these plays. Like other writers he has his own literary ideals and with the great mass of the sane British peoples believes that Shakespeare is still the greatest dramatic poet of the modern world" ("Preface"). According to Campbell, drama that was "unBritish in ideals" was bad drama ("Preface").

The plays of Campbell and that of other Canadians of his time suffered in terms of form from weaknesses inherent in imitation as well as the mediocrity of the genre imitated. In terms of content, Canadian work of the era reflected a timidity of spirit, with subject matter and its treatment framed by gentility and decorum, dictated, as critic Michael Tait puts it, "by an acceptance of those canons of taste shared uncritically by polite English society, and by an excess of propriety" (27). The possibility of good work was further subverted by the Canadian dramatist's lack of contact with the practical theatre and an essential inability to find an audience within Canadian society sufficiently widespread to support and sustain the work.

Our situation as colonials within the British Empire mirrored that of a colonial and colonized people anywhere at any time. The Mother Country defined us. We did not define ourselves. We were expected to subscribe to her beliefs and values. We did not form our own based on our experience. She led, we followed, both in the cultural arena and in the war-torn trenches. Should we find that which was true for her rang false with us, the fault must be ours. In our collective sub-conscious we accepted the Mother Country's assessment of us as congenitally, intrinsically, flawed; for we were not, and never could be,

never would be, the Mother Country. It followed that we were to see our lives in their lives, find our stories in their stories. Play *them* out on the stage and read *their* printed page.... Even Canada's physical features were deemed inappropriate as subject matter for Canadian visual artists. Savage. Raw. Wrong. Not like the English countryside at all, or Wordsworth's Lake District. "Go there," was the unspoken message felt by West Coast painter Emily Carr: "that's where you'll find Real Landscape. Go there if you want to be a Real Artist" (qtd. in Blanchard 87). But time passes. And all things pass with time. Especially Empires.

As said, in the twentieth century the art, craft, theatre training, drama produced and artistic leadership in Canada were still strongly rooted in Great Britain. The majority of our theatres were directed by and our stages populated with expatriates from the British Isles reflecting a wave of immigration after World War II. They produced and we reproduced the Englishman's voice on stage, and played out his drama, or work from away, Neil Simon, for example, being a particular favourite. The view that Canadian stories were folk tales, not plays or the raw material for plays, was affirmed in both overt and covert ways by potential producers. A notable exception was The Vancouver Playhouse which, under artistic directors Joy Coghill and Malcolm Black premiered work by Eric Nichols, Beverley Simons, Hershel Hardin, and George Ryga whose play *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* in 1967 was to open a door of possibility for Canadian drama as it played to sell-out enthusiastic audiences and critical acclaim.

Meanwhile, the Shakespeare Festival Theatre in Stratford, Ontario, and The Shaw Festival in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, each dedicated to the works of the respective playwrights named, were in operation as well. Then, and even more so now, their ensemble companies and long term season contracts represented and represent the pinnacle of success for Canadian theatre artists in the eyes of many — with the exception of playwrights of course. The plays produced at these two companies further entrenched in training and practice a style and method particularly suited to the Shavian, Shakespearean, and classical canon, if not modern drama. The national and international profile of these companies set certain expectations within the country and the theatre community as to what constituted "good theatre" both in production and dramaturgy. Disenchantment grew and spread within the profession as to the relevancy and validity of such standards and production processes when applied to the creation of original Canadian works. The Caucasian face was omnipresent on stage donning whatever shade of make-up required to signify the race of a non-Caucasian character if one were so designated in a cast list (a rare occurrence). If no racial note was made in a cast list, it was assumed the character must be Caucasian. Thus, universality was personified in the white actor just as significance in the minds of many was communicated by the voice and dramatic

literature of the Mother Country.

Characteristic of the decade of the 60s was the challenge to the socio-economic and political status quo, with an accompanying spill-over into the arts. In 1967 Canada's Centennial celebrations kindled a wildfire of national self-awareness. The colonial mind-set began to fragment and was replaced with a burgeoning cultural nationalism. Such national celebration and self-awareness validated the aims and objectives of a number of dissident theatre artists such as Ken Gas, Martin Kinch, Paul Thompson, and Douglas Risk. These and others were committed to the creation of Canadian companies which would give primacy and focus to drama scripted by Canadians, about Canadians, to be produced in small converted venues, and dedicated to the creation of an authentic Canadian theatre in opposition to the programming and perceived values of the major regional theatres.

The late 1960s and 70s saw an explosion of such alternative theatres, for example, Factory Theatre Lab; Toronto Free Theatre, Theatre Passe Muraille, Alberta Theatre Projects, to name a few. The great majority were funded in their early years by The Department of Employment and Immigration through what was referred to as "make-work" projects with titles like "Opportunities for Youth" and "Local Initiative Projects." The cynical might say funding was motivated by the desire to suppress opposition to the major dollars going to the established theatres by throwing a few dollars to the alternative theatres. I doubt this. The impact of theatre had and has been so negligible on the public and the government that it would hardly warrant that kind of attention. Given the paranoia bred by the 1960s and its attendant challenge to established institutions, perhaps government thought "at least we'll know where they are and what they're doing." Or perhaps "this is a good thing, let's give them a chance." Or perhaps such funding served as some small means in strategic planning for some larger, grander political end which only time and the Freedom of Information Act will reveal to us.

Whatever the reason, it was a good thing, and sufficiently successful that Canada Council, the federal funding body for the arts, was forced to acknowledge the viability of the work of the alternative theatres. It did so through the provision of operating grants, and the targeting of special funding for the commissioning of Canadian plays; the workshopping of new plays; the subsidizing of playwrights-in-residence with theatre companies; and the providing of travel grants for playwrights to attend first and second productions of new plays. The Canadian Playwright as a species soon was discovered by the major regional theatres, and those that programmed a season devoid of Canadian scripted drama might expect a paragraph of reprimand in the letter that accompanied their public subsidy cheque.

An actor could now earn a living and a vowel resonating of the British Isles might never pass his lips if he so chose. The work of Carol Bolt, David French, Erika Ritter, George Walker, Ann Chislett, John Murrell, David

Fennario, Rex Deverell, myself, and a host of playwrights with somewhat similar names, somewhat similar faces, and some would say spinning somewhat similar stories, had found space on our stages. As we entered the 1990s, cultural nationalism — which drove many theatre artists during the 1960s and 70s — lost its moral imperative and that loss was not replaced with nor supplanted by any stronger, more dynamic aesthetic or societal imperative. It simply faded away. The diminishing of will and desire, or vision, was accompanied by a drift in direction, with cut-backs in funding and operations, and increasingly conservative programming. The alternative theatres no longer focused exclusively on new work, and the major regionals' production of plays from a culturally specific Canadian repertoire hinted more and more strongly of tokenism. As a result of targeted funding policies, monies for activities specifically directed to creation and production of new Canadian work had seldom been integrated into operational budgets. When public monies targeted for those activities disappeared, the activities ceased or decreased.

This was not a bad thing in all instances. The playwriting workshop, for example, so warmly embraced by so many, had led to the proliferation of never produced but endlessly workshoped scripts, as well as the "make-work" script the production potential of which did not merit workshoping. If, however, one had no script — actors, dramaturge, director, and playwright could receive no fees for workshoping and thus the "make-work" script served the end of income for theatre practitioners. An additional problem lay in the simple fact that the workshop, as generally structured, best served a representational aesthetic and was limited in its usefulness to, or even destructive of, work that defied easy categorization. Innovation in workshoping methods and process to better serve a broader range of plays and playwrights was slow in coming or not in evidence.

The company dedicated only to the production of Canadian work was sometimes charged with the ghettoizing of Canadian drama. Often it appeared that a double standard was applied by producers, media, and academics — a lower standard in which enthusiasm, sincerity, regionality, and good intentions became powerful factors in the decision to produce, celebrate, condemn, study, or to fund with public dollars. This impression of special treatment validated an undervaluing of Canadian drama in the minds of some members of the general public and of the artistic community. Furthermore, the work itself did not reflect the diverse multi-racial and cultural nature of Canada, no more than did the playwrights' names, or the faces seen and the voices heard on stages, even of those companies supposedly committed to the production of an authentic voice in Canadian drama.

A substitute had been found for the British role model of the Mother Country: the Caucasian Canadian, usually of British heritage, now provided the measuring stick for significant story and theatre's interpretative prism. Now it was the song, dance, and story of the "ethnic Canadian" or "visible minority"

that was designated folk art, craft, or gossip. It was their cadence, tone, tenor, rhythm, and inflection of voice that was devalued, and deemed inadequate to communicate truth on stage. Creation had displaced imitation to some degree, but exclusion was still a prime factor in the making of Canadian theatre.

The call to action demanded by such exclusionary practices was further strengthened by the rapidly changing nature of what some like to call the Canadian mosaic. Per Bresk defined the situation clearly:

In view of the radically changed and changing demographics of our country, the net result of this at least seemingly unicultural endeavour on the part of a large component of our professional theatre is that this theatre has become increasingly irrelevant, and decreasingly able to participate in the discourse around the story called Canada. (11)

Today, Canadian theatre artists and playwrights who are of African origin from the continent or the diaspora, First Peoples, Asian, East Asian, South Asian, Hispanic, etc., and combinations of these groups are engaged in a struggle to gain access to theatre platforms for the dissemination of their work. An inherent aspect of this drama is the erasure of a false identity imposed by those in power, and the revelation or creation of an authentic identity. In some cases, I regret to say, those in power who stormed the stages in the name of cultural nationalism in the 1960s and 70s and who fought their own version of this present day battle, are insensitive to those who are presently excluded. Exclusion is defended on the grounds of the lack of talent, training, or experience of the actors and directors; the mediocrity or irrelevancy of the playwright's work to a mainstream audience (always perceived as white); or the difficulty in meeting the racial demands of casting. Most often exclusion is not defended. Why bother? seems to be the note of the day (just don't answer the door when somebody knocks). While this saddens me, I also see positive change happening, not particularly because illumination falls on those in positions who can most easily effect change, but because of the growing strength and creative energy of minority theatre artists and playwrights, and the rightness of their cause. If the door cannot be opened, it can be knocked down, or a new structure built.

For both proactive and reactive reasons, and as in the 1960s and 70s, small companies are forming whose mandate is the creation of work and drama that speaks to the reality, significance, and cultural specificity of the marginalized and visible minorities. The work has an audience that transcends colour of skin and cultural origin, and a vitality that mainstream Canadian theatre often lacks. Just as the alternative theatres of the 1960s and 70s were first funded by other than arts funding agencies, so it is with many of these companies. The Department of Multiculturalism (now the Department of Heritage) has often provided seed funding, followed by some acknowledgement if not financial recognition of their creations and productions by mainstream arts funding

bodies. Public monies to support the arts are harder to come by now than in the past, and who knows, perhaps this will enable new voices to avoid some of the pitfalls that accompanied such funding in the past. Too often, however, public funding has not appeared to stimulate innovation, inclusion, and creation, but rather to reward traditional structure and conservative content, be it in the administrative office or the creative arena.

There is a great distance to be travelled. Non-traditional casting in which race is not a factor in the casting of roles unless race is germane to the play, has made small inroads in our major companies. The concept of non-traditional contracting is in need of implementation with directors, designers, and administrators as well as with actors. In a multicultural and pluralistic society such as Canada's, non-traditional casting and employment equity in all areas of play making and play production not only reflect our reality, but stimulate dramatists to rid themselves of preconceptions that limit their work leading to an enriched dialogue of interpretation and creative input that cannot help but result in better work. For example, Vancouver with a long-standing and growing Asian population has seen alternative theatres such as Firehall Theatre, Tamahanous and Touchstone Theatres programme cross-cultural work producing plays by R.A. Shiomi, Winston Kam, and Betty Quan. Playwrights like Marty Chan of Alberta, Drew Hayden Taylor, Artistic Director of Native Earth Performing Arts, and Djanet Sears of Toronto have gathered numerous awards and productions of their work. *The Rez Sisters* by Thomson Highway has played a role similar to that of Ryga's *Rita Joe* in establishing the artistic merit and commercial viability of work outside mainstream white establishment drama. Companies like the Vancouver Sath, Theatre WUM, and Program for the Professional Development of Artists of Colour in the Theatre are creating work and galvanizing discourse on important issues on multiple fronts. In this regard, we in mainstream theatre and society must address and overcome the seeming desire to categorize such artists and their work in ways that endorse isolation rather than connection. Perhaps for the purposes of growth and change, as a political and sensitizing exercise, there is something to be gained in defining companies and activities as exclusively Black Theatre or Asian Theatre, Black actor, or Asian actor, for then one must admit and confront the category of White theatre and White actor as the majority of theatres in Canada would fall within such a category. It becomes thus apparent that White Theatre and the White actor constitute the standard against which other theatre is measured. The only question left is how does one feel and what is one prepared to do about this.

We are a young society. We have come an enormous distance in a short time from initial contact with the First Peoples of North America to colonial outpost, dominion of provinces and territories, nationhood, and federation as a diverse, culturally rich, and racially, linguistically, and culturally mixed peoples

who choose to live together, creating ways and means to assure our choice results in greater personal, societal, and spiritual returns than should we choose to live apart. Donna Bennett writing on postcolonial cultural complexities has described contemporary Canada as

a collection of cultures within the idea of English Canada, not so much a mosaic as a kaleidoscope, an arrangement of fragments whose interrelationships, while ever changing nevertheless serve — by virtue of their container, we might say — not only to influence what we see when we look through the glass, but also to affect the placement of the other elements in the array. (196-97)

It is increasingly clear that to speak of the evolution of an authentic voice in Canadian drama is to deny the reality of Canada. I suppose what I am really talking about has been more the evolution of authentic voiceS in Canadian drama, for in a pluralistic society there must and will be a plurality of voices. The old ideas of homogeny and uniformity have never been reflected in the Canadian character. History and geography have precluded that. What we are seeing now is a real possibility of and opportunity for clarification and redefinition of our national intention, driven by a vision of wholeness generated by artists rather than a national agenda formulated by politicians and economists.

In closing, I take the liberty of speaking the words of Lorena Gale, award-winning actor, director, playwright, and founder of the Program for the Professional Development of Artists of Colour in the Theatre:

The ethnic make-up of Canada has changed, but Canadian theatre has remained the same. Too cowardly to risk reflecting the cultural richness and diversity of post-modern society, it serves a dying white audience a tasteless unnourishing gruel of the same theatrical fare it dined on centuries ago, not realizing, as it races backwards towards extinction, that Darwin's theory of evolution also applies to artistic form — adapt or perish. (18)

Those are fighting words from the front, and I am greatly encouraged as to the future of Canadian theatre and Canadian drama when such spirited artists are engaged in its creation.

Calgary

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SHERRY SIMON

Robert Lepage and Intercultural Theatre

Introduction

Robert Lepage is a Québécois whose work in theatre has become internationally renowned. I am interested in his work for a number of reasons. First: because his theatre travels, because he has become a star of Québec culture abroad, and because he is a prolific and currently popular figure on the world scene; second, because at least two of his important works speak of the Orient and use the cultural encounters between East and West as their dynamic and underlying structure, and because, overall, his plays challenge stereotypes of ethnicity, exploring the clash and interpenetration of cultures, and use questions of cultural identity in innovative ways. Lepage's productions are part of an evolving tradition of interculturalism in theatre and performance; they are also, despite their "transnationalism," outgrowths of a specifically Québécois obsession with questions of identity and language. Although his plays do not always fulfil their promise, and I am referring in particular to his latest production, *The Seven Streams of the River Ota*, Lepage and his theatre groups ask the right questions. However, I would like to note that my reading of Lepage's play here is a reaction to the performances given in New York in December 1996 at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. I saw a considerably different and much more successful version of the play in Montréal in June 1997.

But a final reason why I am interested in Robert Lepage's work relates to changing images of Québec identity. Probably, the Québec playwright who most successfully rivals Lepage in terms of international celebrity is Michel Tremblay. But it would be hard to find two more culturally dissimilar figures. Tremblay's plays have also travelled widely, but, I would argue, for quite different reasons and according to quite different modes of transportation. Tremblay's plays are related to "localness" in ways we are very familiar with: the sites he uses, the language especially, identify his work as québécois. Lepage's relation to Québec culture, on the other hand, is contingent rather than essential. One does not go to see a Lepage production to see a "Québec" play, yet Lepage's "transnational" theatre is all the same framed and penetrated in important ways by the figure of the nation. It is the paradoxes of the meanings of the "nation" within internationalized art productions today which I am also interested in exploring here.

Canadian Culture and Literature. And a Taiwan Perspective

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1998 ISBN 0-921490-10-0

While Québec culture during the heady days of the 1960s and 1970s was often defined in terms of the specificities of a national identity, the complexities and contradictions of identity during the 1980s and 1990s no longer admit such conclusions. The only constant of cultural production today, we might say, is pluralism and hybridity: the increasing cultural diversity of the population of cultural producers, the diversity of media mobilized by performance and theatre (video, dance, drama), the collage of cultural themes and sites, etc. Lepage, more than Tremblay, points to the salient tensions of cultural identity today: the mobility and uncertainty of the bases upon which the nation is constructed and projected. Lepage's work offers a particularly useful perspective from which we can observe not only the changing configurations of Québec culture but also the interaction between the local and the global in contemporary artistic production.

The main emphasis of my article will be on the way Lepage treats the cultural encounter between "East" and "West." But I will also underline some other elements which to me are significant in his work, in particular his use of languages and the new configurations which he gives to language exchange and translation. It is important to emphasize that analysis of Lepage's theatre must deal with the fact that there is no written text. Lepage's productions are performances which change from one venue to another. Consequently, one must always specify which version it is that is being commented on. *The River Ota*, for instance, was shown in several versions, ranging from a few hours to the final, full 8-hour version. In the case of *The Dragon Trilogy*, the description and commentary provided by the *Cahiers de théâtre Jeu* and the detailed description by Diane Pavlovic are invaluable.

The two plays which I will be discussing are *The Dragon Trilogy*, first produced in 1986 (and which I saw in a 6-hour version in Montréal) and *The Seven Streams of the River Ota*, his latest play, which I saw in an 8 hour version (including some 4 intermissions and a supper break) in New York in December 1996.

Internationalism and Transculturalism

Robert Lepage, then, is the Québec playwright who has become an international phenomenon. This last phrase is to be understood in the fullness of its many dimensions. Not only is he internationally celebrated, but trans-nationalism is the very theme of his work. He has invented and exploited the kinds of theatre productions which, through constructed out of materials gathered from local contexts, are put together into performances which transcend these origins. Through the identities of those working on his productions, the kind of itinerary he can follow in the course of one month — moving from Paris to London, from Tokyo to Toronto — Lepage seems to incarnate a cosmopolitanism, an internationalism, which is in every way a refutation of the traditionalism of

Québec identity. His is a culture which travels.

Lepage's first major play was "Circulations," with Le Théâtre Repère (1984). Among his many productions: The first version of *The Dragon Trilogy* in the fall of 1985, the solo show *Vinci* in the spring of 1986; the *Polygraph* in 1988; *Tectonic Plates* also in 1988; another solo show *Needles and Opium* in 1993; he created the *mise en scène* in 1992 of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in London; *Elseneur*, several Shakespeare adaptations, various *mises-en-scène* for opera, and two recent films, *the Confessional* and *The Polygraph*. Lepage now works with Le théâtre Ex Machina.

In the new constellations of transcultural theatre artists, Robert Lepage is a confirmed star. He joins the company of Eugenio Barba, Peter Brook, Robert Wilson, and Ariane Mnouchkine. These directors have all used elements of distant cultures like the Noh tradition, Kathikali dancing from India, or African performances, as elements of their own theatre. At the same time, the processes of creation have themselves become cosmopolitan. So that Peter Brook, living and working in Paris, with a group of actors from all over the world, could hardly be the representative of any one national culture at a theatre festival, for instance. Lepage has been the director of the Canadian National Arts Centre, and is clearly identified as a Canadian *and* a Québec artist; the recent construction of his new theatre in Québec may tie him somewhat more to this locale; however, his mode of theatrical existence has been resolutely international. Yet, as Lepage explains in the interesting interviews with Rémy Charest in 1995, the dismantling of national structures in theatre is far from complete. The structures of national theatres still seem to carry with them certain traditions, like the very authoritarian role expected of the director in Germany. Or the fact that the Japanese do not seem to place much emphasis on the stylistic unity of their plays (Charest 53). For them, diversity, the encounter and the collision of styles, is an element of enrichment. They do not insist on the presence of a single acting code, for instance, but will integrate several kinds of traditions into one play. This, we can understand, appeals to Lepage, who uses this same kind of technique. And national traditions are still very important in the venerable nationally prestigious venues in which plays are mounted, in the way audiences interpret them and in the national frameworks that are adopted for reviewing. Therefore, playing Strindberg in Sweden, or Shakespeare in England, faces profoundly national constraints — although these can be flouted — as Lepage did in making his Puck speak with a Québécois accent in his *Midsummer Night's Dream* in London. Barbara Hodgdon explains:

Certainly his *Dream*, which yokes divergent materials into pastiche, collage, and bricolage, is oppositional to the grand literary and theatrical narratives that would draw national and cultural boundaries around "Shakespeare" and manage "his" meanings.... Faced with doing Shakespeare at a royally sanctioned London venue, Lepage's reliance on Indonesian psychic and symbolic forms was a move toward finding a space outside

of either British or French Empire that represented an Archimedean point from which to critique the insularity of British Shakespeare-culture. (37)

In a similar vein, we should recall that models of unified national traditions are increasingly rare. This is of course true of contemporary Québec theatre, which is richly diverse, its most notable representatives are the avant-garde Carbone 14 on the one hand (which de-emphasizes text) and Denis Marleau and le Théâtre Ubu on the other (which gives text maximal importance) — but which also includes a wide variety of styles and approaches by such playwrights as Michel-Marc Bouchard, René-Daniel Dubois, Normand Chaurette, Pol Pelletier, and Michel Tremblay.

The definition of such "intercultural" theatre is well explained in the collected volume by *The Intercultural Performance Reader* by Patrice Pavis. In the introduction to the volume, Pavis discusses the "reciprocity" of influences as well as the notions of "culture" upon which interculturality can be approached. To create some definitional order, Pavis distinguishes "intercultural" from "multicultural" theatre and "cultural collage." "Intercultural" is defined as: "hybrid forms drawing upon a more or less conscious and voluntary mixing of performance traditions traceable to distinct cultural areas. The hybridization is very often such that the original forms can no longer be distinguished" (1) and his examples are Brook, Mnouchkine, Barba, and in particular *The Dragon Trilogy* by Lepage (8).

Lepage uses the clash of traditions and influences to construct his own plays and *mises-en-scène*. This encounter of traditions is enacted through various theatrical elements. Gesture, of course, has been one of the most powerful influences from the East (for a phenomenology of gesture, see Flusser). Ariane Mnouchkine, for instance, likes to repeat that the West has created no theatrical forms outside of the Commedia dell'arte, which is itself of Eastern inspiration. Repeating Artaud's words, Mnouchkine declares that "Theatre is Oriental." It is "non-realism," "theatricality" which is to be found in the East (see Féral). The recourse to Asian culture in theatre has often indicated a desire to turn towards more stylized, ritualized forms of acting, a move against realism and naturalism, towards "an elevated artistic bearing," controlled emotions (Pavis 17), and, according to the influential writings of Artaud,

a theater which eliminates the author in favor of what we would call, in our Occidental theatrical jargon, the director; but a director who has become a kind of manager of magic, a master of sacred ceremonies.... The actors with their costumes constitute veritable living, moving hieroglyphs. And these three-dimension hieroglyphs are in turn brocaded with a certain number of gestures - mysterious signs which correspond to some unknown, fabulous, and obscure reality which we here in the Occident have completely repressed. (Artaud 60-61)

The mixing of languages, as used in contemporary avant-garde theatre, is another strategy. More than gesture or language, Lepage uses the meeting between East and West as the very matter of his work, the thematic structure, in both *The Dragon Trilogy* — and in his recent *The Seven Branches of the River Ota*. Lepage's dialogues between East and West must be read against the backdrop of other spectacular efforts of contemporary theatre: Brook's *Mahabharata* and Cixous' *L'Indiade*, both works of epic scale by two of Europe's best-known directors — and produced at roughly the same time in the mid-1980s. Marvin Carlson defines these celebrated theatre companies as part of the phenomenon of the modern "pilgrimage" theatre inaugurated by Wagner in Bayreuth. As shapers of powerful events, these theatre experiences tend to overpower the "foreign" elements which they embrace, depriving, in a sense, these elements of "speaking in their own voice" (84-85). The most powerful and cogent critique of Brook's *Mahabharata* has come from Rustom Bharucha in India. Bharucha is aware, however, that his critique has been in a sense welcomed, categorized as a "Third World" perspective, and included into a range of opinions reflecting the wide horizons of tolerant liberal debate (Bharucha 200). And they can be placed in the context of another kind of intercultural theatre, as well: the contestatory performances of artists like Coco Fusco and Guillermo Pena-Gomez who remind us that "intercultural" relations are infected with the logic of domination and appropriation of colonialism. See in particular Fusco's "The Other History of Intercultural Performance" where she recalls the practice of live exhibitions which accompany colonial domination.

Intercultural Theatre and Dimensions of East and West

The Dragon Trilogy was developed by Lepage and Le Théâtre Repère during the early 1980s, a period which saw a crucial shift in conceptions of ethnicity in Québec. While immigrants had traditionally become integrated into the anglophone community in Québec, the period after law 101 saw a reconfiguration of Québécois cultural power and the realization that immigrants were henceforth to be part of the majority Francophone world. There was a new sense of the wider boundaries of Québec culture, and its necessary heterogeneity. Theatre was particularly attentive to these shifts, and cultural diversity became a preoccupation of a great deal of artistic creation (see, for example, Harel; L'Hérault; Nepveu, Simon et L'Hérault; Simon and Dubé; for a recent survey of the question of intercultural theatre in Québec, see *Cahiers de théâtre Jeu* 72 [1994]). The 1990s have seen an explosion of productions by authors of other than Québécois origin. The best known of these playwrights are Marco Micone, Abba Farhoud, Pan Bouyoucas, Alberto Kurapel, and Wajdi Mouawad. Michelle Rossignol at the Théâtre d'Aujourd'hui is partially responsible for this new visibility, having set up a programme of public readings to encourage the

creation of texts by immigrant writers. In this context, I should also mention the demise of "bilingual" theatre as attempted by Marianne Ackerman (*L'Affaire Tartuffe*) and David Fennario (*Balconville*). In the context of intercultural theatre, there is also the success of crossover theatre such as Tremblay's *Les Belles-soeurs* in Yiddish translation (staged at the Saidye Bronfman Theatre) and *Les Belles-soeurs* in Scottish translation (by a Scots troupe, staged at the Centaur Theatre). And, finally, of historical note — with regard to a specific type of interculturality — is the extreme vitality of Yiddish language theatre in Montréal (see Larrue).

The Dragon Trilogy was an early and spectacular contribution to this movement, focusing on the issue of cultural diversity in Québec, but choosing to investigate, not the more obvious and numerous groups like the Italians, Portuguese, or Greeks living in Montréal, but the archetypical figure of the lone Chinese living in the very small-town atmosphere of a provincial Québec city — a site not often associated with cosmopolitanism. In Québec's history of immigration, the "Italian" connection has probably been the most prominent in Québec intercultural thought, for reasons having to do with the historical relations between Italians and Québécois, their common Catholic religion, but also for the prominence which certain Italian intellectuals and creators have assumed within Québec culture (Marco Micone, for instance, or the journal *Vice Versa*). The Haitians have also been an important group and "Germany" as the extreme site of strangeness exercised a great deal of fascination during this period. The "Chinese" in this context were an unexpected and unusual object of investigation. In addition, the play ventured far beyond sociological issues to an investigation of the symbolic dimensions of Otherness, as well as the material history of relations between "China" and "Québec/Canada" since the Second World War. Further, the Chinese connection is assuming new prominence in Québec with recent literary successes of writers such as Ying Chen.

The Trilogy is a six-hour performance which explores the meaning of "Chinese" through 75 years of the social history of Québec and Canada, moving from Québec City, to Toronto, and to Vancouver. It begins in a parking lot in Québec City, in a sandy parking lot, which is all that is left — on the surface — of Chinatown in Québec City. It begins with the phrase "I have never been to China," spoken in three languages, English, French, and Chinese:

I have never been to China / When I was small, there were houses here / It was Chinatown / Today it's a parking lot / Later, it may become a park, a train station, or a cemetery / If you scratch with your nails / you will find water and motor oil / If you dig further / you will surely find pieces of porcelain / jade / and the foundations of the houses the Chinese lived in here / if you dig even further / you will find yourself in China / When I die / I want you to throw me in a hole like that / so that I fall / eternally / So that I live eternally / Look at the old parking lot attendant / I say that he is not sleeping / It's as if he was the dragon / the dragon guarding the gate of immortality

He is the dragon / And this is The Dragon Trilogy.

The play transports us from west to east and then to the Orient, in three movements which correspond to three eras, three spaces, three colours, three rhythms. This magnificent and absolutely epoch-making production makes of the movements of a Chinese family in Canada an exploration of the interlinking histories of East and West, of their grounding in both social history and individual itineraries.

The "Chinaman" of the trilogy at the start is a stereotype: first the watchman of the parking lot, the guardian of its subterranean secrets, then Wong, the silent laundryman, object of the taunts of the neighbourhood children, who speaks strange French ("*méci*") and an English which even Crawford, an Englishman, cannot always make out. When Wong says "The store is burn" Crawford repeats "A star is born?," evoking at the same time the astral theme and the reference to Haley's comet which runs through the play. The first part of the play revolves around themes of death and memory, the visible signs of Chinese-ness: laundry, opium, and the rituals of girlhood through which pass Jeanne and Françoise. While the first part offers images of Orientals from the outside, the second part, in Toronto, penetrates into their lives and thoughts. Françoise is married to Lee (the arrangement decreed by a poker game) and living in Toronto; she gives birth to Bédard's child, which Lee accepts as his own. (The geisha and the American officer appear here. The geisha reappears in a later scene, when Françoise sings *Youkali* by Kurt Weill. This middle section evokes the political and social movements of the 1950s: women's limited work, missionary activity in China, cancer, the tenth anniversary of Hiroshima, August 6, 1955. The geisha's daughter writes to her absent American father, evoking the bomb, the absence of the corpse of her mother, the vanishing of bodies (65). Jeanne hangs herself; Stella is sent to an institution. The third part moves to Vancouver and to contemporaneity: airplanes replace the train and light and luminosity dominates the scene. Vancouver turns towards Hong Kong, the abortive return of Crawford to this origins, and the crash of the plane into the sea. The main element is the encounter of Pierre and Youkali, of Western and Eastern art traditions. In the hesitant, tender, and difficult dialogue between the two young artists (difficult emotionally but also linguistically, as neither "masters" the English language), there is the suggestion of an opening out into worlds which are new for both of them. Each offers the other a quest, a promise, a hope. And finally Pierre announces to his mother that he wishes to study art in China.

East and West, then, are not two different places, two separate realities, but pieces in an ever-moving and changing configuration of identities. First, Chineseness is the absolute strangeness inhabiting the familiar world of childhood, the closed world of provincial Québec. But slowly it unfurls into a complex and swirling panorama of memory, loss, catastrophe, and art. From the very beginning of the play we are struck by the difference between the intimacy

and ease of communication between Jeanne and Françoise, the two main characters, and the formal, distant and difficult speech of the Chinese laundryman. This difficulty of communication, coming close to incommunicability, identifies the "Chinaman" as an absolute Stranger within the community. Though he lives in the midst of the community, he is not a member of it. He is separated from it by the veil of memory and by the heritage of anti-Oriental racism which Québec, and North America in general, received and enacts from the European tradition. The mode of existence of the "Chinese" in North America is marked by the specific patterns of their immigration: the large numbers of men recruited to work as coolies on the railways, then their dispersion across the continent, to the very smallest of localities, to be often the single Chinese person or family, working in laundry, then in restaurants. Men who immigrated to Canada before 1924 were obliged to remain single, as racist considerations totally put a stop to Chinese immigration from 1924 to 1951. The veil of separation is stunningly represented by Lepage by the sheets which the laundryman hangs up, which become the sails of memory as they are attached to a Chinese junk, and then the canvas upon which the women members of Wong's family paint, in more and more precise detail as the years pass, the landscapes of their childhood. Against the backdrop of the sails, Wong recounts his dream in Chinese — and it is translated by Jeanne and Françoise. The women, though, can only express themselves through their painting. Though they have lived in North America for much of their lives, they never learn any other language, and are condemned to communicating only with each other and their past.

The Chinese theme undergoes many other transformations as the play proceeds, becoming the China of Mao, and then — melding with Japanese — the vehicle of an ancient artistic tradition which becomes the source of inspiration for Pierre Lamontagne — a young artist. The Butterfly theme appears as well with the courtship of an American officer and a Japanese geisha, recounted in the cold, mechanical language of Jeanne's typing lesson: "Il est venu, virgule, puis il est reparti, point. Puis il est reparti, point. Il a dit, deux points, ouvrez les guillemets, 'je reviendrai', ouvrez les guillemets, 'je reviendrai', fermez les guillemets, point. Reviendra-t-il? Point d'interrogation. Personne ne l'a cru, point. Personne ne l'a cru, point" (*Cahiers de théâtre Jeu* 63). In sum, throughout this immensely inventive and powerful play, the meanings of cultural identities are constantly put into question — "Chinese" moving from stereotype, to rich repository of cultural memories, to historical actor, and then becoming interwoven with the identities of the Québécois characters. We see a Québécois missionary in China and recall the active international role that Québec played there. We see the character Pierre Lamontagne become fascinated with elements of Chinese and Japanese art. There is a constant crossing of boundaries from within and without as the play progresses across Canada. Although Chinese

culture begins, in the parking lot of Quebec city, as that most foreign of Othernesses living "among us," the barriers of foreignness are forced open to reveal the interactions which construct identities, ideas, and projects.

Robert Lepage's latest production, *The Seven Streams of the River Ota* is a two-part show lasting eight hours and made up of seven separate acts, a prologue, and an epilogue. Its overarching theme is catastrophe and survival, destruction and recreation. Conceived to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, it foregrounds the city of Hiroshima, while moving to different cities including New York, Amsterdam, Osaka, and the Nazi camp of Teresienstadt. As always, Lepage is interested in the spaces created by the encounter between cultures. These spaces can be sites of oppression, as they can be the occasion for moments of creativity. As the Zen monk Jana Capek says in the prologue, the encounter with the Other is always an encounter with ourselves. The play has a very different structure and a very different feeling from *The Dragon Trilogy*. It is controlled, constrained, and distilled, in contrast to the physicality, exuberance, and abundance of the first play. Where the *Trilogy* moved in a single direction from Québec across Canada and then to the Orient, the action of *the River Ota* moves across wide intercontinental spaces, and returning from the 1940s to the present and back. *The Trilogy* is closely tied to the specificities of local sites and the particular narratives which emerge from them, more modest in its geographical reach, more anchored in the historical realities and material culture of Quebec and Canada. *The Trilogy* is fluid in its narrative sequencing, in the ongoing complexity of the relationships among its characters. The thematic structure of *The River Ota*, in contrast, is as rigid and bounded as the sets through which its actors walk with deliberately slow movements; it is as if Lepage and his troupe wish to confront, through *The River Ota*, the historical reality of boundaries, to mark the strength of them, rather than attempt to avoid or defeat them. This is appropriate to the theme and occasion of the play which is, we recall, an official commemoration of the catastrophe of Hiroshima. *The River Ota* is therefore focused on Japan, where the *Dragon Trilogy* was mainly concerned with China — although, as we have seen, the theme of Hiroshima was present.

The play begins with the visit of the American GI Luke O'Connor to the home of Nozomi Yamashita, a victim of the atomic blast. O'Connor has come to photograph the destruction left by the bombing of the city. We understand that he has prepared himself only to see the devastation wreaked on the structures of the city; Nozomi teaches him to see the devastation marked on her own body. In a new variation on the Madame Butterfly theme, O'Connor makes love with Nozomi, then disappears not knowing he has fathered an infant. Photographs are the traces of his passage in her life, photographs which are the proof of his power as the Occupier, of the knowledge created through destruction, of the science of seeing. The dialogue between O'Connor and

Nozomi is tender and naive; the GI gets a glimpse into his own ignorance, but dares not explore it to the full. This first scene sets the tone for the dialogue between East and West. O'Connor brings with him the authority of the occupying forces. His request to enter the house is in reality an order. That he furthers his research by exploring the scarred body of Nozomi is a logical extension of his job: to map the territory which comes with destruction and conquest. The son of O'Connor and Nozomi, Jeffrey, will be the perfect hybrid. He travels to New York to study music, and becomes a part of the beat culture of the 1960s. He will live close to his father without ever confronting him with his existence. He becomes a jazz musician; his wife, Hanako, is an interpreter.

The other episodes in the play are as follows: the ritualized suicide of Jeffrey O'Connor in Amsterdam in the presence of his friends; Jana Capek's evocation of her memories of Terezin (Teresienstadt in Polish); the presentation of a Feydeau play in Osaka, 1970, as the Canadian contribution to the World's Fair; an interview with Jana Capek who explains why she has come to live in a Zen monastery in Hiroshima; the visit of Pierre Maltais, who is studying Butoh dance, to the home of Hanako in Hiroshima; a final ritual in which Jana Capek and Hanako, two survivors, join together in sprinkling the ashes of Jeffrey Yamashita into the River Ota.

Lepage and the Butterfly Theme

The Butterfly theme, first used in *The Dragon Trilogy* and much more fully developed in *The River Ota*, is of course a classic figure through which the cultural exploitation of the East by the West is represented. While Butterfly is underlined in *The Trilogy* as a moment of abandonment (the daughter of the geisha writes to her absent father), the movement is carried further along in *The River Ota*, Jeffrey coming to live in the U.S., becoming a jazz musician, accompanying, from afar, his father into death. Cultural and gender identity are doubly confused through the activities of the spy. Margery Garber argues that "the figure of the cross-dressed woman, the transvestite figure borrowed from both the Chinese and Japanese stage traditions, the Peking opera and the Kabuki and Noh theatres, functions simultaneously as a mark of gender undecidability and as an indication of category crisis" (125). Like Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*, like the recent *M. Butterfly* by D.H. Hwang, Lepage puts into play the dramas of power, knowledge, and sexuality involved in the encounter between distant and unequal cultures. The opera is based on a short story by John Luther Long (1898) and its stage adaptation by David Belasco (1900) which Puccini saw in London, both of which are in fact inspired by Pierre Loti's *Madame Chrysanthème* (1887). Loti's autobiographical novel follows the outline of a travel adventure, with a voyeuristic sexual subplot common in European narratives about the Orient in the nineteenth century. Long's story is a critical response to

this novel, introducing a tragic dimension (Groos 178). The Butterfly itself is a borrowing from Loti's novel, and is introduced to express the distance between the Oriental respect for all life and the European passion for killing and collecting insects. The butterfly symbolizes the delicate object that Pinkerton wishes to possess (Garber 190).

What Lepage and his troupe choose to ignore here is the fascinating variation on the Butterfly theme that was provided by the "case" of the French diplomat and the Chinese transvestite which became celebrated as Hwang's play and its filmic adaptation, *M. Butterfly*. In this version of the story, it is the Frenchman, the Westerner, who comes out the loser in this unequal exchange, when the "woman" whom the French diplomat Bouriscot has been seeing turns out to be a transvestite, and a spy to boot. This story plays on the themes of ignorance and treachery, using the transvestite as the disturber of categories, the "third term" which puts the logic of binarism to the test (Garber 141).

In what ways does Lepage suggest the possibilities of "category crisis" inherent in the dynamics of cultural confrontation and the crossovers which ensue? Surprisingly, Lepage does not bring issues of gender confusion into his play. Surprisingly, because he has already done so (the figure of Jennifer in *Les Plaques tectoniques*) and because he has always played on the maximum number of identity registers. Rather than collapse and confound relations of alterity within the framework of Orientalism, Lepage moves the Butterfly theme into a totally different venue, making it an expression of impossible love in quite different circumstances. The Jew and opera singer Ada Weber, playing Butterfly, kills herself for love of her absent daughter Sara in Teresienstadt.¹ Here the play stresses not hybridization but the commonalities which play across borders, through the sharing of common traditions. Sara Weber is to some extent a larger-than-life personage, whose very stature refers to the dimensions of the operatic. The reference to opera — through the Butterfly theme, and the characters of Sarah and Ada Weber — operates implicitly throughout the play, and in some way structures the treatment of the excessive nature of the themes: the Hiroshima bomb, the Holocaust, and the AIDS epidemic. What kind of art form, Lepage seems to be asking, can speak of these themes if not opera? Has opera not been obsessed with death and disease, with conflict, and catastrophe? The emotional power of opera, suggest Linda and Michael Hutcheon, lies in the music which allows "passion to be celebrated uncompromisingly in a way it cannot be, without irony, in fiction" (8). In addition, opera stands for a particular source of fascination in the dialogue between West and East — the

1 In the New York version of *The River Ota*, Ada Weber commits suicide in Teresienstadt to the accompaniment of paroxysmic music from *Madame Butterfly*. One wonders if there was some historical link which motivated this association — which is troubling in its arbitrariness and sentimentalism. Lepage eliminated this scene from the Montréal version.

aura of the Peking opera, the tradition of operatic transvestitism (the fact that women's roles are always played by men). But, although homosexuality is introduced into the play, the Butterfly theme, like the other elements of cross-cultural exchange, do not challenge categories of national, sexual, or aesthetic identity.

The *River Ota* participates, all the same, in the economy of operatic excess, taking on the very largest and most overdetermined events of the twentieth century, and yet depriving them of their emotional excessiveness by treating them according to a principle of containment. This containment works first of all as a principle of *mise en scène*. Lepage's work is extremely two-dimensional. All the action is framed on stage by structures (usually a house) which puts the action at a distance from the audience. There is a very precise geometry of staging that limits movement, reducing the action to minimalist gestures. The second aspect of containment is thematic. Very precise and limited aspects of these catastrophes are sliced out of the range of possibilities. Hiroshima is approached through the lens of the photograph - conflating through this means the functions of surveillance, targeting, distance, science, power, which this form of visualization has acquired. The Holocaust is glimpsed only through the mirror of Jana Capek's memory, and this account contains none of the traditional icons of Holocaust rememorization (the trains, the brutality, the smell of death) but only the oppressive weight of enclosure and ominous threat. Ada Weber in the end hangs herself to the apocalyptic music of *Madame Butterfly*, leaving Jana bereft. But this death will lead Jana, the survivor, to Hiroshima and her encounter with Zen and another survivor, Hanako. Similarly, Jeffrey's choice of death in Amsterdam is dramatized as a ritual of serenity, all violence evacuated from this moment of inevitability.

Lepage, Language, and Translation

The Dragon Trilogy, although it is two-thirds in French and one-third in English, was presented without translation in many venues. It played to large audiences in Montréal and London, for instance, even though the amount of English in the play is considerable — and it is English spoken with a Chinese accent, not at all easy to grasp. (This is not to say that Lepage's plays are never translated: *Vinci* was played in English and French versions, *Needles and Opium* also in two versions). What I want to emphasize here is the way in which different languages and different language registers are juxtaposed in *The Dragon Trilogy* in order to investigate the very idea of communication and the different dimensions of intercultural contact. And so, "China" is presented as something both very near (physically proximate) and very far (something totally incommunicable), the object of total incomprehension and ridicule, and also the envelope out of which emerges a barely imaginable world of dreams and

possibilities. The Chinese language is, for the audience, a surface, a texture of sound. But it is also a vehicle which promises depth.

Languages in *The Trilogy* play an especially strong role because of the way they are played one against the other, not only languages as such, but registers — the intimate against the formal, the conversational against the declamatory, the familiar vernacular against the strangely accented foreign. Lepage does not always use language with such strength in all his plays. In fact, in one of his interviews, he compares language to "costume," giving the abundance of language a purely iconic role, in *Tectonic Plates*, for instance. In *Needles and Opium*, for example, Lepage seems to have reduced the registers of language to two, which are played one in dialogue with the other. In this play, Lepage plays two characters — Jean Cocteau — and the character of a Québécois artist. The Cocteau character speaks from the air, from the space between two continents, Europe and North America. This voice of the hanging, floating, and gesticulating Lepage is declamatory, incantatory, and a beautifully modulated voice of recitation. When Lepage switches to his Québécois character, he creates an atmosphere of intimacy, turning his chair at an angle towards the audience, speaking with the easy tones of familiarity. The conversation that Lepage conducts with his public is in fact a brief synopsis of the history of Québec, explaining at the same time his own personal breakdown, loss of inspiration, and the pain of the loss of a lover. The intimacy of this mode of address can have two kinds of messages. For a local audience, this speech will be received with the pleasure of complicity. For a foreign audience, this is an insider's view into a strange and intensely local culture. In either case, the change of linguistic register highlights the theme of the "local." Whether it is "our" local or "their" local, it does not matter. It is the localness itself — in dialogue with the language of the trans-Atlantic Olympian universalized French author — that provides the interest. In operating this movement from atopic to local, the play inscribes the very logic of its mixed audiences within it.

The main crossover figure used in *The River Ota* is the translator, Hanako. Her presence — and the theme of language transfer — will be the occasion for much of the comic effects in the play. In the fifth section of the play, "Words," it is the theme of language which comes to the fore, language as farce and pure display (as in the case of the Feydeau play which, inexplicably, the Canadians have chosen to put on as their contribution to the World Fair at Osaka in 1970), language as mask and weapon (as in the barbs exchanged between Patricia Hébert, the wife of the Canadian ambassador, and Sophie Maltais, an actress he is obviously taken with) and language as the attempt to convey deep and difficult emotions (as in the dialogue between Sophie Maltais, the Québécoise actress who has discovered she is pregnant and Hanako, her French-speaking Japanese friend, which is mediated by a deadpan interpreter, from French into English, for the benefit of the audience and in passing to put language itself on stage.

This whole section is in fact a "staging" of language, which foregrounds language in a way totally different from the rest of the play. (Where, for instance, supertitles are used to translate the extensive French-language passages into English, or foreign languages are used simply for comic effect). And so, when in the dialogue between Sophie and Hanako, Rimbaud is mentioned, and one of them regrets that "Rimbaud s'est tu à vingt ans," the interpreter replies "Rimbaud killed himself at the age of twenty." Hanako later corrects the interpreter — reassuring the members of the audience who noted this error.

The section called "Words," as one tableau among the eight that make up the long production, marks language as one means of cross-cultural communication — not the only one, perhaps not the most important one: photography, jazz, opera, and dance are also vehicles of cross-cultural communication. The scene of language passage and transfer replicates many of the other moments of passage in the play: Luke O'Connor's initial contact with post-war Japan, Jeffrey Yamashita's initiation into the youth culture of New York, Jana Capek's voyage from Teresienstadt to Hiroshima, Pierre Maltais' passage from the art world of the West to forms of Eastern expression in Butoh dance. Each of these movements begins in friction and even violence, to end in a moment of fusion. The passage from West to East, East to West, is continuous, each moment of contact setting off waves of repercussions which generate new forms of cultural synthesis.

That *The River Ota* should foreground the *scene* of translation is totally coherent with the logic of their structure and of their mode of travel. Lepage's plays are mobile because the very logic of travel, of mixed codes, is at work within them. This reminds us of Derrida's question: when you are dealing with an idiom already plural within itself, can you still speak of translation? Using a logic of collage and accumulation, Lepage's play use two very different kind of idioms: words that float on the surface of language, mobile, and slippery; those that are nourished by the roots of community. At the same time, in a play like *The Dragon Trilogy*, Lepage and his group are gambling with the risks of incomprehension, thus definitely privileging the visual over the textual, and reducing the text to the status of commentary, available simply to supplement, in necessary, the effects of image. (Hence Lepage's image of language as costume). Inevitably, his plays will be read quite differently from one venue to another — whether it be through different interpretations of local information and vernacular, or through selective understanding. We could also say that because a play like *The Dragon Trilogy* embodies within itself a kind of "translational culture," one in which idioms are in constant contact and interlap, defying the conventional kind of movement through translation as transfer.

Think of a playwright in which the dynamics of translation would be the total opposite. This would be Michel Tremblay. His plays are relentlessly local, tied to countless specificities of place, time, and language. Yet, strangely enough,

his plays also travel and have been played in numerous European capitals. In addition, Tremblay is now said to be the most popular playwright in Scotland — let me make that more precise, the most popular Scottish playwright. This is because a number of Tremblay's plays have been extraordinarily successfully translated into the Glaswegian working class idiom. Tremblay has been integrated into Scottish cultural production in what seems to be an entirely organic way. The similarities between the political and cultural situation of Scotland with those of Québec are striking — and the translation strategies used by Martin Bowman and William Findley very intelligently draw attention to them. They have now translated at least four plays, and the Scottish production has been successful not only in Scotland, not only in Montréal, but also in the United States and England.

This is the paradox, then. Two entirely different kinds of productions, one kind "internationalized" in its very essence and the other strictly local. Yet both travel successfully. The paradox lies in the fact that they adopt entirely different means of transportation. For Tremblay, the vehicle is translation. For Lepage, it is the opposite: non-translation. Tremblay's plays are abundantly translated, despite the local specificity of the idiom in which they are written. As translations, they are deracinated and replanted in new sites. For instance, we know that Tremblay has become an immensely popular playwright in Scotland (see Findlay). This is because his translators were able to use their cultural knowledge to create the links between both the historical and the contemporary realities of Scotland and Québec, and to play up to those affinities through the process of translation. In Scottish, Tremblay's plays have found a new idiom which is largely, but not totally, "the same" as the Québécois in which it was written. Lepage's plays do not circulate in this manner. They move *along* the surfaces of innumerable cultural sites, slipping with apparent ease across national borders, appearing in the same fragmented and plural form in each of its very different national/geographical venues. The question that interests me is, what does this difference mean to our understanding of the "internationalization" of culture and the way culture travels?

Lepage's theatre, and especially *The Dragon Trilogy* suggest revisions to the idea of translation as the transfer of one culturally-bounded product to another. This is clearly the kind of paradox that Lepage revels in and gets away with. Pitting languages one against the other — at the risk of devaluing language, of declaring its relative inefficacy — is one of the ways that Lepage's productions express their mode of existence in the world, as circulation, as confrontation with diversity. As a coming together of disparate things. Rather than dismiss translation as a model for understanding contemporary cultural phenomena, it is instead necessary to revise our understanding of a translation as relating exclusively to exchange. In other words, translation participates in cultural creation as a fundamental and not as an accessory activity (see Bhabha's Chapter

11 in his *The Location of Culture*). *The Dragon Trilogy* was not predicated on an economy of exchange. Rather, the "otherness" which is explored is always the otherness within, Chineseness as it is experienced and worked through as an element of Quebec and Canadian culture. The various foreignnesses which make up our relations to each other, as much between Bédard and Morin, Jeanne and Françoise, Crawford and Wong, as between Pierre and Maureen, the English Canadian, or between Pierre and Youkali. The resolutely international frame of *The Seven Streams of the River Ota* diminishes this "intra-cultural" exploration, and provides stark and often simplistic images of national differences — even if they are treated with humour.

Lepage, Cities, and History

The Dragon Trilogy draws our attention to the material history of cities. The opening scene in the Québec city parking lot is extraordinarily evocative: we experience the reality of this site through the very absence of traces, the rapidity of time passing having left no visible signs, but only through memories of social relationships which have been created. We realize that experiencing history through the sites and locations of the city — rather than through the glorious epics of the nation — is to foreground cultural dynamics which do not necessarily find a place in the saga of national histories. The city is the place where dissonant temporalities touch, in the conciliation of a common space. Itineraries may not be identical, but paths cross.

The Dragon Trilogy explores the cultural world of cities, what some would call multiculturalism; *The River Ota* is tied to a logic of inter-nationalism, and therefore to inter-culturalism. Encounters across rather than within nations. At the same time, Lepage's plays frame in different ways the question of the local. What is local culture? In *The Seven Streams*, "Québec" is largely a comic object. Foreign languages are used for comic relief (in the scene in the restaurant in Amsterdam); the whole episode of "national cultures" performed at the World Fair in Osaka is proposed in a comic mode.

The most salient distinction between the two plays is in their treatment of history. *The Dragon Trilogy* is grounded in the sites and material history of Québec and Canada; it is a fluid, exuberant, and hirsute story where past and present, alien and familiar, interact. There are many loose ends in this play; it plays with a logic of excess. Historical "events" (the Second World War, Québec's missionary presence in China, women's work, cancer) are woven into the complex story of individuals and families. The play opens new perspectives onto these events, bringing together elements in an unexpected and instructive way. *The Seven Streams of the River Ota* does not complexify historical events in the same way. It uses the overarching catastrophes of the atomic bomb, the Holocaust and AIDS as a backdrop for individual narratives. It must be recalled

that *The Seven Streams of the River Ota* was created to commemorate the event of Hiroshima. Taking on this task, *The River Ota* works simultaneously on two planes, defining Hiroshima as an element in two different series: as an event in the ongoing relationship between East and West (through the Butterfly theme, most notably), and as an event which joins other catastrophes of recent human history, the Holocaust and AIDS. Does this series make sense? Are we satisfied with the catalogue Lepage has put together? In other words, are we content to see Hiroshima, the Holocaust, and AIDS singled out as equivalent historical events and woven into a single narrative whose outcome is survival and reconciliation?

In my opinion, the mixing of the two series (East-West and contemporary catastrophes) was an error: it reduces the complexities of history, banalizing the message of the play which is, finally, to celebrate, in the oniric colours of a psychedelic sunset, the universal values of survival and reconciliation. This is exemplified when Hanako, the translator, and Jana Capek, the Jewish survivor of the Holocaust turned Buddhist monk, join together in a ritual of mourning for Hanako's husband. The play suggests that the catastrophe of Hiroshima and the events of the Holocaust are in some fundamental way "the same thing," that they function on the same plane of history. This may have been a useful starting place for an exploration of the events of the Second World War, but it should not be the end point. One would wish for a more nuanced and problematized confrontation of these historical "events." This false symmetry is tied into the very structure of *The River Ota*. As a whole, the play is regulated by a principle of containment; it opts for an aesthetic of minimalism and purity, always using slow and deliberate gestures, and using the device of the frame (usually the house) to distance the spectator from the action. This principle of containment extends to the narrative material. We come into contact with History only through the effects of catastrophe, the strong and overdetermined "Events" which dominate twentieth-century historical consciousness.

And so the exploration of mixed cultures, so stunningly enacted in *The Dragon Trilogy* here becomes an exposition of the great images of history, rather than a confrontation with the ongoing dislocations of identity. It is as if Lepage and his troupe wish to confront the historical reality of boundaries, to mark the strength of them, rather than attempting to avoid or to defeat them. As an icon of Québec identity today — with his fantastically transformatory face, which moves easily from one gender and identity to another, as a vector of Québec identity as it is projected onto the world scene, as a recipient of the largesse of the Québec and Canadian governments, Lepage — and his theatre company — are a rich object of analysis. His failures are perhaps indicative of the pressures exerted by the transnational milieu, of the inevitable dilutions and stereotypizations created by it. Lepage and his company will move shortly into their new "headquarters" in Québec City. We might hope that this resource site

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will bring Lepage back to the dynamics which led to *The Dragon Trilogy* and to the innovative exploration of mixed cultures.

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I-CHUN WANG

Historiography of War and Suffering in Pollock's *Walsh*

Benedetto Croce asserts that the essence of history lies in the fact that all history is contemporary history, since history written during a given period of time reflects the beliefs, social structure, aspirations, and myths of its society (see in Peacock 9). History is widely used in literature, especially in dramatic works: It is used to represent an individual's role in a certain historical process, to reflect aspirations and desperations of a group of people, or to intensify the consequences of moral and ethical concerns of the writers. To E.H. Carr, history also means interpretation (23). I am drawing on Robert Nunn's definition that documentary theatre as dramas with an emphasis on human situation "unfold[ing] in a specific historical context" (51) and thus if people of every period in our history need to interpret the past as a means of learning to understand human life, historical drama (or documentary theatre) becomes even more meaningful. Historical drama not merely becomes a response to "a deeply-felt need to penetrate to the truth hidden in the massive accumulation of facts" (Nunn 51); rather, with historical facts represented, the dramatist's personal ideology as well as his/her aesthetic demands are combined to reinterpret the laughs and cries of human beings, and at once demystify the concept of history as great individuals' monuments only.

In this article, my concern is the historiography of war and suffering in Sharon Pollock's play *Walsh*. The play deals with the confrontation between Captain Walsh and Chief Sitting Bull, with the Indian War as a pretext, and Sitting Bull's surrender as its ending. I will explore and discuss the theme of suffering as represented by Sitting Bull's hope to construct a more ideal world in which he and his people can co-exist. It covers the suffering and physical struggle as opposed to the concept of freedom and complicated policies as represented in this dramatic work of Pollock, and it demonstrates the playwright's endeavors to historicize and to present history as a complex discursive formation that is both distant and available for critique.

Sharon Pollock is not the first playwright to explore Indian topics. From *Ponteach, or, The Savages of America* (1776) by Major Robert Rogers to plays featuring Pocahontas and Tecumseh in the early twentieth century the theme has

Canadian Culture and Literature. And a Taiwan Perspective

Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek and Yiu-nam Leung, eds.

Research Institute for Comparative Literature, University of Alberta

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1998 ISBN 0-921490-10-0

been often treated in literature. However, more often than not the portrayal of Indians as noble savages more or less carried ironical twists (see Saddlemyer). Pollock's *Walsh*, similar to American playwright Arthur Kopit's *Indians*, focuses on the suffering and plight imposed on Sitting Bull and the tenacious struggle of Sitting Bull's woodland people. While Kopit describes his protagonist as a victim of Buffalo Bill, Sharon Pollock, here similar to Peter Shaffer's *The Royal Hunt of the Sun* (1965), employs the confrontation of two different races and two different cultures to construct a way of initiation for the representative sent from the "civilized world." The confrontation between Sitting Bull and the colonists proves fatal in both Rogers and Pollock; the audience perceives the Hunkpapa Sioux's defeat, their dispossession and the virtual disappearance of their way of life. In historical documentation, Sitting Bull (Tatanka Iyotaka 1831-90), was a major military, spiritual, and political leader of the Hunkpapa Sioux in the mid-nineteenth century. According to W. Fletcher Johnson, the Sioux were then one of the most numerous and vigorous Indian tribes in North America, numbering some forty or fifty thousand, and could "muster, if the tribe could be moved simultaneously, at least eight or ten thousand warriors, well mounted and well armed" (207) and

of all the aboriginal people, [the Sioux] were the bravest in war, the wisest in peace, the most powerful in body, the most advanced in mind; As possessors of the famed Red Pipe Stone Quarry, the Indian Mecca, where Gitche Manito the Mighty, revealed himself to man, they have cherished and developed more than others the myths and legends of the Indian race.... They have longest resisted the inflowing tide of the civilization brought hither by the Puritan and the Cavalier. (1-2; for more Sioux history, see, e.g., *The Native North American Almanac* 1160; Dorsey; McLaughlin; Rice)

Sitting Bull, according to historical accounts (e.g., Johnson 41), was more a medicine man than a military leader for the Sioux in Dakota, but the battles that he fought manifested that even in his early twenties, he was already a leader of his warrior society. That the Native Indian population had a highly developed warrior society was not coincidental: the White expansion into Indian lands was accomplished by any and all means: "secret payments and gifts to leaders, fating Indian delegates, bringing Indian leaders to Washington, establishing stores with liberal credit that guaranteed Indians going deeply in debt ... buying land from a group that did not actually control it, deliberately withholding annuity payments to force negotiations or compliance, [and] permitting whites to acquire individually owned Indian land by any methods" were the white colonists' strategies as we well know (*The Native North American Almanac* 207). The confrontation between Whites and the Hunkpapa Sioux reached a climax especially after General George A. Custer's expedition with more than 1200 men resulted in the discovery of gold in the Black Hills which then turned into the goldrush of miners and settlers. The negotiation between the US government

and Red Cloud turned out to be a failure and Sitting Bull became the leader who opposed parting with their land at any price. The army sent in by the US government under the command of General Crook, as well as his advance troops under Colonel Joseph J. Reynolds, failed to defeat the Sioux but prepared for a larger conflict.¹ The consequence of the Battle of Little Bighorn, while a massacre of General Custer's troops turned for the Sioux by the Spring of 1877 to disaster. Shortages of food, grazing land for cattle, and poor weather forced their large encampment to disperse into small bands. Sitting Bull took his people to Canada, the land of the "Great White Mother," Queen Victoria. His thought was that the Sioux had been promised protection by the British when they fought against the rebels in the American Revolution and thus, in a sense, they would be treated as Loyalists. Although he attempted to bring along also Crazy Horse and his people, Sitting Bull failed to contact them and Crazy Horse's nine hundred Oglalas were starving while Sitting Bull and his band of warriors would eventually be sacrificed for political expediency (Brown 310).

Pollock's play begins with Sitting Bull and his people's long and weakening journey to Canada, after the US government decided to kill them and when the Canadian government decided to starve them. She employs Harry, the wagon master, together with Walsh and Clarence as witnesses of Sitting Bull's suffering in a landscape of nightmares. *Walsh*, as a historical drama, is a combination of documentary information and the author's own imaginative response to the historical background and documentary evidence. Throughout the play she employs Walsh to convey the historical fact that the Canadians never promised to give Sitting Bull supplies and yet forbade them to make raids across the US border and so "thrown upon their own resources, they gradually drifted toward starvation" (Johnson 168). Harry's comments explain the reason why Sitting Bull and his warriors returned to the United States and surrendered themselves to the US authorities. His comments also foretell the later restrictions imposed on them: they were placed on the reservation, and soon the government gave orders that all the Sun Dances should be stopped, especially at Sitting Bull's camp. The Sun Dances to the US government were regarded as dangerous gatherings which might lead to rebellion, but to the Indians the Sun Dances were a discourse essential for dynamic interaction and feedback because the Indians understood the world and their identity in their world as a totality. Pollock's Major Walsh was a powerful mouthpiece for the suffering Sioux; he perceived their plight when Sitting Bull sought help and he struggled with his own sense of justice. To him the Hunkpapa Sioux had as much right to stay in the North-West Territories as the Santee Sioux had in Manitoba (85); to him, the land was the location of

¹ For example, Colonel Joseph J. Reynolds attacked a peaceful Sioux camp on 17 March 1876 and Captain James Egan's unit attacked a tepee village while the Sioux were asleep. The Sioux retaliation was evident (see Brown 286-87).

power and the land was a reminder to the Sioux of their dispossession. Through his eyes and those around him, the suffering was not limited to the Sioux warriors — a woman shot dead still with her baby on her back, the old people dragging along their bleeding feet in snow, and children without enough clothes and food for survival. All these suffering people were in exile and all these sufferers were the dispossessed.

The process of dispossessing, according to Jonathan Rutherford is constructed upon the ideology of ethnic otherness (97), and this ideology constitutes a desire to contain minorities within an assigned social and cultural space so as to limit their space of representation. The process of dispossession thus becomes a process of stereotyping and marginalization. The process of marginalization is often paralleled with representing "minorities as dangerous, threatening others, for what lies hidden in the act of stereotyping is a fear of transgression" (Lee 5). In Pollock's play, Sitting Bull was accused by Clarence and Commissioner MacLeod as the merciless warrior who is responsible for the "Custer massacre," but they had no words to respond when Walsh argued, with his sense of justice, that Custer killed Sitting Bull's people first. Rejected by Canadians, Sitting Bull's self-defence eloquently represents the situation of the cultural other, as the confinement to that category invented and designated by the dominant other:

What white man can ever say I stole his land or a penny of money? Yet they say I am a thief. What white man has ever seen me drunk? Who has ever departed from my lodge unfed? Who has seen me beat my wife or abuse my children? Yet they say I am a bad Indian. What law have I broken? Is it wrong for me to love my own? Is it wicked for me because my skin is red? Because I am a Sioux, because I was born where my father lived, because I would die for my people and my country? (53)

Sitting Bull's "ambition" was really not grand enough. He was asking a piece of land for his people and tradition. He sensed cultural difference but like White people he yearned for freedom. He wanted his people to have an opportunity to construct themselves as a whole, not as fragmented. However, Sitting Bull's vision that "all the universe is enclosed and revealed in the sacred circle" (52) became an irony when it was confronted with the power of the dominant discourse. Sitting Bull's argument — in Edward Said's terms (see 1979, 7-8; 1993, 91-112) — implied the fact that power and discourse are possessed by the colonizer. This notion also parallels Homi Bhabha's reiteration that the objective of colonial discourse was to construct the colonized as a racially degenerate population in order to justify conquest and rule (see 34-56). In Pollock text, the corporate institution to teach, to dominate, to restructure, and to designate the Native culture was represented by the government in Washington. However, the message from Washington and delivered to Sitting Bull by Walsh, was self-contradictory: "Do you realize that [White Father] promised, should you return across the line — a reservation, food and supplies for your people, and a

complete amnesty. No one will be punished or go to jail for acts of war committed against the government. All that will be forgiven and forgotten" (53). The process of assimilation and the meaning of civilization supposedly implying the notion of liberty and higher possibility to deliver human beings from the fear of famine and sickness, resulted in more killing, more suffering, and more wars. Sitting Bull lamented that Bear Ribs, White Antelope, Iron Shield, Black Kettle, Sitting Bear, and Crazy Horse — all who took the White Man's promise — all died and he accused that the White Man came and forced them to "sign away the Black Hills" without knowing that in the Indian notion of land, no one had the right to dispose of any piece of land because the Black Hills "were my father's. After me, they shall be my children's" (42, 55).

Pollock's Sitting Bull echoed other Indian voices represented in historical documents. For example, Ten Bears: "It was you who sent out the first soldier and we who sent out the second ... and since that time there has been a noise like thunderstorm, and we have not known which way to go.... The white man has the country which we loved, and we only wish to wander on the prairie until we die" (Brown 242); Kintpuash (Captain Jack): "I am but one man. I am the voice of my people. I want no more war. I want to be a man. You deny me the right of a white man. My skin is red; my heart is a white man's heart" (Brown 219); or Sinte-Galeshka (Spotted Tail): "This war did not spring up here in our land; this war was brought upon us by the children of the Great Father who came to take our land from us without price" (Brown 122). Sitting Bull and his historical counterpart, Ten Bears, carried with them a strong sense of heritage, especially as they tried to embrace their cultural past and desperately yearned to be free of the colonizers, to enjoy once more their assertive nature.

The wars between the Sioux and the Whites manifested the cultural struggle between hegemony and counter-hegemony. Benita Parry stresses that in any theory of power and contest, the process of procuring the consent of "the oppressed and marginalized to the existing structure of relationships to the ideological inducements, would necessarily generate dissent and resistance": the outcome of this agonistic exchange would entail domination and resistance, normalization and subversion (43). In *Walsh*, the wars between the Indians and the Whites bespeak the nature of colonialism as an economic and political structure of cross-cultural domination. Stanislav Andreski believed that the basic causes of conflict were reducible to demographic-economic imperatives: "Struggles for land, wealth, food, women, power, and honours are unavoidable" (qtd. in Carlton 9), and we know that Kant insisted that peace among men was not a natural state. One of the most influential voices in the field of animal behaviour, Konrad Lorenz, developed his evolutionary theory of violence and warfare by postulating that "aggression has a vital biological function in preserving those who are fittest to survive, and [they are required] to have the necessary qualities of strength, courage, and cunning which have enabled them

to endure where others have perished" (qtd. in Carlton 8-9). Stanley Milgram, however, emphasized that aggression might be learned by experience, and that a reputedly pacifist people might develop aggressive tendencies given sufficient provocation. Earl Loewenberg, however, argued that men of all races held in the unconscious desires while projecting in others what we denied in ourselves, so that the Indian was in the past characterized as a dangerous brute, hostile to civilizing power (186).

Anne Nothof compared Sharon Pollock's White-Indian war a genocide because the Hunkpapa Sioux were required to be self-sufficient in the territory of Canada "while the Americans fired the border to keep the remaining animals for their own Indians, and to starve the Sioux in Canada into submission" (478). The suffering of the Sioux women and children is seen through the minor characters and particularly in Sitting Bull's counterpart, Walsh. According to them, "hunger, sickness, and suffering are taking a heavy toll in the lodges of the Sioux," and "disease has been broken out among the Indian ponies, and the rotting bodies of those that die are being cut up for food" (Pollock 79). The merciless spectators on either side of the border had in a sense denied the Sioux as individuals. Similar to what was described in *The Rising Village*, the White settlers were busy trying to justify their ownership of land while the Indians were relegated to the status of animal-like beings who were not able to seek security anywhere. It certainly was no small irony that the Indians exiled from their traditional hunting grounds because of the agricultural and commercial ambitions of the White colonists, died one after another without dignity, while oftentimes the White pioneers were hailed as heroes in history (see, for example, Bentley 87). Certainly, Nothof's term "genocide" can not be referred to by the definition of the cynical exercise of cruelty only; it involves ideology and it means often "the coldly methodical application of terror by convinced ideologies" (179). As I pointed out earlier, the exercise of authority requires the process of differentiation, individuation, and identity formation; however, this process also requires a set of value systems, and most of the time needs and values derive from those whose practical interests are capable of realization. That is, the ruling class, that is in a position to influence both social sentiments and social order, tends to be involved with totalitarianism because of political expediency, cultural incompatibility, and ideological intolerance. In Eric Carlton's terms, "values are an expression of the dominant class, and are promoted to enhance and reinforce the interests of privilege" (182-83). Certainly, in society violence exists and it has been found expedient to subdue and exploit an underclass. However, the exercise of violence takes more institutionalized forms and, in Pollock, not all the whites endorse the policies of the two governments. Major Walsh is more a figure like Mark Twain's Huck and Joseph Conrad's Marlowe, who are able to free themselves from the codes of a deeper, collective classification system of self and other assigned in their

own culture.

As I demonstrated, *Walsh* is based on historical documents in which the Indian-White struggle is a Canadian version written from the point of view of a British colonizer. Following the genre of historical literature, Sharon Pollock tries to combine textual evidence, her imaginative response, and rhetorical strategies, in rewriting an incident of war history. Her focus was a period of time when Canadian society was doing its best to consolidate its frontier and American society had experienced an explosive growth in population, industrial productivity, and cities, and various problems in the rural sector: "What was the just social order for that new society with its many interest-groups and their aspirations, each of them claiming fuller rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" (Breisach 313). It was also a time when the American government had experienced tough decisions through a series of frontier closings, and when Americans could no longer expand but had to turn their energies "inward." According to Thomas Breisach, conflicts between interest groups, which in the expansionist period could always be defused by expansion, now required more fundamental solutions (315). One of the major problems they were confronted by was the definition whether the concept of liberty, the essence of the American spirit, can be applied to each and every citizen in the United States of America. Pollock's historiography, through the voice of Walsh, not only induced a seemingly evanescent perception of the White people, whose problems, anxieties, and motivations remain covered by a veil of silence but also unveiled the forces of resistance to a hegemonic culture. In other words, Pollock, as a historian dramatist, does not provide us with the past like as professional historians would do. Rather, she took the responsibility of a historical writer investigating modes of accommodation to dominant forces and a complicated power system. Moreover, she subverts the traditional historian's ideology who sacrifices the voices of the minority. Pollock's interest is what Carlo Ginzburg said about the core of historiography: a "historian must be alert to the possibility of tensions and contradictions within as well as between levels of culture" (qtd. in LaCapra 187). One of the most important achievements in Pollock's play was her highlighting of cultural variation and her earnest intention to reconstruct a missing history. Besides the confrontation and friendship between Walsh and Sitting Bull, Pollock depicted Sitting Bull's attentive education of his son; through Sitting Bull's explanation to Crowfoot the notion of the circle and the tradition of the Sun Dance, the audience witnessed the significance of heritage in the Sioux culture. However, at this moment, Sitting Bull was not depicted as a warrior-leader. He was like any loving father; he was characterized by honesty, simplicity, hospitality, nobility of character and, especially, by harmony with nature. Like any human being he also feared that he would be betrayed so as to walk on the path toward death blindly. With the creation of Walsh as Sitting Bull's honest and understanding friend witnessing

Sitting Bull's surrender and the degeneration of the whole tribe of the Sioux, Pollock had actually demystified the myth that history often depicts as monuments of great men. Historiography can be a process of representing a cultural identity, and historiography can be a process of demonstrating the struggle for collective fears and sorrow, in which the cultural hero was only a part.

In Pollock's play, freedom as related to the Sioux was implied rather than indicated. Sitting Bull, who was about to be handed over to the Americans, became a sign devoid of any hope for freedom and once returning he would not have a chance to serve his people. This alternative historiography of the suffering of the Sioux involved an understanding of the aboriginal tradition. Pollock's *Sitting Bull* was not only a sign within Canadian discourse, but also an empty sign or muffled voice weighed down with what Gordon Johnston termed "an intolerable burden of meaning" (qtd. in Godard 65). The representation of Sitting Bull as a sign formulated the process of signification. More meanings were produced in a network of differences not through reference to Sitting Bull as a real Indian, but Sitting Bull as a token of exchange and a sign which could "be received by another sign, an interpretant, in a chain of semiosis" (Godard 223). Theoretically racial superiority culminates in the fact that one race of people feel that they can dominate another race of people: "Consequently when people are powered over, it always results in either transferring this dominance over others less powerful or indignation on being powered over" (Mingwôn 135). Representing the sufferings of Sitting Bull and his people, Pollock became one of the voices examining the nature of dominance and the White-Indian war, and exploring the responsibility that the Canadian people should have taken. Pollock's *Walsh* in a way resembles resistance literature in representing cultural and ideological confrontation. Unlike most resistance writing which draws attention to literature as a political and politicized activity, and unlike resistance discourse which tends to have immediate and direct involvement in a struggle against dominant forms of ideological and cultural control. However, Pollock's *Walsh* shares with resistance literature as a counter-discourse by representing the struggle for decolonization (see Harlow). Pollock seems to have reminded more people of the causes and possibilities of cultural resistance. Yet, similar to resistance literature, Pollock seems to have penetrated into the Hunkpapa Sioux's struggle for liberation; central to this struggle is not just an attempt to reconstruct the history concerning the relations between people in power and people in struggle: Pollock's historiography is a process of unfolding stories belonging to the past and a practice demonstrating signifying systems for different classes and different groups of people. As Pollock stated: "As a Canadian, I feel that much of our history has been misrepresented and even hidden from us. Until we recognize our past, we cannot change our future" (2). Pollock's historiography of war and suffering

initiates her audience to the dialogical experience surrounding the need of intersubjectivity in discourse and the once "silenced" subject of racism in history.

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PROSE and POETRY

A. OWEN ALDRIDGE

The Cultural Restaurant, Canadian Style

Culture is something that distinguishes one national or ethnic group from another, as residents of Canada from those of the United States or Chinese people from French. But it is also something that distinguishes one group of people from others of the same nationality, those of a so-called high culture from those of a low culture. Cultures are not necessarily geographical; they may be based on age, class, language, or religion, characteristics that transcend national or ethnic boundaries. The question facing many governments today is how to deal with these divisions from a political, economic, and social perspective. In the academic world and scholarship, these divisions and their perspectives have particular significance.

The British scientist C.P. Snow remarked some thirty years ago that "the term 'American' culture can still bring a slight smile to the face of the European or Asian intellectual" (v). This European attitude of cultural superiority towards the United States still lingers on in certain quarters. At a meeting of the European Union in Belgium in March of 1997, Michel Rocard of France deplored the world leadership that America has assumed despite its being, in his words, "a country of inferior culture" ("European Union"). The NATO envoy from the United States, Robert Hunter, who spoke next, offered with tongue in cheek "apologies for the inferior culture" ("European Union").

Snow and the delegates to the European Union hold to the notion that culture resides in a widespread way of life and thought typical of all citizens of a particular nation, a notion contrary to that of the American notion of multiculturalism, which suggests that fragmentation and diversity are the hallmarks of the various groups within the whole. Snow, moreover, used the concept of culture in the elitist sense of good taste reflecting the intellectual and aesthetic traditions of the upper ranks of society, a concept that in the Anglophone world derives from a famous formulation of Matthew Arnold, that culture represents "the best that has been known and said." Snow himself acquired a certain degree of notoriety by dividing the world of knowledge into two broad cultures, as he called them, that of science and that of the humanities. Today, however, the culture wars are primarily concerned with race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual preference.

Canadian Culture and Literature. And a Taiwan Perspective

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1998 ISBN 0-921490-10-0

The contrast between Snow's two cultures and the almost infinite number of cultures clamoring for attention today does not represent any major biological or anthropological change. Despite the population shifts created by economic conditions and the emergence of women and blacks as real political forces, the fundamental intellectual cleavage is still that between science and the humanities although some individuals in both camps cross from one to the other. The controversies over multiculturalism have been brought about chiefly by social and philosophical movements in the humanities independent of scientific advance. The major element has been demographic, chiefly the emigration of nationals from one society or culture to another and the resulting problems of incorporating immigrants into the dominant society. Immigration is the outstanding ingredient of the concept of the "melting pot" associated with the United States as well as that of cultural pluralism and "multiculturalism" associated with Canada, Australia, and Great Britain.

Most people think of the melting pot in connection with the kitchen as in the title of a bibliography of cook-books: *Melting Pot: An Annotated Bibliography and Guide to Food and Nutrition Information for Ethnic Groups in America* (Newman). When first used in connection with immigration, the metaphor of the melting pot referred to a crucible, a vessel used for melting minerals when a high degree of heat is required. This was the meaning of the metaphor when it was first used in 1908 as the title of a play, *The Melting Pot*, portraying the experiences of Russian immigrants to the United States. The author, Israel Zangwill, however, was not an American, but an English national of Polish-Latvian-Jewish descent. The play deals mainly with religious freedom in the United States as it demonstrates how the protagonists, both immigrants from Russia, one Jewish and the other Christian, overcome their religious prejudices under the influence of American secularism. The theme overtly promotes mass assimilation into American society and suggests that this amalgamation can best be accomplished through intermarriage. In support of this theme, Zangwill rejected the notion of racial purity in any nation, including the English. And in a later address delivered in London in 1911, he affirmed that "not only is every race akin to every other, but every people is a hotch-potch of race. The Jews, though mainly a white people, are not even devoid of a coloured fringe, black, brown or yellow" (qtd. in Wohlgeleit 180). His logic is essentially the same as that used by Daniel Defoe in a poem early in the eighteenth century demonstrating that there is no such thing as a "True-Born Englishman." Today a frequently-quoted remark by the eminent Canadian novelist Margaret Atwood echoes this concept of shared origins: "we are all immigrants to this place even if we were born here" (qtd. in Richmond and Hutcheon "Preface"). Atwood's words can be construed in two opposite ways: one, as a sympathetic recognition by a member of the dominant hierarchy that minorities deserve an equal hearing, and, two, as a ploy to ensure that the Anglo majority in Canada retains an access

to whatever privileges may be opening to minorities. Atwood's declaration has been quoted by Marian Richmond, co-editor with Linda Hutcheon of an anthology of Canadian multicultural fiction. In the introduction to Marian Richmond and Linda Hutcheon's *Other Solitudes*, Hutcheon states regretfully "that the single most significant factor in the response to multiculturalism in Canada today appears to be race" (ix). Hutcheon made this statement a quarter of a century after a *White Paper* officially defined Canadian multiculturalism as founded upon "one's sense of belonging to a group," a definition, according to some critics, designed "to divert the policy away from immigrant communities" (Davey 105).

Subsequent to the recognition of the melting pot as a metaphor for American immigration policy, some Canadians adopted the salad bowl as a metaphor for their concept of cultural pluralism. A more common metaphor is that of mosaic, which thirty years ago was adopted as the title of a Canadian journal of Comparative Literature (now the University of Winnipeg journal *Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature*). Pluralism has also been called a "cultural shopping centre," but the system as now operating, according to Linda Hutcheon, "has not managed to upset fundamentally the hierarchy (based on class and ethnicity) in our social structures of power that John Porter once called 'the vertical mosaic'" (Richmond and Hutcheon 17). Some of my colleagues in the natural sciences have asked, "Does multiculturalism mean that all cultures are equal?" a question that none of its advocates has attempted to answer, although the French delegate to the European Union would obviously reply in the negative. My own answer would be that all cultures are equal to the same degree that all national literatures are equal. The Canadian *Multiculturalism Act* (1987) affirms that all individuals are equal, but it does nothing to assess different cultures or even to define culture as such. A respected American humanist has charged that today culture is "any chunk of social reality you like or dislike" (Barzun 3). Apart from rhetoric, there are few equivalencies among cultural groups except for their declarations of independence from the mainstream. Groups are classified according to disparate criteria, including language, religion, race, ethnicity, and sex. Neither these groups nor individuals comprised within them can realistically be equated with each other, as, for example, an Austrian with a Lesbian or a Japanese with a Baptist. Who would hope to measure the equality or lack of it between a man and a woman or any group of men or women judged by sex alone? Multiculturalism has even embraced the psychological paradigm of the Self and the Other, which would seem to erase any boundaries whatsoever to the concept. Eva Kushner, a respected scholar of Comparative Literature in Canada, has recently contributed an essay to a collection entitled *Imagining Culture* in which she portrays Martin Luther as the Self and the combination of forces leading to his confrontation of the Diet of Worms as the Other. In both Canada and the United States, multiculturalism

began as a well-meaning attempt to introduce awareness of cultural diversity in secondary schools, by imparting some knowledge of the literature, music, and art of other nations. No satisfactory curriculum has ever been devised, however, to accomplish this goal, nor has it been decided whether the same curriculum should be offered in schools attended by the ethnic majority and those attended by one or several minorities. It has not even been settled whether multicultural education should be required for all students, including both the elite and the underprivileged, or only for racial and ethnic minorities.

In England and France, Muslim fundamentalism has raised the question of whether Muslim girls should be taught the values of their closed society or those of secular liberalism. In the United States a similar quandary surrounds the question of permitting Christian prayers in public schools. It is generally admitted that multiculturalism does nothing to improve mastery of basic subjects such as mathematics and language skills, but its advocates argue, nevertheless, that this is compensated for by the developing of minority self-consciousness and the ability "to access, analyze, compare and interpret information critically" (Gordon 3). No proof is offered, however, that multiculturalism is any more efficacious in imparting these skills than traditional courses based upon content acquisition.

In multicultural discourse, almost no member of a particular group or community is willing to state publicly that in his/her opinion any other such group is culturally or otherwise inferior or less worthy of consideration or support. The general attitude in both Canada and the United States is something like that concerning competing religions: members of each sect believe that all or most of the others have a right to exist on equal terms, but that their own theology is in some way superior. The concept of culture, however, has certain criteria or touchstones which have no parallels in religion. In its original meaning culture referred to the means used to produce grains, fruits, and vegetables. In floriculture and agriculture, crops produced by certain traditional and tested methods are universally acknowledged with few exceptions as superior to those that come about through random growth. Most educated people living in Asia or Africa would probably agree with the delegate to the European Union that French culture is one of the best in Europe, and I believe that I run little risk in affirming that the two best cuisines in the world are the French and the Chinese. In other words, there are certain standards and shared values in all civilized communities even though they may not be generally defined or expressed. One almost universally recognized test of a nation's culture is the degree of literacy it has attained. Another practical measure is the quality of its literary output. Two contrary notions of multiculturalism exist simultaneously, one, that it embraces all cultures within a given national society, all measures adopted by that society applying equally to all its cultural communities; the other, that multiculturalism represents the individual perspective of single communities within the nation, the resources of the society as a whole working toward the

advantage of these single communities according to their degree of power or forcefulness of expression. Linda Hutcheon has adroitly called in the aid of linguistics to illustrate the fundamental difference between these notions. In regard to the first, "the Greek root *ethnos*, meaning 'nation' or 'people' — should suggest that all Canadians are ethnic, including French and British; the fact that the word is *not* so used points to a hierarchy of social and cultural privilege" (Richmond and Hutcheon "Preface"). In regard to the second notion, the word "ethnic" in its association with "'pagan and 'heathen' or in its more recent ones with 'foreign,' ... always has to do with the social positioning of the 'other,' and is thus never free of relations to power and value" (Richmond and Hutcheon 2). Manifestos of multiculturalism ordinarily overflow with the rhetoric of harmony and tolerance, but in practice multiculturalism leads to the formation of special interest groups or identities based on race, religion, ethnicity, and gender. These groups seek to obtain privileges for their constituents, not as individuals but as members of the group. Frequently these groups or communities portray themselves as victims of mainstream society. This aspect of multiculturalism, known as "identity politics," is closely related to the broader psychological concept of the Self and the Other or the treating of the individual as being in conflict with opposing forces beyond his control. In real life, almost every individual can be portrayed as frozen into some sort of confrontational attitude, which also fits nearly every fictional work about human beings. Multiculturalism, however, creates two contrary attitudes, that "I" or the "we" are superior to the "them" and that "I" or the "we" have been victimized by the "them" and are deserving of protection or redress.

One Canadian scholar linking identity politics to racism argues that the best means of combating racism is "by creating a common front of shared experience that, without denying important differences between the lived experiences of oppressed people, will make it impossible for anyone to play the 'us' vs. 'them' game" (see Braun and Klooff 192). Instead of seeing the Other as a foe or an obstacle, it is possible to have an optimistic and affirmative attitude, seeking to learn about the Other and in so doing enlarge one's intellectual and aesthetic horizons. As Neil Bissoondath has remarked, "I seek, though literary exploration, to understand lives very different from my own, pursuing what I would call the demystification of the Other" (182). This is what is usually understood as cosmopolitanism or cross-culturalism. But it is not the road of multiculturalism, which attempts instead to police the literary canon by substituting writings by privileged minorities for those by "Dead White European Males."

Some Canadian writers, chiefly those of indigenous origin — in Canada known as First Nations, in the United States as Native Americans — have argued that it is unjust and immoral for "a writer from a financially prosperous ethnicity or racial group within Canada to profit by selling to publishers literary representations of a less-prosperous ethnicity or racial group" (Davey 108).

Criticism on similar racial grounds has frequently been directed against the portrayal of North American Indians in James Fenimore Cooper's *Leatherstocking* novels. A recent article in the German comparatist journal *Arcadia*, however, has argued that Cooper in these novels was one of the most serious thinkers of his period on the issue that is nowadays called multiculturalism and "on the place of diversity in human culture" (Nemoianu 135). Multiculturalism also creates requirements as well as prohibitions. A bill has passed the legislature of New York State mandating instruction in the public schools concerning the Holocaust that occurred in World War II, and in both New York and New Jersey bills have been presented requiring similar indoctrination concerning the nineteenth-century famine in Ireland.

In attempting to portray multiculturalism, I take issue with the almost universally accepted view that gender can be considered as a separate culture. To the contrary, men and women adopt their life styles, their habits, and prejudices, not from their sexual characteristics, but from their class, religion, historical antecedents and ethnic surroundings. Men and women do not exist as communities except in such artificial ones as boy and girl scouts, nuns and monks, or prison inmates. This is even more true today than in the nineteenth century when women attended female academies and did not ordinarily enter the work place or were segregated when they did so. Today most feminists insist on equal admission to all levels of the workplace, the academy, the police, and the military. There may be a youth culture or a drug culture, but if there is such a thing as a male or a female culture, no convincing definition of it has been devised. Canada today, like most of the Western world, is a unisex society. It would be impossible to demonstrate, moreover, how gender fits either the model of the melting pot or that of cultural pluralism. It does not conform, moreover to the official *White Paper* definition of multiculturalism as stemming from one's sense of belonging to a group. Marriage and the family are much stronger forces than either feminine or masculine bonding. Another category, mass culture, presumably located midway between the high and the low varieties, also comprises both males and females. Hollywood producers and fast-food chains cater to the mass market, but others such as Michel Rocard of the European Union deplore it ("European Union").

So far I have treated multiculturalism as it has developed historically and as it exists today. For a definition of multiculturalism as an unrealized ideal, one which does not as yet exist in either Canada or the United States, I quote Canadian scholar Janice Kulyk Keefer:

Ideally multiculturalism should be a site for border crossings, a liminal space, providing opportunities of connection, exchange, trans-action and transformation. It should abhor the ghetto, the pale, the hermetic seal which tries to ensure purity or non-contamination by the "Other." It is to be linked, not with some established or officially decreed state of tolerance but rather with the continual process of stepping over supposedly uncrossable

lines. It should be a zone where no-trespass signs do not exist, and where we enter one another's different home-and communal ground as guests, not as inspectors, invaders, or mere voyeurs. (181).

One of the best agencies for reaching this ideal, and probably utopian, state of affairs, is that of the portrayal of various segments of national society through literature.

In the United States, writings considered under the multicultural banner have been privileged in many ways, most apparent of which is through political revision of the canon. This has been done most effectively by altering the contents of anthologies of American literature in favour of a range of "distinctive voices, including those of women, blacks, Asian-Americans, Mexican-Americans, and Native Americans" (Bak 66). One journalist, sceptical of the trend, labels one of these anthologies "the Heath Travesty of American Literature" (qtd. in Bak 73). Similar goals of visibility and preference are sought in Canada by a system of government grants specifically targeted toward minorities.

In turning toward particular illustrations of literary multiculturalism, I shall discard gender and sexual preference as categories and instead emphasize immigration. My concept of multiculturalism, therefore, comprises books by first, second, or later generations of immigrants to Canada in which religion and ethnic heritage plays a major role in the development of plot and character. I shall treat in chronological order works of fiction by four authors, all of whom, no doubt coincidentally, are female. The first of these authors is not ranked with ethnic writers, but is generally considered along with Robertson Davies as a symbol of the British intellectual establishment. Even Anglo-British subjects, however, are comprised under the umbrella of the Canadian *Multiculturalism Act*. My main reason for choosing a novel of Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale*, is that it was the only Canadian novel selected by a prominent British publishing house for inclusion in a list of the 100 best books of the twentieth century (Waterstone in association with the British TV Channel 4) and that it appears as well in the New York Public Library's list of *Books of the Century* and that in 1990 it was turned into a successful motion picture, directed by Volker Schlöndorff. Further justification of my choice is that the novel deals with the topic of religion, a significant link with Israel Zangwill's *The Melting Pot* I mentioned previously. While the play is highly supportive of the social values of religion, Atwood's novel to the contrary is very critical. Atwood herself is sometimes treated as a feminist and anti-American, but these attitudes do not show up in *The Handmaid's Tale*. Although most of its characters are women, it is not a "women's novel," and although its setting is the United States, it could just as well be Canada. Superficially the novel resembles George Orwell's dystopia *1984* as a look into a bleak future in which the state has been taken over by an inflexible bureaucracy intent upon increasing and stabilizing its

power by means of rigorous control of thought and language. As such, it is a condemnation of the religious right wherever it exists, but chiefly among born-again Christians. In the process, popularized "family values" are essentially stood on end.

In Atwood's scenario, the United States, in her novel represented as the "Republic of Gilead," has been taken over by Christian fundamentalists, who interpret literally every passage of the Bible that supports their power and mission. They have gained control because of a disastrous decline in the birthrate brought on by air pollution and other results of industrialization. Further reasons given for the decrease in births are nuclear spills, pesticides, birth control methods, including abortion; and sexually generated diseases such as syphilis and AIDS. After the take-over, all second marriages and nonmarital liaisons are declared adulterous and all female partners are regimented as instruments for procreation. Along with all unmarried healthy women of childbearing age they are forced into a military type organization, given the title of "Handmaids," and issued a standard red uniform which conceals bodily contours. This uniform equipped with wings that force the gaze to be directed straight ahead resembles the head-scarf that is obligatory today for Muslim women. The revolution itself was presumably fomented by "Islamic fanatics." The president and congress have been liquidated, the army placed in control, and the constitution suspended. Doctors who formerly performed abortions are hunted down and hanged. Two National Homelands are created on the order of South-African apartheid, the state of North Dakota for Indians and the city of Detroit for Blacks. The regimented women under their denomination of Handmaids are conscripted for the single function of childbearing and are parcelled out to barren married couples and forced to have intercourse with the husband at appropriate intervals. At these encounters the wife is present, holding the Handmaid's hands as in the Old Testament account of Rachel, who instructed her husband Jacob to go unto her maid Bilhah that she might "have children by her" *Genesis* 30: 1-3). Twentieth-century precursors of this system were artificial insemination, fertility clinics, and surrogate mothers. The Republic of Gilead outlawed the first two, but adopted the use of surrogate mothers because of the precedent of Jacob and Rachel and the Biblical approval of polygamy.

Daily language is modified to incorporate Scriptural phraseology, which is obligatory even for ordinary greetings and responses. The attempt at conception is known as the Ceremony, the night of the week on which it takes place the only one on which the Handmaid is allowed to watch television with the wife. Programs consist almost entirely of religious music or exhortation, the preachers resembling businessmen. There are also battle scenes between government troops known as Angels and various heretical sects such as Quakers and Baptists. The Revolution has been preceded by mass book burnings of alleged

pornography. In the Republic of Gilead, there is almost no printed material to be had, even the Bible being locked up. Ordinary people are read to, but are not allowed to read for themselves. Movies feature anti-abortion clips from the 1980s. Mass spectacles are known as "Salvagings" and "Prayvaganzas." The former consist of executions of refractory citizens by hanging, the term deriving from a Philippine word for the elimination of enemies, the second celebrate group weddings for women and military victories for men. Occasionally, the protagonist sings to herself something mournful and lugubrious like the eighteenth-century hymn "Amazing Grace." After the Revolution such songs are no longer permitted in public if they contain such words as "free." Handmaids are kept — almost incarcerated — in barely-furnished rooms in the homes where they service their masters or Commanders. The protagonist, early in the novel, while craving some evidence of a former inhabitant, discovers in tiny letters scratched on the floor of a cupboard the Latin message *nolite te bastardes carborandorum*. She puzzles about its meaning throughout most of the book until near the end when she realizes that it means "don't let the bastards grind you down" (52, 186).

Perhaps the most devastating criticism of evangelical Christianity in the novel consists of a silent soliloquy by the protagonist that amounts to an agnostic version of the Lord's Prayer (*Matthew* 6: 9-13), partly parody and partly imitation. It appears immediately following the description of a regimented prayer service for the handmaids punctuated with such requests as "Oh God, obliterate me. Make me fruitful. Mortify my flesh, that I may be multiplied" (194). In the protagonist's meditation, the Kingdom of Heaven is declared to be "within," and God is addressed as You "for lack of anything more specific." Passing over daily bread and forgiveness as inapplicable to her needs, she contemplates temptation only in connection with suicide. She affirms that it "takes a lot" to believe in kingdom, power and glory. "If I were You, I'd be fed up." Finally she uses a line from an Irving Berlin song, "All alone by the telephone," to indicate that there is no god or at least no possibility of contacting one.

So far everything seems fairly consistent with the beliefs and programs of the Christian far right, but Atwood has added one feature to her dystopian state that does not conform to either its theology or its ethics. This is the institution of a gathering place for privileged males, resembling Playboy clubs of the 1980s. In my opinion, a puritanical society based on the ideology of the Christian right would not condone legalized prostitution accompanied by luxurious surroundings and expensive food and drink. If it is assumed, alternately, that the Christian right is composed — mainly or entirely — of hypocrites, such widespread dissimulation would not be able to maintain a functioning society. The inclusion of a House of Prostitution may perhaps make the novel acceptable to feminist ideology, but it detracts from the work's verisimilitude. Further, a linguistic

flaw exists in the placing of the Republic of Gilead in the United States. A character, presumably American, when using the past tense of the verb "to shit" adopts the British form "shat" instead of the American "shit." Nor is *The Handmaid's Tale* very convincing as a contribution to futurology since all indications suggest that populations, in North America as elsewhere, are likely to increase, not decrease in the twenty-first century. A quarter of a century ago Atwood published her survey of Canadian literature, *Survival*, in which she isolated two central preoccupations of its prose and poetry, survival and victims. These themes are not only alive today, but are exemplified in her *The Handmaid's Tale*. In her treatment of the survival theme, Atwood gives a humorous summary of the plots of a number of relevant novels and a similar summary could be made of *The Handmaid's Tale*: female protagonist attempts to stay alive as a procreating machine in a futurist society dominated by Old Testament theology, but fails.

My next novel, Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* (1981) also treats religion, but unlike *The Handmaid's Tale* its attitude toward Christianity is well disposed. It has a Biblical epigraph of faith and hope in contrast to Atwood's verses about the Old Testament's sexual threesome. *Obasan* is ordinarily considered to be connected with multiculturalism because of its vindication of the Japanese *nisei*, who were forcibly uprooted from their West Coast homes during World War II. Beneath this frequently publicized theme, however, lies a deeper meaning, the author's longing for recognition as an unhyphenated Canadian as opposed to, as she expresses it, "the multiculturalist's tone" (226) Although the book is filled with nostalgic references to Japanese traditions and customs, it clearly places integration or assimilation as more desirable than cultural pluralism. When the book was reviewed in the *New York Times* — before multiculturalism became a media buzz word in the United States — it was seen merely as "a very moving vision of an affront to democratic principles" (qtd. on the cover of the softcover edition of 1984).

Obasan has three major characters, the protagonist, who narrates in the first person, and her two aunts, one who has an English surname, Emily, and is belligerent in her crusade for justice, and the other, Nomwa, who is nearly always referred to by the Japanese name for aunt, Obasan. The opposite of Emily, she is retiring and accepting hardship and exile. Part of the political background of the government-forced removal of the narrator's upper middle-class family to pristine surroundings in the Canadian interior is conveyed by a manuscript written by Aunt Emily entitled "The Story of the Nisei in Canada: A Struggle for Liberty" (38) along with a series of letters from Emily to the protagonist's mother, who had been deported to Japan, copied into a journal in 1942. The journal has an underlined statement circled in red ink, "I am Canadian," and it quotes Walter Scott's line "This is my own, my native land." The remainder of the book treats the hardships and privations of the truncated

family in a remote rural area in the Canadian interior. Although the conditions described are far from the comfort which the family had previously enjoyed in relative luxury in Vancouver, the children are at least provided an education in the local schools on the same terms as the other inhabitants of the district. After the family has become somewhat adjusted to its primitive surroundings, the narrator's uncle suddenly receives official notice that he is required to move to another location. On the day following this notice, the Japanese Christian minister holds a prayer service in the family hut (125).

Toward the end of the novel, the narrator reveals her pain and indignation at the insensitivity of people who ask whether she has ever gone back to Japan; whereas she was born in Canada and had never left its shores. She affirms, "we come from Canada, this land that is like every land, filled with the wise, the fearful, the compassionate, the corrupt" (226). Obasan, however, who has remained untouched by the competitive, aggressive manners of the West, "does not come from this clamorous climate. She does not dance to the multi-cultured piper's tune or respond to the racist's slur" (226). Kogawa's *Itsuka* (1992), the sequel to *Obasan*, which has as its title the Japanese word for *someday*, recounts the struggle to obtain government compensation for the Japanese victims of internment and confiscation of property. Far more political than *Obasan*, it is at the same time even less separatist from the mainstream because of its eulogistic portrayal of Episcopal Christianity. The book is dedicated among others to "the people of the Church of the Holy Trinity in Toronto," and one of its sympathetically portrayed characters is an Episcopalian clergyman. Yet Kogawa does not exculpate the Church from its tacit acceptance of the injustice done to wartime *isei* and *nisei*. Aunt Emily, who becomes the leading agitator for redress, finds the church guilty "not just of apathy, but of deliberate malice, ... of fomenting racism directly from the pulpits and at the communion rails" (76). The narrator, however, is somewhat less belligerent, coming close to rebuking those who carry on as though "redress is an evangelistic crusade" (121). Distancing herself from the identity politics of multiculturalism, she reflects that "the redress effort is rather inconsequential if you consider what's going on in the world. Famines. Tortures. Genocides. Our history is barely a ripple in a rain puddle. They'd like to make waves, perhaps. Rock some paper boats" (121). Elsewhere she remarks, "A redress movement for homeless people would make more sense than ours. But on the other hand, we were forced into homelessness ourselves" (175). The protagonist is like Obasan and the *isei* "who will never ever complain From their early childhood in Meiji Japan, they witnessed the poverty of fellow villagers who suffered in silence, for the love of parents, for the sake of the whole" (148). However, one of the characters in the novel asks the question: what if the government had taken away the home of Robertson Davies, one of Canada's mainstream literary icons.

Kogawa succeeds in presenting almost every point of view concerning identity

politics in a description of an ethnocultural breakfast organized by the Minister of Multiculturalism. Here, a black woman grabs the microphone to charge that when white persons usurp the voice of a person of colour or "equate your lack of privilege as an immigrant with centuries of racial oppression, you trivialize our suffering, and that's racism" (226). The same speaker, however, offers a somewhat optimistic view of future intercultural cooperation.

This country, my country, your country, is one country where the great wide Technicolour dream can come true. We can stamp out racism and show the world how it's done. Not by homogenization. We know that a homogenized mind-set is ecologically unsound. But by real plurality. And I'm not talking about ethnic folk dancing. I'm talking about access to power. I'm talking about distinctness and mutuality, collaborative politics at every level. Not tolerance of difference, but celebration. (226)

In the concluding chapter, the protagonist reports her rapturous response to the official acknowledgment of the Canadian Parliament in September 1988 that Japanese Canadians had suffered great injustice. She felt vindicated for having repeated throughout the years that she was a Canadian. "Finally, though we can hardly believe it, to be Canadian means what it hasn't meant before. Reconciliation. Liberation. Belongingness. Home" (328).

In a sense this positive attitude is reflected in Sky Lee's *Disappearing Moon Cafe* (1992; a pseudonym for Sharon Kwan Ling Lee). The verso of the title page acknowledges that it was printed with the assistance of the Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship of Canada. Not surprisingly, therefore, it comes closer to portraying the realities of cultural mixing than many of the other novels currently considered under the multicultural banner. Yet none of the characters, nearly all of whom are Chinese, considers himself a victim of race. Nor are the Chinese always pitted against Canadians of other backgrounds, who are not portrayed as villains. Instead, the narrative comprises a family saga with characters from other cultures intervening primarily as agencies to keep the plot moving. The characters and events of the novel are so rich and manifold, and the narrative voices so dispersed, however, that it is difficult to extricate a plot or main thread beyond the primarily sexual and financial struggles of the characters. The action stems from the adventures of a patriarch Chang while looking for the bones of Chinese labourers in grave sites along the bed of the Canadian Pacific Railroad. He meets an Indian-Chinese girl whom he marries and eventually deserts. This is the only section of the novel which clearly reflects on injustices done to Chinese nationals, but even here the author does not treat the situation as outrageous or demanding redress even though in some ways it seems to be worse than that of the Japanese *isei* and *nisei* a half century later. This section is followed by one set in 1986 in which the third person narrative shifts to a first-person summary by Chang's great-great-granddaughter of the major events during the intervening three generations. Almost im-

mediately the narrative returns to the third person, focusing on the grandmother, the proprietress of the "even-now famous *Disappearing Moon Cafe*" in Vancouver's Chinatown. Throughout the rest of the book, narrators, protagonists, and historical periods constantly appear and reappear, making it almost impossible to keep track of the main characters and their relations to each other even with the aid of a genealogical table preceding the table of contents. Emphasis throughout is on individual character and family relationships rather than on contacts between Chinese culture and that of other groups. Criticism of some Chinese customs is often stronger than that directed against those of the Canadian mainstream. Almost the only episode bringing the Chinese and the Anglo communities in conflict concerns the "Janet Smith affair," the mysterious death of a Scottish nursemaid "in a most unnatural way" in the company of a Chinese houseboy. In reaction to the apparent crime, the Chinese inhabitants instinctively board up their businesses and go on the defensive. One of the family members remarks that victims are always "the first to consent to being victimized" (70). Interestingly, this is parallel to the characterization of the protagonist in one of the earliest of Canadian ethnic novels, John Marlyn's 1957 *Under the Ribs of Death*. In Marlyn's novel, as John Roberts contends, the protagonist's "alienation allows him to adopt the stance of a victim among his fellow victims. He accepts that English Canadians are a given, then argues that if the English hate foreigners the fault must lie with the foreigners" (43).

In Lee's novel, the only probing of the identity problem occurs when another character feels cheated when she discovers that her nursemaid is not an overseas Chinese:

In a way, she wasn't even pure Chinese (as if that were important), and she had learned her Chineseness from my mother, which added tremendously to my confusion. All my life I saw double. All I ever wanted was authenticity; meanwhile the people around me wore two-faced masks, and they played their lifelong roles to artistic perfection. No wonder no one writes family sagas any more! (128)

Elsewhere witnessing "an entire house fall" is described as "the makings of a great Chinese tragedy" (179). Yet, an "unspoken Chinese edict" allows only "happy mentionables" to enter the family record. Similarly "a Chinese-in-Canada trait" is considered to be "the great wall of silence and invisibility we have built around us" (180). The closing pages of the novel recognize the separation of the races and the chasm between them, and express regret for these conditions, but hope for changing them. Eventually the old men of the community are "surprised to find how much alike Chinamen and white people were" (223). At the very end, the narrative returns to the patriarch Chang and his romance with the native girl as he reveals his guilty feelings for having deserted her to return to China to find another wife. The founder of the Chinese-Canadian family is, therefore, seen as just as much to be condemned as any of the non-Chinese in

the narrative.

Although my fourth example, Evelyn Lau's 1995 *Runaway: Diary of a Street Kid*, is generally trumpeted as a work of multiculturalism, the only culture it probes is that of drugs and prostitutes, and it has almost nothing to do with the presumed Chinese background of its author. None of the Library of Congress subject-headings on the verso of the cover page even mentions culture. The major themes are psychological boredom, the search for identity, and the craving for suicide, themes which have more resemblance to those of Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar* than to any other book I can think of. The first-person narrator affirms, "What conceit to think that someone would want to read a journal in which the promising young author rattles incoherently about dope" (222). Except for the adjective "incoherently," this sentence could apply to the entire work. The novel professes to be the diary or journal of the life of a young girl between the ages of 14 and 16 as she develops from a high-school dropout to a self-supporting prostitute, surviving from day to day on one species of drugs or another, each use a symbol of suicide. There is nothing to identify the protagonist as Chinese except her typical oriental parents hounding her to follow an endless routine of study and housework. She blames her totally anonymous life at home for turning her into a "messed-up human being." In one of the final entries, however, she declares that she is not a victim (276). Apart from the family background, references to her ethnicity are minimal. An aged down-and-out Roman Catholic from Poland tells her "he didn't mind talking with a Chinese person" (96); she considers a Chinese man who squeezes her breasts as safe (118); she repeats a Chinese superstition that hail is bad luck (153); she occasionally engages in group meditation at a Zen centre (155); one of her Johns fantasizes about Oriental women (165) and another calls her a "Chinese broad" (136). The only other resemblance to conventional multicultural fiction is the theme of the Self and the Other, which appears in various guises throughout the work, but mainly in connection with the antagonism between parents and daughter. At the end, the narrator declares, "being different means it isn't easy to belong, isn't easy to be accepted, but it is also a measure of safety."

Midway in the novel Lau quotes the Latin injunction *nolite te bastardes carborundorum* with no indication that it has a previous source (135). This can hardly be ranked as an example of intertextual borrowing from *The Handmaid's Tale*, however, since it appears in the journal entry dated 27 January 1987 (Atwood's book had not been published until the previous year, and it does not seem credible that in that short period it would have made its way to a teen-age drop-out). If we are guided entirely by Lau's title, it is apparent that the protagonist is not a runaway from Chinese culture. If not, what is she running from? A stifling home environment, a conventional life style, or even personal shortcomings? Is she, in other words, what some of the Self-Other critics have invented, a runaway from herself? The highest compliment I can pay to Lau's

novel is to say that I would like to meet her and find out.

To conclude, the works among those I have treated in this essay that seriously delineate an ethnic culture are *The Disappearing Moon Cafe*, *Obasan*, and *Itsuka*. These are also the ones that do not stress the theme of the Self and the Other. *The Handmaid's Tale* depicts the role of religion in culture as do *Obasan* and *Itsuka* to a lesser degree. *Runaway: Diary of a Street Kid* offers a vivid portrayal of the teen-age drug culture. From a purely literary standpoint, Joy Kogawa's two books on the treatment of the Japanese during World War II rate high as powerful propaganda carried out in poetic language, but their concentration on a single issue reduces their appeal. Similarly, the constant focus on the theme of enforced procreation in *The Handmaid's Tale* eventually blurs attention despite subordinate elements of characterization. For sheer entertainment, *Disappearing Moon Cafe* has the most to offer with its historical panorama covering four generations of the same family, significant sexual encounters, including incest, an unsolved murder, and a brisk prose style.

It would be hard to prove that American as well as Canadian identity politics now associated with multiculturalism had any measurable influence in the writing of these books, which reflect political, economic and psychological conditions, primarily immigration and other demographic movements. These books constitute, instead, an appealing and wholesome contribution to the Canadian mosaic by counterbalancing the less positive aspects of multicultural ideology.

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陳鵬翔 (PENG-HSIANG CHEN)

柏樂傑《頓呼組曲》中的音樂與寂靜 (Music and Tranquility in E. D. Blodgett's Recent Poetry Collection *Apostrophes*)

Edward D. Blodgett's Recent collection of poetry, *Apostrophes*, for which he received Canada's Governor-General's Award in 1996, provides us with glimpses of reveries and realities. He fluctuates between these two "themes." As a matter of fact, it appears that he is not so much interested in offering specificities in his poems. Rather, he offers us "movements" or insights of consciousness in his life. In a highly unusual and interesting way, he describes his understanding and outlook on life by means of a very sophisticated method of meditation. This meditation is constructed by primordial images of nature such as roses, rain, trees, winds, flowers, sea, lake, etc. And these images are wrought in a musical and flowing manner, mellifluous to the ear. In my paper, I will analyze Blodgett's poetry by using a phenomenological approach. As well, I will analyze the thematics of his poetry.

如果撇除 1990 年出版的詩選集《達卡坡》(*Da Capo*)不算，柏樂傑(Edward Dickinson Blodgett, 1935-)到去年為止一共出版了六本詩集；這些詩集都各有特色和主題，一般都以沈思默想、主觀投射入物象為主；他要把加拿大俱都吞入胸壑之中，但他不像惠特曼那樣嘻皮、浪蕩大地上而高歌頌讚，赤裸、猖狂、泛愛，把美國等同於他自己，而把美國提昇為一個可供永恆頌讚的主題。柏樂傑早期較有寫實景的意味，近來則愈來愈是內省、抒情¹；到了去年出版其第六本詩集《頓呼組曲》時，其抒

1 在 "The Lyricism of Metamorphosis" 裡, Roy Arthur Swanson 討論的是柏樂

情與心景、沈思融合為一，達致某種非常特殊而且有特色的詩歌沈思錄(poetic meditations)。其企圖以詩來建構某種詩觀/傳統，到此則已昭然若揭；在某種程度而言，其詩歌即是一種詩學的具體化或展示。

柏樂傑的詩歌看似乎實淺顯，其實相當複雜而艱深，常在有意無意中包含了西方的兩大傳統--希伯來的和希臘的--，尤其是希臘的悲劇、神話故事、但丁和里爾克等，俱都不時在其詩中展現，讀者如果獲悉他是一位教比較文學的教授，對於他在詩中包羅西方文化傳統就不會感到驚訝了。他的詩不僅是一種創作態度的展現，更是一種特別的、深刻的人生觀照。閱讀柏樂傑的詩會令人覺得他的遣詞用字、文字指涉、章節和節奏的安排、思想的表達等等都非常精緻巧妙，巧妙到令人覺得他對文字的關注已凌駕其他一切²。事實上，當讀者把他去年出版的《頓呼組曲》(*Apostrophes*)讀完後，他的看法愈會得到證實。表面上看來，這本詩集跟早期出版的《測量水深》(*Soundings*, 1977)和《考掘抒情》(*Arche/Elegies*, 1983)一樣，都採用組曲形式，一共是六十六首詩，重複處理一些自然景物像玫瑰、樹木、風雨、湖泊、海洋和花朵等。那麼這些母題意象到底表達了些什麼？有一位批評家就採用「怪異」(eccentric)這個形容詞來按指柏樂傑，因為他的詩既不是時事特寫、史詩或軼聞，也不是社會動態批評³，那麼它們到底是什麼？

若從「怪異」的角度來看柏樂傑這本最新的詩作，讀者一

傑詩歌中的變異主題，但因題目裡應用了「抒情」這個詞，因此，引起柏氏本人的反響，認為他往往用的是抒情詩之形式，其用意未必在抒情。參考他跟但南(Robert Dunham)的訪談“A Sentence Like a Snake,”頁31。

- 2 柏樂傑在跟但南的訪談中曾多次談到語言的各種功能；他認為語言是可怕的工具，可卻也給吾人提供了生命(頁31)。柏樂傑詩選《達卡坡》的編者雅達生(Paul Hjartarson)在這詩選的序文中亦提及柏氏對語言的重視，請參頁 xvi-xviii。
- 3 這是瓊斯(D. G. Jones)最近對柏樂傑的詩歌所做的一個概括性評述，見其所作“Blodgett’s Poetry,”頁328。

定會覺得怪異透了。詩歌的主標題是「頓呼」，副題是「彈鋼琴中的女人」；換言之，收集在這本集子中的六十六首詩都是寫給一個「他者」聆聽的，那麼他/她的邊緣性以及詩中所要探索的課題的邊緣性可能都是一種障眼法而已，意在解構和顛覆所謂正統詩歌的言談。他在跟但南(Robert Dunham)的對談中就提到，寫詩之難就在於不知如何開始，如何結束；在同一個脈絡裡，他又提到他是在藉抒情的形式來顛覆抒情(頁 31)。我們覺得他這本詩集是一種幻想曲，由於是幻想，故詩中所再現或表達的不必一定要是自然詩的巧構形似，而應是想像力運作的成果。

在一本專門用現象學理論來研究詩的幻想特質的著作《幻想的詩學》(*The Poetics of Reverie*, 1969)中，貝舍拉德(Gaston Bachelard)認為幻想跟夢幻之不同就在於前者有意識的干預作用在，而後者則沒有受到這種干預(頁 11)；另一方面，從心理學的觀點來看，也只有幻想才能促使我們從現實功能(reality function)中解放出來。用貝舍拉德的話來說：

詩的幻想是一種宇宙性幻想，它開向一個美麗的世界、開向許許多多美麗的世界。它給「我」(I)提供一個屬於我的“非我”(non-I)：亦即「我的非我」，這個“我的非我”把夢幻中的我迷住，只有詩人能幫我們分享它。對我的“我做夢者”而言，就是這個“我的非我”使我在這個世界上活出我的存有的秘密。(頁 13)

我覺得柏樂傑的《頓呼組曲》中的詩篇都是這樣一些幻想性文本，由想像力所給出，那些不斷出現的母題意象都是詩人的意識對象(intentional object)或所經驗的物象，詩人的意識作用(intentional act)不斷意識到它們的存在；我們當然可以說，它們有象徵人的生死、愛情、宇宙的永恆、生命的有無、神的存在等意義在。總之，風雨、樹木、花草、海洋等這些流動的基型

意象都是循環性的⁴，都是有一定意義的。

柏樂傑這本組詩集是以詩人生命中的某一個特別時刻為起點（即他看著「一個彈鋼琴中的女人」為起點）：

過去我要告訴你這些：有一個坐著的女人，
她的手指彷彿不屬於自己，坐越許多長長的晌午，
射入房裡的陽光在變幻中，陽光
在房中不斷交集在她的肌肉和空氣之間；
我無法分辨我看到的是黃色抑或黃色的溫熱，
但是陽光在她的皮膚上移動，而且肌肉的溫熱進入
陽光中，而她坐在陽光裡，寂靜的意識和
消逝的肌肉，音樂從她手指間滑落。
我要告訴你這些以及更多東西--她的姿勢以及
穿越過海洋的午後的顏色，鳥兒陸續
翱翔越過波浪。

(頁 7, 1-11 行)

在詩人把這特別的一刻推展開來時，我們發覺他對物象的感受既細膩而且帶著溫熱，英文叫做 *sensuous*。這個竊偷詩人旁白/頓呼的「你」以及彈鋼琴中的女人都是一個「他者」(the other)，所以柏樂傑這本詩集顯然是書寫給一個「他者」聆聽的有關一個「他者」的種種事件。抒寫策略是，不斷開拓、挖掘「頓呼法」這個修辭策略的雙關辨證法--既直接對話且又想從對話中轉開(turn away)，這當然是一種充滿張力而且有顛覆性的做法⁵，至於成就了多少可還是相當有爭議的。我覺得這第一首詩應該

4 本身也是詩人的文評家朱迪·費茲哲樂(Judith Fitzgerald)在一篇評薦 1996 年獲得加拿大總督獎(Governor-General's Award)作家的文章中指出，柏樂傑收輯在《頓呼組曲》裡這些有板有眼的沈思錄探討的是「生命、死亡、雨水、樹木、玫瑰和愛情的循環本質」(頁 E14)。

5 費茲哲樂曾提到柏樂傑的標題《頓呼組曲》中所蘊含的“轉開去”的書寫策略。柏樂傑在給筆者的一個電子郵件(1997-5-2)中亦提到他的書寫策略是“apostrophe”的兩個含義--對人說話以及自思想或書寫的牽執中轉開--都開拓出來。

是這本小集子裡最確指(specific)的一首，其他的六十五首可都是從這一首推展開來，它們的空間指涉性(specificity)或地點性(placeness)就可沒有這一首這樣較可稽考。

撇開這首詩中的確指性不談，我們深為感覺到詩人的意識（「寂靜的意識」不僅是「她」的而已）已在那裡運作；確指性只是其意識的起點而已。然後再看下去，我們就發現詩人的意識對象不斷移轉、重疊---顏色互相組構以至音樂、空氣和顏色互相互涉、滲透---最後是：

.....女人坐著。我告訴你這一點：我要張開嘴巴
變成藍色、變成黑暗，斜倚進入寂靜中，觸覺觸及觸覺。
(頁7，26-27行)

假使這首詩有什麼基調的話，那就是「藍色」，甚或音樂所滲透出來的藍調。假使讀者一定要追索這首詩的意義的話，我們除了點出柏樂傑非常生動感性的意識活動以及點出這種基調之外，「無所為而為」(purposiveness with a purpose)或者強調「無所事事」(emphasized the importance of the “nothing”⁶)--這些都是藝術的功能--應該就是很好的一個重點。

在這第一首詩中所出現的陽光、肌膚、海洋、飛鳥、波浪、樹木、音樂、花草、黑暗等等都會在其他詩篇當中重現。從容格(Carl Jung)的理論來看，他們都具有原型意象的意義；可是從現象學的角度來看，它們已在時空中歷經變異，即使是同一東西，可是在意識作用的觀照底下，它們應已是「新鮮」的東西。在這種角度底下來看，每一次觀照所得都應是「絕對的真實」⁷。在這第一首詩中，那個在彈鋼琴的女人在詩人意識和想像雙重

6 魁北克藝術記者康羅克(Ray Conlogue)提到柏樂傑“強調詩人作為的無關緊要性，”見〈范德禧擊垮吉樂獎對手榮獲總督文學獎〉，頁A14。

7 所謂“絕對的真實”採自柏樂傑《頓呼組曲》的引語，為當代法國詩人聖約翰·波斯(St.-John Perse, 1887-1975)1960接受諾貝爾文學獎時講詞中的一句話。

作用下，她被幻化成「永遠坐在陽光下」(第十七行)，她跟她所彈奏的音樂俱已具體化為藝術美，也應是詩人與詩歌的化身。除了這種由音樂家所彈奏出來的樂音之外，在這本詩集中，我們發覺詩人柏樂傑對大自然的音樂--尤其對天籟與地籟--也非常著迷(或者說更加著迷)，這種樂音生生不息，也許比人間美的創作(音樂)還永恆呢。比如他在第十七首〈而今你的臉孔已衰老〉所描繪的風聲、海浪聲甚至人的說話聲；這首詩最後一行是：「我聽到宇宙呼出的氣息、你的氣息，而風勢漸弱」(第十行)，這裡不只天籟、地籟，連人籟都有了。又例如第四十七首〈詠嘆曲〉提到夜闌中的樂音時說：「有關岩石、樹木和宇宙碎落的片塊的樂音/這可是再細微不過的音響」(第四至五行)，這些都是吾人無以規避的音樂，它們可以內置、內化成為我們「最徹底的內在」(第七行)。而柏樂傑在這本詩集中最令吾人震驚得脊椎骨都會發麻的是第十八首〈我已遺忘了〉中赫美士(Hermes)所帶來的一陣陰風：

一陣我不認得的風
在我骨髓間吹颯(或者我即是那陣風)，
海面上的一陣冷流，能把樹根與岩石之黑都刮裂？
(第 11-13 行)

從音樂的優美、不朽游轉到吹枯拉朽的陰風，柏樂傑這種「即興式」⁸的主題探索毋寧是非常自然的--就像「氣息」⁹流動那樣自然。不過，為了在轉入到跟聲響/音樂有關的寂靜主題之前，我們還是再引一首有關音樂的詩來討論：

- 8 柏樂傑在給筆者的一個電子郵件(1997-5-2)中提到他本來擬用「即興曲」來做《頓呼組曲》這本詩集的名稱。
- 9 但南在跟柏樂傑對談時已注意到，柏氏在詩中一提到風，他也就必會提及「氣息」(breath)和宇宙的精神(world-spirit)，參見但南的“A Sentence Like a Snake,”頁 31。我倒是覺得，柏氏《頓呼組曲》中描寫生生不息的氣息的許多片斷必然令人想到他是受到莊子的影響。

月亮花

在夏天的豐饒中，空中之樂音為綻放自
 海底的音樂，以棲息在草葉上。它瞬間
 變化，綠色而有辟邪味，是某種音樂的瞬間，
 月亮與運轉的星星俱在其呼喚之中，音樂的莊嚴
 是活生生的血肉的音樂，在昇起的海洋之內
 閃亮；在你立足之處，它聳立而起，
 樹木在寂靜中向聲音傾斜，而在
 海上天空中漂飛的鳥兒都嚇住了，流動的亮光
 自你所在處隱隱然升起，在其向空中開闢處，
 那是向回潮的海洋所下的咒語。音樂即
 在其旋轉中擁有不朽，謙卑中樹木的
 渴望，星星非星星，而是你在夜晚中的
 立足點。宇宙並非太陽，而係關於你之種種
 說出月亮，在空中並沒有其他月亮升起來。
 (頁 59)

這首詩中的音樂形貌當然是詩人幻化出來的，相關之意象及動詞都非常鮮活而貼切，這些我已不擬再作仔細分析了。我要指出的是，在詩人眼裡，音樂的莊嚴在其能鮮活表達活生生的血肉生活，亦就是說，「音樂即為血肉」(第十行)。在這首詩裡，音樂已不再是創作品/藝術品；它是天籟，也是人類的血肉之軀；跟藝術品一樣，它是不朽的。

跟音樂有關的一個主旨/主題就是寂靜；如果音樂、音響為氣息之動，那麼寂靜則為氣息之未動，為萬物之原點。柏樂傑不僅寫過一篇叫做〈揚棄：詩歌與宗教言談中的寂靜〉來探討寂靜的面向，而在這本《頓呼組曲》中，他不僅在許多片段描繪這現象，而且有好幾首根本就在探索這個玄奧的課題。那麼寂靜到底是無還是有？它跟永恆有何關係？寂靜可以只是外觀的、形象的，比如你平和的面貌，無風吹拂的花朵，我們睡眠中的狀況，音樂的起始，籠罩萬物的寂靜狀態等；但它也可以是滲透、貫穿這些現象中更為本質的東西，這時候就是柏樂傑在第八首詩〈雨水只在我們內中降落〉所說的：「雨水降落自

寂靜之所在，斜落而去，進入黑暗之中」(第二行)，「寂靜就是雨水」(第四行)，它是本質性的、超越性的。正如柏樂傑在〈揚棄〉中所注意到的，寂靜可以是存在之前或之後的狀態；也即是說，寂靜即是無有、死亡或死亡之所(地獄)。假若人類的氣息不通--亦即不會利用語言、文字來表達思想--，那麼我們是無法切入到「靜止」這個點的，我們所說的這個意思就是艾略特(T. S. Eliot)在《四重奏》(*Four Quartets*)〈焚毀的諾頓〉(“Burnt Norton”)中所描述的：

文詞和音樂只在時間之內
開展；但任何能活著的東西
都得死亡。文詞隨著言語進入
寂靜之中。只有藉助形式、形態
文詞或音樂才能切入
靜止點；正如一個中國古瓷瓶
在其靜止中仍一直在活動中。
(第五段第 1-7 行)

柏樂傑在〈揚棄〉這篇論文的第二段曾經引用了艾略特上頭這幾行詩，並且認為艾氏的觀念跟舊約聖經中讚美詩的想法是一致的：文詞或音樂都需要形式、型態來進入所謂的靜止點(頁 208-209)。

柏樂傑《頓呼組曲》的第五首作品〈禮品〉所表達的題旨就跟上提的一些觀念有些類似(當然也有新的擴展)。我們還是把它引錄如下：

寂靜在成長。除了寂靜之樹木長出蔥綠的寂靜
葉子，無物源自寂靜，月亮亦非月亮，
它只是寂靜回應著太陽的寂靜。我無法分辨
月亮下那個佇立湖上的女人，她是否即是寂靜
抑或看似女人佇立在那兒。我無法說出它如何站立，
她的花呢衣服垂到腳邊，她雙腳幾未觸及湖水，
靜止得似未觸及腳下的空氣，並把月亮投向空中。

此即為寂靜說話之所在了。那女人的輪廓
 在湖面上，凝視著自己，女人的寂靜，而其樣態乃思想的
 樣態，冒自湖水中進入空中，此乃亮光自個兒垂落、
 升起。啊，宇宙！寂靜的樣態必須不斷延展，
 挪動進入樹木、月亮、湖泊和女人的亮光中。
 我為何坐在湖岸上？我嘴唇微張，為何只有寂靜
 落入我耳朵之中？為何只有文詞自身化為寧靜？
 有何物比這地點更重要？我認為在這裡
 上帝是沈默的、絕對的，而且尚未形成抑或只是一道
 掠過天空的道路，竟未嘗在湖上留下一個漣漪，亦未在樹林中
 刮出颼颼聲。只有我與上帝在一起。我們要亮光，亮光四處洋溢。
 啊，她在那兒，她並非適合於女人的寂靜，她是一個噴泉，自她臉上
 滲出寂靜的光亮。我真的無法想像音樂之為物
 抑或任何能逾越這個的東西，並說明其逾越之道。
 (頁 11)

這首詩可真是柏樂傑的論文〈揚棄〉中各種論點的具象化；可是在詩中，他必須把一個個意象/境幻化開來，想像他們為寂靜的各個層面，這就是為什麼他一開頭就說「寂靜在成長了」。前頭提到艾略特認為文詞、音樂必須在時間之內展開，而這種展開是要依靠各種型態、方式來進行的。寂靜又何嘗不一樣？除此之外，寂靜還是環中之靜止點，是萬物之源頭，是上帝。寂靜(氣息之未動)之跟音樂/響(氣息之已動)有這麼密切的關係牽扯，表面上看來可還是相當吊詭的。

在《頓呼組曲》所收輯六十六首短詩中，作為他者的「你」(you)有時候會被確指下來，譬如第十二首取名為〈我父親坐著〉中的「你」似乎應該是指「我父親」。同第一首不一樣的是，這時候的「你」可變成我意識作用所支配的主/客體。假使第一首的基調是德國詩人何德林(Friedrich Hölderlin, 1770-1843)的藍調音樂，那麼這一首的基調跟第五首的一樣，還是「寂靜」；假使藍調是由音樂所釋放出來的，那麼這首詩中的寂靜則是由玫瑰與蜜蜂——「蜜蜂」是里爾克和柏樂傑的最愛——所突顯出來的。這首詩很短，我們還是把它逐譯如下：

我記得你在花園中，玫瑰綻放在空中
而蜜蜂在花辦中竄鬧。你坐在
一張長石凳上，綠蔭披肩一般披落在
你脊背上。你的靜默與玫瑰花一致。有一隻貓兒
躺在你手掌心。我無法分辨看到的到底是那隻貓兒
抑或是你在樹蔭下撫摸的手掌。你是否已變成中國人

抑或死亡的相貌，眼睛趨向靈魂，玫瑰在那兒鬆懈其根莖，
無人察覺，亦一無音響？你是宇宙以及其意義。我們的星星、
太陽和雨水俱都派不上用場。除了蜜蜂，一切寂無動靜，
而牠們消失在陽光中。你無法感覺玫瑰----只有玫瑰能感覺
你呼吸中尖稜稜的污垢、你紆緩的回吸以及伴隨著蜜蜂
悄悄地歸來的無限細小的春天、無以或忘的玫瑰芬芳。
(頁 18)

連玫瑰在靈魂處鬆懈其根莖都能意識得到，你還能找出比這個
更寂靜的嗎？蜜蜂的飛動正好把「你」以及「玫瑰花」的寂默
給襯托了出來。

跟音樂與寂靜有相關的一個題旨即是貫穿萬物、宇宙間的
氣息；這一點我們在討論寂靜時已略為觸及。我們知道，有氣
息流動才是生命存有的開始以及保證。柏樂傑的第二十六首《天
候》說的本來是人類生命跟宏觀的外界的對比；這種隱喻性說
法在十七世紀以前的西方詩歌中本來就是極為普遍的寫法；可
是柏氏跟這種書寫策略有些不同之處在於，他竟利用氣息來作
為催促變化的因子。在深入討論之前，我們還是把這首引錄於
后：

在陰暗中躺在你身旁假寐，你軀體沒有生命的跡象，
我現在無法記起那時太陽何時下了山以及
我是否睡著了或是在做夢。我們並非血肉而是生命的
天候，早發的小溪流、天空中消退的色澤、一道
永不抵達地表的亮光。鳥兒越過吾人而去尋找
塵土和睡眠。我並未看到月亮照入房裡，

只從皮膚上感覺而知道夜晚裹住了我們。
 去觸碰你臉孔並順便在那裡觸摸月亮，
 夜晚和肌膚都在我掌握之中，這可是那一門子的生死系聯？沒有人
 會知道我們是否會醒過來並且醒覺在何處。風
 進入我的呼吸，攜帶雨水、玫瑰的芳馨進入
 我軀體，還有夏天、白天的亮光消逝後的湖泊

的色澤，有甚麼東西悄悄地把樹葉喚回。因此，
 最微弱的氣息是吾人有所不知的儀式，它把
 天空中改觀。在月亮底下躺在你身邊等你在
 黑暗中張開眼睛，我發覺它們不再是眼睛；
 我們是花園，空氣中只可以聽到花朵
 在月亮下被吹刮，一陣花瓣飄浮在黑暗中
 （頁 32）

第三、四行裡的「我們並非血肉而是生命的/天候」即是這首詩的主題。詩中提到的「風」以及「最微弱的氣息」即是造成變化的主導力量，這種力量看似微弱，卻能進入我們的呼吸，並能帶動花卉、樹木、色澤等的變化。總之，天氣的變化即是人的生命的變化，因此，詩人最後乾脆說，「我們是花園」（第十七行）。

在詩人非常生動、活潑的意識活動底下，許多意象都被點亮了，在這些明亮的意象中有一個應是玫瑰與其所屬的花卉綱目。在《頓呼組曲》裡，我們發覺玫瑰/花朵可以是詩人意識活動的許多內容：玫瑰是瞎的、會做夢（第六首），玫瑰會感覺人的呼吸（第十二首），玫瑰是人的眼睛（第二十首及第二十三首），玫瑰是夢幻、生死和人之不朽（第二十七首），玫瑰是夏天、月亮（第五十九首）、玫瑰是人的手掌（第六十三首）。在這裡，我們還是引錄第二十七首〈夢是玫瑰花〉來探討，因為它的題旨（人的朽與不朽）都跟本文所討論的虛靜與氣息有些許關聯：

夢是玫瑰花，其根莖藏在泥底下，每一朵的綻放
 會刺傷空氣，而在我們睡眠時，它們的氣味
 即是我們的呼吸。怎麼可能又是我再度夢見你，你的眼睛

落入玫瑰的空氣中，你音樂般的聲音再度
進入我的肌膚？夢幻中的亮光無不落自
天空中月亮劃過之處。此際看到你佇立在那兒，

月光灑落在你臉上，有一朵玫瑰自你一隻手中
升起，根莖已除，此際開始在枯萎，我此刻想到
我亦已在枯萎。從你眼中發覺玫瑰花就枯萎在那兒，
我無法自你手中把它取走。朋友，夢幻是會死的，
我們所呼吸的樂音是血肉，而我們是天空，
有許多月亮在那兒的宇宙間掠過。那麼玫瑰花就不會逝去，

它們最終即是我們--在天空下你所在處，自個兒
運行，成為月亮。我們睡眠時，玫瑰花在我們肌膚內躍動，
無人記得我們前此是何許人，眼睛張向天空，聲音
掠過許多花園降下。這就是我的玫瑰，肉身會死的
玫瑰，不管你走到何處都獻給你，我的呼吸呼出
月亮，然後自我棄絕。我的玫瑰所說者並非吾言。

這是柏樂傑《頓呼組曲》中最神祕深奧的一首，它不僅有超現實的意味，而且相當神祕，在這裡，詩人的意識已侵入無以知論的境地。那麼，這首詩中所再現的玫瑰花到底是什麼/代表什麼？根據詩中的推展過程，它/它們=人類=人之老朽=不朽；這樣吊詭的推論，那麼它/它們的本質，可真完全是夢幻、是虛擬的？如果我們以最後一行所說的玫瑰花的言說並非我的真言，那麼我們這一首詩(白紙黑字)所說的、所表現出來的跟所謂的真理的關係是權宜的、不定的，這是不是也是頓呼法所蘊含的「轉開」正統論述的一種做法？

在《頓呼組曲》中，柏樂傑還探討了愛情、生死、存在、永恆、亮光與黑暗等課題，採取的都是以沈思默想、以意識觀照物體並加以轉化為主的策略，這樣的做法或許就是詩人要在這本詩集中展示、建立的一種創作模式。我們還是可以把生死、永恆等主題跟音樂、靜寂扯在一起；但是一來限於篇幅，二來我這篇短論係以氣息把音樂和寂靜在一起來討論，其他跟這個

沒有肌膚連理的關係也就暫時擱置了。

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Munro's "Friend of My Youth": A Mediated Mother-Daughter Relationship

Mother-Daughter Relationship as Envisioned by Luce Irigaray

Luce Irigaray makes several comments on current perceptions of mother-daughter relationship. For instance, in her article "And the One Doesn't Stir without the Other," she attempts to give a lyrical if anguished voice to the daughter of the mother-daughter relationship. Instead of the usual discourse charted by psychoanalysis, she envisions and articulates a pre-Oedipal relationship between daughter and mother. Facing this most thorny and most personal of relationships between women, Irigaray takes as her point of departure an indictment of psychoanalysis for its almost total disregard of the female subject. In Irigaray's opinion, perhaps simply because the unsymbolized relationship between mother and daughter, its analysis constitutes a threat to the patriarchal symbolic order and thus psychoanalysis is reluctant to tackle aspects maternal genealogy. Consequently, the daughter's retrospection in Irigaray's understanding is carefully designed to bring the daughter's reality into strong relief after its obfuscation. Since female bonding is not easily recognized by the cultural imaginary, Irigaray has to retrace the unconscious elements of the symbolic system, for instance, the infant daughter's symbiotic relationship with her mother in the pre-Oedipal stage, i.e., when the daughter's femininity has not yet been repressed by patriarchy.

According to Margaret Whitford, "Irigaray argues that we have to go back to Greek mythology to find available, culturally embodied representations of the mother-daughter relationship" (76-77). The maternal genealogy, as we understand it, is a major and most significant absence in the symbolic capital of culture. Hence, for Irigaray, it is essential to bring that mother-daughter relationship into the symbolic capital. Yet in some cases, the mother is inaccessible to the daughter. Irigaray describes this aspect of the relationship as follows:

But we have never, never spoken to each other. And such an abyss now separates us that I never leave you whole, for I am always held back in you womb. Shrouded in shadow. Captives of our confinement. And the one doesn't stir without the other. But we do not move together. When the one of us come into the world, the other goes underground.

Canadian Culture and Literature. And a Taiwan Perspective

Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek and Yiu-nam Leung, eds.

Research Institute for Comparative Literature, University of Alberta

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1998 ISBN 0-921490-10-0

When the one carries life, the other dies. And what I wanted from you, Mother, was this: that in giving me life, you still remain alive. (67).

Here, because the mother is the Other, mothering becomes a burden to both mother *and* daughter. It is true, as Irigaray claims, that without the presence of maternal genealogy, mother and daughter can only pull each other down. It is precisely such deadening relationship between mother and daughter that Irigaray wants to challenge and change. In my article, I intend to provide a reading of a short story by Alice Munro within the context of an Irigarayan reconceptualization of the mother-daughter relationship.

Daughter's Dream vs. Mother's Memory

Alice Munro tells a story in her "Friend of My Youth," in which the first-person narrator reconstructs a story from her mother's description the story of her mother's friend Flora. Moreover, the story is framed by the narrator's dream of her dead mother. This framework, while not directly related to the main story, is significant for a reconciliation between the narrator and her mother. In other words, the first-person narrator is keen to set up another imaginary relationship between her and her mother as mediated by dreams; she recognizes her need to identify with her mother. Hence, although her mother remains nameless in the story, her perspective of the story is preserved and revered.

The narrator's mother, in her youth, once worked as a teacher in a small town. She then becomes familiar with the Grievese sisters, Flora and Ellie, and learns about the story of them. Flora, the elder sister, is originally engaged to marry a farmer called Robert but he betrays her and impregnates her sister Ellie. So Flora divides the house into two parts and makes her sister marry Robert. During their marriage all the pregnancies Ellie has come to still births or miscarriages. Ellie becomes bed-ridden and relies on her sister to take care of her. Then a nurse called Audrey Atkinson arrives to administer to the dying of Ellie. After Ellie dies, to everybody's surprise Robert marries Nurse Atkinson. And despite all the modernizations on the other part of the house, Flora still lives in her part of the house which is without electricity and other conveniences. Later, through Flora's letter, they learn that she has moved out to the nearby town and started to work as a clerk in a shop. This letter starts all the speculation on Flora again. The story ends with the narrator imagining an encounter between her and Flora, and finally a dream of her mother which echoes the dream at the beginning of the story.

The story, with its fairly ordinary although somewhat eccentric and bizarre, even freakish characters, is itself quite simple. According to Ajay Heble, the narrator is "forced to abandon her concern with historical exactitude in favour of what might be called the autobiographical imperative" (177). Being the title story of the collection of short stories, "Friend of My Youth" commands special

attention. For instance, in addition to exploring events from the past, "Friend of My Youth" interrogates the ways in which a reconstruction of the past takes place within the context of an autobiographical act. In other words, it can be seen as an attempt by the first-person narrator to symbolize her relation with her mother through the re-telling of the story of her mother's friend. Thus, the unconscious elements in the symbolic system become manifest in the reconciliation brought about by the dream emphasized both at the beginning and the end of the story. In such a context, the dream reveals the narrator's obsession with mothering and her yearning for her mother. In fact, the whole story can be seen as a record of the belated recognition of mothering — Flora, in spite of her patience toward Ellie, is not appreciated in her mothering role; the narrator can only express her yearning to her mother in her dream. It is also a story about rejected mothering: Ellie rejects Flora for all the latter's care and Robert rejects Flora for all her endurance.

In a milieu such as a village, women in general suffer from inability to individuate themselves. Thus the weariness the narrator imagines Flora to express at the imagined encounter between the two might serve as a critique of the narrator's own reinscription of Flora's story, in other words "an implicit acknowledgment, on the part of the narrator, of the limits of her own representational powers" (178). Flora's weariness may indicate the narrator's own willingness to acknowledge and identify the imaginative element in her own discourse, to gesture towards a critique of her own meta-story, the identification of the narrator's mother with Flora might serve a corollary function: like Flora, the narrator's mother may also be uncertain about the narrator's version of things.

As a theme familiar to us from Nancy Chodorow's work on object-relations theory in relation to women, the trouble in differentiation might seem here as though we were on familiar ground. However, the aims and presupposition of Chodorow and Irigaray are quite different. Chodorow explains that, at an unconscious level, women often do not separate sufficiently from their mother; their identity never becomes distinct from that of their mother, and they remain, unconsciously, in a state of merging or fusion in which it is impossible for them to distinguish between their own feelings and those of their mother:

Mothers tend to experience their daughters as more like, and continuous with themselves. Correspondingly, girls tend to remain part of the dyadic primary mother-child relationship itself. This means that a girl continues to experience herself as involved in issues of merging and separation, and in an attachment characterized by primary identification and object choice. By contrast, mothers experience their sons as a male opposite. (166) As long as women mother, we can expect that a girl's preoedipal period will be longer than that of a boy and that women, more than men, will be open to and preoccupied with those very relational issues that go into mothering — feelings of primary identification, lack of separateness or differentiation, ego and body-ego boundary

issues. (110)

Accordingly, the narrator's mother, although now deceased, still exerts influence on the narrator. In other words, they are still in a preoedipal, i.e., a dyadic primary mother-child relationship. Thus, the narrator is keenly interested in as well as bewildered by the imbalanced triangular relationships among Robert and the Grieves sisters and later Robert, Flora, and nurse Atkinson, for those relationships are always temporary, anxious, and unstable, easily reduced to relationships between just two. Unfortunately, in each case, Flora, the elder sister, is always the one to be left alone. Her role in each case is awkward, even funny or ironic. And her identities along the years undergo constant marginalization: first the bride-to-be to Robert, then second the sister-in-law to her former fiancé, then a complete outsider to Robert's second marriage. As Flora belongs to a strict religious sect of Scottish origin, her behaviour is regarded "saintly" because she has twice forgiven the betrayal by her fiancé in prospective marriages. However, the patriarchal sect does not preach forgiveness in particular. As the epilogue of the short story — providing further background knowledge of the religious sect — indicates, it is in fact quite merciless and brutal. Moreover, it does indeed function to juxtapose the story with a marginal, yet at the same time zealous and uncompromising masculine religious ideology. Therefore, the self-sacrificing story of Flora does not fit well into the behavioral pattern of the fanatic sect. Moreover, there seems to be several gaps as well as fusions along the flow of the narrative as it is constantly disrupted by the embedded descriptions of the (m)other's life.

The boundaries of the story are floating: it sometimes excludes but other times includes details of the narrator's mother's health. It also indicates the limitation of the first-person narrator's perspective. In other words, it reveals the truth that the narrator is only an ordinary person with a limited perspective within the network of various discourses. It can be made up only through unconscious devices. Thus the narrator's mother emerges in her daughter's dreams, and, contrary to reality, her health regained. This contradiction to reality indicates a wish fulfilment on the daughter's side. Yet, since the narrator lays bare the unconscious mechanisms in the story-telling, the reader has to accept the fact that there is a lot of information beyond our grasp. As readers, we have to recognize the opaque materiality and heterogeneity of language. Thus, we may claim that this story-telling process grows out of the female imaginary, i.e., the unconscious of Western thought which is constantly repressed. For all its conceptual mobility, it has to strive for its existence within its present symbolic order. In order to realize the existence of the female imaginary, we have to scrutinize and make change of the current mother-daughter relationship. It should not remain unsymbolized and we have to face and analyze dreams and accordingly, in this story, we have to reconstruct dreams. Yet, one cannot conceptualize the female imaginary without thinking

about the female symbolic for imaginary identity cannot be limited to the unconscious fantasy of an individual.

Seen in this light, the conflation of Flora and the narrator's mother, in the end of the story, can be then understandable. Although making different choices in their lives, they, in the daughter's imaginary, will certainly come to the same fate and end, death. Yet they both can be similarly empowered through the workings of the female imaginary. And though differently located, they are similarly represented as alienated (m)others. Therefore, the reader is implicitly invited to pay special attention to the ironic presence of the narrator's mother. For the story does not immediately begin with the story of Flora; the mother's memories are treated as equally significant. According to Heble, "the opening sequence of the story anticipates this act of substitution, of daughter-narrator retelling and reinscribing a story told to her by her mother" (175). Thus, the story begins with the mother framed and relocated in the daughter's surprising dreams. The settings would be placed in their old kitchen or rather other unexpected places like a hotel lobby or an airport. And her mother would be much better from the paralyzing disease that held her in its grip for a decade or more before her death. In other words, her mother is imagined to be freed from disease, just as Flora is finally liberated from the monstrosities of her religion.

Such astonishment and recovery of her mother's liveliness of face and voice, however, leads to the daughter's recollection of her mother's youth. Although there appears a gap between the dream and the starting point of her story, the dream framework is not without function. Rather, it gives the story a more intimate and sophisticated beginning. It also indicates who is the one the narrator really cares about, that is, her mother. As a story of failed mothering, however, the mother-daughter relationships or maternal genealogy, should be closely reassessed. Female bonding, as it turns out, is strong and persistent, which binds the narrator to Flora whom she has never seen. Through the female imaginary, her mother, or even Flora, is no longer inaccessible to the daughter-narrator. For instance, through letter-writing, Flora reveals her final breaking away from the farm. Along the process of story-telling, the narrator develops different versions of Flora: a Presbyterian witch, reading out of her poisonous book, for instance. When the narrator's version clashes with her mother's version, the reader is left with their own common sense to judge.

Open-Ending: A Female Imaginary with no Female Symbolic?

According to Whitford, the question of relation between symbolic/imaginary and subjectivity/identity can be formulated in the following way: 1) Subjectivity is a structure, or a position of enunciation. It is not identity and 2) but that structure would be empty without the imaginary: representations are what flesh it out. Thus, the symbolic is structure (form) which is given content by the imaginary and the imaginary pours itself into the available structures to form

representations. Subjectivity, then belongs to the symbolic, but it is empty without the imaginary; identity is imaginary, but it takes a symbolic (representational) form. Although it is possible to make a conceptual distinction, in practice the two overlap because one never finds the one without the other.

However, in "Friend of My Youth," women are no objects of exchange. It is, rather, a man (Robert), who is circulated among women. Located within a female imaginary, women cannot cut the umbilical cord which links them to their mother. Although the narrator attempts to symbolize the relation between her mother and herself as daughter, by rejecting her mother's version of Flora's story, she fails to acknowledge her mother as a subject of epistemology. And according to Irigaray, the creation of a powerful female symbolic to represent the other term of sexual difference against the omnipresent effects of the male imaginary would alter the status of women. Yet the existence of the female symbolic depends on the symbolic redistribution of "nature" and "culture." Hence, Irigaray strives for the perception of the "double syntax," created to facilitate the existence of "women-amongst-themselves." "Women-amongst-themselves" projects a community in which women are no longer conditioned by men's desire as rivals. They thus escape from the male desire which used to dictate their existence and construct a dominant male symbolic. Flora, within the story's double syntax, refuses to be pinned down according to the patriarchal scenario of marriage. In other words, after she moves away from the farm, she is qualified to join a "women-amongst-themselves." Thus, the narrator, confronted with the danger of being caught in the web of contradictory discourses, cannot impose a closed ending upon her story. By providing an epilogue on the historical background of the religious sect, the narrator presents two sets of genealogies: one maternal, the other paternal. Yet neither of the two can summarize the story; they provide either contradiction or superficial explanation to the strangeness of the story. Flora's destiny remains unknown and impenetrable. Only in dreams can the narrator imagine a powerful and strong woman as mother, or mother as woman.

At the scene of representation, Flora's desire is never represented. Her story-telling to her sister Ellie is a submission to religious piety as demanded and imposed by patriarchal ideology. However, there are several surprising turns of the plot which leave open several possible scenarios. In the narrator's imagination, Flora would be

listening, with a pleasant composure. But she shakes her head. She smiles at me, and in her smile there is a degree of mockery, a faint, self-assured malice. Weariness, as well. She is not surprised that I am telling her this, but she is weary of it, of me and my idea of her, my information, my notion that I can know anything about her. Of course it's my mother I'm thinking of, my mother as she was in those dreams, saying, It's nothing, just this little tremor; saying with such astonishing lighthearted forgiveness, Oh, I knew you'd come someday. My mother surprising me, and doing it almost indifferently. Her mask,

her fate, and most of her affliction taken away. How relieved I was, and happy. But I now recall that I was disconcerted as well. I would have to say that I felt slightly cheated. Yes. Offended, tricked, cheated, by this welcome turnaround, this reprieve. My mother moving rather carelessly out of her old prison, showing options and powers I never dreamed she had, changes more than herself. She changes the bitter lump of love I have carried all this time into a phantom — something useless and uncalled for, like a phantom pregnancy. (26)

Thus, it can be concluded that the mystery of Flora is shared by the narrator's mother and that the text has a double referentiality. This, in turn, leads us to the conclusion that Munro's short story refuses to be classified.

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De la Production littéraire et des écrivains canadiens d'origine arabe

Une littérature arabe créée par des néo-canadiens de première génération est vivante désormais. Elle a vu le jour dans les années 1970; elle a produit dans tous les genres et ce, dans un mode d'écriture qui couvre toutes les gammes, du réalisme au postmodernisme; son bilan monte à près de 170 livres, et bien plus en contributions à des magazines littéraires. C'est une littérature trilingue (Français, Arabe, Anglais), et partant, elle satisfait doublement la définition donnée par Deleuze et Guattari aux littératures mineures: "une littérature mineure n'est pas celle d'une langue mineure, plutôt celle qu'une minorité fait dans une langue majeure" (29). Comme d'autres littératures de communautés culturelles, elle porte le signe indélébile de l'exil. En somme, elle fait partie de "l'ère des trois solitudes" que "le pays des deux solitudes,"¹ le Canada, a reconnue et acceptée.

Malheureusement, et malgré le grand progrès effectué dans les années 1980 quant à l'admission de l'hétérogène par nombre d'intellectuels, notamment au Québec (voir, par exemple, Nepveu), la littérature québéco-canadienne du Moyen Orient n'a pas joui d'une grande réception dans les sanctuaires académiques. Je citerai en exemple une lacune des plus significatives: exception faite d'un article des plus intéressants sur Naïm Kattan (voir Rahimieh), le colloque de 1988 (Research Institute for Comparative Literature, University of Alberta), sur les "littératures de moindre diffusion" et les actes de ce colloque qui comptent plus de 24 articles sur les écrits de diverses minorités transculturelles, ne contiennent rien sur la matière (voir Pivato, Tötösy, et Dimić). A ma connaissance, la communication que j'ai faite lors du quatorzième congrès de l'Association Internationale de Littérature Comparée (University of Alberta 1994) était une instance solitaire (voir Dahab 1998). Cette littérature ne figure pas non plus dans le recueil important, *Other Solitudes* (voir Hutcheon et Richmond 1990), publié

1 "Pays de deux solitudes," expression qui se rapporte aux deux peuples fondateurs, alors que "l'ère des trois solitudes" est une expression de l'écrivain italo-québécois Filippo Salvatore, désignant le groupe des écrivains italiens (198).

avec l'aide du Secrétariat d'Etat et qui regroupe des extraits et des entrevues de dix-huit écrivains de minorités culturelles. Même le livre très informatif de Baha Abu Laban intitulé *An Olive Branch on the Family Tree: The Arabs in Canada* (1980) ne traite pas de la littérature des Néo-Canadiens d'origines arabes. Cette dernière est également absente du corpus de livres qui sont parus dans les années 1980, avec l'aide du gouvernement canadien, sur les littératures minoritaires, par exemple la littérature hongroise (Bisztray 1987), asiatique (1988), ourdou (Khan 1988; Shaheen, Nasim, Mirza 1988), hispanique (Michalski 1988), italienne (Pivato 1985, 1988), etc., (pour les bibliographies voir Miska; Tötösy 1996). A deux reprises, en 1994 et en 1996 — c'est là une instance révélatrice — j'ai soumis une demande de bourse de recherche auprès du Département du Patrimoine Canadien en vue de la rédaction d'un livre sur la question. A deux reprises ma demande a été refusée. Les raisons du refus m'ont paru inadéquates. Une exception cependant est importante à noter: il s'agit des travaux de Maïr Verthuy et son équipe (Université Concordia) depuis quelques années, sur les écrivaines en provenance du Sud, notamment du monde arabe (voir Lequin et Verthuy).

C'est donc avec une certaine anticipation joyeuse que j'entreprends ce travail préliminaire de pioche: répertorier, identifier oeuvres et écrivains, les classer — quel est le volume produit, en quelle langue, et pourquoi — et dégager les traits les plus caractéristiques de cette littérature. Comme l'a bien exprimé le critique, au sein de toute communication littéraire "*all texts are only artifacts with an undeterminate communicative status until someone does something with them*" (Beaugrande 12). Précisément! D'où l'importante bibliographie que je dresse à la fin de cet article, ainsi que la table représentative ci-dessous. En un deuxième temps il conviendrait d'étudier plus à fond la question; le but ultime serait de rendre visible et de propager cette littérature au sein de l'institution littéraire canadienne. Mais il serait prématuré de m'embarquer dès maintenant sur une analyse des aspects formels et artistiques de la littérature néo-canadienne d'origine moyen-orientale alors que les modalités premières de son existence demeurent inconnues tant par le grand public que par les universitaires. Mon approche est une approche anormative: celle d'un chercheur plutôt que d'un critique littéraire, et qui tente de "cerner des relations plutôt que des essences" (Lambert 1980, 66). Mon optique est influencée par L'étude empirique de la littérature prônée par Siegfried J. Schmidt et son école, surtout en ce qui concerne sa formulation des principes sous-jacents au développement des systèmes sociaux et les sous-systèmes culturels et littéraires (voir Schmidt; Tötösy et Sywenky). Dans les confins de cet article, je traiterai donc d'éléments appartenant à l'un des volets constitutifs de toute institution littéraire, soit, la production des textes littéraires (producteurs et produits).

Il serait utile de rappeler que la communauté arabe en Amérique du Nord comprend plus de trois millions d'individus dont à peu près cinquante mille qui

résident au Canada. Ils sont arrivés en deux vagues majeures: au tournant du siècle et après la deuxième guerre mondiale. Le deuxième flux migratoire est le plus volumineux. Quarante-cinq mille individus sont arrivés pendant les décennies 1960 et 1970. Il faut noter que les immigrants égyptiens constituent 40% de la totalité de l'immigration du Moyen Orient vers le Canada; les Libanais 30%, les Marocains 13%, les Syriens, Jourdanais et Tunisiens 17%. Ils se sont installés dans les provinces du Québec, de l'Ontario et de l'Alberta, par ordre décroissant (ces trois provinces englobent 95% des immigrants arabes). Après 1971, cependant, l'Ontario devint la province de prédilection, suivie du Québec, de l'Alberta et de la Nouvelle Ecosse. L'appartenance linguistique, ethnique, religieuse, culturelle et linguistique de ces groupes est si multiple et variée que la rubrique "Arabe" qui les englobe tous est quelque peu artificielle. La vague d'immigration égyptienne a eu lieu principalement après la guerre de 1967, guerre qui a coïncidé avec la fin du règne de terreur et de violence de Nasser, avec son atmosphère de prostitution intellectuelle, de corruption et d'oppression politique, un règne marqué par un grand nombre de "disparitions" de ceux qui osaient se prononcer contre la révolution de 1952. C'est surtout après la guerre de 1973 que le flux migratoire égyptien fut le plus grand, et ce jusqu'aux années 1980. Il trouve ses origines notamment dans la perte de toute illusion relative au gouvernement Sadat, ses prises de position politiques et économiques, et le déclin social qui suivit sa politique de *Infitah* et son ouverture aux influences étrangères.

J'ai repéré environ trente-cinq écrivains canadiens d'origine arabe: vingt-trois d'entre eux ont à leur actif une production majeure (au moins un livre publié), et les autres une production mineure (dans des revues et magazines littéraires), et je soupçonne l'existence d'autres à découvrir. La table suivante est un échantillon qui, non-exhaustif, donnera toutefois une certaine idée du potentiel de cette littérature. Seuls ceux qui ont produit un volume édité y figurent.

Les Ecrivains: profil bio-bibliographique²

Nom, pays d'origine, date, province	Genres, Nombre de publications	Prix littéraires maisons d'édition, revues littéraires ³
Abitbol, Bob Oré, Maroc? Québec	Nouvelles (1)	

2 Les points d'interrogation dans ce tableau renvoient à des renseignements qui n'ont pu être obtenus à ce stade de mes recherches.

3 Cette colonne renvoie aux prix littéraires reçus par les écrivains, et, selon le cas, aux maisons d'édition et aux revues littéraires par eux fondées.

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Alonzo, Anne-Marie, Egypte, 1963, Québec	Prose poétique (24)	Prix Emile Nelligan 1985, L'Ordre du Canada 1997, <i>Editions Trois</i>
Bouyoucas, Pan,	Pièces de théâtre, romans, nouvelles (6)	Prix Radio Canada 1983, Festival de théâtre du Québec 1986, Editions Quinze (?)
Bourouai, Hédi, Tunisie, 1966, Ontario	Poèmes (16)	Prix International de Poésie (Cannes 1987)
Dahan, Andrée, Egypte, 1968, Québec	Roman (3)	Prix du Signet d'Or 1994
El Hadj-Moussa, Toufik, Algeria, Québec	Nouvelles (2)	
Elkhadem, Saad, Nouveau Brunswick Egypte, 1968	Mini-romans (15)	York Press Ltd, <i>International Fiction Review</i> 1975
El Malh, Youssef, Palestine?	Nouvelles (?)	<i>Canadian Fiction Magazine</i> (Prix)
Ghalem, Nadia, Algérie, 1976, Québec	Poèmes, romans, nouvelles (7)	Grand Prix Littéraire Guérin 1987
Karamé, Antoine, Egypte, 1974, Québec	Roman (1)	
Khalo, Michel, Egypte, Québec, 1966	Romans (2)	
Kattan, Naïm, Irak, 1954, Québec	Romans, Nouvelles (26), essais, pièce de théâtre (1)	Prix France-Canada 1971
Latif-Ghattas, Mona, Egypte, 1966, Québec	Romans, roman-poèmes (7)	
Ltaif, Nadine Egypte, 1980, Québec	Poèmes (3)	
Marwan, Hassan, Liban, Ontario	Roman (3)	
Naaman, Antoine, Egypte, 1966, Québec	Essais, traductions (15)	Editions Naaman (1973), <i>Cosmos</i> , <i>Présence Francophone</i> (1969), <i>Ecriture française dans le monde</i> (1974)

Mazel, Thomas O., Algérie?	Roman (1)	
Najib, Di'un, Liban, 1960, Québec	Mémoires (2)	
Rostom, Kamal, Egypte, 1974, Québec	Nouvelles, romans (30) ⁴	Rostom Publishing (1984)
Saïd, M., Salwa, Egypte?	Nouvelles (3)	
Shaker, Fouad, Liban?, Québec	Roman, essais (?)	
Salloum, Habib, Egypte?	Nouvelles (?)	
Tarakdjian, Elie, Egypte, 1969, Québec	Roman (1)	
Varoujean, Vasco, Syrie, 1967, Québec	Romans (3)	
Wyl, Jean-Michel, Algérie, 1967, Québec	Romans (4)	

La table précédente révèle un profil bio-sociologique en accord avec la présence arabe au Canada: près de la moitié des écrivains majeurs sont d'origine égyptienne, le restant provient du Liban, d'Irak, d'Algérie, de la Syrie et de la Tunisie. Ils se sont installés au Québec surtout, dans l'Ontario ensuite. Ils sont souvent trilingues. Outre l'Arabe, les langues maîtrisées le plus souvent sont le Français, l'Anglais, l'Allemand, l'Arménien, l'Hébreu et l'Italien. Leurs origines religieuses sont diverses: copte orthodoxe, catholique, protestante, musulmane et juive. Bon nombre parmi eux ont une appartenance ethnique multiple, parfois immédiate, souvent distante. Par exemple, l'Égyptien Elie Tarakdjian et le Libanais Vasco Varoujean, tous les deux arméniens d'origine, n'ont jamais vécu en Arménie et sont d'ascendance syrienne. Pan Bouyoucas, né au Liban où il a vécu jusqu'à l'âge de seize ans, est d'origine grecque et ne se considère nullement arabe (d'après une conversation téléphonique avec l'auteur en juin 1994). L'écrivaine égypto-québécoise, Anne-Marie Alonzo, a

4 Dont quatre sont publiés au Canada.

des origines maltaise, palestinienne, et syrienne, ce qui ajoute à son malaise.⁵

Il serait sans doute bon de noter que ce qui frappe le plus en examinant ce corpus d'écrivains c'est certainement la diversité ethnique et langagière, le manque de solidarité — nombre de ces écrivains ne se connaissent même pas et ne cherchent pas à se connaître — et le fait que ceux qui sont les plus édités détiennent des fonctions dans le secteur public. A une ou deux exceptions près (notamment Naïm Kattan qui immigra en 1954), les écrivains d'origine arabe ont immigré au Canada entre 1964 et 1974. La grande majorité a dépassé la quarantaine, fait indicateur pour qui veut prédire le sort de cette littérature. Une dizaine parmi eux continuent à produire et le font de façon prolifique. Citons les noms de Naïm Kattan (vingt-six livres), Anne-Marie Alonzo (vingt-quatre livres), Saad Elkhadem (quinze livres), Nadia Ghalem (sept livres), Mona Latif-Ghattas (sept livres), Kamal Rostom (trois livres), Marwan Hassan (trois livres), Nadine Ltaif (trois livres), Andrée Dahan (deux livres). Ils écrivent des pièces de théâtre ou des documentaires pour Radio-Canada ou Radio-Québec, ils écrivent des scénarios de films (Ghalem), ils sont metteurs en scène (Latif-Ghattas) et écrivent pour les Grands Ballets Canadiens (Alonzo). Ils collaborent à des revues et des magazines littéraires, tels que *Le Devoir*, *La Voix mètèque*, *Trait-D'Union*, *La Presse*, *Liberté*, *Voix et Images*, *Humanitas*, *Canadian Fiction Magazine*, *The Whigstandard*, *The Georgian*, *The Athenian*. Plusieurs d'entre eux enseignent à l'Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM): Naïm Kattan (en 1991 il a quitté le Conseil du Canada où il avait le poste de directeur qu'il avait eu depuis 1967), Andrée Dahan (chargée de cours), et Pan Bouyoucas. Le Tunisien Hédi Bouraoui est professeur d'Allemand et de littérature comparée à York (Ontario), et l'Égyptien Saad Elkhadem était professeur d'Allemand à l'Université du Nouveau Brunswick. Au Québec, ils sont publiés par des maisons d'édition alternatives, telles que Leméac, L'Hexagone, Editions des Femmes (Paris), Editions du Noroît, Hurtubise HMM, vlb éditeur, Boréal, L'Arbre, Guérin littérature, Guernica (les éditions Guernica, voilà quelques années, se sont installées à Toronto), Editions du Noroît, Editions XYZ et La Presse.

Nous ne pouvons rendre compte d'une littérature en devenir sans reconnaître ses agents de transmission, ses intercesseurs, ses médiateurs, pour ainsi dire. Lorsque ces derniers appartiennent eux-mêmes à ce corpus d'écriture minoritaire, il y a début de cohésion, de système, dans le sens défini par José Lambert en 1986: "Un ensemble d'oeuvres, d'auteurs, de lecteurs ... liés par des principes (des normes) qui les opposent aux systèmes environnants" (176). En 1980 il écrivait: "Que la littérature est envisagée comme un système complexe

5 "toujours étrangère marquée là-bas comme ici / De quel nom ou d'arbre./ Perdue cette généalogie suis française vénitienne espagnole / palestinienne dit ma tante syrienne pour ma mère maltaise / pour la sienne si peu du nil" (*Droite et de profil* 5).

signifie simplement que le chercheur accepte au départ l'existence de relations multiples au sein de toute littérature nationale, puis entre ce système de la littérature nationale et les systèmes voisins mais sans savoir au préalable quelle est la nature exacte de ces relations" (63). Quelques-uns des écrivains en question ont fondé des revues littéraires, voire des maisons d'édition, afin de se fournir, comme à d'autres, un exutoire pour leurs écrits. Pour citer les exemples les plus notoires: York Press fondée en 1974 par Saad Elkhadem. Il y publia sa production littéraire dans son entièreté dans une édition bilingue (Arabe-Anglais). Elkhadem fonda également la revue *The International Fiction Review* dont il fut l'éditeur jusqu'à sa retraite, il ya trois ans. Citons également les Editions Trois (Laval) que Anne-Marie Alonzo co-fonda en 1985 avec le Québécois Alain Laframboise. *Trois* est la revue littéraire bilingue que ces deux collaborateurs fondèrent. Le plus grand médiateur, s'il faut en trouver un, de cette littérature est sans conteste l'Égyptien Antoine Naaman, qu'un journal Québécois (Anonyme B3) qualifia de "figure imposante": à la fois professeur, écrivain, animateur, chercheur, critique, et éditeur. Il était à la tête du département de français à l'Université de Sherbrooke qui l'embaucha dès 1966. Il a fondé et dirigé les Editions Cosmos en 1969 et les Editions Naaman depuis 1973. Il a également créé deux revues: une revue semestrielle, *Présence francophone* (1970) qu'il dirigea jusqu'en 1974 et qu'il rattacha au centre établi par lui en 1969, Centre D'Études des Littératures d'Expression Françaises (CELEF); et une revue trimestrielle, *Écriture française dans le monde* dès 1969.⁶

Lui-même ardent francophile, il nourrissait une grande ambition à une époque où la France elle-même ne faisait pas grand'chose pour promouvoir la francophonie ou les écrivains francophones: celle de faire de Sherbrooke la capitale mondiale des littératures d'expression française publiées en dehors de la France: "Grâce au dynamisme d'Antoine Naaman, Sherbrooke est devenu un centre international de diffusion des littératures francophones, surtout des pays en dehors de l'Europe," diront les trois universitaires canadiens qui ont établi le *Dictionnaire des auteurs de langue française en Amérique du Nord* (1020). Au fait, en 1983 les Editions Naaman avaient 450 livres à leur actif, de 40 pays différents, et les Editions Cosmos en avaient soixante. Environ huit pour cent de la littérature québéco-arabe fut publiée par cet éditeur.

A peu près 30% de la littérature canadienne d'origine moyen-orientale est produite en Arabe, tandis que 55% est écrite en Français et 15% en Anglais. Ont choisi l'Anglais ceux des écrivains qui ont immigré au Canada anglais assez jeunes (Emily Nasrallah, Marwan Hassan). Ceux dont l'immigration s'est faite à l'âge adulte, comme pour Kamal Rostom, ils ont continué à écrire en Arabe,

6 Les deux maisons d'édition et les revues qui y étaient rattachées ont cessé d'exister depuis 1990, quatre ans après sa mort.

souvent devenant leurs propres traducteurs. Tel est le cas pour Saad Elkhadem qui s'est établi au Canada à 35 ans. Comme il le dit lui-même, l'Arabe lui fournit "a direct line without pause or hesitation between [his] ideas and the images [he] uses" (d'après une conversation téléphonique avec l'auteur en juin 1995). Il est unique parmi ses confrères en ceci que la presque totalité de sa production canadienne fut publiée par la maison d'édition que lui-même a fondée (York Press), dans des éditions bilingues, traduites en anglais par L'Égyptien Saad El Gabalawy, professeur de littérature anglaise à L'Université de Calgary.⁷ Plusieurs des écrivains qui nous intéressent ici (Alonzo, Ghalem, Karamé, Latif Ghattas, Varoujean) ont passé les années formatives de leur enfance dans un milieu francophone, dans des écoles de langue française. Quoi de plus naturel, une fois le Québec élu comme pays d'immigration, que de choisir le Français comme langue d'écriture? Comme le dira Anne-Marie Alonzo: "C'est une langue que j'aime. Mes parents sont venus s'établir au Québec parce qu'on y parlait français. Pour moi la langue française est la plus belle" (Dupré 238). Et Naïm Kattan de lui faire écho: "j'ai choisi le français parce que pour moi l'Occident libérateur était francophone" (Allard 13). Ni l'un ni l'autre de ces deux auteurs, et cela est assez représentatif, ne se sentirent à l'aise dans leur pays d'origine où ils étaient en quelque sorte déjà en exil, à cause d'une généalogie familiale marquée par une appartenance culturelle multiple: Kattan en tant que jeune juif vivant en Irak et déchiré entre la culture juive qu'il délaissa en faveur de l'Arabe qu'il parlait avec un accent, et Alonzo en tant que jeune catholique d'éducation francophone vivant dans un pays musulman arabophone: "me dire que j'étais refusé par tout le monde ou me dire que c'était ma chance d'appartenir à personne" (Allard 24) , et Alonzo de ressasser: "En Egypte je ne me suis jamais sentie égyptienne: on me faisait sentir que je ne l'étais pas.... Ici je n'étais pas non plus considérée comme une Québécoise ni une Canadienne" (Dupré 247).

Le choix de la langue d'écriture est considéré, au sein de la recherche universitaire canadienne sur les littératures minoritaires, comme un phénomène-clé (Bisztray 1989, 834-35; Padolsky). Je pense notamment à l'important colloque qui a eu lieu en 1988 à l'Université de l'Alberta sur les "littératures de moindre diffusion." En dissertant sur la langue d'écriture choisie par l'écrivain migrant, d'aucuns ont voulu opter pour "une littérature canadienne multilingue" (Bisztray 1989, 834, 835); d'autres ont soulevé l'épineuse question d'appartenance de ceux-là mêmes qui écrivent dans une langue *troisième*, en dehors des deux langues officielles du Canada. Pour J.M. Bumsted, en 1984 déjà, la réponse était radicale: "Anyone who lives and/or writes and/or publishes in Canada must be accepted as a Canadian" (18). Traitant de la littérature

7 Dans deux instances, comme pour Ajnihah min Rasâs (*Wings of Lead*, 1971) et "Rijâl" ("Men," 1967) Elkhadem fut son propre traducteur.

Canadienne d'ascendance polonaise, Edward Mozejko (824) fait remarquer qu'à l'intérieur de la réalité culturelle canadienne, les écritures produites en une troisième langue appartiendront au système primaire de la langue dont elles dérivent. En 1994, Padolsky écrivait: "the idea that Canadian literature can only be written in English or French ... has to give way to a broader, more pluralistic view of literature" (380-81). Perspicace observation qui sera cependant démentie au niveau de la réception officielle de ces oeuvres. Comme le notait amèrement quelques années plus tôt un critique d'origine hongroise: "Clearly if you do not write in English or French you are not a Canadian author" (Bisztray 1989, 834). L'épineux de la question consiste en ceci que toute littérature migrante produite au Québec aura de ce fait accumulé deux paliers de recul par rapport au système dominant: le premier palier consiste au *degré d'éloignement* (culturel, émotif, idéologique) où se tient le Québec lui-même vis-à-vis du Canada anglophone majoritaire, et le deuxième niveau de recul consistera en cela que le texte migrant, inéluctablement, sera produit, dans La Belle Province, par un étranger parmi des étrangers. Dans un article intitulé "Configurations of Post-coloniality and National Identity: Inbetween Peripherality and Narratives of Change," Steven Tötösy a suggéré: "my theoretical designation of inbetween peripherality is also applicable — it appears to me — to several types of minority texts including those of ethnic and exile literatures" (1999). Il serait intéressant d'élaborer cette discussion dans le contexte où elle a pris naissance: l'opposition binaire, inhérente à tout texte littéraire produit par un membre d'une minorité ethnique, entre une culture dominante et une culture dominée.

Comme nous le montre la table bio-bibliographique ci-dessus, plusieurs de nos écrivains ont bénéficié de prix prestigieux, parmi lesquels figure le très honorifique Ordre du Canada décerné récemment à Anne-Marie Alonzo. Ici et là commencent à percer des marques certaines de reconnaissance de cette écriture. Des noms auparavant inconnus sont désormais inclus dans des dictionnaires et des anthologies d'écrivains canadiens. En gros cependant, et comme je le démontre ailleurs, la présence de cette écriture en provenance du Moyen Orient au sein de l'Institution Littéraire canadienne demeure insuffisante (voir Dahab 1998). Kamal Rostom avait-il raison d'attribuer cette lacune aux écrivains en question: "they did not seriously attempt to record, annotate, and disseminate their own artistic products and literary works, nor did they raise their voices and make themselves noticed when such studies were undertaken by others" ("Foreword").

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阮秀莉 (HSIU-LI JUAN)

借道後現代論述以觀多元文化主義：
側看Linda Hutcheon以及加拿大文學*
(An Understanding of Multiculturalism via
Postmodernism: A Slant View of Linda
Hutcheon and Canadian Literature)

Linda Hutcheon is one of the most active Canadian scholars. She is well known in studies of postmodernism, contemporary Canadian literature, and multiculturalism in theory and practice. This paper intends to present a view from Taiwan on the problem of getting to know Canada through Hutcheon's literary activities, and by this way I discuss the problem of cultural construction of a national image and identity. I shall focus on the crisscross of postmodernism, multiculturalism, and Canadian literature, exploring how they complement and conflict with each other. I do not intend to make an appraisal of Hutcheon's work. Rather, my focus is on the political application of the postmodern methodology of difference, the decentering of multicultural Canada, and the revision of defining Canada as a country of immigrants. One nation, but of a multicultural origin; in this way Canada comes to terms with her colonial past and multicultural present. In a way, this is a rediscovery of Canada. With this newly adjusted identity, Canada, conscious of her marginality and being overshadowed by America, takes

* 原文〈借道後現代主義的多元文化觀：側看 Linda Hutcheon 以及加拿大文學〉(Multiculturalism via Postmodernism: A Slant View of Linda Hutcheon and Canadian Literature)，發表於一九九七國際加拿大學術研究研討會，四月二十五日—二十七日，台北及新竹。本文為修定稿。

* 感謝劉紀雯老師批評及借書，陳界華老師借書，李怡珊小姐幫忙打字，以及梁耀南老師再三催稿。

Canadian Culture and Literature. And a Taiwan Perspective

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1998 ISBN 0-921490-10-0

an eminent place in international society. The process Canada has gone through is an inspiration to Taiwan, a country that desires international recognition and visibility.

壹 前言

各個不同的潮流有各自發展的歷史因素和背景，但是相互之間又有許多交錯、折衝的關係，也脫離不了世界局勢、物質大環境的影響，不會是孤立的現象。討論多元文化的議題，牽涉到許多實際作法，如多元文化教育、多元社會的建立等，其理想是，想像一個多元文化的環境，主流文化與其他文化共處，從中獲得更豐富的生活，更開放的經驗。以美國的六零年代而言，社會運動風起雲湧，多元文化是因應人權運動、女性運動、少數族裔的要求。作法之一，如多元文化教育的改造，改訂必讀的經典書單，納入文化的弱勢團體和非主流族群，反省「早已作古、白人、男性」所建立的傳統。

多元文化基本上是一個自由主義的實踐，這樣的理想有時候流於一廂情願和表面，多元文化的衝突問題可能蓋過和平共處的美夢。大家很容易有多元文化的粗淺經驗，吃民族風味的食物，看原住民的歌舞，參加族裔的慶典。若要真正深入了解，進而接納共處，各自根深蒂固的傳統其間的差異，是很大的鴻溝。真正能夠產生改變，創造意義的，是在深層的探索，必須面對異質文化的刺激、傷痛的擦撥、自我保護的本能、利益的衝突、認同的危機，甚或是靈魂的分裂等等重大問題。

這一次的加拿大學術研究研討會以多元文化為主要議題，本文擬定在理論的層次從後現代的思想，以探討多元文化的觀念，其中有旁涉到政治、權力的關係，則以後現代與後殖民論述做比較，而這些探討的方向以 Linda Hutcheon 做為具體的探討例子，並探討加拿大多元文化作為一政治策略的作法。Linda Hutcheon 的學術生涯持續發展，從形式主義到多元文化的主張，看似歧異很大，實又相謀合，這一貫的發展，依據的是後

現代主義的軌跡，本文即依循 Hutcheon 的後現代主義、加拿大文學、多元文化三者的相互影響和衝激，觸及由這樣的模式建立的國家認知，以及其特性和作用。

從後現代來思考多元文化，並不代表多元文化就是後現代的產物，而是站在後現代的理念來思考多元文化，Linda Hutcheon 初期的學術研究以後現代研究為重，進而結合對加拿大的現實的關心，而探討多元文化和移民、殖民以及後殖民的問題。在西方學術界，後現代先得到熱烈討論並獲得承認，之後文化研究逐漸抬頭，蔚為主流。以台灣而言，西方學術的走向是最主要的影響，大致追隨歐美的發展，加以後現代的差異政治和離散學說是比較基層的理念、模式探討，對現實的政治、個別的環境、具體的事件的衝擊和檢討比較輕微，而後殖民的尖銳問題，涉及族群、國家、認同，公開討論的時機較晚，後現代先行鋪路，有一定的分合作用。至於多元文化在台灣還沒有真正受到重視，停留在各自為政，零星的探討。在此討論加拿大的多元文化發展及辯論，限定在多元族群的範圍，提供不同於美國多元(族群)文化的歷史發展和解釋模式。

後現代的討論本身有很大的歧異，有的把後現代視為繼現代之後的階段，有的以哲學的立場討論後現代性，有的闡述後現代主義的形式和模式，有的強調「後」現代，有的則是後「現代」。本文用後現代涵蓋這些範圍，討論屬於後現代的，或有關後現代的議題。在實際的事務關聯上，後現代可能是美學前衛但政治保守，可能是政治基進的姿態，也可能是資訊社會、消費文化的代稱，無論是怎樣的意識形態或價值體系，後現代都代表一個新型的態度或模式，可以好也可以壞。¹

- 1 後現代有許多面相，以台灣的文學、藝術為例，粗淺的來說，林耀德的現代詩擁抱後現代的科技文明和都會意象，而鍾明德的後現代主義是一個後現代政治劇場，以簡單、手工、共同製作的形式，表達民間議題，走向街頭社區。兩者南轅北轍，但都具有前衛或前進的姿態。

加拿大多元文化牽涉到加拿大對內、對外的族群關係的結構改變，和後殖民的潮流很密切。在此先澄清後現代和後殖民的關係，兩者有相符合和相悖離之處。後現代討論的邊緣、弱勢比較抽象，後殖民的議題很明確，是從族群、國家的發展直接引發。論者的立場，有的兼採兩方，有的堅持後殖民，敵視後現代，尤其以馬克思主義的立場，將後現代視為後期資本主義的文化現象，或是第一世界文化帝國主義的流播，對後現代採取激烈的批判立場。

一般而言，會同意 Helen Tiffin 所說的後現代比較沒有在表面上直接處理政治問題，而後殖民直接以政治為訴求，批判現存的權力、社會結構。然而後現代又是主流的文化、知識論述，足以左右後殖民世界，甚至後殖民國家的文化生產 (Adam and Tiffin 1)。這之間有些基本衝突的地方，如後現代挑戰自主、統一的主體概念，而後殖民則尋求建立或修補受扭曲、挫敗或被迫放棄的主體。而後殖民地區也有視後現代是歐美強勢國家的產物，以後期資本主義為經濟基礎的帝國霸權的新保守主義，將全球普遍同質化。

Hutcheon 也注意到這些差異，以及後現代在政治作用上曖昧的可能。而她認為後現代與後殖民接近的地方是對歷史的再思，強調和過去的折衝，面對歷史、政治與社會造成的狀況，改變現代主義對歷史拒斥的態度。後殖民特重對殖民歷史的檢討，重審歷史，重估價值，改寫殖民歷史，也呼應後現代肯定地方性及殊異性，去中心，凸顯邊緣的論述。另外後現代與後殖民有類同的表現模式，如魔幻寫實，將真實與想像並置 (in “Circling”)。

Hutcheon 談到加拿大的地位，指出加拿大作為一個國家，從未在文化或政治上居於中心過，深深感覺處於邊陲的次級地位 (“Circling” 171)。加拿大本身獨特的背景包括東西部的差異，西部猶深感處於殖民狀態，而東部的魁北克也不認同英語勢力。另外 Hutcheon 也沒有忘記，這些主流的白人，當初也是殖

民者，所以談起後殖民的時候，不能和西印度群島、印度、非洲等第三世界地區完全相提並論。Hutcheon 說，在加拿大談及後殖民狀況，鮮少是針對原著民而言，就歷史而論，談後殖民更應該是屬於原住民的權利 (171)。²

當日的殖民者重新看待自己與殖民國的關係主要是從加拿大後殖民的角度，加拿大對外的後殖民思潮洶湧及動作明顯應以此觀之。原住民輪不到主控後殖民論述，原住民在加拿大主要放在多元文化的範疇在內部來調整。而今天的加拿大各地新移民的湧入，形成三角關係，原住民、舊移民、新移民，是現今的加拿大多元文化所要處理的問題。

貳 從後現代到多元文化

Hutcheon 是位比較文學學者，文學閱讀廣泛，並涉獵各類藝術形式和許多文化議題。就後現代主義作為文化現象而言，Hutcheon 特別重視其政治層面，這和 Fredric Jameson 以及 Terry Eagleton 說法正相反，後兩者視後現代主義為保守的文化形式，忽視對歷史與政治積極的介入 (ahistorical and apolitical)，而 Hutcheon 則特別發揮後現代主義的政治可能性。後現代有相當複雜的淵源和歧異的面相，就其大要有強調自覺、差異、解中心、小敘述取代大敘述等，這樣的取向和幾個政治與文化運動很快就互相激盪匯流，女性主義、後殖民主義、多元文化觀都從後現代獲得不少的動能。Hutcheon 運用後現代在具體的文化政治上，強調差別政治 (politics of difference)，挑戰既定的權威

2 Diana Brydon 對這一點有意見，她認為 Hutcheon 這種說法是掉入後殖民論述的「貨真價實論」陷阱，殖民的東西既然是外來的，只有原來的東西是真的。我認為 Hutcheon 的重點不在於貶抑加拿大的主流後殖民論述是假貨，而是警覺到不分緣由的「後殖民」訴求會掩蓋一些重要的差異。基本上 Brydon 不苟同後現代主義。《Past the Last Post》一書為劉紀雯老師所建議。

和故有的統一論述，揚棄表面的和諧一致，致力挖掘受掩蓋住的差異。

Jameson 和 Eagleton 看不到後現代主義直接對政治及社會議題有因應的主張，或對理想未來的追求，Hutcheon 則強調並凸顯存在於後現代主義基本論述裡的政治性格。後現代主義的政治潛力在於拒絕啟蒙主義以降對普遍性的訴求，不滿意建立於普同真理為基礎的人性說(humanism)，以及建立於超驗的理性的主體說，具體的主張可見於 Lyotard 意欲以小敘述取代大敘述，以及 Foucault 致力於將關切的方向轉移到那些局部的、不連貫的、不合法度的知識。「正統」的知識有一套完整一致的理論體系支持，這樣的體系不斷的過濾、分化、歸類、排等第、比高下，以科學或真理之名，將不合體系的存在，打成「異端邪說」，或是不得現身的「他者」地位，後現代則暴露出潛藏在現代性中的專橫和獨斷。本文援引的後現代，以這個面相為主，所以商品化、物化的後現代另有討論的脈絡，不在本文範圍。³

多元文化的政治訴求是打破優勢支配文化獨霸的局面，在後現代主義理論找到知音，相對於主流文化的弱勢文化，對「他者」的地位有切身之痛。後現代主義從理論出發，對「他者」的探討，在於視「他者」為一個空白的地位，以作為批判的立論點，但沒有具體指明現實世界中誰是他者。「他者」是一個

3 劉紀雯老師認為 Hutcheon 是將後現代當作一個時代階段來看待，Lyotard 討論的重點是後現代情境，後現代情境可以在任何時代發生，後者的觀念不完全適用於前者。Hutcheon 探討的興趣在於當代文學及藝術，其創新形式(如 historiographical metafiction)、技巧、內涵以及和時代的關係(諧擬 parody，反諷 irony)，出入美學、政治與歷史。可以說 Lyotard 偏重後現代性，Hutcheon 偏重後現代主義。後現代性和後現代主義是後現代階段的顯學、主流，後現代的階段使得後現代性和後現代主義得到充分的討論和建構，也反過來定義時代，這是我對後現代這個廣泛的詞彙的理解。

虛位，可以理解為主體裡受壓抑的部份，也可以理解為現實世界裡因性別、性取向、族群等因素而受壓抑的人，可依據不同的運用，填補不同的內容。以多元文化的角度而言，他者就是優勢支配族群以外的弱勢族群、少數族群、移民族群、原住民族群等。不過他者的地位並不就保證免於本質主義的陷阱，也並不就保證道德的正當性。他者一樣可能自視完整穩定而排他，而重蹈支配者的覆轍。後現代給予他者一個發言的地位，但不保證其穩定。

Lyotard 闡述現代與後現代的關係，說後現代反而很弔詭的應該是在現代之前的情境，是事物初初發生尚未進入系統；尚未受現代理性馴化之前的狀態。Mark Poster 持類似的看法，視後現代處在一個初生探索的地位，感應、記錄著社會的變局。後現代的特點就是，致力於鬆動已無自覺的傳統，讓「他者」有機會冒現，衝擊僵硬自滿的體制，並恆常自覺的避免落入固著、體系化。

各種對後現代的批評也很激烈，有視之為現代的末流，頹廢爛熟，或對現代性的反動，瓦解理性的進程，或是現代主義求新的過度發展，一味無謂的新奇。無論如何後現代都帶著一個「反」的姿態；有些訴諸自我放逐或自我遺忘的作法，目的還是在唱反調。後現代不是過份就是不及，不是老熟就是夾生。因為抵制體制，是故悖離成熟與常態，後現代之後，勢必要訴諸「後後現代」，來收拾這個拆解後的局面。

回到 Hutcheon。借用康德意向性的說法，後現代沒有就政治、社會的改造提出批判，但其理論不乏政治性。Hutcheon 的著眼點就環繞著政治議題開發，她形容後現代主義對支配文化的批判是一「共謀式的批判」，位居雙重立場，必然的站在體系之內對體系展開顛覆。她把重點放在再現政治的考察，後現代主義把一向視為自然的事物化為非自然，將不假思索視之為自然的經驗，剝除其自然而然的假面，暴露其文化建制，顯示所謂天賦也者也是人為的。後現代主義於再現歷史時，不以為

有歷史的整體，對自以為事實的記錄，報以反諷的諧擬，並以後設或自我反射的形式拆解其脈絡，暴露其迷思，把過去夾帶入現代，凸顯沒有純然的過去。後現代的語彙是「雙重編碼」(double coding)，打破真實與虛構，歷史與小說，語文性與影象性，公共與私有領域的界限。是雙向的，既保守懷舊，又基進革新，既訴諸大眾品味又別具深度意涵。這是後現代特有的策略，透過這樣的方式致力將定論瓦解，解除中心。這些論點都反覆在 Hutcheon 幾部後現代主義的著作出現。

Hutcheon 在《後現代詩學》探討後現代文學形式的著作裡，就已經標明後現代形式的政治性，她說：「我稱之為後現代主義的形式基本上講的是矛盾和對立，和歷史脫不開關係，而必然是政治的」(4)。Hutcheon 指出後現代主義形式的主要特色是「後設」，在寫作的過程中暴露自身的架構和形成，充滿高度的自覺，反諷的諧擬，和歷史的指設。後設是雙重編碼，使用成規，又暴露成規的運作，是體制的一部份，又對體制質疑，是為共謀的批判。後現代藝術在現實世界中的政治作用，是從藝術的層次，導向社會和眾多勢力的交匯消長。

在 Hutcheon 看來後現代裡沒有超然的地位，所有的再現活動都和意識型態、語言模式緊緊的牽扯在一起。一九八零年代，政治運動的關懷產生鮮明的政治強調點：性別、種族和族群；身處邊緣的團體和個人，在後現代理論找到支持，如對主體的解構，和對他者的關注，弱勢者用以彰顯自己的獨特性、差異和價值(Best 205)。從這樣的後現代立場和政治運動的合流，Hutcheon 給自己的定位是：加拿大人、女性、義大利移民後裔、使用英語的學者(*Canadian Postmodern* viii)。她說：「要釐清定位的衝動是很重要的……而且是後現代的」(viii)。從這樣的位置發言，意味著發言人的審慎和自覺，並蘊含著政治出擊的預設。

後現代的自我定位，自覺的強調有限，拒絕普世皆同的概念，給予加拿大一個重新出發的機會，和發展的空間。加拿大

自感於身處國際邊緣的地位，一方面自省，對從前建立的秩序、身份反省，一方面借力使力，搭上後現代大唱「反」調和「解」調的陣勢，翻轉目前的局勢。傳承也者，不再是自然而然的理所當然，而是把歷史的縱深攤到表面上來，讓過去掩蓋住的齟齬彼此面對面，嘈雜、喧囂、缺乏火候是後現代難免的特徵，而對 Hutcheon 而言將後現代的政治性表面化，且與藝術連結，是她作為一位後現代學者刻意的抉擇。

國家的發展裡，分裂與矛盾一直都存在，但是在過去追求的認同政治裡，有意的壓抑不同。以後現代的基礎，來想像一個國家，國家的典範從純粹國家的概念降階鬆弛，成為多樣的組合，從神聖超越的凝聚，蛻變到有限度的矛盾聚合體。另外從多元文化的角度而言，多元文化調整國家的認定和組成，以容忍取代排他。多元文化國家是一個低姿態的訴求，降低現代國家主義的霸氣，以及帝國主義的潛在可能性。

以加拿大而言，Hutcheon 指出後現代的差異政治別具意義，加拿大的歷史曲折，矛盾明顯易見，在後現代的脈絡裡，統一的國家此概念受到挑戰，加拿大轉而珍視自己特殊的構成背景，凸顯多元文化為加拿大的特點，繼而重新定義加拿大的國家意義，以便有別於其他國家，尤其是美國 (*Canadian Postmodern ix*)。Hutcheon 的學術事業，結合後現代的政治性和加拿大多元文化文學，是加拿大這股改寫國家認同／身份的行動之一。

參 加拿大多元文化與文學

根據 David Stouck 《加拿大主要作家》 (*Major Canadian Authors*) 的說法，加拿大文學很晚才有國家的體認，而實驗性作品和移民文學更晚才進入文學主流。加拿大文學事實上絕對不會一致，因為一國雙語，但是英屬加拿大和魁北克都同樣對遼闊的疆土、殖民問題(包括魁北克受制於英屬加拿大)，和嚴格的宗教等主題同樣關心 (298-99)。

加拿大文學發展遲緩，因為加國持久且艱辛的拓荒歷史，稀少的人口，以及長期的殖民地地位 (299-300)，二十世紀二零年代才有 Lorne Pierce 的 *Makers of Canadian Literature* 的加拿大作家系列，奠定加拿大文學研究的基礎。Pierce 具有浪漫精神，並有強烈的國家感，矢志推廣加拿大文學及文化 (301)。二零年代情況有所改變，加拿大文學力求因應國際的標準，放眼世界的文學潮流，此態度可見於 A. J. M. Smith 論加拿大的詩歌和 E. K. Brown 編纂的加拿大詩選，效法 T. S. Eliot 和後期的 W. B. Yeats 的現代主義詩風，這樣的作法一直延續到四零、五零年代，但為 John Sutherland 批評為英國標準的文化殖民。六零、七零年代 Northrop Frye 獨領風騷，影響加拿大文學研究的主要方向 (301)。同時加拿大越來越自覺自強，想法也益趨複雜，有關加拿大的興趣日增，有 Frank Davey 的資料彙編，導讀 1960 年以來較實驗性的作品，又 Robin Mathews 從國族主義和社會主義觀點探討加文學與政治的關係 (302-3)。八零年代，其它國家對加文學的研究興趣高漲，加學者在美國任教，加文學進入美國及部份歐洲大學課程，世界文學開始納入加拿大作家 (304)，以上為加拿大文學研究簡史。

根據 Northrop Frye 的意見，加拿大文化在 1960 年以前是不成熟的，算不上是一個社會，只能算是個地方，供給物產資源，先是服務大英帝國，而後是美國。加拿大是個移民殖民地，不像印度、非洲、南美受到的壓迫嚴重，也因此面對英帝國時，自我的意識不那麼強烈，同時沒有經歷像美國一樣的一場獨立革命，而缺乏強烈的自我命運塑造的自覺。換言之加拿大沒有經歷一場國家的誕生，就開始以國家的身份上路，導致前後的身份模糊不分明 (qtd. in Hutcheon "Eruption")。1971 年 Frye 寫的文章說加拿大是世上唯一剩下的純粹殖民地，經濟地位如此，心態尤其如此 (qtd. in Hutcheon "Eruption")。後殖民時代的加拿大面對「兩個加拿大」的挑戰，雖然 1867 年就已經制訂一國雙語、雙文化，但是到 1970 年代，英屬加拿大才醒覺後殖

民的態勢，正視魁北克的寧靜革命和大量的魁北克文學要求脫除殖民狀態的呼聲(“Eruption”)。

這一波的多元文化更擴大，對加拿大人更密切、真實，全面正視他們的移民背景，大部份的加拿大人都能夠很容易的追溯出他們所來自的地方，世界那個地方出了新聞，都可以看到有加拿大人密切的注意家鄉的事件，媒體也熱切追蹤他們對老家事件的反應。但是這一波多元文化文學的潮流裡，印地安原住民伊奴族相形顯得沈寂，原住民的口傳文學傳統經過翻譯或改寫，大多面目全非，而能以歐語寫作的知名作家又太「白化」，博取主流的接受。

「多元文化」，一個代表進步、開放的詞彙，這樣的理想是不容反對的，但是這個名詞包裝下的內容值得細究。本文討論的多元文化，指的是不同族裔的文化，以前支配的主流族群不是不知道其它族群文化的存在，但是優勢文化相對他文化的關係是封閉的，對他文化的認識是帶著偷窺的眼光，對奇風異俗、古怪的儀式、陌生的傳統感到好奇，以異國風味視之，不是過度貶抑，就是過度美化，其認識往往偏執或失焦。提出多元文化並無法翻轉主流/邊緣的地位，但是多元文化的訴求，促使不同文化間的互動重新檢討，自覺到主流與邊緣的權力位置及宰制關係，並且打開單方面掌控解釋權的局面，調整成雙向的流動，將焦點從主流文化單方面的主觀願望和觀看，轉移至他文化的自我定位和處理邊緣地位的經驗。多元文化代表的是符號的連結(hyphenation)，在國家的身份之前連結一族裔的身份，意味著多元主義(pluralism)、容忍、流通、契合，也意味著衝突、緊張和對立。

Hugh MacLennan 寫過一部小說《兩個孤寂》(*Two Solitudes*)，而今 Hutcheon 和 Marian Richmond 合編《其它的孤寂：加拿大多元文化小說》(*Other Solitudes*)，代表加拿大英法兩大族群以外的小說創作。Richmond 在前言中說加拿大文化很早就是馬賽克拼貼，但是「多元文化」這樣的說法在五十年

前還是未曾聽聞，多元文化小說這樣的書也不會為人看重，1940年代加拿大官方還是只認定兩種文化，英、法兩族裔，時至1988年七月才正式通過加拿大多元文化法案。

《其他的孤寂》探討加拿大其他種族的小說創作，處理移民經驗、種族歧視、和族裔的多樣性，就如 Margaret Atwood 說：「我們都是這地方的移民，雖然我們都在此出生」(qtd. in "Preface")。以 Hutcheon 自己而言，本書初衷是要打破 Raymond August 所說的「那層加拿大式容忍的保護殼：只是接受但不關心」(1)。多元文化打開一個空間，以便社會的張力和文化的多彩多姿可以有所協調，理想與意識型態可以有所交會 (2-3)。全書以訪談方式呈現，並附帶作家作品節錄，作家有各族裔的代表，訪談者也分屬廣大的不同族群，兩者有時立場針鋒相對。這些族群的來處非常複雜，有來自加勒比海地區，有來自中東、東歐，有的是多次移民，從印度，到東南亞，到美國，最後落腳在加拿大。他們陌生、拗口的名字，反映了他們複雜的身世。這樣的一部書在加拿大是創舉，正視白人文學主流以外的作家，書中不諱言族群的衝突，以及創造多元文化社會的失敗之處，但又展示出目前的成果，體認到族群刻板印象化的惡果，以及這些在加拿大被視為「外國文化」的族群的孤立和異化，所以選集中代表的作品呈現出「孤寂」的移民經驗 (Irvine 145)。

儘管如此，《其他的孤寂》中表現出的姿態是擁抱多元文化的作法，凸顯加拿大近來對多元文化的醒覺，並要確立加拿大多元文化馬賽克的特性，強調加拿大式多元文化是「沙拉鉢」的特點，有別於美國式「民族大熔爐」的多元文化，沙拉鉢或馬賽克在互動中保持自己的面目，大熔爐最終是給主流文化同化。加拿大多元文化肯定多元族群對加國定位的正面意義，彰顯多樣的活力，成為其立國特色，(cf. Irvine 146)，以多元文化的訴求改變加拿大過去「蒼白」、白人當中的非主流國家的形象。加拿大標榜多元文化，以昭告世人加拿大是一個繁富有趣的國家。

這樣的行動，不只是民間多元文化力量的具體反應，且是官方有意的支持，此由本書答謝部份可看出政府單位的色彩，有政府出版機關的贊助，與總督本身的支持。如此創新的作法，而有官方的色彩，不免引起有些疑慮，唯恐被收編於體制之內，推銷官方版的多元文化。

無論如何，這裡可以確定的是加拿大朝野儘管對多元文化意涵與方案有所爭議，如魁北克的反彈聲浪就很大，多元文化已是加拿大的重大議題與共識，且形諸於「外」，在國際上自曝其「拼湊」性格，多元雜處，痕跡鮮明，不以消化差異為要務，而以馬賽克色塊為國家文化自擬。在移民國家當中，美國早已徹底完成獨立，建立起強力的統一國家形象，其內部矛盾不礙其國際的單一性格。加拿大形式上以及實質上脫離殖民相當緩慢，現在加拿大轉而將缺乏強力國家形象的地位，化為自身的資產，以多元取代統一。同樣的情況也見於澳洲。若將後現代定義為「差異並存的狀態」，那麼馬賽克多元文化的國家模式，趨近一個後現代國家，在現代國家與後國家之間，國家的形態在經歷種種調整。

整體而言，Hutcheon的說法和作法遊走邊界，但是沒有越界。這是加拿大的再發現，被立場轉移的新的人口學所打開的一個空間 (Golfman 176)。多元文化對文化認知的改寫，有如小敘述對大敘述的挑戰。多元文化挑戰的是將大文化視為唯一的文化理想，為了大文化的光大久遠，其他文化成了註腳。多元文化文學訴說的是接觸與碰撞的悲喜，多元文化是交界的現象學，多元文化文學書寫這樣的經驗。

加拿大多元文化從國內的自覺發展成為國際的形象輸出。在內部的挑戰是弱勢文化爭取優勢文化的正視，重點擺在連字符號之前的他種文化指標；在國際舞臺上，連字符號之後的加拿大卻又變成一個共同身份，必須受到強調，所以連字號的兩頭有既是連結又是緊張的雙重關係。國家的定義與再定義是一連串折衝的結果，連結符號的作用在調整焦點，是可以左右移

動的，加拿大並未全面被改寫，亦未必被取代，但是加拿大這個意符的意涵隨之擴充。觀看歷史，檢視國家建立的基礎，並前瞻未來，從而建立的國家身份，用以解釋自己何以存在和因何存在。這當中有策略問題，有權力意志的伸張，有勢力的傾軋，但根本的需要是一個想像力，這想像力是容忍力的積極延伸，能夠脫離自我侷限，站出來觀看自己與他者，想像國家可以是另一等模樣，而非從來就是這樣。觀看分裂的自我，並且在國際如此讓人觀看，從而肯定自己存在的模式，是這次加拿大學術研討會所隱含的目的之一。

肆 文化建構與文化交流

加拿大多元文化的辯論裡，政府的作為受到部份論者的質疑。作家 Neil Bissoondath 擔心官方的多元文化政策有一手操作之嫌，然後廣為推銷，造成虛假的文化商品流行。文化商品化就是將文化物化，可以拿來展示、操弄，可以拿來仰慕、買賣，當然也可以拿來忘記，導致錯亂不實的認識和自我定位，甚至流為鄙俗的樣本 (Golfman 176, 178)。

Bissoondath 的顧慮是有道理的，多元文化和馬克思主義、女性主義等等理念一樣，都很容易就被庸俗化，為其他目的所利用。加拿大多元文化的現實場域充滿各種勢力的較勁。身為局外人無從置喙誰是誰非，但是我想從另一個角度來看待「造作文化」這個行動。Bissoondath 用的字眼是造作(fabrication)，造作有造假杜撰的可能，因為「造作」是有意的行為，有人為和加工的成分。對於虛偽的捏造固然要搭伐，但是對造作的概念卻不必全然抹煞。以後現代的認知來看，造作有另一層次的意義，文化理念有可能是個共識，但並沒有因此有絕然超越百世不易的地位，在文化的領域裡所有自然或當然的事物，都是將共識形成的過程有意或無意的遺忘，抹除造作的痕跡。目前加拿大多元文化社會是否虛構的假象是一個實踐的問題，我想導入純粹討論文化建構的問題。

後現代的造作觀是一個建構的說法和本質說針鋒相對，Ernesto Laclau 在討論後現代理論的政治意涵時，提出的說法是：後現代為現代劃限度，沖淡根基論(foundationalism) 的執著。他對根基的看法是：若認定社會的結構有一個終極的基礎，那麼政治討論只能在這個地平打轉，並有待於外在的「事實」來驗證討論的正確性；而建構論並不預設一個正確不移的根本，那麼政治討論變得非常關鍵，可以塑造社會現實。社會也者，從而可以了解為討論的文本，在這個層次上，人們可以藉由討論來建構他們的現實 (341)。

Richard Kearney 討論後現代性和國族主義，認為國族主義有階段性的貢獻，但是在過渡到後現代的社會裡，國家的形態、身份和認同受到挑戰，並藉著歐洲國家關係的變動觀察後國家的發展。後現代批判所有既存的中心權力：理性、本源、顯有、主體、認同、統一、結構；現代的國族主義自然也可以是後現代理論檢驗的對象，現代國家所預設的總體式的國家認同，受到後現代理論的批判，後現代情境暴露現代國家形成的歷史裡，壓不住的異質的痕跡。

從建構說來考慮國家身份和認同的形成，旨在拆解國家建構的過程，並從基礎、認知和定義再度書寫，開放改變的可能性。改變既有，不是顛倒上下的階層，化臣服為支配，成為新的宰制關係，而是調整支配與臣服為雙向的關係，改變支配優勢文化的單向建構，以共同參與、討論、書寫，改變優勢的支配文化所寫定的國家意義和文化內容。Hutcheon 的加拿大多元文化文學，以後現代的肯定差異為基礎，從中心轉移到他者文化的介入，集體的文化自我再造，其政治作用之一，即尋找加拿大的新意涵。

Edward Said 提醒後殖民狀況，注意同是被殖民的地位也有差異：「被殖民者」所指涉的很可能是很不一樣的東西，在很不同的地方，在很不同的時間，雖然都是次等的地位 (qtd. in Hutcheon "Colonialism" 7)。多元文化肯定差異，而差異中的差

異，是可以再細談的問題。一方面後現代理論的差異並沒有止境，以差別為主要考慮，要仔細劃分的話，可以永遠分不完。多元文化的差異無法延伸無限的差異，而是在特定、有限的差異裡結盟，重要的任務是在保證基礎的活絡，建構的開放，身份與認同沒有被釘死的憂慮。

另一方面，多元文化論述的進行，不免和所有差異論述一樣容易傾向二元論述，形成主流文化和邊緣文化的對話，訴說差異的對象局限於主流文化。邊緣之間的差異，有時候甚至大過於和主流文化的差異，但所有的不同文化都納入同一邊，和主流文化相對多元文化實為邊緣文化的「美稱」。多元文化也和其他差異論述的政治作用一樣，差異的一方可能有其他更大的差異訴求，準乎此，多元文化在乎的差異是族群的中心與邊緣地位所造成的支配與宰制的關係。不同的結盟做不同的事，邊緣人所做的就是爭取有作用、實質的存在，多元文化文學書寫和多元文化論述，增添文化的材料和變數，在內部和統一純粹的大文化周旋，使中心不再就是全部，使支配優勢文化不再以單一模式強加諸其他文化之上，掩蓋住其差異不同，而是共同詮釋其共處的團體。

「交流」是多元文化文學的必要條件，多元文化文學是跨族群的寫作和閱讀。書寫跨族群的經驗是多元文化文學的主要內容，此道理顯而易見，而跨族群的閱讀和討論尤為重要，寫出來的東西在自家人當中流傳不算，例如，台灣人有許多留學生文學，台灣人自己看，算不得自家的或人家的多元文化文學。多元文化文學影響了國(家)語文學的學門，逸離偉大文學的傳統，或是換一個說法，有別於國家大傳統的經典文學，一向國(家)語所主導的文學概念和國家文學認定受到挑戰，也有了新的文學組合基礎，如華裔文學、移民文學、後殖民文學、國協文學、新英文文學等跨越不同語文的寫作或來自不同國家的出品。

多元文化涵蓋社會、政治、經濟、文化各個現象，文學現象是其中之一，文學活動在這些現象中產生，以這些現象為基

礎，是一個上層結構，其交流與接觸需要更成熟的條件，前面的現象伴隨不同族群共同生活必然產生，多元文化文學需要這些活動的相當累積、沈澱和反省。誠然文學無能使事情直接發生，其利害關係是間接的，但是因為多元文化文學不必然與其他現象同時發生，多元文化文學的間接性成為該社會多元進化的重要指標。

多元文化書寫中，文學的創作活動又比記載活動有更深的意義，和上面的情況一樣，記載活動，如歷史資料、日記、尺牘等比較直接發生，而創作活動無論如何解構，都是一個有機的形式，有其部分自主性，是 semi-autonomous，有其建構的世界，建構的感情。從反映、記載、抒發到建構是一跳躍，身在現實世界中，又塑造一個文學中的世界，既在其內又在其外，這樣的文學世界一樣不必然存在，不必然成形，文學創作活動的可貴也就在於另外一個空間的開創，這不是我們實在居住其間的空間，但又確實在其中活動。

由加拿大多元文化文學，到加拿大多元文化，到加拿大，我們看到一個想像拓展的空間，典範的轉移，從現代到後現代，在其中發掘改變的可能性，從辯論中尋求方向，Linda Hutcheon 是這個共同建構工程的一部分。

伍 後語

寫論文之初我曾問自己加拿大是什麼，第一個浮現的是楓葉，相信是加拿大自己成功創造出來的識別設計，但是加拿大已經不滿足這樣的框框，企圖走出舊有的刻板印象，此次加拿大學術研討會是具體的行動。除了楓葉以外，依次想到的是高緯度、美國之北(兩者都是受美國定義之事實及左右)，魁北克(歷史的特殊和獨立公投事件的曝光)，幾個城市名字(東邊的幾個會混淆，溫哥華不會，環太平洋的鄰近關係)。知道美華作家，但不知加華，涉獵過 Northrop Frye, Linda Hutcheon, Margaret Atwood，但只把他們當一般文學研究，不管他們的加拿大背

景。加拿大多元文化文學要打開的是這樣的一個刻板認知的局面。

在這個透過多元文化文學的補白，以重新認識加拿大的活動裡，以多元文化作為訴求，有別以往的國家文學的文化策略，相較以往美新處所「推銷」的「美國大作家牌」，霍桑、海明威等，多元文化別具意義。固然多元文化是當前熱門議題，像曾經過的存在主義、現代主義，但對台灣多元文化特別能夠訴求的著力點，華裔作家自然是關鍵，華裔作家居中拉住遙遠的兩邊，那是和大作家牌很不一樣的姿態，雖然大作家仍然是必要的，Atwood 還是不能缺席。

華裔加拿大作家的雙重身份，兩邊都不覺是外人，這個雙邊拉手的姿態，比之握手的(文化)政治作用更加曖昧。是互相召喚？互相得其所哉？以多元文化文學給加拿大定位，再回過頭來擁抱「加拿大」文學，二者的互相循環定義，相信也是加拿大方面本身尋求新定位，自我詮釋，以突破舊有刻板印象的策略。

後現代理論可以輕易轉化為文化政治挪用，後現代的差異，轉化為族裔的混雜，邊緣轉化為地方／地域，對傳統的解構轉化為殖民文化的退位。加拿大從地方出擊，標榜多元文化馬賽克，強調殖民歷史與移民社會，以後知之明來說，這些後現代狀況一直就在那裡，認知的調整使得問題能夠獲得承認並討論。

我在這次的研究裡討論後現代的理論，多元文化的實踐，多元文化文學的書寫，改造國家的認同基礎，其相互之間多重多邊的關係，而歸之於建構的說法，是一個比較折衷的看法。至於探入後現代理論的基進層次，做基進的運用，整個動搖國家的基本形式，全然跳出框框，做另類思考，以他種方式取代「不公不義」的現況，和革命理論結合，形成徹底的改造，那是對想像的至大考驗，也要對行動做最嚴苛的要求。最大的建設往往伴隨最大的破壞，固然沒有人應該天生為他者、邊緣、

弱勢，但也沒有人有權決定何人理應為新世界墊底，被「新文化」所革除。革命大不易，熱情與冷靜缺一不可。

台灣在多年的高壓政治鬆綁之後，攤開來的社會、文化、宗教、景觀、國土規劃無一不是大敘述退位後的後現代狀況，政治的爆發力也盡在於此。後現代沒有比較好，也沒有比較壞，而是一個出發點。台灣與後現代情境相當契合的地方是一個變字，台灣在轉變，快速變化，變得五花八門，變得眼花撩亂，台灣努力在變，要的不是固定現成的答案，不滿意已有的答案，台灣在碰撞自己的答案。變一直都在那裡，只是從底層浮現出來。變不是唯一的法則，但在當前是主調。在轉變的漩渦裡，套句 Emily Dickinson 的詩句：變是「我們所知道的天堂，我們所需要的地獄。」變革中狀況百出，給步向新紀元的台灣帶來最大的考驗，測試台灣的想像力是否夠強韌，能在前現代、現代、後現代、後殖民、多元文化種種問題與解決之間走出一條路來。⁴

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4 劉紀雯老師在這一點也有不同的意見。我原來只用「後現代」描述台灣的混亂現象，語意不夠清楚。我的著眼點之一是大敘述崩解後的台灣狀況，台灣的處境要從威權體制過渡到後解嚴來看待，有些問題更是現代性和現代化的問題。用後現代描述台灣，並不代表後現代是這些現象的根本原因，也並不代表台灣現在全面處於後現代階段。思考台灣可以從很多角度切入，後現代是其中之一。

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Multicultural Ambivalence in Marlyn's *Under the Ribs of Death*

To isolate the disparate ingredients of Canadianness and Un-Canadianness suggested in my title I use a definition of what it means to be a Canadian from an article on John Marlyn by John Roberts: "to synthesize the Old World and the New" (47).¹ The tragedy of Sandor Hunyadi — the protagonist of Marlyn's 1957 novel, *Under the Ribs of Death* — is that he accepts blindly the values of the New World while remaining distanced to those of the Old. As he remarks early in the novel, "when you're English it's the same as bein' Canadian" (24). This, of course, is a reflection of Canada before the advent of multiculturalism as official Canadian government policy.

The concept of multiculturalism is an extremely broad and ambiguous concept covering economics, political science, sociology, and history quite apart from the aesthetic overtones suggested by the component of culture. In the Canadian context, both in theory and in subject matter, multiculturalism is intrinsically related to immigration. In literary works in particular, authors ordinarily balance their perception of the ethnic culture of their heritage with that of their chosen or adopted country, Canada. Some feel nostalgia for the past; others optimism for the future, some look to find both. Still others are highly ambivalent, finding good things and bad things in both the land of their ancestors and in the New World of Canada.

Recent critical works on multiculturalism almost unanimously affirm that Canada is organized on a plan of cultural pluralism in contrast to the melting pot concept of the United States. The concept of the melting pot or assimilation represents an "effort to make all cultures adopt that of the mainstream" (Aldridge 30). In the process, minorities are theoretically accommodated into the essentially white, middle-class society. The contrasting model, cultural pluralism, "does not attempt to cast all people into the same mould, but allows minorities cultural independence within the framework of social and political

1 I would like to thank A. Owen Aldridge who read my draft and Steven Tötösy who supplied me with secondary material on Marlyn's novel.

conformity" (Aldridge 31). The distinction between assimilation and cultural pluralism is a relatively new one: after the pioneering steps taken by Canada, cultural pluralism now flourishes as a national policy in the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand. Before World War II, it was taken for granted in Canada that immigrants would be assimilated to the life style of one of the two cultural areas in which they settled, Québec or English Canada.

In English-Canadian literature early novels associated with multiculturalism assumed that amalgamation was the norm. Consequently, they were optimistic when the characters were successfully assimilated, pessimistic when they were not. Multicultural novels published within the last quarter of a century usually consider any ethnic background, not only the French or English, as equally valuable and viable and place this one ethnicity in competition with other groups and with the mainstream. John Marlyn's *Under the Ribs of Death* is written with a linear narrative and the characterization is fairly clear cut. The young protagonist, a twelve-year-old Canadian boy of Hungarian ancestry, attempts to conform to exigencies of the New World while his father clings to the moral and aesthetic values of the Old.

The title of this novel may seem harrowing or gruesome if it were more explicit, but as it stands it is so ambiguous that it conveys no precise image. It is based on an epigraph from Milton's *Comus*, that is also ambiguous, but suggests that a man's future may seem propitious, but actually be doomed to a sad end. But the application of the epigraph to Marlyn's novel is still not clear: Margaret Atwood refers to death in the title, but offers no further clue (154). Perhaps the title is intended to imply the pressure of capitalist society as leading to the death of individual hopes or aspirations. No critic as far as I know has wondered whether death in the title should be taken literally or whether it has a broader metaphorical significance. Beverly Rasporich, in an interview with the author, asked, whether he objected to his book being classified as "an ethnic novel of social protest or an immigrant novel" (37). While evading a direct answer, Marlyn replied that "the overriding element is not ethnic, but humanistic" (37). In this perspective, he indicated that the novel has a theme resembling Wordsworth's "The World is Too Much With Us," and that the philosophical dichotomy it presents is that "between humanism and blatant, rampant commercialism" (37).

In my analysis I will treat this novel from the perspective of nativism, the vertical mosaic, class, and the immigrant's dream. Further, I will compare the text with F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*. My reason for the comparison is thematic: Sandor follows the same path as Gatsby, but covers a much smaller distance. This is what gives the work its Canadian character — mistakes are on a smaller scale than in the United States, as are failure and tragedy. Gatsby is a mobster, a womanizer, and a big spender; Sandor is a mere hanger-on in a teenage gang, shows almost no interest in sex, and remains on the edge of

poverty throughout his development. Unlike more recent immigrants who take pride in their ethnicity, Sandor tries every means possible to erase any trace of his ethnocultural roots: by changing his Hungarian name into an English one "Alex Hunter," a name which suggests "Alexander the Great, conqueror of the world, and of the predatory hunting-and-killing stance Sandor feels success requires" (Atwood 153). His ethnic roots are considered as "foreign, dirty, poor, less than human" (Pivato 199).² Called a "Hunky" (the derogatory term for Hungarians originating in the tobacco growing areas around Delhi, south-western Ontario), Sandor feels ashamed to spell out his name in front of his class at school. Here the school nurse, librarian, and his friends make fun of his strange-sounding name. His self-hatred grows. Not only does he want to change his name, he also tries to ask his father to make the same change. His ethnicity becomes a hindrance, keeping him from moving upward on the social ladder. He is also harassed and taunted by the English children in his neighbourhood. Invited to attend a former neighbour's party, he receives a cold reception from the host and is ridiculed and bullied by a group of English kids. When he gets a part-time job of mowing the lawn for a rich family residing in a more affluent area of Winnipeg, he assumes the air of the English and calls himself "Alex Humphrey." He consistently speaks English instead of Hungarian. He even fantasizes that "his real father was an English lord. One day he would return and then this Joseph Hunyadi had better watch himself" (19), and the fact that the surname "Hunyadi" is the same name as that of the family that gave the Renaissance king, Matthias Corvinus, to Hungary is of no significance because Hungarian history is of no importance in Canada. Sandor's life, as one critic maintains, is built upon "illusions" that constitute "part of a larger myth of economic opportunity and social mobility (Roberts 41). He attempts to hide his ethnicity at a job interview (136). "Name changes," as one critic observes, are designed to "avoid racial discrimination, or to attract racial favouritism" (Craig 103). Sandor feels uncomfortable during his interview and thinks that the interviewer shows more interest in his family background and connections than in his business career and working experience and competence. He tries to evade questions on his family background but in vain. He is forced to reveal that "his parents are both living, that he had a younger brother, that his father is a watchmaker, and that they live on Selkirk Avenue" (136). As he is unable to hide his ethnicity, he admits to his real name Hunyadi and feels the "vowelled vulgarity of that last question, a vulgarity that seemed suddenly ineradicable and universal and that would plague him forever" (137). The burden of ethnicity follows him wherever he goes: at another interview, where he is taken for a German, the interview closes even before he has time to explain. He longs to

2 It is an open question whether we should consider an autobiographical parallel here: the author, John Mihaelovitz, changed his name to John Marlyn (see Kadar 76).

be English, which to him means wealth and no discrimination. As one critic describes Sandor's process of acculturation, Sandor "moves from a transitional assimilative position (name change, ethnic self-hatred, preference of English, attachment to the material values of the majority reference group etc.) to a deeper understanding of the meaning of his group identity and values" (Padolsky 615). Sandor's enlightenment, at best, is metaphorical:

He turned and saw a small brown beetle making its way along a leaf. The leaf gave way and the beetle fell to the ground, dropping on its back and waving its legs frantically. He watched it, absently at first, then with growing interest and at last with compassion, with a clear and terrible understanding of its plight. A strange feeling came over him. It seemed to him that if he helped it to get to its feet again, he too would somehow be helped. He scoffed at the feeling but obeyed its injunction nevertheless. It took but a flick of his finger. (210)

Sandor has a strong sense of regret towards the end of the novel and admits his wrongs and asks his father's forgiveness for disappointing him by not following his advice to receive education and to become a teacher instead of a businessman. For his father, success and wealth do not assume paramount importance. His expectation is that his son obtain a university education and become "a benefactor and a philosopher and one of them humanitarians he was always talking about would never be realized" (25). "You are ashamed of the wrong things, Sandor," he said. "It is shameful to be a money-chaser, to be dishonest, and to remain ignorant when the opportunity for learning is so great here. But to be ashamed of your name because you are Hungarian and are poor! When you grow up you will laugh to think that such things ever troubled you Do you understand, Sandor?" (25). Sandor eventually becomes economically self-sufficient, marries, and has a child, but abruptly all his capital is wiped out by the Great Depression. At the end of the novel, however, he seems to find a degree of spiritual satisfaction and hope in the company of his infant child. As Sandor looks at his son's eyes, he says, "But every child is unique. Therein lies the promise and the wonder. Ah, what these eyes will see! He will have thoughts no man ever had before" (219).

Recent criticism has seen in the novel an ethnic dichotomy between nativist and assimilationist forces. Nativism is an attitude of suspicion of foreigners, especially during wartime. In the Winnipeg of the novel this suspicious hostility was directed against East European immigrants. In the years after World War I, open animosity existed toward Germany and its allies, and Canadian patriotism meant being British. Although nativism has almost died out today, some traces of it are revealed in Joy Kogawa's 1981 novel *Obasan*. The contrary force of assimilation seeks to mould immigrants into the mainstream at the price of abandoning nearly all of their ethnic identity. Immigrants are often torn between the economic need to conform to the norm and loyalty to their ethnic

roots. Sandor, who wanted more than anything else to be accepted in the mainstream, nevertheless, bitterly complained that the only people who count are the English. Robert Thacker argues that the novel "debunks ... the stereotype of the immigrant joyfully casting off his old-world tradition to embrace those of the new" (34). It is true enough that Sandor experiences very little joy at any stage of his life, but neither does he reveal any regret or nostalgia for his heritage. It is his father who holds on to the traditional values. Sandor himself embraces the get-rich-quick at any cost philosophy of Canadian capitalism.

The notion of the vertical mosaic refers to the ascendance of ethnic immigrants in the economic scale and it belongs almost exclusively to Canadian sociology and literature. It obviously applies to the concept and structure of cultural pluralism rather than to that of the melting pot. One of the preliminary stages in the vertical progression is escape from the ghetto. Early in Marlyn's novel, Sandor rebels against the dirt and squalor of his Henry Street neighbourhood and threat of violence from the English street gang. He promises himself that one day "he would grow up and leave all this" (17). In this context, generational conflict is a further aspect of upward mobility, presenting a first generation clinging to traditional ways, the second and later generations accommodating to the new environment. Sandor's father clings to humanist and old-world values, whereas Sandor himself is willing to do almost anything, including lying and stealing, to attain economic success. In this he is no different from Mordecai Richler's Duddy Kravitz. Somewhat out of the pattern, however, he goes through another literary epiphany as a result of reading a Horatio Alger novel. In this context, Horatio Alger may be interpreted in two different ways: first, as an exponent of the get-ahead-in-the-world philosophy for its own sake (a philosophy that Sandor had adopted before reading Alger) and, second, as the proponent of honesty, hard work, cheerfulness, and moral fervour as necessary ingredients for success. Alger, however, has nothing pertinent to the immigrant class, and is, therefore, not entirely relevant to the mosaic pattern.

Another characteristic of upward mobility is the division of society into victims and oppressors. In the words of Tamara Palmer, "when the ethnic protagonists in the struggle ask themselves ... why Henry Street is their lot and why they find it so difficult to pass beyond it, they find the answers either in an outside villain or in themselves, and they often entertain both possibilities simultaneously" (638). And John Roberts has expressed the same paradox of victimization: "Sandor's alienation allows him to adopt the stance of a victim among his fellow victims. He accepts that English-Canadian way as a given, then argues that if the English hate foreigners the fault must lie with the foreigners" (43). Marlyn's interviewer Rasporich remarked in connection with the psychology of prejudice, that Sandor begins to feel that those Anglo-Saxons who do not hate him are really flawed." To this Marlyn replied, "a man is often more ashamed of his dirty socks than of murders" (39).

Social class as an element in multiculturalism is closely associated with economic affluence, but the two, nevertheless, are not inseparable. The Japanese victims in *Obasan*, for example, belong to the upper class by virtue of their education and artistic talent, but are levelled to a status of primitive existence because of wartime hysteria. From the cultural perspective Sandor's family belongs to the educated upper middle-class of Hungarian society. This is evident in several ways, such as Sandor's father speaking four languages and reading works of philosophy. The father, moreover, promises Sandor that he will go to university and Sandor himself wins a school prize in celebration of Victoria Day. However, Sandor's worst encounters with class distinction comes with his interview for a position in the commercial world. Instead of probing his experience and knowledge, the interviewer asks questions about his family and social connections.

A great deal of scholarship has been devoted to the myth of the American Dream as a major element in the immigrant experience. North America, including both the United States and Canada, has for three centuries been depicted as a Promised Land of comfort and economic prosperity. In mythological terms, it is portrayed as a wondrous garden of wealth and beauty. The garden theme is symbolized at length in the novel by Sandor's thought on first entering the garden of an estate where he had been offered a job. "It was as though he had walked into a picture in one of his childhood books, past the painted margin to a land that lay smiling under a friendly spell, where the sun always shone, and the clean-washed tint of sky and child and garden would never fade, where one could walk, but on tip-toe, and look and look but never touch, and never speak to break the enchanted hush" (64). Although Sandor soon overcomes his feelings and realizes that the garden is illusion and fantasy, he decides that it is the "real" thing. The garden becomes for him not only a symbol of his unrealized dreams but a promise of their attainment. "Sandor raised his head. It was true, a vast gulf separated this world from his, but he had spanned it; in one stride had crossed over to taste, to see, and forever to invest his dreams with the vision of it" (74; for an analysis of the American Dream as applied to Canada and Marlyn's novel, see Itwaru).

The myth of the American Dream is the connecting link between *Under the Ribs of Death* and *The Great Gatsby*. Gatsby in Fitzgerald's novel has essentially the same undistinguished background as Sandor, but he has considerably more success in climbing the economic ladder. The son of a Scandinavian family in South Dakota, he changes his name from James Gatz to Jay Gatsby because of the presumed aristocratic aura of the latter. He drops out of St. Olaf college — parallel to Sandor's poor performance in high school — and through a lucky accident becomes a combination of steward-secretary to a wealthy bachelor. Then he acquires a taste for the rich and well-born, comparable to Sandor's quasi-friendship with the young boy of the rich family. Gatsby becomes a

gangster and eventually acquires a fortune. This gives him a zeal for social respectability, which is increased by his encounter with a girl whom he had known briefly in his teens. He does everything in his power to win her affections, but fails because he does not have the "right" kind of money. Despite his outward success, he is denied entrance to the New Garden of Eden. The basic similarities in the two texts are name change, frustrated courtship, lack of social acceptance, and indictment of the American Dream. However, paradoxically Fitzgerald's novel ends with the demise of the protagonist, whereas in Marlyn's novel the protagonist is still alive and apparently still prepared to continue the struggle to climb the vertical mosaic, exemplified by Sandor's hopes in his son:

He shifted the child on his lap and, as he did so, his son raised his head and suddenly it was as though Alex were seeing him for the first time. He looked into his eyes, so widely and innocently open to his gaze that it shamed him to look so deeply into another human being. Yet he was filled too with a gladness, such as he had rarely known, because in those mild depths, it seemed to him, were all those things, miraculously alive, which he had suppressed in himself; stifled for the sake of what he had almost felt within his grasp, out there, over his son's head, out and beyond in the grey desolation. ... But every child is unique. Therein lies the promise and the wonder. Ah, what these eyes will see! He will have thoughts no man ever had before. (219-20)

According to Robert Thacker, "the implied illumination" in this scene "suggests a degree of spiritual awareness which is not consistent with Sandor's realized character": he is bright and pragmatic, but "has nothing but disdain for philosophical thinking and spirited matter" (33). Throughout the novel Sandor is "almost wholly calculating" concerned only with his place in English-Canadian society. But he is "never spiritually aware and, therefore, the ending Marlyn provides is not genuine" (33). John Roberts contends that Sandor "understands that his only future lies in his child who must be nurtured within the garden of the family. And he must have faith, for until he had faith his crisis would continue" (216). The contrary absurdist position, according to Roberts, "is based on a total lack of faith in both man and God. There is neither order nor purpose in life" (216). Rasporich agrees with this optimistic conclusion: "You do not leave your reader with emptiness, in the absurdist's void." Naturally, Marlyn concurs, "I can't leave my fiction with emptiness; it doesn't satisfy me. In Sandor Hunyadi you have a deformed father, but there is hope in the son, in the next generation" (40).

Margaret Atwood, however, fails to see this glimpse of hope and she summarizes the plot of the novel according to the major theme of Canadian literature, "survival": "Hero amputates himself spiritually in order to make it financially, fails anyway" (34). Sandor's son, moreover, fits Atwood's pattern of "The Great Canadian Baby" as a "literary institution," the "Baby *ex machina*" solving "problems for the characters which they can't solve for themselves" (207). In a sweeping generalization, Atwood affirms that "magic babies like this have a lot to do with the Canadian habit of predicting great things for the future

since the present is such a notable failure" (207).

All of these comments, concentrating on Sandor's character, take little or no account of the ethnic factor of the novel, which should theoretically be paramount in a novel presumed to be an exemplary text of multicultural literature. In the text, we find no evidence that Sandor had any attachment to his inherited ethnic or cultural tradition. Instead, he embraced whole-heartedly the get-rich-at-any-cost philosophy of his environment, which seems to have been a primary ingredient of Canadianness of the period. From this perspective of current multiculturalism, *Under the Ribs of Death*, like *The Great Gatsby*, is an indictment of the immigrant's dream of the New World as a garden of wealth and security.

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CECILIA H.C. LIU

Folding the Time-Space Continuum: Atwood's *Cat's Eye* as Chronotopic *Bildungsroman*

Readers who eagerly awaited Atwood's novel following the critically acclaimed and popularly championed *The Handmaid's Tale* were caught somewhat off-guard with the release of *Cat's Eye*. Although this novel was a *New York Times* bestseller, early critics and readers were not exactly sure what to make of Atwood's fictitious middle-aged painter who explores her own past through a retrospective speech act. Trying to understand Atwood's apparent downshift from a futuristic dystopia to what appears to be merely a midlife confessional narrative, Robert Fulford suggests that the novel represents an autobiographical introspection: "Obviously, she [Atwood] wants us to see her story as being in some sense autobiographical — certainly it's the closest to an autobiographical novel that she's given us" (18). Kim Hubbard approaches the novel similarly from an autobiographical perspective, pointing out the similarities between Elaine's and Atwood's family backgrounds (206).

Such readings, while understandably tempting, are clearly misguided given the abundance of Atwood scholarship and personal interviews describing her critical position. Throughout her literary career, Atwood has repeatedly denounced any attempt to interpret her work biographically. She maintains a critical principle which necessitates the separation between speaker and author, between fiction and her personal life (for a chronological survey of Atwood interviews, see Ingersoll). Atwood has always been and still remains an intellectually complex writer and this novel deserves a more sophisticated approach than the autobiographical considerations rendered by its reviews. Unfortunately, critics remain ambivalent toward *Cat's Eye*, and this becomes obvious by the lack of literary scholarship devoted to this novel, which in turn results in an unjustified dismissal of a structurally, socially, and politically complex piece of work.

With *Cat's Eye*, Atwood returns to the *Künstlerroman*, revisiting many of the themes and plots she has written in *Lady Oracle*. Both novels follow the development of a woman artist — Joan, a writer in *Lady Oracle*, and Elaine, a painter in *Cat's Eye*. Both novels start with frightful childhoods in which the

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1998 ISBN 0-921490-10-0

protagonists are tormented by their friends. As Joan and Elaine grow up and leave home, both become artists and live with patriarchal, European men. When these relationships fail, they marry younger men who at first seem romantic but later turn out to be dull and inane. Both of these *Künstlerroman*-s begin *in medias res* with the artist-protagonist experiencing a mid-life crisis which instigates a retrospective narration wherein the protagonist discovers the fragmented state of her identity and attempts to (re-)construct her subjectivity. However, *Cat's Eye* is not simply a retelling of *Lady Oracle* now from a painter's perspective. On the contrary, I think Atwood returns to the genre of the *Künstlerroman* in order to explore in greater detail its relationship to the process of self-construction, a relationship whose potential is not fully realized in *Lady Oracle*. Writing, indeed, plays a significant role in Joan's self-construction. Early in her writing career, Joan unwittingly constructs her identity in terms of the Gothic conventions structuring her novels. Writing also enables Joan to realize that she has been constructed by these conventions and by the expectations of her mother, her lovers, and her society. And writing finally empowers Joan to write herself out of these self-denying constructs and to write herself back into society on her own terms. Writing allows Joan to construct her subjectivity; but throughout the novel, Joan is not aware of the role writing plays in her self-construction. She does not fully realize how discourse first victimizes her and then liberates her. While Joan indeed begins the process of subjectivity, she is not aware of the extent to which her art influences this process.

On the other hand, Elaine in *Cat's Eye* is far more conscious of herself as an artist and of the power art possesses to effect change and development in the artist's life. Because Elaine consciously develops and pursues her art career, she does not become a victim of her art as does Joan who naively begins writing Gothic novels as a hobby only to be caught up in its discursive conventions. Throughout Elaine's artistic development, her drawings and paintings are self-revealing and self-constructive. Her art does not trap her within self-denying conventional constructs. Elaine does not need to deconstruct self-entangling conventions and then to re-construct her subjectivity as does Joan; instead, Elaine's development toward subjective self-construction involves rediscovering the life she has forgotten and incorporating this forgotten life into the matrix from which she can finally construct her subjectivity. Elaine must discover that her art can enable her to fold the space-time continuum so as to actively re-experience her childhood retrospectively from an adult's point of view. Elaine must dive through the layers of time, uncover the memories, feelings, and fears of her childhood which she has suppressed since she was nine years old, and re-surface with the historical components she needs in order to fill her spiritual vacuum and to initiate her self-creation.

This process of subjectivity begins with a journey back to childhood in the form of a narrative confessional. Bonnie Braendlin notes that "the prevalence of

first person narration ... invites consideration of the importance of recollection and reconstruction of memories for the search for selfhood in contemporary feminist *Bildungsroman*" (19). *Cat's Eye* exhibits a bifurcated narrative structure in which an older Elaine narrates her present "real" time experience as she returns to Toronto to host a retrospective showing of her art while episodically projecting herself back to her past. As the novel progresses, these two narrative tracts gradually converge, much like the illusion of two parallel lines which seem to connect the farther they progress forward, and the novel ends with a unified narrative and a unified Elaine who manages to integrate her past with her present. However, before Elaine can achieve this self-integration, she must re-experience the disjointed horrors of her past. As Richard Baultch states, "Our recourse [for self-knowledge], Atwood implies, begins with rummaging through our primal scenes of instruction, our childhood. Therein lie openings to understanding" (437). Elaine's understanding begins with her re-encountering and re-constructing the psychologically oppressive torments she endured at the hands of her childhood "friends." Cordelia, Grace, and Carol assume mock parental roles and incessantly criticize, correct, and pick at Elaine's clothes, her speech, her looks, and at how she plays, cruelly punishing her for any transgression against standards which they do not clearly define for her or for which they consistently change the rules. Elaine cannot escape their endless tauntings, for one of them is always watching her in class, in church, or on the playground, taking mental notes of all the "mistakes" she commits, mistakes that she does not even know are mistakes until she is punished:

Once I'm outside the house there is no getting away from them. They are on the school bus, where Cordelia stands close beside me and whispers into my ear: "Stand up straight! People are looking!" Carol is in my classroom, and it's her job to report to Cordelia what I do and say all day. They're there at recess, and in the cellar at lunchtime. They comment on the kind of lunch I have, how I hold my sandwich, how I chew. On the way home from school I have to walk in front of them, or behind. In front is worse because they talk about how I'm walking, how I look from behind. "Don't haunch over," says Cordelia. "Don't move your arms like that." (126)

Most disturbing is that Elaine cannot decide if these girls are her friends or her enemies. She believes them to be her friends, but it confuses her that these "friends" destroy her self-esteem by dictating what she can and cannot do, who she can and cannot be. As the mature Elaine notes, little girls are not the angels society makes them out to be: "Little girls are cute and small only to adults. To one another they are not so cute. They are life-sized" (124). Upon reexamining and re-constructing her childhood, Elaine begins to realize just how self-destructive these life-sized oppressive forces can be to a little girl's psychological and social development. As Cordelia continues to make Elaine believe that she is not normal, that she needs to be changed, and that Cordelia and the others

will help her improve herself, Elaine begins peeling the skin off her fingers and, later, tearing patches of skin off her feet. The casual observer may consider such behaviour a nasty, childish habit that will probably soon end or that can be eradicated later. In Elaine's case, however, this skin-peeling habit is a physical manifestation of her deep psychological scarring resulting from continued exposure to the self-deprecating messages showered on her by her "friends." These girls have constructed Elaine's identity as someone who is culturally faulty, socially inept, and her self-mutilating behaviour represents Elaine's psychological and emotional frustration at being constructed by powerful external forces without the opportunity to participate actively in her own self-construction: Elaine is constructed in terms of what Cordelia and the others want her to be. She feels that she must destroy this "false," inadequate self, to peel away the impurities in search of a more perfect person underneath. However, Elaine finds only blood and pain oozing out from the wounds Cordelia and the others inflict upon her identity.

The self-destructive oppressiveness of Cordelia and the other girls' attempts to purify Elaine become poignantly illustrated in the wringer image the mature Elaine conjures from her past. Elaine repeatedly escaped the childhood's torments by remaining indoors helping her mother about the house. One afternoon as she wrings the washed clothes, she contemplates what would happen if her hand were to be caught in the wringer: "the blood and flesh squeezing up my arm like a travelling bulge, the hand coming out the other side flat as a glove, white as paper. This would hurt a lot at first, I know that. But there's something compelling about it. A whole person could go through the wringer and come out flat, neat, completed, like a flower pressed in a book" (129). Elaine specifically remembers this particular incident because it not only speaks vividly to the self-deprecating influences Cordelia and the other children had on her as a child, but it also represents a harsh social critique of the patriarchal forces which trap women in self-denying and self-destructive domestic circles. These girls repeatedly try to "clean" Elaine's identity, to refashion her after their own definition of what she should be. These girls model themselves after patriarchal expectations which traditionally script women in domestic roles, and they try to force Elaine into this self-destructive social role using the same methods by which a patriarchal society enforces its rules for female behaviour. As a result, Elaine associates cleaning with a process not of self-improvement, but of self-denial. Cordelia's relentless efforts to correct, to clean Elaine's behaviour is ultimately deadly to Elaine's sense of self and to her psychological health, much like the "Javex bleach with a skull and crossbones on it, reeking of sanitation and death" (128).

Given the terrifying conditions of her childhood, it is understandable that death becomes an intriguing, even inviting concept to the little Elaine. Because Cordelia's torments do not leave physical scars like a black eye, Elaine feels alone in her suffering, as if she cannot tell anyone of her pain because the marks

are not physically confirmable (165). Elaine begins to feel totally isolated from human community and, as a result, begins to contemplate death as a possible source of escape from her tormentors: "I think about becoming invisible. I think about eating the deadly nightshade berries from the bushes beside the path. I think about drinking the Javex out of the skull and crossbones bottle in the laundry room, about jumping off the bridge, smashing down like a pumpkin, half of an eye, half of a grin. I would come apart like that, I would be dead, like the dead people" (165-66). If she cannot find solace with the living, perhaps the quiet, calm dead can provide the peace and escape from her psychologically tortured existence she so desperately desires. As do many women who feel helplessly trapped by menial, self-deprecating social roles within a patriarchal society, Elaine considers suicide as a way to release the choking grip of her oppressors.

Elaine almost receives this much desired escape at the ill-fated bridge scene. Because Elaine laughs when Cordelia falls down a snowy embankment one afternoon, Cordelia throws Elaine's hat into the stream. When Elaine climbs down to retrieve her hat, she falls through the ice: "The water of the creek is cold and peaceful, it comes straight from the cemetery, from the graves and their bones. It's water made from the dead people, dissolved and clear, and I am standing in it. If I don't move soon I will be frozen in the creek. I will be a dead person, peaceful and clear, like them" (199). Instead of finding peace in death, however, Elaine receives an epiphany which directs her toward a salvation she can achieve through life. From the coldness which soothes and caresses her body, a coldness which should be sharp and painful, comes an image of the Virgin Mary that tells Elaine she can go home. Her inner, personal strength finally takes shape in Elaine's mind; her own internal cat's eye, so to speak, becomes real for her. She finds the confidence and strength to be herself and to ultimately reject Cordelia and her taunting. She finally realizes that she can walk away from the pain: "I am still a coward, still fearful; none of that has changed. But I turn and walk away from her. It's like stepping off a cliff, believing the air will hold you up. And it does. I see that I don't have to do what she says, and worse and better, I've never had to do what she says. I can do what I like" (205). Elaine is no longer bound to her psychological torture. She is free. It would appear that Elaine has finally released herself from the self-deprecating, self-denying forces which have plagued her childhood. She has reached deep into her soul and found the internal, personal strength to believe in herself, to walk away, to take control of her own life. Unfortunately, the strength she discovers that afternoon in the ravine is not the strength to confront, but the willingness to avoid. Much like Joan in *Lady Oracle*, Elaine develops the keen ability to escape, to turn her back on her problems, to walk away, and to forget. While this early epiphany indeed opens Elaine up to her inner strengths, allowing her to walk away from her childhood and enter into her adolescent

years, it also transforms Elaine into a type of escape artist who, instead of confronting and solving her personal problems, suppresses the anxieties and fears in an attempt to forget instead of forgiving.

This newly gained power to forget becomes Elaine's next psychological obstacle on her quest for a powerful subjectivity. In the feminist *Bildungsroman*, Braendlin explains, "[women's] reconstruction and analysis of past experiences and present predicaments reveals to these women a disintegration of their personalities that thwarts daily functioning and causes misery and indecision" (19). In analyzing her own past, Elaine realizes that she has become an amnesiac who repeatedly suppresses aspects of her life in order to cope with this life's difficulties: "I've forgotten things, I've forgotten that I've forgotten them. I remember my old school, but only dimly, as if I was last there five years ago instead of five months. I remember going to Sunday school, but not the details. I know I don't like the thought of Mrs. Smeath, but I've forgotten why" (213). In this amnesiac state, Elaine loses significant parts of her past and thus becomes a type of lost soul. Consequently, Elaine identifies the Virgin Mary of her childhood epiphany as the Patron saint of Lost Things (210-11). As she selectively forgets parts of her past, Elaine becomes herself a lost thing, a nothing: "*What do you have to say for yourself?* Cordelia used to ask. *Nothing*, I would say. It was a word I came to connect with myself, as if I was nothing, as if there was nothing there at all" (43). The pain of her childhood is so great that Elaine represses even the memory of her pain, thus placing herself at risk of totally losing touch with her self. Her history becomes a disjointed series of empty gaps, of voids that do not allow her to construct an integrated self-awareness. When she returns to the bridge forty years later, she feels "as if something's buried down there [in the ravine], a nameless, crucial thing, or as if there's someone still on the bridge, left by mistake, up in the air, unable to get to the land. But it's obvious there's no one" (214). What is obvious, however, is that it is she who is buried down in that ravine, the forgotten aspects of herself; she is merely "Half a face," as the title of her painting suggests, and she must learn how to paint, to create the other half: "I need to fill in the black square of time, go back to see what's in it. It's as if I vanish at that moment and reappear later, but different, not knowing why I have been changed" (113). Elaine's task, then, is to confront this void, this repressed past and reconstruct it so that she can be someone in the future.

In order to recover these lost components of her self, Elaine must engage in what I call chronotopic retrospection. In his seminal essay "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel: Notes Toward a Historical Poetics," Mikhail Bakhtin borrows the notion of a chronotope from mathematics and Einstein's Theory of Relativity which "expresses the inseparability of time and space (time as the fourth dimension of space)" (84). For literary study, the chronotope is

the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature. ... In the literary artist chronotope, spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one carefully thought-out, concrete whole. Time as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history. This intersection of axes and fusion of indicators characterizes the artistic chronotope. (84)

In other words, the chronotope is a type of literary indicator or motif which assimilates temporal issues and spatial relations into an interdependent matrix that itself becomes a narrative centre around which meaning is created. As Bakhtin states, "The chronotope is the place where the knots of narrative are tied and untied. It can be said without qualification that to them belongs the meaning that shapes narrative" (250). The chronotope serves as an artistic intersection of time and space, a point in which time and space collapse into a singularity wherein the past, the present, and conceivably the future exist simultaneously. Atwood's narrative as a *Bildungsroman* can be considered a chronotopic retrospective which itself folds the time-space continuum into a personal singularity. Atwood begins her novel with an obscure discussion of the intricacies of time, noting that time is not linear but circuitous and fluid: "Time is not a line but a dimension, like the dimensions of space. If you can bend space you can bend time also, and if you knew enough and could move faster than light you could travel backward in time and exist in two places at once" (3). Indeed, Elaine's chronotopic narrative act allows her to bend space and time and to exist simultaneously in her adult present and in her childhood past.

This achieved singularity is best illustrated by Elaine's verb tense shifts. As noted earlier, the novel is a complex combination of two narrative levels: there is the older Elaine who is in Toronto for a retrospective of her art work, and there is the childhood Elaine whom the older Elaine describes in retrospect. Interestingly, however, Elaine does not maintain the past tense as she recounts her childhood experience; instead, she begins a past episode in the past tense and gradually, almost without the readers realizing it, shifts into the present tense. She effectively brings her past into her present and takes her present into her past, where she actually reexperiences her past as if for the first time. Through this chronotopic commingling, Elaine relives her past thus enabling self-construction. However, in order to accomplish this chronotopic space-time fold, Elaine must re-conceptualize time and space: "But I began then to think of time as having a shape, something you could see, like a series of liquid transparencies, one laid on top of another. You don't look back along time but down through it, like water. Sometimes this comes to the surface, sometimes that, sometimes nothing. Nothing goes away" (3). By joining the past with her present through narration, Elaine can complete her self-construction. Elaine's narrative act is itself a chronotopic journey into the pool of her imagination, of her subconscious, a pool made of layers of fluid time into which she must dive so

as to recover and integrate the missing parts of her past, and then surface with her subjectivity recomposed.¹

Central to the chronotopic elements of *Cat's Eye* and to Elaine's *Bildung* (education) is the artwork displayed in her Toronto retrospective and in Elaine's education and becoming an artist which lead her to create these painting chronotopes. While the development of the artist as a young man typically entails employing aesthetics in a god-like manner to recreate the collective conscience of his community — as is Stephen Dedalus' mythically declared quest at the close of Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* — the development of the woman as an artist, on the other hand, involves an introspective celebration of the act of artistic creation itself, a celebration of the sole individual's imagination and its role in the ultimate creation of the self — as Lily Briscoe comes to learn in Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*. In many cases, then, the woman's artistic development plays a vital role in that woman's *Bildung*: "The celebration of the imagination is the celebration of individual power over otherness, over an unknowable nature and a dissatisfying social world" (Hirsch 46). Elaine's development as an artist ultimately allows her chronotopic introspection which in turn grants her the opportunity to rediscover her past and to reintegrate this lost past into the process of her self-construction.

Elaine's artistic awakening begins early in her childhood with watching her father grade the students' drawings of insects. She liked best the cross-sectioned drawings which displayed the internal organs, and while her father criticized the drawings for lack of biographical accuracy, young Elaine judged them on their colour schemes (36-37). Later in high school, Elaine excels in dissection and the drawing of her dissections, not so much for the sake of science but for the sake of artistic expression and representation (261-62). She makes early connections between art and introspection, developing an affinity for the aesthetics of drawing and the impressionistic tendency of artistic rendering. She focusses on how art can be used to reveal the inside of something, a skill she will rely upon later as she begins her own internal quest. Elaine's early experience with drawing continues to lead toward the expressionistic qualities of art. Elaine's fifth grade teacher, Miss Stuart, apparently loves art and unintentionally aids Elaine in her artistic development. During an afternoon art lesson, Miss Stuart instructs the students to draw their afternoon activities. While the other students draw themselves playing, Elaine draws herself sitting on her bed at night, filling in most of the page with black crayon (173). Most revealing, however, is that when she finishes, she realizes she has drawn something without intending to:

1 Once again Atwood presents us with her old and established motif. As in *Surfacing*, where the narrator dives into the lake and encounters her primordial self, chronotopically experiencing her own origins in her "real" time, Elaine dives into the pool of time to relive her childhood and to construct her individuality.

"I look at this picture with dismay. It isn't what I meant to draw. It's unlike everyone else's picture, it's the wrong thing" (173). Elaine fears that she will be scolded by her teacher; however, Miss Stuart talks to Elaine about her drawing in a supportive manner, as if she understands what is going on in Elaine's life. Instead of criticizing her as would Cordelia or Carol, Miss Stuart accepts Elaine for who she is, validates her in the way that no one else has yet done. Art becomes an acceptable means of expressing internal anguish or psychologically suppressed fears and anxieties, a form of expression which will later prove crucial in Elaine's construction of her selfhood.

Her formal artistic training begins when she enters the university and studies Life Drawing with Josef Hrbik. Her initial drawings, however, reveal an emptiness, a lifeless quality that Josef critiques immediately: "We are not making a medical textbook,' he says to me. 'What you have made is a corpse, not a woman'" (286). At the end of class, he tells Elaine, "'You are an unfinished woman,' he adds in a lower voice, 'but here you will be finished'" (287; accentual spelling of woman). Elaine is indeed unfinished in that she has suppressed many aspects of her childhood, and she expresses these suppressions as lifeless shapes on the canvas. She must discover how to open up that past and spill it onto the canvas if she is ever to begin constructing her subjectivity. She has to learn how to transform her art into a chronotopic portal into her past, into her soul. Along with her Life Drawing classes, art history also plays an important role in Elaine's artistic development. Most telling is her discovery and investigation of Van Eyck's *The Arnolfini Marriage* in which she discovers an ornate pier glass centrally positioned in the background behind the two foregrounded figures. Because iconography is an important component of Dutch Renaissance paintings, Elaine pours over the mirror with a magnifying glass, noticing the reflection of the portrayed couple and two other figures not shown in the painting proper. She considers the pier glass as a type of cat's eye which holds in a physically distinct dimension the two mysterious figures who possibly represent the painter and the observer (343). A work of art, then, becomes a complex chronotope which locks the painter's vision within a space-time warp bubble, preserving it indefinitely for the viewing public.

However, instead of enabling self-exploration, Elaine's paintings express her entrapment. Her repressed childhood experiences are momentarily released from her subconscious only to be trapped on canvas. In the *Künstlerroman* tradition, artistic expression normally provides celebration of imagination and exultation of individuality. In Elaine's case, however, her art is much like her earlier Virgin Mary epiphany in that it serves not as a productive method of facing her problems but as a convenient mode of avoidance, of coping. Her repressed anxieties are released without her recognition onto the canvas, where they are trapped within a new suppressed dimension. In contemplating her paintings, Elaine observes:

I know that these things must be memories, but they do not have the quality of memories. They are not hazy around the edges, but sharp and clear. They arrive detached from any context; they are simply there, in isolation, as an object glimpsed on the street is there. I have no image of myself in relation to them. They are suffused with anxiety, but it's not my own anxiety. The anxiety is the things themselves. (353)

Instead of opening up her unconscious mind, these paintings isolate her memories within the painted canvas, cutting them off from any sort of self-explorational contexts. Her memories remain detached, disjointed bits of her past trapped in a sharp and clear glass pier. Even though her art work fuses the emotional import of her past chronotopically in her present, the potential for her *Bildung* is not yet realized. Not until Elaine walks through her own retrospective showing as an observer of her work independent of her critical approaches as creator and independent of the pretentious artistic evaluations provided by Charna, one of the retrospective coordinators, does she begin to experience the process of *Bildung* and then progresses to her artistic development. She begins to understand that her paintings are expressions of internal hate, fear, and vengeance which she has suppressed for so long. These unacknowledged feelings have festered in her like a disease, mutating into a boil that has darkened her soul. She starts to work through her fear, accepting her feelings, noting the inappropriateness of her vindictiveness, and understanding how her unacknowledged fear and hate have blinded her to others and to herself (247-48).

Elaine's self-portrait entitled *Cat's Eye* is essentially self-revealing and helps Elaine take yet another crucial step toward self-actualization. Of her face, this painting depicts only her staring eyes and her forehead. Behind her, however, in the tradition of the Van Eyck painting, is an ornate, circular pier glass which reflects the back of her head and three small figures dressed in winter clothes, figures which do not appear in the painting proper. Rendered in this painting is that essential bit of self-awareness needed to complete Elaine's *Bildung*. Her psychological composition has been dominated by the tauntings of those three little girls trapped in the pier glass, and how she develops as an adult depends very much on how she decides to work through her repressed emotions associated with her childhood.

This retrospective showing of her art is a chronotopic culmination of Elaine's artistic maturation which leads her to self-realization. She has managed to condense time and space into a singularity, she has opened up the past by folding the time-space continuum, and she has entered this synchronous past-present history to emerge as an integrated person. Asking herself why she contemplates the temporality of her work, the potential for all of her paintings to be wiped out by disaster, Elaine answers: "Because I can no longer control these paintings, or tell them what to mean. Whatever energy they have come out of me. I'm what's left over" (431). She discovers that the paintings are not ends in themselves. They are creative converters or reflectors for the energy emitting

from her self. Through her creation, she stared her past in the eye and was forced to look deeply into herself. She realizes that she now has the ability to create an honest, self-fulfilling, fully integrated subjectivity not rendered superficially on canvas but asserted actively into her own "real" time-space continuum. Her *Bildung*, of course, is not without regret or loss. Hirsch states that many Feminist *Bildungsroman*-s result in both spiritual gain and personal loss: "The intense inwardness that results allows her [the fictional heroine] to explore and develop spiritually, emotionally, and morally, but often at the expense of other aspects of selfhood" (24). Elaine's newly found spiritual strength comes from her understanding that the loneliness, the awkwardness, and the anxiety that she felt as a child and which persisted with her throughout her life were the psychological projections of Cordelia (443). Elaine realizes that the treatment was not in any way related to her own deficiency, but that she received the brunt of Cordelia's psychological defense mechanism, a defense mechanism which eventually broke down, resulting in Cordelia's own gradually encroaching insanity.² Elaine finally exorcises Cordelia's ghost, forgiving and accepting the past as an integral component of her subjectivity.

As Elaine gains this self-knowledge, however, she also realizes her spiritual loss. Even though she works through her past, realizing who she is in relation to that past, she also realizes that not having an integrated self has led her away from sisterhood. Because she walked away from her childhood fears, suppressing them within her pier-glassed subconscious, Elaine never learned how to create constructive female friendships. She innately distrusts and dislikes the majority of the women she encounters, considering them manipulative, spiteful, and dangerous. This understood loss, however, is itself a type of reflective, self-acknowledging light that will prove at least adequate in directing her into her future: "It's old light, and there's not much of it. But it's enough to see by" (446). In classic Atwood fashion, *Cat's Eye* ends ambiguously and will undoubtedly provide readers and critics with much to consider. Helen Yglesias decides, "*Cat's Eye* gathers its many streams, sends them flowing forward in wash after wash of rich detail and observation, but disappointingly no wave forms. Fizzling, it disperses its brilliant waters ineffectually, allowing them to be sucked back into the general stream" (4). If analyzed from a twentieth-century postmodern cultural context, however, this fizzling wave, as Yglesias describes it, becomes a constructively destructive swell of tsunamic proportion.

2 It is curious that Cordelia, the representative of the oppressive forces which traditionally drive women artists toward insanity or death, herself succumbs to insanity. It is as if Atwood completely undercuts the archetypal patterns by portraying the woman artist as somewhat victorious over her oppressor, subjecting the oppressive agent to the insanity that traditionally victimized the woman artist. Or, Cordelia may recognize her own complicity in patriarchal oppression and be driven mad by the guilt.

Just as women begin to experience new artistic, educational, sexual, occupational, and intellectual freedoms, just as women begin to discover their voices and to assert them in society so as to locate their identity's relationship to this society, postmodernism — predominately a male-oriented movement — attempts to denature and to deny the very selfhood that women are beginning to discover.

Meeting this postmodern wave head on is a counter wave of women's *Bildungsroman*. Lee Edwards notes that a significant difference in the twentieth-century female novel is that it portrays life not as an endless, winless battle but as a celebration of life or, in the very least, a growth towards the possibility of celebration (145). She goes on to suggest that women writers encourage this celebration of life via an open-ended narrative structure: "Their creators invite us to imagine their stories evolving after the narrative's last page has concluded. Shifting the burden of continuation from themselves to the reader, these authors forge the bond between reader and hero. While denying knowledge, they inspire hope. Their narratives merge with our lives and model them" (145). Atwood's ending is indeed ambiguous and, at first glance, may seem to fizzle away. But a closer examination reveals that Elaine's story really does not end on such a plain level. Elaine has experienced great loss to be sure, but more important, this very loss has provided her with the psychological and spiritual preparation to begin celebrating life and to reenter the sisterhood she has rejected. In a cultural environment which preaches the eternal loss of the unified self, Atwood presents her readers with a woman who manages to create a time-space singularity from which she extracts the materials and the internal strength to complete her *Bildung* and to initiate her personal process of subjectivity.

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JOSEPH PIVATO

Four Languages of Italian-Canadian Writers

Introduction

Canada is a multicultural society which has two official languages: English and French. This simple statement identifies a complex social reality which even Canadians are not always able to grasp, let alone fully appreciate. Canadian society is one which allows a significant degree of diversity while at the same time valuing national unity. It is a fact of demographics that there are hundreds of thousands of Canadians who function everyday in languages other than English or French. We have not only the native languages of the First Nations, but the immigrant languages of Italian, Chinese, German, Ukrainian, Polish, Spanish and many others. More than 34% of the population of Canada are from backgrounds other than British or French. Whatever happens to future government policies on Multiculturalism, the nature of Canadian society has changed forever away from the old bicultural model of English and French.

Perhaps more than any other group, Canadian writers of Italian background have benefitted from this cultural diversity by producing a body of literature that exists in different languages: English, Italian, French, and a fourth language. There are about one hundred active Italian-Canadian writers, and while most of them use only one language such as English or French, all have a knowledge of one or two of the other languages. And there is a small group of writers who work in two languages and the rare author who has published in three. The result of this literary activity is that we have an unusual situation in which there is not only a trilingual body of literature but writers who move freely among these languages and translate between one and the other for those who cannot reach beyond the language barriers.

One of the trilingual writers is Alexandre Amprimoz who first published in Italian and then worked in French and English to produce a dozen books between 1977 and 1991. The other unusual aspect about this author is that his French and English writing are in different styles as if he were projecting two different personalities. Given this linguistic confusion, it is not surprising that two other polyglot writers, Antonio D'Alfonso and Marco Micone, have both produced different works entitled "Babel" which I will examine here. The reality of

Canadian Culture and Literature. And a Taiwan Perspective

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1998 ISBN 0-921490-10-0

linguistic diversity in the community is reflected in this trilingual body of writing and has some unusual effects on the activity of these writers: the nature of their writing, their translations, and their relations with other writers. This body of writing makes some demands on readers, since they are expected to share this knowledge of another language when they are reading English or French or Italian. In fact, it is necessary for readers to read works in all three languages in order to fully understand individual works and the body of literature as a whole. This phenomenon is unusual for writing in North America, a continent apparently dominated by English language and culture.

The activity of Italian-Canadian writers in different languages has parallels with authors from other cultural groups such as the Arabic-Canadian writers studied by Elizabeth F. Dahab (see in this volume and 1998), and the South Asian writers examined by Frank Birbalsingh. In the future, it will be most useful to do comparative studies among these various groups. In the present article, I will examine this linguistic diversity in the writing of an ethnic minority group and briefly explore the following topics: 1) Writing in different languages; 2) Language interference; and 3) The question of the fourth language. I will consider the writing of Marco Micone, Antonio D'Alfonso, Mary di Michele, Caterina Edwards, Dorina Michelut, and Filippo Salvatore and I will also refer briefly to Bianca Zagolin and Maria Ardizzi.

Writing in Different Languages

There is a history in Canada of writing in different languages. When Charles G.D. Roberts translated Philippe Aubert de Gaspé's *Les Anciens Canadiens* into English in 1890, he made this observation in his "Introduction": "In Canada there is settling into shape a nation of two races, there is springing into existence, at the same time, a literature in two languages" (5). This idea of the link between a national language and a national literature is a traditional one which is bound up with the sacred notion of a national identity. But when you have the possibility of two languages the door to diversity is open.

In Winnipeg in 1935 Watson Kirkconnell published *Canadian Overtones*, an anthology of Canadian poems written in several Ethnic-Canadian languages. For Kirkconnell, and since him for many Canadians, Canadian literature can exist in languages in addition to the two official languages of English and French. One of the earliest examples of this diversity is Fr. Francesco Giuseppe Bressani, a Jesuit missionary who published the chronicle of his years in Canada in Italian for an Italian readership. Bressani's 1653 *Breve Relatione* is the only part of the voluminous *Jesuit Relations* that is in Italian. A later example is Mario Duliani who published *La Ville sans femmes* in French in 1945 and one year later brought out his own Italian version, *Citta senza donne*. The Italian is not just a translation of the French but a different version for a different readership. While

the main theme of the book is a narrative of Duliani's experience as a prisoner in an internment camp during the Second World War, the Italian experience and perspective of these events are different from those of a French Canadian. Duliani was a journalist for the Montréal *La Presse* and understood the importance of different readership. This controversial book was translated into English only in 1994, as *The City without Women* by the Italian-Canadian poet Antonino Mazza. Today, we have a whole generation of writers who work and publish in more than one language. In Montréal Filippo Salvatore has published in Italian, in English and in French. His first collection of poems, *Tufo e gramigna* (1977) in Italian, was later published in English as *Suns of Darkness* (1980). Salvatore produced a French play, *La Fresque de Mussolini* (1985), which implicitly compares the more extreme forms of Québec nationalism to the Fascist regime in Italy. By playing with languages, rhetoric, and perspectives of the two national groups he is able to criticize both societies. In Québec language and culture are political issues and he feels it is important for the other language groups to enter into the discourse about the future of Canada and Québec. Salvatore's primary languages have become French and Italian as he continues to add to the linguistic diversity of Québec.

Another polyglot writer is Antonio D'Alfonso who reflects the linguistic diversity of his upbringing and education in Montréal. In his book of French prose-poems, *L'Autre rivage* (1987), he writes:

Même l'italien est une langue apprise. Langue du nord, ce n'est pas la langue dans laquelle mes idées émergent, ni la musique qui naît en moi la nuit lorsque je n'arrive pas à dormir. Déjà là, une transformation s'opère: du guglionesano à l'italien. Quand j'écris, je traduis. Parfois, aucune traduction n'est nécessaire: mots et phrases surgissent, toutes faites, en anglais ou en français. Un lien de différences. (127)

In the English version of the book, *The Other Shore* (1986) this stanza reads:

Even Italian is a learned language for me. Language of the North, it is not the language my thoughts were formed in, nor the music I hear in my head at night when I cannot get to sleep. Already a transformation occurs: from Guglionesano, I must translate into Italian. When I write I translate. Sometimes no translation occurs. The words or phrases come directly into English or French. A linkage of differences. (109)

The linguistic strata in D'Alfonso's writing exemplify very well the four types of language identified by Henri Gobard in his book, *L'Aliénation linguistique*. The first is the vernacular language, that of maternal origins, which in this case is the Italian dialect of Guglionesi. The second language is vehicular, the urban language of the state and commerce, which for D'Alfonso is English, the language of power. The third is the referential language, that of culture, which here is French. And the fourth is the mythic language of religion and beyond,

which here is standard Italian. This cultural environment of many languages has its effect on the writing itself. D'Alfonso openly acknowledges this in macaronic verse, a poem called, "Babel,"

Nativo di Montreal
 élève comme Québécois
 forced to learn the language of power
 vivi en Mexico como alternativa
 figlio del sole e della campagna
 par les franc-parleurs aime
 finding thousands like me suffering
 me case y divorcie en tierra fria
 nipote di Guglionesi
 parlant politique malgré moi
steeled in the school of Old Aquinas
 queriendo luchar con mis amigos latinos
 Dio where shall I be demain
 (trop vif) que puedo saber yo
 spero che la terra be mine. (*The Other Shore* 57)

By using a majority language and inserting foreign words into it, Italian-Canadian writers change the nature of the communication and the relationship with the reader. In *Devils in Paradise* Pasquale Verdicchio argues that, in fact, these writers are subverting the majority language:

With the acquisition of a language of expression, with the opening provided by language as an antagonistic tool, Italian-Canadian writers have been able to turn the English language back toward those who call it their mother tongue. By stressing latinate vocabulary, by the insertion of Italian syntactical forms, and by the inclusion of linguistic elements that represent the utterance of immigrant culture, these writers have altered the semantic field of English, thereby denying expected meaning. The expression of Italian-Canadian "silence" becomes Anglo Canada's interpretive silence. (17)

D'Alfonso's work well illustrates the peculiar nature of this multicultural writing. These authors, whether they work in English or French or Italian, are conscious of the influence of a different language on every word they write. They can never use English as if it were the only language, one which can capture all their realities. Instead, they often use words from Italian or French to expand the reach of their writing. What D'Alfonso says about himself is often also true of other writers: when they write, they translate. As a group, these writers share a preoccupation with language, an over-sensitivity to the meaning and weight of words, English, French, Italian and dialects. They read each other's work with this perspective on languages. And they invite their Canadian readers to become aware of this diversity and the growing multidimensional aspect of Canadian literature.

This linguistic diversity has also emerged in the writing of other ethnic minority authors in Canada. West Indian writers such as Austin Clarke are very effective in using West Indian dialects in their English narratives. The many languages of India are sometimes evident in the work of Rohinton Mistry and M.G. Vassanji. And in Calgary, Hiromi Goto is not afraid to use Japanese in her English novel, *Chorus of Mushrooms* (1994).

Language Interference

When one language effects the use of another language we have language interference. This is a common phenomenon in the writing of ethnic minority authors. For Italian-Canadian writers language interference has two aspects; it is a reflection of the daily reality of immigrants and it is a linguistic phenomenon consciously used to interrogate the meaning of communication. However, despite, or perhaps because of the problematics of language use, Italian-Canadian writers do not produce much experimental writing. Instead, they tend to write very much in the realist tradition. The interference of one language on another is not a clever literary device but a daily reality which these writers try to represent truthfully with all its ramifications. D'Alfonso's "Babel," for instance, is not a postmodern poem which deconstructs language, but a slice of life: the language confusion which D'Alfonso and other ethnic students grow up with in Montréal.

It is not surprising, then, that Marco Micone also has a dramatic scene entitled, "Babele" (1989). In this scene the Italian immigrant father, Pasquale, speaks to his French visitor in a Molisan dialect sprinkled with standard Italian and French words: "Mon garzon, parla tutte le lingue," he boasts, but then complains that "Sule u taliane, nu parle tante buone" (1989, 30). The son has learned English and French but has lost both the Italian and the Molisan languages. In his French-language play, *Addolorata* (1984), Marco Micone has the main character, Addolorata, explain her linguistic gains in Montréal with these words:

I can also speak English with my friends, French with the neighbours, Italian with the machos, and Spanish with certain customers. With my four languages, I never get bored. With my four languages, I can watch soaps in English, read the French TV Guide, the Italian fotoromanzi, and sing "Guantanamera" ... At the Bay, when I have Spanish customers, I introduce myself as Lolita Gomez. It's so much nicer than Addolorata Zanni. Addolorata is so ugly, that most of my cousins changed their name. The one living in Toronto calls herself Laurie. She is the cousin I like least. She is so weird — she studies things that are for men. She wants to be a "lawyer." She only speaks English. She says she also speaks Italian, but when she tries, she speaks half Italian, half English. I don't know where she is going to go with a language and a half. I have another cousin in Argentina. Her name is Dolores. (137-38)

For Addolorata there is no apparent confusion between one language and another; rather, there is confusion over her own identity. She has had to compartmentalize herself into four linguistic identities for which she even has names. Is this a negative or positive situation for her, or is it rather simply a reality, a condition commonly found among ethnic minority individuals?

In the short stories of Dino Minni this shifting identity is often treated as a positive change, an opportunity for the character to make a new beginning, to take control of his or her own destiny. In his short story, "Details from the Canadian Mosaic," the little Italian boy, Mario, changes his name so that he has two identities to match his two languages, "He did not know at what point he had become Mike. One day looking for a suitable translation for his name and finding none, he decided that Mike was closest. By the end of the summer, he was Mario at home and Mike in the streets" (56). Dino Minni is not writing from Québec, but from British Columbia where there seems to be great flexibility with different languages and cultures.

Language interference takes many forms from minute word changes to entire works. It is evident in the single Italian words found in the English poems of Pier Giorgio Di Cicco and Mary di Michele. In her poem, "Across the Atlantic," di Michele uses the Italian phrase, "Tutto il mondo e paese" to express an idea which cannot be translated into English (1980, 28). Four lines later in the poem she gives an English translation of the Italian words, "All the world is a village." But these English words cannot capture the meaning of the Italian idea of *paese*. It can mean village or town, but also country region. It is a word which connotes notions of family and kinship ties in a home region, a shared life experience and similar outlook in class, religion, etc., and it is an emotionally charged word in Italian. Thematically, the poem itself deals with the all-pervasive influence of di Michele's Italian background, as the speaker can hear the voice of her mamma across the Atlantic (28). The way di Michele uses the Italian phrase itself is an example of language interference from the point of view of standard Italian. The correct Italian expression is "Tutto il mondo e un paese" ("the whole world is a town"). In the poem di Michele has left out the article *un* for *paese*. This demonstrates the interference of the Molisan dialect which di Michele spoke at home. In these five words in an English poem we have the intersection of three language codes: English, standard Italian, and Molisan Italian. Di Michele has stated that she intentionally uses Italian in her English writing to remind the reader that there is another culture at work in the text. She has described these Italian words as stones on the smooth road of her English which bump the reader into a consciousness of the other culture, ever-present (1984, 22).

Entire works can demonstrate the effects of language interference in the widest sense. In Edmonton Caterina Edwards produced a play which she originally entitled, *Terra straniera*, but later changed to *Homeground*, a title which

has the opposite meaning of the original Italian, "strange land." The difference is partially due to position and point of view. For an Italian immigrant Canada is a strange land. But for an English-speaking Canadian it can be home. The different languages, then, represent different perspectives. The play itself tries to communicate the Italian perspective and an Italian immigrant notion of *nostalgia*. This is not simply English nostalgia, but Italian, *nostalgia*, a whole complex of ideas, relationships, obligations, regional ties, history, etc., and which are difficult to translate into English because the Italian word contains a specific emotionality and context. For Edwards, it takes the whole play to try to communicate some of this idea. The movement of the play is backward-looking as the Italian immigrants are going to leave Canada and return to Italy. The play is full of Italian terms, points of reference, ritual, folklore and cultural assumptions which can never be fully rendered into English.

In the play, the wife and mother, Maria, is trying to recall the words of old Italian folksongs and a one point tries to recall the recipe for an old ritual. She finds that she has forgotten it in the Canadian context:

There is safety in the old ways, safety. The old rites. Oil and salt, flame and water. If I could remember the words. I only heard them a few times as a child, mumbled over my head or over that of my brothers and sisters. I left the valley before I had the age or the wisdom to learn from the older women. Each word must be exact. Oil and salt, flame and water — that I remember. The words, the words. (78)

To Maria the exact words are important; they cannot be changed or translated because a different language is a different frame of reference. The play, *Homeground*, is constructed around this problem of different languages and cultures. The characters are recent Italian immigrants who, in the real world, would be speaking Italian to each other. In this Canadian play they speak standard English, but the dialogue is peppered with Italian expressions, "Senza pane tutti diventano orfani." There are also several verses of Italian folksongs, songs of *nostalgia* such as "Terra Straniera." In the context of the play, the Italian words take on new meanings which emerge from the experience of the immigrants in Canada. And the English words of the Italian characters change as well. Words like husband, son, job, house, and bread take on meanings that they do not normally have in an English-Canadian context. Even a word like bread does not mean the same thing in every language. In my own personal experience, it was not until I was twenty years old that my parents bought Canadian bread in plastic bags. Up to that point bread in plastic bags was foreign, something we did not even consider to be bread. To us, to me to this day, bread must have a crust, a texture, and smell. How can one translate that lifetime experience of bread with words?

English is the major language of Edwards' play, but when used by these strange new people, it is a language which is deterritorialized, that is, it is

subjected to a series of displacements that make it change pace, slow down, so that we have to re-examine the meanings of words. One character explains, "pretty" from our mouths is not the same as "pretty" from the mouth of Mr. Edmonton" (62) and Pasquale Verdicchio's argument that such use of English is subversive makes perfect sense (17).

This language interference extends to the other languages used by Italian-Canadian writers. The Italian-Canadian writers who work in Italian use the language in a different way than writers in Italy; for instance, they may have to use an English-Canadian expression because there is no equivalent word in Italian. But some Italian words take on a new meaning or meanings when used on this side of the Atlantic. The idea of migrant in English has two words: emigrant; the person who leaves, and immigrant; the new arrival who comes into the host country. In Italian they use only one word, *emigrante*; the person who leaves, since Italy has never been a host country to new arrivals, at least not until the last ten years. In the Italian word, *emigrante*, the person who has left, has both positive and negative connotations. In Maria Ardizzi's Italian novel, *Made in Italy*, the narrator is fascinated with the idea of *emigrante* because it seems to contain for her the idea of freedom and travel to exotic places. At least this was her perspective from Italy, before she became an immigrant trapped in a ghetto in North America. Ardizzi's Italian novels explore how there are changes to this meaning when the *emigrante* is in Canada. The perspective is no longer from one who is leaving, but from the one who has arrived and must make adjustments.

The Fourth Language

As we know, Italian-Canadian writers have produced a body of literature in three standard languages: English, French, and Italian. But there is often a fourth language which may vary from writer to writer. For Antonio D'Alfonso, Filippo Salvatore, and di Michele it is the Italian dialect of Molise. Pasquale Verdicchio and Corrado Mastropasqua share the dialect of Naples, while Antonino Mazza and Antonio Corea share that of Calabria. For Dorina Michelut, Marisa De Franceschi, and Bianca Zagolin it is Friulan or Furlan, the distinct language of the Friuli region of Northeastern Italy. Michelut has explored her relationship to this language both in her poetry, *Loyalty to the Hunt* and in her essay, "Coming to Terms with the Mother Tongue":

The balance that Furlan and English struck within me long ago is so very entrenched it feels saturated and inaccessible. At a certain point, my two acquired languages, Italian and English, were forced to come to terms with each other within me. It was this experience that led me to consider ways of approaching the more remote Furlan. (65)

For many Italian Canadians the "other" language is *Italiесе*, that mixture

of Italian and English which has developed as a dialect in Canada. Of the approximately one hundred active Italian-Canadian writers not a single one writes in *Italièse*, not even for humour or for dialogue. This is the everyday language for many Italian Canadians. It is the language many constantly hear, but it is not the language which is used in writing. Rather, it is the language they write against. It is the language against which they make their characters so articulate in one of the standard languages that they are sometimes hard to perceive as realistic Italian immigrants. Hard to believe but not hard to understand. And this is the writers' most important objective: to be understood clearly. In a poem to his dead father Pier Giorgio Di Cicco writes, "The roses dream with him / of being understood in clear english" (31). *Italièse* is the language he rejects as he rejects the stereotypes of the "dumb wop" and the mafioso. In addition to clarity of communication, the languages used also have the task of fighting that very heavy burden of the negative Italian stereotype. For eighty years in North America, in film and later television the Italian has been depicted as either stupid or evil. In the work of the Italian-Canadian writers one will not find figures from organized crime. So while Mario Puzo may have made it fashionable and profitable in the United States to exploit this image of the Italian Mafia, in Canada we have rejected this type of writing.

While *Italièse* conjures up any number of negative connotations for Italian immigrants in North America, there is also the phenomenon of corrupt politics in the highest levels of government in Italy itself for which journalists have coined the term, *tangentopoli*. That many Italian immigrants left Italy to escape this political corruption and now find they can easily be associated with it simply by being Italian is only cruel irony.

In Québec, Marco Micone discovered that the fourth language is that of silence. In his French-language plays Micone writes against the condition of being inarticulate. His theatre begins with silence, the silence which he attributes to Italian immigrants in Québec: in his *Gens du silence* (1980), the Italians are not only voiceless but invisible and powerless. The social and cultural background against which he writes is of course the political conflict between the English and the Québécois which have resulted in the marginalization of Italians and other immigrant groups. In this first play, the immigrant daughter, Nancy, expresses this rootless condition with these words,

J'enseigne ... à les adolescents qui portent tous un nom italien dont la seule culture c'est celle du silence. Silence sur les origines paysannes de leurs parents. Silence sur les cause de l'émigration de leurs parents. Silence sur la manipulation dont ils sont victimes. Silence sur le pays dans lequel ils vivent. Silence sur les raison de ce silence. (94)

I teach teenagers who all have Italian names and who have one culture, that of silence. Silence about the peasant origin of their parents. Silence about the reasons for emigration. Silence about the manipulation they're victims of. Silence about the country they live in. Silence about the reasons for their silence. (71)

Given this voiceless state, how does Micone make the immigrants express themselves? How does he break this silence with words that can be understood by both Italo-Québécois and Québécois? Micone's solution is to give them a French voice with Italian and English accents as Nancy tells us,

Il faut que tu écrives en français pour que tout le monde te comprenne. Il faut que les jeunes puissent se reconnaître dans les textes écrits par quelqu'un qui a vécu comme eux, qui les comprend et veut les aider. Il faut que leur différence devienne une raison de plus qui les pousse à lutter et non pas une cause de complexes et de passivité. (95)

You must write in French so that everyone can understand you. Young people must find themselves in texts written by someone who lived like them, who understands and wants to help them. Their being different has to become a reason for them to struggle, and not a cause for complexes and passivity.

Why do Italian-Canadian writers use so many languages? The direct answer to this question is that they live in a Canada of different languages and reflect this in their writing. Italian immigrants come from an Italy of diversity in which people normally use more than one language in the first place: they often speak the regional dialect at home and standard Italian in school and in their communication with government officials and other authorities. Thus, it is natural for them to deal with the ambiguities and translation processes of the different languages of Canada and, in turn, they have produced a literature in three or four languages because they could not write it in any other way. As much as Multiculturalism is attacked by Neo-conservatives, it is a reality in Canada. The work of Italian-Canadian writers and other ethnic minority authors demonstrates that "there is settling into shape a nation of great diversity."

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LYNNE VAN LUVEN

Voices from the Past Echo through the Present: Choy's *The Jade Peony* and Lai's *When Fox is a Thousand*

Ever since the flowering of contemporary Canadian Literature in the 1960s, a wide array of writers has found a variety of ways to assert that the stories we tell about ourselves shape and assert our destiny. By now it is a truism to claim that a storyless land is a phantom place. We know that to be true, and we value our stories all the more for it. Furthermore, an increasing number of Canadians can cite authors whose work has "made real" a certain geography, whether it be through Lorna Crozier's poems about life on the prairies, David Adams Richards's bleak tales of the Miramichi Valley, Jack Hodgins's magic-realist tales of Vancouver Island, or Joy Kogawa's poetic evocation of life among Japanese Canadians interned during the Second World War. All of these stories, read, experienced, and told again, do indeed function to "shoot history" into our veins.

Over the past fifteen years, it has become increasingly evident that these older writers, the bulk of them writing out of an European ancestry and tradition, are the foremothers and forefathers of a whole new generation of writers, writers who incorporate an even wider sense of place into their work, and whose stories draw upon metaphors and mythologies from a rich, sprawling tapestry representing First Nations, Japanese, Chinese, and East Indian peoples, to name just four vivid threads of narrative present in literature published today in Canada.

This article focuses on the work of two writers who call upon their Chinese ancestry as they tell their stories. Both Wayson Choy and Larissa Lai set their novels in Vancouver, drawing upon the distinct sights and sounds of that city's sizable Chinese-Canadian population as both a backdrop for their action and as a framework eliciting their characters' rebellion and growth. Wayson Choy, who now lives in Toronto and teaches English at Humber College, sets his traditional, realistic novel, *The Jade Peony*, in the 1930s and 1940s in a family dominated by a powerful grandmother-figure who keeps the old Chinese tales alive. Larissa Lai, who was born in La Jolla, California, locates her novel in contemporary, crowded Vancouver, amid hip young characters affected by rootlessness and

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1998 ISBN 0-921490-10-0

anomie. Into that urban world she introduces ancient folklore as well as the persona of the ninth-century poet Yu Hsuan-Chi. Despite their sharp differences in narrative style and authorial voice, both novels are "haunted," as it were, by the past. In Choy's narrative, the character of the Monkey King is a powerful connection to ancient China. It is interesting to note that another novelist, Chinese-American writer Maxine Hong Kingston in her 1989 novel, *Tripmaster Monkey*, also explored "monkey business" via a young San Francisco hippie of Chinese extraction named Wittman Ah Sing. Wittman is a frustrated poet and dramatist who enlivens his lacklustre life by spinning wild tales of the trickster Monkey King, whom he often impersonates, much to the chagrin of people around him. In Lai's novel, the devious, sly and immortal Fox provides a counterpoint to — and commentary upon — the contemporary narrative. And both Choy and Lai explore issues of identity, transformation, and change as their characters' lives progress. Of the two, Lai's novel is the more postmodern and thus disjunctive.

Wayson Choy's *The Jade Peony* is a multi-generational novel in the best traditional sense of the term. Although told in three parts, through the voices of three siblings — Jook-Liang, Only Sister; Jung-Sum, second brother; and Sek-Lung, third brother — the novel presents a unified and comprehensive picture of Chinese-Canadian life in a family stranded between alienation and assimilation. Part of the intrigue in *The Jade Peony* stems from Choy's skilled depiction of the politics of birth order: each child experiences differently the connection to, or distance from, the old ways, and thus each has a different story to tell about family life based upon his or her experience of what we might call family mythology. Sekky, the youngest child, has the most difficulty sorting out traditional culture and history; in fact, his sister claims he is "driving himself crazy" making sense of Chinatown mores and secrets (134). As the youngest child, six-year-old Sek-Lung is closest to his grandmother, Poh-Poh, and yet also her most exasperating grandchild. He is confused by the complexities of Chinese language and kinship, which give him "a headache" (131). Nor is he clear about his own status; he wonders aloud, "Am I Chinese or Canadian?" His confusion is reinforced by his family's response: "Tong Yahn ... Chinese," says his Grandmama. His mother, whom Grandmama insists be designated Stepmother, since she is her son's second wife, allows that the boy does not know "the right way to be Chinese." And his father answers, "We are also Canadian" (133). In fact, in many of his questions, Sekky is seeking reassurance against a truth he already knows: "even if I was born in Vancouver, even if I should salute the Union Jack a hundred million times, even if I had the cleanest hands in all the Dominion of Canada, and prayed forever, I would still be Chinese" (135). Young as he is, Sek-Lung glimpses the complexity of his identity. His father's plea of "keep things simple," is a fruitless attempt to help his children shed some of the burdens of the old ways. But Sekky knows "simple" masks a harsher truth: "I

was the Canadian-born child of unwanted immigrants who were not allowed to become citizens. The words *resident alien* were stamped on my birth certificate, as if I were a loitering stranger" (136). "Everything was a puzzle to me. Everyone was an enigma," Sekky says (134). Yet he understands a great deal: he recognizes how the many dialects of Chinatown known to his grandmother and her friend Mrs. Lim open "another reality to them, another time and place they shared" (134). He knows how much the families in China depend upon the Canadian relatives in Gold Mountain, for each few dollars sent back to the "family-name clan starving in war-torn, famine and drought-cursed China" (134). And he knows the money sent is never, ever enough — and consequently the pressures upon the Chinese-Canadian wage earners will never cease. Yet for all his knowledge of his family's past, he is a "born-in-Canada" child, one of the "*mo no* children. Children with no Old China history in our brains" (135).

Throughout *The Jade Peony*, Choy employs Grandmama as the "enforcer" of Old China history and folklore. It is Poh-Poh/Grandmama who tells the stories of the magic and ghosts of Old China, particularly the exploits of the Monkey King which transfix and entertain her two youngest grandchildren, Jook-Liang and Sek-Lung. Dorothea Hayward Scott's *Chinese Popular Literature and the Child* maintains that among the animals playing an important role in Chinese myths and legends, the monkey is the most popular: "The monkey King is the hero of countless exploits in the famous fifteenth-century novel *Pilgrimage to the West*, inspired by the historical account of an actual journey made by a seventh-century Chinese monk to India in search of Buddhist relics and scriptures" (35). Monkey, born from a stone egg but animated by the light of the sun, has magical powers: he can do a somersault which covers huge distances; he carries a magic iron cudgel and he can "perform seventy-two kinds of transformations" (35). No wonder he proclaims himself "King of the Monkeys." And as Arthur Waley tells us in his translation of Monkey's adventures, monkey is dauntless and endlessly resourceful. The many trickster/transformational tales, such as those surrounding the Monkey King, Anne Birrell notes in her 1993 book *Chinese Mythology*, belong more to "folkloristic material" than ancient myths, but the two streams of stories have been commingled largely owing to faulty nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholarship — much of it emanating from Westerners — which incorporated the two "without due regard for chronological consistency" (2).

As autocratic matriarch in *The Jade Peony*, Poh-Poh decrees the order of life in the family. One evening, she announces Wong Bak, an "Old China friend," will be coming for dinner and puts on her jade hair ornament in honour of his visit. One of the Old China bachelor-men who has been exploited for his labour and is now without resources, Old Wong has been referred to the family by the local Tong Association — "Perhaps a meal now and then, a few visits with the family...? asked the officer" (18). Five-year-old Jook-Liang senses from her father's nervousness that Wong Bak is an elder, and an elder who "knew the

old one herself. Grandmother must not lose face; we must not fail in our hospitality" (18). Father instructs the brothers Kiam and Jung not to ask stupid questions or to stare rudely. When Old Wong arrives, Jook-Liang sees why he's been so worried: in addition to being angular and terribly stooped, Wong Sin-saang walks with two sticks and has a face "like no other human one we had seen before" (23). What Jook-Liang sees in the parlour is an old man with a face "like those carved wooden masks sold during the Year of the Monkey." For Jook-Liang, it is a transformative moment: "I heard ghost thunder. A mountain opened, and here, right in our parlour, staring back at me, stood Monkey, the Monkey King of Poh-Poh's stories, disguised as an old man bent over two canes" (23). Although her brothers are tongue-tied in front of Wong Sin-saang, Jook-Liang runs to hug him, reassured by the fact that his voice trembles when he calls her "the pr-pretty one." He is telling her not to be afraid of him and not to doubt him, she thinks. "His disguise as an old man and his two canes were not meant to fool me, especially the canes. I knew what those two really were: the two walking sticks, which he could instantly rejoin to become the powerful bamboo pole Monkey used to propel himself across canyons and streams; the same pole he employed to battle monsters, mock demons, shake at courage-testing spirits" (25).

Throughout the dinner, which the elderly guest enjoys with great gusto, Liang thinks of all the Monkey King stories Poh-Poh has told her since she was two years old, all of the disguises the Monkey dons for his adventures in the human world: "He could look like an old woman with a hooked nose and crooked fingers," Grandmama has told her, "or turn as lovely as Kwan Yin standing in a white silk gown; sometimes it suited him to be a country farmer with dirt on his brows ... but all the time he was as hungry as a bear from his travels. You could trick the Monkey King with food, especially if you offered him ripe peaches" (27). Finally, Liang's curiosity gets the better of her; she drops her chopsticks and grabs Old Wong's large ear, asking if he is a monkey. Instead of being angry, Old Wong laughs, and tells her to "pull away." Looking into the old man's eyes, Liang realizes "they were real, reflecting life. I touched his deeply wrinkled forehead, studied both sides of his head to look for a telltale string. Nothing but straggly hair. Even the pen-brush tufts that stuck out from his ears were honest. I felt proud of myself, unable to hold back the news: 'Gene-goh Mauh-lauh Bak!' I said to the soft eyes. 'A for-real Monkey Man!'" (28).

Amused by her spirit, the old man asks her to call him Wong Suk, a less formal name, normally applied to a much younger man. In this way, the elder is freeing her from the strictures of an elder-child relationship; to Liang, he is "giving us his secret magic name as a blessing." And because she feels so free with the old man, she comments on his crooked, crippled state the way any irrepressible five-year-old would. "You not scared of Monkey Man?" Wong Suk asks, and Liang shakes her head and hugs the old man fiercely (29). In that moment, a bond is formed which will become the delight of Liang's life and

give her some respite from being just the "stupid," and "Mo yung — useless" girl-child Poh-Poh is always reminding her she is. By the time Liang is almost nine, Wong Suk is her fast friend, her "bandit-prince," with whom she sees movies on Saturdays, who sometimes joins forces with her to thwart Poh-Poh's dictates. As guardian and adopted uncle, Wong Suk is important to Liang; best of all, as befits a Monkey Man, he allows her to inhabit her make-believe world where she is a Chinese Shirley Temple one minute, a heroine in a Chinese opera the next. Wong Suk's role is to function as Liang's audience, to encourage her to enact her own stories, just as she is his audience, to listen to his fantastic, violent, ghost-driven stories. In the interaction between Jook-Liang and Wong Suk, the two Chinas come together: the Gold Mountain child hears Old China fables from an elder while the Venerable Uncle encourages the dreams and fantasies of a *mo yung* girl who is beginning to rebel against the traditional ways. Ironically, on the very Saturday afternoon Liang is to perform her new tap-dance number for Wong Suk, he comes late to his visit, telling her excitedly that he is leaving, going back to China as the escort for all the bones — two thousand pounds of them — of Chinese workers who died in Gold Mountain. Old-China ways are taking away Liang's confidante. She feels betrayed, angry; she is too young to understand the importance of her bandit-prince's mission. But at the dock, as the Empress of Russia pulls away, she realizes, "Dear Wong Suk, I never to forget you" (68).

Just as Liang has had to fight for her own space in Poh-Poh's arbitrary traditional view of the world, so Sekky must make sense, at the age of seven, of the large hole left in his life by Poh-Poh's death. An avid consumer of the old lady's endless store of ghost stories and fabulous tales, as well as a somewhat reluctant recipient of her folk remedies for his weak chest, Sekky deals with his Grandmama's death in a perfectly logical way: he continues to commune with her ghost, which he sees on the staircase, in the front hall, and even at the foot of his bed:

When she was alive, Grandmama had taught me that spirits and ghosts are everywhere because the Chinese were such an ancient people; so many Chinese people had died that their ten-thousand million ghosts in Old China inhabited "the ways of the Han people." Whether one was a peasant or royalty, Grandmama said, Old China people took it for granted that these ghosts lived constantly alongside them. (156)

Ghosts, it should be noted in passing, also play a crucial role in Amy Tan's 1995 novel *The Hundred Secret Senses*, a tale of two sisters, one an American-born young woman named Olivia, and one a Chinese-born older woman named Kwan. "My sister Kwan believes she has yin eyes," Tan's novel opens. "She sees those who have died and now dwell in the World of Yin, ghosts who leave the mists just to visit her kitchen on Balboa Street in San Francisco" (3). *The Hundred Secret Senses* is a novel of the fabulous, complete with time travel and

reincarnation.

Wayson Choy's Sekky understands that ghosts may be scary demons or fun-loving spirits; they may upset order or bring harmony to chaos. For the seven-year-old, who wants nothing more than to escape his status as invalid and go to school with his siblings, Poh-Poh is a source of hope — she has promised to help him go to school in September; it is only natural that the "incidents" which spook the rest of the family begin happening to Sekky three months after Grandmama's burial. The back door swings closed, apparently of its own volition; the front parlour windows — all three of them — mysteriously bang shut. The family's "scientific" explanations of winds and drafts have no effect on Sekky's faith that "it's Grandmama." Nor is he swayed by his older brother Kiam's modern scientific explanation: "She was, he patiently explained, disintegrating into basic atoms and molecules. Bits of matter" (161).

Even Sekky's mother rejects the accounts of her son's "incidents" as "just old-fashioned talk." The boy's belief that "Grandmama had never left me" forces the family to come to some sort of accommodation between observance of the old ways and the need to adapt to the new. Third Uncle finally convinces Sekky's father what must be done: "You must *bai sen*, you must bow. Pay your respects! All this political talk you talk, one world, one citizenship! You forget you Chinese!?" (164). The proof of the remark comes when Father storms out of the house: one of the building bricks holding open one of the mysteriously closing parlour windows falls to the porch and the window slams shut, cracking the glass. Definitely an omen: Poh-Poh has spoken.

A geomancer and monk come to the house to lead a ceremony in Grandmama's bedroom; the pair recites prayers over burning incense sticks placed in red clay bowls at the room's east and west corners. But that is not enough; Sekky sees Poh-Poh three more times — and so does Mrs. Lim, who lives across the street. "Grandma wants us to *bai sen* once more," Sekky informs his exasperated family. And this time, the ceremony is more heartfelt, involving everyone in the family: Stepmother cooks steamed chicken with black mushrooms, the Old One's favourite dish; Third Uncle brings special wine and paper money to burn; Mrs. Lim rings red sauce for good luck. At the second ceremony, a shrine is erected in the parlour; the Buddhist monk comes again and lights sticks of incense; each member of the family bows three times and talks directly to the Old One, each asking her blessing and help. When it's Sekky's turn, he asks: "I'm getting stronger, aren't I, Grandmama?" He feels the tightness leave his lungs, sees the old woman looking at him sternly. "To *bai sen* meant atoms and molecules did not count," Sekky thinks (167). And it works: the hauntings stop and Sekky begins to eat three bowls of rice at his meals, an unheard of phenomenon. "Now, when I picked up the coin-sized jade peony [a medallion Poh-Poh slipped in his pocket before she went to the hospital to die], remembering how Grandmama used to hold it up to the light and tell me

stories, the carved semitranslucent stone was a reminder that she was gone" (169). Father hangs Grandmama's portrait in the parlour wall facing the front windows and "a kind of peace" settles on the household.

Wayson Choy has integrated many of the ancient legends of Old China into his nostalgic rendering of the family's struggle through the Depression and the Second World War. As the children in the family navigate the shoals of life in the new world, they do not shed everything from the old. Jook-Liang has her Monkey King; Sek-Lung holds firm to his faith in spirits; and even Jung-Sum, the adopted Second Brother who proves himself through sports, to show that Poh-Poh is wrong when she claims he "is the moon," in touch with another world, and not fully masculine. In fact, when Jung-Sum meets Grandmama for the first time, he thinks "of the cunning Fox Lady my mother had warned me about" (83). According to Hayward Scott, "Monkey is a hero, even if mischievous, but the fox, which figures in many stories of the supernatural, is usually regarded as inauspicious or evil. Traditional Chinese tombs were hollowed out of hillsides, and foxes, with their nocturnal life and habit of living in holes, were sometimes seen emerging from the graves at night. For this reason, they were thought to be ghosts of the dead. They were also believed to be the steeds on which ghosts could ride. Foxes had the power of transformation either into a man or a woman, but most frequently turned into a young and pretty woman whose influence would be evil. Other supernatural powers attributed to the fox were the ability to make fire by striking its tail on the ground nine times and to live for a thousand years" (35).

Recalling his mother's tales of the demon Fox, which took on many disguises to "ensnare little children for her supper," Jung-Sum makes sure to "look behind" Grandmama for a furry red tale waving beneath her ankle-length skirts. "I darted behind the foxy old lady to look at the many folds of her skirt. Nothing moved. No furry tail appeared, no wagging motion whatsoever, only the extended long fingers of her old hand, stretched behind her back, offering to take my hand" (84). Although Jung-Sum has to admit his new Poh-Poh does not have the telltale brush beneath her skirts, he comes to realize she is "foxy" in another way — she is the only one in his family who recognizes his struggle with his emerging homosexuality, and sees the "moon" side of him, which he tries so hard to deny.

When a fox is fifty years old, it acquires the ability to change itself into a woman. At a hundred, it can assume the shape of a beautiful girl, or that of a sorcerer ... At that age the fox knows what is happening at a distance of a thousand miles, it can derange the human mind and reduce a person to an imbecile. When the fox is a thousand years old, it is in communication with Heaven, and is then called Heavenly Fox, t'ien-hu. (Hsuan-Chung-Chi, qtd. in Lai 88)

Larissa Lai's *When Fox Is a Thousand* is an ambitious attempt to weave Old

China tales into the lives of a group of rootless materialistic twentysomethings living in contemporary Vancouver. Like Choy, Lai writes her novel in "three voices," each connoted by a tiny graphic: the silhouette of a fox, for the Fox; a woman in classical Chinese kimono, "for the ninth-century poetess," Yu Hsuan-Chi; and a weathered tree with exposed roots "for an unnamed narrator speaking of contemporary twentieth-century life." In the latter sections of the novel, readers meet a group of young adults living on the fringes of studenthood, including Artemis Wong, Mercy/Ming Lee, Claude Chow, Diane Wong, who becomes Artemis's lover, and a young male photographer named Eden. Lai attempts to use the tales from the poet's life, which is rife with abuse against women, to comment upon the more aimless pursuits of Artemis and her friends. The Fox functions as the go-between, as it were, between the two worlds and eras, attempting to give Artemis some connection to her past. Even more than Sekky, Artemis is caught between two cultures: she has been adopted and raised by Caucasian parents. Her natural mother seems to have been in a cultural clash of her own, naming her daughter after the virgin huntress in Greek mythology. The Fox says the name "suits her, since she belongs to no one" (10). As for the Fox, though he keeps an eye on Artemis, it is the Poetess's body he has inhabited "for more than nine hundred years, off and on. It is the only one I am able to return to each time without trouble, although only as long as I keep up my nightly scavenging" (17).

The Fox is aware that there is little room for mythology, for spirits, in the modern world. He has a long and ironic view of his species' history:

When I was a cub, foxes were thought of as a general evil, to be avoided at the best of times, smoked out of our holes, short, or poisoned at the worst. The situation became even more dire after the invention of gunpowder, although by then I had learned to leap through trees and fly as fast as sound.... Now there are many who have forgotten about us altogether. It is a relief to be so ill-regarded, although sometimes, I must admit, a little humiliating to be so much forgotten. I had once hoped for my own little temple, as in the old days, when the few who placed faith in us would build small shrines beside the road. But I have long since given up on that. (81)

Artemis is far more removed from her past. She watches a Chinatown demonstration against the Tiananmen Massacre in Beijing from a great distance, wondering if her vague melancholy comes from "tapping into a collective memory of all the deaths, abandonments and slow stresses of war that have gone unspoken through the generations? Perhaps the precise stories and politics had been lost, but the emotional memory might move from one generation to the next as surely as any genetic trait" (85).

But it is difficult to hang on to one's past, especially if one feels a stranger in a strange land. Even the Fox has difficulty. Toward the end of the novel, he observes:

My thousandth birthday is coming sooner than I thought. A week tomorrow, to be precise. I had not forgotten, it's just that I was having trouble calculating the exact date. I know I've become much too westernized. I've relied on the solar calendar for the last three hundred solar years. I have entirely lost track of the moon. My cousins would laugh if they could see. My grandmother would flick her left ear and turn away in annoyance if she were still alive, but she never made it past the first stages of immortality, bless her sleeping soul. (186)

Artemis's tenuous connection with her past comes closer to clarification when she receives what happens to be a call from her biological mother, whom she agrees to meet. In a scene reminiscent of Little Red Riding Hood, Artemis unwittingly meets the Fox, in the guise of a woman, as she cuts through the woods en route to the bus stop. Artemis has a sense of having seen this stranger before: "All the air in the forest was relatively still, but there was a breeze that kept the stranger's hair constantly in motion, crossing her face and coming free and crossing again, and the face seemed different every time it emerged" (205). When Artemis gets to the address where she expects to meet her birth mother, there again is the strange woman, who reassumes her Fox form and tells Artemis a tale about a Buddhist nun who falls in love with a Fox who has taken the form of a beautiful young novice. When Artemis awakens, she is back in her own bedroom. And she learns that her friend Mercy/Ming has been found dead of a gunshot wound to the head.

The Fox haunts Artemis, ostensibly to help her understand why Ming was killed, but also to solve the parallel mystery of the Poetess, who was executed for the murder of her maidservant/lover. This convergence of the three streams of the novel is perhaps Lai's most unconvincing invention. One is left having to accept that the Fox has somehow healed Artemis's malaise by writing poetry with her and drinking scotch with her. Just how the riddle of her identity is solved is never explained. Perhaps that is fitting behaviour for a Fox, and one would have to live to be a thousand to fully understand the ways of its magic. The strands of Artemis's life do seem to come together, as they did for Sekky in *The Jade Peony*, with a ceremony for the deceased. "The ceremony was Claude's idea. None of them knew what they were supposed to do, what their ancestors might have done on a similar occasion.

"She bought a lot of white candles, joss sticks, some oranges and a steamed chicken" (234). The friends walk through the forest to the hollow tree where Ming's body has been found, and leave their offerings. Later, the Fox finds the chicken and consumes it, bringing the events full circle. Fox confesses that, in fact, he had briefly animated Ming's body after her death, and they had paid a visit to Artemis, who understood the visitation only as a dream. By the end of the novel, Fox has decided to leave this haunting: "The constellations have shifted from their original positions in the black bowl of the sky. Surely congress between the divine and the mortal should not take place with such

sordid regularity.... It is time for me to move on" (236). As it turns out, Artemis "has an old soul," one dating back a thousand years. So perhaps she no longer needs the fox's interventions.

Wherever it originates, the story, then, is always in motion, never fixed, not even when it originates in conventions and mythologies based firmly in the past. That myriad-faced and unfixed fluidity of story is its strength, and the key to the longevity of fable and mythology. These two novels published in 1995, *The Jade Peony* and *When Fox Is a Thousand*, use a tri-partite narration to show that, although the tales of Chinese ancestors may be employed and interpreted differently, they are as vibrant and compelling today in far-flung places as they were in the days of the Old China dynasties.

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王淑華(Shu-hua Wang)

《千年狐》裏的文化翻譯、神話變形、
及時空越界

**When the Fox Speaks: Translation,
Transformation, and Transgression in
*When Fox Is a Thousand***

This paper examines Larissa Lai's *When Fox Is a Thousand*. I shall discuss Lai's adaptation of Chinese mythology and specifically the legend of the Fox, the use and advantage of a multi-voiced narrative strategy in the novel, as well as its transgression (transport) in and out of different times and places. Where appropriate, I shall assess the Chinese-Canadian writer through a comparative perspective, taking into consideration the works of some Asian-American authors, while exploring similar topics such as diaspora, cultural alienation, Orientalism, representation, and Canadian multiculturalism.

前言

此次是「國際加拿大學術研究研討會」首次在台灣舉行。加拿大文學／文化研究正方興未艾，而台灣在長年專注於英美文學教學和研究之後終於把眼光放遠到其他英語系國家和地區。加拿大作為北美及全球幅員最遼闊的國家之一，卻長久以來一直極力排除美國強勢文化的陰影並致力於為其國家文學獨樹一幟。由此次研討會“multiculturalism”的主題可看出加拿大瞭解並且重視其社會種族文化的多元性；然而近至一九九零年出版的

Canadian Culture and Literature. And a Taiwan Perspective

Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek and Yiu-nam Leung, eds.

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1998 ISBN 0-921490-10-0

Studies on Canadian Literature (MLA) 以及 *An Anthology of Canadian Literature in English* (Oxford) 兩本書雖為英、法裔及原住民文學留有一席之地，卻來不及包含華裔加拿大文學。九零年起陸續有許多精彩的華裔作家作品出現，本篇所要討論的 Larissa Lai 的作品 *When Fox Is a Thousand* 《千年狐》出版於一九九五年。在準備這份研究報告的過程中，筆者也發現在台灣大部份圖書館中有關於討論加拿大文學的書，雖聊備一格，卻也不是很多。因此今日得於此地討論華裔加拿大文學作品，是一個很有意義的開始：拋磚引玉，希望引起台、加兩地學界對加華文學的注意和興趣。

文化翻譯

When Fox is a Thousand 《千年狐》是加籍華裔女作家 Larissa Lai 的作品。如同美籍華裔作家 Maxine Hong Kingston 及 Amy Tan 等人作品之富於中國典故和指涉，這本小說的題目來自中國晉代郭璞《玄中記》裏對「狐」的描述。中國民間故事以及傳奇小說中有許多對「狐」的既成概念，像是狐狸精、鬼狐等。“When fox is a thousand” 是說當狐狸為一千歲的時候，即所謂千年狐、天狐這樣的一個概念。作者在她的書中也曾引用《玄中記》裏的一段：「狐五十歲能變化為婦人。百歲為美女，為神巫。或為丈夫，與女人交接。能知千里外事。善蠱魅，使人迷惑心智。千歲即與天通，稱天狐。」(Fox 88; 源自《玄中記》，引載於高羅佩《中國古代房內考：中國古代的性與社會》) 其他有關狐的說法包括：像這樣的千年天狐，又稱九尾狐，變化隨心所欲，已接近神仙。這本小說很特別的一點是：Larissa Lai 在她小說的最後，附有一連串 source notes，並提到此書的完成是借助很多中國的作品--包括《聊齋誌異》的各種翻譯本，中國古代女詩人以及后妃傳記故事等英譯本，尤其值得注意的是荷蘭學者高羅佩(Robert H. Van Gulik)所寫的一九六一年初版的《中國古代房內考：中國古代的性與社會》(*Sexual Life in Ancient China: A*

Preliminary Survey of Chinese Sex and Society from ca. 1500 B.C. till 1644 A.D.)。高羅佩這本書雖在source notes中只被提到一、二次,但我認為*When Fox is a Thousand* 整本書受到*Sexual Life in Ancient China*非常大的影響,幾乎可說這整本小說有關中國的典故,都可在高羅佩的書中找到痕跡。因此,雖說作者並未明言,但我們應將《千年狐》與高羅佩的《中國古代房內考》並觀。除了互文的關係之外,後者(高書)無疑可被視為前者《千年狐》(*Fox*)的母文(mother text)。這一點我們從小說內容裏找到證明。例如小說中狐的種種傳說雖來自《聊齋》,高羅佩的書中也已提及,尤其是《玄中記》裏的一段;高羅佩也提到魚玄機的故事;高書還提及武則天的典故;以及對中國古代社會裏同性戀情況的著墨。這些母題都是《千年狐》書中所關注的。

《千年狐》主要包涵了三種不同的敘述聲音(multi-voiced narration),不但如此,它的多樣性,正如Linda Hutcheon在*Studies on Canadian Literature* (A. E. Davidson, ed., MLA, 1990)裏提到的:後現代加拿大文學的特色之一是它的多重性、片斷性、它的遠離中心和主流 (28);以及對寫實小說傳統的“use and abuse,”迫使大家對此傳統重新思考和體會 (29)。它們在寫實與幻想之間游移,因而在結構與意義上呈現一開放性、不確定性、很晦澀、而且可有多種可能的解讀。敘述方式往往看起來像某一類的創作,卻又像另一類的作品。《千年狐》正是這樣的小說。書中三個不同的敘述者,分別是一隻狐狸、魚玄機、和一個現代的第三人稱敘述者。這一點也經作者特別在此書開始處指出,並利用圖形來代表:黑色的狐狸側影,古代中國仕女圖,和一棵連根露出的大樹。整本小說也就十分方便地交互穿插這三種敘述聲音,而讀者則由章節前的圖形得到指示,不會有絲毫的混亂。這種文內文外的提示、註解當然有別於一般小說;並且給人一種作者無時無刻不在涉入,指揮,遙控的感覺。此小說中的狐狸隱隱然俯視,綜觀一切,穿越時空(由古到今,自中國至加拿大,最後且上天入地,出入陰陽);而這本小說的作

者又何其不然！

這種超越時空，出入現實給讀者的感覺就像在看一部科幻電影，非常的魔幻寫實：一下子追溯過去，一下子回到當下，或展望未來。「過去」的一部份，尤其可從作者利用非常豐富的中國典故裡發現。譬如這本小說的第一個敘述者是一隻近一千歲的狐狸；另一個敘述者就是唐朝長安的名妓魚玄機(她又同時具有女道士、女詩人的身份)。前述的這隻狐狸曾在五十歲的時候進駐一破敗老婦人的屍體。這隻狐狸與魚玄機的關係，是在等著魚玄機死後駐進她的身體，從此這隻狐狸就有女道士魚玄機美麗的外貌。這種進駐或附身，狐狸吊詭地用“animate”這個字；加以作者描述此狐常需飲人畜(尤其是雞)的暖血，其實此狐已兼具中國狐仙與西洋吸血鬼(vampire)兩種形象。故事第三種敘述聲音，是個第三人稱敘述者(third-person narrator)，由一棵連根拔起的雪杉(cedar)樹為代表(根外露不著土：「失根的蘭花」?)；至於前面兩個敘述者是用第一人稱的方式由狐狸、魚玄機分別在說故事，兩者皆由自己身世歷史開始。以第三人稱發聲的樹，述說著一個現代的故事。這個現代的故事有一女主角Artemis Wong。Artemis Wong(黃，除了是個中國姓氏，並且是個很中國的顏色。)是一被白種人收養的小孩，她不知自己的親生母親為誰，因此身世不明。她是被敘述者，被觀察者，被收養者。她的白種人養父為東亞系(Asian Studies)的教授，養母也嗜好收藏東方藝術品。為了維持一點她亞洲的heritage而保留了Wong(粵語的“黃”)的姓氏。至於Artemis Wong的生母留給她的遺產是Artemis(即希臘神話的月神，羅馬神話的Diana)這個名字。Artemis自己的想法是：Artemis這個名子很難叫，太古典艱澀；尤其是在入學的時候，她很想和大家解釋Artemis就是Diana的意思。Artemis也有曾換名字的想法。不過現在(二十歲左右的大學生)她反而覺得Artemis這個名字在二十世紀末的年代還頗有個性及美感，幸好當時沒有改名。其實，Artemis名雖希臘，“月”的意象卻十分中國。對於身份，來源，和名稱的不確定和

懷疑，是女主角Artemis的負擔。她像一個遊魂，居無定所，在Vancouver搬來搬去，好像有一個尋母溯源的任務，卻又常常顯得漫無目的，是個當代版的Ulysses。書中三個主要角色之間的關係在於狐狸先在唐朝與魚玄機交會，現在等者與Artemis相處，並欲為魚玄機殺婢疑案及Artemis尋母一事施展神通。

神話變形

《千年狐》為四章，第一章題目為*How the Fox Came to Live Alone*：這隻狐狸為何現在落得形單影隻？獨來獨往？她說自己來自一個很老實的狐狸家庭（此處有幽默諷刺的意味，與傳統對狐狸的概念不同，寫狐如寫人；又如動物寓言裏的動物角色，同時具有人與獸的特質，用之於一隻近千年的狐精，倒也恰當），只有她自己仍想與人打交道，發生一些關係。至於她家族的人，由於狐狸已不再若以往風光，所以她們是消聲匿跡，規規矩矩的做「狐」。這隻狐狸的家人對於她依舊對人類社會有興趣的行為，是很不贊成的。這隻狐狸在整個小說中的目的是在等待她一千歲的生日。由於她的族群裏尚未有「狐」活到千歲天狐的境界，所以她自己也不知道能與天通是種什麼樣的狀況。至於這本小說的另一個主角Artemis Wong是個被白種人收養的華裔女孩，亦是個搬出來獨立門戶的女生。她生母留給她的只有她的姓名和一個箱子。箱子裡面有一件棉襖和一些在她看來不大值錢的中國物品，充滿強烈樟腦丸的氣味。Artemis與狐狸不乏共通處：兩者都獨來獨往，都有所等待，雖然不知會等到甚麼，都有些狡詐，都是某種獵者(huntress)。Larissa Lai在這本小說為各個角色所取的名字，很明顯是別有用心。像Artemis的名字，就很直接地點出是月神之名“the virgin huntress”。Artemis有一個男朋友Eden，表面上對她時有溫柔體貼的時刻，有時卻若即若離，忽冷忽熱。但她卻是非常孤獨地覺得不屬於任何人，the virgin huntress與伊甸樂園無緣，異教文化與(基督教)上帝的恩寵隔絕。Artemis先是與Eden同住，接著搬出去，亦曾與

Diane同住，後來搬到另一住處，付了租金才知房東打算賣房子。歸屬(Belonging)與認同(Identity)--在這個文化與環境裡面的身份、地位、階級、種族--的問題從第一章一開始即已出現。像那隻狐狸也有一個歸屬的問題，她脫離自己的家族，並一直在尋找一個目標，如同聖杯的追尋，她在等待著一千歲的到來。而Artemis這位人稱Art或Artless，有時使使小詐，品行並非沒有瑕疵的女孩就是她的一個目標，她等待互動的對象。

Artemis與男朋友Eden兩人始終無法有男歡女愛的親密性關係，只能維持一種若即若離、有時溫馨有時平淡的交往。後來Artemis發現Eden有同性戀的傾向。Artemis有一個同學兼好友Mercy Lee，二人均修Western Civilization的課。故事開始於西雅圖一個拜占庭藝術展，兩人同看十字軍東征時，基督徒由回教國家所掠奪來的宗教遺(聖)物(relics)，像是部份的十字架及聖徒遺體(頭顱、手臂)等。由於Artemis很喜歡這些展覽品，於是就在博物館裏附設的禮品店，趁亂偷了一個曾裝過“pieces of The True Cross”的盒子的複製品。不過她對那些精雕細琢的盒子興趣大過那些連Mercy都認為噁心的聖徒的斷頭殘臂。從此處我們可看出Artemis是一個不拘小節的人，她也有狐狸的狡滑和善偷的技巧。但此處諷刺的不只是Artemis；所謂的歷史文明乃至宗教，恐怕也是野蠻殘暴經過時間和距離的沈澱。至於Mercy Lee則是一個很典型的基督徒，即使是撒謊都不願意；顧名思義，Mercy是Artemis的良知和救贖。例如她們從西雅圖要回溫哥華，在過邊界的時候，Artemis身上帶了一些有價值，須報稅的禮物，於是就先和Mercy商討該如何瞞過海關人員。Artemis認為只要向海關說「沒有」可申報之物即可，但Mercy Lee卻覺得這樣撒謊使她不安。

由於Mercy家裡遇到困難，兩人幾次相約都無法碰頭。Eden曾有“Is Mercy always late?” (23)類似comic relief的雙關語。誤會和不滿越積越深，Mercy與Artemis遂漸行漸遠，各自另外有一些朋友。故事到了第三章兩人關係開始有轉折。當二人再見面

的時候，是Artemis走過半個地球由香港回溫哥華，並在西雅圖返加拿大途中於巴士上與Mercy不期而遇。此時Mercy頭髮剪得相當短，如同男孩一般，並穿一件皮夾克，所以Artemis起初並沒認出，直至海關，Artemis才發現那位短髮女孩為Mercy。但這位Mercy卻說她現在叫做Ming(明brightness)，看來真是改頭換面了。相對於第一章兩人一起過邊界的狀況，第三章於兩人再過海關時，海關發現Ming/Mercy攜帶超量煙絲，而未申報，全車的人因她被攔下盤查而耽誤。中規中矩的基督徒Mercy已經不復以往了。到了第四章Ming於Stanley Park被槍殺，並由Artemis認屍。從基督教寓言(allegorical)的觀點來看，Artemis與Mercy從友好同伴(表面上Mercy如其名所指，是Artemis所需的神恩，亦有如Artemis的良知)到逐漸疏遠，兩人關係慢慢中斷，再見時Mercy已變質，最後乃至死亡，似乎是救贖的失敗，神的慈悲終告斷絕。或者，基督教的愛與恩典竟無法澤被異族異類 -- Mercy與書中許多華裔／少數民族／同性戀一樣不被主流社會接受，先是被拒，然後自棄：Mercy的改名和個性的改變大約是出於幻滅和抗議，後來甚至到靶場練槍自衛，並與人發生口角 (189)，最後死於仇恨之手，儘管她最初曾一心擁抱主流宗教！而故事開始時對(基督/天主)宗教文明的嘲諷 -- 宗教所引起的仇恨、戰爭、死亡 (6-8) -- 在此結尾處更顯辛辣與無奈。

雖說這本小說表面很鬆散：三條敘述的路線，很多如同電影一般一閃而過的人事物，看似鬆散，其實不然。在第一章我們已可看出很多線索：身世與屬性，愛與性--同性戀與異性戀，基督教與異教，東方與西方，文明與野蠻，歷史與現代，期待與失望，如真似幻等主題早在第一章即已出現。關於同性戀這一不斷重覆的主題在高羅佩的《中國古代房內考：中國古代的女性與社會》中提到：除了男同性戀早已存在，女同性戀在古代中國社會(尤其是大家庭裏)是被認可與容忍的，因為在一個三妻四妾的家庭中，女性們長期的被壓抑以及相處，往往會從姊妹情誼(sisterhood)轉變成同性(同情)戀(Lesbianism)，如此親密的關

係反而可以形成一股安穩、平衡的力量（高羅佩48）。除了 Mercy/Ming外，Artemis幾乎與每個女伴都發生了同志情感；而Ming到後來也作不男不女的打扮，加上亞裔身份，因此被靶場的bigots挑釁。Artemis在男友Eden住處替他的攝影模特兒（Artemis後來想起她，用了“the blonde amazon”一詞--24）化粧時，以及當Artemis穿上Eden給她的中國肚兜時不禁感到與另一女性肌膚親近的特殊感覺（14, 22）。但這種特殊感覺似乎又與Artemis欠缺與生母的親密關係有一點相干。一種親近的渴望更多過肉體情慾。而男友Eden卻是若即若離，可「慾」而不可求。伊甸的不可能，神恩的不可得，Artemis Wong是注定要孤獨漂泊。初遇Diane Wong也是在Eden那兒，“We have the same name,” Artemis心想“just different versions”（24）。Diane與Artemis也長得很像，Diane較高，臉稍長。其實Diane Wong就是Artemis Wong的alter ego，也就是她的另外一個自我。Eden為她們拍照時更是將她們打扮成一個模樣，一張胸背緊鄰，一張兩臉貼近得看得到對方瞳孔裏的“波濤洶湧”（25）-- 是雙胞胎？還是鏡裏的自己？Artemis是一個身份不明的女孩，不知道自己的生母，有的只是一箱充滿樟腦氣味（“the smell of China”--21）的衣物。Diane卻是個典型華裔移民的第二代，Artemis若不被收養，有的大約就是Diane這樣的家庭背景。她們曾同住，直到因爭吵而分開，Artemis並與Diane的男友Saint發生關係。Diane的哥哥Andie正巧也是同性戀者，後來在多倫多的一處公園被（可能是仇恨同性戀者所）殺。Diane一出現就問Artemis：「難道妳不想知道自己的身份？」Artemis嘴上說不一定要知道啊，我的養父母對我很好。Diane顛覆地說：妳（養）父母也許是典型東方主義者（Orientalists），把妳當作一個收藏品，小小的殖民地。妳以為他們真的愛妳？Artemis心中於是種下這一個疑問，並認為應該去找尋自己的身世（identity）。於是她就在二十世紀的Vancouver遊蕩，換過幾個住處，與各種人接觸、發生關係，像一個飄泊的尤里西思（Ulysses），但最後也沒找到她所追尋的。對自我（身

份)、文化、宗教、性愛等歸屬(認同)問題的失落迷惘(disorientation)是書中幾個華裔青年的共同悲哀吧！

時空越界

當Diane這個「分身」(alter ego)毫不留情地揭穿Artemis被收養的(可能)事實，使人想起書中有關Ridley Scott的電影*Blade Runner*的指涉 (15, 100)。*Blade Runner*裏一群複製人(機器人)在太空殖民地叛變後逃回地球，希望能夠「尋根」以改變「命運」，延長他們原先被設計好的只有四年的短暫生命。諷刺的是，這些複製人(replicants)雖被賦予四年生命，卻又被輸入假記憶，因此每人都「記得」自己的「童年」。主角Rick Deckard (an ex-blade runner)殘酷地告訴Rachael--一個誤以為自己是人類的replicant--他知道她的童年，因為她和其他replicants都有相似的假兒時回憶。他們事實上並無真正身份，只是一群背景相似的假人，跑到這個不屬於他們的地球，追求一個不可能的夢。在小說第一章Artemis就在Eden住處看了這部電影。*Blade Runner*因此不但暗示了Artemis身世的神秘性、被動性、甚至悲劇性，也賦予本書更濃厚的魔幻色彩。虛虛實實，真真假假，是這本小說的基調。除了*Blade Runner*以外，小說中還直接或間接指涉到許多當代西方電影及流行音樂，像*Diva* (96-97), *Thelma and Louise* (33-50, the Peacock Hen事件裏Diane和Artemis使人想起Ridley Scott這部電影)。這些流行文化的典故，配合了Artemis故事的現代感，提供社會背景的襯托，並且利用音樂電影等感官意象側寫書中人物的心理，如此與多媒體文化文本互涉的結果，不但豐富了主題而且成功地營造烘托主題的氣氛。

此外，有關於魚玄機的故事，在史料中我們可看到的並不多，只知她十六歲被賣到平康里為妓。她曾嫁給李億(子安)為妾，在李府的歲月中，因不容於大太太，故又被李子安送到咸宜觀中去做女道士。Larissa Lai的這本小說第二條敘述線，亦由魚玄機自述其兒時為起點，說明幼年喪母、最近亦遭父喪，故

被賣到平康里為妓女。此處所要探討的也是一歸屬的問題。我們可以發現這本小說的三位女性主角都是很孤獨飄泊的靈魂，她們在試圖尋找著自己的歸屬。關於魚玄機的故事，作者於小說開始處引用魚玄機的兩句詩做楔子。從英文翻譯我們看不出什麼。找出原文，方知這首詩是魚玄機寫給李子安的，最後四句為頗帶幽怨的：「聚散已悲雲不定，恩情須學水長流。有花時節知難遇，未肯厭厭醉玉樓。」聚散不定，知心難遇，只能無奈地買醉度日，難道不是Artemis後來的寫照嗎？魚玄機的故事在此亦被扭轉改寫，史實加入幻想。魚玄機因涉嫌打死奴婢綠翹，而被判死刑。Larissa Lai即把這一個短短的故事拉長，把魚玄機與綠翹的關係寫成類似朋友、主奴、以及女同性戀的多重關係。綠翹被認為是魚玄機打死，是由於魚玄機嫉妒綠翹招待魚玄機的一位恩客李近仁員外。但就作者／狐狸而言，綠翹之死以及魚玄機的涉嫌是件千古懸案；而身份歸屬、性別、死亡的主題再次顯現。

小說中魚玄機的部份作者用蒲松齡《聊齋誌異》裡有關鬼狐故事加以鋪陳渲染，發展成一另類情節。魚玄機自述如何在廟裏初遇綠翹，又在無意中再遇扮男妝的綠翹和李公子，兩人形貌酷似，正大談武則天的功過。在小說第二章類似《聊齋》「狐嫁女」的情節裏，魚玄機嫁了狐狸李公子。後又與綠翹有著同性戀關係。綠翹在這章裏的影像已與那善變化的狐狸重疊。到第三章狐狸等待魚玄機的死亡，作者安排她倆相遇，道士魚玄機似乎並不懼怕死亡或是眼前這個等著借其屍體還魂的老狐狸，魚玄機並且施起法術，有如《聊齋》裏的「勞山道士」，剪紙為月，擲筷入月，請月裏仙姬(嫦娥)下凡獻舞。對月亮及月桂樹的描寫一方面非常中國，而且適合狐仙故事的神秘性，另一方面卻隱隱約約令讀者想到那個以月神為名的現代女孩Artemis。作者就如此綜合混雜修改運用《聊齋》故事，重寫魚玄機。至於妒殺綠翹疑案，卻成了連接第九世紀與二十世紀的線索。狐狸將帶著偵破千古懸案的任務，等待千年時加以解決。

她同時也嘗試解決Ming/Mercy被殺之謎。由此看來，第四章的謀殺案與魚玄機妒殺綠翹似有關連。

小說結尾的一章更加充滿魔幻寫實的味道。二十世紀末加拿大溫哥華史丹利公園(Stanley Park)發現一名女屍。Ming (Mercy Lee)頭部中彈，看似謀殺。Artemis前往認屍，對她而言是個巨大的衝擊。就在這樣極脆弱的狀況下主角狐狸駐進Artemis的生活裏。狐狸已達千歲。在此之前狐狸只是像「守護神」(“hovered like a guardian angel”)一般，「狐」視眈眈地觀察Artemis，現在她終於採取行動。她冒充Artemis的生母打電話給她，在一場「小紅帽與大野狼」的場景裏邂逅 (205-207)。只是這裏小紅帽尋找的是母親而不是祖母；大野狼也變成了狐仙。從此著了魔(狐作祟)的Artemis成天足不出戶，只是喝得爛醉，躲在房裏寫詩，形消骨瘦，讓人想起魚玄機。狐狸每天陪她寫詩，並上天堂，下地獄，為找出魚玄機涉嫌殺死綠翹的真相，以及Artemis的朋友Mercy的死因。書的最後並未提供直接的解答，但不無暗示。所謂暗示，是指Mercy/Ming死前曾多嘴而導致Artemis和Diane及Claude的誤會，Artemis氣得幾乎(潛意識裏)要殺死她。也許Artemis殺了Mercy，也許狐狸順便幫了點忙(197-99)，就像綠翹之死一樣神秘，有多種可能。通天的狐狸在天堂圖書館找到的是多種版本，眾說紛云的記載。魚玄機仍是懸案。狐狸在閻羅殿看到五個容貌一樣的女鬼，使人想起Artemis的諸女友。她們都是亞裔，因種族偏見及社會仇恨冤枉地被任意打死。但她們之中沒有一個是Mercy。

這樣的多重性和不確定性從開始到結束，是有意的模糊，故意的開放。最後狐狸並未達成任務，她離開時，兩大“古今奇案”謎仍未解，Artemis並未找到生母(身份)，卻有一個代替 -- surrogate mother。書中一開始就讓讀者期待，狐狸自己也百般期待的，千歲之卒，*Millennium*，就是如此？沒有救贖，沒有解答，只有繼續等待。“Is Mercy always late?” (23) 如此刻意的多重敘述，出入不同時空和各種文本，改造傳說，揉合中西典故，

模糊了歷史與事實，超越幻想和寫實的分野，闖破種種傳統小說敘述的藩籬。最後Artemis，魚玄機，天狐三個形像層層相疊--是人？是鬼？是狐？古耶？今耶？或實？或虛？整個文本的面貌飄忽不定，有如善變的天狐，游移幻化於古今中外、黃泉碧落。Larissa Lai似乎對應了美國華裔女作家湯亭亭和譚恩美先前立下的運用雙重文化承傳和中西文本互涉而達到重寫神話，魔幻兼寫實的北美華裔作家特有傳統。從此中國文學典故、文化影響注入美加兩國文本及文學系統，有朝一日將成世界(西方)文學意識之一部份；有如古希臘羅馬的文學之於歐美傳統(見筆者〈文化認同的焦慮：湯亭亭與譚恩美的多重故事敘述〉)；反過來說，這些華裔作家豐富了美加文學的內涵，改變了它的風貌。如此般的文化翻譯、神話變形、及時空越界將形成二十一世紀跨越疆界的新興文類。

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Selected Bibliography of Studies about Canadian Ethnic Minority Writing

This selected bibliography was compiled according to the following criteria: 1) Only English- and French-language works were selected; however, it should be noted that there exists a substantial corpus of studies in a number Canada's immigrant languages; 2) Critical works about the literatures of Canada's First Nations were not compiled following the frequently expressed opinion that Canadian Aboriginal literatures should not be categorized within Canadian "Ethnic" writing but as a separate corpus; 3) The selection was made to include literary criticism as well as theoretical texts; 4) Critical texts on works of authors writing in English and French but usually viewed or which could be considered as "Ethnic" authors (i.e., immigré(e)/exile individuals whose works contain Canadian "Ethnic" perspectives) were included; 5) Some works dealing with US or general North American Ethnic Minority Writing but which included Canadian perspectives were included; 6) Attention was paid to works published abroad; and 7) As a rule, collected volumes were not included separately; rather, a selection was made of pertinent articles from such volumes.

The focus of this selected bibliography is on studies of *Canadian* Ethnic Minority Writing; however, it should be mentioned that recently there have been, increasingly in numbers, incisive theoretical studies published in English as well as other languages which consider the study of literature in the context of minority and/or diaspora writing which, in turn, is viewed as a "force in a variety of social and cultural territories" (Bernheimer). For English-language sources, see, for example, Charles Bernheimer, ed., *Comparative Literature in the Age of Multiculturalism* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1995); Ella Shohat and Robert Stam, *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994); Gurbhagat Singh, ed. *Differential Multilogue: Comparative Literature and National Literatures* (Delhi: Ajanta Publications, 1991), Susan P. Castillo, *Notes from the Periphery: Marginality in North American Literature and Culture* (New York: Peter Lang, 1995), or Winfried Siemerling and Katrin Schwenk, eds. *Cultural Difference and the Literary Text: Pluralism and the Limits of Authenticity in North American Literatures* (Iowa City: U of Iowa P, 1996). Such views on the landscape of literary and culture

Canadian Culture and Literature. And a Taiwan Perspective

Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek and Yiu-nam Leung, eds.

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1998 ISBN 0-921490-10-0

scholarship follow and strengthen that particular Canadian position which inscribes scholarship to include rather than — consciously or not — to marginalize. As well, we should take note of two recent anthologies of Canadian Ethnic Minority Writing with selected primary texts: Linda Hutcheon and Marion Richmond, eds. *Other Solitudes: Canadian Multicultural Fictions* (Toronto: Oxford UP, 1990) and Smaro Kamboureli, ed. *Making a Difference: Canadian Multicultural Literature* (Toronto: Oxford UP, 1996).

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